

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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Introduction

The months of Rajab, Sha'bān and Ramadan are a season of worship when the soul goes through a cleansing and purification. This allows it to ascend towards higher realms. The acts of worship recommended in this month are to help the soul in this journey. It is by the Grace of Allah ﷻ that He has encouraged us to get closer to Him during these months. This push towards worship helps fulfill the purpose of creation, worship and submission to the Creator.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said: *Rajab is the month of Allah, Sha'bān is my month, and Ramadan is the month of my Ummah*. The month of Sha'bān is in the middle of the season and carries significance in being closer to the approach of the holy month of Ramadan. Although many people are aware of the significance of Rajab and abide by its recommendations to pray and fast in it, the month of Sha'bān may receive a little less attention. Hence the purpose of this booklet is to allow believers access to all that has been said about the performances of this month.

Although the month of Sha'bān this year has already begun, many of the initial a'māl for the beginning of the month can also be done at the beginning of other Islamic months. We hope that with the increased time we have due to staying home during the pandemic, Mu'minīn can make the most of these beautiful observances.

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Benefiting from the month of Sha'bān

On account of the Coronavirus pandemic many of us are working from home. This is not easy for believers as they would like to perform their daily prayers, *nawāfil* and other *mustahab* observances (*a'māl*) in masājid and Islamic centers. However, the present situation grants us opportunities to perform all minor and major acts of worship (*'ibādāt*) during the wonderful season of worship which occurs in the months of Rajab, Sha'bān and Ramadan. Staying at home allows for ample time to go through the beautiful and profound supplications taught by the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his holy Ahlul Bayt عليه السلام.

We present below a few Du'ās, *tasbeeh*, prayers and other recitations for welcoming the month of Sha'bān. Supporting Hadith and details of most of the recitations mentioned below can be found in this pamphlet with the exception of a'māl for the eve of fifteenth night. For the a'māl of that night please refer to other books mentioned later.

- 1) Go out to seek the crescent moon (*istihlāl*). This way you can be certain the month has begun. Also, you will be able recite the recommended supplication for the new moon taught by the Ma'sūmīn عليه السلام and reflect upon the great creation of the Almighty.
- 2) Recite Sūrat al-Fātiha seven times upon seeing the crescent moon and you will inshāAllah be protected from the inflammation of the eyes in this month.
- 3) Recite what the Holy Prophet ﷺ recited upon sighting the crescent.

4) Recite Du‘ā no.43 from *Sahīfa Sajjādiyya* which ponders over the Divine creation and the function of changes in the constellation

5) Eat some cheese for according to Hadith: one who has the habit of taking it regularly on the first of every month, his/her *hājāt* will inshāAllah not be rejected.

6) Say two rakāts prayer on the first night of the month similar to al-fajr prayers, except that Sūrat al-An‘ām should be recited after al-Fātiha in both rakāts. After the prayer beseech Allah subhānahu *wata‘ālā* to grant you [your family and other mu‘minīn) safety from every kind of danger, trouble and unpleasant occurrences during the month.

7) According to Imam Muhammad al-Taqī al-Jawād عليه السلام recite a prescribed two rakāts of prayers anytime during at the beginning of a lunar month. The method of this prayers is similar to *al-fajr* (dawn) prayer, except that one has to say Sūrat al-Tawhīd thirty (30) times after al-Fātiha in the first rak‘ah and Sūrat al-Qadr thirty (30) times after al-Fātiha in the second rak‘ah.

8) Offer *sadaqah* (charity) after the above prayer with an intention of attaining well-being during the month and warding off calamities. Also, give *sadaqah* often during the month of Sha‘bān, however little it may be, for Allah – if He wills, will spare your body from the Fire of the Hell.

9) Recite following ten passages from Holy Quran with *tadabbur* (reflection and understanding): 1) Q 11:16, 2) Q

10:107, 3) 6:17, 4) Q 65:7, 5) Q 18:39, 6) Q 3:173, 7) Q 40:44, 8) Q 21:87, 9) Q 28:24 and 10) Q 21:89.

10) Plead for forgiveness from Allah ﷻ regularly during the entire month. Know that doing istighfār seventy (70) times in Sha‘bān is equal to saying it seventy thousand (70,000) times in other months.

11) Recite the phrase on the Unity of God (*tawhīd*) one thousand (1,000) times during the entire month

12) Recite salawāt on the Holy Prophet (s) and his Ahlul Bayt ﷺ repeatedly during the entire month of Sha‘bān.

13) Fast as often as you can in the month of Sha‘bān, especially on: the 1st and the 3rd of the month, on Mondays and Thursdays of Sha‘bān, and on *ayyām al-bīd* (the bright shiny days), i.e. on the 13th, 14th, and the 15th of the month. It is also recommended to fast on the last three days of Sha ‘bān and joining them with the fasts of Holy month of Ramadan. Numerous hadith have been reported from the Holy Ma‘sumīn ﷺ on the merits and benefits of fasting. A few of these appear in this pamphlet.

14) Recite the special Du‘ā taught by Imam Ali Zaynul ‘Ābidīn ﷺ for the month of Sha‘bān after *ẓuhr* prayers during the month and on the fifteenth night. Salawāt on the Holy Prophet and his family is repeated six times in this supplication.

15) Recite the famous *Munājāt al-Sha‘bāniyyah* from Amirul Mu‘minīn Ali ibn Abī Tālib ﷺ which was also recited by other Imams of the Ahlul Bayt ﷺ during the month of Sha‘bān.

16) Perform two rakāts prayer every Thursday in Sha‘bān similar to *al-fajr* prayer, except that Surat al-Tawhīd should be recited one hundred (100) times after al-Fātihā in both rakāts. After the prayer say salawāt one hundred (100) times.

17) Sayyid al-Shuhadā Abū ‘Abdillāh Imam al-Husayn عليه السلام was born 3rd of Sha‘bān 4 AH. Besides fasting and celebrating the birth of this Imam, recite two special Du‘ās, one taught by Imam Hasan al-‘Askarī عليه السلام which begins with *allahumma innī as‘aluka bihaqqil-man‘lud* and another recited by Imam Ja‘far al-Sādiq (a) on this day which begins with *allahumma anta muta‘ālim-makan*. The second du‘ā is the one Imam al-Husayn عليه السلام recited at a time when he was surrounded by the merciless enemies on the Day of ‘Ashūrā.

18) Do not miss keeping awake on the eve of fifteenth Sha‘bān. According to Imam Muhammad al-Bāqir عليه السلام it is the best night after Laylatul Qadr. Due to the coronavirus in which the entire world has been entangled, we have included a few recitations during this holy night to seek relief from it.

19) Celebrate the Birth of Imam Muhammad al-Mahdī al-Qā’im *‘ajjallāhu farajah* in a way that is memorable.

20) Recite Holy Quran as much as you can. When Abū Salt al-Harawī visited Imam Ali al-Ridā عليه السلام in the last week of Sha‘bān, the Imam advised him saying: *O Abū Salt . . . devote yourself to what is beneficial for you. Supplicate a lot and do istighfār. Read as much of the Glorious Quran as you can.*

Ibn ‘Abbās narrates that people mentioned about the merits of Sha‘bān in the presence of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, so he said: *it is a distinguished month and it is my month, the carriers of ‘arsh (Divine Throne) sanctify it and know its right, and it is the month in which sustenance is increased for the believers. [Sha‘bān] is the month of performing deeds, the good is multiplied seventy times and the evil is diminished, the sins are forgiven, the good deeds are accepted. [In this month] the Omnipotent (God) -the Exalted (and) the Majestic, takes pride in it at His servants, and looks at those who frequently fast in it and those who frequently pray in it, and boasts about them to the carriers of ‘arsh.*

(*Iqbāl al-Ā‘māl* p. 684; *Wasāil al-Shi‘ah* H. 13952)

DETAILS OF THE OBSERVANCES FOR THE MONTH OF SHA'BĀN

1. Seeking the Crescent Moon

Restrictions because of the coronavirus pandemic are increasing daily. If the authorities still allow us to go out individually, it is recommended to observe the sighting of the new moon in person. This way you are sure that month has indeed set in. Additionally, you will be able to appreciate the creation of Allah *'azza wajall* and reflect upon it. *The Quran has often reminded us about reflecting on the signs of Allah.*

Allah ﷻ says in Sūrat Āli Imrān:

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاجْتِذَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ آيَاتٍ لِأُولِي

الْأَبْصَارِ

Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day, there are signs for people of intellect. (Q 3:190)

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ

السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَاطِلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

Those who remember Allah while standing, sitting and lying on their sides, and meditate on the creation of the heavens and the earth, (saying) 'Our Lord! You have not created (all) this