

About Ramadan

Ramadan is that month of the year which Allah ﷻ has blessed the Muslims with, to attain closeness to him. This month holds many unique virtues. This is the month in which the Quran was revealed. Each moment in this month is precious and holds tremendous value in the sight of Allah ﷻ. Our pious predecessors would look forward to the coming of Ramadan and spend each moment wisely to maximize the benefit of it. Many would stop their extra voluntary *ibadah* and minimize their necessities, such as sleeping and eating, to devote themselves to the Book of Allah and standing the night in prayer.

In the month of Ramadan, Allah ﷻ has commanded the Believers to fast from sunrise to sunset. Fasting is a multi-dimensional *ibadah* and has a reward like no other action. It is mentioned in a *hadith qudsi* that Allah says “The reward of every action undertaken by man is for him—and good deeds will be rewarded from ten to seven hundred times”, Allah ﷻ says, “Except for fasting, that is for me and I will determine its reward. He [the fasting person] has abandoned his lawful desire for intimacy, food, and drink for my sake. The fasting person has two delights: The delight he experiences at the time he breaks his fast, and the delight he will have when he meets his Lord. The foul odor that emerges from the mouth of the fasting person is sweeter to Allah ﷻ than the fragrance of musk.”

If one wanted, they could easily eat or drink when no one is looking. This is why it is very hard to show off while fasting and it is very unlikely someone would fast and refrain from food and drink even when alone with the intention of pleasing someone other than Allah ﷻ. Fasting is one of the forms of worship the angels are unable to perform. This is because they do not feel hunger or thirst and do not require nourishment from food or drink. To understand this we can take the example of someone who is blind and someone who can see. Will they both receive the same reward if they refrain from taking unlawful glances? Obviously the individual who is blind does not have the ability to misuse his eyes and thus will not receive the same reward as the one has sight.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ mentions “Fasting is half of patience.”(Tirmizhi) The Ulama mention there are three types of *sabr*: one required to remain obedient to Allah ﷻ, one to refrain from that which Allah has made haram, and that required to bear the difficulties Allah has decreed for us. All three of which are found when fasting. Much patience is required to continue fasting a whole month, while refraining from the desires of nourishment and intimacy which Allah has forbidden in the daytime and further bear the difficulties of fasting such as hunger thirst and the weakening of the body. Allah ﷻ mentions, “Certainly those who observe patience will be given their reward in full without measure” (39:10.) It is understood from this verse that the reward for fasting is only known by Allah.

On the last day of Sha'ban, Prophet ﷺ, gave a sermon about the upcoming month of Ramadan. It is a very important sermon to be reviewed before every Ramadan for guidance on how to spend this month.

Sayyiduna Salman ؓ reports, "On the last day of Shaban, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ addressed us and said,

'O people there comes over you now a great month, a most blessed month in which lies a night greater in virtue than a thousand months. It is a month in which Allah has made Fasting compulsory by day and has made sunnah praying [the Taraweeh] by night. Whosoever intends to draw near to Allah by performing any virtuous deed, for such person shall be the reward like the one who had performed a fardh in any other time. And whoever performs a fardh, shall be blessed with the reward of seventy faraa-idh in any other time.

This is indeed the month of patience and the reward for true patience is Jannah. It is the month of sympathy with one's fellow men. It is the month wherein a true believer's rizq is increased. Whosoever feeds another who fasted, in order to break the fast, for the feeder there shall be forgiveness of sins and emancipation from the fire of Jahannam, and for such feeder shall be the same reward as the one who fasted (who he fed) without that person's reward being decreased in the least."

Thereupon we said, "O messenger of Allah, not all of us possess the means whereby we can give a fasting person to break his fast." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ replied, "Allah grants the same reward to the one who gives a fasting person to break the fast a mere date, or a drink of water, or a sip of milk.

This is a month, the first of which brings Allah's mercy, the middle of which brings His forgiveness and the last of which brings emancipation from the fire of Jahannam."

"Whosoever lessens the burden of his servants in this month, Allah will forgive him and free him from the fire of Jahannam.

And in this month four things you should continue to perform in great number, two of which shall be to please your Lord, while the other two shall be those without which you cannot do. Those which shall be to please your Lord, are that you should in great quantity bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah (i.e. recite the Kalimah Tayyibah Laa ilaaha illallaah) and make much Istighfaar, beg Allah's forgiveness with Astagfirfirullaah. As for those without which you cannot do, you should beg of Allah, entrance into Jannah and ask refuge in Him from Jahannam.

And whoever gave a person who fasted water to drink, Allah shall grant that giver to drink from my fountain, such a drink whereafter that person shall never again feel thirsty until he enters Jannah."

May Allah Taala give the ability to spend the month of Ramadan in the way that most pleases Him and achieve the real goal of this month, *taqwa*.