



30

RAMADAN

REMINDERS



Life With Allah

الحياة مع الله



“The month of
Ramaḍān has come to you, a
blessed month in which Allah –
Exalted and Majestic is He – has
obligated (its) fasting upon you.
In it the gates of Paradise are
opened, the gates of Hell-fire are
closed, and the rebellious devils
are chained. In it, Allah has a night
which is better than a thousand
months. Whoever is deprived of
its good is truly deprived!”

(The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, Nasā’ī)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Ramaḍān is a gift from Allah. In it, we shift our focus from the material towards the spiritual; detach from the world and attach to the hereafter; disconnect from the 'noise' of the world and **connect to our Creator.**

In a world of ever increasing pain and confusion, Ramaḍān, by the will of Allah, is our lifeline: patience through fasting, tranquillity through the night prayer, purification through repentance, comfort through du'ā' and contentment through dhikr.

Ramaḍān is the **month of the Qur'ān.** It is the month where we aim to become the people of the Qur'ān: people who recite, learn, reflect and 'live' the Qur'ān.

Ramaḍān is the perfect opportunity to **cleanse our hearts** from greed, envy, pride, hatred and the love of the world. It is the optimum time to become the best of Allah's servants: those who bring the most benefit to others, those who treat their parents, spouses, children, families and wider communities with **kindness and excellence.**

Ramaḍān is the ultimate **īmān-booster.** It is an intensive 30-day training programme; a bootcamp in which we can gain new habits, discard the bad ones, and truly transform our lives.

Ramaḍān is the month of Allah's special care, love, forgiveness, and generosity. It is a month in which Allah rewards us handsomely for our meagre efforts. It contains a night which is better than a thousand months.

We pray that the daily reminders in this book will help you to take advantage of these blessings during these few days.

Ramaḍān Mubārak!

My Ramadan Timetable



1. Salāh

- The 5 daily prayers, including the sunnah prayers. Be punctual with praying in congregation and aim to be there before the opening takbīr.
- Qiyām al-Layl (Tarāwīḥ/Tahajjud).
- Salāh al-Ḍuḥā. This can be read approximately 15 minutes after sunrise till 15 minutes before Zuhr.

2. Qur'ān

- Have an ambitious target for reciting as much Qur'ān as possible.
- Along with recitation, allocate time for memorising, reviewing memorisation, learning the meanings and reflecting on the Qur'ān.

3. Dhikr

- Morning and evening adhkār
- Adhkār after ṣalāh
- Adhkār of sleep
- General dhikr throughout the day

4. Du'ā'

- Du'ā' before and after iftār
- Du'ā' throughout the day when you're fasting
- Du'ā' in your sajdah
- Du'ā' and istighfār in the last 3rd of the night

5. Helping Others & Family Ties

- Try to help others as much as possible, especially the elderly and the vulnerable people in your community.
- Maintain family ties and reach out to people you may have cut off contact with.
- Give charity. Try to feed those who are fasting to acquire the reward of their fasts.

Strengthen Your Iman



The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said,

“Indeed īmān wears out in the heart just as clothes wear out — so renew your īmān.” (Ṭabarānī)



Īmān is like a tree. If it isn't tended to, it will wither and die. It has to be constantly watered with **beneficial knowledge, righteous deeds** and the remembrance of Allah. **The month of Ramaḍān is a perfect opportunity to rejuvenate our īmān and kickstart our journey to Allah.** This is because we combine some of the greatest acts of worship such as fasting, ṣalāh, the night prayer, charity, i'tikāf, dhikr etc. for thirty consecutive days. Likewise, we try our best to stay away from sins and we try to have excellent character (akhlāq) in our interactions with people.

Let us make it our goal this Ramaḍān that everything we do should help us increase our īmān. The goal should not be to just perform x number of good deeds. Rather than focusing on quantity, we have to focus on quality by learning about the inner dimensions of worship.

اللَّهُمَّ زَيِّنَا بِزِينَةِ الْإِيمَانِ ، وَاجْعَلْنَا هُدَاةً مُهْتَدِينَ

Allāhumma zayyinnā bi-zīnati-l-īmān, wa-j'alnā hudāta-m-muhtadīn.

O Allah, adorn us with the beauty of īmān, and make us those who guide others and are guided themselves. (Nasā'ī)

Fast for Allah



The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said,

“Whoever observes the fasts of Ramaḍān with **īmān** (firm belief) and **iḥtisāb** (hoping for reward), all his previous sins will be forgiven...” (Bukhārī)



Fasting cannot be because of habit, or because it's what your family does and is deemed 'culturally' the right thing to do. Fasting has to be accompanied by **īmān**. This means that it cannot merely be a physical act. It is deeply tied to the state of your heart.

Fasting with **īmān** means to firmly believe that this is a command from Allah: He has made it compulsory and He will reward you for it. Fasting with **iḥtisāb** means to fast purely for Him, hoping for reward only from Him. A person who does this feels happy that Allah gave him an opportunity to fast.

Fast so that you can become a true servant of Allah, and not a servant of your 'inner desires'. Fast so that you can shield yourself from shayṭān and lust. Fast so that you can attain His love. Fast to become close to Allah. Fast **for** Allah.

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ

Allāhumma-ghfir lil-mu'minīna wa-l-mu'mināt.

O Allah, forgive the believing men and the believing women.
(Ṭabarānī)

Why Do We Fast?



“...Fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may attain taqwā (piety and mindfulness of Allah).” (2:183)



The greatest purpose of fasting is to attain taqwā. Taqwā is to **protect yourself from the punishment of Allah by avoiding His prohibitions and implementing His commands.**

When we fast, we temporarily make ḥarām on ourselves things that are usually ḥalāl (eating, drinking etc). Fasting teaches us to say ‘NO!’ to our nafs (inner self) and desires. This helps us to develop taqwā, making it easier to restrain ourselves from ḥarām throughout the year. Fasting is, therefore, a means of **training ourselves to obey Allah.**

When we become used to eating and drinking at the same time every day, our bodies start to crave food and drink when we pass that time (and often before!). By fasting, we wean our nafs off from what it is accustomed to, refusing to give in to its desires. **Instead of allowing our nafs to control us, we control our nafs.**

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالتُّقَىٰ وَالْعَفَافَ وَالْغِنَىٰ

Allāhumma innī as'aluka-l-hudā wa-t-tuqā wa-l-'afāfa wa-l-ghinā.

O Allah, I beg You for guidance, taqwā (piety), chastity and self-sufficiency. (Muslim)

The Wisdom of Fasting

Fasting should help us to:

Attain taqwā (piety)

Develop control over nafs (inner self)

Increase our īmān in Allah

Increase our servitude to Allah

Increase our ṣabr (perseverance)

Develop ikhlās (sincerity)

Increase our shukr (gratitude) to Allah

Increase our zuhd (detachment from the world)

Increase our empathy for the poor

Purify our hearts

Remove toxins from the body

Reflect on our weaknesses

Fill our hearts with the conscious remembrance of Allah

Marvel at Allah's greatness

Beautify our character

Resist Shayṭān's attacks on us

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ وَارْحَمْ وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّحِيمِينَ

Rabbi-ghfir wa-rḥam wa Anta khayru-r-rāḥimīn.

My Lord, forgive and have mercy. You are the Best of those who are merciful. (23:118)

The Secret of Fasting

Imām al-Ghazālī رحمه الله explains that the essence and secret of fasting is to **weaken the forces of Shayṭān**, and this can only happen if you reduce your intake of food. He writes,

“...How will fasting help the individual overcome Shayṭān and break one’s desires if he makes up at ifṭār time for what he missed out on eating throughout the day? And perhaps he **might even indulge in a variety of extra foods?**”

It has even become the custom to stock up for Ramaḍān with all kinds of foods so that more is consumed during that time than in the course of several other months put together. It is well known that **the objective of fasting is to experience hunger and to break one’s desire, in order to strengthen the soul in attaining taqwā.**”

Overeating can also cause difficulty in night prayers, and create a barrier between you and your remembrance of Allah. An empty stomach softens and illuminates the heart, making it easier to remember Allah consciously.

رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنْفُسَنَا وَإِن لَّمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

Rabbanā ḡalamnā anfusanā wa il-lam ṡaghfir lanā wa tarḡamnā la-nakūnanna minal-khāsīrīn.

Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves. If You do not forgive us and have mercy upon us, we will surely be amongst the losers.

(7:23)

Salah



After the obligation of attesting to the Oneness of Allah ﷻ (tawḥīd), there is no greater commandment in Islam than ṣalāh. It is the first act which we will be held accountable for on the Day of Judgement: if it is good, we will be saved and will succeed; if it is not good, we will be doomed and be amongst the losers.

Ṣalāh should be our number one priority, in Ramaḍān and outside of it. Without ṣalāh, we cannot fulfil our purpose of life. In ṣalāh, we shut off the world around us to talk directly with Allah ﷻ, displaying our complete servitude and humility to Him. It is one of the best ways to remember Allah ﷻ, thank Him, and attain His love.

Ṣalāh separates us from the disbelievers. Ṣalāh helps us when we are stressed or feeling down, filling our lives with peace and comfort. **Ṣalāh is your oxygen**, without which you will die. If you do not perform your ṣalāh, although you may be 'alive' in the physical sense, you are spiritually 'dead'.

رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي رَبَّنَا وَتَقَبَّلْ دُعَاءِ

Rabbij-‘alnī muqīma-ṣ-ṣalāti wa min dhurriy-yatī Rabbanā wa taqabbal du‘ā’.

My Lord, make me steadfast in ṣalāh, and my offspring as well.
Our Lord, accept my prayer. (14:40)

The Month of the Qur'an

Imagine the scenario. It is the best month of the year: Ramaḍān. Every night, there is a magnificent union taking place. The best of mankind, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is meeting the best of angels, Jibrīl ؑ to review the best of words: the words of the Most Magnificent.

It has been said that whilst the primary purpose of fasting is to gain taqwā, the purpose of Ramaḍān is to connect with the Qur'ān. Allah ﷻ says, "Ramaḍān is the month in which the Qur'ān was revealed – a guidance for mankind, and clear proofs of the guidance, and the criterion (between right and wrong)..." (2:185).

The Qur'ān is Allah's greatest gift to mankind. It is the eternal book of guidance and eternal wisdom. It is a cure for every disease, both spiritual or physical. It is a light which illuminates the path of truth amidst the darkness of falsehood.

Let us connect with the Book of Allah in this month by reciting it, learning it, reflecting upon it and implementing it in our lives.

(اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلِ الْقُرْآنَ رِبِيْعَ قَلْبِي، وَنُوْرَ صَدْرِي وَجَلَاءَ حُزْنِي، وَذَهَابَ هَمِّي

Allāhumma-j'alai-l-Qur'āna rabī'a qalbī, wa nūra ṣadrī wa jalā'a ḥuznī, wa dhahāba hammī.

(O Allah, make) the Qur'ān the spring of my heart, the light of my chest, the banisher of my grief and the reliever of my anxiety. (Aḥmad)

The Night Prayer

The night prayer (qiyām/tarāwīḥ/tahajjud) is the means to get all of our previous minor sins forgiven. The Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever stands in prayer at night in the month of Ramaḍān with firm belief and hoping for reward, all his previous sins will be forgiven” (Bukhārī).

We often struggle to stand throughout the entire night, and feel sad at not being able to stand for long hours like our pious predecessors used to. However, the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever performs qiyām (night prayer) with the imām until he finishes, Allah will record the qiyām of the (entire) night for him” (Nasā’ī).

Night prayer leaves a deep impression on the soul. Allah ﷻ says, “Indeed, worship in the night is more impactful and suitable for recitation” (73:6). In the stillness of the night, distractions are cut off, and one is able to focus solely on the Qur’ān; and the tongue can concur with the heart in reflecting upon the Qur’ān.

يَا مُقَلِّبَ الْقُلُوبِ ثَبِّتْ قَلْبِي عَلَى دِينِكَ

Yā Muqalliba-l-qulūbi thabbit qalbī ‘alā dīnik.

O Changer of the hearts, make my heart firm upon Your religion. (Tirmidhī)

Conscious Dhikr

The Prophet ﷺ was once asked, “Which of those who fast are the best?” He ﷺ replied, “Those who remember Allah the most” (Aḥmad).

Dhikr (the remembrance of Allah) is one of the best deeds of a believer. It brings life to the heart, filling it with peace and tranquillity. It is the path to knowing Allah ﷻ, loving Him and being loved by Him.

The secret of dhikr is to glorify Allah by reflecting on His Perfect Names, Attributes and Actions and pondering over His blessings and His creation. For e.g. look at beautiful scenery and say *سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ* (How Perfect is Allah!) with your heart. Think of each specific blessing in your body and say *الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ* (All praise and gratitude is for Allah).

In Ramaḍān, we should fill our days with Sunnah remembrances and du‘ās, especially the morning and evening adhkār, the adhkār before sleep and after ṣalāh. Reading the adhkār prescribed by the Prophet ﷺ at the prescribed times in the day is an easy deed, which does not take much time but can transform our lives.

اللَّهُمَّ اعْنِي عَلَى ذِكْرِكَ وَشُكْرِكَ وَحُسْنِ عِبَادَتِكَ

Allāhumma a‘innī ‘alā dhikrika wa shukrika wa ḥusni ‘ibādatik.

O Allah, help me in remembering You, in being grateful to You, and in worshipping You in an excellent manner. (Abū Dāwūd)

Heartfelt Du‘a



“When My servants ask you about Me, truly I am Near. I answer the call of the caller when he calls on Me.” (2:186)



Du‘ā’ is the essence of worship. Du‘ā’ is a **whispering conversation with Allah**, our Creator. Whilst our fellow humans tire of our persistent questioning and begging, Allah, our Generous Lord, does not stop giving and is angered when we don’t ask from Him! The secret to making du‘ā’ is to display **one’s utter need of Allah, with utmost humility, desperation and dependence.**

Ramaḍān is du‘ā’ prime-time. The beauty of du‘ā’ is that it can be done at any time and in any language. In Ramaḍān, however, there are a few special moments which we should carve out in our daily schedules to make du‘ā’:

(1) Throughout the fast (2) At the time of ifṭār (3) In the last third of the night, in sujūd and (4) between the adhān and the iqāmah. The Prophet ﷺ told us that du‘ā’ in these times is accepted.

رَبِّ إِنِّي لِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ إِلَيَّ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَقِيرٌ

Rabbi innī limā anzalta illayya min khayrin faqīr.

My Lord, truly I am in dire need of any good which
You may send me. (28:24)

The Joys of Iftar



Our beloved Messenger ﷺ said,

“The fasting person will have two moments of joy: one when he opens his fast, and the other when he will meet his Lord.”

(Muslim)



At the time of ifṭār, we feel happy and grateful at being given the opportunity and the ability to complete an incredible act of worship (fasting). We feel happy at being able to lawfully eat and drink once again.

The Prophet ﷺ then reminds us that even though ifṭār fills us with happiness, there is an even greater source of happiness waiting for us in the next world.

It is from the sunnah of our beloved Prophet ﷺ to eat ifṭār early. We should open our fast with **dates** like he ﷺ used to. We should eat nutritious and ḥalāl food; earned from a lawful income and ethically reared. We should avoid overeating at ifṭār time.

Du‘ā’ for Opening a Fast

ذَهَبَ الظَّمْأُ، وَابْتَلَّتِ الْعُرُوقُ، وَتَبَّتِ الْأَجْرُ إِنِ شَاءَ اللَّهُ

Dhahaba-z-zama', wa-b-tallati-l-'urūq, wa thabata-l-ajru in shā'a-llāh.

“The thirst has gone, the veins have been moistened, and the reward has been secured, if Allah wills.” (Abū Dāwūd)

Suḥur: A Blessed Meal



The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said,

“Eat suḥūr, for indeed there is blessing in it.” (Bukhārī)



Suḥūr gives us **strength** to worship Allah. It protects us from a bad attitude and poor character that may arise from hunger (feeling ‘hangry’). Suḥūr is a fool proof method of ensuring we **stand for Allah and make du‘ā’ to Him in the last part of the night.**

5 Things To Do When You Wake Up For Suhur

- 1 As soon as you wake up, do the following dhikr.

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ ، وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ ، وَهُوَ عَلَى
كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ، الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ، وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ ، وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ، وَاللَّهُ
أَكْبَرُ ، وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ ، اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي

“Whoever gets up at night and says [the dhikr above] and then says: ‘O Allah, forgive me’ or makes du‘ā’, it will be accepted. If he performs wuḍū’ and prays, his prayer will be accepted.”

- 2 Pray tahajjud ṣalāh, even if it is just 2 rak‘ahs.
- 3 Seek forgiveness from Allah, inside and outside your ṣalāh.
- 4 Make du‘ā’, especially in sujūd.
- 5 Have suḥūr, even if it’s just a sip of water. Have at least 1 date.

Protect Your Fast

Fasting is a **training programme to help us stop sinning**. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “There are many who fast, who gain nothing of their fast except hunger; and there are many who stand for the night prayer, who gain nothing of their prayer except sleeplessness” (Ibn Mājah).

This ḥadīth illustrates the wisdom behind fasting. It is not merely to give up food, drink and intimacy, but rather it is to be conscious of Allah in every action.

In order to protect ourselves from this warning, we should be **extremely conscious of our tongues** in Ramaḍān. This includes: backbiting, slandering, lying, foul language and saying hurtful things.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever does not give up lying and false conduct, Allah has no need in him giving up his food and his drink” (Bukhārī). Similarly, he ﷺ said, “**Fasting is a shield** (from the Hell-fire), as long as one does not damage it.” In another narration, he ﷺ said, “by lying or backbiting” (Nasā’ī).

اللَّهُمَّ فَأَيُّمَا عَبْدٍ مُؤْمِنٍ سَبَبْتُهُ فَاجْعَلْ ذَلِكَ لَهُ قُرْبَةً إِلَيْكَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

Allāhumma fa-ayyuma ‘abdi-m-mu’minin sababtuhū fa-j’al dhālika lahū qurbatan ilayka yawma-l-qiyāmah.

O Allah, any believing servant whom I have cursed, make that a source of nearness to You on the Day of Judgement. (Muslim)

Good Character



Ramaḍān is the perfect time to cultivate our akhlāq (good character), to develop forbearance, and to refrain from reacting when provoked. Ramaḍān is the time to **control our anger**, and especially when we may be feeling irritable due to hunger ('hangry').

The Prophet ﷺ taught us a powerful method to use during our fasts: "When one of you wakes up fasting, he should **neither use obscene language nor act ignorantly**. If anyone insults him or argues with him, he should say: 'I am fasting, I am fasting'" (Muslim).

The purpose of fasting is to attain taqwā (piety). Sometimes we may limit our understanding of piety to something which is only between us and Allah. But what fasting teaches us is that **Allah takes the rights of His servants very seriously**. If we violate the honour and rights of our fellow believers, our fasting becomes deficient, and may not be accepted by Allah.

اَللّٰهُمَّ اهْدِنِيْ لِاَحْسَنِ الْاَخْلَاقِ لَا يَهْدِيْ لِاَحْسَنِهَا اِلَّا اَنْتَ ،
 وَاَصْرِفْ عَنِّيْ سَيِّئَهَا لَا يَصْرِفُ عَنِّيْ سَيِّئَهَا اِلَّا اَنْتَ

Allāhumma-hdinī li-aḥsani-l-akhlāqi lā yahdī li-aḥsanihā illā Ant, wa-ṣrif ‘annī sayyi’ahā lā yaṣrifu ‘annī sayyi’ahā illā Ant.

O Allah, guide me to the best of character, for no one guides to the best of it except You; and turn the evil of it away from me, for no one turns it away except You. (Muslim)

Protect Your Eyes



One of our key goals of Ramaḍān should be to train ourselves to stop looking at ḥarām. This is especially more important in our times, where access to ḥarām images has become very easy. The eye is the entry point to our heart. What we look at affects our emotions, desires and thoughts. **Gazing at ḥarām gives shayṭān open access to our hearts.**

There is a strong link between fasting and protecting one's gaze. The Prophet ﷺ said, "...And whoever is not able (to marry), then he should fast, as it restrains desires" (Bukhārī). Fasting properly (by not overeating; controlling one's eyes, tongue etc.) should lead a person to develop a greater level of self-restraint, and be able to control himself the next time he is tempted to look at ḥarām.

Gazing at ḥarām is a **poison which stops us from tasting the sweetness of imān and worshipping Allah.** Along with lowering our gazes from anything which incites lust, we should also avoid looking at the glitz and glamour of the world, as this makes us heedless and forgetful of Allah ﷻ.

اللَّهُمَّ أَحْسِنْ عَاقِبَتَنَا فِي الْأُمُورِ كُلِّهَا، وَأَجِرْنَا مِنْ خِزْيِ الدُّنْيَا وَعَذَابِ الآخِرَةِ

Allāhumma aḥsin ‘āqibatānā fi-l-umūri kullihā, wa ajirnā min khizyi-d-dunyā wa ‘adhābi-l-ākhirah.

O Allah, grant us the best outcome in all of our affairs, and protect us from the humiliation of this world and the punishment of the hereafter. (Aḥmad)

Social Media

The Prophet ﷺ said, “There are two blessings that many people lose out on: health and free time” (Bukhārī).

Today, one of the biggest obstacles in our journey to Allah is social media and the entertainment industry. The many ills of social media include: looking at ḥarām, backbiting, slandering, spreading lies, pointless arguing, showing off, pride, envy and the public display of one’s sins.

This Ramaḍān, **re-assess** the impact social media is having on your life. How does it affect your family relationships? How does it affect your ṣalāh and your other acts of worship? How does it affect your character and your heart? How does it ‘influence’ (or brainwash) your worldview?

Social media is the biggest thief of our time. Every moment of our lives is precious and we must use our time consciously and productively, especially in Ramaḍān. Therefore, **try to take a social media fast for the entire Ramaḍān**. Otherwise, reduce it to the bare minimum: have a set ‘window’ in which you allow yourself to use it.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ التَّعِيْمَ يَوْمَ الْعَيْلَةِ ، وَالْأَمْنَ يَوْمَ الْحَوْفِ

Allāhumma innī as'aluka-n-na'īma yawmal-'aylah, wa-l-amna yawma-l-khawf.

O Allah, I beg you for blessings on the day of intense need, and safety on the day of fear (i.e. Day of Judgement). (Aḥmad)

Recite Slowly



“...Recite the Qur’ān slowly and distinctly.” (73:4)



We should recite the Qur’ān with tajwīd and tartīl. Tartīl refers to reciting slowly and calmly, making each word distinct, and not exceeding the limits. Reciting like this ensures that the tongue, heart and the rest of the body are in perfect harmony with each other.

Sometimes we recite very fast, just to get to the end of a sūrah or a juz. Similarly, we may witness ‘super high speeds’ in the tarāwīḥ prayers. However, this is contrary to the sunnah and does not help us attain the objectives of the Qur’ān.

Slow recitation is vital for absorbing the message of the Qur’ān and for reflecting on what Allah ﷻ is saying. Repeating certain āyāt is critical if we want to strengthen our īmān through the Qur’ān.

“Son of Ādam, how will your heart soften when your only concern is to reach the end of the sūrah?” – al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي ، وَبَيِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي

Rabbi-sh-shrah lī ṣadrī. Wa yassir lī amrī.

My Lord, put my heart at peace for me, and make my task easy for me. (26-20:25)

Heartfelt Recitation

The purpose of melodious recitation is not merely to ensure that the recitation of the Qur'an sounds good, but that it results in the heart being moved. It should **increase our fear of Allah** ﷻ and provide peace. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Of those who recite the Qur'an with the best voice is the one who, when you hear him recite, you think that he fears Allah" (Ibn Mājah).

Imām al-Ghazālī ﷺ wrote, "It is **mustahabb** (recommended) to **cry whilst reciting the Qur'an**, and when it is being recited. The way to achieve this is to evoke sadness in the heart by reflecting on the severe threats, warnings and promises; and then reflecting on one's shortcomings regarding them."

"I said to my nafs: 'O nafs, recite the Qur'an as though you (personally) heard it from Allah when He uttered it.' I then felt the sweetness (of reciting the Qur'an)." – Sulaymān b. Maymūn ﷺ

يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ ، بِرَحْمَتِكَ أَسْتَغِيْثُ ، أَصْلِحْ لِيْ شَأْنِيْ كُلَّهُ ، وَلَا
تَكِلْنِيْ إِلَى نَفْسِيْ طَرْفَةَ عَيْنٍ

*Yā Hayyu yā Qayyūm, bi-rahmatika astaghīth, aṣliḥ lī sha'nī kullah,
wa lā takilnī ilā nafsi ṭarfata 'ayn.*

O The Ever Living, The Sustainer of all ; I seek assistance through Your mercy. Rectify all of my affairs and do not entrust me to myself for the blink of an eye. (Nasā'ī)

Reflect on The Qur'an



Reciting the Qur'an or memorising its words is in itself not enough. Although both of these are essential, they must be accompanied by reflection and a deep commitment to 'live' the Qur'an. Allah ﷻ says, **“Do they not then, ponder upon the Qur'an? Or are there locks upon their hearts?”** (47:24)

The recitation of the Qur'an is supposed to increase our īmān and deepen the love and awe of Allah in our hearts. This will only occur if we recite with reflection and deliberation.

1. Recite and memorise

- Recite slowly and beautifully.
- Memorise a new sūrah/review previously memorised sūrahs.

2. Understand the āyah/ sūrah

- Read the translation of the Qur'an.
- Read/listen to reliable tafsīr.
- Reflect on what Allah is saying to you.

3. Recite it in Ṣalāh

- Recite it slowly and beautifully in the night prayer.
- Repeat and interact with the āyāh wherever necessary to absorb it in your heart and increase in īmān.

The Last 10 Days



'Ā'ishah ﷺ said,

“When the last ten days of Ramaḍān arrived, the Prophet ﷺ would tighten his waist belt (stay away from his wives/strive hard), spend the night in worship, and awaken his family.”

(Bukhārī)



10 Tips For The Last 10 Nights of Ramadan

- 1 Switch off social media and don't surf the internet.
- 2 Don't waste time with Eid preparations.
- 3 Give charity every day.
- 4 Push yourself to worship Allah.
- 5 Perform I'tikāf.
- 6 Perform at least 'Ishā and Fajr (at the minimum) in congregation.
- 7 Perform qiyām in the night.
- 8 Constantly ask Allah for forgiveness and freedom from the Hellfire.
- 9 Strive in every potential night and recite the Sunnah du'ā.
- 10 Bathe, apply perfume and adorn yourself for this great night.

Laylat al-Qadr



Laylat al-Qadr: the best night of the year. Allah ﷻ says, “The Night of Qadr is better than a thousand months” (97:3). Worshipping Allah ﷻ in this one night is equivalent to **worshipping for more than a thousand months**. In it, the Qur’ān was revealed. On this night, Allah ﷻ announces the decree of the upcoming year to His angels. The earth is **full of goodness and blessings** on this night, as there are a huge number of angels filling up the entire earth.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Seek out Laylat al-Qadr in the odd nights of the last ten (days) of Ramaḍān” (Bukhārī).

5 things to do in Laylat al-Qadr

The night begins at sunset. Do not miss out on the time between Maghrib and ‘Ishā’.

1. Pray qiyām (night prayer) for as long as you can. This is the best deed for this night.
2. Recite Qur’ān and do dhikr.
3. Make abundant du‘ā’, especially in sajdah.
4. Make sincere repentance and conclude the night with istighfār (seeking forgiveness).
5. Recite the specified du‘ā’ in abundance:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُورٌ تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّي

Allāhumma innaka ‘Affuwun tuḥibb-ul-‘afwa fa‘fu ‘annī.

O Allah, You are the Ever-Pardoning; You love to pardon so pardon me. (Tirmidhi)

Khushu' in Salah



One of our main Ramaḍān goals should be to perform the five farḍ prayers to the best of our abilities. This includes all the additional sunnah prayers and performing them with full concentration, calmness and humility (khushū'). To try to attain khushū':

Remove distractions

Eat and use the bathroom before praying. Pray in a quiet place and put your phone away to enter a 'peaceful zone'.

Understand what you are saying

Learn the translation of everything you are saying in ṣalāh. This will help you reflect on what you are saying.

Remember death and the hereafter

Remember death and the hereafter during and outside of your ṣalāh. Imagine you are praying your final prayer.

Focus your heart fully on Allah.

Fill your heart with His love, fear and hope. Try to pray as though you can see Him. If you can't, then keep in mind that He sees you. This is the key to ṣalāh.

Charity

Fasting in Ramaḍān reminds us of our hungry and needy brothers and sisters. It increases our empathy for them, removes arrogance towards them and makes us more eager to give ṣadaqah (charity) to them.

‘Abdullāh b. ‘Abbās ؓ said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was the most generous of all people; and he was the most generous during the month of Ramaḍān when Jibrīl ؑ would meet him. Jibrīl would meet him every night in Ramaḍān to study the Qur’ān with him ﷺ. When Jibrīl would meet him, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would be more generous than strong winds (which cause rain and prosperity)” (Bukhārī).

One of the most virtuous forms of charity in Ramaḍān is to provide ifṭār to the fasting person. Our beloved ﷺ said, “Whoever provides ifṭār for a fasting person, he will have the same reward as him, without anything being diminished from the reward of the fasting person” (Tirmidhī).

(اللَّهُمَّ أَسْأَلُكَ) بَرْدَ الْعَيْشِ بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ لَذَّةَ النَّظَرِ إِلَى
وَجْهِكَ ، وَالشَّوْقَ إِلَى لِقَائِكَ

*Allāhumma as'aluka barda-l-'ayshi ba'da-l-mawt, wa as'aluka
ladh-dhata-n-nazari ilā wajhik, wa-sh-shawqa ilā liqā'ik.*

O Allah, I ask You for a cool and comfortable life after death; for the pleasure of seeing Your Face; and for the longing to meet You. (Nasā'ī)

The Etiquettes of Sadaqah



- 1 Give sincerely, for the sake of Allah ﷻ alone.
- 2 Give wholeheartedly and willingly.
- 3 Give from the wealth that is most dear to your heart.
- 4 Give secretly (unless there is a greater benefit in giving it publicly).
- 5 Give to your poor family members first.
- 6 Give from wealth that is pure.
- 7 Give graciously. Don't expect thanks or make them feel ashamed about their poverty.
- 8 Don't become arrogant about what you have given.
- 9 Give when you fear poverty, and when you have plenty.
- 10 Ask Allah ﷻ to accept your giving, and fear that it may not be accepted.

Sincerity

Fasting teaches us ikhlāṣ (sincerity). Ikhhlāṣ refers to doing everything solely for the sake of Allah ﷻ.



Our beloved Prophet ﷺ said,

“Every action of the son of Ādam is multiplied: a good deed receiving a tenfold to seven hundredfold rewards. Allah ﷻ says: ‘Except for fasting. It is for Me and I will (personally) reward it; he abandons his desires and food for My sake...’”
(Muslim)



Fasting is not something you actively do, but it is what you do **not** do (i.e. no eating, drinking and intimacy). No one else can ever be 100% certain if you are fasting, or if you may have broken your fast in secret. This is something only Allah ﷻ fully knows.

As fasting helps us to develop ikhlāṣ, this should trickle down to other parts of our lives. In these few days left for Ramaḍān, cultivate your ikhlāṣ by having a special ‘secret deed’ between you and Allah.

رَبِّ ابْنِ لِي عِنْدَكَ بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ

Rabbi-b-ni lī ‘indaka baytan fi-l-Jannah.

My Lord, build for me, near You, a house in Paradise. (66:11)

Purify Your Heart



The greatest need of our time is for us to return to Allah and focus on purifying our inner selves (tazkiyat al-nafs). The root of most of the world's problems is diseased hearts. **Hearts which do not know Allah;** hearts which are full of arrogance, greed and selfishness. Hearts which have become corrupted by sins and no longer taste the sweetness of īmān and worship. Hearts torn apart by pride, envy and hatred, resulting in a fractured ummah.

The Prophet ﷺ said, **“Fasting the month of patience (i.e. Ramaḍān) and three days of every month removes the evil traits (waḥar) of the heart”** (Aḥmad). Waḥar includes hatred, anger, hypocrisy, hard-heartedness, and the whispers of shayṭān.

One of the best ways to purify the soul is to always **remember and think that Allah is with you.** When we fast, our mindfulness of Allah (taqwā) increases. We are more aware of what thoughts and feelings we let into our hearts. This helps us to purify our negative thoughts and actions.

اللَّهُمَّ آتِ نَفْسِي تَقْوَاهَا، وَزَكِّهَا أَنْتَ خَيْرُ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا، أَنْتَ وَلِيِّهَا وَمَوْلَاهَا

*Allāhumma āti nafsi taqwāhā, wa zakkihā Anta khayru man zakkāhā,
Anta Walliyuhā wa Mawlāhā.*

O Allah, grant my soul taqwā (piety) and purify it, for You are the Best of those who can purify it. You are its Protector and Master. (Muslim)

Repent & Seek Forgiveness



Ramaḍān is the month to turn a new leaf and to turn to Allah ﷻ in true repentance. We should reflect on our past and feel very bad at having sinned. We should reflect on our negligence in worshipping Allah and feel **shame and remorse**. We should reflect over how Kind and Generous Allah is to us, and how we use the very same blessings to disobey Him. Throughout these blessed days, we should continuously seek His forgiveness.

For our repentance to be sincere, we have to:

1. Stop committing the sin;
2. Feel a deep sense of regret and remorse over the sin;
3. Firmly resolve to never return to that sin; (e.g. if we give up watching ḥarām in Ramaḍān, but at the back of our minds, we intend to return to it after Ramaḍān, then this is not a sincere tawbah);
4. Make amends if we have wronged another person (e.g. ask their forgiveness or supplicate for them).

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

Lā ilāha illā Anta subḥānaka innī kuntu mina-ẓ-ẓālimīn.

There is no god worthy of worship except You. You are free from imperfection. Indeed, I have been of the wrongdoers.

(21:87)

Jahannam



Our beloved Prophet ﷺ said,

“Indeed Allah has freed slaves (from Hell) every day and night (in Ramaḍān), and every servant amongst them has a supplication which is answered.” (Aḥmad)



Jahannam will be sixty-nine times hotter than the fire of this world. Imagine your whole body being roasted in such a hot fire! Every time the skins of the disbelievers will burn off, **Allah will replace them with new skins**, so that they can continuously feel the punishment.

Jahannam will be dark, bleak, and miserable. Full of scorpions and snakes. Its inhabitants will be **constantly wailing** and screaming for help. The food of Jahannam will be bitter, smell foul and will choke; poisonous thorny plants which will not satisfy their hunger and burn their insides. The drink will be scalding water, the discharges of dirty wounds, blood and pus.

Jahannam is the worst prison you can think of. With shackles around their necks and chains on their legs, the people of Jahannam **“will be dragged into the scalding water”** (40: 71-2).

رَبَّنَا اصْرِفْ عَنَّا عَذَابَ جَهَنَّمَ إِنَّ عَذَابَهَا كَانَ غَرَامًا

Rabbana-ṣrif ‘an-nā ‘adhāba Jahannam, inna ‘adhābahā kāna gharāmā.

Our Lord, turn away from us the punishment of Hell-fire.
Indeed, its punishment is endless. (25:65)

Jannah



Our beloved Messenger ﷺ said,

“In it (i.e. Ramaḍān,) the gates of Paradise are opened...” (Nasā’ī)



Soil of musk and saffron.

Rocks of pearls and jewels.

Buildings and tree trunks of gold and silver.

Fruits softer than butter and sweeter than honey.

Rivers of milk, pure honey, and opulent wine.

Endless buffets of delicacies, desserts, meats and fruits.

Drinking goblets of gold and silver.

No hatred. No stress. No fatigue. No gossip. No evil.

Being reunited with your loved ones. Meeting the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Gazing at the Most Magnificent!

“And hasten towards forgiveness from your Lord and a Paradise as vast as the heavens and the earth, prepared for the righteous.” (3:133)

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْفِرْدَوْسَ أَعْلَى الْجَنَّةِ

Allāhumma innī as'alukal-Firdawsa a'lāl-Jannah.

O Allah, I beg you for al-Firdaws, the loftiest abode of Paradise.
(Bukhārī)

How to End Ramadan



- 1 Thank Allah for blessing you with the gift of Ramaḍān and the ability to do good deeds.
- 2 Feel scared that your actions may not be accepted.
- 3 Ask Allah to accept your good deeds.
- 4 Seek forgiveness for all your shortcomings and sins.
- 5 Be careful of 'ujb (self-admiration) in regards to your good deeds.
- 6 Make a firm intention to continue after Ramaḍān inshaAllah.

We should give **ṣadaqat al-fiṭr** as we conclude Ramaḍān and welcome the Day of Eid. Ṣadaqah (charity) is a way to compensate for our mistakes and sins during this month.

As we end this blessed month, let us make a firm intention of continuing to worship Allah and staying away from sin. Let us recite the **takbīrāt** in abundance and let us at least pray two rak'ahs of the night prayer on the blessed night of Eid.

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا، إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ، وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا، إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ

Rabbanā taqabbal minnā innaka Anta-s-Samī'u-l-'Alīm. Wa tub 'alaynā innaka Anta-t-Tawwābu-r-Raḥīm.

Our Lord, accept from us. Indeed, You – and You alone – are the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing. And accept our repentance. Indeed, You -and You alone – are the Acceptor of repentance, the very Merciful. (8-2:127)



Eid Mubarak

تَقَبَّلَ اللهُ مِنَّا وَمِنْكُمْ

May Allah accept from us and you.

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ،
وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ ، وَلِلَّهِ الْحَمْدُ *

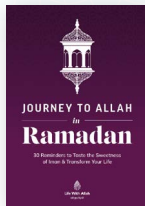
May Allah bring the happiness of Eid to the entire Ummah and restore its honour and glory. May your Eid be blessed!

* Repeat the takbīr of Eid when the sun sets on the night of Eid until the Eid ṣalāh begins.

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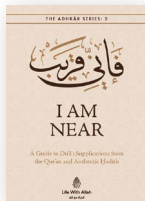
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