



ALI 697: Merits of Sahar and Suhūr in Ramadan

March 2025/ Ramadan 1446 – Session 9

Description: In this **online** course, we will *inshāAllah* discuss the *ādāb* of how to spend the time of *sahar* in Holy Ramadan. We will cover a few passages from the Du'ās of sahar and discuss Hadith on taking suhūr before dawn.

Schedule: March 3 – 7, 2025 at 6 am in NY, 11 am in UK, 2 pm in East Africa. March 10 – 14, 2025, at 7 am in NY, 12 noon in UK, and 2 pm in East Africa.

Instructor : Sh Hasanayn Kassamali.

Note: Friday, iA, we will meet at 6:30 am instead of 7:00 am. please do not miss tomorrow's session, as we will have a short survey for future courses.

وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

A hadith states, “One hour of reflection [or meditation, *tafakkur*] is better than a night’s vigil.” Meditation and reflection are mentioned many times in the Quran (13:3; 16:11, 44, 69; 30:21; 39:42; 45:13; 59:21), and the notion of reflection (*tafakkur* or *fiker*) forms an important foundation of Islamic spirituality. Some say, “Reflection (*fiker*) is the lamp of the heart. If it vanishes the heart has no illumination” (Ibn ‘Ajībah, *al-bahr al-madid*). It is reported that the wife of Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī said he would spend his days in reflection in a corner of his house . . . In this vein, Hasan al-Basrī is reported to have said, “If one’s words are not wisdom, they are vain. If one’s silence is not reflection, it is absentmindedness. If one’s thought is not contemplation, it is play” (Ibid.). (*The Study Quran*, p. 418, commentary on Q 3:191)

Imam Ja‘far al-Sadiq عليه السلام has advised to say the following when traveling:

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْ مَسِيرِي عِبْرًا وَصَمْتِي تَفَكُّرًا وَكَلَامِي ذِكْرًا

O Allah, make my travel an admonition, my silence a reflection and my speech [Your] remembrance.

(*Makārim al-Akhlāq*, p. 254)

Abu ‘Abdillah (Imam al-Sadiq) عليه السلام that he said: Amīr al-Mu‘minīn عليه السلام used to say: “Arouse your heart to contemplation; keep your side clear off the night; and be heedful towards your Lord.”¹ (Ayt. Khumaynī, *Forty Hadith*, Hadith 12)

Reflection on Du‘ā # 2 at Sahar_1

يَا مَفْرَعِي عِنْدَ كُرْبَتِي وَيَا غَوْثِي عِنْدَ شِدَّتِي،
إِلَيْكَ فَزِعْتُ وَبِكَ اسْتَعْتُ وَبِكَ لُدْتُ
لَا أَلُودُ بِسِوَاكَ، وَلَا أَطْلُبُ الْفَرَجَ إِلَّا مِنْكَ؛ فَأَغِثْنِي وَفَرِّجْ عَنِّي.

O my sanctuary during distress, O my help during difficulty,
from You I seek help, in You I seek refuge, To You I flee

I do not seek refuge in other than You and ask none for relief except You.

So, help me, and relieve me

First-person pronoun employed four times (شِدَّتِي, غَوْثِي, كُرْبَتِي, مَفْرَعِي) showing the helplessness of the supplicant. This followed by second person pronoun, masculine and singular addressing Allah swt directly **five** times. Therefore, O my God, Lord, Master - understood but not mentioned, because You are already in His presence, help me in my situation and relive of these, again employing the first-person pronoun twice.

Hadith on taking Sahūr_2

1) Imam Muhammad al-Bāqir عليه السلام says that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وآله broke his fast and had his early morning meal with two black things. When asked what they were, he replied: dates and water, and raisins and water. (Rayshahrī, *Shabrullāh fil-kitab wal-sunnah*, H 330)

We discussed this Hadith earlier in the first week. Let us look at another two Hadiths.

تَسَحَّرُوا مِنْ آخِرِ اللَّيْلِ، وَهُوَ الْعَدَاءُ الْمُبَارَكُ

2) Have the sahur in the last part of the night for that food is blessed. **Prophet Muhammad** صلى الله عليه وآله (*Shabrullāh*, H 312 taken from *Kanz al-Ummāl*, H. 23890). In another Hadith the Prophet (s) *al-sahūr barkatun* (the sahur refers to food and suhūr refers to the action). from *al-Kafi* 4:95, h 3 & *Tahdhīb* 4:198, h 568). Reflections: 1, food or drink in the last part of the night, 2, it is blessed

لَا تَدَعُ أُمَّتِي السَّحُورَ وَلَوْ عَلَى حَشْفَةٍ

3) My nation should not leave the Sahūr, even if it is with a dry date. **Prophet Muhammad** صلى الله عليه وآله – (*Ibid*, H 315 taken from *Al-Kafi* 4:95, h 3; *Tahdhīb*, 4:198 h 568). Reflections: 1, do not leave this practice for it will also make you wake up for other ‘ibādat, ii) simple as dry date that you can carry in your pocket wherever you may be, iii) having date on empty stomach is better.