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Chapter 8: Days to Remember

Note: Not every Day to Remember is necessarily commemorated by all members of the faith community.

Salat al-Jumuah

Salat al-Jumuah occurs at noon every Friday after Muslims have gathered at the larger mosques to pray in congregation and listen to the weekly address – khutbah – that covers both .religious and practical matters.

O you who believe, at the Friday call to prayer – the day of Assembly – hasten solemnly to the remembrance of Allah. Leave business and traffic for that is best for you if you but knew. (Qur'an 62:9)

The Month of Ramadhan

The ninth month in the *Hijri* calendar, during the twenty–nine or thirty days of the month of Ramazan Muslims do not eat or drink from before dawn until sunset. This fasting – *sawm* – a major feature of Islamic life promotes an extraordinary sense of community and spirituality. It is highly recommended that the whole of the Qur'an is read over this holy month.

O you who believe, fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed to those before you, so that you may learn self-restraint. (Qur'an 2:183

Memorial of Khadijah -10th Ramadhan

Khadijah bint Khwailid (a.s.) – for 24 years the beloved wife of the Prophet Muhammad (S) – was the first woman to accept Islam. She is remembered for her unstinting support, encouragement and devotion to him and for being the mother of his six children. Both their sons, Qasim and Abdullah, died in infancy.

Their daughters, Zaynab, Ruqayyah and Um-Kulthum became respected ladies of Makkah. Fatimah al-

Zahra (a.s.) married Ali ibn Abu-Talib (a.s.) – the elected fourth Caliph and first of the 12 divinely appointed Imams – and mothered the second and third Imams, Hasan (a.s.) and Husayn (a.s.). The year in which Khadijah (a.s.) and the Prophet's uncle AbuTalib (a.s.) passed away has become known as 'The Year of Sorrow'.

Birthday of the second Imam, al-Hasan al-Mujtaba (a.s.) - 15th Ramadhan

Imam al-Hasan al-Mujtaba (a.s.) – 'The Chosen' – was the son of the Prophet's cousin Ali (a.s.) and his daughter Fatimah al-Zahra (a.s.) – He and his younger brother Husayn (a.s.) were greatly loved by their grandfather the Prophet Muhammad (S), who passed away when Hasan (a.s.) was seven years old.

The Prophet Muhammad (S) said,

Whoever wants the pleasure of seeing the leader of the youth in paradise should simply look at Hasan (a.s.). 1

Memorial of the first Imam, Ali ibn Abu-Talib (a.s.) 21st Ramadhan

Imam Ali ibn Abu-Talib (a.s.) Commander of the Faithful – Amir al-Mu'min

- was the Prophet's cousin and the first male to accept Islam. To foil the Makkan plot to assassinate the Prophet (S) in the dead of night, he risked his life to maintain activity in the Prophet's house and conceal that the Prophet had already left Makkah.

"Ali (a.s.) married the Prophet's daughter Fatimah (a.s.) and is the father of Hasan (a.s.) and Husayn (a.s.) – He is understood by many Muslims to be the Prophet's (S) chosen successor.

The Prophet (S) said,

I am the city of knowledge and 'Ali (a.s.) is its gate. 2

Laylat al-Qadr 29th, 21st, 23rd, and 27th Ramadhan

Laylat al–Qadr – the Night of Measure – commemorates the revelation of the Qur'an to the Prophet Muhammad (S) – This blessed night falls on one of the last ten nights of the month of Ramadhan. Muslims remember it particularly between the 23rd and 27th night by offering extra prayers to thank Allah for His guidance.

The Night of Measure is better than 1,000 months. Therein come down the Angels and the Spirit by Allah's permission on every errand, Peace! ..this until the rise of morn! (Qur'an 97:3-5)

The last Salat al-Jumu'ah of Ramadhan

On the last Salat al–Jumu'ah of the month of Ramadhan, Muslims are sad the holy month is ending. The Imam announces the levy due for *Zakat al–Fitr* and the community contributes that, or more, for every

Muslim who will be under their roof on the night of 'Fitr'. This is paid before the *id* prayer so that everyone has the funds with which to celebrate.

The Prophet (S) said,

'O people, the gates of Paradise are opened during this month, so ask your Lord to keep them open for you ...'3

Id al-Fitr 1st Shawwal

Id al-Fitr falls on the first day after the fasting month ends – on which fasting is not approved. In the morning, Muslims attend *id* prayer at the mosque and have a holiday from school and work.

The Prophet Muhammad (S) said, .

..do not finish the month of fasting until you have seen the new moon. If it is covered with clouds when you think it should be visible, add an extra day of fasting.4

Memorial of the sixth Imam, Jafar al-Sadiq (a.s.) 25th Shawwal

The sixth Imam, Ja'far al-Sadiq (a.s.) – the Truthful – who passed away in 765 CE, a renowned scholar and expert in Islamic law (*Shariah*), was the founder of the *Ja'fari* School of Law. He had many famous pupils including Abu Hanifa, founder of the Hanafi School of Law. His work continues to influence the practice and understanding of Islam throughout the world today.

The Prophet (S) said,

Being in the presence of a scholar is in itself an act of worship. 5

Birthday of the eighth Imam, Ali Ar-Ridha' (a.s.) 11th Dhul-Qa'dah

The eighth Imam, 'Ali Ar-Ridha' (a.s.) – pleased with Allah's Will – was born in Madinah in 148 AH. He was a devout, calm person who would recite the whole (Qur'an over three days. Humble and well–mannered, he lived a simple life and fasted frequently.

The Prophet said,

Humility is an aspect of true knowledge. 6

Memorial of the ninth Imam, Muhammad al-Taqi al-Jawad (a.s.)

30th Dhul-Qa'dah (celebrated on the 29th if there is no 30th day that year)

Even as a young child, Imam Muhammad al-Taqi (a.s.) – the Pious – al Jawad (a.s.) – the Generous – was referred to vis–a–vis questions about Islam. Crowds often gathered at his home to listen to his lectures.

The most meritorious of you are those who are the most pious. (Qur'an 49:13)

Memorial of the fifth Imam Muhammad Baqir (a.s.) 7th Dhul-Hijjah

The fifth Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (a.s.) - the Disseminator of Knowledge

- established the first hawzah (religious educational establishment for people of all ages and levels) to nurture minds for the flowering of Islamic knowledge.

Imam Baqir said, 'Laziness harms one's life and one's faith'. Al-Kafi Vol. 5, p.85

Hajj 9th Dhul-Hijjah

The Hajj – pilgrimage ordered by Allah – commemorates events in the life of the Prophets Ibrahim (a.s.), Ismail (a.s.) and Muhammad (S). Muslims who have the health and means to do so are expected to go on Hajj at least once during their lifetime.

The first house of worship appointed for people was that at Makkah: full of blessing and of guidance for all the worlds ... Whoever enters it reaches security; pilgrimage thereto is a duty people owe to Allah,... (Qur'an 3:96-97)

The Day of Arafah 9th Dhul-Hijjah

The Day of Arafah is the high point of the Hajj and commemorates the Prophet Muhammad's (S) farewell pilgrimage. On that day, he taught his followers how to perform Hajj while at Arafat and gave them important advice on how Muslims ought to behave. Pilgrims spend the day at Arafat praying for Allah's forgiveness and blessing.

...All believers are brothers, all have the same rights and responsibilities. No-one is allowed to take from another that which he does not allow them of his own free will.

Id al-Adha 10th Dhul-Hijjah

On Eid al-Adha Muslims may sacrifice a sheep to commemorate the Prophet (S).

Ibrahim's (a.s.) willingness to sacrifice his son Ismail (a.s.) in obedience to Allah. This sacrifice is one of the rites of the pilgrimage. People attend *Eid Salah* on this celebratory day.

'O my son! I have seen in a dream that I offer you in sacrifice, now what is your view?' The son said, O my father! Do as you are commanded, you will find me to be one of the steadfast if Allah so wills.'(Qur'an 37:102)

Id al-Ghadir 18th Dhul-Hijjah

Id al-Ghadir commemorates an event which occurred after the Prophet's last Hajj. Some 100.000 people gathered at Ghadir Kumm, a parting of the roads outside Makkah. The Prophet proclaimed the last revelation of the Qur'an and advised the assembled crowd that after him, his cousin and son-in-law-Ali (a.s.): would lead them.

This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed My favor upon you and have chosen for you Islam as your religion. (Qur'an 5:03)

Id al-Mubahala 24th Dhul-Hijjah

Id al-Mubahala commemorates the occasion when a group of Christians from Yemen queried the Islamic understanding of Isa (a.s.) – Having challenged the Prophet on this matter they declined to settle the dispute in the traditional manner, which involved both sides praying for the Lord to punish those who were lying – imprecation.

Say. 'O people of the Book! Come to common terms as between us and you, that we worship none but Allah ...' (Qur'an 3:64)

1st Muharram

The first of Muharram commemorates the start of the Hijri lunar calendar – the beginning of the new Islamic era and is the first day of a new Islamic year.

After years of persecution in Makkah the Prophet Muhammad (S) was invited to Madinah where, in 622 CE (Common Era), he established the ideal Muslim community and first Islamic state.

... [Allah] provided a safe asylum for you, strengthened you with His aid and gave you good things for sustenance that you might be grateful. (Qur'an 8:26)

Memorial of the third Imam, al-Husayn (a.s.) – 10th Muharram – Ashura

On Ashura, Muslims mourn for the martyrdom of Imam Husayn ibn Ali (a.s.), the Prophet's grandson and the third of the twelve Imams. His refusal to endorse the claim to leadership of the corrupt tyrant Yazid resulted in his, and his family and followers en-route to Kufah, being intercepted by Yazid's army, denied access to the waters of the Euphrates and massacred at Karbala in Iraq in the year 680 CE.

The Prophet (S) would often say,

Husayn (a.s.) is from me and I am from Husayn (a.s.). O Allah, love those who love Husayn. (a.s.)8

Memorial of the fourth Imam, Zayn al-Abidin (a.s.) 25th Muharram

The fourth Imam, Ali ibn Husayn, Zayn al-Abidi (a.s.) – Ornament of the Worshippers – was the great-grandson of the Prophet Muhammad (S)– He survived the massacre at Karbala where most of his family were killed.

Despite being prevented from teaching in any mosque, he passed on the Islamic knowledge he had inherited. Among his works is the much loved prayer book, titled in English 'The Psalms of Islam'.

O Allah, let me pass my days in that for which you have created me.9

Birthday of the fifth Imam, Muhammad al-Baqir (a.s.) 3rd Safar

The fifth Imam, Muhammad al-Baqir (a.s.) – Disseminator of Knowledge – lived through the appalling massacre at Karbala when he was only four years old. His father was a great-grandson of the Prophet and his mother the Prophet's great-granddaughter. He was the first person to be a direct descendant of Imam "Ali from both sides.

Imam Baqir (a.s.) said,

Allah is displeased with those who displease their parents. 10

Memorial of the second Imam, al-Hasan al-Mujtaba (a.s.) 7th Safar The second Imam, al-Hasan al-Mujtaba (a.s.) – The Chosen – grandson of the Prophet Muhammad (S), was violently opposed by the governor of Syria, who was intent to usurp power. This made Imam al-Hasan's (a.s.) life difficult and endangered his family.

The Prophet (S) said,

Birthday of the Seventh Imam, Musa al-Kadim (a.s.) 7th Safar

The seventh Imam, Musa al-Kazim (a.s.) – the Restrainer of Anger – was born at a place between Makkah and Madinah in 128 AH. He was known as knowledgeable and sincere. This sincerity was so convincing that after his conversations with a Christian priest, the man accepted Islam. He had a beautiful voice and loved to recite the Qur'an.

Imam Baqir (a.s.) said,

On the Day of Judgement Allah will fill with peace and faith the hearts of those who restrained their anger. 12

Memorial of the eighth Imam, Ali Ar-Ridha' (a.s.) 17th Safar

The eighth Imam, Ali Ar–Ridha' (a.s.) – Pleased with Allah's Will – was told by Abbasid Caliph Ma'mun that he wanted to install the Imam as Caliph before he abdicated. Imam Ali Ar–Ridha' (a.s.) declined the offer saying that if that position had been granted by Allah he could surely not relinquish it. And if Allah had not installed him, who was he to decide who should be Caliph.

Imam Ali (a.s.) said,

Wisdom is your friend and ignorance your enemy. 13

Memorial of the Prophet Muhammad (S) 28th Safar

The Prophet Muhammad (S) is a perfect exemplar for all Muslims. They follow his Sunnah – customs and practices, recorded in *ahadith*, which are reports of what he said and did. From these, Muslims learn that they should worship Allah and be kind and just to all of Allah's creation.

[O Muhammad,] We sent you as a mercy for the whole Universe. (Qur'an 21:107)

Memorial of the eleventh Imam, al-Hasan al-Askari (a.s.)

8th Rabi al-Awwal

The eleventh Imam, al-Hasan al-Askari (a.s.)-from the Garrison Town – was Imam for seven years during which time he was either in prison or under house arrest. Only his closest followers knew his whereabouts and were able to see him. Despite this, he was able to pass on the Islamic know ledge he had inherited.

Imam al-Hasan al-Askari (a.s.) said,

All vices are collected in one room and its key is lies. 14

Birthday of the Prophet Muhammad Mawlid-an-Nabi

12-17th Rabi al-Awwal

Mawlid-an-Nabi – Birthday of the Prophet – commemorates the birth, life and example of the Prophet Muhammad (S) born in Makkah in Arabia in 570 CE. During 'Islamic Unity Week' between the 12th and 17th of the Islamic Month of *Rabi al-Awwal*, people meet to tell stories of the Prophet's (S) life, to give thanks to Allah and to encourage love for the Prophet (S).

You have indeed in the Messenger of Allah an excellent exemplar. (Qur'an 33:21)

Birthday of the sixth Imam, Jafar al-Sadiq (a.s.)

17th Rabi al-Awwal

The sixth Imam, Jafar al–Sadiq (a.s.) – the Truthful – was born in 83 AH. He left a legacy of knowledge and scholarship that, almost 1,400 years later, is still consulted. He lived a humble life preferring simple food and clothing.

He did not agree with merchants making excessive profits and reported that the Prophet (S) had said,

The strongest fear I have for my nation is that they will succumb to the lure of unlawful income. 15

Birthday of the eleventh Imam, al-Hasan al-Askari (a.s.)

8th Rabi al-Thani

The eleventh Imam, al-Hasan al-'Askari (a.s.) – from the Garrison – was the son of the tenth Imam and the Lady Hadith, who was originally a slave. He was handsome, well built and considered to have a similar character to his revered ancestor the Prophet Muhammad (S) – One of his well-known sayings is,

Anger is the source of all evil. 16

Memorial of Fatimah al-Zahra (a.s.)

3rd *Jumada al-Thaniyah*

Fatimah al-Zahra the Bright - was the daughter of the Prophet Muhammad (S) and his wife Khadijah

(a.s.) – She married the Commander of the Faithful Ali ibn Abu–Talib (a.s.) and was the mother of the Prophet's grandsons Hasan (a.s.) and Husayn (a.s.) – She is celebrated as being 'The Leader of Women' and this day is commemorated as women's/mothers' day.

The Prophet Muhammad (S) said,

Allah is pleased with those who please Fatimah (a.s.) and displeased with those who displease her. 17

Birthday of Fatimah al-Zahra (a.s.) 20th Jumada al-Thaniyah

Fatimah al–Zahra (a.s.) – the Bright – was the daughter of the Prophet Muhammad (S) and his wife Khadijah (a.s.) – and born in Makkah in 615 CE.

When the Prophet (S) and his family lived there they were persecuted for their belief in the One True God. On several occasions, while still a child,

Fatimah (a.s.) –is reported to have courageously berated those who abused her father. After her mother's death she remained inseparable from her father.

The Prophet (S) said,

On the Night Journey, Jibra'il offered me a quince from paradise; after Ihad eaten it Iapproached my wife Khad jah and Fatimah was conceived. Whenever I wished to smell paradise again, I visit my daughter Fatimah. 18

Birthday of the tenth Imam, Ali al-Naqi (a.s.)

2nd Rajab

The tenth Imam, Ali al-Naqi (a.s.) – the Pure – was the son of the ninth Imam (a.s.). A soft-spoken and courteous person, he lived in a time of political intrigue and upheaval. Despite this, he remained patient and was always ready to help people, even those who had wronged him.

The Prophet (S) said,

Allah pardons those who grant pardon. 19

Memorial of the tenth Imam, Ali al-Naqi (a.s.)

3rd Rajab

The tenth Imam, Ali al-Naqi (a.s.)-the Pure – is remembered for many good actions. He once gave medical advice to a Caliph, afflicted with pustules, who had persecuted his family. All others had been

too afraid to treat the Caliph but it is recorded the tenth Imam's remedy was successful.

The Prophet Muhammad (S) said,

Be just, even to your enemies. 20

Birthday of the ninth Imam, Muhammad al-Taqi, al-Jawad (a.s.)

20th Rajab

The ninth Imam, Muhammad al-Taqi (a.s.) – the Pious – al-Jawad – the Generous – was born in Madinah in 811CE. He was well known for his ability to answer and resolve complex questions and issues. He is reported to have regularly travelled on horseback to distribute food and money to the needy.

You shall not attain righteousness until you are able to give in charity that which you love. (Qur'an 3:92)

Birthday of the first Imam, Ali ibn Abu-Talib (a.s.)

13th Rajab

The first Imam, Ali ibn Abu–Talib (a.s.), was the son of the uncle in whose Makkan home the Prophet (S) grew up. When six years old, Ali (a.s.) came to live in the Prophet's (S) own home. Later, when the Prophet (S) gathered his relatives to ask them to accept Islam,Ali (a.s.) was the first to answer this call. They remained close throughout the Prophet's (S) life and Ali (a.s.) led the prayers at the Prophet's (S) funeral.

The Prophet (S) said,

The first of you to join me at the pool [Kawthar – reported to be a pool in paradise] is the first of you who embraced Islam and that is Ali (a.s.) son of Abu Talib –21

Memorial of the seventh Imam, Musa al-Kazim (a.s.)

25th Rajab

The seventh Imam, Musa also known as al-Kazim (a.s.) – the Restrainer of Anger – lived in very difficult times. While praying in the Prophet's mosque in Madinah he was arrested and taken in chains to Basra and Baghdad. For years he was moved from one prison to another before finally being poisoned.

Imam Baqir (a.s.) said,

On the Day of Judgement Allah will fill, with faith and tranquility, the hearts of those who have controlled their anger when in positions to retaliate. 22

Laylat al-Isra wal Miraj

27th Rajab

Laylat al-Isra wal Miraj commemorates the Prophet Muhammad's (S) 'Night Journey' from Makkah to Jerusalem and ascent through the seven heavens to receive Allah's instructions on Salah,

Glory to Allah who took His servant for a journey by night from the sacred mosque to the furthest mosque whose surroundings We did bless.

(Qur'an 17:1)

Id-al-Mab'ath

27th Rajab

Eid-al-Mab'ath commemorates the start of Muhammad's 'Prophetic Calling' as Allah's final Messenger. Muslims offer prayer and read the Qur'an, Allah's final revelation to humankind.

We have truly sent you as a witness, as a bringer of glad tidings and as a Warner, in order that you, O people, may believe in Allah and His Messenger ... (Qur'an 48:8-9)

Birthday of the third Imam, al-Husayn (a.s.)

3rd Shaban

The third Imam, al-Husayn (a.s.), son of Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali (a.s.) and Fatimah al-Zahra (a.s.), was the Prophet's (S) grandson. He was born in Madinah in the fourth year of the Hijri calendar. He was generous, gentle and a staunch upholder of Islamic values. He inspired great loyalty among his family and followers.

Imam al-Husayn (a.s.) said,

Calamity is a blessing in disguise 23

Birthday of the fourth Imam, Zayn al-Abidin (a.s.)

5th Shaban

The fourth Imam, Zayn al-Abidin (a.s.)-The Ornament of Worshippers – was born in Madinah in the 36th year of the *Hijrah*. At night he would often go abroad in disguise to distribute money, food and firewood

to the needy of the community. It was only after his death that people realized who had done those good deeds. More than anything else, he liked to pray and help others to reconcile their differences.

Those who restrain anger and forgive others; Allah loves those who do good. (Qur'an 3: 134)

Laylat al-Bara'at 14th Shaban

Laylat al-Bara'at – the night of promises and forgiveness – is when Allah decides what will happen to all of His creation in the coming year. Muslims offer prayers of gratitude, forgiveness and hope for the future. Because it falls 15 days before the month of Ramadhan it is sometimes referred to as the gateway to Ramadhan.

For Allah is He who gives all sustenance, Lord of Power, steadfast forever. (Qur'an 51:58)

Birthday of the twelfth Imam, Muhammad al-Mahdi (a.s.)

15th Shaban

The twelfth Imam, Muhammad al-Mahdi (a.s.) – the Rightly Guided – was born in Samara in 255 AH. People turned to this acknowledged trustworthy person for answers to religious questions. He is considered to be alive but hidden until he reappears to establish Allah's truth and justice on earth before the Day of Judgement. People pray for his return.

The Prophet (S) said,

The end of the world will not come about until the one of my progeny known as The Rightly Guided One – al-Mahdi (a.s.) – has filled the earth with justice and truth. 24

- 1. History of Damascus,p.78.
- 2. Al-Hakim, Al-Mustadrak, Vol. 3, p.26.
- 3. Wassail al-Shi'ah, Vol. 7, p.227.
- 4. Sahih al-Bukhari Book of Fasting, chapter on Moon Sighting.
- 5. Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. t, p. 195.
- 6. Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 2, p.235.
- 7. The Prophet's speech at "Arafat.
- 8. Sunan al Tirmidhi, Vol. 2, p.307.
- 9. The Psalms of Islam, Prayer Number 20.
- 10. Tohaf al-Uqul, p.23.
- 11. Sahih Bukhari, Vol 9, p.71.
- 12. Al-Kafi, Vol. 2, p. 110.
- 13. Ghurar al-Hikam.
- 14. Bihar al-Anwar, Vol 72, p.263.
- 15. Al-Kafi, Vol.5, p. 124.
- 16. Al-Targhib wal Tarhib, Vol. 3, p.448.
- 17. Musnad of Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Vol. 4. p.5.

- 18. Al-Mustadrak 'ala Sahihain, Vol. 3, p. 156.
- 19. Kanz al- Ummal, Tradition No. 7023.
- 20. Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 78, p.379.
- 21. Al-Mustadrak 'ala Sahihain, Vol. 3, p. 136.
- 22. Al-Kafi Vol 2, p.110.
- 23. Bihar al-Anwar, Vol 67, p.237.
- 24. Iqd al-Durar fi Akhbar al-Mahdi al-Muntadar, Chapter 1.

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