

يَا بَاغِيَ الْخَيْرِ أَقْبِلْ

*O Seeker of Good,
Come Forward*

WELCOMING RAMADAN

SOURCE: RIYAD AS SALIHIN

رياض الصالحين - الإمام النووي

IPP-001088

MC-02-01-0858362



طلب التصريح لتداول أو طباعة المصاحف والمطبوعات

Request Issuance of Permit Publication/Printing

نتيجة تدقيق مادة علمية
Result of Auditing the Material

| | | |
|---------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|
| Applicant | إيمان العبيد | جهة الطلب |
| Reference number | IPP-001088 | الرقم المرجعي / تاريخ الطلب |
| Date of application | 31/05/2023 | تاريخ الطلب |
| The addressee | | الجهة المرسل إليها |

| عنوان المادة | المؤلف | المحقق | الناشر/دار الطبع | شكل المادة | اللغة | سنة الطبع | القياس | عدد الصفحات |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------|----------------------|------------|----------|-----------|--------|-------------|
| O Seeker of good come forward | إيمان العبيد ونورة الظاهر | نورة الظاهر | مركز السلام الإسلامي | كتاب | انجليزية | 2023 | A5 | 29 |

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Generated Date

07-December-2020

تاريخ إنشاء الشهادة

Application Number

MC-02-01-0858362

رقم الطلب

Establishment Details

بيانات المنشأة

| | | |
|------------------------|---|---------------------|
| Establishment Name | AlSalam Islamic Center / مركز السلام الإسلامي | اسم المنشأة |
| Emirate | Dubai / دبي | الإمارة |
| Trading License Number | 57 | رقم الرخصة التجارية |
| Media File Number | MF-02-5801994 | رقم السجل الإعلامي |

Permit Details

بيانات التصريح

| | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Service | Printing Permit / إذن طباعة | الخدمة |
| Type of Publication | Book / كتاب | نوع المطبوع |
| Book Title | Seeker of Good Come Forward | اسم الكتاب |
| Author Name | ALSALAM ISLAMIC CENTER | اسم المؤلف |
| Language | English / الإنجليزية | اللغة |
| Age Classification | E | التصنيف العمري |

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

ALL PRAISES AND THANKS ARE DUE TO ALLAH, THE LORD OF THE 'ALAMIN.
MAY THE PEACE AND BLESSINGS OF ALLAH BE UPON MUHAMMAD,
HIS FAMILY, HIS COMPANIONS , AND THOSE WHO FOLLOW IN THEIR FOOTSTEPS
AND TREAD THEIR PATH UNTIL THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT. AMEEN.

يَا بَاغِيَ الْخَيْرِ أَقْبِلْ

O Seeker of Good, Come Forward

WELCOMING RAMADAN

SOURCE: RIYAD AS SALIHIN - الإمام النووي رياض الصالحين

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Introduction

Welcoming Ramadan is like welcoming a beloved guest, a guest who comes for a visit once a year. In anticipation of its arrival, you do your best to prepare so that you can benefit as much as you can from its visit. The Companions (رضي الله عنهم) used to make dua for six months asking Allah (ﷻ) to prolong their lives so that they could reach Ramadan, and then after Ramadan, they would pray for five months asking Allah (ﷻ) to accept it from them.

We need to enter this blessed month with faith, a solid foundation on which we can build during Ramadan with the hope that, by the departure of Ramadan, our “Building of Faith” will have reached a new height. **WE WANT TO COME OUT OF RAMADAN A BETTER PERSON; WE DON'T WANT TO REMAIN THE SAME.**

Allah (ﷻ) says:

قُلْ بِفَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَبِرَحْمَتِهِ فَبِذَلِكَ فَلْيَفْرَحُوا هُوَ خَيْرٌ مِمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ

Say: "In the Bounty of Allâh, and in His Mercy (i.e. Islâm and the Qur'ân); - therein let them rejoice." That is better than what (the wealth) they amass. (Surah Yunus, Ayah 58).

WELCOME RAMADAN WITH A SENSE OF HAPPINESS, FREE FROM ANY NEGATIVE FEELINGS OR STRESS. If you are looking forward to Ramadan, Allah (ﷻ) will make it a beneficial experience for you. As we approach this special month, we need to prepare ourselves by increasing our knowledge of Allah (ﷻ), reading the Quran, and doing taddabur (pondering upon its verses).

Don't even depend on yourself for a blink of an eye. When a person relies on his own power and ability he is setting himself up to fail. We cannot depend on any means, not even ourselves. We need to rely completely on Allah (ﷻ) to take care of all our affairs in the worldly life and the hereafter.

Free yourself from depending on your own strength and power. No one can do anything without the help and support of Allah: لا حول و لا قوة الا بالله. There is no might and power except with Allah.

OUR TEST IN LIFE IS NOT TO PROVE HOW STRONG WE ARE, BUT TO PROVE HOW MUCH WE ARE TRULY RELYING ON ALLAH (ﷻ).

How will Ramadan welcome us?

Ramadan is a month created by Allah (ﷻ), and He has made it a special month. Acts of obedience that are performed during this month earn multiple rewards, and acts of disobedience earn multiple sins. **THIS IS WHY IT IS SO IMPORTANT TO INCREASE IN GOOD DEEDS DURING RAMADAN.**

This month is special because Allah (ﷻ) changes the universe for us in Ramadan. He wants to make it easy for us to worship Him in this month, much like a mother wants her children to do well in their exams, so she prepares the surroundings by cooking nutritious meals for them, buying them the stationary and books they need, limiting distractions, etc.

The changes begin from the first night of Ramadan. Although we cannot physically see these changes, we need to believe in them – this is a matter of faith. **FAITH IS TO BELIEVE IN THE UNSEEN MATTERS.** If we were to see them then everyone would be a believer and you would not know who is truthful and who is a liar.

Changes in the Universe

The shayatin are chained during Ramadan:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " أَتَاكُمْ رَمَضَانُ شَهْرٌ مُبَارَكٌ فَرَضَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ عَلَيْكُمْ صِيَامَهُ تَفْتَحُ فِيهِ أَبْوَابُ السَّمَاءِ وَتُغْلَقُ فِيهِ أَبْوَابُ الْجَحِيمِ وَتُعَلُّ فِيهِ مَرَدَةُ الشَّيَاطِينِ لِلَّهِ فِيهِ لَيْلَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ مَنْ حُرِمَ خَيْرَهَا فَقَدْ حُرِمَ

Abu Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

“There has come to you Ramadan, a blessed month, which Allah, the Mighty and Sublime, has enjoined you to fast. In it the gates of the heavens are opened and the gates of Hell are closed, and every devil is chained up. In it Allah has a night which is better than a thousand months; whoever is deprived of its goodness is indeed deprived.” (Sunan An Nisa’i, Hadith 2106).

Not all of the shayatin are locked up; only the “master” devils. Shaitan is an expert in logic and in beautifying the sins, but his promises are empty. He is at

war with us our entire lives. We get tired, but he doesn't get tired. We get bored, but he doesn't get bored. We sleep, but he doesn't sleep; he even comes in our dreams. He presents us with an idea of a sin, much like throwing a ball into the court, and our nafs will then pick it up and play with it. The shaitan is jealous of our obedience to Allah, because he himself disobeyed Allah when he was commanded to prostrate to Adam عليه السلام.

WE HAVE THREE ENEMIES: THE SHAITAN, OUR NAFS, AND BAD COMPANIONS. In Ramadan we have to struggle against our nafs; the shaitan is shackled so we cannot blame him for our sins. We can only blame ourselves. When people commit sins during Ramadan, this is from their own selves and from the influence of bad companions.

Ramadan presents an opportunity for us to get to know ourselves better so that we can reform ourselves. We want to taste the sweetness of faith in Ramadan, not waste our time.

ALL THE DOORS OF PARADISE WILL BE OPENED IN RAMADAN. You will see those who usually don't give charity, giving charity, and those who don't pray, praying.

All the doors of hellfire will be closed.

A caller will call:

يَا بَاغِيَ الْخَيْرِ أَقْبِلْ

O Seeker of Good, Come Forward

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " إِذَا كَانَ أَوَّلُ لَيْلَةٍ مِنْ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ صُفِّدَتِ الشَّيَاطِينُ وَمَرَدَةُ الْجِنِّ وَغُلِّقَتْ أَبْوَابُ النَّارِ فَلَمْ يُفْتَحْ مِنْهَا بَابٌ. وَفُتِّحَتْ أَبْوَابُ الْجَنَّةِ فَلَمْ يُغْلَقْ مِنْهَا بَابٌ وَيُنَادِي مُنَادٍ يَا بَاغِيَ الْخَيْرِ أَقْبِلْ وَيَا بَاغِيَ الشَّرِّ أَقْصِرْ وَنُفِثَ عِتْقَاءُ مِنَ النَّارِ وَذَلِكَ كُلُّ لَيْلَةٍ "

Abu Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"On the first night of the month of Ramadan, the Shayatin are shackled, the jinns are restrained, the gates of the Fires are shut such that no gate among them would be opened. The gates of Paradise are opened such that no gate among them would be closed, and a caller calls: 'O seeker of good, come forward!' and 'O seeker of evil, stop! For there are those whom Allah frees

from the Fire.' And that is every night." (Jami` at-Tirmidhi, Hadith 682).

Ramadan is an invitation for all Muslims; no one is excluded except the one who excludes himself.

Allah (ﷻ) is inviting us to the “feast” of Ramadan, where we will be tasting a variety of different forms of worship. The one who accepts this highly generous invitation will enjoy this feast, but the one who declines it, he will be amongst the losers. We have an opportunity to change ourselves, so accept the invitation.

Allah (ﷻ) says:

إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَذِكْرٍ لِمَنْ كَانَ لَهُ قَلْبٌ أَوْ أَلْقَى السَّمْعَ وَهُوَ

شَهِيدٌ ﴿٣٧﴾

Verily, therein is indeed a reminder for him who has a heart or gives ear while he is heedful. (Surah Qaf, Ayah 37).

Anyone who has committed a sin, come forward. Anyone who has transgressed, come forward. This is your chance because Allah (ﷻ) is calling you to forgiveness; He is calling you to a paradise the width of the heavens and the earth.

وَسَارِعُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا

السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٣٣﴾

And march forth in the way (which leads to) forgiveness from your Lord, and for Paradise as wide as are the heavens and the earth, prepared for Al-Muttaqûn. (Surah Ali Imran, Ayah 133).

Fasting in Ramadan

Fasting in Ramadan is one of the pillars of Islam. It is the main worship in Ramadan. It is a divine command. Fasting (صيام) means “imsak (إمساك)”. **IN RAMADAN, YOU NEED TO HOLD YOUR DESIRES.** The desire for food, drink, and intimate relations between spouses are essential, legitimate desires in human beings. Fasting is to hold yourself from these desires from fajr until maghrib. Allah (ﷻ) is teaching us how to control our desires by commanding us to hold ourselves from indulging in these pleasures for a certain period of time. If we can train ourselves to refrain from desires that are innate and halal, from dawn until sunset, then we can hold ourselves from haraam (backbiting, lying, being suspicious, oppressing, speaking indecently, etc). Fasting teaches us submission. Whoever doesn't abandon falsehood and indecency in speech and actions, then Allah (ﷻ) has no need for him to leave his food and drink. Your tongue, hearing, and limbs should also be fasting.

The wisdom behind fasting is to attain taqwa:

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُنِبَ عَلَيْكُمْ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُنِبَ عَلَى
الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨٣﴾

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-Muttaqûn. (Surah Al Baqarah, Ayah 183).

We consist of body and soul; the body is made from the earth and the soul is heavenly. No one can explain the soul because little knowledge has been revealed to us. Both body and soul need food. The food for the body is from the earth, but this is not suitable for the soul. The soul is heavenly so it needs “food” that is divine; it needs the Quran and worship. It needs connection to Allah (ﷻ). An imbalance occurs when we take care of one component and neglect the other. There are some people who only take care of their materialistic needs, so they end up becoming depressed. On the other hand, there are also people who only take care of their soul whilst neglecting their body, and this too leads to imbalance.

DURING THE MONTH OF RAMADAN, YOU TAKE A BREAK FROM THE NEEDS OF YOUR BODY SO THAT YOU CAN FOCUS MORE ON YOUR SOUL You will find yourself calmer and wanting to do more good deeds.

Sheikh Ibn Baaz (رحمه الله) defined taqwa as: “Worshipping Allah (ﷻ) by doing the commandments and abstaining from the sins out of fear, hope, magnification and love for Allah (ﷻ)” Taqwa “is the main part of every good and its key and the reason behind every good in this life and the akhirah.” It means to be an obedient slave of Allah and not to follow our desires.

It is not only your body that must fast; your heart should also be fasting from thinking about anything besides Allah (ﷻ). Don’t waste the valuable hours you are fasting on just planning your iftar meal. Avoid any unnecessary worldly distractions because you want to reach a higher level during this blessed month.

Virtues of Fasting

One of the most important virtues of fasting is forgiveness for our sins.

وعن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: من صام رمضان إيماناً واحتساباً، غفر له ما تقدم من ذنبه

Abu Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "He who observes fasting during the month of Ramadan with Faith while seeking its reward from Allah, will have his past sins forgiven." (Riyadh As Saliheen, Al Bukhari and Muslim, Book 9, Hadith 1219).

Allah (ﷻ) frees people from the hellfire every night in Ramadan.

Your fast is a lawyer who will defend you on the Day of Judgement.

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم الصيام و القرآن يشفعان للعبد يوم القيامة يقول الصيام رب منعتك الطعام و الشهوات بالنهار فشفعني فيه و يقول القرآن منعتك النوم بالليل فشفعني فيه قال فيشفعان

The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Fasting and the Quran intercede for the slave on the Day of Judgement. The fast will say, ‘Rabb, I deprived him from food and temptations during the day, so allow me to intercede for him,’ and the Quran will say, ‘I deprived him from sleeping during the night, so allow me to intercede for him.’ He says: they intercede.” (Sahih Al Jami’, Hadith 3882, authenticated by Al Albani as Sahih).

We fast to seek the Pleasure of Allah (ﷻ) and the reward for fasting is like an open cheque.

وعن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "قال الله عز وجل: كل عمل ابن آدم له إلا الصيام، فإنه لي وأنا أجزي به. للصائم فرحتان: فرحة عند فطره، وفرحة عند لقاء ربه. ولخلاف فيه أطيب عند الله من ريح المسك

Abu Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Messenger of Allah (ﷻ) said, "Allah the Exalted and Majestic said: 'Every act of the son of Adam is for him, except As-Siyam (the fasting) which is (exclusively) for Me, and I will reward him for it.' The fasting person has two joyous occasions, one at the time of breaking his fast, and the other at the time of meeting his Rabb. Surely, the breath of one observing Saum is better smelling to Allah than the fragrance of musk." (Riyadh As Saliheen, Al Bukhari and Muslim, Book 9, Hadith 1215).

We fast, hoping to reach the level of the truthful ones and the martyrs.

جاء رجل الى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، فقال: يا رسول الله أرأيت ان شهدت أن لا اله الا الله، و أنك رسول الله و صليت الصلوات الخمس و أدت الزكاة و صمت رمضان و قمته، فممن أنا؟ قال الرسول صلى الله عليه وسلم من الصديقين و الشهداء

A man came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said: "O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), if I bear witness that there is no one worthy of worship but Allah, and that you are the Messenger of Allah, and I pray the five obligatory prayers, perform zakat, fast Ramadan and establish the night prayer, so of whom am I?" The Messenger (ﷺ) said: "You are from the truthful ones and martyrs." (Sahih At Targheeb, 1001, authenticated by Al Albani as Sahih).

The dua of the fasting person, just before he breaks his fast, is answered immediately. This golden moment should not be missed.

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو كُرَيْبٍ، حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ نُمَيْرٍ، عَنْ سَعْدَانَ الْقُبَيْيِّ، عَنْ أَبِي مُجَاهِدٍ، عَنْ أَبِي مُدَلَّةَ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " ثَلَاثَةٌ لَا تُرَدُّ دَعْوَتُهُمُ الصَّائِمُ حَتَّى يُفْطِرَ وَالْإِمَامُ الْعَادِلُ وَدَعْوَةُ الْمَظْلُومِ يَرْفَعُهَا اللَّهُ فَوْقَ الْعَمَامِ وَيَفْتَحُ لَهَا أَبْوَابَ السَّمَاءِ وَيَقُولُ الرَّبُّ وَعِزَّتِي لِأَنْصُرَنَّكَ وَلَوْ بَعْدَ حِينٍ " . قَالَ أَبُو عِيْسَى هَذَا حَدِيثٌ حَسَنٌ وَسَعْدَانُ الْقُبَيْيُّ هُوَ سَعْدَانُ بْنُ بَشْرٍ . وَقَدْ رَوَى عَنْهُ عِيْسَى بْنُ يُونُسَ وَأَبُو عَاصِمٍ وَعَبْرٌ وَاحِدٌ مِنْ كِبَارِ أَهْلِ الْحَدِيثِ وَأَبُو مُجَاهِدٍ هُوَ سَعْدٌ

الطَّائِبُ وَأَبُو مُدَلَّةَ هُوَ مَوْلَى أُمَّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَائِشَةَ وَإِنَّمَا نَعْرِفُهُ بِهَذَا الْحَدِيثِ وَيُرْوَى عَنْهُ هَذَا الْحَدِيثُ أَتَمَّ مِنْ هَذَا وَأَطْوَلَ .

Abu Hurairah narrated that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "There are three whose supplication is not rejected: The fasting person when he breaks his fast, the just leader, and the supplication of the oppressed person; Allah raises it up above the clouds and opens the gates of heaven to it. And the Lord says: 'By My might, I shall surely aid you, even if it should be after a while.'" (Jami` at-Tirmidhi 3598)

Importance of the prayer

(فضل الصلاة)

Islam is built upon five pillars. Salat (prayer) is the second pillar of Islam; it follows the testimony of faith. All the pillars of Islam serve to reform a person; they help to keep a believer upright in his life, protecting him from collapsing. **SALAT STRENGTHENS YOU FROM INSIDE; IT DEEPENS YOUR CONNECTION TO YOUR CREATOR.**

There are people who pray taraweeh during Ramadan, but neglect their obligatory prayers. **YOUR PRIORITY IS TO PRAY YOUR FIVE OBLIGATORY PRAYERS FIRST.** It is not permissible to abandon the prayer, even if you are sick or travelling. If you cannot move, you can still pray with your eyes. Leaving the prayer is considered disbelief. Anyone who is not praying has to feel remorse and repent sincerely to Allah (ﷻ).

Salat comes from the verb صلة which means connection.

Allah (ﷻ) will not get bored with you until you start to feel bored. **IF YOU TALK FROM MORNING UNTIL NIGHT TO ALLAH (ﷻ). HE WILL NEVER GET BORED WITH YOU.** Imagine a child talking to his mother all night long. She will eventually get bored and fall asleep. Allah (ﷻ) loves to listen to you, even though He doesn't need you. You need Him. How many people are connecting to Allah (ﷻ) at the same time? Allah (ﷻ) responds to all of them individually. May Allah (ﷻ) never make us disconnected from Him. Ameen.

CONNECTION WITH THE MOST GREAT IS AN AMAZING EXPERIENCE. It is highly important to pray with feelings, and not to pray like it is a burden that you just want to finish quickly so that you can get on with your life. You need to enjoy your prayer because you are talking to Allah (ﷻ), your Creator and Nurturer. It is a great loss if you are connecting with everyone in your life but not with the Most Great.

Voluntary Prayers (النوافل)

The best deed is establishing the obligatory prayers, followed by seeking knowledge, and performing the voluntary prayers.

سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: " عليك بكثرة السجود، فإنك لن
"تسجد لله سجدة إلا رفعك الله بها درجة، وحط عنك بها خطيئة"

Thauban (رضي الله عنه) said: "I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, 'Perform Salah more often. For every prostration that you perform before Allah will raise your position one degree and will remit one of your sins.'" (Riyadh As Saliheen, Muslim, Book 1, Hadith 107).

Types of voluntary prayers

AR RAWATIB (الرواتب): these are the voluntary prayers that are linked to the obligatory prayers.

- **FAJR:** 2 units before the obligatory prayer. This is a highly recommended sunnah (سنة مؤكدة).
- **DHUHR:** 2x2 units before the obligatory prayer, followed by 2 after.
- **MAGHRIB:** 2 units after the obligatory prayer.
- **'ISHA:** 2 units after the obligatory prayer.
- **TOTAL:** 12 units.

The reward for praying these twelve units of prayer is a house in paradise.

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " مَنْ تَابَرَ عَلَى ثِنْتَيْ عَشْرَةَ
رَكْعَةً مِنَ السُّنَّةِ بَنَى اللَّهُ لَهُ بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ أَرْبَعِ رَكَعَاتٍ قَبْلَ الظُّهْرِ وَرَكَعَتَيْنِ بَعْدَهَا
"وَرَكَعَتَيْنِ بَعْدَ الْمَغْرِبِ وَرَكَعَتَيْنِ بَعْدَ الْعِشَاءِ وَرَكَعَتَيْنِ قَبْلَ الْفَجْرِ"

Aishah (رضي الله عنها) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "Whoever is regular with twelve Rak'ah of Sunnah (prayer), Allah will build a house for him in Paradise: Four Rak'ah before Dhuhr, two Rak'ah after it, two Rak'ah after Maghrib, two Rak'ah after Isha, and two Rak'ah before Fajr." (Jami` at-Tirmidhi, 414).

DHUHA PRAYER (الضحى): the time of this prayer is approximately twelve minutes after sunrise until twelve minutes before dhuhr. You can pray a minimum of two units.

WITR PRAYER (الوتر): this is a prayer that consists of an odd number of units.

The prayers that are performed during the day consist of an even number of units, but in the night, the total number of units that you pray are an odd number. The best time to pray witr is in the final third of the night, but if you are unable to get up at this time, then you can pray it before you go to sleep. It is a highly recommended sunnah (سنة مؤكدة). The minimum number of units you can pray for witr is one unit, but you can pray three units, five units, seven units or more. The Prophet (pbuh) would pray 11 or 13 units.

Taraweeh (التراويح)

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه، أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: "من قام رمضان إيماناً واحتساباً غفر له ما تقدم من ذنبه"

Abu Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "He who observes optional prayer (Taraweeh prayers) throughout Ramadan, out of sincerity of Faith and in the hope of earning reward will have his past sins pardoned." (Riyadh As Saliheen, Al- Bukhari and Muslim, Book 9, Hadith 1187).

Taraweeh refers to the voluntary prayers that are performed in the nights of Ramadan. They are the same as qiyaam al layl (night prayers). It is derived from the word راحة which means rest because you can rest between the units. It is a highly recommended sunnah (سنة مؤكدة). The men pray in the masjid, but for women, it is better to pray in the house.

If you pray taraweeh every night in Ramadan, even if it is at home (for women), the reward is expiation of your sins.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

إِنَّهُ مَنْ قَامَ مَعَ الْإِمَامِ حَتَّى يَنْصَرِفَ كُتِبَ لَهُ قِيَامُ لَيْلَةٍ

"Indeed, whoever stands (praying) with the Imam until he has finished, then it is recorded for him that he prayed the whole night." (Jami` at-Tirmidhi, Hadith 806)- part of longer hadith.

For the one who prays in the masjid, and prays with the imam until he finishes, including the witr, then it is as if he has prayed for the whole night. The condition is to finish with the imam; some people pray taraweeh but they don't pray the witr with the imam, they leave it to pray later at home, but this

doesn't count. The Prophet (ﷺ) would pray a total of eleven units at night but it is permissible to pray more. The time of taraweeh is after the 'isha prayer until before fajr.

Feelings in prayer: Praying with khushu'

We get deceived into thinking that quantity is important, but what is important with Allah (ﷻ) is the quality of our deeds, the feelings we have in our worship. Quantity is good when it is accompanied by high quality. When your deeds make you to feel good about yourself then this is arrogance.

THE QUALITY OF ANY DEED IS BASED ON YOUR HEART. Where is your heart while you are praying? Do you understand the words that you are saying in your prayer? Presence of heart, humbling yourself before Allah(ﷻ), and understanding the words you are saying in the prayer, these feelings and actions lead to khushu' in the prayer.

In the prayer, you are moving from state to state: you begin in the standing position and then move to the bowing position, you rise from the bowing position and go down for sujood. You sit up after the first sujood and then you go down again for the second sujood. You stand again. There is also the position for saying the tashahud and ending with the tasleem.

Standing in the prayer

Before you stand in prayer, you need to perform wudhu or ghusl. **ALLAH (ﷻ) LOVES THOSE WHO PURIFY THEMSELVES BEFORE GOING INTO THEIR MEETING WITH HIM.**

The standing position is the most honourable position in the prayer; it is in this position that you recite kalam Allah, the Speech of Allah (ﷻ). You enter the meeting as soon as you say, "Allahu Akbar (الله أكبر)." This is called "Takbeerat Al Ihram (تكبيرة الإحرام)." Allah (ﷻ) is Greater than anything and anyone in your life; Allah (ﷻ) is Greater than your work, Greater than your family, Greater than your children. Allah (ﷻ) is Greater than anything great in your life. Anything of high value in your life will keep you occupied unless you have something greater to focus on, and **THERE IS NOTHING GREATER THAN ALLAH (ﷻ).**

As soon as you say “Allahu Akbar,” Allah (ﷻ) will place His Face in front of your face, but you cannot see Him. Allah (ﷻ) is above the Throne, He is not everywhere. Don’t ask, “how can His Face be in front of me?” for nothing is difficult for Allah (ﷻ). As long as your face and heart are not turning away, Allah (ﷻ) will not turn.

When you are standing in front of Allah (ﷻ) in the prayer, this is a reminder of your standing before Him on the Day of Judgement. You need to take care of your standing in front of Allah (ﷻ) in the dunya and He will take care of your standing on the Day of Judgement.

Seek refuge with Allah (ﷻ) from the shaitan (أعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم) because he wants to ruin your prayer. As soon as you start to pray, he will remind you of so many things to distract you from the prayer. If you have lost something, he will remind you where you put it. If there is food cooking on the stove in the kitchen, he will make you worry that it is going to burn. If you need to go shopping later on in the day, he will remind you to buy this and that. If you need to pick up your children from school after the prayer, he will make you worry that you will be late. We will always struggle with our prayer until we die.

YOU BEGIN IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, “BISMI ALLAHI AR RAHMAN AR RAHEEM (بِسْمِ الله الرحمن الرحيم),” BECAUSE YOU NEED HIS HELP AND YOU NEED HIS MERCY.

Recite Surah al Fatiha (سورة الفاتحة) in every unit of prayer; your prayer will not be accepted if you don’t recite this surah in every rakah. When you are reciting Surah al Fatiha, you need to pause at the end of every ayah.

فَإِنِّي سَمِعْتُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: قَالَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: قَسَمْتُ الصَّلَاةَ
بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ عَبْدِي نَصْفَيْنِ، وَلِعَبْدِي مَا سَأَلَ، فَإِذَا قَالَ الْعَبْدُ: { الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ
الْعَالَمِينَ } قَالَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: حَمَدَنِي عَبْدِي، وَإِذَا قَالَ: { الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ } قَالَ اللَّهُ
عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: أَتْنَى عَلَيَّ عَبْدِي، وَإِذَا قَالَ: { مَالِكِ يَوْمَ الدِّينِ } قَالَ اللَّهُ: مَجَدَّنِي عَبْدِي -
وَقَالَ مَرَّةً: فَوَضَّ إِلَيَّ عَبْدِي، فَإِذَا قَالَ: { إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ } قَالَ: هَذَا بَيْنِي
وَبَيْنَ عَبْدِي وَلِعَبْدِي مَا سَأَلَ، فَإِذَا قَالَ: { اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ
أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ } قَالَ: هَذَا لِعَبْدِي وَلِعَبْدِي مَا
سَأَلَ.

For I heard the Prophet (ﷺ) say: “Allah (mighty and sublime be He) said: I have divided prayer between Myself and My servant into two halves, and My servant shall have what he has asked for. When the servant says: Alhamdulillah rabbi alamin, Allah (mighty and sublime be He) says: My servant has praised Me. When he says: Ar-rahmani r-rahim, Allah (mighty and sublime be He) says: My servant has extolled Me. When he says: Maliki yawmi d-din, Allah says: My servant has glorified Me - and on one occasion He said: My servant has submitted to My Power. When he says: Iyyaka na’budu wa iyyaka nastaen, He says: This is between Me and My servant, and My servant shall have what he has asked for. When he says: Ihdinas-siratal mustaqim, siratal ladhina an amta alayhim ghayril-maghdubi alayhim wala d-dallin, He says: This is for My servant, and My servant shall have what he has asked for.” (Sahih Muslim, Hadith 395).


 الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

All the praises and thanks are due to Allah (ﷻ) because He is perfect. When you recite this ayah, Allah (ﷻ) says: “My slave has praised Me.”


 الرَّحْمَنَ الرَّحِيمَ

The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. The mercy of Allah (ﷻ) reaches everyone and everything. When you recite this ayah, Allah (ﷻ) says: “My slave has extolled Me.”


 مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

Owner of the Day of Recompense. You are admitting that Allah (ﷻ) is the Owner of everything and the Owner of the Day of Judgement. Allah (ﷻ) will say: “My slave has glorified Me.”


 إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

You alone we worship and You alone we seek for help. You cannot worship Him without His help. Allah (ﷻ) says: “This is between Me and My slave,” as if it is a contract. You need to worship Allah (ﷻ) but He is the One who is helping you and guiding you to worship Him. Allah (ﷻ) says: “Whatever My slave asks Me then I will grant him.”

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

Guide us to the Straight Path. This is the dua. You are asking Allah (ﷻ) to guide you to make the right decisions in your life, to guide you to the best deeds, the best manners, the best knowledge, the best speech. Allah (ﷻ) is teaching us to say this dua at least seventeen times a day. This highlights the importance of this dua.

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ

The path of those upon whom You have bestowed Your Favours. You want to tread the path of the Messengers and the Prophets (عليهم السلام) because they were on the best way.

غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

Not (the path) of those who earned Your Anger, nor of those who went astray. The people with whom Allah (ﷻ) is Angry are those who have the knowledge but they don't act upon it. The ones who are misled are those who act without knowledge. So the Straight Path involves both knowledge and action.

Ameen. You are asking Allah (ﷻ) to respond to, and accept your dua.

Bowing in the prayer (ruku')

Then you say "Allahu Akbar" and bow. This is reminding you that **ALLAH IS GREATER THAN ANYONE AND ANYTHING IN YOUR LIFE**. When you bow, you keep your back straight, and, in this position, you magnify Allah (ﷻ) by saying "Subhana Rabbiyal 'Adheem (سبحان ربي العظيم) Far from imperfection is my Rabb The Most Great" three times. You are magnifying Him because He is the Most Great.

You will only bow to Allah (ﷻ) because He is the One Who allowed you to bend your back and bow. You show more humility in the ruku'.

Rising from the bowing position

When you rise from bowing, you say “Sami’Allahu liman hamidah (سَمِعَ اللهُ لِمَنْ حَمِدَهُ),” which means that **ALLAH (ﷻ) RESPONDS TO THE ONE WHO PRAISES HIM.** Allah (ﷻ) loves to be praised and He will reward you for this. Then you say, “Rabbanaa wa lakal hamd (رَبَّنَا وَلَكَ الْحَمْدُ),” which means “O Our Rabb, all praises are due to You.”

Sujood in prayer

In sujood, you are in your **CLOSEST POSITION TO ALLAH (ﷻ).** You say “Subhana Rabbiyal A’la (سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْأَعْلَى) Free from imperfection is my Rabb The Most High” three times. Allah (ﷻ) is the Most High and you are in your lowest position. When you are focused on your prayer, Allah (ﷻ) will take care of your concerns. When you are in sujood, you make dua to Allah (ﷻ), and the best supplications are from the Quran and the Sunnah.

Sujood has so much value, and the more sujood you do, the more Allah (ﷻ) will elevate you. You get into this position twice in each unit of prayer, unlike the other positions which you only do once in every rakah. You are placing the most honourable part of your body, your face, on the ground for Allah (ﷻ) and He appreciates this so much. This position shows your submission to Allah (ﷻ).

The believers who will be purified in the hellfire on the Day of Judgement because of their sins will be burnt except for the places of sujood, subhan Allah. Allah (ﷻ) has forbidden the fire from consuming these areas. May Allah (ﷻ) never make us to enter the hellfire. Ameen.

The Prophet (ﷺ) advised us to pray as if it is our last prayer. Bring this feeling to all of your prayers. This can help you to attain khushu’ in your prayer.

فَقَالَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ عَلَّمْنِي وَأَوْجِزْ . قَالَ " إِذَا قُمْتَ فِي صَلَاتِكَ فَصَلِّ صَلَاةَ مُودِّعٍ
Abu Ayyub (رضي الله عنه) narrated that: “A man came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said, ‘O Messenger of Allah, teach me something but make it concise.’ He said, ‘When you stand to pray, pray like a man bidding farewell.’” (Sunan Ibn Majah, Hadith 4169).

Sitting between the sujood

In this sitting position, you say “Rabbighfir lee, Rabbighfir lee (ربي أغفر لي ربي),” which means “my Rabb forgive me, my Rabb forgive me.” After coming out of your closest position to Allah (ﷻ), you need to ask for **FORGIVENESS** because you will never be able to worship Allah (ﷻ) as He deserves to be worshipped; your worship will never be perfect.

Tashahud

Before you finish the prayer, you need to say the tashahud, which means **TESTIMONY**. You sit with your left palm on your left knee, and your right palm resting on your right knee, curling your fingers to make a circle with your thumb and your middle finger. Raise the right index finger, pointing it towards the Qiblah, and move it in its place, raising it and lowering it in a manner that can hardly be seen.

Tasleem

You turn your head to the right and say, “Assalaamu alaykum warahmatullah (السلام عليكم ورحمة الله),” which means “may the peace and mercy of Allah be upon you.” Then you turn your head to the left and repeat the same greeting.

THE PRAYER BEGINS WITH “ALLAHU AKBAR” AND ENDS WITH PEACE. This is a Muslim. A Muslim does not harm anyone with his hands or tongue; he spreads peace. When you feel every part of the prayer, you will not want it to end. You feel at peace when you pray, and you want to spread the peace.

What is the relationship between Ramadan and the Quran?

All the divine books were revealed in the month of Ramadan.

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أنزلت صحف إبراهيم أول ليلة من شهر رمضان ، و أنزلت التوراة لست مضت من رمضان ، و أنزل الإنجيل بثلاث عشرة مضت من رمضان ، و أنزل الزبور لثمان عشرة خلّت من رمضان ، و أنزل القرآن لأربع وعشرين خلّت من رمضان

The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "The scrolls of Ibrahim were sent down in the first night of the month of Ramadan, and the Tawrat was sent down on the sixth of Ramadan, the Gospel was sent down on the thirteenth of Ramadan, the Psalms were sent down on the eighteenth of Ramadan, and the Quran was sent down on the twenty-fourth of Ramadan." (Sahih Al Jami', Hadith 1497, authenticated by Al Albani as Hasan).

Allah (ﷻ) says:

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ
وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ
فَلْيَصُمْهُ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ
أُخْرٍ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ
وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَيْنَاكُمْ
وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

The month of Ramadân in which was revealed the Qur'ân, a guidance for mankind and clear proofs for the guidance and the criterion (between right and wrong). So whoever of you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the

month (of Ramadân i.e. is present at his home), he must observe Saum (fasts) that month, and whoever is ill or on a journey, the same number [of days which one did not observe Saum (fasts) must be made up] from other days. Allâh intends for you ease, and He does not want to make things difficult for you. (He wants that you) must complete the same number (of days), and that you must magnify Allâh [i.e. to say Takbîr (Allâhu-Akbar, Allâh is the Most Great) for having guided you so that you may be grateful to Him. (Surah Al Baqarah, Ayah 185).

In the month of Ramadan, increase in good deeds, especially in reading the Quran. **THE QURAN IS THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH.** Focus only on the Quran. The righteous predecessors would focus on reading the Quran, putting on hold all other books, even books on hadith. Spend as much time as you can with the Quran - reciting, memorizing, pondering, understanding, applying its teachings to your life, and teaching others. Don't lose any moments during this valuable month.

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدَانُ، حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ، أَخْبَرَنَا يُونُسُ، عَنِ الزُّهْرِيِّ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي عُبَيْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا - قَالَ كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَجْوَدَ النَّاسِ، وَأَجْوَدُ مَا يَكُونُ فِي رَمَضَانَ، حِينَ يَلْقَاهُ جِبْرِيلُ، وَكَانَ جِبْرِيلُ - عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ - يَلْقَاهُ فِي كُلِّ لَيْلَةٍ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ، فَيَدَارِسُهُ الْقُرْآنَ فَلَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَجْوَدُ بِالْخَبِيرِ مِنَ الرِّيحِ الْمُرْسَلَةِ.

The Prophet (ﷺ) was the most generous of all the people, and he used to become more generous in Ramadan when Gabriel met him. Gabriel used to meet him every night during Ramadan to revise the Qur'an with him. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) then used to be more generous than the fast wind. (Sahih al-Bukhari 3554)

Studying the Quran helps with pondering, and the best time to study the Quran in Ramadan is at night because that is when Jibreel (عليه السلام) used to meet with the Prophet (ﷺ) to revise the Quran with him. When you expose yourself to more Quran, this is a purification for your heart; the cleaner your heart, the more tender it becomes. A soft heart will help us to increase in good deeds and in having taqwa. When the heart is dry and hard, we just follow our desires. Kalam Allah (ﷻ) is the best heart-purifier and heart-softener.

RAMADAN IS THE MONTH OF THE QURAN SO ITS EFFECT ON YOUR HEART SHOULD BE GREATER IN THIS MONTH.

Allah (ﷻ) says:

اللَّهُ نَزَلَ أَحْسَنَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابًا مُتَشَابِهًا مَثَانِيَ نَقَشَعُرٌ مِنْهُ جُلُودُ
الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ ثُمَّ تَلِينُ جُلُودُهُمْ وَقُلُوبُهُمْ إِلَى ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ
ذَلِكَ هُدَى اللَّهِ يَهْدِي بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُضِلِلِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ
مِنْ هَادٍ ﴿٢٣﴾

Allâh has sent down the Best statement, a Book (this Qur'ân), its parts resembling each other (in goodness and truth), and oft-repeated. The skins of those who fear their Lord shiver from it (when they recite it or hear it). Then their skin and their heart soften to the remembrance of Allâh. That is the guidance of Allâh. He Guides therewith whom He wills and whomever Allâh sends astray, for him there is no guide. (Surah Az Zumar, Ayah 23).

Allah (ﷻ) says:

إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِينَ
يَعْمَلُونَ الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا كَبِيرًا ﴿٩﴾

Verily, this Qur'ân guides to that which is most just and right and gives glad tidings to the believers (in the Oneness of Allâh and His Messenger, Muhammad ﷺ, etc) who work deeds of righteousness, that they shall have a great reward (Paradise). (Surah Al Isra, Ayah 9).

The Quran guides you to the best belief, to the best creed, to the best deeds, and to the best manners.

You need to believe that **EVERY AYAH CONCERNS YOU**. Sometimes you may read an ayah about the one who steals or the one who commits adultery or about Fir'aun, and you may think to yourself that this doesn't concern me, but this is not correct. You need to believe that in every single ayah Allah (ﷻ) is addressing you personally.

The more you repeat one ayah, the more your faith increases. Repeat the ayah until it **SOFTENS YOUR HEART**, even if you need to repeat it ten times.

Don't make your goal to reach the end of the surah. If you are hasty to finish then you won't benefit. The Quran is not like other books. It all depends on your heart. When you feel the urge to check how many pages are left, stop yourself. **JUST ENJOY AND GATHER YOUR HEART**. Quality is more valuable than quantity.

Allah (ﷻ) says:

كُنْتُ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبْرَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُولُو
الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿٢٩﴾

(This is) a Book (the Qur'ân) which We have sent down to you, full of blessings that they may ponder over its Verses, and that men of understanding may remember. (Surah Saad, Ayah 29).

THE MORE TIME YOU SPEND WITH THE QURAN, THE MORE BLESSINGS ALLAH (ﷻ) WILL PUT IN YOUR TIME, HEALTH, AND WEALTH.

The obstacles that can block you from understanding the Quran include focusing on the rules of tajweed or grammar whilst you are reciting instead of doing taddabur. Don't try to imitate the melodic style of a particular reciter. The moment you have feelings for the Quran, Allah (ﷻ) will give you your own rhythm. Persistence in committing sins can also affect your understanding of the Quran, especially the sins that you know you are doing. Arrogance will also impair your ability to understand the Quran, as well as heedlessness (thinking about something else whilst you are reciting).

Practical Ramadan

It is mustahabb (recommended) to eat suhoor, a pre-dawn meal, before beginning the fast.

تسحروا فإن في السحور بركة" عن أنس، رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله
صلى الله عليه وسلم

*Anas ibn Maalik (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:
"Eat suhoor. Surely, there is a blessing in suhoor." Riyadh As Saliheen, Al
Bukhari and Muslim, Book 9, Hadith 239).*

You eat this meal before fajr. It is mustahabb (recommended) to delay the suhoor until just before fajr. As soon as the adhan for fajr is announced, you must stop eating and drinking. The best suhoor is **DRY DATES**.

As soon as you hear "Allahu Akbar" in the adhan for maghrib, you can break your fast. This shows submission. The most beloved slave to Allah (ﷻ) is the one who hastens to break his fast.

The best iftar (the meal you break your fast with) is **FRESH DATES**. This is the sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ). When breaking your fast, you say the following supplication:

قَالَ رَأَيْتُ ابْنَ عُمَرَ يَقْبِضُ عَلَى لِحْيَتِهِ فَيَقْطَعُ مَا زَادَ عَلَى الْكَفِّ وَقَالَ كَانَ رَسُولُ
اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا أَفْطَرَ قَالَ " ذَهَبَ الظَّمَأُ وَأَبْتَلَّتِ الْعُرُوقُ وَتَبَّتِ الْأَجْرُ
" إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ

*Marwan ibn Salim al-Muqaffa' (رضي الله عنه) said: "I saw Ibn Umar holding his
beard with his hand and cutting what exceeded the handful of it. He (Ibn
Umar) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said when he broke his fast: "Thirst has
gone, the veins are moist, and the reward is assured, if Allah wills." (Sunan
Abi Dawud, Hadith 2357, authenticated by Al Albani as Hasan).*

What did the Prophet (ﷺ) do in the last ten nights of Ramadan?

The Prophet (ﷺ) would make more effort in Ramadan than in any other month, and he would strive harder in worship, “tighten his belt” (شد المأزر), in the last ten nights than in the other nights. May Allah (ﷻ) give us good health and make us to use all He has given us to worship Him. Ameen.

He (ﷺ) enlivened the nights (أحياء الليل) so that the nights became alive like the mornings. He (ﷺ) would awaken his family (أيقظ أهله) because of the statement of Allah (ﷻ):

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا

O you who believe! Ward off from yourselves and your families against a Fire (Hell). (Surah At Tahreem, Ayah 6).

HAVE TAWAKKUL (التوكل) IN ALLAH (ﷻ). Rely on Him alone for all your affairs because all the matters of this world and the akhirah are in His Hands. Nothing occurs except by His Permission. Switch on your heart and make your concern the akhirah. Remove yourself from the equation, don't put yourself in the competition. Our test in life is how much we rely on Allah (ﷻ), and not on ourselves.

SEEK FORGIVENESS (ملازمة الاستغفار) FOR YOUR SINS because the sins can stop you from doing good deeds; they can delay you from moving forward in your life. Beware of self-amazement and self-deception (اياك العجب و الغرور) for if these diseases touch the worship, they will spoil it and ruin the slave.

BE GRATEFUL (الشكر) that you are alive, be grateful that you are Muslim, be grateful for the guidance of Allah (ﷻ), be grateful that you have been blessed with another day to worship Allah (ﷻ) despite all your sins, be grateful for knowledge, be grateful for the Quran, be grateful for being able to recite the Quran, be grateful for your house, be grateful for all that Allah (ﷻ) has given you. If you are grateful, Allah (ﷻ) will increase you.

Night of Decree (ليلة القدر)

Allah (ﷻ) sent down the Quran on the night of decree:

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ ۝
وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ ۝
لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ ۝
نَزَّلُ الْمَلَائِكَةَ وَالرُّوحَ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ ۝
سَلَامٌ هِيَ حَتَّىٰ مَطَلَعِ الْفَجْرِ ۝

Verily, We have sent it (this Qur'ân) down in the night of Al-Qadr (Decree). And what will make you know what the night of Al-Qadr (Decree) is? The night of Al-Qadr (Decree) is better than a thousand months (i.e. worshipping Allâh in that night is better than worshipping Him a thousand months).

Therein descend the angels and the Rûh [Jibril (Gabriel)] by Allâh's Permission with all Decrees.

Peace! (All that night, there is Peace and Goodness from Allâh to His believing slaves) until the appearance of dawn. (Surah Al Qadr).

Allah (ﷻ) revealed the Quran on this special night. The Night of Decree is a night of status (شرف) because worshipping Allah (ﷻ) on this night carries more rewards than worshipping Him for a thousand months. On this blessed night, the angels descend to the earth by the Permission of Allah (ﷻ), and the earth becomes tight (التضييق) with their great presence. **WHEN THE ANGELS ARE PRESENT, THERE IS PEACE, TRANQUILITY, AND DUAS ARE ACCEPTED.** On this night, all the decrees (التقدير) for the coming year will be revealed to the angels from the Preserved Tablet.

Laylat al Qadr is a great Favour from Allah (ﷻ) upon the ummah of Muhammad (ﷺ) for which we need to be truly grateful. **WE CAN ONLY RELY ON HIM TO MAKE US TO WITNESS THIS BLESSED NIGHT.** There is no might and power except with Allah (ﷻ). We tend to think of worship as comprising mainly of

practical actions such as prayer, reciting Quran and making dua, but even actions of the heart are greatly valued. If you pray on laylat al qadr, then it is as if you have prayed for a thousand months. If you are grateful, then it is as if you have been grateful for a thousand months. You have to want to witness this great night, relying completely on Allah (ﷻ) to help you.

We should establish the night prayer on the Night of Decree.

مَنْ يَقُمْ لَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ " : اللَّهُ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ : عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ

Abu Huraira (رضي الله عنه) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"Whoever establishes the prayers on the night of Qadr out of sincere faith and hoping to attain Allah's rewards (not to show off) then all his past sins will be forgiven." (Sahih al-Bukhari, Hadith 35).

Praying qiyaam is the best act of worship that a person can do on Laylat al Qadr. Other acts of worship include reciting the Quran, pondering over its verses, making dua, istighfar, and dhikr. If you have your menses, you can spend the night doing all these acts of worship except praying.

The best dua to say on laylat al qadr is:

اللهم إنك عفو تحب العفو فاعفُ عني

O Allah, You are Most Pardoning,

and You love to pardon; so pardon me.

(At-Tirmidhi).

The Departure of Ramadan

Ramadan teaches us discipline, patience, and self-control. By the end of Ramadan, we hope to graduate with **TAQWA**; closer to attaining the Pleasure of Allah (ﷻ). Allah (ﷻ) is inviting us to go to paradise but we need to struggle to reform and purify ourselves to be worthy of such a great reward.

In the month of Ramadan, people were hastening to collect good deeds by reciting the Quran, giving zakat or sadaqah, helping people and praying. Whoever managed to do good deeds in Ramadan, must **THANK ALLAH (ﷻ)** for guiding him, and beg Allah (ﷻ) to accept them. Whoever committed sins and had shortcomings, then let him not despair from the mercy of Allah (ﷻ); the doors of repentance are still open for him. **VERILY ALLAH (ﷻ) LOVES THOSE WHO REPENT.**

The greatest benefit of fasting in Ramadan is to **STRENGTHEN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH ALLAH (ﷻ)**. Throughout the year we are busy with the dunya, and we are hasty and heedless in completing our obligations, often praying with our limbs only, without presence of heart.

Ramadan is a great reminder for us to **PUT THE DELIGHTS OF THE WORLDLY LIFE ASIDE**, and bring the hereafter forward, work harder to reform ourselves, strive to do more good deeds, so that we can attain the pleasure of Allah (ﷻ).

In Ramadan, everything in the **UNIVERSE IS CHANGED** to help one perform more good deeds. This leads to an increase in faith which also makes one more sensitive to his sins.

The next benefit is the association with **GOOD COMPANIONS**. In Ramadan, we spend more time with good companions who help us increase in faith. This leads one to be more selective and cautious about whom he chooses to spend time with. Bad companions encourage us to commit sins which lead to decreasing in faith.

Another benefit is hating the sins. With more faith, the sins seem like a mountain over the head and with weak faith, the sins seem like flies that can be brushed away.

Ramadan also trains us to be more cautious about our time; to spend our time in performing good deeds and avoid wasting time with vain talk or unnecessary activities.

THE TRUE WINNERS ARE THOSE WHO WILL TAKE CARE OF THEIR TIME AFTER RAMADAN AND NOT WASTE IT. They will spend their time as they were spending it in Ramadan: in doing good deeds.

Fasting six days in Shawwal

An indication of acceptance of good deeds is that Allah opens another door of goodness for the person.

What is the indication of the acceptance of your fast and qiyaam in Ramadan? Allah (ﷻ) will open for you to more good deeds, and Allah (ﷻ) will open for you to fast six days in Shawwal.

THE BELIEVERS WILL BE HASTY AND KEEN TO FAST THE SIX DAYS OF SHAWWAL.

Fasting six days in Shawwal is a voluntary act that comes after fulfilling the obligation of fasting in the month of Ramadan. This is similar to having the voluntary prayers after the obligatory prayers in order to rectify any shortcomings in our obligatory prayers. So by fasting the six days in Shawwal, you can make up for any shortfalls in a your fasting of Ramadan.

عَنْ أَبِي أَيُّوبَ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - " مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ ثُمَّ
(أَتْبَعَهُ بِسِتِّ مِنْ شَوَّالٍ كَانَ كَصَوْمِ الدَّهْرِ

It was narrated from Abu Ayyub (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "Whoever fasts Ramadan then follows it with six days of Shawwal, it is as if he fasted for a lifetime." (Sunan Ibn Majah, Book 7, Hadith 1787).

Before you fast the six days in shawwal, you need to make up for any fasts you missed in Ramadan before you fast the six days in Shawwal. This is your priority because the days which you missed fasting in Ramadan are an obligation for you to make up, whereas fasting the six days in Shawwal is a voluntary fast.

A person can have multiple intentions for a voluntary fast but not for an obligatory fast. For example, if you have already completed your missed fasts of Ramadan, and you plan to fast on the coming Monday, 13th of Shawwal, then you can have many intentions to fast on this day: to fast one of the days in Shawwal, to fast on a Monday, and to fast on one of the White Days. If you are fasting to make up a missed fast of Ramadan then this is an obligatory fast, and its intention cannot be mixed with the intention of a voluntary fast.

There is no need for a woman to ask permission of her husband if she is making up her obligatory missed days from Ramadan. However she does need to ask his permission for the voluntary fasts, including the six days in Shawwal. If he says no, then you get two rewards –a reward for obeying your husband, and a reward for having the intention to fast voluntarily. **TRULY THERE IS NO ONE LIKE ALLAH (ﷻ).**

*Virtues of fasting the six days of Shawwal:
Sheikh Abdur Razzaq Al Badr (may Allah preserve him)*

1. It is a way of showing **GRATITUDE TO ALLAH (ﷻ)** for guiding us to fast the month of Ramadan.
2. It serves a similar purpose to praying the voluntary prayers after the obligatory prayers: **TO RECTIFY THE DEFICIENCIES IN OUR OBLIGATORY FAST.**
3. If a person observes the fast of Ramadan and then follows it with fasting six days of Shawwal, **IT IS AS IF HE HAS BEEN FASTING FOR THE WHOLE YEAR.** If a person does this every year, it would be as if he has fasted for a lifetime. The explanation for this is that Allah (ﷻ) rewards each good deed with ten like it, so if you fast the thirty days of Ramadan and the six days of Shawwal, the good deed for fasting these thirty six days is 360, and this completes the year. If your intention every year is to fast Ramadan and then follow it with six days in Shawwal, it will be as if you have fasted your whole lifetime. This is the winner; he is always looking to make a profit and to benefit from doing good deeds.
4. Fasting these six days is an **INDICATION THAT ALLAH (ﷻ) HAS ACCEPTED YOUR FAST OF RAMADAN, AND THAT HE IS PLEASED WITH YOU.**
5. The state of the believer after Ramadan should be **BETTER AND MORE VIRTUOUS THAN HE WAS BEFORE RAMADAN.** This is an indication of the acceptance of his fast, qiyaam and good deeds by Allah (ﷻ).

ALL PRAISES AND THANKS ARE DUE TO ALLAH, THE LORD OF THE 'ALAMIN. MAY THE PEACE AND BLESSINGS OF ALLAH BE UPON MUHAMMAD, HIS FAMILY, HIS COMPANIONS , AND THOSE WHO FOLLOW IN THEIR FOOTSTEPS AND TREAD THEIR PATH UNTIL THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT. AMEEN.



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