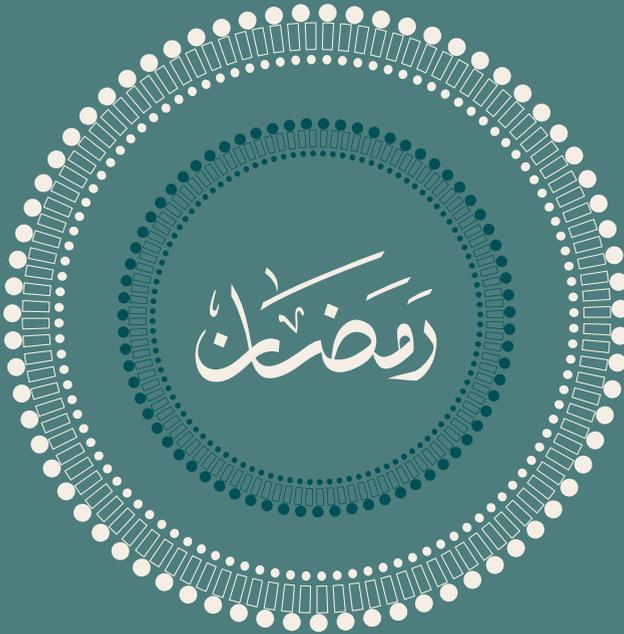




# A Guide To Ramadan



Imam Abid Khan & Ustadh Rehan Salim

# بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلاة والسلام على خاتم الأنبياء والمرسلين،  
المبعوث رحمة للعالمين محمد وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين

Ramadan is one of the most important months in the Islamic calendar. It is the month in which fasting, the fourth pillar of Islam, was prescribed, and the month in which the Quran was revealed.

The companions of the Prophet ﷺ knew the immense value of this month. Like a treasure worth striving for, they would endeavour to prepare for its arrival six months in advance. We should aim to follow in the tradition they left behind by learning about Ramadan and striving to attain the countless blessings Allah has stored within it.

Linguistically, the word Ramadan comes from the root 'ramad' which roughly translates as 'extreme heat'. It is mentioned that this name refers to the dryness of the mouth at the time of intense thirst. Allah says in the Quran, referring to the month of Ramadan:

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

*O believers! Fasting is prescribed for you—as it was for those before you—so perhaps you will become mindful of Allah.*  
(Surah al-Baqarah, Verse 183)

As a result, we present this humble guide to provide the reader with a detailed guide of how to approach Ramadan from a spiritual and practical viewpoint. It is our intention to include sufficient information and references on various topics whilst trying to avoid excessive lengthy discourse.

Topics relating to the virtues of fasting, its spiritual implications, matters of jurisprudence and dietary advice are all included in order to present a guide which we hope you will regularly refer to before, during, and after every Ramadan.

We ask Allah to accept this work and make it a means to attain his pleasure and Jannah. Whatever good you find within this is from the mercy of Allah and we ask His forgiveness for any mistakes we have made.

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# The History of Fasting & Ramadan

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

O believers! Fasting is prescribed for you—as it was for those before you—so perhaps you will become mindful 'of Allah'.

Quran. Al-Baqarah: 183

Allah makes it clear in this verse that fasting is not a new commandment exclusively obligated upon the Muslims. Countless generations before us were also commanded to fast. However, the exact form and number of days these generations would fast is a matter over which scholars have differed.

Ibn Kathir states in the tafsir to the above verse that previous nations were ordered to fast three days a month.

Scholars such as Mujahid held that this ayah was specifically referring to the fasting of the People of the Book (the Jews and Christians). This would then apply the following meaning to the verse: "Fasting is prescribed upon you (the Muslims) as it was prescribed upon the People of the Book before you".



Prior to the commandment to fast the month of Ramadan, Muslims would fast the day of 'Ashura, and were given the option of either fasting during the month of Ramadan, or feeding a poor person for each day they did not fast. However, Allah eventually revealed the following verse:

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ

"The month of Ramadan [is that] in which was revealed the Quran, a guidance for the people and clear proofs of guidance and criterion. So whoever sights [the new moon of] the month, let him fast it."

Quran. Al-Baqarah: 185

Following this, all previous traditions were abrogated, and fasting the month of Ramadan became obligatory. In fact, the actual commandment to fast the month of Ramadan was prescribed upon the Muslims in the second year following the Prophet's ﷺ migration from Makkah to Madinah after the incident of Sarf al-Qiblah (changing of the Qiblah).

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ fasted the month of Ramadan nine times before he departed from this world in the 11th year after the Hijrah.

# The Virtues of Fasting

Below is a short collection of *ahadith* (sayings of the Prophet ﷺ) highlighting the numerous virtues related to both the month of Ramadan as well as the act of fasting:

*The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said:*



Whoever fasts Ramadan out of faith and with the hope of (Allah's) reward, all his previous sins will be forgiven."

Bukhari

This hadith illustrates the incredible opportunity Allah has bestowed upon his slaves of having their previous sins forgiven. The scholars highlighted that the hadith is referring to the forgiveness of minor sins, as major sins are expiated through seeking forgiveness.

On the Day of Resurrection every soul will be concerned with his/her own fate. It is a day when every single person will be searching for their good actions to present before Allah, the Almighty. It is a day in which even a mother will turn away from her child out of sheer fear for herself. This hadith explains how our fasts will come and intercede for us on this terrifying day.

*The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said:*



Fasting and the Quran intercede for the servant on the Day of Resurrection. Fasting will say, 'O my Lord I prevented him from food and desires so accept my intercession for him,' and the Quran will say: 'I prevented him from sleep at night, so accept my intercession for him,' so their intercession will be accepted."

Ahmed

*The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said:*



"There is a gate in Paradise called Al-Rayyan, and those who observe fasts will enter through it on the Day of Resurrection and none except them will enter through it. It will be said, 'Where are those who used to observe fasts?' They will get up, and none except them will enter through it. After their entry the gate will be closed and nobody will enter through it."

Bukhari

The scholars indicate that paradise has eight doors. A hadith related by Imam Bukhari mentions four by name: al-Salah, al-Jihad, al-Sadaqah and al-Rayyan. The Prophet highlights in this hadith that the one who gives up food and drink for the sake of Allah will be rewarded immensely.

The act of fasting highlights one's reliance and inherent physical weakness thereby developing a higher spiritual state which awakens one's consciousness of Allah. This consequently compels the believer to make sincere Du'a which the Prophet ﷺ has promised will not be rejected.

The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said:



The Prophet ﷺ said, "The du'a of the fasting person will not be refused."

Al-Bayhaqi

## The Month of Du'a

Ramadan is a time for making plentiful *du'a*, as it is a month of mercy, forgiveness, and blessings. The doors of heaven are open, and the gates of hell are closed, making it a time to turn to Allah and make heartfelt *du'a* to Allah.



What Duas do you plan to make this Ramadan?

# The Etiquettes of Fasting

It must be noted that outwardly, fasting may be performed correctly by adhering to the conditions of correct intention and avoiding eating/drinking between dawn and sunset. However, its reward is dependent upon the quality of the action (i.e. the inward condition of the person performing the act).

*The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said:*



It may be that a fasting person gets nothing from his fast except hunger

Ibn Majah

This hadith indicates how immorality and poor character may render ones fast void of any reward. Therefore, in order to bear the fruits of our fast we should make a conscious effort to internalize the following etiquettes during the month of Ramadan:

**01** | Refrain from Sin



**05** | Avoid Overeating

**02** | Restrain Anger



**04** | Be Steadfast in Worship



**03** | Remember the Poor

## 1) Refrain from Sin

This is clearly articulated by the Prophet (ﷺ) who said "Whoever does not give up forged speech and evil actions, Allah is not in need of his leaving food and drink." In this concise statement, the Prophet (ﷺ) explains how the real concept of fasting extends far beyond abstinence from food and drink, but includes refraining from immoral character. Abu al-'Aliyah said 'The fasting one is in a continual state of worship until he says about another person that which they would not like to hear'.



Which sin do you pledge to avoid during this Ramadan and continue to stay away from afterwards?

## 2) Restrain Anger

Allah mentions one of the qualities of the Muttaqin in Surah ale-'Imran as "Those who swallow their anger". Hence, it is upon the Muslim in Ramadan to embody the character of the muttaqin and abstain from losing their temper over trivial matters. In fact, the Prophet (ﷺ) gave the following advice if provoked, "If someone fights him or insults him, he should say 'I am fasting, I am fasting.'"



## 3) Remember the Poor

Ramadan is a time of reflection on one's weaknesses and reliance on Allah. It is also a time where one should remember the poor who are in a state of continual fasting due to abject poverty. It is narrated that 'Abd Allah ibn 'Umar would prefer to eat with the poor and would not break his fast unless there were orphans or the poor with him.



Which of your neighbours can you help support this Ramadan?

#### 4) Be steadfast in your Worship

Our pious predecessors would make *du'a* six months in advance to the onset of Ramadan as they understood its immense value. The scholars mention how good deeds in this month are multiplied, whilst there is a difference of opinion on the increased severity of bad deeds. Either way, one should try to fill the day with all types of good deeds ranging from recitation of the Quran to serving ones parents and local community.



Plan your meals for Ramadan to avoid overcooking and wasting food.

#### 5) Avoid overeating

Conscious effort should still be made to avoid overeating. Overeating is known to make the heart hard, the body sluggish for worship and is generally a sign of extravagance.

*The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said:*



“The worst vessel the son of Adam can fill is his stomach”

Ibn Majah

Therefore, we should strive to eat conservatively, particularly at iftar time.

# Fasting & It's Special Rank

The scholars of Islam say that the act of fasting has particular attributes which are not present in other forms of worship. In fact, the act of fasting carries a special rank amongst the obligations ordered by Allah as a means to obeying Him, as Allah personally attributes the reward of fasting to himself.

Allah says in a Hadith Qudsi:



"FASTING IS FOR ME AND I  
REWARD FOR IT."

---

Imam al-Qurtubi mentions how the reward for good deeds is between 10 and 700-fold as Allah wills, except for fasting. Allah connects the reward for fasting to Himself without specifying an amount which indicates the greatness of the reward, and indicates that it is one which is without measure. Some scholars even claimed the Hadith indicates the superiority of fasting over all other acts of worship!

**Q:** So why does fasting have this particular virtue?

1

It is a secret and an internal action which no one can see except for Allah. The result is that as people cannot see the act, there is no ostentation (showing off).



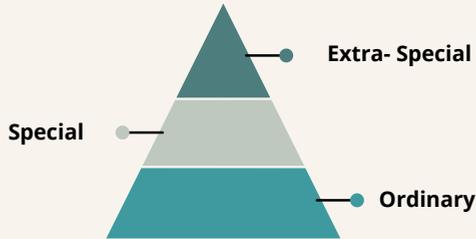
2

Fasting actually overpowers the enemy of Allah - the Shaytan, because the means of the Shaytan is through desires. By minimising desires (through abstaining from food and drink) the means of temptation are tightened.



# The Levels of Fasting

Imam al-Ghazali in *Ihya' 'ulum al-Din* (Revival of the Islamic Sciences) categorizes fasting into three levels:



## EXTRA SPECIAL

Fasting of the heart from unworthy concerns and worldly thoughts, in total disregard of everything but Allah, Great and Glorious is He. This kind of fast is broken by thinking of worldly matters, except for those conducive to religious ends.

Keeping one's ears, eyes, tongue, hands, feet and all other organs free from sin.

## SPECIAL

## ORDINARY

Abstaining from food, drink and sexual relations.

Ultimately, the intelligent one in Ramadan is one who places equal importance to cleansing his heart from his desires and vices as he does to the external conditions of fasting. We ask Allah to aid us all in this endeavour.

أَمِينُ يَا رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ

# Sunnan of Ramadan

## EAT SUHUR

The Prophet of Allah ﷺ said : 'Eat *Suhur*, for there is blessing in it' (Bukhari)



# 1

## DELAY SUHUR

# 2

Zayd ibn Thabit RA said: 'We took *Suhur* with the Prophet of Allah ﷺ and then stood for prayer' (Bukhari & Muslim)

# 3

## HASTEN TO BREAK YOUR FAST

The Prophet of Allah ﷺ said : 'The people will be in goodness as long as they hasten breaking the fast. (Bukhari & Muslim)



# 4

## OPEN YOUR FAST WITH A DATE



If no dates are available then to drink water or eat something sweet.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ would open his fast with fresh dates before praying. If there were no fresh dates then dry dates. If there were no dry dates then he would drink a few sips of water. (Tirmidhi)

# 5



## READ THE DU'A OF BREAKING THE FAST

The Prophet of Allah ﷺ used to say the following *du'a* at the time of breaking the fast:

ذَهَبَ الظَّمَأُ وَابْتَلَّتِ الْعُرُوقُ وَثَبَتَ الْأَجْرُ إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ

"The thirst is gone, the veins are moistened, and the reward is confirmed, if Allah wills"

# Sunnan of Ramadan

## READ OR STUDY THE QURAN

Jibril AS would come to the Prophet ﷺ every night and would rehearse the Quran with him. (Bukhari)

# 6

# 7



## TARAWIH

The Prophet of Allah ﷺ said: "Whoever prayed at night in it [the month of Ramadan] out of sincere faith and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his previous sins will be forgiven". (Bukhari)

# 8

## BE GENEROUS & GIVE INCHAIRITY

Ibn Abbas RA said: 'The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was the most generous person, and he would be at his most generous in Ramadan'. (Bukhari)



Select one of these Sunnahs and make a strong intention to practice it throughout this Ramadan

# The Quran & Sadaqah

It is mentioned by the scholars that good deeds are multiplied during Ramadan due to the honour of this particular month. Therefore, one should strive to increase in good deeds. However, two particular acts were given special attention by the Prophet ﷺ:



**RECITATION OF  
THE QURAN**



**GIVING SADAQAH  
(CHARITY)**

Ibn 'Abbas RA reported: 'The Prophet ﷺ was the most generous of people. He used to be the most generous in Ramadan when he would meet with angel Jibril and study the Quran with him. Angel Jibril would meet with the Prophet ﷺ every night in Ramadan to teach him the Quran...'. (Bukhari)

# The Quran

The Prophet ﷺ would listen to, ponder over, recite, and study the Quran with Jibril AS in the blessed month of Ramadan.

The month of Ramadan is a time in which we should all examine our relationship with the Quran.

We should ask ourselves how often do we read the Quran? How often do we reflect upon its verses? How much do we follow its teachings? When asked about the Prophet's ﷺ character, Aishah RA replied that his character was the Quran.



It is important to recite the Quran as much as possible in order to attain the bounteous virtues for this simple act. The Prophet ﷺ said: "Whoever reads a letter from the Book of Allah, he will have a reward. And that reward will be multiplied by ten. I am not saying that "Alif, Laam, Meem" is a letter, rather I am saying that "Alif" is a letter, "Lam" is a letter, and "Mim" is a letter."

Tirmidhi



## Understand



## Recite

In the Quran lies guidance for humanity, as Allah says:

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ

"The month of Ramadan [is that] in which was revealed the Quran, a guidance for the people..."

Quran. Al-Baqarah: 185

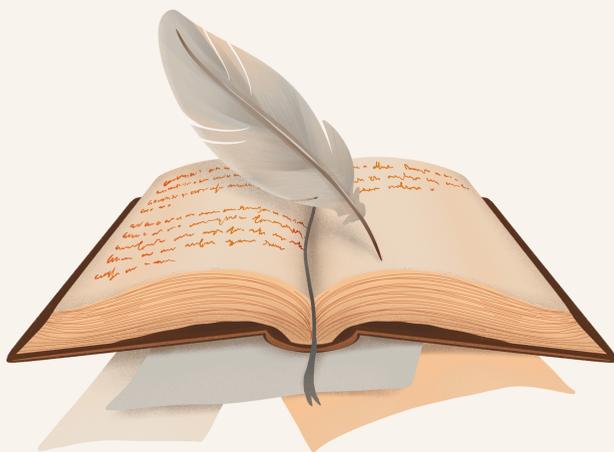
The Quran details a complete code which allows Muslims to live a good, chaste, and rewarding life in obedience to the commandments of Allah. As the Quran is a book of guidance, we as Muslims must make a conscious effort to understand its message and reflect upon its verses. If one does not understand Arabic, one should try to read the translation and, if possible, attempt to learn the Arabic language.

# Lessons from the Salaf

The Salaf would exert extra effort in reciting and reflecting upon the Quran in this blessed month. Some of them would complete a khatam (completion) of the Quran every three nights in Ramadan, whilst others such as Qatada would complete the Quran every seven nights. It is evident that their hearts were attached to the light of the Quran which compelled them to read it, day and night.

When one reads about our pious predecessors, we find that they would in fact devote this whole month in service to the Quran. It is reported that the great scholar of Hadith, Imam Malik would stop the recitation of Hadith and circles of 'Ilm (knowledge) during Ramadan in order to focus purely on the recitation of the Quran.

These and other numerous narrations illustrate the fact that our pious predecessors spent their days and nights reciting during Ramadan, contemplating and journeying through the Quran.



# QURAN GOALS

Set yourself some personal Quran goals below

RECITATION

REFLECTION

STUDY

# Sadaqah

*Ibn Abbas RA Reported*



The Prophet ﷺ was the most generous of all the people, and he used to become more generous in Ramadan when Gabriel met him  
Sahih Bukhari

Sadaqah is the act of giving voluntary charity and literally means 'to be truthful'. In essence, the person who gives charity validates their true devotion and service to Allah.

This is mirrored by Imam Maqdisi, who explains how charity (*zakah* or *sadaqah*) has three 'objectives':

Testing one's love for Allah by spending from that which is dear to him

Elevating oneself from the blameworthy character trait of miserliness [and greed]

Thanking Allah for the blessing of wealth [by spending from it]



As well as being a form of spiritual purification, *sadaqah* is also a means to multiply one's *hasanat* (good deeds) as the Prophet ﷺ said: "Whoever gives charity equivalent to a date, from his pure earnings and Allah only accepts pure, then Allah will accept it with His right hand, then He will nurture it...until it becomes like a mountain."

Allah Himself will grant the giver deeds the size of a mountain from a single date, therefore how about during Ramadan, when Allah further multiplies ones good deeds during this blessed month!

Therefore, one should strive to take advantage of this blessed time, helping those who are less fortunate whilst seeking the pleasure of Allah.



What different ways can you give this Ramadan?



# THE LAST

# 10

# NIGHTS

The last ten nights of Ramadan are the most important nights of the Islamic year as attested by the scholars. In one of these nights occurs Laylat al-Qadr (the Night of Power) which is better than 1000 months of worship.

In a narration by Muslim, Aishah RA said, "The Prophet of Allah ﷺ would strive hard in the last ten nights [more so] than at any other time"

(Bukhari & Muslim).



# Sunan Acts in the Last Ten Nights

1

Increase in seriousness & vigour  
(and avoid sexual relations)

Aishah RA relates



When the last ten days of Ramadan came, the Prophet ﷺ would stay up at night, wake his family and gird his loins."

Bukhari and Muslim

The above Hadith indicates the importance the Prophet ﷺ gave to prayer in the last ten nights. One should also busy themselves with *du'a*, recitation of Quran and dhikr.

2

To liven the night in prayer and  
good deeds

3

To wake up & encourage your  
family towards good deeds

This was also practiced by the companions such as 'Umar ibn al-Khattab RA who would pray until the middle of the night whereupon he would wake his family saying 'The prayer, the prayer' and then recite the verse - "And enjoin the prayer on your family and be patient in offering them."

Aishah RA recounts:



"I said, 'O Messenger of Allah, what do you think, if I witness Laylat al-Qadr, what should I say?' He said: 'Say:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوٌّ تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّي

Allahumma innaka 'afuwwun tuhibbul-'afwa,  
fa'fu 'anni

"O Allah, You are Forgiving and Generous,  
and you love forgiveness, so forgive me"

4

Continuously recite the  
following Du'a:



5

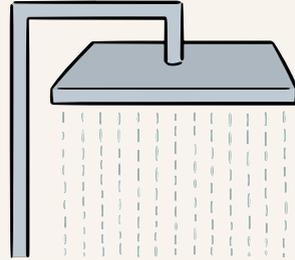
I'tikaaf

I'tikaf is a period of time spent in a mosque in order to distance oneself from the *dunya* to focus on beseeching Allah with *du'a* and remembrance. This was a regular sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ in Ramadan, to the extent that Abu Hurayrah RA spent days in 'I'tikaf every Ramadan.

It is narrated that the Prophet ﷺ would bathe between the two Adhans of Maghrib and 'Isha. This was also practiced by the salaf, such as Ibrahim al-Nakhai, who would bathe every night of the last ten days. Other reports indicate that some of the companions, such as Anas Ibn Malik, would bathe and perfume themselves on the nights they hoped was Laylat al-Qadr.

6

Bathing in between Maghrib and 'Isha



How can I create a spiritual environment in my home, just as the Prophet (PBUH) did with his family?



# LAYLATUL QADR

Laylat al-Qadr, or the 'Night of Power' is one of the most important nights of the year, as Allah states in the Quran;

لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ

"Laylat al-Qadr is better than a thousand months"

(Surah al-Qadr, Verse 3)

Imam al-Tabari explains the verse stating how a man from Bani 'Isra'il would stand the night in prayer until the morning and would fight in the path of Allah during the day for approximately 1000 months. It is said that standing (in prayer) on the night of Laylat al-Qadr is better than the act of this man! (Tafsir al-Tabari).

On this night, Allah makes the worship of a Muslim equal to that of 83 continuous years. It is a night where the angels, including Jibril, descend due to the numerous peace and blessings bestowed upon this night. It is a night where Allah will forgive the sins of his slaves for the Prophet ﷺ said: "Whoever stays up and prays on Laylat al-Qadr out of faith and in the hope of reward, his previous sins will be forgiven". (An-Nasai)

The scholars have differed considerably regarding the exact day of Laylat ul-Qadr with some scholars specifying a particular night in the last ten days such as the 27th, others such as Abdullah ibn Mas'ud and Imam Abu Hanifah even suggested it could be any day of the year. Due to the variety of narrations from the Prophet ﷺ and his companions, it is difficult to say for sure the exact night of Laylat al-Qadr, though many scholars hold it to be in one of the last 10 nights of Ramadan.

In fact, particular attention should be paid to the odd nights due to the saying of the Prophet ﷺ "Seek *laylat al-Qadr* in the odd numbered nights of the last ten nights." (Bukhari & Muslim).

One of the popular views, as mentioned by many scholars including Imam an-Nawawi, is that Laylat al-Qadr moves within the last ten nights every Ramadan. The wisdom behind this is for the Muslim to search and exert himself in worship through all the nights. And Allah knows best.

Set yourself some personal goals for the last 10 days below



# Fiqh Of Fasting

This section covers the legal matters related to fasting. Please refer to your local Imam or your school of thought for the specific rulings pertaining to your Madhab.

## Rulings on Fasting



It is compulsory upon Muslims to fast the month of Ramadan. Allah says in the Quran, "O you who believe! Observing al-Sawm (the fasting) is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become al-Muttaqun (the pious)".

The Prophet ﷺ said, 'Islam is built on five (pillars)...', among which he mentioned fasting in Ramadan. The one that does not fast the month of Ramadan without a legitimate excuse has committed a major sin.

## Definition



Siyam or Sawm linguistically means to restrain oneself from something. Allah mentions in the Quran that Maryam said: "Surely I have vowed to ar-Rahman (The Most Merciful, Allah) to fast"

The meaning of the word 'fast' in the above ayah is to 'abstain from speaking'. The technical definition of Siyam in the Shari'ah means to abstain from anything that breaks the fast, from dawn until sunset, with the intention (*niyyah*) to fast.

## The Beginning of Ramadan



It is *fard kifayah* (a collective duty) on the Muslims to make an effort to sight the moon of Ramadan on the 29th of Sha'ban. The Prophet ﷺ said in an authentic narration, "Fast when you see it (the new moon) and break your fast when you see it, but if the sky is cloudy (on the 29th of Sha'ban), then estimate it (by completing) 30 days of Sha'ban."

## Who is Obligated To Fast?



Fasting is obligatory upon every sane, adult Muslim who is not a traveller or is not prevented from fasting due to illness or any other legislative preventative factor. Women who are menstruating (haydh) or suffer from post-natal bleeding (nifas) are also absolved from fasting but must make them up as Aishah RA reports, "We were commanded to make up our fasts and we were not commanded to make up our prayers."



Take some time to learn the rules and guidelines related to Ramadan so you can better understand its practices during the month.

## Niyah (Intention)



Intention (niyyah) is a requirement for the validity of a fast. The intention must be made before Fajr as the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever does not intend to fast before Fajr will have no fast." According to the majority of scholars the intention must be repeated for every day of fasting, whilst one intention made on the eve of Ramadan for the whole month does not suffice.

However, it is important to note that the origin of the intention is the heart, therefore there is no requirement to verbally profess it. Going to sleep with the mere intention of waking up for the pre-dawn meal is an expression of one's intent to fast.



## The Traveller

A traveller is allowed to break his fast while travelling, whether or not it results in hardship. Certain conditions must be met before one is considered a traveller; firstly the journey must be more than 48 miles, and should go beyond the city and its suburbs. Secondly, the purpose of the journey must be permitted under the Shari'ah. According to the most correct opinion, if the purpose of the journey is unlawful, the traveller is not allowed to break his fast.

Whoever travels to a place and intends to stay there for more than four days must fast (as he is considered a settler), according to the majority of scholars. However, if one intends to stay at a place for less than four days he has the option to fast or not.



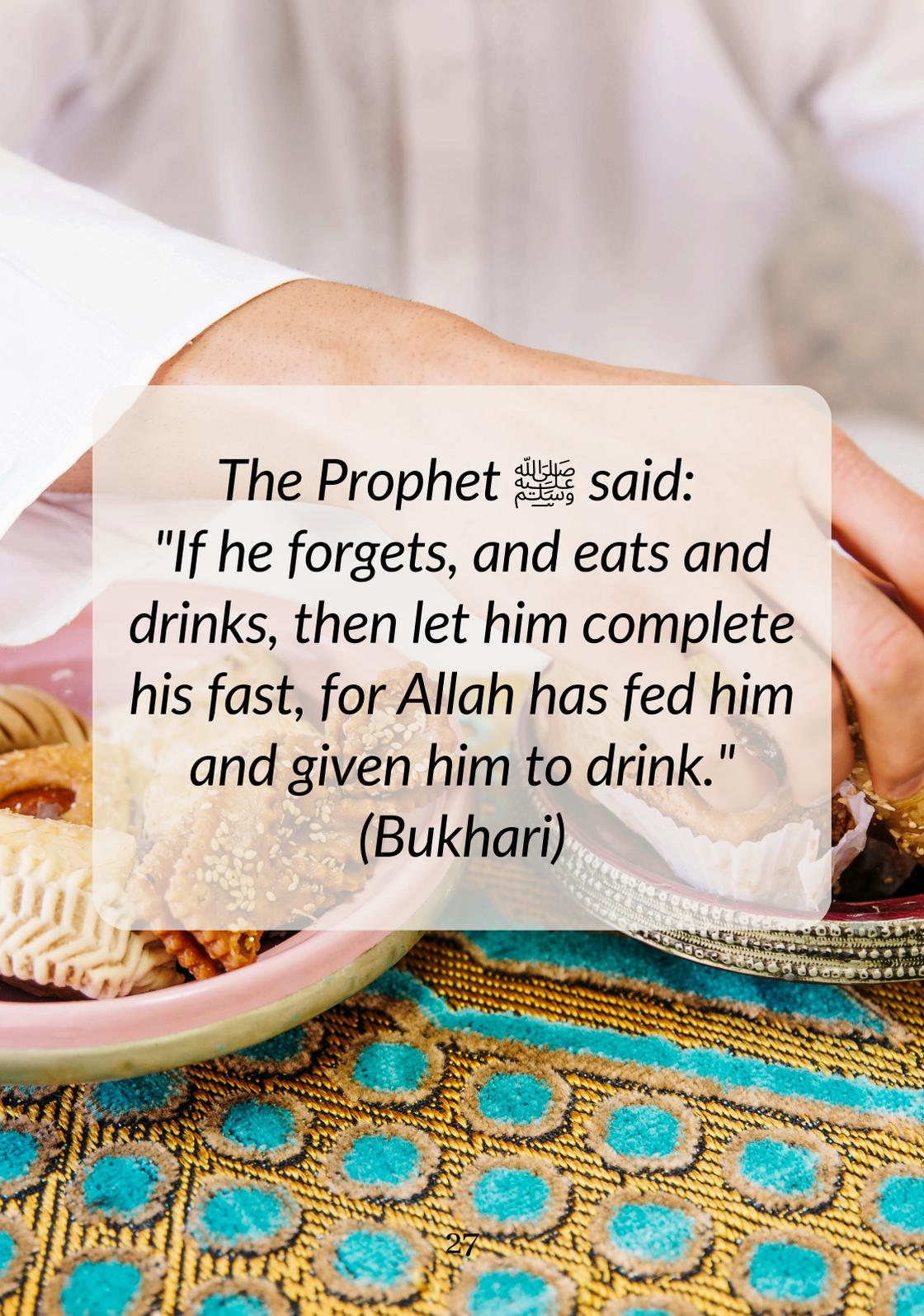
## The Sick

If a person is suffering from an illness which will be worsened by fasting, or fasting would delay the cure, the fast maybe abandoned. The basis for this is the ayah: "...and whoever is ill or on a journey, the same number [of days on which one did not observe sawm must be made up] from other days...". However, one is not exempted from fasting if he or she is suffering from a minor illness such as a headache or cough.

## The Elderly

Allah says in the Quran: "...and He (Allah) has not laid upon you any hardship in religion." Those who are elderly and face extreme difficulty in fasting due to their old age do not have to fast. This is a concession granted to them by Allah as He says in the Quran: "And as for those who can fast with difficulty (e.g., an old man, etc.), they have (a choice either to fast or) to feed a poor person (for every day)."

Ibn 'Abbas RA states in a narration that the above ayah refers to the old man and old woman who cannot fast. Such people must feed an indigent person for every fast missed, known as fidyah. Whoever travels to a place and intends to stay there for more than four days must fast (as he is considered a settler), according to the majority of scholars. However, if one intends to stay at a place for less than four days he has the option to fast or not.

A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a plate of food. The plate contains various items, including what appears to be a fried chicken drumstick, some bread, and a small bowl of dipping sauce. The background is a patterned fabric with blue and gold circular motifs. A semi-transparent white box with rounded corners is overlaid on the image, containing text in English and Arabic. The text is centered and reads: "The Prophet ﷺ said: 'If he forgets, and eats and drinks, then let him complete his fast, for Allah has fed him and given him to drink.' (Bukhari)".

The Prophet ﷺ said:  
"If he forgets, and eats and  
drinks, then let him complete  
his fast, for Allah has fed him  
and given him to drink."  
(Bukhari)

# Menstruation & Fasting

All schools of thought are in agreement that fasting is not permissible for women who are menstruating (*haydh*) or suffer from postnatal bleeding (*nifas*). However, they have been ordered to make them up as Aishah RA reports, "We were commanded to make up our fasts and we were not commanded to make up our salahs." (Muslim). On the other hand, a woman suffering from '*Istihadhah*' (non-menstrual vaginal bleeding) is still obligated to fast.

When a menstruating woman sees the white substance by which a woman knows that she has now become *tahir* (pure), she should have the intention to fast from the night before and should fast. If she does not have a time when she knows she is *tahir*, she should insert a piece of cotton or something similar, and if it comes out clean, she should fast, and if she starts to bleed again, she should stop fasting (whether the blood is a flow or just spotting) because it breaks the fast as long as it comes at the time of her period.



According to all scholars, if a woman's period or post-natal bleeding ceases during the night, and she makes the intention to fast, her fast is valid whether she makes ghusl or not.



How can you ensure that you are still benefiting from the other aspects of Ramadan (like prayer, reading the Quran, and charity) while on your period?

# Pregnancy & Fasting

Regarding a pregnant or breastfeeding woman, it is permissible for her to break the fast if she fears harm for herself or the child. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah has lifted the obligation of fasting and part of the prayer from the traveller, and He has lifted the obligation of fasting from the pregnant and breastfeeding woman". (Ibn Majah)

If such a woman breaks her fast fearing for herself, then she must make up the fast but isn't required to pay fidyah; likewise, if she fears harm for both herself and the child. However, Imam Shafi'i held that if a woman breaks her fast fearing only for the child, then she must make up the fasts as well as pay fidyah.



# Actions That Invalidate the Fast

## Actions That Invalidate the Fast

- Eating or drinking (excluding due to forgetfulness)
- Menstruation
- Post-Natal Bleeding
- Intercourse
- Vomiting (intentionally)
- Kidney Dialysis (blood returned with nourishing substance)
- Smoking
- Anything which enters the stomach

## Actions That Do NOT Invalidate the Fast

- Eye or drops, etc.
- Toothbrush and Miswak
- Medications absorbed through the skin
- Inhalers (consisting of compressed gas)
- Nose bleed
- Using henna, kohl or oil to one's hair
- Nose drops and nasal sprays (as long as they do not reach the throat)
- Vomiting (unintentionally)
- Kissing, hugging, or embracing one's wife
- Anything inserted into the vagina for medical purposes
- A wet dream

# Kaffarah

(Expiation)

*Kaffarah* is the compensation that one is required to give if he/she deliberately misses or breaks a fast in the month of Ramadan without a valid reason. Actions which necessitate *kaffarah* include:

- Sexual intercourse during the fast
- Eating or drinking purposefully

The Kaffarah for one day of an intentionally broken or missed fast (which is in addition to making up the missed day) is to fast for 60 consecutive days. If a person is unable to fast the 60 days for a legitimate reason such as chronic illness that makes fasting difficult, then the person can do one of the following:

- Feed 60 poor people two full meals a day.
- Feed one poor person two meals a day for 60 days.



# Fidyah

*(Compensation)*

Not all Muslims are able to fast during the month of Ramadan, therefore for those who cannot; there is the option to pay Fidyah.

A person who cannot fast due to extreme weakness, old age or chronic illness from which they have no apparent hope of recovery is Islamically allowed to feed an indigent person, or give away its cost as atonement for every fast. This is called Fidyah in Shari'ah.

The Fidyah for one day of fast is equal to an average person's two meals for that day.



# Healthy Heating During Ramadan

Whilst most of us will have revised the legal rules of fasting, few of us may have given careful deliberation regarding what we consume at meal times.

It is paramount to eat sensibly and remain well hydrated which will help one avoid quarrelling, being abusive, or using foul language. The Prophet ﷺ emphasized the need to purify one's character in this month stating "How many from among those who fast receive nothing from their fast except hunger and thirst." (An-Nasa'i)

1

Complex carbohydrates and  
fibre-rich foods



Complex carbohydrates and fibre-rich foods are digested slowly and release energy gradually during the long hours of fasting. Incorporating the following types of foods will provide ample energy for the day: barley, wheat, oats, semolina, beans, lentils, whole meal, flour, basmati rice, bran, cereals, whole wheat, grains, potatoes, pitta bread, fruits and vegetables.

2

High Sugar Content Foods



Try to maintain a low intake of foods with high sugar content, particularly cakes, biscuits and chocolates. Although excess simple sugars can provide a quick burst of energy, they can leave one feeling fatigued soon after as they are broken down much quicker into the bloodstream than complex carbohydrates.

3

### Fizzy Drinks & Fruit Juices



Reduce all forms of fizzy drinks, caffeine and fruit juices. If you must have juice then either squeeze them yourself or opt for juices which are labeled 'not from concentrate' and without any added sugars.

4

### Avoid Caffeine



Avoid caffeine where possible due to its diuretic effect. Caffeine induces unnecessary urination, resulting in losing vital fluids. Therefore try to avoid large cups of tea and coffee at Suhur time.

5

### Have your Multivitamins



Consider multivitamins. Vitamins C, E, A, zinc, selenium and B-complex are the top nutrients required. Ensure you drink as much water as you can before and after the fast to keep hydrated throughout the day. On a general note, it is also preferable to drink milk (particularly goats milk) as this is a prophetic habit.

6

### Avoid Deep Fried Foods



Where possible, try to avoid frying or deep frying food. Instead, consider grilling or baking which is far healthier, has no effect on taste and reduces loss of essential minerals.

# Prophetic Foods

Fruital and Spices  
Restaurant

A brief list of foods which were eaten by the Prophet ﷺ and not necessarily related to fasting and Ramadan include:

**Cucumbers**



**Dates**

*(Particularly Ajwa Dates)*



**Gourd**

**Melon**



**Cow's Milk**

**Goat Milk**



**Olive Oil**



**Pumpkin**

**Honey**



**Tharid**

**Vinegar**



# Additional Suggestions During Ramadan

## Planning Your Worship



- Try not to miss tarawih. If you do, at least pray some cycles of prayer at home.
- Make a list of particular important ad'iyah and recite them every night on the last ten nights. This way you are sure to catch *laylat al-Qadr*.
- Make a daily plan for reciting Quran and aim to complete the Qur'ān at least once during Ramadan.
- If you work, arrange to take **some holidays** in the last ten days to free yourself for worship.
- Plan your time for the night to take advantage of the odd nights of the last ten days.

## Body & Surroundings



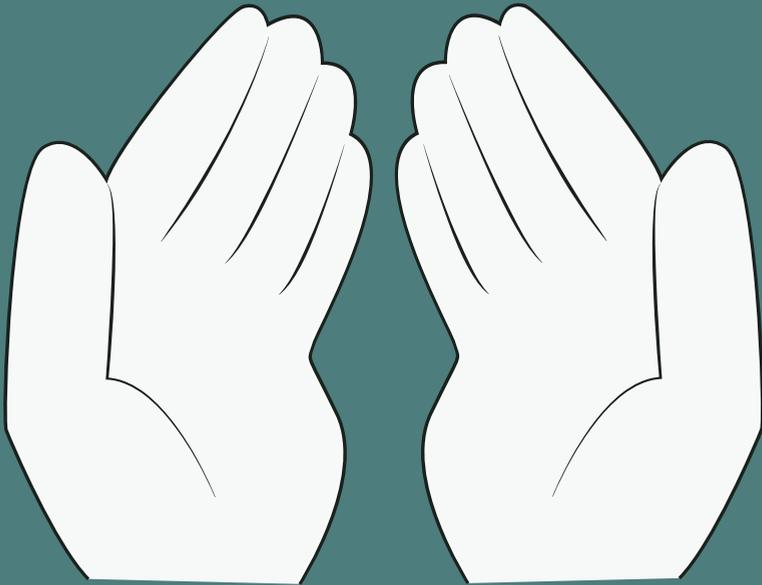
- Don't eat too much for *iftar*
- Sleep early to give yourself enough rest.
- Drink lots of water between *iftar* and *suhur*.
- Turn off/disconnect the TV.

## Community



- Give back belongings, books etc taken from people so as to enter Ramadan clear of any debts.
- Sort grievances and reconcile differences between family and friends before Ramadan.
- Try to keep the last ten nights free from iftar parties, social gatherings, and general outings. Politely decline requests explaining the importance of the last ten days.
- Attend as many prayers at the mosque as you can - the reward is multiplied by up to 27 times

# Du'as





## DU'A FOR BREAKING THE FAST

ذَهَبَ الظَّمَأُ ، وَابْتَلَّتِ العُرُوقُ ، وَثَبَتَ الأَجْرُ إِنْ  
شَاءَ اللهُ

Dhahab adh-Dhama'u wabtallatil-'urooq wa  
thabatal-ajru inshaa'Allah

*"The thirst is gone, the veins moistened and  
the reward is confirmed, if Allah wills"*



## DU'A FOR BREAKING THE FAST

اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ صُمْتُ ، وَعَلَى رِزْقِكَ أَفْطَرْتُ

Allahumma laka sumtu wa ala rizq-ika-  
aftartu

*"O Allah, I fasted for you and break my fast  
with your sustenance"*



## DU'A FOR LAST 10 NIGHTS

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوفٌ تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّي

Allahumma innaka 'afuwwun tuhibbul-'afwa,  
fa'fu 'anni

*"O Allah, You are Forgiving and Generous,  
and you love forgiveness, so forgive me"*



## DU'A FOR WHEN SOMEONE IS RUDE TO YOU WHILST FASTING

إِنِّي صَائِمٌ، إِنِّي صَائِمٌ

Innee saa'im, innee saa'im  
*"I am fasting, I am fasting"*



## DU'A WHEN BREAKING THE FAST AT SOMEONE'S HOME

أَفْطَرَ عِنْدَكُمْ الصَّائِمُونَ وَأَكَلَ طَعَامَكُمْ  
الْأَبْرَارُ ، وَصَلَّتْ عَلَيْكُمْ الْمَلَائِكَةُ

aftara 'indakum as-saa'imoon, wa akala  
ta'aamakum al-abraar, wa sallat 'alaikum  
al-malaa'ikah.

*"May the fasting break their fast in your  
home, and may the dutiful and pious eat  
your food and may the angels send prayers  
upon you"*



## DU'A UPON SIGHTING OF THE NEW MOON

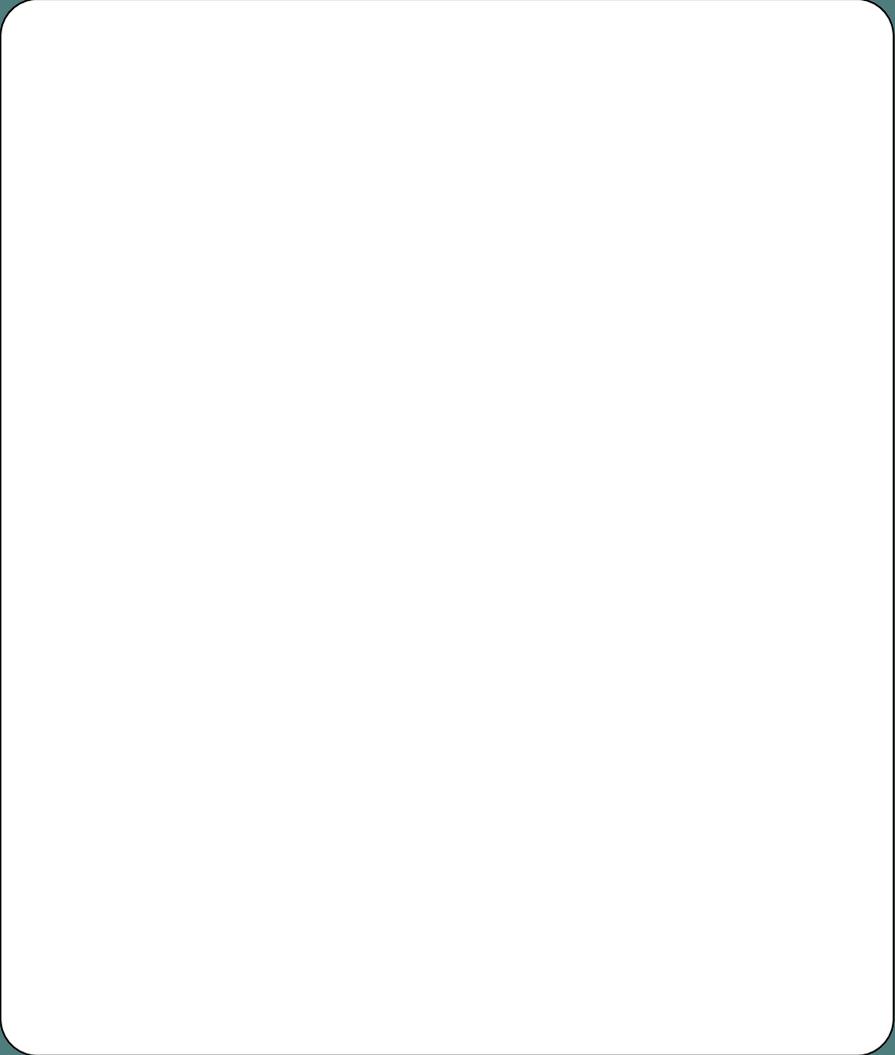
اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، اللَّهُمَّ أَهْلُهُ عَلَيْنَا بِالْأَمْنِ وَالْإِيمَانِ  
وَالسَّلَامَةِ وَالْإِسْلَامِ وَالتَّوْفِيقِ لِمَا يُحِبُّ رَبُّنَا  
وَيَرْضَى، رَبَّنَا وَرَبُّكَ اللَّهُ

"Allahu akbar, Allahumma ahillahu 'alayna bil-  
amni wal-imani wa-s-salamati wal-Islami wa-t-  
tawfiqi lima yuhibbu rabbuna wa-yarda,  
rabbuna wa-rabbuka Allah."

*"Allah is the greatest. O Allah, bring us the new  
moon with security and faith, with peace and  
Islam, and success with what our Lord loves and  
pleases him. Our Lord and your Lord is Allah."*

# DU'A GOALS

Create your own Du'a list below



# Itikaaf (Spiritual Retreat)

## What is *Itikaaf*?

*Itikaaf* is a type of spiritual inclusion whereby one will isolate themselves from their worldly matters to devote themselves to ibadah and self- reflection. Aishah RA reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to observe *Itikaaf* in the last 10 days of Ramadan.

When the last 10 days of Ramadan arrived, the Prophet ﷺ would exert his absolute best in worshipping Allah and engaging in continuous ibadah. It is important that we follow in the Prophet's ﷺ footsteps and revive this sunnah.

Just as the purpose of Ramadan is to develop Taqwa, the purpose of *Itikaaf* is to also develop Taqwa.

## What to do during *Itikaaf*

When one is performing *Itikaaf*, they should busy themselves in beneficial activities such as:

- Voluntary prayer
- Dhikr of Allah
- Reciting & reflecting on the Quran
- Gaining beneficial knowledge
- Continuous Du'a

## Benefits of *Itikaaf*

- Distance yourself from worldly distractions that divert your mind and heart from the remembrance of Allah.
- Gain closeness to Allah.
- Increase in good deeds.
- Obtain Allah's forgiveness and mercy.
- Benefit from the company of the righteous on a daily basis in the barakah of the masjid (Males).
- Resemble the angels who do not disobey the command of Allah to do what they are commanded whilst glorifying Allah night and day without tiring.

How can you prepare yourself mentally and spiritually before starting *Itikaf* to maximize its benefits and ensure you are focused solely on Allah?

# Zakat al-Fitr



## What is Zakāt al-Fitr

The literal meaning of Zakāh is the process of purification. Fitr is from the word Fitrāh and its literal meaning is one's nature or natural state. Thus, the undertone of Zakat al-Fitr is to purify one's nature.

In Islam, Zakāt al-fitr is a small amount of alms that Muslims are obliged to pay as charity at the end of Ramadhan. It is Wajib on every Muslim, man or woman, free or in servitude, adult or child. (Muslim)



## Who Should Pay?

Every adult Muslim, with sufficient food for the family for a day, should pay Zakat al-Fitr for himself/herself and all his/her dependents. Even those who did not fast should pay. Zakat al-Fitr should also be paid for the newborn child or anyone who dies just before the Fajr (dawn) on the day of Eid.



## When to Pay?

Zakat al-Fitr becomes obligatory from sunset on the last day of fasting and remains obligatory until the beginning of Salat al-Eid. However it can be paid prior to the above mentioned period, as many of the companions used to pay Zakat al-Fitr a couple of days before Eid. Some scholars such as Imam al-Shafi'i reported that it is permissible to pay Zakāt al-Fitr from the beginning of Ramadan.



## What is it's Purpose?

Zakat al-Fitr becomes obligatory from sunset on the last day of fasting and remains obligatory until the beginning of Salat al-Eid. However it can be paid prior to the above mentioned period, as many of the companions used to pay Zakat al-Fitr a couple of days before Eid. Some scholars such as Imam al-Shafi'i reported that it is permissible to pay Zakāt al-Fitr from the beginning of Ramadan.



# 'Eid al-Fitr

It is compulsory on every sane, adult Muslim to pray the Eid prayer. The Prophet ﷺ and his Companions never ceased performing it and he ﷺ encouraged everyone, including women, children, and the elderly, to attend.

Even menstruating women should go to the place of congregation so that they may partake in the blessings.

## *Sunan on Eid Day*

- One should bathe on the morning of 'Eid.
- Apply scent and wear his/her best clothes prior to leaving for Salat al-'Eid
- Eat dates before leaving for the id prayer to openly show that we are not fasting on this day. The Prophet ﷺ did not leave for the 'Eid al-Fitr prayer except after eating some dates.
- Say the takbir loudly when leaving ones home to go to 'Eid prayer and repeat it until the prayer starts.

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

Allahu Akbar Allahu Akbar la ilaha illa Allah wa Allahu Akbar Allahu Akbar  
wa lillah al-hamd

*'Allah is Most Great, Allah is Most Great, there is no god except Allah, Allah is Most Great, Allah is Most Great, and all praise be to Allah'*

- To take different routes to and from the prayer ground, preferably walking if possible. Jabir RA reported that the Prophet ﷺ used to come back from the 'Eid prayer on a path.

# YOUR RAMADAN TRACKER

ACTION	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
Worship																															
Quran																															
Good deeds																															
Purification																															



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