

At The Approach of Rajab and Sha'ban

With the sighting of the crescent of Rajab, Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) would anticipate and begin preparations for the month of Ramadan. This is two months in advance! People "live to see" various accomplishments in their lives, but a Believer "lives for" and yearns to witness sacred days like these.

Rajab Du'a

Sayyiduna Anas Ibn Malik (radiyallahu'anhu) reports that Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) would recite the following supplication when the Month of Rajab would commence:

اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ لَنَا فِي رَجَبٍ وَشَعْبَانَ وَبَلِّغْنَا رَمَضَانَ

Allahumma barik lana fi Rajabuw wa Sha'bana wa balligh na Ramadan

Translation: Oh Allah! Grant us Barakah (Blessing) during (the months of) Rajab and Sha'ban, and allow us to reach Ramadan.

(Shu'abul-Iman, Hadith: 3534, Ibnu Sunni, Hadith: 660, Mukhtasar Zawaid Bazzar, Hadith: 662, also see Al-Adhkar, Hadith: 549)

Hafiz Ibn Rajab rahimahullah says this narration is suitable to prove the merit of reciting this du'a -"istihbab. Lataif, pg.172. To declare this du'a as baseless is exaggerate.

Sacred Months

Rajab is the second of the "four sacred months" in the Islamic Calendar which are referred to as: "**Al-Ash-hurul hurum**" (Surah Tawbah, verse: 36)

The others are: *Zhul Qa'dah, Zhul Hijjah and Muharram.*

Explaining their significance the 'Ulama mention that during these months, good deeds are more virtuous and evil deeds are more detestable to Almighty Allah. (*Lataiful-Ma'arif, pg.163*)

A pious person once fell ill before Rajab. He made du'a to Allah that He allow him to live till Rajab (at least) because he had heard that Allah frees people from punishment in Rajab. Allah Ta'ala had accepted his du'a. (*Latiful Ma'arif, pg.173*)

Sha'ban

As for Sha'ban, **authentic Hadiths describe special significance for the 15th night.**

Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) is reported to have said: "Certainly Almighty Allah forgives everyone on this night besides those who ascribe partners to Him and those who harbor enmity for others".

(Sahih Ibn Hibban; Al Ihsan, Hadith: 5665, Al-Targhib, vol. 3 pg. 459, Majma'uz Zawaid, vol. 8 pg. 65 & Lataiful-Ma'arif, pg. 194)

Imam 'Ataa Ibn Yasar (rahimahullah)- a distinguished Tabi'i- said:

" After Laylatul Qadr, there is no other night more virtuous than the middle (15th) night of Sha'ban."

(Ibid, pg. 197)

Du'as are accepted

Imam Shafi'i (rahimahullah) has stated: "I have heard that du'as are accepted by Almighty Allah on five nights:

1) The night of Jumu'ah,

2 and 3) The nights of the two 'Eids,

4) The first night of Rajab,

5) The middle (15th) night of Sha'ban,

(Lataiful Ma'arif, pg. 196. Also see Kitabul Umm, vol. 2 pg. 485)

In fact, the experience of people prior to Islam even, shows that Allah Ta'ala would accept their du'as during the month of Rajab. Imam Ibn Abi Dunya (rahimahullah) has cited several examples of this in his book: "Mujabu Da'wah". (ibid)

Specific forms of worship

There are no specific types of Salah etc. that are prescribed for the Month of Rajab or the 15th night of Sha'ban. One may engage in whatever form of 'ibadah one is comfortable with. (Lataiful Ma'arif, pg.168, Islamic Months by Mufti Taqi Uthmani, pgs. 63 and 79)

The Sahabah (radiyallahu 'anhum) and the Tab'un (rahimahumullah) would increase their Quranic recital during these months (especially in Sha'ban), i.e. in preparation for Ramadan. (Lataiful Ma'arif, pg. 192)

The beginning of a new season

The crescent of Rajab actually signals the start of a "New Season". One of hope, mercy and forgiveness for a believer. This "season" only finishes three months later; on the day of Eid!

Shaykh Abu Bakr Balkhy (rahimahullah) says:

"Rajab is a month in which we plant the seeds of good. i.e, by increasing our 'ibadah. In Sha'ban we water them, to cultivate (and reap the rewards) in Ramadan" (Lataif, pg. 173)

Opportunities like these only come once a year. Fortunate are those who maximise their benefit there from.



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