Shab-e-Miraj

Shab-i-Miraj means the night of Ascent. It is the blessed night when the Holy Prophet of Islam was spiritually transported to heaven and he reached a high stage of nearness to God Almighty which is beyond ordinary human comprehension. The Ascent took place on 27th day or Rajab, 2 years before Hijra. The journey was not with a physical body but was a vision of the highest type. On the way the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, met Adam, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and some other Prophets. The purpose of the Ascent was to confirm the high status of the Prophet of Islam, a position which all Muslims believe, is impossible to attain by any other human being. It is related that even Gabriel, the Angel who was accompanying the Holy Prophet remarked at one stage, 'I am forced to stop here. I cannot go any further, but you O Messenger of peace and friend of the Master of the worlds, continue your glorious ascent.'

It is also related that the Holy Prophet continued his journey until he reached very close to the Throne of God Almighty and attained the utmost nearness to Him. After having drunk fully at the Divine fountain of spiritual knowledge he came down to impart the knowledge to mankind.

It was on this journey, that five daily prayers were made obligatory upon Muslims.

Celebrations:

According to popular belief, the Miraj or Spiritual Ascension took place on 27 of Rajab. On this day, in some Muslim countries the houses and streets and specially the mosques are decorated with colorful pennants and buntings, and at night they are well illuminated by means of electric lights, candles or even oil lamps. As evening approaches the worshippers assemble in the mosques and engage themselves in glorifying the Lord and in singing hymns in His praise and in praise of the Holy Prophet. Public meetings are also held generally after Isha Prayer in larger mosques where speakers throw light on the spiritual status of the Holy Prophet, and various aspects of his life. The story of his spiritual ascension is narrated in detail. After the meetings sweets are generally distributed. Muslims of means give money in charity and also distribute food among the poor. The devoted ones spend the whole night in the remembrance of God.