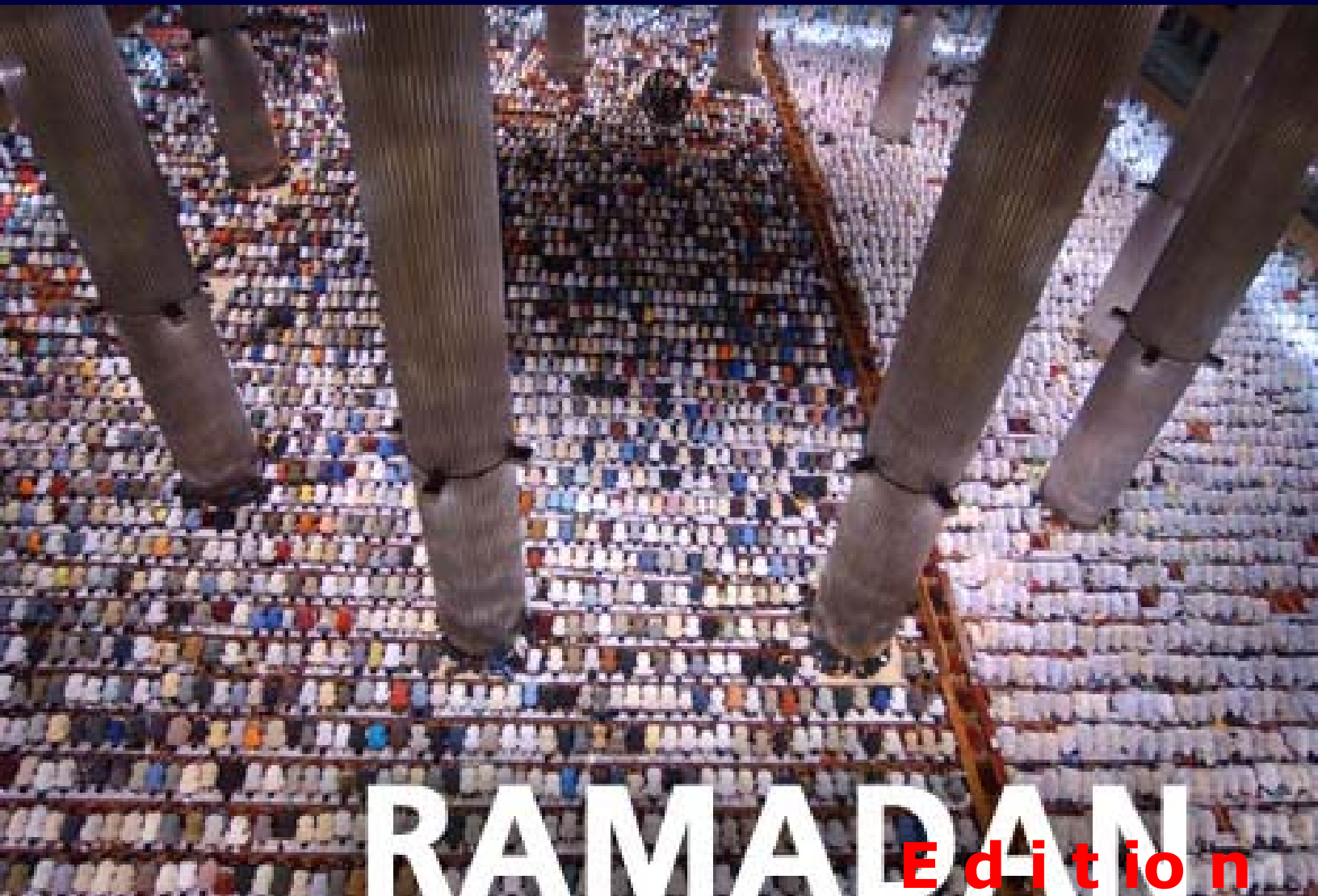


United Muslims of Australia

The Message

“O you people!

A great and a blessed month has arrived for you... anyone who comes closer to Allah through a good deed during this month is as if he performed an obligatory duty during times other than Ramadan, and he who fulfils an obligatory duty in it will be like one who fulfils seventy obligatory duties in another month. It is the month of patience and the reward of patience is Paradise.”



RAMADAN Edition

THE PROPHET'S RAMADAN KHUTBA

Assalamu'Alaikum

The following khutba was delivered by Prophet Muhammad (s) on the eve of Ramadan. It is short but concise, informative and educational. It provides instructional models to Muslims to be followed and to be practised in their daily lives; especially during the month of Ramadan. Due to its importance and because it was spoken by the Prophet Muhammad (s) himself on a notable occasion, the meaning of the khutba was translated and included for all of us to develop a greater understanding behind the true meaning of Ramadan.

It was narrated by Salman the Persian (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (s) delivered a khutba on the last day of Sha'ban (on the eve of Ramadan). The Prophet (s) said: "O you people! A great and a blessed month has arrived for you. A month therein a night which is better than one thousand months. The fasting during this month is an obligation (Fareedah), and the extra prayers during its nights are voluntary. Anyone who comes closer to Allah through a good deed during this month is as if he performed an obligatory duty

(Fareedah) during times other than Ramadan, and he who fulfils an obligatory duty in it will be like one who fulfils seventy obligatory duties in another month. It is the month of patience, and, the reward of patience is Paradise. It is the month of visiting of the poor, the sick and the needy so as to share their sorrows. It is the month where the nourishment, the sustenance and the income of the believing Muslim increase and they are blessed."

"Anyone who invites others to break their fast at Iftar will be provided with forgiveness of his sins and be saved from hell, and will receive reward equal to the fasting person without reducing his own reward in any respect."

Some of the followers of the Prophet (s) said: "Not all of us may find food to share with one so that he could break his fast." The Prophet said: "Allah will reward you even if you help the fasting Muslim to break his fast with a date, a sip of water, or a drink of milk . . . it is a month: its beginning

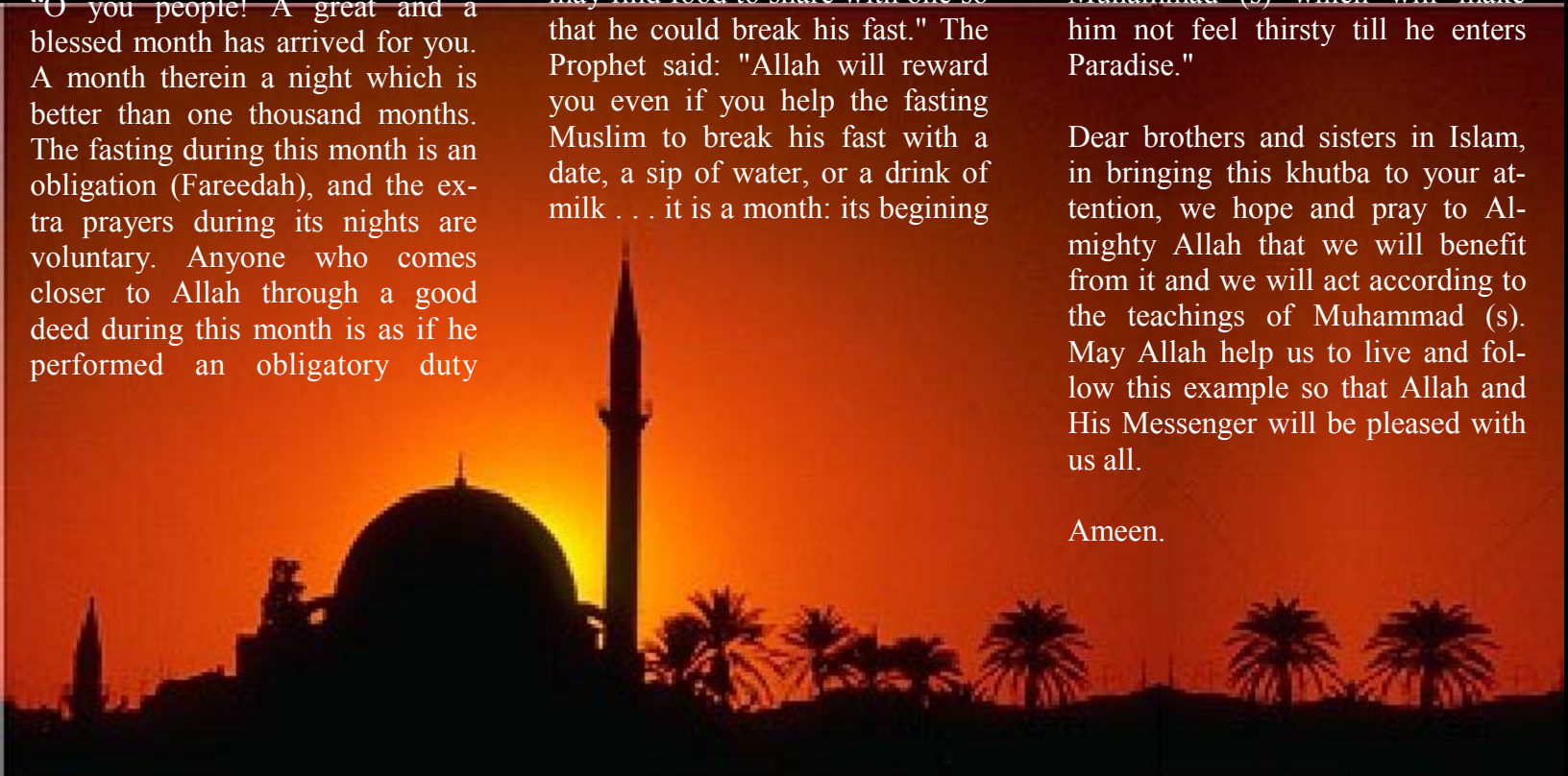
is Mercy (Rahmah), and its middle part is Forgiveness (Maghfirah) and its last part is freedom from hellfire. Anyone who helps a slave to be freed, Allah will forgive him and free him from Hell. Increase in yourselves four characteristics: two by which you will please your Lord, and two others by which you cannot live without.

The first two qualities to please Allah, are to bear witness that there is no one worthy of worship except Allah, and to ask forgiveness from Allah. However, the other two things that you cannot live without are: to ask Allah for Paradise and to ask Him to protect you from Hellfire.

Anyone who gives water to a Muslim at Iftar, Allah will give him water during the Day of Judgment from the fountain of the Prophet Muhammad (s) which will make him not feel thirsty till he enters Paradise."

Dear brothers and sisters in Islam, in bringing this khutba to your attention, we hope and pray to Almighty Allah that we will benefit from it and we will act according to the teachings of Muhammad (s). May Allah help us to live and follow this example so that Allah and His Messenger will be pleased with us all.

Ameen.



EDITORIAL

**“O you who
have attained to
faith! Fasting is
ordained for you
as it was or-
dained for those
before you, so
that you might
attain God-
consciousness”
[Surah Al-
Baqarah 2:183]**

Ramadan does not just revolve around fasting; it places certain restrictions on the daily lives of every Muslim. Sexual activities, drinking water and smoking are forbidden during the fasting period. Other restrictions which are also prohibited at all times, in particular in the month of Ramadan include: telling of a lie (false statements), backbiting, false oath, greed, the use of offensive language etc. Therefore brothers and sisters in Islam let us be cautious in this month, as Ramadan sets an example on how we should act and behave in our homes, mosques, and in particular, in the streets throughout the entire year.

Another important and significant aspect of Ramadan is *Laylat-al-Qadr* (the Night of Power). *Laylat-al-Qadr* is held on the evening of the 27th day of the month. This is the night Muhammad (s) received the first revelation of the Holy Quran. This night which Allah declares as being better than a thousand months, is a night where even the angels in the heavens see as being worthy of witnessing and is a night so rich with holiness that past sins are forgiven and good deeds are returned. So brothers and sisters, let us take this opportunity to renew our faith and earn the rewards that this great month can offer which will help us attain our ultimate goal and enter us into the gates of paradise inshaAllah.

On a final note, Ramadan is a test of will and sacrifice so let us strive and set ourselves the goal, that come the end of Ramadan, we are ‘spiritually recharged’, having attained an increase in faith and feeling closer to Allah (swt).

Your brother in Islam

The Editor

Assalamu alaikum brothers and sisters in Islam,

Ramadan Mubarak and welcome to another edition of “The Message”. As we are all aware the holy month of Ramadan has dawned upon us again and the Newsletter Committee has decided it would be appropriate to focus this edition on this blessed month.

As good practicing Muslims it is essential that we strive to understand the importance of Ramadan and how it affects our daily activities. Ramadan is the ninth month on the Islamic calendar. It is the month when the Holy Quran was sent down from the heavens, acting as guidance onto mankind, attaining a declaration of direction, and acquiring a means of Salvation. Throughout this holy month, Muslims from every global corner of the world fast during the daylight hours, while simultaneously increasing the amount of time spent in worship, visiting the *Masjid* (Mosque), offering prayers and reciting the Quran. It can also be described as a time of sacrifice, contemplation and a period where Muslims totally surrender themselves and concentrate on worshipping their lord.



The Meaning of Ramadan

by *Khalid Baig*



Fasting during Ramadan was ordained during the second year of Hijrah. Why not earlier? In Makkah the economic conditions of the Muslims were bad. They were being persecuted. Often days would go by before they had anything to eat. It is easy to skip meals if you don't have any. Obviously fasting would have been easier under the circumstances. So why not then?

The answer may be that Ramadan is not only about skipping meals. While fasting is an integral and paramount part of it, Ramadan offers a comprehensive program for our spiritual overhaul. The

entire program required the peace and security that was offered by Madinah.

Yes, Ramadan is the most important month of the year. It is the month that the believers await with eagerness. At the beginning of Rajab --- two full months before Ramadan --- the Prophet Muhammad, (s), used to supplicate thus: "O Allah! Bless us during Rajab and Sha'ban, and let us reach Ramadan (in good health)."

During Ramadan the believers get busy seeking Allah's mercy, forgiveness, and protection from Hellfire. This is the month for renewing our commitment and re-

establishing our relationship with our Creator. It is the spring season for goodness and virtues when righteousness blossoms throughout the Muslim communities. "If we combine all the blessings of the other eleven months, they would not add up to the blessings of Ramadan," said the great scholar and reformer Shaikh Ahmed Farooqi (Mujaddad Alif Thani). It offers every Muslim an opportunity to strengthen his Iman, purify his heart and soul, and to remove the evil effects of the sins committed by him.

"Anyone who fasts during this month with purity of belief and with expectation of a good reward (from his Creator), will have his previous sins forgiven," said Prophet Muhammad, (s). "Anyone who stands in prayers during its nights with purity of belief and expectation of a reward, will have his previous sins forgiven." As other ahadith tell us, the rewards for good deeds are multiplied manifold during Ramadan.

Along with the possibility of a great reward, there is the risk of a terrible loss. If we let any other month pass by carelessly, we just lost a month. If we do the same during Ramadan, we have lost everything. The person who misses just one day's fast without a legitimate reason, cannot really make up for it even if he were to fast everyday for the rest of his life. And of the three persons that Prophet, (s) cursed, one is the unfortunate Mus-

lim who finds Ramadan in good health but does not use the opportunity to seek Allah's mercy.

One who does not fast is obviously in this category, but so also is the person who fasts and prays but makes no effort to stay away from sins or attain purity of the heart through the numerous opportunities offered by Ramadan. The Prophet, (s), warned us: "There are those who get nothing from their fast but hunger and thirst. There are those who get nothing from their nightly prayers but loss of sleep."

Those who understood this, for them Ramadan was indeed a very special month. In addition to fasting, mandatory Salat, and extra Ta-

raweeh Salat, they spent the whole month in acts of worship like voluntary Salat, Tilawa (recitation of Qur'an), Dhikr etc.

Islam does not approve of monasticism. It does not ask us to permanently isolate ourselves from this world, since our test is in living here according to the Commands of our Creator. But it does ask us to take periodic breaks from it. The mandatory Salat (five daily prayers) is one example. For a few minutes every so many hours throughout the day, we leave the affairs of this world and appear before Allah to remind ourselves that none but He is worthy of worship and of our unfaltering obedience. Ramadan takes this to the next higher plane, providing

intense training for a whole month.

This spirit is captured in I'tikaf, a unique Ibada associated with Ramadan, in which a person gives up all his normal activities and enters a mosque for a specific period. There is great merit in it and every Muslim community is encouraged to provide at least one person who will perform I'tikaf for the last ten days of Ramadan. But even those who cannot spare ten days are encouraged to spend as much time in the mosque as possible.

Through direct Ibada we "recharge our spiritual batteries" as Ramadan is the month for rebuilding our spiritual strength. How much we benefit from it is up to us.

"It is a month: its beginning is Mercy (Rahmah), and its middle part is Forgiveness (Maghfirah) and its last part is freedom from hellfire..."



newsletter@uma.org.au



If you have any interesting articles, comments or thoughts you would like to share, please send us an email.

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READY, SET, RAMADAN!

*In the Name of Allah, Most
Gracious, Most Merciful*

Since Ramadan is just around the corner, I thought I'd prepare a list of simple and practical advice for us to share before Ramadan, in preparation for this blessed month. The aim is to help us take advantage of this time of the year and better appreciate and comprehend what has graced the Muslim Community from rewards and opportunity for betterment.

1. Mental preparation before Ramadan is crucial and it goes hand in hand with the Dua. The Prophet peace be upon him would always make Dua close to the arrival of Ramadan and say: "Oh Allah make us reach Ramadan." Be conscious of the entire atmosphere before hand so that when it is here, it does not take you by surprise. How can anything so valuable to us take us by surprise when we love its company? Start preparing for it from the very beginning. Look at the days of the year it fall in, what does that coincide with – TAFE exams? University exams? Work commitments? What time is Iftar? What time is Taraweeh? What does that imply for your days, should you be starting work earlier to make it to Iftar on time? What time is Fajr? How many hours of sleep will you need? So on and so forth so that when Ramadan comes, you're smooth sailing and you can ride the wave.

2. Beware of treating it like a habit! For most of us, Ramadan comes and goes and only later during the month do

we catch on and realize what is happening. The time it takes for Ramadan to sink in is time wasted; it should hit us from day one. This goes for anything we do for the sake of Allah, especially the worships, it pays to stop everything and bring to your mental attention what you're about to do. To avoid the treadmill approach of empty yearly traditions, when you are about to embark onto a magnificent journey of worship such as Ramadan, you must realize what you're doing, bring to your consciousness, gather all your concentration on this, and then begin in the name of Allah!

3. Allah from his mercy runs a sale during Ramadan. These are the prices every year. Ibn Khusaima narrated a hadith that one Sunnah action is for the price of an obligatory action. If you choose to upsize, one obligatory action is for the price of 70 obligatory actions.

By Mohammed Khodr

Obligatory actions include what we know like prayer and we already do it. Being good to parents is also obligatory – feed them, please them, spend on them, let every day of Ramadan be Fathers and Mothers day if that's what you like, don't worry about that other day imitating the non-believers, this is the time you treat your parents, to a Muslim everyday is Fathers and Mothers day. Treat their friends well for their sake, be good to your uncles and aunts from each of their sides, ask Allah for forgiveness and mercy upon them. The obligatory act of lowering your gaze, when you do that it's times 70 also, around university, in the

street, avoid the shops because it'll make this hard for you and it will diminish your rewards as a result, go shopping as less often as you can. With the Sunnah pray them all, any 12 and more, daily.

*“Ramadan is
not a time for
sleep!”*

2 before Fajr, 4 before and 2 after Thohr, 2 after Maghreb, 2 after Isha or other authentic narrations about how many and when and always end your day by praying Witr. If you do so, the Hadith tells us that Allah will build for you a palace in Jannah. This is in and out of Ramadan.

Now get this mathematical example. You walk to the Masjid and every step you take earns you a Hashanah and gets rid of a sin and elevates your position in Jannah. Step by step until you reach the Masjid. Store that on the side, that's one.

There you pray the Obligatory Prayer and in congregation which is 70 prayers by 27 prayers, and in another narration by 25 prayers. So that's 70 by 27 for each obligatory prayer which equals 1890 prayers. At the end of the day, if you pray all 5 prayers in such a fashion, you will earn the rewards of 9450 prayers. If we multiply this number by 30 days, we get 283 500 prayers, which is more than 150 years of prayer! This is just from praying the obligatory prayers in congregation. That's 2, keep storing these points.

You also choose to pray your Sunnah which equals a fard. You pray all the Sunnah of the prayers during the day and you get a palace in Jannah every single day. We look forward so much to buying a house in Australia, in pursuit of the Australian Dream, what about the Islamic Dream of having a House in Jannah? Have we really thought about that? When we pray all our Sunnah and earn 30 Palaces in Jannah, how do you acquire these Palaces and get access to them? You enter Jannah through the door of Rayaah, which is exclusive to the fasters, after they all enter, it will be shut behind them. That's point 3, it just keeps getting better.

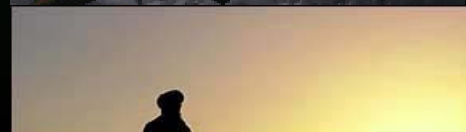
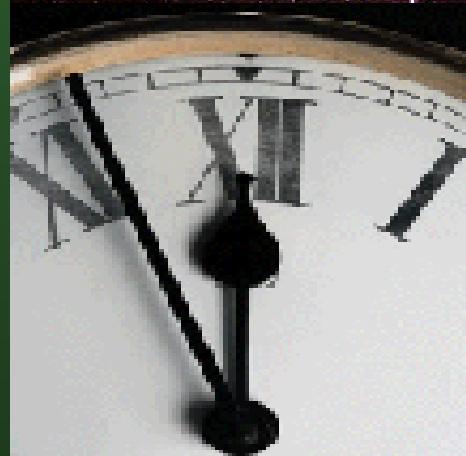
Day after day, you clock your foot steps, you pray your Obligatory prayers and your Sunnah prayers and those rewards are increasing until you reach the Eve of Qadr. You stay up that night in sincere worship to Allah for the last 10 odd nights of Ramadan. At the break of dawn, you walk the earth without a sin on your back. No more sins but those 3 points of reward are still accumulating. This is point 4, forgiveness of your sins, all of them.

We have just mentioned 4 points and very briefly and systematically. We never constraint the mercy and reward of Allah, but this is just to give you a ballpark figure of the rewards involved. Add to the four points the reward of fasting that only Allah knows, the rewards for a charity, for reading Quran, for praying the Taraweeh, for inviting people to break their fast at your place and... and ... and. At the end of Ramadan you would have one hefty account inshaAllah and none of it will be wasted. Let's make this all encompassing fact, point 5.

Now get this, all these rewards are earned in one single Ramadan. Imagine all these rewards in the one Ramadan being repeated for a second, and a third and a fourth, 5th, 6th seventh etc for as long as you are alive, every year when Ramadan comes round, this is the outcome?! How much rewards would you have earned?

So now answer this question: Is Allah merciful to His slaves or isn't he? And: Is Jannah reachable or isn't it? YES YES YES! But what's the catch? You have to want it and you have to thus work for it.

Allah knows best. What I said which was correct is from Allah. What I said which was incorrect is from myself and Shaitan, Allah and His Messenger are innocent from it.



Fasting Rules & Regulations

By: Bilal Dannoun

nence; abstaining from the things that break a person's fast from the break of dawn till sunset, along with a continued intention between these two periods.

The third pillar of fasting is the time. That is, one must fast during the days of Ramadan and not the nights. Whoever fasts the nights instead of the days, then their fasting is deemed defective because Allah (s.w.t) says: *"...and eat and drink until the white thread (light) of dawn appears to you distinct from the black thread (darkness of night), then complete your fast till the night-fall..."*

Things Which Break the Fast

Eating and drinking deliberately

Any Muslim who eats or drinks intentionally has broken their fast. Whoever does this must repent to Allah, asking Him for forgiveness. Many of the Muslims scholars are of the opinion that he should also make up this day before the next Ramadan. Imam Abu Hanifah holds the opinion that in addition to repenting and the making up the day, he must also feed a poor or needy person. This view is also attributed to Imam Malik.

Induced vomiting

The soundest view amongst the scholars of Islam is that as long as vomiting is unintentional then the fasting remains valid. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: **"If someone had a sudden attack of vomiting, no atonement is required of him, but if he vomits intentionally he must make atonement."** If any vomit is accidentally swallowed, the fast is not affected.

Menstruation and post-natal bleeding

A woman who bleeds due to any one of these two reasons has broken her fast, even if a woman gets her period seconds before sunset. This is the opinion of the majority of the scholars. The number of fasting days missed must be

Fasting Ramadan is the fourth pillar of Islam, which Allah made obligatory on Muslims in the second year of the Prophet's migration (Hijrah) to Madinah: *"O you who believe, fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may gain Taqwa (piety)"* (2: 183) The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"He who fasts during Ramadan with faith and seeking reward from Allah will have his past sins forgiven." (Bukhari) Ramadan is a unique opportunity for Muslims to seek forgiveness and repentance from Allah. It is also a month of opportunity for enormous reward. As the noble month of Ramadan draws near, it is relevant for us to look into some of the rulings associated with fasting. It is incumbent on Muslims to be aware of Allah's mandates, prohibitions, and permissible actions, in order that we worship Allah with sure sightedness.

Definition and Pillars of fasting

Linguistically, fasting means to abstain from doing something. However, when

the notion of fasting is used in Islamic shari'a, it refers to abstaining from all the things that nullify fasting from the break of dawn (Fajr) till sunset (Maghreb), coupled with the intention of doing so as an act of worship. Fasting the month of Ramadan is obligatory (Fard) according to the Qur'an, Sunnah, and consensus of the scholars on every Muslim who has reached the age of puberty, is sane, and is able to fast without it acting as a threat to one's health due to illness.

The first pillar of fasting is the intention, and the place of the intention is the heart, hence articulating the intention is **something not legislated. It is mandatory to have the intention at night, that is, before the break of dawn (Fajr). This is based on the saying of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him): "Whoever does not intend fasting prior to Fajr, then there is no fasting for him."** It is permissible to make an intention for the whole month at the first evening of Ramadan. However, some scholars have suggested that is obligatory to make an intention every night of Ramadan.

The second pillar of fasting is absti-

made up prior to the next Ramadan.

Ejaculation

Regardless of whether this resulted due to the husband kissing his wife, caressing her etc. This is the opinion of the majority of the Muslim scholars and Allah knows best.

Sexual Intercourse

If a fasting person has sexual intercourse during the day of Ramadan, irrespective of whether ejaculation takes place or not the fasting has been broken. In this case a person must repent, seek forgiveness from Allah, and make up this day. Furthermore, he must free a slave if he owns one, if not, then two consecutive months of fasting must be done prior to the next Ramadan. If fasting two consecutive months is detrimental to one's health then sixty poor or needy people must be fed.

Supplements, nutritional injections and drips

These dietary intakes also break the fast as they defeat one of the main objectives of fasting, namely, to undergo thirst and hunger.

Apostasy

If a fasting person becomes a disbeliever, then their fasting becomes void, as Allah Most High says: *"If you commit shirk (associate others in worship with Allah), then surely (all) your deeds will be in vain..."*

Who is Exempted from Fasting?

The Sick

Those who are sick but are able to fast must do so. However, if fasting is detrimental to a person's health, due to illness, then this person is not required to fast. Those who have no hope of recovery are to compensate by paying *Fidyah* – The feeding of a needy person for every day missed. Those who are temporarily ill are to make up the missed days after their recovery before the next Ramadan.

Travelers

A traveler who will face no difficulty in fasting may choose not to fast, but fasting in his case is preferable. If however, fasting will cause a traveler hardships then it is advised to take up the favor and concession of Allah granted to him, and break the fast. The missed days must be up before the next Ramadan.

Children

Fasting is not required of children until they reach the age of puberty. The signs of puberty are: the growth of pubic hair, the occurrence of wet dreams, and in the case of a female, the menstrual period. If a person turns the age of fifteen and none of these signs have appeared, then they are considered to have reached the age of puberty. Although children are not obligated to fast prior to puberty, they should be encouraged to fast if there is no fear of harm as this will train them to fast.

Controversial Issues

Unintentionally Eating or Drinking after the Break of Dawn or before Sunset

The correct opinion concerning a person who eats or drinks believing that the break of dawn has not commenced, or that the sun has set when it actually hasn't taken place does not need to make up that day. During the leadership of 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) some people broke their fast, some moments later, the sun appeared. They asked whether they should make up this day, at which 'Umar responded by saying: "No, by Allah, we did not have any inclination towards a wrongful action." In addition, we have the incident whereby Asmaa' (may Allah be pleased with her) said: "We broke our fast on a cloudy day during Ramadan at the time of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), then the sun appeared." (Bukhari) Ibn Taymiyyah said: "This suggests it is not obligatory to make up the day, for if the Prophet (peace



be upon him) had ordered them to make up that day, this would have been widely known, just as the news of the breaking of their fast was widely circulated.

Use of Nose Drops, Eye Drops, Intravenous Injections and Perfume

The scholars of Islam differed about the use of these things during fasting. The correct opinion - and Allah knows best - is that these things do not nullify fasting, and that no compensation is required if used, even if they nose or eye drops pass the throat. This is the opinion of Ibn 'Umar, Anas ibn Malik, Abu Hanifah, ash-Shaafi, and Ibn Taymiyyah. There is nothing authentically mentioned by the Prophet (peace be upon him) prohibiting their use.

Water Entering the Stomach Accidentally

Water that enters into the stomach as a result of sniffing or rinsing out of the mouth has also caused controversy amongst scholars. The correct opinion is that the fasting is not broken, as this has occurred unintentionally. Although sniffing water up the nostrils during *wudu* is desirable, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) advised that it should be avoided during fasting.

Use of Puffers

Puffers used for asthma do not break the fast according to a number of scholars. This is because it is considered as compressed gas that goes to the lungs, and does in no way nourish or quench the thirst.

Pregnant and Breast Feeding Women

Women who are pregnant or breast feeding are allowed to break their fast if they fear for their health or the health of their infant or fetus. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **“Allah Most High has given concession to the traveler to pray half the salat, and for the traveler, the**

pregnant, and the breast feeding and fasting.” (Ibn Majah) The respected scholars of Islam differed concerning how a woman who is pregnant or breast-feeding must compensate for her missed days. The first opinion is that of the companions Ibn 'Abbas and Ibn 'Umar, (may Allah be pleased with them) who said that she should only need to feed a needy person for each missed day.

The second opinion is that of Abu Hanifah who said she needs to make up the day only. Imam Ash-Shafi and Imam Ahmad hold the opinion that she must both feed and make up the days. According to Imam Malik, a pregnant woman must make the day only, and that one who was breastfeeding must feed and make up the days. The correct opinion – and Allah knows best – is that she only needs to feed a poor or needy person for each missed day. This is because we do not have any reports from any of the companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) opposing Ibn 'Abbas and Ibn 'Umar's verdict – Two of Islam's most learned men concerning the Qur'an and Prophetic Sunnah.

We ask Allah Most High through His beautiful and greatest names and attributes to bless us with the strength that will enable us to remember Him, glorify Him, and extol Him throughout this sacred month and throughout our lives .

Aameen.

HADITH OF THE MONTH

By Hesham Mourad

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Whoever fasts the month of Ramadan, obeying all of its limitations and guarding himself against what is forbidden, has in fact atoned for any sins he committed before it."

Ahmad and alBaihaqi related this hadith with a good chain.

Some of us have heard this Hadith (or a similar one) many times. The blessed month of Ramadan arrives once more, and we all get ready to purify our souls yet again. But a question arises in our minds; if we need to purify our souls, have we really accomplished this in the previous months of Ramadan?

If we find the need to repeat this process of purification during this blessed month year by year, due to the flagitious sins we commit, have we really considered that there must be something wrong which we may need to mend? Let us go back to the real reason why we all fast, or as mentioned in the Hadith, the limitations/conditions of fasting, so that we may reach our ultimate goal.

The motive to fast should be to attain *Taqwa* (or consciousness of Allah swt). We may also realize that fasting is a means to return to our state of *Fitrah* (or natural state), since acts like smoking, swearing, anger and the like, are reduced and we all try to turn to Allah (swt) to save us from these acts.

Many of us try and make a shield between ourselves and Allah's wrath, and many of us do succeed! But during the aftermath of Ramadan, we revert to our old ways like frauds and exclaim "But the shaitan made me do it, as the devils are released from their chains after Ramadan".

This brings us back to our initial question, and we finally appreciate the answer again: we only return to Allah in this month, expecting an easy way out for our past

actions.

Nonetheless, maybe we actually knew this answer all along, and we were trying to kid ourselves by saying that Allah is the most Merciful. Yes indeed, Allah is definitely the most Merciful! But do we really submit to Allah in all truthfulness during the remainder of the year?

Sure we may reduce our bad actions when we fast as mentioned earlier, but there may be another action that we need to adopt to truly attain *Taqwa* and to save ourselves from Allah's wrath. By rendering the following act, we can justly deserve Allah's Mercy and have our past sins forgiven in this blessed month. That is: to know Allah all year round.

“Sincerity, Brotherhood, and Sacrifice are the three essential elements that are at the heart of UMA.”

- Sheikh Shady Suleiman



“Come and visit our Youth Centre and be apart of the Social Activities, Basketball and Pool comps and nightly Islamic lectures during Ramadan”.

69 Croydon St Lakemba

IN THE OF ALLAH THE MOST
GARSIOUS THE MOST MERCIFUL

Praise be to Allah for the greatest bounty - the bounty of Islam.

And praise be to Allah for the worship of fasting and for the month of Ramadan. A month that the Prophet (s) will say to his companions “when Ramadan comes Allah has gifted you with a gift, this gift is the month of Ramadan: the month of mercy, the month of forgiveness, the month of blessings and the month of the Quran. It is the month angel Jibril came to the Prophet Mohammad (s) with the light of guidance, the light of the Quran with the light of Islam.

It is the month of Ramadan - a month that the gates of the hell fire will close and the gates of the paradise will open wide for the believers. A special gate called Rayyaan has been prepared for only those who fast and who will be allowed to enter from it. This is the month that Allah gives his servants the opportunity to renew their relationship with Him that I am your Lord and you are My servants. It is an opportunity to get closer to their Lord, Allah almighty and glory. It is an opportunity for the sins to be forgiven and the good deeds to be accepted. And this is the greatest worship Allah (swt) can bestow on his servants, the

worship of fasting. All the deeds and worships are recorded by the angles except the worship of fasting where Allah (swt) says fasting is for me and I reward my servants for it.

What an honour for the servants of Allah and what a reward from a Merciful Lord. The rewards are so great that Allah Him self is taking care of it. He also says glory be to Him, that the change of breath of the one that fasts its more beloved to him than the perfume of mask. Subhannallah! Doesn't He deserve to be worshiped?

Fasting is a great worship that Allah loves, not because you left your food, water and desires but rather, it is because you did so seeking the love and pleasure of your Lord and that is why Allah (swt) has created this special gate in paradise that none can enter from it except those who fasts. Why then shouldn't we look forward to the month of Ramadan, and why shouldn't we be overjoyed about its arrival. It is narrated that the companions use to get so happy when the month of Ramadan would enter and get so depressed at its conclusion.

My Muslim brothers and sisters, let us all take advantage of this month, let us all make the most of this month and let us all invest what we have from our time, money and energy in this month. No month is better than the blessed month of Ramadan.

Let us all renew our relationship with our Lord in this month, let us repent to Him, ask Him for His forgiveness and acceptance. Let us all make a pledge with Allah - an unbreakable pledge that “oh Allah we have sold our souls and wealth and desires for Your sake and for the return of paradise.” As Allah (swt) says in the Quran 'that Allah had bought from the believers their souls and their wealth for in return, the paradise'. Let us all my brother and sisters make that pledge to Allah and ask Him to make us from those believers that He has mentioned.

My brothers and sisters, the month of Ramadan is that opportunity that we get from Allah to get closer to Him. A Muslim is a believer 365 days in the year - before Ramadan, in Ramadan and after Ramadan. There is no such thing called a part-time Muslim. In Islam, we all should be full time Muslims, 24 hours a day. Every moment of our day and night, every place of this world should be spend in the worship of Allah. This is the quality of a true believer and a true daeya (preacher), until the day we meet Our Lord.

I ask Allah to bestow His mercy and His forgiveness in this blessed month of Ramadan, and I ask Him to guide all our Muslim brothers and sisters who are misguided.

By Sh. Shady Suleiman

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Ramadan: A Me

Another year has elapsed and it is that time of the year again when we return to silent and verbal introspection and recharge our spiritual batteries. Where must we begin in such a quest? What must our frame of heart be in arriving at this destination? How must we prepare to receive our annual guest?

Abu Huraira (r) reported the Prophet (s) saying: "The time between the five prayers, two consecutive Friday prayers, and two consecutive Ramadans are expiations for all that has happened during that period, provided that one has avoided the grave sins." [Muslim]

The above hadith, defines the essential need in the life of a Muslim for a return to Allah, or a time to take the self to account. The placement of the five daily prayers, the Friday congregational prayer and the annual fast of Ramadan share that common thread and purpose, which is to serve as a reality check. These serve as times to stop whatever it is we are doing in life and to reflect on our direction, whatever it may be. This introspection would inadvertently make us realise where we have fallen into error and it presents itself as an opportunity to make amends and get back on the straight path of life. The amendments come through repentance which arises out of deep seated *nadham* (regret) and *istighfar* (asking Allah for forgiveness). In other words, the five daily prayers, the Friday congregational prayer and Ramadan each present an opportunity, each spanned by its allotted time. The opportunity is there, it is for us to take recourse and identify how it can impact upon our lives and how we can best utilise its fruits to nourish use and serve as provisions for our journey through life.

"...And make provision for yourselves – but, verily the best of all provisions is taqwa (God-consciousness): remain then conscious of Me O you who are endowed with insight."

[Al-Baqarah 2:197]

Ibadah (worship) in itself equates to life and to living, the pursuit of which becomes the journey of life. Understanding the nature of *ibadah* becomes foundational to understanding the nature of fasting and in fact is the very purpose of our existence.

For Allah says in the Quran: *"I have not created Jinn nor humankind except that they should worship me."* [Ad-Dhariyat 51:56]

The sole purpose of our creation and hence existence is so that we can fulfil through every breath we take, our purpose of being a servant of Allah and to spend every moment in our lives in *ibadah* or the worship of the One True God, Allah. This definition of worship extends far beyond the ritual acts of worship, that are in themselves reinforcing this broader understanding and enactment of *ibadah*. *Ibadah* therefore is living life itself in full acceptance of Allah and thus intentionally committing oneself to live life in accord with His guidance and instruction. So be it in youth or old age, be it at school or at work, on the road or the playground, the Muslim is in constant awareness of Allah, or is conscious of Allah and is thus in a constant state of *ibadah*. This is the ideal that we constantly strive towards and achieving this state is a continual and constant jihad (struggle or striving).

The Messenger of Allah, Muhammad (s) said: *"... the*



rcy to the Worlds

By Maher Magrabi

mujahid (one who carries out jihad) is he who strives against himself for the sake of obeying Allah, and the muhajir (one who emigrates) is he who abandons evil deeds and sin." [Sahih Ibn Hibban]

When we then look at the Quranic injunction of making fasting a duty upon every Muslim, we can immediately identify where fasting fits into the bigger picture of life and reinforces our very purpose and objective in life.

Fasting or As-Siyam does not merely mean to abstain from food, drink and lawful sexual intercourse from sunrise to sunset, but more importantly it is a period where one takes extra special care to guard the eyes, the ears, the tongue, and the limbs from any impropriety. Therefore, the need then arises to look at ways in which we could prepare ourselves for such an intensive challenge. It is a period where the pains of hunger must be felt, where the thirst of day, the weakness of body fuses together to create an atmosphere for the infusion of taqwa into the soul and the re-purification of the heart. It is a declaration of independence from the material realm and a statement of our utter dependence on the Ultimate Reality or Al-Haqq for our successes and rewards in this life and in the hereafter.

To understand how the annual exercise of fasting operates a training program for the establishment of taqwa within our ourselves, we can draw an analogy between fasting and training for marathons. Marathon runners train at high altitude in an atmosphere of less oxygen. They get tired a lot more easily and have to work much harder to achieve results, but in the process they condition their body to get used to less. With high perform-

ance attained under adverse conditions, under normal conditions even greater results are achieved. Similarly, with the reduction of food intake, we condition our souls towards high performance despite the adverse conditions. This month long training, leaves us primed and ready to take on many challenges in the following year. It is our declaration of our independence from the material and dependence on Allah, Who is the source of all sustenance and strength.

Unlawful food is the poison of the body and corrupts the soul, while lawful food is like medicine. Even the lawful in excess can kill you. **Moderation** is the key. With the coming of Ramadan, many families buy and consume more food than ever before. In many households, the womenfolk spend the entire day in the kitchen preparing for the evening meal, whereas the focus should be on worship and recitation of the Quran during the day and night. In many other households, the day is the time of rest and the night is the time for parties and over eating frenzies. We must start correcting such behaviour and impudent tendencies. We must re-adjust our sleeping patterns so that we maximize our output from the day and spend the night in *salaat, dua*, Quran reading and *zhikrullah*. **Ramadan is not a time for sleep!**

Ramadan is the flowering ground for Taqwa and this is both for the individual as well as for the community. It is a gift from Allah and something too precious to lose. The responsibility is upon us. May Allah help us and guide us. May He enable us to live through Ramadan and reap all the fruits and treasures in this month and the coming months. May He enable us to invest our time profitably. Ya Rabb (O Lord), enable us to sow the seeds for a bright and prosperous future, in this world and the Hereafter.



ZAKAT: A HEREAFTER INVESTMENT

One of the most important principles of Islam is that all things belong to God, and that wealth is therefore held by human beings in trust. The word Zakat means both 'purification' and 'growth'. Our possessions are purified by setting aside a proportion for those in need, and, like the pruning of plants, this cutting back balances and encourages new growth.

Zakat is the amount of money that every adult, mentally stable, free, and financially able Muslim, male and female, has to pay to support specific categories people.

This category of people is defined in surah at-Taubah (9) verse 60: "The alms are only for the poor and the needy, and those who collect them, and those whose hearts are to be reconciled, and to free the captives and the debtors, and for the cause of Allah, and (for) the wayfarers; a duty imposed by Allah. Allah is knower, Wise." (The Holy Qur'an 9:60).

The obligatory nature of Zakat is firmly established in the Qur'an, the Sunnah (or hadith), and the consensus of the companions and the Muslim scholars. Allah states in Surah at-Taubah verses 34-35: "34:O ye who believe! there are indeed many among the priests and anchorites, who in Falsehood devour the substance of men and hinder (them) from the way of Allah. And there are those who bury gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah. announce unto them a most grievous penalty- 35:On the Day when heat will be produced out of that (wealth) in the fire of Hell, and with it will be branded their foreheads, their flanks, and their backs, their flanks, and their backs.- "This is the (treasure) which ye buried for yourselves: taste ye, then, the (treasures) ye buried!" (The Holy Qur'an 9:34-35).

The prophet (pbuh) said: "Any owner of gold and silver who does not deliver from them their right, on the Day of Quiyamah (Day of Judgment), (the gold and silver) will be shaped as foils of fire. Then it will be heated in the fire of Hell; (and) then with it he will be ironed on his side, his forehead, and his back" (narrated by Muslim).

It is agreed between Muslims in all the centuries the obligatory nature of paying Zakat for gold and silver, and from those the other kinds of currency.

Zakat is obligatory when a certain amount of money, called the nisab is reached or exceeded. Zakat is not obligatory if the amount owned is less than this nisab. The nisab (or minimum amount) of gold and golden currency is 20 mithqal, this is approximately 85 grams of pure gold. One mithqal is approximately 4.25 grams. The nisab of silver and silver currency is 200 dirhams, which is approximately 595 grams of pure silver. The nisab of other kinds of money and currency is to be scaled to that of gold, 85 grams of pure gold. This means that the nisab of money is the price of 85 grams of 999-type (pure) gold, on the day in which Zakat is paid.

When is Zakat Due ?

1. Passage of One Lunar Year:

Zakat is obligatory after a time span of one lunar year passes with the money in the control of its owner. Then the owner needs to pay 2.5% (or 1/40) of the money as Zakat. (A lunar year is approximately 355 days).

2. Deduction of Debts:

The owner should deduct any amount of money he or she borrowed from others; then check if the rest reaches the



"A Quality of a true believer is that they feed the poor for the Love and Pleasure of Allah Alone" (Quran 76:8)

necessary nisab, then pays Zakat for it. If the owner had enough money to satisfy the nisab at the beginning of the year, then the money increased (in profits, salaries, inheritance, grants...etc.), the owner needs to add the increase to the nisab amount owned at the beginning of the year; then pay Zakat, 2.5%, of the total at the end of the lunar year. (there are small differences in the fiqh schools here)

Each Muslim calculates his or her own Zakat individually. For most purposes this involves the payment each year of two and a half percent of one's capital.

**800,000,000
PEOPLE GO TO
BED EVERY
NIGHT
HUNGRY!**

A pious person may also give as much as he or she pleases as sadaqa, and does so preferably in secret. Although this word can be translated as 'voluntary charity' it has a wider meaning. The Prophet said 'even meeting your brother with a cheerful face is charity.'

The Prophet said: 'Charity is a necessity for every Muslim.' He was asked: 'What if a person has nothing?' The Prophet replied: 'He should work with his own hands for his benefit and then give something out of such earnings in charity.' The Companions asked: 'What if he is not able to work?' The Prophet said: 'He should help poor and needy persons.' The Companions further asked 'What if he cannot do even that?' The Prophet said 'He should urge others to do good.' The Companions said 'What if he lacks that also?' The Prophet said 'He should check himself from doing evil. That is also charity.'

**24,000 people die due
to hungry related
causes every day!**

WHAT AFTER RAMADAN?

"How evil are the people who know Allah only in Ramadan!"

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful,

We leave the blessed month of Ramadan, its beautiful days and its fragrant nights. We leave the month of the Quran, taqwa, patience, jihad, mercy, forgiveness and freedom from hellfire.

Have we fulfilled the requirements of taqwa and graduated from the Ramadan school with the diploma of the god-fearing?

Have we fought our souls and desires and defeated them, or have we been overtaken by our customs and blind imitations?

Have we performed our actions in a way that fulfills the conditions for receiving mercy, forgiveness and release from the Fire?

Many questions and numerous thoughts come to the heart of the sincere Muslim, who asks and answers with truthfulness.

What Have We Gained From Ramadan?

Ramadan is a school of iman and a 'stop to recharge one's spiritual batteries' - to acquire one's provision for the rest of the year...

For when will one take a lesson and change for better if not in the month

of Ramadan?

The noble month is a true school of transformation in which we change our actions, habits and manners. "Verily, Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves" (13:11).

If you are from those who benefited from Ramadan, fulfilled the requirements of taqwa, truly fasted the month, prayed in it with truthfulness, and strove against the desires of your soul, then praise and thank Allah, and ask Him for steadfastness upon it until you meet your death.

Be not like the one who has sewn a shirt and then destroyed it. Have you seen one who sewed a shirt or thawb, so when she looked at it, she liked it. Then she destroyed it, pulling a thread by thread for no reason. What would people say about such a person? Or have you seen one who earns a fortune trading throughout the day, then when the night comes, he throws away all that he earned, dollar by dollar. What would people say about such a person?

This is the condition of one who returns to sinning and evildoing after Ramadan and leaves obedience and righteous actions. So after he was favored with the blessing of obedience and enjoyment of communicating with Allah he returned to the blaze of sins and evil actions. How evil are the people who know Allah only in Ramadan!



FIND-A-WORD

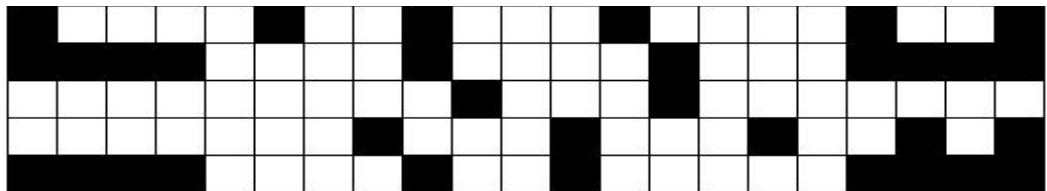
Aspects Of Ramadan

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 FORGIVENESS
 HUMBLE
 MANNERS
 PATIENCE
 PIOUS
 QURAN
 RAMADAN
 REVELATION
 TAQWA
 TARAWIH
 WILLPOWER

FALLEN PHRASE

Hint: An Ayah From
 the Koran



T H F A E

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Hadith of the Week

The Prophet Pea

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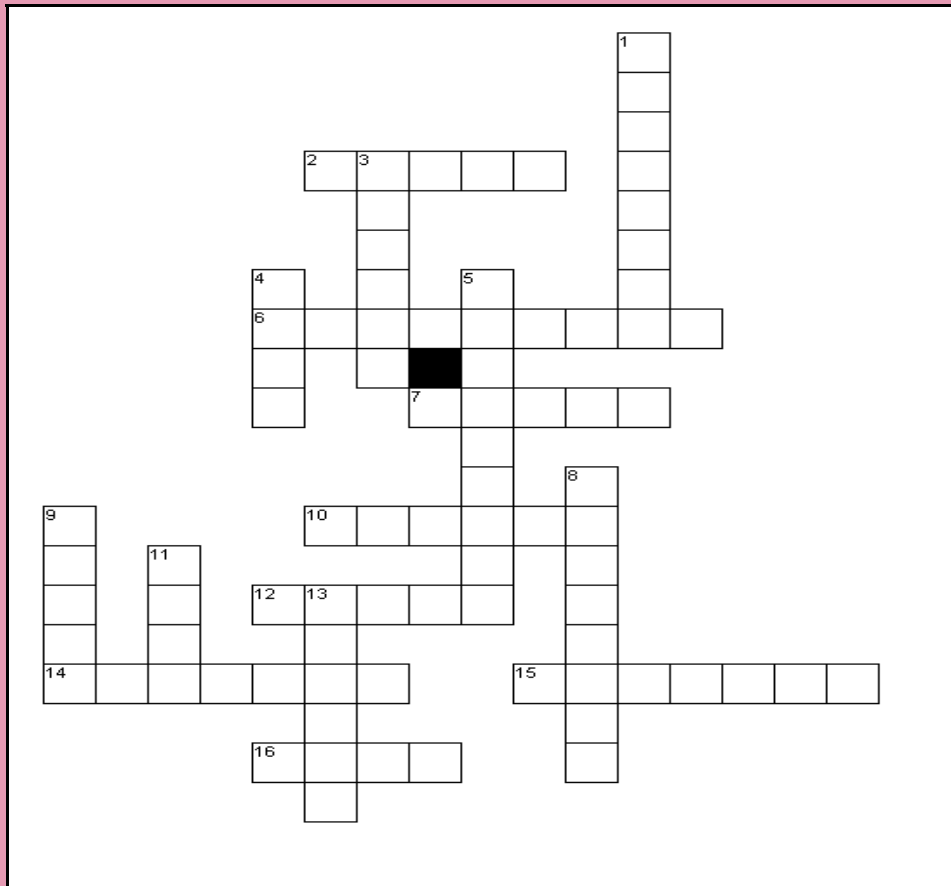
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AMUSEMENTS PAGE

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The Prophet (s) said: "Ramadan has come to you - a blessed month. Allah has made it obligatory upon you to fast in it. During this month, the gates of heaven are open, the gates of the Hellfire are closed and the evil devils are chained..."
 [Ahmed and An-Nasaa'ee].

Across

2. The purpose of Ramadan is so one can gain t_____.
6. The name given to the celebration to mark the end of Ramadan.
7. The type of fruit the Prophet (s) would break his fast on.
10. What pillar of Islam is fasting in the month of Ramadan.
12. What month in the Islamic calendar does Ramadan fall in?
14. The recommended night prayer during the month of Ramadan.
15. From whom did Prophet Muhammad (s) receive the first verses of the Quran.
16. The Arabic name given to fasting.

Down

1. Which phase of the moon signifies the end of Ramadan?
3. The name given to the night the Quran was revealed.
4. The first word/action Prophet Muhammad (s) was commanded to do during the Night of Power.
5. Which surah is the verse "Fasting is ordained for you as it was ordained for those before you, so that you might attain to God-consciousness" mentioned in?
8. The Night of Power is equivalent to how many months?
9. Obligatory payments of charity made during Ramadan by Muslims.
11. The first battle fought in the month of Ramadan.
13. Seclusion or isolation in the last ten days of Ramadan.



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