

Secrets of the Night of Miraj (Night of Ascension) January 16, 2026

Subhan ellathee esra bi'abdihi laylan mina almasjid-l harami ilal-masjidi-l aqsal-lathee berakna hawlahu linuriyahu min ayatina. innahu huwa -ssamee'ul baseer (Surah al-Israh 17:1) Sadaqallah.

Glory to (Allah) Who did take His servant for a Journey by night from the Sacred Mosque to the Farthest Mosque, whose neighborhood We blessed, in order that We might show him some of Our Signs: for He is the One Who heareth and seeth all things.

Last night we celebrated Laylatul Miraj, the night of Ascension. On this beautiful night, our beloved Prophet Muhammad (saws) was taken on a remarkable journey from Mecca to Jerusalem, to the highest heavens, and then to the very presence of His Lord, where he had the honor of conversing with Him.

Laylatul Miraj is beyond a historical event; it is a profound spiritual journey that gives hope to us all. It is a divine gift from Allah for all to reflect upon, inspiring us to strive for spiritual growth to fulfill the purpose of our creation. Every messenger of Allah experienced an “ascension” through their greatest trials, but none was like the ascension of the beloved of Allah (saws). For Hd. Nuh (Noah) (as), it was the moment of salvation in the midst of the Great Flood; for Hd. Ibrahim (as) (Abraham) it was the rose garden he found within Nimrod’s fire; for Hd. Yunus (as) (Jonah) it was the realization within the belly of the whale; and for Hd. Musa (as) (Moses) it was the intimate dialogue with his Lord at the top of Mount Sinai. Yet, none compare to the Ascension of the Beloved of Allah (saws). The Night of Ascension (Miraj) occurred at a time when Muslims were subject to despicable treatment, during a period of immense hardship, including direct persecution for the Prophet Muhammad (saws), as well as the early Muslim community. They had nowhere to turn but to Allah and His messenger (saws).

It was the year 619, known as “The Year of Sorrow.” A relentless siege had lasted for three years. In addition, Rasulallah’s (saws) uncle Abu Talib (ra), a pillar of support and protection, took his last breath. This was followed by the departure of his beloved wife, Hd. Khadija (ra), the mother of his children. When it became impossible to practice Islam in Mecca, he traveled to Taif, where he hoped to find support. Not only did the people of Taif not listen to him, but they insulted him and attacked him with stones. When he left Taif bruised and rejected, bleeding and disappointed, he made his famous du’a. Instead of revolting for not receiving help after all these difficult years and losses, he humbly blamed himself and turned to God. He said:

"As long as You are not displeased with me, I am not concerned about anything else. Your favor is what gives me the most relief. I seek protection in the light of Your face, which can dispel any darkness and bring order to every situation in this world and the hereafter. My sole desire is for Your pleasure and satisfaction until You are content. There is no power or strength except through You."

In this time of darkness, Allah granted His beloved Prophet (saws) the miraculous journey to the heavens, offering profound comfort and reassurance. After all these difficulties, his only concern was not being able to receive the approval of his Lord. He was saddened, his blessed heart ached, but he neither complained nor questioned the wisdom of Allah-u Ta'ala. He did everything possible to receive the pleasure of His Lord, and that is how he reached the zenith of servanthood, becoming Abdullah.

On this night of the 26th of Rajab, According to Hd. Ibn Abbas (ra), Rasulallah (saws) related, "I had just prayed and gone to bed, and realized that Jibril (Gabriel) (as) had come, who said, "Oh messenger! I bring greetings from Allah. He invites you tonight." Before the journey began, the angel Jibril (as) washed the Prophet's heart with Zamzam water in a golden vessel, pouring faith and wisdom into it to fortify him for the divine wonders he was about to witness.

He was then mounted on a heavenly creature, Buraq, which moved with lightning speed, the same mount once used by the Prophet Ibrahim (as). Then he was instructed to dismount and pray at Medina, the land of his future migration, at Mount Sinai where Allah spoke to Hd. Musa (as) and at Bethlehem, the birthplace of Hd. Isa (as). Upon reaching Jerusalem, in a miraculous congregation at Masjid Al-Aqsa, the Prophet (saws) led all 124,000 prophets in prayer, signifying his status as the Seal of the Prophets who united the messages of all prophets before him.

The Prophet Mohammed's (saws) miraculous journey on this special night has two distinct but connected phases. The first phase, Isra, refers specifically to the horizontal journey on Earth, starting from the Sacred Mosque in Mecca to Masjid Al-Aqsa in Jerusalem, traveling on Buraq moving at lightning speed.

The second phase of the journey is called Miraj. It is a vertical one. It is the ascension from Earth to the Heavens, involving meeting with specific prophets within the various layers of heaven. The Mi'raj represents the highest point of the journey, where the Prophet Muhammed (saws) was brought nearest to Allah-u Ta'ala in a place so divine that even the Angel Jibril (as) could not ascend to it. The Prophet Mohammed (saws) had a miraculous conversation with Allah that far surpassed the way He spoke to Musa (as) on earth at Mount Sinai.

How do the servants of Allah experience their own ascension? How do we, in our modern lives, mount the Buraq? In our own journey, Buraq represents the first vital

step towards the divine. For us, what carries us is to show patience against difficulties and hardship, not giving up, and not losing hope in the mercy of Allah. Just as Buraq carried Rasulallah (saws) to Jerusalem at lightning speed, patience also becomes a vehicle for us, and takes us from one state, raising us to another one.

Our journey then mirrors the Isra, the horizontal part of the night journey. Just as the Prophet (saws) led the previous Prophets in prayer, uniting their diverse qualities and legacies, we must strive to unify our own qualities. Our own ascension begins when we meet difficulty with patience, witness Divine attributes within the multiplicity of the world, and recognize that while nothing is Him, His Light is in all and everything.

How do we enter His presence to converse Him? In order for faithful servants to attain their own Miraj, Allah-u Ta'ala bestowed a gift upon the ummah, and that gift is Salah. Through the words of Surah al-Fatiha, five times a day, we are granted the sublime opportunity to stand before our Lord and converse with the Divine.

Yurdaer Al Latif Al Jerrahi