

The Tafsīr of Sūrat Al-Qadr **(Chapter - 97)**

Which was revealed in Makkah

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allāh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

﴿إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ﴾ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ ﴿لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفٍ ﴿شَهْرٍ﴾ نَزَّلَ الْمَلَكُكُمُ وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ ﴿سَلَامٌ هِيَ حَتَّىٰ مَطْلَعِ الْفَجْرِ﴾﴾

- ﴿1. Verily, We have sent it down in the Night of Al-Qadr.﴾
- ﴿2. And what will make you know what the Night of Al-Qadr is?﴾
- ﴿3. The Night of Al-Qadr is better than a thousand months.﴾
- ﴿4. Therein descend the angels and the Rūḥ by their Lord's permission with every matter.﴾
- ﴿5. There is peace until the appearance of dawn.﴾

The Virtues of the Night of Al-Qadr (the Decree)

Allāh informs that He sent the Qur'ān down during the Night of Al-Qadr, and it is a blessed night about which Allāh says,

﴿إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةٍ مُبَارَكَةٍ﴾

﴿We sent it down on a blessed night.﴾ (44:3) This is the Night of Al-Qadr and it occurs during the month of Ramaḍān. This is as Allāh says,

﴿شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ﴾

﴿The month of Ramaḍān in which was revealed the Qur'ān.﴾
(2:185)

Ibn 'Abbās and others have said, "Allāh sent the Qur'ān down all at one time from the Preserved Tablet (*Al-Lawḥ Al-Mahfūz*)

to the House of Might (*Baytul-Izzah*), which is in the heaven of this world. Then it came down in parts to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ based upon the incidents that occurred over a period of twenty-three years."

Then Allāh magnified the status of the Night of *Al-Qadr*, which He chose for the revelation of the Mighty Qur'ān, by His saying,

﴿وَمَا آدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ ۚ لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ﴾

«And what will make you know what the Night of *Al-Qadr* is? The Night of *Al-Qadr* is better than a thousand months.»^[1]

Imām Aḥmad recorded that Abu Hurayrah said, "When Ramaḍān would come, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ would say,

«قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ، شَهْرُ مُبَارَكٍ، افْتَرَضَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ صِيَامَهُ، تُفْتَحُ فِيهِ أَبْوَابُ الْجَنَّةِ، وَتُغْلَقُ فِيهِ أَبْوَابُ الْجَحِيمِ، وَتُغْلَقُ فِيهِ الشَّيَاطِينُ، فِيهِ لَيْلَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ، مَنْ حُرِمَ خَيْرَهَا فَقَدْ حُرِمَ»

«Verily, the month of Ramaḍān has come to you all. It is a blessed month, which Allāh has obligated you all to fast. During it the gates of Paradise are opened, the gates of Hell are closed and the devils are shackled. In it there is a night that is better than one thousand months. Whoever is deprived of its good, then he has truly been deprived.»^[2]

An-Nasā'ī recorded this same *Ḥadīth*.^[3] Aside from the fact that worship during the Night of *Al-Qadr* is equivalent to worship performed for a period of one thousand months, it is also confirmed in the Two *Ṣaḥīḥs* from Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said,

﴿مَنْ قَامَ لَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ إِيمَانًا وَارْتِبَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ﴾

«Whoever stands (in prayer) during the Night of *Al-Qadr* with faith and expecting reward (from Allāh), he will be forgiven for his previous sins.»^[4]

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 24:531, 532, and Al-Qurṭubī 20:130.

[2] Aḥmad 2:230. There is a witness for this narration from the *Ḥadīth* of Anas bin Mālik in the books of the *Sunan*.

[3] An-Nasā'ī 4:129.

[4] *Faṭḥ Al-Bāri* 4:294, and Muslim 1:523.

The Descent of the Angels and the Decree for Every Good during the Night of Al-Qadr

Allāh says,

﴿تَنَزَّلُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ﴾

«Therein descend the angels and the Rūḥ by their Lord's permission with every matter.»

meaning, the angels descend in abundance during the Night of Al-Qadr due to its abundant blessings. The angels descend with the descending of blessings and mercy, just as they descend when the Qur'ān is recited, they surround the circles of *Dhikr* (remembrance of Allāh) and they lower their wings with true respect for the student of knowledge.

In reference to *Ar-Rūḥ*, it is said that here it means the angel Jibrīl. Therefore, the wording of the *Āyah* is a method of adding the name of the distinct object (in this case Jibrīl) separate from the general group (in this case the angels).

Concerning Allāh's statement,

﴿مِنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ﴾

«with every matter.» Mujāhid said, "Peace concerning every matter." Sa'īd bin Manṣūr said, 'Isā bin Yūnus told us that Al-A'mash narrated to them that Mujāhid said concerning Allāh's statement,

﴿سَلَامٌ مِنْ﴾

«There is peace» "It is security in which *Shayṭān* cannot do any evil or any harm." Qatādah and others have said, "The matters are determined during it, and the times of death and provisions are measured out (i.e., decided) during it." Allāh says,

﴿فِيهَا يُفْرَقُ كُلُّ أَمْرٍ حَكِيمٍ﴾

«Therein is decreed every matter of decree.» (44:4)

Then Allāh says,

﴿سَلَامٌ مِنْ حَتَّىٰ تَطْلُعَ النُّجُومُ﴾

«There is peace until the appearance of dawn.»

Sa'īd bin Manṣūr said, "Hushaym narrated to us on the authority of Abu Ishāq, who narrated that Ash-Sha'bi said

concerning Allāh's statement,

﴿مِنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ سَلَامٌ حَتَّىٰ مَطْلَعِ الْفَجْرِ﴾

«With every matter, there is a peace until the appearance of dawn.»

The angels giving the greetings of peace during the Night of Al-Qadr to the people in the *Masjids* until the coming of *Fajr* (dawn).”

Qatādah and Ibn Zayd both said concerning Allāh's statement,

﴿سَلَامٌ هِيَ﴾

«There is peace.» “This means all of it is good and there is no evil in it until the coming of *Fajr* (dawn).”

Specifying the Night of Decree and its Signs

This is supported by what Imām Aḥmad recorded from Ubādah bin Aṣ-Ṣāmit that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said,

«لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ فِي الْعَشْرِ الْبَوَاقِي، مَنْ قَامَهُنَّ ابْتِغَاءَ جِسْمَتِهِنَّ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ، وَهِيَ لَيْلَةٌ وَتُرَى: يَنْسَعُ أَوْ سَبْعُ أَوْ خَامِسَةٌ أَوْ ثَالِثَةٌ أَوْ آخِرُ لَيْلَةٍ»

«The Night of Al-Qadr occurs during the last ten (nights). Whoever stands for them (in prayer) seeking their reward, then indeed Allāh will forgive his previous sins and his latter sins. It is an odd night: the ninth, or the seventh, or the fifth, or the third or the last night (of Ramaḍān).»

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ also said,

«إِنَّ أَمَارَةَ لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ أَنَّهَا صَافِيَةٌ بَلَجَةٌ، كَأَنَّ فِيهَا قَمَرًا سَاطِعًا، سَاكِتَةٌ سَاجِدَةٌ، لَا يَرْدُ فِيهَا وَلَا حَرٌّ، وَلَا يَجُلُ لِكَوْكَبٍ يُرْمَى بِهِ فِيهَا حَتَّىٰ يُضَيِّعَ، وَإِنَّ أَمَارَتَهَا أَنَّ الشَّمْسَ صَبَحَتْهَا تَخْرُجُ مُشْتَرِيَةً لَيْسَ لَهَا شُعَاعٌ، مِثْلُ الْقَمَرِ لَيْلَةَ الْبَدْرِ، وَلَا يَجُلُ لِلشَّيْطَانِ أَنْ يَخْرُجَ مَعَهَا يَوْمَئِذٍ»

«Verily, the sign of the Night of Al-Qadr is that it is pure and glowing as if there were a bright, tranquil, calm moon during it. It is not cold, nor is it hot, and no shooting star is permitted until morning. Its sign is that the sun appears on the morning following it smooth having no rays on it, just like the moon on a full moon night. Shayṭān is not allowed to come out

with it (the sun) on that day.»^[1]

This chain of narration is good. In its text there is some oddities and in some of its wordings there are things that are objectionable.

Abu Dāwud mentioned a section in his *Sunan* that he titled, "Chapter: Clarification that the Night of *Al-Qadr* occurs during every Ramaḍān." Then he recorded that 'Abdullāh bin 'Umar said, "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was asked about the Night of *Al-Qadr* while I was listening and he said,

«مِي فِي كُلِّ رَمَضَانَ»

«It occurs during every Ramaḍān.»^[2]

The men of this chain of narration are all reliable, but Abu Dāwud said that Shu'bah and Sufyān both narrated it from Ishāq and they both considered it to be a statement of the Companion (Ibn 'Umar, and thus not the statement of the Prophet ﷺ).

It has been reported that Abu Sa'īd Al-Khudri said, "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ performed *I'tikāf* during the first ten nights of Ramaḍān and we performed *I'tikāf* with him. Then Jibrīl came to him and said, 'That which you are seeking is in front of you.' So the Prophet ﷺ performed *I'tikāf* during the middle ten days of Ramaḍān and we also performed *I'tikāf* with him. Then Jibrīl came to him and said; 'That which you are seeking is ahead of you.' So the Prophet ﷺ stood up and gave a sermon on the morning of the twentieth of Ramaḍān and he said,

«مَنْ كَانَ اغْتَكَفَ مَعِيَ فَلْيَرْجِعْ فَإِنِّي رَأَيْتُ لَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ، وَإِنِّي أَنْسِيْتُهَا، وَإِنَّهَا فِي الْعَشْرِ الْآخِرِ فِي وَتَرٍ، وَإِنِّي رَأَيْتُ كَأَنِّي أَشْجُدُ فِي طِينٍ وَمَاءٍ»

«Whoever performed *I'tikāf* with me, let him come back (for *I'tikāf* again), for verily I saw the Night of *Al-Qadr*, and I was caused to forget it, and indeed it is during the last ten (nights). It is during an odd night and I saw myself as if I were prostrating in mud and water.»

The roof of the *Masjid* was made of dried palm-tree leaves and

[1] Aḥmad 5:324. It is a *Mursal* narration.

[2] Abu Dāwud 2:111. This narration is considered *Mawqūf*.

we did not see anything (i.e., clouds) in the sky. But then a patch of wind-driven clouds came and it rained. So the Prophet ﷺ lead us in prayer until we saw the traces of mud and water on the forehead of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, which confirmed his dream."

In one narration it adds that this occurred on the morning of the twenty-first night (meaning the next morning). They both (Al-Bukhārī and Muslim) recorded it in the Two *Ṣaḥīḥs*.^[1]

Ash-Shāfi'i said, "This *Ḥadīth* is the most authentic of what has been reported." It has also been said that it is on the twenty-third night due to a *Ḥadīth* narrated from 'Abdullāh bin Unays in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*.^[2]

It has also been said that it is on the twenty-fifth night due to what Al-Bukhārī recorded from Ibn 'Abbās that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said,

«الْتَمِسُوهَا فِي الْعَشْرِ الْآخِرِ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ فِي تَائِعَةٍ تَبْقَى، فِي سَائِعَةٍ تَبْقَى، فِي خَامِسَةٍ تَبْقَى»

"Seek it in the last ten (nights) of Ramaḍān. In the ninth it still remains, in the seventh it still remains, in the fifth it still remains."^[3]

Many have explained this *Ḥadīth* to refer to the odd nights, and this is the most apparent and most popular explanation. It has also been said that it occurs on the twenty-seventh night because of what Muslim recorded in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* from Ubay bin Ka'b that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ mentioned that it was on the twenty-seventh night.^[4]

Imām Aḥmad recorded from Zirr that he asked Ubayy bin Ka'b, "O Abu Al-Mundhir! Verily, your brother Ibn Mas'ūd says whoever stands for prayer (at night) the entire year, will catch the Night of *Al-Qadr*." He (Ubayy) said, "May Allāh have mercy upon him. Indeed he knows that it is during the month of Ramaḍān and that it is the twenty-seventh night." Then he swore by Allāh. Zirr then said, "How do you know that?"

[1] *Faṭḥ Al-Bāri* 4:329, 318, and Muslim 2:824.

[2] Muslim 2:827.

[3] *Faṭḥ Al-Bāri* 4:306.

[4] Muslim 2:828.

Ubayy replied, "By a sign or an indication that he (the Prophet ﷺ) informed us of. It rises that next day having no rays on it – meaning the sun."^[1] Muslim has also recorded it.^[2]

It has been said that it is the night of the twenty-ninth. Imām Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal recorded from 'Ubādah bin Aṣ-Ṣāmit that he asked the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ about the Night of Decree and he replied,

«فِي رَمَضَانَ فَاتَمِسُوهَا فِي الْعَشْرِ الْآخِرِ، فَإِنَّهَا فِي وَثْرٍ إِحْدَى وَعِشْرِينَ، أَوْ ثَلَاثَ وَعِشْرِينَ، أَوْ خَمْسَ وَعِشْرِينَ، أَوْ سَبْعَ وَعِشْرِينَ، أَوْ تِسْعَ وَعِشْرِينَ، أَوْ فِي آخِرِ لَيْلَةٍ»

«Seek it in Ramaḍān in the last ten nights. For verily, it is during the odd nights, the twenty-first, or the twenty-third, or the twenty-fifth, or the twenty-seventh, or the twenty-ninth, or during the last night.»^[3]

Imām Aḥmad also recorded from Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said about the Night of Al-Qadr,

«إِنَّهَا لَيْلَةٌ سَابِقَةٌ أَوْ تَابِعَةٌ وَعِشْرِينَ، وَإِنَّ الْمَلَائِكَةَ تِلْكَ اللَّيْلَةَ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَكْثَرُ مِنْ عَدَدِ الْحَصَى»

«Verily, it is during the twenty-seventh or the twenty-ninth night. And verily, the angels who are on the earth during that night are more numerous than the number of pebbles.»^[4]

Aḥmad was alone in recording this Ḥadīth and there is nothing wrong with its chain of narration.

At-Tirmidhi recorded from Abu Qilābah that he said, "The Night of Al-Qadr moves around (i.e., from year to year) throughout the last ten nights." This view that At-Tirmidhi mentions from Abu Qilābah has also been recorded by Mālik, Ath-Thawri, Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal, Ishāq bin Rahuyah, Abu Thawr, Al-Muzani, Abu Bakr bin Khuzaymah and others. It has also been related from Ash-Shāfiʿī, and Al-Qāḍi reported it

[1] Aḥmad 5:130.

[2] Muslim 2:828.

[3] Aḥmad 5:318. There is a deficiency in its chain of narration, but the meanings are found with others.

[4] Aḥmad 2:519.

from him, and this is most likely. And Allāh knows best.

Supplication during the Night of Decree

It is recommended to supplicate often during all times, especially during the month of Ramaḍān, in the last ten nights, and during the odd nights of it even more so. It is recommended that one say the following supplication a lot:

“O Allāh! Verily, You are the Oft-Pardoning, You love to pardon, so pardon me.”

This is due to what Imām Aḥmad recorded from ‘Ā’ishah, that she said, “O Messenger of Allāh! If I find the Night of *Al-Qadr* what should I say?” He replied,

«قُولِي: اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوفٌ تُجِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّي»

«Say: “O Allāh! Verily, You are the Oft-Pardoning, You love to pardon, so pardon me.”»^[1]

At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasā’ī and Ibn Mājah have all recorded this *Ḥadīth*. At-Tirmidhi said, “This *Ḥadīth* is *Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ*.”^[2] Al-Ḥākim recorded it in his *Mustadrak* (with a different chain of narration) and he said that it is authentic according to the criteria of the two Shaykhs (Al-Bukhārī and Muslim).^[3] An-Nasā’ī also recorded it.^[4]

This is the end of the *Tafsir* of *Sūrah Laylat Al-Qadr*, and all praise and blessings are due to Allāh.

[1] Aḥmad 6:182.

[2] *Tuḥfat Al-Aḥwadhī* 9:495, An-Nasā’ī in *Al-Kubrā* 6:218, and Ibn Mājah 2:1265.

[3] Al-Ḥākim 1:530.

[4] An-Nasā’ī in *Al-Kubrā* 6:219.