Tafseer of Surah Qadar

Indeed, We had sent it (the Quraan) down in the night of Qadar (honour and esteem). And what will explain to you what the night of Qadar (honour and esteem) is? The night of Qadar (honour and esteem) is better than a thousand months. The angels and Jibreel ('alaihis salaam) descend in it by the permission of their Rabb with every command. It (this night) is Peace; (and) it is till the rise of dawn.

The commentators of the Qur’aan Majeed explain that the reason for this Surah being revealed was that on one occasion, Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) informed the Sahaabah (radhiyallahu ‘anhum) about a certain mujaahid from amongst the Bani Israa’eel who fought in Jihaad for a thousand months. When the Sahaabah (radhiyallahu ‘anhum) heard about the striving of this person, they were surprised and expressed envy over this.

Thereupon Allah Ta’ala revealed this surah as a gift and bounty for this ummah. The special bounty mentioned in this surah is that any person from this ummah who worships Allah Ta’ala on this night of Qadr, he will earn for himself the reward of worshipping Allah Ta’ala for more than a thousand months, and a thousand months is equivalent to 83 years!

Indeed, We had sent it (the Quraan) down in the night of Qadar (honour and esteem).

In this verse, Allah Ta’ala explains that He had sent down the Qur’aan Majeed on the night of Qadr. Other Ahaadith explain that the Qur’aan Majeed was revealed to Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) over a period of twenty-three years.
The commentators of the Qur’aan Majeed explain that the Qur’aan Majeed was first sent down from the Lowh-e-Mahfooz to the first heaven during the month of Ramadhaan in the night of Qadr. Thereafter, the entire Quraan Majeed was revealed from the first heaven upon Hazrat Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) over a period of twenty-three years.

And what will explain to you what the night of Qadar (honour and esteem) is? The night of Qadar (honour and esteem) is better than a thousand months.

This night is known as the night of Qadr. One meaning of ‘Qadr’ is honour and esteem. The reason for this night being given this title is that it is a cause for this ummah acquiring honour and esteem in the sight of Allah Ta’ala. Therefore, each person should strive to worship Allah Ta’ala on this night and acquire the great blessings of this night. Even if a person is a great transgressor and has debased himself through committing sins, this night offers him a golden opportunity to bring himself back to the position of esteem and honour through seeking forgiveness from Allah Ta’ala for his wrongs as well as engaging in the worship of Allah Ta’ala on this blessed night.

The commentators of the Qur’aan Majeed explain that another meaning of ‘Qadr’ is destiny and decree. This night is also called the night of Qadr (the night of destiny and decree) as it is on this night that the decree of Allah Ta’ala, regarding the destiny of the creation, is sent down to the angels. The angels are informed as to who will be born and who will pass away during the year as well as the proportions of rizq (sustenance) which Allah Ta’ala will send down to each person.

Though there are two reports in regard to the destiny of the creation; one report explains that the destiny is sent down to the angels on Laylatul Baraa’ah, the 15th night of Sha’baan, and the second report explains that the destiny is sent down to the angels on Laylatul Qadr - both these reports are correct.

The Ulama have reconciled between both reports by explaining that on the 15th night of Sha’baan, known as Laylatul Baraa’ah, the angels are informed regarding the various matters that are decreed to take place in the following year. For example, the decree is passed regarding who will live and who will die, how much sustenance will be given to each person, which person will be blessed with the opportunity of Hajj and Umrah, etc. Similarly, all the other details relating to mankind are recorded and destined on this night of Baraa’ah and the angels are informed regarding these decisions.
Thereafter, on the night of Qadr, all the decisions that were decreed on the night of Baraa’ah are then conveyed to the respective angels so that they may carry out the commands of Allah Ta’ala.

The angels and Jibreel (‘alaihis salaam) descend in it by the permission of their Rabb with every command. It (this night) is Peace; (and) it is till the rise of dawn.

In this night, an additional grace and blessing of Allah Ta’ala is that Hazrat Jibreel (‘alaihis salaam) descends from Sidratul Muntaha with all the angels. Sidratul Muntaha refers to the furthest station to which the angels can ascend in the heavens. When Hazrat Jibreel (‘alaihis salaam) and the angels come down to the earth on this night, they make salaam to every Muslim, male and female.

Hazrat Abullah bin Abbaas (radhiyallahu ‘anhuma) reports that Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) said that all the angels who are stationed at Sidratul Muntaha descend from the heavens to the earth with Hazrat Jibreel (‘alaihis salaam) and greet every believer, male and female. However, the angels do not greet those who consume wine or pork.

Those who stand in ibaadat during this night are indeed extremely blessed and fortunate. The angels that descend from the heavens make du’aa for them asking Allah Ta’ala to shower His special grace and mercy upon them. Furthermore, Allah Ta’ala forgives all their previous minor sins.

Hazrat Abu Hurairah (radhiyallahu ‘anhu) reports that Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) said, “The one who stands in worship on the night of Qadr with imaan and the hope of receiving reward, all his past (minor) sins will be forgiven.”

Another narration mentions that when the month of Ramadhaan commenced, Hazrat Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) addressed the Sahaabah (radhiyallahu ‘anhum) saying, “Certainly this month (of Ramadhaan) has dawned upon you, and within it there is a night greater than a thousand months. The one who is deprived of this night has certainly been deprived of all good, and only the truly deprived ones will be deprived of the good of this night.”

Hence, during this auspicious night, one should ensure that he engages in ibaadat and refrains from all types of sins. One should also engage in abundant du’aa and beg Allah Ta’ala to forgive him for his sins and bless him with His special mercy.

The angels and Jibreel (‘alaihis salaam) descend in it by the permission of their Rabb with every command. It (this night) is Peace; (and) it is till the rise of dawn.
Hazrat Aaisha (radhiyallahu ‘anha) once said to Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam), “O Rasul of Allah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam)! If I find this night of Qadr then what du’aa should I make?” Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) replied by mentioning the du’aa:

اَللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوٌّ إِنَّكَ لَتَعِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّي

O Allah! You are most forgiving, and You love to forgive, so forgive me!

Through this du’aa, Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) taught the ummah to always turn to Allah Ta’ala in repentance for their sins, and at no point should they feel that they are sinless and free of faults.

Even though the exact date of Laylatul Qadr has not been explained to the ummah, Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) advised the ummah to search for Laylatul Qadr during the month of Ramadhaan. In some Ahaadith, it is recorded that Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) said, “Search for Laylatul Qadr during the last ten days of Ramadhaan,” while in other Ahaadith, Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) said, “Search for Laylatul Qadr during the odd nights of the last ten days of Ramadhaan.”

The Ulama explain that Laylatul Qadr can occur in any part of the month of Ramadhaan. However, it most often occurs during the last ten nights of the month of Ramadhaan during the odd nights.