

# رمضان كريم

## HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF RAMADAN

in the light of Al- Qur'an and Authentic Hadith



**DARUSSALAM**

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# **HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF RAMADHAN**

In the light of Al-Qur'an and Authentic Hadeeth

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﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى  
الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴾

*O you who believe! Observing As-Saum (the fasting) is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become Al-Muttaqun. (Al-Qur'an 2:183)*

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## **Foreword**

*In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful*

All praise is due to Allah the Almighty. We praise Him, seek His Help, and ask His Forgiveness.

This booklet was initially published on the internet by the Islamic-knowledge. The internet version has been thoroughly reviewed and presentation has been significantly improved by Darussalam. The improved version is being presented free of cost for the benefit of Muslims at large during the blessed month of Ramadhan.

Please participate in this noble endeavour by giving your valuable feedback on the booklet if it has benefited you. If you have any suggestions on improving this booklet or come across any errors/corrections, please contact us so that necessary steps can be taken to improve the publication.

May Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) accept our effort and place it on our scale of good deeds on the Day of Resurrection to outweigh the evil deeds. Aameen.

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## Fasting In Ramadhan



Fasting (Sawm) in Ramadhan, the 9th month in the Hijri Calendar, is one of the Five Pillars of Islam. The meaning of Sawm is to 'abstain'. In this month, Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) has made fasting obligatory upon Muslims, as He had to earlier peoples and nations. Fasting involves total abstinence from eating, drinking, smoking and conjugal relations, and all forms of vice from dawn until sunset.

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said:

*“There is a gate in Paradise called Ar-Rayyan, and those who observe fasting will enter through it on the Day of Resurrection and none except them will enter through it”.* (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 31, Number 120)

During the month of Ramadhan, the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) spent his days in remembrance, recitation, learning and providing advice and training. His nights were spent in supplication in a state of humble submission unto Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He), seeking His help, support, victory and guidance.

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said that Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) said:

*“Every action of the son of Adam is for himself except fasting. It is done for My sake, and I will give a reward for it and the reward of good deeds is multiplied 10 times”.* (Sahih Al-Bukhari Volume 3, Book 31, Number 118, & Sahih Muslim, Book 006, Number 2564)

Ramadhan is an annual training programme to refresh us for carrying out our duties towards Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He). Fasting develops self-control and helps us to overcome selfishness, greed, laziness and other faults. This month of patience gives us an opportunity to experience for ourselves what it is like to have an empty stomach. This develops our empathy for the poor and hungry. Fasting teaches us to control the love of comfort.

If you experience difficulty in fasting, you should bear it cheerfully and not complain. Should we feel fatigued at the time of Taraweeh (Ramadhan nightly prayer), this too should be borne with fortitude.

It should also be borne in mind that fasting does not aim at inflicting punishment upon people or taking on unbearable burdens. The underlying idea behind it is to teach moderation and spiritual discipline so that human temptations may not become so wild and uncontrollable as to flout the commands of the Great Master. To be a true servant of Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He), it is essential that man should be able to conform his behaviour to the moral and spiritual discipline embodied in the Shari'ah of Islam. Fasting is indispensable for this moral and spiritual training.

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said,

*“When the month of Ramadhan starts, the gates of mercy are opened and the gates of Hell are locked and the devils are chained”. (Sahih Muslim, Book 006, Number 2361)*

The Hadeeth below gives some very important points regarding Ramadhan:

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said:

*“Fasting is a shield or protection from the Fire and from committing sins. If one is fasting, he should avoid sexual relations with his wife and quarrelling, and if somebody should fight or quarrel with him, he should say, ‘I am fasting.’ There are two pleasures for the fasting person, one at the time of breaking his fast, and other at the time when he will meet Allah; then he will be pleased because of his fasting.” (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 31, Number 128)*

In this month, the rebellious ‘Shayateen’ (Satan) are chained, so as not to provoke the evils that they normally do during months other than Ramadhan. A question may arise here: when the ‘Shayateen’ are chained, how it is that we still do see evil committed? The reply is that evil may not necessarily be caused by the rebellious ‘Shayateen’. People have lived in obedience to the whims and wishes of ‘Shayateen’ for eleven months, and so performing evil deeds instigated by them becomes second nature. Consequently, evil actions are perpetrated in and out of Ramadhan.

Therefore, the feelings and lessons we experience should stay with us throughout the year. In Al-Qur’an, Muslims are commanded to fast so that they may “become pious”. This piety and devotion is especially felt during Ramadhan, but we all must strive to make the feelings and attitude stay with us during our “normal” lives. That is the true goal and test of Ramadhan.

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said:

*“Every servant of Allah who observes fast for a day in the way of Allah, Allah would remove, because of this day, his face farther from the Fire of Hell to the extent of seventy years’ distance”. (Sahih Muslim, Book 006, S Number 2570)*



Fasting is the way to piety and the fear of God. Fasting narrows the food and blood arteries. They are known to be pathways of the devils; hence fasting reduces the effect of their insinuation. It further weakens carnal desires, thoughts and temptations of disobedience.

Fasting enhances bodily health. It gets rid of toxins, eases the stomach, purifies the blood, eases the working of the heart, brightens the spirit, refines the soul and disciplines the character. When an individual fasts, his soul is humbled and his carnal desires are dispelled. There is a great reward for fasting, as it shows a Muslim obeying Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) and submitting to His command.

## **Fasting In The Month Of Shaban**

According to a narration by Aishah (May Allah be pleased with her):

*"The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) used to fast till one would say he would never stop fasting, and he would abandon fasting till one would say he would never fast. I never saw the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) fasting for a whole month except the month of Ramadhan, and did not see him fasting in any month more than in the month of Shaban. (Sahih Al-Bukhari Volume 3, Book 31, No 190)*

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) has told us not to fast one or two days before Ramadhan as we need to keep our physical and spiritual strength to make the most of this blessed month.

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said:

*"None of you should fast a day or two before the month of Ramadhan unless he has habit of fasting (Nawafil) (and if his fasting coincides with that day) then he can fast that day." (Al-Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 31, No.138, Muslim, Book 006, Number 2382)*

## The Wisdom Behind Fasting

Fasting in Ramadhan is not merely physically restraining from the obvious food and drink, but the total commitment of the servant's body and soul to the letter and spirit of fasting.

The fast of the self, means to be free from all carnal desires.

The fast of the mind is avoiding thoughts about things other than Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He).

The fast of the hand is not touching/taking what does not belong to it.

The fast of the nose means not sniffing or smelling unlawful things.

The fast of the feet is not going places where sinful acts are propagated.

The fast of the eye is to prevent it from seeing forbidden things.

Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) says in Al-Qur'an:

*“Tell the believing men to lower their gaze and be mindful of their chastity; this will be most conducive to their purity. And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and be mindful of their chastity, and not display their charms (in public) beyond what may (decently) be apparent thereof, hence let them draw their head-covering over their bosoms”.* (Al-Qur'an 24:30-31)

The fast of the tongue is guarding against lying, backbiting, slandering, reviling, abusing others, cursing, indecent conversation, swearing and false evidence.

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said:

*“A Muslim is he from whose tongue and hands other Muslims are safe”.*

*The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said, “Whoever does not give up forged speech and evil actions, Allah is not in need of his leaving his food and drink (i.e. Allah will not accept his fasting.)” (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 31, Number 127)*

The fast of the ears is not to listen to idle talk, gossip, lyrics and music notes that contain obscene and indecent things. Listening to Al-Qur'an bears the fruit of faith, guidance, light and prosperity. It fills the heart with wisdom, tranquillity, intimacy and contentment. It is a source of protection from dangerous, deviant and sinful thoughts.

The fast of the heart means casting out from it the love of worldly things and by emptying it of all corrupt material such as, false beliefs, evil suggestions, filthy intentions and degenerate thoughts.

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said:

*“There is a piece of flesh in the body if it becomes good (reformed) the whole body becomes good, but if it gets spoilt the whole body gets spoilt and that is the heart.” (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Volume 1, Book 2, Number 49)*

The believer's heart abstains from pride and egotism as these traits turn him away from virtuous acts. Egotism is when the individual sees himself as perfect and better than others. The cure for this self-importance is to look at one's faults and shortcomings, the thousands of sins and misdeeds that one has committed, wrongs that one has done and forgotten, but knowledge of which is with Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He).



Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) says in Al-Qur'an:

*“Do they, perchance, envy other people for what God has granted them out of his bounty?” (Al-Qur'an 4:54)*

The heart of the believer fasts and abstains from envy as envy lowers righteous deeds and stops its progress toward Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He).

## **Avoidance Of Things That Contradict The Spirit Of Fasting**

Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) says in Al-Qur'an:

*"Eat and drink (freely), but do not waste: verily, He does not love the wasteful!" (Al-Qur'an 7:31)*

Some people who fast waste money on meals both at the time of beginning and breaking of the fast in Ramadhan. They prepare food enough for a crowd of people, consisting of numerous dishes. Then, at the end of this, they only eat a little and throw the remainder into the refuse. This is contrary to the great teachings of Islam.

There are other people who fill the stomach with delicious foods at "Suhoor", so that one does not feel hungry until "Iftaar". When breaking their fast, they indulge in excessive eating and drinking. This however, defeats the purpose of fasting, one of which is to empty the stomach of all toxins by reducing the intake of food.

Many people spend their fasting hours sleeping. As a result, it seems as if they did not fast. The wisdom of fasting is that the one who fasts should experience pangs of hunger and thirst in order to gain the pleasure of Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He).

There are also people who make no effort to do good by giving charity. They do not honour their tables by allowing others to break their fast with them.

## **What Does & What Doesn't Break The Fast**

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said:

*"Neither vomiting, nor emission, nor cupping breaks the fast." (Abu Dawood, Book 13, Number 2370)*

There are certain things that break a person's fast, the most obvious being those things that are explicitly forbidden during fasting, i.e. eating, drinking, sexual relations and during menstruation, for females. However, if one eats something forgetfully, then this fast does not have to be made up later.

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said:

*"If somebody eats something forgetfully while he is fasting, then he should complete his fast, for Allah has made him eat and drink." (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 31, Number 154)*

A certain degree of affection is allowed between spouses as this Hadeeth shows:

'A'isha (May Allah be pleased with her) reported

*, "The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) used to kiss me while observing fast and who among you can control his desire as the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) could control his desire?" (Sahih Muslim, Book 006, Number 2438)*

However, according to another Hadeeth:

*"A man asked the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) whether one who was fasting could embrace (his wife) and he gave him permission; but when another man came to him, and asked him, he forbade him. The one to whom he gave permission was an old man and the one whom he forbade was a youth." (Abu Dawood, Book 13, Number 2381)*

## **What A Sick Man Does When Fasting**

There are some situations when a person can break their fast.

*"If a man succumbs to an illness which makes fasting very difficult for him and exhausts him and wears him out, he can break his fast.(Muwatta, Book 18, Number 18.15.41)*

## **Fasting Whilst Traveling**

Hamza bin 'Amr Al-Aslami asked the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him),

*"Should I fast while travelling?" The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) replied: "You may fast if you wish, and you may not fast if you wish." (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 31, Number 164)*

*Fasting whilst travelling is optional, so there is no sin on the one who chooses not to fast whilst on a journey if they feel that it will weaken them. Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) has allowed man not to fast, whilst travelling because He knows that His slaves may not be able to cope. (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 32, Number 226)*

Anas(May Allah be pleased with him) reported, "We were with the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) on a journey. Some of us had been observing the fast and some of us had not been fasting. We got down at a place on a hot day. Most of us had cloth for shelter. There were also those amongst us who sheltered themselves against the rays of the sun with the help of their hands. The fasting people fell down (on account of weakness). Those who had not observed it got up, pitched tents, and watered the mounts. Thereupon the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said:

*"The ones who broke the fast have taken away the reward today".(Sahih Muslim, Book 006, Number 2484)*

## Recitation Of Al Quran During Ramadhan



Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) says in Al-Qur'an:

*“Ramadhan is the (month) in which was sent down Al-Qur'an, as a guide to mankind, also clear (Signs) for guidance and judgement (Between right and wrong)”. (Al-Qur'an 2:185)*

The entire month of Ramadhan is in essence a celebration of the revelation of Al-Qur'an, which is described as a

*“Guide and Mercy for those who do good.” (Al-Qur'an 31:3).*

Ramadhan celebrates God's Mercy by which He sent a guiding light in Al-Qur'an that leads human life towards the path of good and virtue and protects the human soul from evil and vice. Al-Qur'an is life, spirit, salvation, happiness, reward and recompense. It is a divine teaching, a constitution and eternal wisdom.

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said,

*“Read Al-Qur'an for surely it will be an intercessor for you on the Day of Judgement”. (Sahih Muslim Book 4 No 1757)*

In his final year, the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) recited the Al-Qur'an twice in Ramadhan. Muslims should try to read the entire Al-Qur'an at least once during Ramadhan.

Many others read or recite Al-Qur'an during Taraweeh Prayers (congregational nightly prayers in Ramadhan), which are held only during Ramadhan, or in private late night Prayers called Tahajjud.

However, the common practice these days is that Taraweeh prayers are rushed in order to complete Al-Qur'an. This goes against the teaching of Islam as Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) says in Al-Qur'an (what means):

*“And recite Al-Qur'an in slow, measured rhythmic tones.” (Al-Qur'an 73:4).*

Commenting on this, IbnKathir says this means

*“Recite it slowly, for that will help in understanding Al-Qur'an and contemplating it. This is how the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) used to recite”. Although it is desirable to complete Al-Qur'an in Ramadhan to follow the Sunnah, it should be read with understanding and contemplation in order to draw closer to Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) by increasing our guidance in sha' Allah.*

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said: "Fast three days a month." 'Abdullah (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "I am able to fast more than that." They kept on arguing on this matter until the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said: "Fast on alternate days, and recite the whole Qur'an once a month." 'Abdullah (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "I can recite more (in a month)," and the argument went on till the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said,

*"Recite the Qur'an once each three days." (i.e. you must not recite the whole Qur'an in less than three days). (Sahih Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 31, No. 199)*

Therefore, we are encouraged to read Al-Qur'an often but should not try to complete it in less than seven days as we should be learning from it and implementing the commands of Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) and His laws into our lives. We should not just read it without contemplating the meaning.

Muslims who cannot read Arabic well, should spend some time each day listening to a tape or CD of Al-Qur'an being recited. Muslims consider Ramadhan to be a good time to get into the habit of reading at least some portion of Al-Qur'an or its translation every day, and if they haven't read either of them cover to cover, Ramadhan is the time to do it.

## Charity In Ramadhan



It is reported that:

*“The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) was naturally the most generous of people and he used to be more generous than ever in the month of Ramadhan”. (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 31, Number 126)*

Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) has granted us numerous blessings, so Muslims should try to give generously in Ramadhan, both Sadaqah (optional charity) and Zakaah (obligatory charity). Every time a servant of Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) gives something in charity Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) eases his physical, spiritual and mental condition. He expands for him His sustenance. Sadaqah does not only have to be money. It can also be a good deed - such as helping another person - done for the sake of Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) and without expecting any reward from the person. Even a smile is considered charity in Islam. Most Muslims pay their Zakaah during Ramadhan because the reward is so much greater in that month. Wealth is like water, if its flow is obstructed it becomes brackish, and if it flows, it becomes sweet and fresh.

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said:

*“This is the month of charity in which the believer’s sustenance is increased. Whosoever feeds a fasting person or gives a fasting person a single date or a sip of water, to break the fast, for him there shall be forgiveness of his sins and he will be saved from the fire of Hell, and for him shall be the same reward as for him (whom he fed)”.(Tirmidhi Hadeeth 1965)*

Because of the great reward for feeding a fasting person, in many places ‘Iftaar’(the meal at breaking the fast at sunset) is served in mosques, with the food donated or brought by individuals to share. This contact between the various levels of society helps to create a real bond of brotherhood in the Muslim community.

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said,

*“When a man dies all of his deeds come to an end, except for three: ongoing charity, knowledge which is benefited from, or pious offspring who pray for them.”(Sahih Muslim, Book 013, Number 4005)*

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) enjoined Zakaah on those who fast to purify them from any indecent act or deeds. It is a sort of purification of the soul on the individual level, a cure against miserliness, and a social safety net. The rich are obliged to come in contact with



the poor and the poor with the even less fortunate. Zakaah provides for the poor and spares them the humiliation of asking for charity.

## How The Blessed Month Of Ramadhan Starts

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said:

*“Do not fast till you see the new moon, and do not break the fast till you see it, but if the weather is cloudy calculate it.” (Sahih Muslim, Book 006, Number 2363)*

It is very important to start the best month in the Islamic year correctly. It is very clear in Al-Qur'an and Sunnah that we should look for the moon and if it is sighted then the month has started. It is also clear that we should look for the moon in our own country of residence as stated in the Hadeeth below:

Umm Al-Fadhl said,

*“I saw the new moon (of Ramadhan) on Friday”. Abdullah b. ‘Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) asked me (about the new moon of Ramadhan) and said, “When did you see it?” I said, “We saw it on the night of Friday”. He said, “Did you see it yourself?” I said, “Yes” and the people also saw it and they observed fast and Mu’awiyah also observed the fast, whereupon he said, “But we saw it on Saturday night. So we would continue to observe fast till we complete thirty (fasts) or we see it (the new moon of Shawwal)”. I said “Is the sighting of the moon by Mu’awiyah not valid for you?” He said, “No, this is how the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) has commanded us”. (Sahih Muslim, Book 006, Number 2391)*

## Taraweeh Prayer

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said:

*"Whoever observes night prayer in Ramadhan as an expression of his faith and to seek reward from Allah, his previous sins will be blotted out".*

During this month, Muslims should make an extra effort to perform Taraweeh Prayer (Ramadhan nightly prayer), preferably in congregation. Taraweeh has a special merit over other nights. Taraweeh is part of physical and spiritual training, for observing it insures physical fitness and spiritual rewards awaiting the people who observe this prayer. It must be mentioned here that Taraweeh prayers, although very beneficial and meritorious, are not compulsory as stated by the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) himself.

'A'isha (May Allah be pleased with her) reported that Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) prayed one night in the mosque and the people also prayed along with him. He then prayed on the following night and there were many persons. Then on the third or fourth night (many people) gathered there, but the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) did not come out to them (for leading the Taraweeh prayer). When it was morning, he said:

*"I saw what you were doing, but I desisted to come to you (and lead the prayer) for I feared that this prayer might become obligatory for you". (He the narrator) said: It was the month of Ramadhan.  
(Sahih Al-Bukhari, Volume 2, Book 13, Number 46)*

## Etiquettes Of Ramadhan

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said:

*“He who does not make an intention to fast before dawn does not fast”. (Abu Dawood, Book 13, Number 2448)*

We should try our best to get up for Suhoor.

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said:

*“Eat a little before dawn (Suhoor) as there is a blessing in it [i.e., taking a meal at that time].” (Sahih Muslim, Book 006, Number 2412)*

Many people are deprived of this great blessing because of their own laziness. Even if there is no food, then it is enough to eat one date or a drink of water. The period before dawn is considered blessed because it lies in the last third of the night, the time of divine descent and forgiveness. It is another special time when Du'as are accepted.

Some time should be left after taking the Suhoor and before the Fajrathan (call for prayer).

According to a Hadeeth:

*“We took Suhoor with the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). Then he stood for the prayer.” I asked, “What was the interval between the Suhoor and the Athan?” He replied, “The interval was sufficient to recite fifty verses of the Quran.” (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 31, Number 144)*

It is also narrated that even when the Fajr athan was made, it was not necessarily the time to stop eating because the true dawn arises when the streaks of the whiteness of dawn are horizontal. However, these days this is difficult to ascertain in some countries and in these circumstances we should keep enough time to eat to be confident that we are not eating when dawn appears.

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said:

*“The athan of Bilal should not mislead you with regard to your food at the commencement of the fast, nor the vertical (streaks) of whiteness in the horizon (for it is an indication of false dawn). You should stop eating (food) until (the whiteness) spreads like it.” Hammad narrated it and with the gesture of his hand he explained, the horizontal position (of the streaks of light).” (Sahih Muslim, Book 006, Number 2409)*

We should make haste to break our fasts.

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said:

*“The people will remain on right path as long as they hasten breaking of the fast (Iftaar). (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 31, Number 178 & Muslim, Book 006, Number 2417)*

To eat dates to break one's fast is a Sunnah.

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said:

*“When one of you is fasting, he should break his fast with dates, but if he cannot get any, then (he should break his fast) with water, for water is purifying”. (Abu Dawood, Book 13, Number 2348)*

It is also very important that we do not delay the Maghrib salah unnecessarily and pray soon after breaking the fast.

Abu 'Atiyya reported

*"I and Masruq went to 'A'ishah (May Allah be pleased with her) and Masruq said to her, "There are two persons among the Companions of Muhammad (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) none of whom abandons the good: one of them hastens to observe the sunset prayer and break the fast, and the other delays in observing the sunset prayer and in breaking the fast". Thereupon she said: "Who hastens to observe the sunset prayer and break the fast?" He said: "It is 'Abdullah". Upon this she said: "This is how the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) used to do. (Sahih Muslim, Book 006, Number 2419)*

It is a Sunnah to use Miswaak.

*"The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) chewed Miswaak while fasting".(Sahih Al-Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 31, Number 154)*



It is recommended to take care of the mouth, teeth and gums all the time, and more so during fasting. This can be achieved by the use of Miswaak, a special stick or root (from Arak tree) that is used to cleanse the teeth and strengthen the gums. However, for a thorough cleaning of the teeth and gums the regular use of the toothbrush and toothpaste should be a daily habit.

*"The breath of the fasting person is sweeter to Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) than the fragrance of musk". (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 31, Number 118 & Sahih Muslim, Book 006, Number 2564)*

## Dua's Of A Fasting Person



The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said:

*“There are three whose supplication is not rejected, one who has just ended a fast, a just Imam, and one who has been wronged whose supplication is raised by Allah above the skies and for which the gates of Heaven are opened. Allah says: ‘I swear by My might that I shall certainly help you, though it be after some time.’”(Tirmidhi Hadeeth 2248)*

The Du’a of a fasting person is never refused – especially in the final hour before the setting of the sun, which is one of the greatest hours of the day. Therefore, submit all your needs before Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He). However, Muslims are generally so engrossed in eating that we neglect this opportunity.

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) informed us that when a fasting Muslim prays for anything from Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He), he definitely receives one out of the following three things: he gets exactly what he asked for. Or Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) either removes from his path some great calamity in exchange for what he desired. Or the reward for that which he prayed for is stored for the Hereafter.

Therefore, Du’a is indeed very important, and to neglect it at any time is a matter of great loss. Should Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) find that granting us what we beseech from Him is in our welfare and interest, He grants it, otherwise not. It should be borne in mind that there are certain conditions under which supplications are accepted, in the absence of these, supplications may be often rejected. When Haraam is consumed, the supplications are not accepted. A person who fasts and breaks his fast with Haraam food, is like a sick person, who takes medicine as a cure, but also adds a little poison, which destroys him.

## Asking Forgiveness In Ramadhan



The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said:

*“May his nose be smeared with dust, the person in whose presence I am mentioned, and he does not invoke blessings upon me; the one who is given the opportunity to witness the month of Ramadhan and it comes to an end without his securing pardon for himself, and one whose aged parents are alive, both of them or one of them, and through them (by serving them) he does not enter Paradise.”*  
(Tirmidhi Hadeeth 927)

By this, the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) meant the person who spends the days in sin and disregards his duties even in Ramadhan, the month of blessings and righteousness, and thus he doesn't gain forgiveness.

If he cannot gain the pleasure of Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) in Ramadhan, then when will he do so? The way to seek Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He)'s pardon for his sins is to fulfil his obligations in Ramadhan as enjoined by Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) such as fasting, offering 'Taraweeh' prayers and repentance on past sins. Those who are sincere with Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) will find that all their sins throughout the year will be forgiven in Ramadhan, if they avoid major sins. Even the fish in the sea seek forgiveness on their behalf until they break their fast.

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) termed the first 10 days of Ramadhan as the period of Mercy, whereby Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He)'s mercy is showered on the believers. Those who express their gratitude to Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) for His bounties, receive them in large measure as Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) says in Al-Qur'an (what means):

*“If you are grateful, I will add more (favours) unto you, But if you show ingratitude, truly My punishment is terrible indeed.” (Al-Quran 14:7)*

The second 10 days of Ramadhan is when forgiveness is granted to the believers as reward for the fasting during the first part. The last 10 days of Ramadhan brings immunity from Hell.

In Ramadhan, you should endeavour to perform three acts of worship:

Recite: "Laa ilaha illallahu". If the seven heavens, the earth and all its occupants were placed in one balance of a scale and these words on the other, they would outweigh everything.

'Istighfaar' (Beg for forgiveness from Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He). Whoever says a great deal of 'Istighfaar', Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) opens a way out for him from all difficulties and releases him from sorrows.

Beg for entry into Paradise and seek refuge with Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) from the fire of 'Jahannam' (Hell).



## Layla Tul Qadar (Night Of Power)



Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) says in Al-Qur'an (what means):

*"Layla tul Qadar is better than a thousand months". (Al-Qur'an 97:3)*

The night of "Layla tul Qadar" is described as being greater in blessedness and spiritual virtue than 1,000 months. Therefore fortunate is that person who attains the full blessings of this night by spending it in the worship of Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He).

'A'aisha (May Allah be pleased with her) asked the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) to tell her what prayers to say on Layla tul Qadr if she knew which night it was, and he told her to say,

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوٌّ تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّي

"Allahumma innaka afuwwun, tuhibbul afuw, fa'fu anni."

*"O Allah, You are forgiving and love to forgive, so forgive me." (Tirmidhi, Hadith 2091)*

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said,

*"Seek Layla tul Qadar in the last ten nights. If one among you shows slackness and weakness in the earlier part of Ramadhan, it should not be allowed to prevail upon him in the last week". (Sahih Muslim, Book 006, Number 2621)*

During the last third of Ramadhan, one should read more of Al-Qur'an and remember Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) more often, even constantly. For Muslims, the last ten days should be a time to perfect one's fast and avoid anything that may break it. It is a time to give more charity, to settle disputes and forgive one another. It is also a time for soul searching, evaluating one's life, supplicating, and asking forgiveness. This should be done sincerely because if Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) accepts the supplications, the reward is the remission of one's sins. The best time to do it is in the last part of the night.

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said,

*"When the last one third of the night remains, Allah, the Glorious One, descends towards the lower heaven and proclaims "Is there anyone supplicating to Me, so that I grant his supplication? Is there anyone begging of Me for anything, so that I grant him his wish? Is there anyone who seeks My forgiveness, so that I forgive him?" (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Volume 8, Book 75, Number 333)*

Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) has concealed the exact date of the Night of Power so that we would double our efforts during the last ten days. Through this, He also tests the serious and the non-serious among the believers. The seriously interested person will search for it late at night and in the early hours until he or she attains it, regardless of the hardship.

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said,

*“Whoever stands in prayers and worships on the night of Power, with complete faith and sincere hope of gaining reward, all his previous sins are forgiven”.(Sahih Al-Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 32, Number 226)*

It is recommended to seek the night and spend it diligently in devotion, including performing the nightly Sunnah prayers (Tahajjud) and recitation of Al-Qur’an. This narration indicates that regardless of whether a person knows the night or not Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) will grant forgiveness for previous shortcomings.

*The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) used to exert himself in devotion during the last ten nights to a greater extent than at any other time.(Sahih Muslim, Book 006, Number 2644)*

During this time, he limited his contact with people and intensified his supplications and Du’as to Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He). The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) did this in order to attune his heart even more with Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) and to free his mind from the concerns of the world.

*With the start of the last ten days of Ramadhan, the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) used to work hard and used to offer Salaat (prayers) all night, and used to keep his family awake for Salaat (prayers).(Sahih Al-Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 32, Number 241)*

## **I'tikaaf**

*The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) mentioned that he would practice I'tikaaf in the last ten days of Ramadhan. 'Aishah (May Allah be pleased with him) asked his permission to perform I'tikaaf and he permitted her. (Al-Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 33, Number 261)*

It used to be the general practice of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) to perform I'tikaaf (secluding oneself in the Mosque for worship) in the Holy month of Ramadhan.

*The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) used to observe I'tikaaf during the last ten days of Ramadhan. One year he did not observe I'tikaaf, but when the next year came, he observed I'tikaaf for twenty nights (i.e. days). (Abu Dawood, Book 13, Number 2457)*

## Compensation For Fasts Missed In Ramadhan

Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) has stated very clearly what should be done if there is a valid excuse for missing a fast of Ramadhan.

Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) says in Al-Qur'an:

*"(Observe Sawm – fasts, for a fixed number of days, but if any of you is ill or on a journey, the same number (should be made up) from other days. And as for those who can fast with difficulty, (e.g. an old man, etc.), they have (a choice either to fast or) to feed a Miskeen (poor person) (for every day). But whoever does good of his own accord, it is better for him. And that you fast, it is better for you if only you knew." (Al-Qur'an 2:184)*

In addition to the sick and the old, the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) also mentioned other categories of people who are allowed to miss a fast of Ramadhan:

*Allah has remitted half the prayer to a traveller, and fasting to the traveller, the woman who is suckling an infant and the woman who is pregnant, I swear by Allah, he (the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) mentioned both (i.e. suckling and pregnant women) or one of them. (Abu Dawud, Book 13, Number 2402)*

However if someone misses a fast without a valid reason then even if he fasts for the rest of his life, he will not be able to make up this one fast:

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said:

*"If anyone breaks his fast one day in Ramadhan without a concession granted to him by Allah, a perpetual fast will not atone for it." (Abu Dawud, Book 13, Number 2390)*

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) stated the action to take for the one who breaks a fast by sexual relations with his wife in Ramadhan.

A man broke the fast in Ramadhan and the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him, ordered him to make kaffarah (expiation) by freeing a slave, or fasting two consecutive months, or feeding sixty poor people. However, he said,

*"I can't do it." Someone brought a large basket of dates to the Prophet, and he said, "Take this and give it away as sadaqah." He said, "O Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) there is none more needy than I am." The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), laughed until his molars were visible and then he said, "Eat them." (Muwatta, Book 18, Number 18.9.28)*

If in Ramadhan, any of the days of fasting were missed, they must be made up for before the next Ramadhan. Generally, Muslims should try to make up for them as soon as possible because any days that are missed are considered as a debt to Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He).

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said,

*"Whoever dies and he ought to have fasted (the missed days of Ramadhan) then his heirs must fast on his behalf." (Al-Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 31, Number 173)*

## **Fasting In Shawwal**

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said:

*“Whoever observes the Ramadhan fast and follows it with six days of fast in Shawwal, it is as if he has fasted Dahr (the whole year)”. (Sahih Muslim, Book 006, Number 2614)*

Shawwal is the tenth month in the lunar calendar. The first of Shawwal is Eid-ul-Fitr. After the festivity of Eid it is recommended to observe six days of fast. This fast may be observed either continuously without a break, or it may be observed one day at a time.

## Duas For Breaking The Fast

اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ صُومْتُ وَ عَلَى رِزْقِكَ أَفْطَرْتُ

Allahumma laka sumtu wa 'ala rizq-ika aftartu

*(O Allah! I fasted for You and I break my fast with Your sustenance) (Abu Dawood, Book 13, Number 2351)*

ذَهَبَ الظَّمَا وَ ابْتَلَّتِ العُرُوقُ وَ تَبَّتِ الأَجْرُ إِنْ شَاءَ اللهُ

Dhahabdh-dhama'uwab-tallatil 'urûqu, wa thabat al ajru in sha Allah

*(The thirst is gone, the veins are moistened and the reward is confirmed, if Allah Wills) (Abu Dawood, Book 13, Number 2350)*

