

المجالس الرمضانية

RAMAḌĀN LOUNGING SESSIONS

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Editor's Foreword

All praise be to Allāh and peace and blessings be upon the last and final Messenger,

To proceed,

This is an attempt at translating the book المجالس الرمضانية Ramaḍān Lounging Sessions by our Shaykh Dr. Waleed Edrees Al Meneese. It is with the best of timing to release this book days before the start of Ramaḍān. Everyone who partook in preparing this work is pleased to have participated. A great deal of effort was put in to making the translation match the original work as much as possible. However, sometimes different words and sentence structure was used to make it flow better for the English reader without changing the intended meaning of the author. Any good that comes from this is from Allāh and if there is any mistakes it is only from our own deficiencies. We ask Allāh to place this on our scale of good deeds and make it beneficial for Muslims at large.

Farooq Broberg

INTRODUCTION

All praise be to Allāh and peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allāh,

To proceed,

This is a brief work that covers what Muslims need to be reminded of in preparation for the blessed month of Ramaḍān. It includes topics such as: the virtues of the month of Ramaḍān, the wisdom of fasting, rulings pertaining to fasting, Laylah Al-Qadr, the sunnah of seclusion, the rulings of 'Eid Al-Fiṭr, and the importance of striving for steadfastness after Ramaḍān.

I ask Allāh, the Exalted, to bless it and accept it.

Written by,

Dr. Waleed Edrees Al Meneese

CHAPTER ONE

VIRTUES OF THE MONTH OF RAMAḌĀN

Allāh[1] has singled out the month of *Ramaḍān*[2] to be a great season of good deeds and blessings. The one whom Allāh guides to be obedient in this month will be victorious and the one that is mislead during this month will perish. *"The month of Ramaḍān in which the Qur'ān was revealed, a guidance for mankind, and it has clear proofs of guidance and criterion [between truth and false-hood]. So whoever of you sights [the crescent on the first night of] the month, he must observe the fast for that month."* (Al-Baqarah 2:185)

Jābir Ibn Samūrah, Allāh be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, ascended the pulpit and said: **"Āmeen,[3] āmeen, āmeen".** Then, it was said, "O Messenger of Allāh, when you ascended the pulpit you said, 'Āmeen, āmeen, āmeen." The Messenger said: **"*Jibreel*[4] came to me and said, 'O Muḥammad, he who lives until one of his parents becomes old, and then dies and enters Hellfire [because of his bad treatment to his parents], so [O] Allāh distance him [from Your mercy].' He said, 'Say āmeen,' so I said, 'Āmeen.' Then, he said: 'O Muḥammad, he who sees the month of Ramaḍān come and go, and then dies without being forgiven and enters Hellfire, so [O] Allāh distance him [from Your mercy].' He said,' Say āmeen,' so I said, 'Āmeen. Then, he said: 'O Muḥammad, he who hears you mentioned and does not ask Allāh to send peace and blessings upon you and dies and enters Hellfire, so [O] Allāh distance him [from Your mercy].' He said, 'Say āmeen,' so I said, 'Āmeen."** (Narrated by Aṭ-Ṭabarāni, Ibn Ḥabbān, and in Ṣaḥeeḥ Al-Jāmi' 75)

How do you regard a supplication of the trustworthy soul [Jibreel] that was acknowledged by the Prophet of all mankind, peace and blessings be upon him?

The righteous predecessors, Allāh have mercy on them, used to ask Allāh during the six months prior to the occasion to grant them long enough lives so that they could see Ramaḍān; and they used to ask Allāh during the six months following Ramaḍān to accept their good deeds and fasting. Nothing caused them to do that, except their knowledge of the great virtues of this blessed month.

The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, used to bring the good news to his companions saying, as reported by Abu Hurairah, Allāh be pleased with him, **"Ramaḍān has come to you, a blessed month which Allāh has enjoined you to fast, during which the gates of Paradise are opened and the gates of Hellfire are closed, and the devils**

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[1] Allāh is the proper name of the Creator of all that exists, the one that deserves to be worshiped alone without partners.
[2] Ramaḍān is the 9th month in the Islamic Lunar Calendar in which Muslims fast from dawn to sunset.
3 Āmeen is equivalent to the English amen, meaning , let it be so. Typically said, in the end of a supplication
[4] Jibreel is typically translated into English as Gabriel. However, being the proper name of an angel, it was kept in its original Arabic.

are chained up. In it there is a night which is better than a thousand months, and whoever is deprived of its goodness is indeed deprived." (Narrated by An-Nasā'ī, Aḥmad, and in the Ṣaḥeeḥ Al-Jāmi' 55)

With all the sins we commit and our short comings during the months of *Rajab*[5] and *Sha'bān*,[6] we should work hard to make up for it by doing good deeds in Ramaḍān. Allāh bless the poet who said:

O you, who's mischief did not suffice him in Rajab

So he continued disobeying his Lord in Sha'bān

The month of fasting came to shade you afterwards

So don't make it another month of disobedience

And recite the Qur'ān and praise your Lord diligently

As it is the month of Qur'ān and praise

How many did you know of those who fasted before?

Amongst family, neighbors and siblings

Death has ended them and left you alive after them

But you are not far from their destiny

Abu Hurairah, Allāh be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"When the first night of Ramaḍān comes, the Devils and the rebellious *Jinn*[7] are put in chains. The gates of Hellfire are closed, until none of them remains open. The Gates of Paradise are opened until none of them remains closed. Then a caller shouts out, 'O seeker of goodness, come forward, and O seeker of evil, desist. And Allāh will free many from Hellfire [in this month].' This announcement is made every night."** (Narrated by At-Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah and graded as authentic by Al-Albānī in Ṣaḥeeḥ Al-Jāmi' 759) complacent

THE PREVIOUS *ḤADEETH*[8] STATES SEVERAL VIRTUES OF THE MONTH OF RAMAḌĀN

- The devils are chained; so they are prevented from what they normally do in all other months. This does not prevent mankind from committing sins in Ramaḍān due to their souls promoting evil.

[5] Rajab is the 7th month in the Islamic Lunar Calendar.
[6] Sha'bān is the 8th month in the Islamic Lunar Calendar prior to Ramaḍān.
[7] Jinn are another creation by Allāh. They are made from a smokeless fire and unseen to man.
[8] A ḥadeeth is an Islamic term meaning a statement or action of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him.

- The closing of the seven doors of Hellfire is a sign that the doors of evil are sealed in this month of Ramaḍān.

- The opening of the eight doors of Paradise is a sign that the doors of good deeds are open and obedience is made easy in this month of Ramaḍān.

- An angel ordered specially to do so calls "O seeker of goodness, come forward, and O seeker of evil, desist" i.e. come forward with your good deeds and stay away from bad ones.

- Allāh frees a certain number of people every night during Ramaḍān; those who are freed will not enter Hellfire and will be destined to enter Heaven. We ask Allāh to free us from Hellfire.

THE MONTH OF RAMAḌĀN IS A REASON FOR REPENTANCE AND FORGIVENESS OF ALL SINS

Abu Hurairah, Allāh be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"The five prayers, Friday to Friday, and Ramaḍān to Ramaḍān will be expiation for the sins between them as long as major sins are avoided."** (Narrated by Muslim)

He, Allāh be pleased with him, also reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"Whoever fasts during the month of Ramaḍān out of sincere faith, and hoping to attain Allāh 's reward, then all his past sins will be forgiven. And whoever stands in prayer during the nights of Ramaḍān out of sincere faith and hoping to attain Allāh 's reward all his past sins will be forgiven. And whoever stands in prayer for *Laylah Al-Qadr*[9] out of sincere faith and seeking Allāh's reward, all his past sins will be forgiven."** (Narrated by Al-Bukhārī)

Any of these three means (i.e. fasting the month of Ramaḍān, and standing in prayer during the nights of Ramaḍān, and standing in prayer for Laylah Al-Qadr). is enough on its own to achieve forgiveness for one's the past sins, and even more so if all of them are done! By the grace of Allāh, all three of these means take place in one blessed month.

'Abdullah Ibn 'Amr, Allāh be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"Fasting and the Qur'ān will intercede for the slave on the Day of Resurrection. Fasting will say: O Lord, I prevented him from food and drink during the day, so allow me to intercede for him. The Qur'ān will say: O Lord, I**

[9] Laylah Al-Qadr is sometimes translated as the Night of Decree. It is a night in the last ten days of Ramaḍān in which all things measured are decreed for the following year. Also worship in this night is equivalent of one thousand months. See Chapter 8.

prevented him from sleeping during the night, so allow me to intercede for him. Thus, they will both intercede for him." (Narrated by Aḥmad and in Ṣaḥeeḥ Al-Jāmi' 3882)

Allāh, the Exalted said, *"Eat and drink with ease for what you put forth in the days past."* (Al-Ḥāqqah 69:24) Many of the predecessors said that this verse was revealed in regards to those who fast, and it will be said to them on the Day of Judgment.

Abu Hurairah, Allāh be pleased with him, reported that the Messenger of Allāh, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"Every deed of the son of Ādam is multiplied from ten to seven hundred times." "Allāh, the Exalted said, 'Every deed of the son of Ādam is for him except fasting; it is for Me and I shall reward for it. Fasting is a shield. So, the person observing fasting should avoid sexual relation with his wife and should not behave foolishly, and if somebody insults him, he should tell him, 'I am fasting."** [The Prophet added] **"By Him in Whose Hand the soul of Muḥammad lies, the smell coming out from the mouth of a fasting person is better in the sight of Allāh than the smell of musk." "The fasting person has two occasions of joy, one when he breaks his fast and the other when he meets his Lord because of the reward for his fast."** (Narrated by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim)

Sahl Ibn sa'd, Allāh be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"There is a gate in Paradise called Ar-Rayyān, and those who fast 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 fast?' 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."**

In another narration, **"Heaven has eight gates, among them is a gate called Ar-Rayyān, none will enter it except those who used to fast."** (Narrated by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim)

CHAPTER TWO

THE WISDOM IN FASTING

Allāh,glory be to Him, is the All Wise, He does not legislate anything except with the utmost wisdom that in turn brings about happiness and joy in this life and the next. Those who know the wisdom behind certain legislations know it, while others remain unaware.

THERE ARE SEVERAL GREAT WISDOMS BEHIND THE LEGISLATION OF FASTING

1. Fasting cleanses the soul; it's a treatment for arrogance and greed.

The human soul by nature is inflicted with pride, vanity and transgression when every desire is always met. Fasting weakens the desires, it makes a person feel his weakness and their need for the Creator and the Provider that nourishes them and heals them in times of sickness. Thus, the Muslim will be striving to do what is right and have control over his desires.

"Then, for him who Tagha [transgressed all bounds, in disbelief, oppression and evil deeds of disobedience to Allāh]. And preferred the life of this world [by following his evil desires and lusts]. Verily, his abode will be Hellfire; But as for him who feared standing before his Lord, and restrained himself from impure evil desires, and lusts. Verily, Paradise will be his abode." (An-Nazi'āt 79:37-41)

So by fasting, a Muslim grabs the reigns of his desires and can then steer himself to what is better for him and what brings about happiness. Furthermore, one gets accustomed to not letting his whims run wild and steer him to destruction.

2. Fasting narrows the passages through which the Devil flows inside mankind.

Anas and Ṡafiyah, Allāh be pleased with them, reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"The Devil flows through the son of Ādam the way blood does."** (Narrated by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim) Fasting represses the whispers of the Devil; it weakens the intensity of one's desires and anger. In addition to being chained and locked up during Ramaḍān, the Devil can't find an opening into the heart of the believer. So if the Muslim takes advantage of this sweet connection with the Entirely Merciful and distancing himself from the false embellishments of the Devil, by the permission of Allāh, he will strive after Ramaḍān to be of Allāh's sincere slaves who are not under the control of the Devil. Allāh, the Exalted said, *"[The Devil] said: "By Your Might, then I will surely mislead them all, except Your chosen slaves amongst them [faithful, obedient, sincere, true believers of Islamic Monotheism]."* (Ṡād 38:82-83)

3. Fasting empties the heart from the concerns of this life and it helps in the remembrance of Allāh and contemplation.

The Arabs used to say "If the stomach is full, the idea [the brain] is asleep." Al-Miqdām Ibn M'ad Yakrab, Allāh be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"There is no vessel which the son of Ādam can fill that is more evil than his stomach, for it is enough for him to take a few bites in order to straighten his back. Yet if he is overcome by appetite, then he may fill it with a third of food, a third of drink, and a third to breath."** (Narrated by Aḥmad, At-Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah and graded as authentic by Al-Albānī in Ṣaḥeeḥ Al-Jāmi' 5674)

4. Fasting is a type of worship which a person can use to get closer to his Lord.

This is done by leaving that which is most loved i.e. food, drink and intercourse. By doing this, the genuineness of one's belief, the completeness of one's worship, the prevalence of one's love of Allāh, and one's hope in the reward of Allāh is shown. For indeed, that which is loved would not be abandoned except to get something greater. When the believer knows that pleasure of Allāh is attained by leaving off these naturally loved acts, then he will give precedence to pleasing Allāh over satisfying his desires.

5. Fasting causes piety.

Piety is doing what has been commanded and leaving off what has been forbidden. As much as Allāh's slaves are commanded to abstain from food and drinks, they are also commanded to abstain from all sins in Ramaḍān. This is to prepare them to continue abstaining from sins after the month of Ramaḍān as well. Allāh, the Exalted said, *"O you who believe, fasting has been prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may be pious."* (Al-Baqarah 2:183)

As Allāh started the verses of fasting with piety, He concludes them with piety as well. *"Thus does Allāh make clear His Ayat [proofs, evidences, lessons, signs, revelations, verses, laws, legal and illegal things, Allāh 's set limits, orders, etc.] to mankind that they may be pious."* (Al-Baqarah 2:187)

Abu Hurairah, Allāh be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"Whoever does not give up false statements (i.e. telling lies), and acting upon it, Allāh is not in need of his [fasting] leaving his food and drink."** (Narrated by Al-Bukhārī) Thus, when the fasting person desired to do a sinful act he remembers that he is fasting and refrains from it.

6. Fasting trains oneself to be sincere to Allāh, the Exalted.

The fasting person could be alone in his house with delicious food and cold drink in front of him in a state of extreme hunger and thirst and none other than Allāh sees him. However, he abstains from the food and drink and endures the hunger and thirst out of fear

of Allāh and his observation. And when one reflects upon this meaning then indeed he will act similar with all types of sinful acts. If and when one is alone he will remember that Allāh sees him and will say to himself, "The same way I refrained from sin during Ramaḍān I will outside of Ramaḍān. I will make that which is hidden as if it was in the open."

And when I am alone in the darkness

And the soul is calling to sin

Be shy of the sight of the Lord and say to it [the soul]

Indeed he who created the darkness can see me

7. Fasting trains one to be forbearing, control his anger and refrain from causing harm.

Abu Hurairah, Allāh be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"Fasting is a shield. So, the person observing the fast should avoid sexual relations with his wife and should not behave foolishly, and if somebody insults him, he should tell him, 'I am fasting."** (Narrated by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim)

8. Fasting shows the unity of the Muslims.

Fasting is a noticeable ritual from the rituals of Islam. Other people see how the Muslims start fasting at the same time and break their fast at the same time.

9. Ramaḍān is a month of being thankful to Allāh.

The fasting person notices the amount of blessings that have been forbidden during the time of fasting. It is the habit of people that they don't feel the value of a blessing except when they are deprived of it or mix with those who are deprived of it. This leads one to be grateful and thankful to Allāh, the Exalted.

10. Ramaḍān is a month of patience.

This is because one is patient in doing Allāh's commandments, abstaining from disobeying Allāh . One is also patient dealing with misfortunes i.e. hunger and thirst. These three types of patience are all found in Ramaḍān.

11. It is also the month of victory and Jihad.

During the month of Ramaḍān is when the Muslims won the battle of *Badr*.[10] It was also during Ramaḍān when Makkah was conquered. It has been the tradition of Allāh to

[10] Badr is location West South-West of Madeenah. At this location is when the first battle in Islamic history took place on the 17th of Ramaḍān in the 2nd year Hijrī.

accompany the month of Ramaḍān with great victories and triumphs. In this month the Muslims conquered Jerusalem and retook it again from the Crusaders.

12.Ramaḍān is the month of generosity and nobility.

A wealthy, fasting person feels the need of his poor brothers that go to sleep hungry and can't find anything to eat or feed their children, who cry out from hunger. We see this all over the Islamic World, as much of the Islamic World is inflicted with wars, hunger and famine. Ibn 'Abbās, Allāh be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, **was the most generous of the people and he was even more generous during the month of Ramaḍān when Jibreel would visit him. Jibreel, peace be upon him, would meet with him every night of Ramaḍān and review the Qur'ān with the Prophet. [During this time] He was more generous than a swift wind bringing rain.** (Narrated by Al-Bukhārī)

One of the acts of generosity during the month of Ramaḍān that we have been encouraged to do is, feeding the fasting people. Zaid Ibn Khalid, Allāh be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"Whoever feeds a fasting person is rewarded the same reward as the fasting person, and this does not decrease the reward of the fasting person."** (Aḥmad, At-Tirmidhī and graded as authentic by Al-Albānī in Ṣaḥeeḥ Al-Jāmi' 6415) The reward for fasting is enormous. Allāh, the Exalted, said in a divine ḥadeeth, "Every deed of the son of Ādam is for him except fasting; it is for Me and I shall reward for it." (Narrated by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah with a chain to the Prophet)

So if one knows that he will possess the same reward as the fasting person in addition to his own reward, he will hasten to partake in this great action.

13.Ramaḍān is the month of Qur'ān.

It is a great opportunity for Muslims who have neglected the Book of Allāh to recite it and contemplate on it.

14.In Ramaḍān the reward of doing *'Umrah*[11] is doubled.

The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"Umrah in Ramaḍān is as if a person performed Ḥajj with me."** (Narrated by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas and others)

15.There are health benefits for fasting.

It is a period of rest to the digestion system, it helps the body to get rid of any toxicants and harmful waste products. It was narrated, **"Fast and you will be healed."**

11 'Umrah is a minor pilgrimage to Makkah. It can be undertaken at any time of the year and only consists of Ṭawwāf and Sa'ee, in contrast to Ḥajj.

If one contemplates upon these great wisdoms behind fasting, he will realize that Islam is the complete religion to bring about happiness in this life and next. We ask Allāh to allow us to live until Ramaḍān and help us fast, stand for the night prayers and all good deeds, āmeen.

CHAPTER THREE

THE ETIQUETTE OF FASTING

Fasting the month of Ramaḍān has etiquettes that a Muslim should observe.

1. Be consistent in eating *Suḥoor*[12] and delaying it.

Anas, Allāh be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"Eat Suḥoor, for indeed in Suḥoor is blessing."** (Narrated by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim) From the blessings of Suḥoor is that it gives one strength and helps one to fast. It is a chance to wake up before dawn to seek of Allāh's forgiveness or to stand in prayer. Allāh, the Exalted said, *"And those who seek forgiveness before dawn"* (Āl-'Imrān 3:17)

Furthermore, eating Suḥoor is in opposition of Polytheists and in accordance to the guidance of the Prophets. Abu Ad-Darda', Allāh be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"Three are from prophetic manners; hastening to break the fast, delaying Suḥoor, and placing the right [hand] over the left [hand] in prayers."** (Narrated by Aṭ-Ṭabarāni and graded as authentic by Al-Albānī in Ṣaḥeeḥ Al-Jāmi' 3038)

2. Hastening to break the fast.

The evidence for this is the previous ḥadeeth and what was narrated by *Imām*[13] Aḥmad on the authority of Abu Dharr, Allāh be pleased with him, that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"My nation remains to be a good one as long as they hasten in breaking their fast."** (Ṣaḥeeḥ Al-Jāmi' 7284)

3. Increasing supplication while fasting.

Indeed, the supplication of the fasting person is answered. It was reported by Abu Hurairah, Allāh be pleased with him, that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"Three supplications are answered: the supplication of someone fasting, the supplication of the oppressed, and the supplication of the traveler."** (Narrated by Al-Bayhaqī, and others, and was graded as authentic by Al-Albānī in Ṣaḥeeḥ Al-Jāmi' 3030)

4. To break the fast with fresh dates.

If fresh dates are not available, then one should break the fast with dried dates. If dried dates are not available, then by sipping a few sips of water, as the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, used to do. (Narrated by Aḥmad, Abu Dawood, and At-Tirmidhī on the authority of Anas and graded as sound by Al-Albānī) If none of these are available, then

[12] Suḥoor is a meal that is eaten before dawn, after which one fasts until sunset.
[13] Imām is title given to those that reach high levels of Islamic scholarship. Many times it is mentioned in reference to the four Imāms: Abu Ḥaneefah, Mālik, Ash-Shāfi'ee, and Aḥmad

one should break the fast with whatever ħalāl[14] sources they can find. If even that isn't available, then one should make the intention in their hearts that the fast is broken. When breaking the fast, one should say, **"Thirst has gone, the arteries are moist, and the reward is certain, if Allāh wills."** (Narrated by Abu Dawood and An-Nasā'ī and graded sound by Al-Albānī)

5. **The fasting person should observe all the obligations, offer more voluntary acts of worship, avoid all sinful actions, beware of backbiting and spreading false rumors, and busy himself with good deeds.**

[14] Ḥalāl is a term in Islamic Law that refers to things that are permissible, legal or allowed.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE COMMENCEMENT OF RAMAḌĀN

Our Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, made it clear to us that there is no other method to confirm the commencement of Ramaḍān except by sighting of the crescent moon or upon the completion of thirty days of the month of Sha'bān, if the crescent moon was not seen. This is what was reported by nine of the companions, Allāh be pleased with them, with similar wordings. These companions are 'Abdullah Ibn 'Umar, Abu Hurairah, Ibn 'Abbas, Hudhaifah, Jābir, 'Āishah, Talq Ibn Ali, Abu Bakrah, Al-Barā' Ibn ʻĀzib, Allāh be pleased with them. They reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"When you see the crescent moon then fast, and when you see it [the crescent moon again] then break your fast, if it is obscured by clouds, then complete the period [a full] thirty [days]."** (Narrated by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim)

The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, also said, **"We are an illiterate nation; we neither write, nor calculate. Fast after seeing it [the crescent moon], and when you see it [the crescent moon again] break your fast, if it is obscured by clouds, then complete the period [a full] thirty [days]."** (Narrated by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim)

Hence, if one upright Muslim sights the crescent moon, then it becomes an obligation on Muslims to fast. On the other hand, if none of the upright Muslims see the moon then it is an obligation to complete the thirty days of month of Sha'bān. This is applicable even when the moon is present but not seen. This is because Islamic Law has made fasting restricted to the sighting of the crescent moon, not its presence.

For this reason, the companions, their followers, the four Imāms: Abu Haneefah, Mālik, Shāfi'ee, and Aḥmad, and all of the scholars in the three favored centuries have declared, by consensus, that it is not permissible to use astronomical calculations to confirm the commencement of the month of Ramaḍān or any other month. Nor can these calculations be used to negate the testimony of those who sighted the moon. *Shaykh*[15] Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah said about the one who uses astronomical calculations for confirming the commencement of the month of Ramaḍān, "He is deviated from the Islamic Law, an innovator in the religion, and contradicting the intellect." (Majmoo' Al-Fatawa 132/25)

What is required from one during the event of discrepancy is to return to the *Sunnah*[16] of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, and the Righteous Caliphs. Thus, if we return to the Sunnah we find it commanding to act upon the legal viewing of the crescent moon and prohibiting the use of astronomical calculations.

The more correct opinion of the scholars, which is the opinion of the majority of scholars, is that there is no significance to different locations when sighting the moon.

[15] Shaykh is a term given to elders or people of knowledge to show respect.
[16] Sunnah can carry multiple different meanings. Here it means the collections of ḥadeeth.

Therefore, whenever it is confirmed that the moon has been sighted in a country and we share a portion of the night with them, even if it is a small portion, then we fast following them.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE RULES OF FASTING

Allāh, the Exalted said, *"And say [O Prophet] O my Lord, increase me in knowledge."* (Ṭāhā 20:114) The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"When Allāh wishes good for someone, He grants him understanding of the religion of Islam"** (Narrated by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim, on the authority of Mu'āwyah Ibn Sufyān, Allāh be pleased with him)

It is incumbent upon every Muslim to gain understanding of the religion, and to know of the rules of fasting, in order to be of those who worship Allāh with knowledge, and worship Him in the most complete of ways.

HERE, WE MENTION SOME OF THE MOST IMPORTANT RULES OF FASTING THAT ONE NEEDS TO KNOW FOR FASTING DURING RAMAḌĀN

According to Arabic language, 'Aṡ-Ṡiyām', fasting, means to abstain from something.

While according to Islamic Law, fasting means to make intention to abstain from *mufaṭṭirāt*[17] from the beginning of the true dawn until sunset.

Fasting during the month of Ramaḍān is one of the pillars of Islam. 'Abdullah Ibn 'Umar, Allāh be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"Islam is built upon five pillars: Testifying that there is nothing worthy of worship but Allāh, and that Muḥammad is His messenger; performing the prayer; fasting of Ramaḍān; paying *Zakāh*;[18] and performing Ḥajj to the sacred House in Makkah."** (Narrated by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim)

Allāh, the Exalted, said, *"O you who believe, fasting is made obligatory upon you as it was made obligatory on those before you, so that you may be pious."* (Al-Baqarah 2:183) He, the Exalted, also said, "*So whoever of you sights [the crescent on the first night of] the month, he must observe the fast for that month."* (Al-Baqarah 2:185)

Intentionally not fasting during Ramaḍān without an excuse is a grave disobedience and one of the greatest of sins. Whoever intentionally does not fast in Ramaḍān must repent to Allāh, and make up the day(s) he did not fast. Moreover, if someone breaks his fast by having intercourse he must make up for that day and offer expiation for that day by either freeing a slave or fasting two consecutive months or feeding sixty poor people if he is not able to fast for two consecutive months.

[17] Mufaṭṭirāt are the things which break the fast.
[18] Zakāh is an obligatory charity which has its own set of rules that are beyond the scopes of this work.

1. **The intention**
2. **Abstaining from mufaṭṭirāt**

As for the intention, its evidence is that 'Umar, Allāh be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"Actions are but by intentions, and each person will have but that which he intended."** (Narrated by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim)

Whoever abstains from mufaṭṭirāt, but he did not have the intention to fast, then he is not fasting according to Islamic Law. Furthermore, it is obligatory to make intention to fast during the night before dawn, even if it is just a moment beforehand. The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"Whoever does not make intention to fast before dawn, then there is no fast for him."** (Narrated by Aḥmad and the compilers of the *Sunan*[19] on the authority of Hafsah, Allāh be pleased with her)

The aforementioned ḥadeeth, is about obligatory fasting; however, it is not a condition to make intention prior to dawn in voluntary fasting. Rather, it is permissible to make the intention to fast at any time during the day, as long as the person has abstained from mufaṭṭirāt.

The majority of scholars say, "It is necessary to make the intention to fast during the night, every night, for the following day. However, Imām Malik says, "It is sufficient to make the intention to fast one time during the first night of Ramaḍān for the entire month. The intention is to be made in the heart and it is not legislated to utter it." In sum, one is required to have the intention in their heart every night during Ramaḍān to fast the following day, which is, by the blessing of Allāh, an easy matter.

As for the second pillar of fasting, it is abstaining from mufaṭṭirāt. The mufaṭṭirāt are things that the fasting person must avoid to make his fasting acceptable, and if he does not avoid them, his fasting becomes invalid.

The mufaṭṭirāt that are mentioned in the Qur'ān are three: eating, drinking, and intercourse. Allāh, the Exalted said, *"Now it is lawful for you to have sexual intercourse with your wives, and seek what Allāh has ordained for you; and eat and drink until the white streak of dawn becomes distinguishable from the darkness to you."* (Al-Baqarah 2:187)

In the abovementioned verse, Allāh permitted the following:

1. Having intercourse with wives, and seeking what Allāh has ordained for a person, i.e. having offspring through intercourse.
2. Eating
3. Drinking

[19] The Sunan are a type of compilation of ḥadeeth. What is meant by the Sunan here is the four books of Abu Dawood, At-Tirmidhī, An-Nisā'ī, and Ibn Mājah.

These three things are unanimously permissible during the night of Ramaḍān until the beginning of the true dawn.

From the things that break the fast as well:

4. Things that take the place of intercourse, i.e. intentional ejaculation by masturbation, kissing, touching, and so on, because these are of the desires a fasting person must refrain from.

Allāh, the Exalted, said, in a divine ḥadeeth, **"Except for fasting, it is for Me [Allāh], as he leaves his food, drink, and desires for My sake."** (Narrated by Al-Bukhārī)

As for kissing and touching without ejaculating, it does not break the fast. 'Āishah, Allāh be pleased with her, reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, **used to kiss and touch [his wives] when he was fasting, but he had more control of his desires than you."** (Narrated by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim)

Her statement, Allāh be pleased with her, **"But he had more control of his desires than you,"** is evidence that these things are permissible for a fasting person if he knows he can control himself and will not cause him to ejaculate or lead to intercourse.

As for un-intentional ejaculation such as a nocturnal emission, it does not break the fast. Nor does the fast break if ejaculation occurs due to thoughts without any action.

5. The fifth thing that breaks the fast is that which has the effects of food and drink, i.e. blood transfusions and nutritional injections, because they are substitutes for food and drink. The scholars disagree regarding this category of things that break the fast. However, a fasting person should be cautious and avoid it except in case of necessity. If a fasting person needs a blood infusion or glucose injection, he should make up for that day(s) in order to be on the safe side, even if he did not take other things that break the fast. It should be noted, that those who need to take such injections are usually sick and are permitted to break the fast and make up for the missed day(s).
6. Intentional vomiting by putting something in the mouth to vomit, or watching or smelling what makes one vomit, and the like. However, if someone vomits unintentionally, then his fast does not break. Aḥmad, Abu Dawood, At-Tirmidhī, and Ibn Mājah narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"Whoever is overcome by vomiting he does not to need to make up for the day; whoever vomits intentionally must make up for the day."**

Moreover, if someone needs to vomit due to an illness, in order to get rid of what harms or hurts him, then there is no issue in that. However, by doing so, he breaks his fast and he must make up for that day(s).

- ❖ According to the opinion of the majority of scholars, cupping does not break the fast. Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudrī, Allāh be pleased with him, said, "The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, permitted cupping for a fasting person." (Narrated by Ad-Dār Al-Qutnī. Cupping was prohibited for a fasting person because it weakens him. Then the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him allowed it. Likewise, donating blood is disliked for a fasting person because it weakens him, and may cause him to break his fast.
- ❖ Similarly, taking injections for medical purposes other than nourishment does not break the fast.
- ❖ Also, something reaching the internal part of a fasting person's body, by means other than the mouth or the nose, does not break the fast. That is because the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, forbade a fasting person to exaggerate while sniffing water into the nose for ablution. Thus, using eye drops, ears drops, eyeliner or eye shadow does not break the fast, even if one is able to taste it.
- ❖ Using *siwāk*[20] does not break the fast.
- ❖ Using water to cool down does not break the fast.
- ❖ Likewise, taking shower, rinsing the mouth, and sniffing water into the nose without exaggeration does not break the fast.
- ❖ Moreover, the mufaṭṭirāt will only brake they fast if they were done knowingly, attentively, and by choice. However, if they are done unintentionally, forgetfully, or by force, then the fast does not break, and there is no need to make up for that day(s).

CONDITIONS THAT MAKE FASTING RAMAḌĀN AN OBLIGATION

They are six: Islam, puberty, sanity, the ability to fast, residence [not travelling], the absence of menstruation bleeding, or post-childbirth bleeding.

1. A disbeliever is not required to fast Ramaḍān and it's not accepted from him.

If a disbeliever accepts Islam, then he is not required to make up for the Ramaḍān(s) he missed, nor he is required to make up for the missed day(s) that have passed of the current Ramaḍān. If one becomes Muslim during a day of Ramaḍān, then he must fast the rest of the day, and he is not required to make up for that day in which he became Muslim.

2. The second condition is puberty.

Thus, fasting is not obligatory on children; however, their guardian should command them to fast so they become used to it, then when they reach the age of puberty, fasting is easy for them. If a child reaches the age of puberty during a day of Ramaḍān, then he must fast the rest of the day, and he is not required to make up for that day.

[20] Siwāk is a natural toothbrush usually taken from the roots of an Arak tree.

3. Sanity is a condition that makes fasting Ramaḍān an obligation.

Thus, fasting is not obligatory on an insane person, nor on a very old person who lost his memory and becomes senile, and they do not need to offer expiation for the missed day(s) because they are not held responsible. If an insane person regained his sanity during a day of Ramaḍān, then he must fast the rest of the day, and he is not required to make up for that day.

4. Having the ability to fast is a condition that makes fasting Ramaḍān an obligation.

Thus, fasting is not obligatory on un-able person, such as a sick person. If the illness is believed to be curable, then he should break his fast and wait until he has recovered from his illness. Then, he makes up for the missed day(s). However, if the illness is believed to be incurable, he would then break his fast and for every missed day feed a poor person with half a *ṡā'*[21] of measurable and storable, or cookable food, such as rice, dates, and the like. One must feed poor people according to the number day(s) that were missed.

Also, the ruling of the sick can be applied to those who are pregnant or breast feeding, if fasting would harm the woman or the baby. According to the opinion of the four Imāms, they must make up for the missed day(s) if they break the fast. However, Ibn 'Abbās, and Ibn 'Umar, Allāh be pleased with them, said those that are pregnant or breast feeding must feed a poor person for every missed day.

If a sick person recovers from his illness during the day, then he is not required to fast the rest of the day, but he must fast another day in its place.

5. Residence [not travelling] is a condition that makes fasting Ramaḍān an obligation.

Thus, it is permissible for a traveler to break the fast, and make up for that day(s) later. If a traveler returns to his home during a the day, then he is not required to fast the rest of the day, but he must fast another day in its place.

6. The absence of menstruation bleeding, or post-childbirth bleeding is a condition for that makes fasting Ramaḍān an obligation and valid.

Fasting is impermissible and invalid for women who have menstrual bleeding or post-childbirth bleeding, and they must make up for those days. If they become pure from menstruation or post-childbirth bleeding during the day, then they must fast the rest of the day, and make up for it.

[21] A ṡā' is a unit of measurement. One ṡā' is equivalent to four scoops with the hands, each scoop should fill the palms of both hands of a regular sized man.

CHAPTER SIX

RAMAḌĀN: THE MONTH OF THE QUR'ĀN

Ramaḍān is the month of the Qur'ān. Allāh, the Exalted said, *"The month of Ramaḍān in which the Qur'ān was revealed, a guidance for mankind, and it has clear proofs of guidance and criterion [between truth and false-hood]."* (Al-Baqarah 2:185)

Allāh, the Exalted, revealed the Qur'ān in the month of Ramaḍān from the Preserved Tablet to *Bayt Al-'Izzah*[22] in the lowest heaven, which is a house congruent to the *Ka'bah*[23]. The Qur'ān was revealed all at once, on Laylah Al-Qadr in Ramaḍān. Then, Allāh revealed the Qur'ān in pieces throughout twenty three years. The angel Jibreel would listen to verses being recited by Allāh, and then would reveal them to the heart of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him.

This revelation of the Qur'ān, also began on Laylah Al-Qadr in Ramaḍān, when the angel Jibreel, peace be upon him, revealed the beginning of *Surah Al-'Alaq* to the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him. *"Read,[O Prophet], in the name of your Lord, who created. He created man from a blood-clot. Read, [O Prophet], and your Lord is the most noble. He who taught by the pen. He taught man what he knew not."* (Al-'Alaq 96: 1-5)

Allāh, the Exalted, said*, "It is indeed [this Qur'ān] the revelation from the Lord of all that exists. The trustworthy angel [Jibreel] brought it down to your heart, so that you would be one of the warners. He revealed it in clear Arabic speech."* (Ash-Shu'arā' 26: 192-195)

Because the month of Ramaḍān is singled out for the Qur'ān, the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, used to distinguish it with frequent recitation and studying of the Qur'ān. He used to recite the entire Qur'ān once or twice in Ramaḍān. Reading it once to angel Jibreel, peace be upon him and another time by himself, peace and blessings be upon him. The angel Jibreel used to come to the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, every night during Ramaḍān. They would review the Qur'ān together as was confirmed in Bukhārī in a narration by the companion Ibn 'Abbās, Allāh be please with him.

The companions and the predecessors have imitated the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, in this regard. Thus, they used to recite the entire Qur'ān more than once during Ramaḍān in and outside prayers.

Imām Mālik used to stop teaching ḥadeeth when Ramaḍān began; instead he would occupy himself with the recitation of the Qur'ān. Some of the pious predecessors used to say, "Ramaḍān is only for reciting the Qur'ān and distributing food."

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[22] Bayt Al-'Izzah might be translated as the House of Might. It is a house of worship similar to the Ka'bah directly above it in the lowest heaven.

[23] The Ka'bah is the first house of worship built to worship Allāh alone without partners. It was built by the prophets Ibrāheem and Ismā'eel in Makkah.

Indeed, the glorious Qur'ān is the Book of Enlightenment, the Wise Remembrance. It is the book that false-hood cannot come to it from any direction. It was described by Allāh, the One who revealed it to us, that it is the Book of Enlightenment because it enlightens man's path, and protects him from darkness. It also enlightens the believer's heart, so it fills up with happiness, pleasure, and tranquility. Moreover, Allāh, the Exalted, called the Qur'ān the Criterion because it distinguishes false-hood from the truth.

Allāh, the Exalted said, *"It is He [Allāh] who revealed the Qur'ān to you [O Prophet] with truth, confirming what was before it. And He revealed before the Torah and the Gospel, guidance for mankind, and He revealed the Criterion."* (Āl-'Imran 3:3-4) He, the exalted also said, *"Those who have believed, and whose hearts are assured by the remembrance of Allāh. Truly, by the remembrance of Allāh, the hearts are assured."* (Ar-R'ad 13: 28) and *"Verily, the true believers are whose hearts become fearful when Allāh is mentioned; when His verses are recited to them, they increase their faith; and on their Lord, they are dependent."* (Al-Anfāl 8:2)

Verily, this glorious Qur'ān is the Guidance, the Cure, the Mercy. Allāh, glory be to him, named it so in the Qur'ān. Allāh, the Exalted said, *"Tell them [O Prophet] it is for those who believe a guidance and cure."* (Fuṡṡilāt 41: 44), and *"We [Allāh] reveal of the Qur'ān that which is a cure and mercy for the believers and it does not increase the oppressors except in loss."* (Al-Isrā' 17:82)

Indeed, the glorious Qur'ān gives life to the heart of the Muslim when it dies, and arouses it when it becomes unmindful. Abu Mūsā Al-Ash'arī, Allāh be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"The likeness of the one who remembers his Lord and the one who does not remember his Lord is that of the living and the dead."** (Narrated by Bukhārī)

The glorious Qur'ān fills Muslim's heart with hope when it is inflicted with despair and hopelessness. It fills the heart with cautiousness and fear when it is inflicted with arrogance, delusions and feels safe from the punishment of Allāh .

Describing the Qur'ān, Al-Waleed Ibn Al-Mugheerah, a bitter enemy [of Islam], said, "It is neither the speech of human being, nor is it the speech of the jinn. It is attractive; its words are adorned with beauty and charm; it is like a fruitful, deep-rooted tree." Indeed, the testimony of enemies is indisputable.

Allāh, the Exalted, has challenged mankind and the jinn to bring the likeness of the Qur'ān, and He, the Exalted, said that they will never do so. Allāh, the Exalted, said, *"If you [O disbelievers] have doubt about what We [Allāh] have revealed to our servant [Muḥammad], then bring a chapter like it and seek help from your witnesses other than Allāh if you are truthful [in your claim]. If you are unable to, and you will never be able to, then fear the fire whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for the disbelievers."* (Al-Baqarah 2: 23-24) He, the Exalted also said, *"Say: if mankind and the jinn made an agreement to bring the like of this Qur'ān, they could not bring the like of it, even if they were helpers of each another."*

(Al-Isrā' 17: 88) They cannot bring something like the Qur'ān: the truthfulness of its speech, justice of its rules, beauty of its words and expressions, nor loftiness of its meanings.

The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, strongly encouraged Muslims to recite the Qur'ān, he said, **"Whoever wishes to love Allāh and His Messenger, then he should recite from the *muṡḥaf*."**[24] (Narrated by Al-Bayhaqī on the authority of Ibn Mas'ood and graded as sound by Al-Albānī in Ṣaḥeeḥ Al-Jami 6289)

Ibn Mas'ood, Allāh be pleased with him, also reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"Whoever recites a letter from the Book of Allāh, the Exalted, he will get one reward, and it will be multiplied ten times. I do not say 'Alīf-lām-meem' is one letter, but alif is a letter, lām is a letter, and meem is a letter."** (At-Tirmidhī, and he graded it as authentic)

'Āishah, Allāh be pleased with her, reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"Whoever recites the Qur'ān proficiently is with the noble, pious ambassadors [i.e. the angels]. And whoever recites the Qur'ān, stumbling over the words and with difficulty will have double rewards."** (Narrated by Bukhārī and Muslim)

Abu Hurairah, Allāh be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"No group of people gather in one of the houses of Allāh, reciting and studying the Qur'ān with one another, except that tranquility will descend upon them, mercy will cover them, the angels will surround them, and Allāh will mention them among those with Him."** (Narrated by Muslim)

Moreover, Allāh the Exalted, warns us of deserting the Qur'ān. He has mentioned in the Qur'ān that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, will complain to Him on the Day of Judgment that his people have deserted the Qur'ān. Allāh, the Exalted, said, *"The Messenger will say, O Allāh, indeed, my people deserted this Qur'ān."* (Al-Furqān 25: 30)

ABANDONING THE QUR'ĀN IS OF DIFFERENT TYPES

Among the different types are: not reciting the Qur'ān, not acting upon it, not contemplating it; not judging by it; and not seeking healing from it.

Thus, we should recite and contemplate the Qur'ān, as Allāh has made it clear that the heart of whoever does not contemplate the Qur'ān has locks preventing guidance and light from reaching it. Allāh, glory be to him, said, *"Will they not contemplate the Qur'ān, or are there locks on their hearts?"* (Muḥammad 47:24)

We must comply with the rules of the Qur'ān, as Allāh has not revealed it except to abide by its commandments and avoid its prohibitions. We must also make the Qur'ān the judge of our households and of our societies. We must nurture ourselves and our children

[24] A muṡḥaf is a written copy of the Qur'ān in book form.

with it. For indeed, the Qur'ān is a cure for the bodies, just as it is a cure for the souls and the hearts.

We should strive to memorize the Qur'ān and act upon its rules so that we will be of the people of the Qur'ān. As the people of the Qur'ān are the people of Allāh, the Exalted. Anas, Allāh be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"Allāh has special people from mankind, and the people of the Qur'ān are Allāh's special people."** Narrated by Ibn Mājah, Aḥmad, and An-Nasā'ī and recored in Ṣaḥeeḥ Al-Jāmi' 2165)

O Allāh, make us of the people of the Qur'ān, and guide us to recite it day and night according to the manner that pleases you.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE LAST TEN DAYS OF RAMAḌĀN

The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **“Verily, [the reward of] actions are decided by the last [of them]."** He, peace and blessings be upon him, also said, **“Take advantage of five before five: your youth before your old age, your health before your sickness, your wealth before your poverty, your free time before your business, and your life before your death.”**

Therefore, finish Ramaḍān with the best of deeds; even though it's noticed that many Muslims lose their determination and their resolution becomes weak as Ramaḍān comes to a close. It's evident that many people are enthusiastic in the beginning of Ramaḍān. They are eager to recite the Qur’ān, pray *Taraweeḥ*,[25] and perform good deeds. However, the number of those who pray Taraweeḥ becomes less and less as the end of the month approaches.

This is quite the opposite of what's asked of a Muslim. Because it is desired to end Ramaḍān in the best manners, since [the reward of] actions are decided by the last [of them]. Therefore, it is asked that one increases his effort in the last ten days of Ramaḍān. 'Āishah reported, **“When the last ten days of Ramaḍān would come, the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, used to tighten his cloak around his waist, enliven his night [by praying], and wake up his family [to do the same].”** (Narrated by Muslim)

"Tighten his cloak", this refers to the Prophet’s exertion in worship and it is a metaphor meaning, avoiding sexual relationships with his wives to free himself for *'Itikāf*[26] and prayer.

If we were negligent in first twenty nights, then we should make up for it by exerting effort in the last ten nights - which are the best nights of the year - so that we do as we are supposed to, and mend what we have spoiled. In fact, one’s life may end, and none of us know if we will be alive for the next Ramaḍān or not. Furthermore, if a one does live to see the next Ramaḍān, he does not know whether he will be strong, healthy, and have spare time, so that he will be able to exert himself in worship or if obstacles will prevent him from doing so. Therefore, you should take advantage of your life before your death, your health before your illness, your youth before your old age, your wealth before your poverty, and your free time before your busyness. Beware not to miss this great opportunity and know that whoever prays Taraweeḥ with the Imām until he leaves, he is rewarded as if he prayed the entire night.

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[25] Taraweeḥ is a prayer specific to Ramadan. It is a generally longer than normal prayers and it is held between 'Ishā' and Witr prayers.

26 I'tikāf is the seclusion in a mosque with the intention of becoming closer to Allāh, the Exalted. See Chapter 9.

CHAPTER EIGHT

LAYLAH AL-QADR

During the last ten days of Ramaḍān, there is Laylah Al-Qadr, which is a great and blessed night. Allāh, the Exalted, has made the exact timing of it unknown so that Muslims will be diligent throughout the last ten days of Ramaḍān. In the Arabic language, it is called the Laylah Al-Qadr, because it is a night of qadr i.e. nobility and greatness. It is also called this, because in this night the amount of everything for the following years is decreed and is sent down from the Preserved Tablet to Bayt Al-'Izzah the lowest heaven.

Allāh, the Exalted, revealed the Qur'ān in Laylah Al-Qadr. He, the Exalted, said, *"Indeed, We [Allāh] have revealed it in Laylah Al-Qadr. And what [O Prophet] will make you know what Laylah Al-Qadr is?"* (Al-Qadr 97:1-2)

Allāh has granted this night to the Muslim nation since their life span is short; and He has made it better than a thousand months, i.e. the worship in it is better than the worship done in eighty some years. Allāh, the Exalted, has described this blessed night by saying, *"Laylah Al-Qadr is better than a thousand months. The angels and Ar-Rooh [Jibreel] frequently descend in it, by the permission of their Lord for every affair. It is all peace until the rising of dawn."* (Al-Qadr 97:3-5) Moreover, the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"Whoever is deprived of the good things of the night of decree is deprived."**

THERE ARE FOUR SIGNS OF THIS NIGHT AUTHENTICALLY REPORTED FROM THE PROPHET, PEACE AND BLESSINGS BE UPON HIM

1. It is a bright night and whoever lives in the desert or a place where there is no artificial light will feel its brightness.

2. It is neither hot nor cold, which is a relative and compared to the nights before and after it.

3. It will be absent of shooting stars.

4. The sun will rise with no visible rays on the following morning. In addition, it is understood from Allāh 's speech, *"It is all peace until the rising of dawn."*(Al-Qadr 97:5), that the believer will feel tranquility and comfort because of the frequent descending of the angels in that night to Earth.

For it is reported on the authority of Wathilah Ibn Al-Asqa' and 'Ubādah Ibn Sāmit, Allāh be pleased with them, the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"Laylah Al-Qadr is a bright night, it is neither hot nor cold, and no stars are shot during it and**

from the signs of its day is the sun rises without rays." (Aḥmad, Aṭ-Ṭabarāni, and graded as sound by Al-Albānī)

Seek out Laylah Al-Qadr in the last seven days because it has been narrated in a authentic ḥadeeth by Muslim that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"Seek it in the last ten nights [of Ramaḍān]. If one of you becomes weak or unable [to seek it], he should not be overcome in the remaining seven [nights]."**

The night of the twenty-third is highly expected to be Laylah Al-Qadr as it is reported by 'Abdullah Ibn 'Unais Al-Juhanī came to the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and said, "O Messenger of Allāh, I have camels, goats, and children, hence I would love that you tell me of a night that upon its arrival I shall attend the prayers, and that [night should be] in the month of Ramaḍān. The Messenger of Allāh, peace and blessings be upon him, called him and whispered in his ear. Since then, when it was the night of the twenty-third, Al-Juhanī would enter the mosque with his camels, goats, and family for 'Aṣr and would not leave, except for in need, until he prayed Fajr. So it is said the night of Al-Juhanī.

In another narration, Al-Juhanī said, "O Messenger of Allāh, I have a large area of a barren land that I pray in. Tell me of a night so that I would go to the mosque and pray in it instead.' The Messenger of Allāh, peace and blessings be upon him said, 'Go for the night of the twenty-third."

The most expected night to be Laylah Al-Qadr is the night of the twenty-seventh. Zir Ibn Hubaish said, "I heard 'Ubay Ibn Ka'b speaking and it was said to him, 'Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood says, 'Whoever prays every night in a year will have prayed on Laylah Al-Qadr,' 'Ubay then said, 'By Allāh, who there is nothing worthy of worship except Him, it is in Ramaḍān [he took an oath without exceptions]. And by Allāh, I know which night it is. It is the night that the Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him, ordered us to stand in it [by praying], it is the night of the twenty-seventh, and its sign is the rising of the Sun the following morning, white [in color] without rays."

Al-Hāfith[27] Ibn Rajab said, "A group [of scholars] favored that Laylah Al-Qadr is the night of the twenty-seventh. Ath-Thawri has mentioned it on behalf of the people of Kūfah, he said, "We say it is the night of the twenty-seventh based on what we have received on the authority of 'Ubay Ibn Ka'b. He use to swear on it by Allāh without exceptions, and Zir Ibn Hubaish, and 'Abdah Ibn Abi Lubābah. It was also reported that Qunādah Ibn 'Abdullah An-Nahmī said, "I asked Zir about Laylah Al-Qadr, then he said, "'Umar, Hudhaifah, and individuals from the companions of the Messenger of Allāh, peace and blessings be upon him, were not in doubt that it is the night of the twenty-seventh. (Narrated by Ibn Abī Shaibah and it is the opinion of Aḥmad Ibn Hambal and Isḥāq Ibn Rāhawayh)

[27] Hāfith is title given to scholars that have committed enormous amounts of ḥadeeth to memory.

CHAPTER 9

I'TIKĀF

I'tikāf in the mosques in the last ten days of Ramaḍān is from the *sunnah*[28] of the Prophet.

I'tikāf is the seclusion in a mosque with the intention of becoming closer to Allāh, the Exalted.

I'tikāf is legislated as it is mentioned in the Qur'ān, *"Purify My House for those who perform Tawaf and those make I'tikāf and those who bow and prostrate [in prayer]."* (Al-Baqarah 2:125), and, *"And do not have sexual relations with them [wives] as long as you are making I'tikāf in the mosques."* (Al-Baqarah 2-187)

The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, used to make I'tikāf in the last ten days of Ramaḍān in his mosque since he immigrated to Madeenah. When he missed making I'tikāf one year because of an excuse, he, peace and blessings be upon him, made it up by making I'tikāf for ten days in Shawwāl. One year, he, peace and blessings be upon him, made I'tikāf for twenty days in Ramaḍān. He made I'tikāf for the mid-ten days thinking that Laylah Al-Qadr was in one of them. Then Allāh, the Exalted, revealed to him that Laylah Al-Qadr was ahead of him, i.e. that it is in the last ten nights of Ramaḍān. Thus he made I'tikāf in these nights.

I'tikāf is legislated for both men and women. The wives of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, made I'tikāf during his lifetime and after his death. (Narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim) They used to perform it regularly with the condition that the mosque had a dedicated place in the mosque that preserved their privacy, or a segregated place dedicated for women in the mosque.

VIRTUES OF I'TIKĀF

There are many virtues for making I'tikāf in the mosque. Each virtue on its own is enough for one to be keen to make I'tikāf. The one making I'tikāf should be mindful of these virtues in his intention so that he can be rewarded for them by the will of Allāh .

1. Seeking Laylah Al-Qadr by spending every moment from the setting of the Sun until the dawn of Fajr in worship because I'tikāf is a form of worship comprising of every part of the night.

[28] Here sunnah means the tradition, common practice or habit.

2. Following the footsteps of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, and acting upon the words of Allāh, the Exalted, *"Indeed in the Messenger of Allāh you have a an excellent example*." (Al-Aḥzāb 33:21)

3. Increase in the rewards of acts of worship that are performed in the mosque, as the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"No group of people gather in one of the houses of Allāh, reciting and studying the Qur'ān with one another, except that tranquility will descend upon them, mercy will cover them, the angels will surround them, and Allāh will mention them among those with Him."**

4. Performing the prayers in congregation.

5. Performing the prayers at the beginning of its allocated time.

6. To catch *Takbeerah Al-Iḥrām*[29] with the Imām. Whoever catches Takbeerah Al-Iḥrām with the Imām for forty days, two exemptions are inscribed for him; he will be free from hypocrisy and safe from the hellfire.

7. Waiting for one prayer after another, and this is called *Ar-Rabāṭ*.[30] One is considered to be in prayer as long as he is waiting for the prayer to start. The angels shade him and ask forgiveness for him as long as he is in the place where he prayed.

8. Cooperation in righteousness and piety, since everyone making I'tikāf will help one another obey the commands of Allāh, the Exalted. Allāh, glory be to Him, said, *"And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression."* (Al-Mā'idah 5:2), and He, glory be to him said, *"And keep yourself patient [by being] with those who call upon their Lord in the morning and the evening, seeking His Face"* (Al-Kahf 18:28)

9. Simple acts of selflessness such feeding other people and offering them help has a great reward. This gathering is an opportunity for every one performing I'tikāf to favor his brother on himself and gain rewards.

10. An opportunity to meet and spread love and harmony between everyone in I'tikāf.

11. It is isolation from evil actions and evil people. The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, "The emigrant is the one who leaves bad actions."

[29] Takbeerah means the saying "Allahu Akbar". Takbeerah Al-Iḥrām is the first Takbeerah that commences the beginning of the prayer.
[30] Ar-Rabāṭ literally means tying. Here, it means staying in the place of prayer, after having finished it, until the following prayer, as if you were tied in place.

CHAPTER 10

ZAKĀH AL-FIṪR

Allāh, the Exalted, has ordained for us in conclusion of the month an honorable act of worship, *Zakāh Al-Fiṫr*[31]. Its virtues are numerous. It is from the obligated charities, and the general evidences of the virtues of giving charity and spending in the way of Allāh are applied to it.

The month of Ramaḍān is the month of generosity and nobility. Zakāh Al-Fiṫr is one of the forms of generosity and nobility in this month. It is an obligation on every Muslim who has wealth that exceeds the amount that is necessary by him and those he takes care of for the day and night of *'Eid*.[32]

Allāh, the Exalted said, *"He is successful who [gave] charity, and mentioned the name of his Lord and prayed."* (Al-A'la 87:14-15)

"[gave] charity" i.e. gave Zakāh Al-Fiṫr.

"mentioned the name of his Lord" i.e. perfomored the *Takbeerāt of 'Eid*.[33]

"and prayed" i.e. prayed the 'Eid Prayer.

Zakāh Al-Fiṫr is a noticeable ritual of Islam. The Messenger of Allāh, peace and blessings be upon him, obligated it to feed the poor and to purify the shortcomings of any shameful and useless speech while fasting. The amount prescribed by the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, is a ṡā' of either dates, raisins, wheat, barley, hard skimmed yoghurt. The majority of scholars have added to these types of food any type of food that can be measured and stored, such as rice, corn, flour, lentils, fava beans, and other beans.

A ṡā' is a measurement four scoops with the hands, each scoop should fill the palms of both hands of a regular sized man. The weight of a ṡā' [consisting of any the types of food that is allowed in Zakāh Al-Fiṫr] does not exceed on 3 kilograms. The weight of a ṡā' of high quality wheat is equivalent to two kilograms and four hundred grams.

It is mandatory for a Muslim to give a ṡā' on behalf of himself and a ṡā' for each of his dependents, whether they are young or old, a male or a female. Additionally, if one's wife is pregnant then it is recommended to give a ṡā' on behalf of the fetus in the womb as this was the action of 'Uthmān, Allāh be pleased with him.

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[31] Zakāh Al-Fiṫr is a type of Zakāh that is specific to the first day following the end of Ramaḍān, the 1st of Shawwāl, 'Eid Al-Fiṫr

[32] 'Eid is an Islamic holiday or celebration. There are two of them throughout the year. 'Eid Al-Fiṫr which takes place on the 1st of Shawwāl following the end of Ramaḍān. 'Eid Al-Aḍḥā which takes place on the 10th of Dhull-Ḥijjah following Ḥajj.

[33] Takbeerāt of 'Eid is chant that is said while waiting for the 'Eid prayer to start. See Chapter 11.

The time allocated for giving the charity is before 'Eid day by one, two, or three days based on the ħadeeth of Abu Hurairah, Allāh be pleased with him, when the Devil came to steal from Zakāh Al-Fiṫr during these three days. The favorable time ends with the 'Eid prayer while the time of permissibility extends to sunset on the day of 'Eid. It is not permissible to delay it further beyond the sunset. If the it was delayed to after sunset, the person has committed a sin. It remains in his debt and is required to make it up.

It is not permissible to give the charity in the form of money according to the majority of the scholars, unless one is commissioning someone else to buy the food on his behalf and give it away as charity. This is because it is an act of worship; and worship is fixed to the way it is described in authentic revealed texts.

'Atā', Al-Hasan Al-Basrī, 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul'Azeez, Ath-Thawrī, Abu Haneefah, and other scholars have the opinion that it is permissible to pay the cost of the food. The honored *tabi'ee*[34], Abu Isħāq As-Sabī'ee said, "I have lived among them and [witnessed that] they were giving the charity of Ramaḍān as coins equivalent to the value of the food." (Narrated by Ibn Shaibah in Al-Muṡannaf)

The opinion I accept is that it is permissible to take this exemption when in need in this country because of the hardship in gathering, storing, and transporting the charity as grains. Zakāh Al-Fiṫr must be delivered in its allocated time, either to the poor or the person who is entrusted to deliver it to the poor. If the charity reaches the entrusted person in its allocated time, then it is as if it has reached the poor himself, even if the entrusted person was late in delivering it. The mosque and charity organizations that gather Zakāh Al-Fiṫr are considered according to contemporary scholars as entrusted authorities to receive the charity for the poor and to deliver the charity on behalf of the wealthy at the same time. And all praise is due to Allāh the Lord of all that exists.

[34] A tabi'ee is anyone who met a companion and died on Islam but did not meet the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him. They are the second generation.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

'EID AL-FIṬR

The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"The fasting person has two occasions of joy, once when he breaks his fast and when he meets his Lord, he is joyful of his fast."**

The day of 'Eid is the first occasion of joy, the bliss of breaking the fast. The reason for this happiness is that Allāh, the Exalted, granted him the ability to fast and stand [in prayer] while others were deprived from the sweetness of these acts of worship. *"Say, by the grace of Allāh and in His mercy, in that let them rejoice; it is better than what they accumulate."* (Yunus 10:58)

We ask Allāh, glory be to Him, to grant us the second joyful occasion when meeting Him. When the people who fast are called to enter Paradise from the door of Ar-Rayyān.

It is recommended on the day of 'Eid for the Muslims to greet each other and to say to each other, **"Allāh accept from us and from you [the good deeds]."** It is legislated for a Muslim to bring happiness to his family, children, and the Muslims on the day of 'Eid on particular and everyday in general. The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"The most beloved deed to Allāh is bring joy to a Muslim, or to pay for him a debt, or to remove a hardship from him, or expel him from hunger."**

It is also legislated to do takbeer in the end of the month of Ramaḍān. Allāh, the Exalted said, *"(He wants you) to complete the prescribed period, and to glorify Him in that He has guided you; and perhaps you will be grateful."* (Al-Baqarah 2:185) i.e. mentioning Allāh when you are done with your acts of worship. The same way Allāh, the Exalted, legislated His remembrance by glorify Him and exalting Him after the prayers , He legislated His remembrance at the end of the Hajj. Allāh, the Exalted said, *"And when you have completed your rites, remember Allāh like your [previous] remembrance of your fathers or with [much] greater remembrance."* (Al-Baqarah 2:200) He, the Exalted, legislated His remembrance after the completion of the fast of Ramaḍān by takbeer. Takbeer starts from the sight of the crescent moon for month of *Shawwāl*[35] or from sunset on the last day of Ramaḍān, and ends with the time of the 'Eid prayer.

The form of takbeer, as narrated by Ibn Mas'ood, Allāh be pleased with him, is, "Allāhu akbar, Allāhu akbar, lā ilāha illa Allāh, wAllāhu akbar, Allāhu akbar, walillāhil-ḥamd" [Allāh is the greatest, Allāh is the greatest, there is nothing worthy of worship except Allāh, Allāh is the greatest, Allāh is the greatest, and to Allāh is all praise].

[35] Shawwāl is the 10th month of the Islamic Lunar Calendar following Ramaḍān.

Performing takbeer out loud is legislated after prayers, on the way to the 'Eid prayer, in the prayer area awaiting the 'Eid prayer, and every time one remembers he performs takbeer thanking Allāh, the Exalted, for granting us success and giving us the bounties we have.

Wearing the best of clothes is legislated for the day of 'Eid. It is reported by 'Alī, Allāh be pleased with him, that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, used to wear an adorned garment [made in Yemen] for every 'Eid. (Narrated by Ash-Shafi'ee and Aṫ-Ṫabarāni) It was reported by Ibn Khuzaimah on the authority of Jābir, Allāh be pleased with him, that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, used to wear a red garment for both 'Eids and *Jumu'ah*.[36]

According to the practice of a number of the companions, Allāh be pleased with them, it is recommended to perform a *ghusl*[37] before leaving to the 'Eid prayer.

The 'Eid prayer is a noticeable ritual of Islam. It is legislated that men, women, young and old attend. On the authority of Umm ʻAṫiyyah, Allāh be pleased with her, "The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, has commanded us to bring the adolescent girls, the unmarried girls, and the ones who are menstruating to the 'Eid prayer. The menstruating women do not join the prayers, however they witness the goodness and the supplication of the Muslims. So I said, 'O Messenger of Allāh, one of us does not have a garment [to wear].' He said, **'let her sister dress her in one of her garments."** (Narrated by Al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and the compilers of the Sunan) Abu Dawood added in his narration, "and those menstruating will be behind the people saying takbeer with them."

It is legislated for women to say the takbeer, however it should be said silently. They should attend the 'Eid prayer in their garments and concealing *hijab*.[38]

According to Imām Abu Haneefah, the 'Eid prayer is an obligation on every Muslim. Imām Aḥmad follows the opinion that if the prayer was performed by a group of Muslim then it is not obligated on the rest of the Muslims. Imām Malik and Ash-Shafi'ee follow the opinion that it is a *sunnah*.[39]

It is recommended to go to and return from the 'Eid prayer walking, if possible. This is to make the rituals of Islam visible in the roads. Moreover, it is recommended to return from a different path from the one taken previously, because it was the practice of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him. (Narrated by Al-Bukhārī)

It is also recommended to eat an odd number of dates before leaving to the 'Eid prayer. Anas, Allāh be pleased with him said, "The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon

[36] Jumu'ah is the Friday prayer accompanied with a sermon.
[37] A ghusl is a ritual shower to remove a higher level of spiritual impurity.
[38] A garment that conceals a woman's private area, which is her whole body besides her face and hands according to the majority of scholars.
[39] Here sunnah means that it is a recommended act rather than mandatory.

him, **would not leave on the day of ['Eid] Al-Fiṫr until he ate few palm dates, and he would eat an odd number."** (Narrated by Al-Bukhārī)

One should be keen to leave early on the day of 'Eid to attend the prayers, and keen to listen to the 'Eid sermon after the prayers.

'Eid celebrations are from the rituals of Islam that makes Muslims distinct from the celebrations of the disbelievers. It is not permissible, according to the consensus of the scholars, to celebrate in the celebrations of the disbelievers or to give them glad tidings for it. Allāh, the Exalted said, *"And [the believers are] those who do not testify falsehood."* (Al-Furqān 25:72) Abul-'Āliyah, Ibn Sireen, and Tāwoos, and many of the predecessors said, "i.e. they are the ones who do not witness the celebrations of the disbelievers."

When the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, entered Madeenah he found its people celebrating two days from the celebrations of the time ignorance. He, peace and blessings be upon him, forbade them and said, **"Allāh has replaced these days for you with two better days; the day of ['Eid] Al-Fiṫr, and the day of ['Eid] Al-Aḍĥā."**

The Messenger of Allāh, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"All of you are shepherds and each of you are responsible for your flock. The ruler is a shepherd and responsible for his flock. A man is a shepherd for his family and responsible for his flock. A woman is a shepherd in her husband's house and is responsible for her flock. So all of you are shepherds and are responsible for your flocks."** (Narrated by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim on the authority of Ibn 'Umar)

Thus, one should fear Allāh regarding the flock Allāh has prescribed upon him; because you will be asked about them in front of Allāh. Where they guarded or where they misplaced? Parents then should be careful on raising their children with an Islamic upbringing. They should teach them to pray, teach the girls to cover themselves, get them used to doing good in their childhood, and to separate them from bad friends.

The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, specifically gave the women advice on the day of 'Eid. After advising the men, the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, went to the prayer area of the women and advised them saying, **"O women, give charity, for thus I have seen you [women] the majority of the people of Hellfire.'** A women said, 'O Messenger of Allāh, why?' He, peace and blessings be upon him said, **'You complain frequently and are ungrateful to your husbands. I have not seen anyone more lacking in wisdom and religion than you. You can lead a cautious, wise man away. One of us would do good to you for a lifetime, then if one mistake appeared from him you say, 'We have never seen good from you."** (Narrated by Al-Bukhārī on the authority of Jābir)

1. To encourage them to give charity, because the charity distinguishes the sins as water distinguishes fire. Allāh, the Exalted said, *"If you loan Allāh a goodly loan, He will multiply it for you and forgive you. And Allāh is Most Appreciative and Forbearing."* (At-Taghābūn 64:17)

2. To warn them not to complain frequently. Muslim women should be careful from complaining about her husband, her children, poverty or illness. Rather she should direct her complaints to Allāh, the Exalted, *"He said, 'I only complain of my suffering and my grief to Allāh."* (Yusuf 12:86)

3. To warn them from ungratefulness and mistreatment of one's husband. The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said to the woman regarding her husband, **"He is your Paradise and Hellfire."** Meaning, he is your way to seek Paradise, if you obeyed him and treated him well, and your way to Hellfire, if you disobeyed him and mistreated him.

'Eid is a ritual for all Muslims without exception. Attending it should include the children, the women, the young and the old. Unlike other forms of worship, which the poor, the young, and women could be exempt from. Hold firmly to the rope of Allāh together and do not become divided. O slaves of Allāh, be in brotherhood as Allāh has commanded you. Repent to Him with sincere repentance.

Allāh, the Exalted said, *"[Allāh wants] for you to complete the period and to glorify Allāh for that [to] which He has guided you; and perhaps you will be grateful."* (Al-Baqarah 2:185) Allāh, glory be to him, has commanded us after completing the fast of the month, to glorify Him the night and day of 'Eid with gratitude for guiding us.

There are no annual celebrations for Muslims except for 'Eid Al-Fiṫr and 'Eid Al-Aḍħā with the days of *At-Tashreeq*.[40] The weekly 'Eid is Jumu'ah. The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"Allāh has replaced these days for you with two better days."**

It is legislated on the day of 'Eid to show happiness and joy. The evidence for this is the ħadeeth of the two young girls when Abu Bakr said, "A horn of Satan in the house of the Messenger of Allāh?' He, peace and blessings be upon him said, **'Leave them Abu Bakr."** Also as evidence, is the ħadeeth of the Abyssinians playing with the spears in the mosque of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him.

'Eid Al-Fiṫr is after fulfilling a pillar of Islam, fasting Ramaḍān; and 'Eid Al-Aḍħā is after fulfilling a pillar of Islam, Ḥajj. 'Eid Al-Fiṫr is after the best ten nights, which are the

[40] The days of At-Tashreeq are the three days following Eid Al-Aḍħā, the 11th, 12th and 13th of Dhul-Ḥijjah.

last ten nights of Ramaḍān; and 'Eid Al-Aḍḥā is after the best ten days, which are the first ten days of Dhul-Ḥijjah. All praise belongs to Allāh for His grace and blessings.

CHAPTER 12

AFTER RAMAḌĀN

The month of Ramaḍān is a month of exclusive offers, some take advantage from these offers and others who are in negligent.

From the wisdoms of fasting in Ramaḍān is weaning the self from its habits. The self is the biggest barrier to do good. Thus, take advantage of the opportunity after Ramaḍān and strike while the iron is hot. Continue in weaning the self from bad habits that you have already stopped in Ramaḍān.

Allāh, the Exalted, has warned us in His glorious book from following the steps of Bal'am Ibn Ba'oorā', one of the children of Israel. He tasted the sweetness of faith and Allāh gave him His signs. Then, he turned back onto his heels and exchanged guidance for error and forgiveness for punishment, and detached himself from the signs of Allāh as the snake detaches from its skin. Allāh, the Exalted said, *"And recite to them, [O Muḥammad], the news of him to whom we gave [knowledge of] Our signs, but he detached himself from them; so Satan pursued him, and he became of those who went astray. And if We had willed, we could have elevated him thereby, but he adhered [instead] to the earth and followed his own desire. So his example is like that of the dog; if you chase him, he pants, or if you leave him, he [still] pants. That is the example of the people who denied Our signs. So relate the stories that perhaps they will give thought."* (Al-A'rāf 7:175-176)

Our Lord, glory be to Him, has also warned us from being like the mentally ill woman in Makkah named, Reetah Bint sa'd. She used to spin throughout her day a strong and firm spin then undo the thread. Allāh, the Exalted, said *"And be not like her who undoes the thread which she has spun after it has become strong, by taking your oaths a means of deception among yourselves, lest a nation may be more numerous than another nation. Allāh only tries you thereby. And He will surely make clear to you on the Day of Resurrection that over which you used to differ."* (An-Naḥl 16:92)

"By taking your oaths a means of deception among yourselves" means, to take a deceptive oath to be with a specific nation. Then when you find another nation that is greater in number and status, you go back on your oath with the first nation and take an oath with the other one.

These warnings from the Qur'an are applicable to the person who tasted the sweetness of obeying Allāh, the Exalted, in Ramaḍān by fulfilling the obligations and staying away from sins. Then, after Ramaḍān passed, he turned away from the signs of Allāh and undid the thread of what he spun after it was firm and strong. Many of the Muslims, Allāh guide them, are from those who carefully maintain their prayers in Ramaḍān. However, after Ramaḍān ends they neglect their prayers and follow their

desires. Many Muslims avoid smoking, watching what is forbidden, and listening to music until Ramaḍān ends. Then they go back to the falsehood they used to be in. It is feared that these are the ones that would have their last deeds be sinful, Allāh protect us.

Many of the Muslims visit and maintain the mosques in Ramaḍān with actions of obedience to Allāh and by attending gatherings that are focused on the remembrance of Allāh. They spend their time reciting the Qur'ān and reflecting upon its verses. However, after Ramaḍān ends, they forsake attending the mosques and reciting the Book of Allāh. Thus, O slaves of Allāh, fear Allāh.

'Āishah, Allāh be pleased with her, was asked, "How were the deeds of the Messenger of Allāh?' She said, **'His deeds were performed with consistency, and who among you can do what the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him used to do?"** (Narrated by Muslim) Muslim also narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"The most beloved deeds to Allāh, the ones performed with consistency even if they are small in number."**

So, one should enjoin on himself specific actions of worship that he can be consistent with. Even if they are small in number, it will end up being a lot by being consistent and will be beloved to the Lord of Might, the Exalted.

From the good deeds that are legislated after Ramaḍān is fasting six days of Shawwāl. On the authority of Abu Ayyoob, Allāh be pleased with him said, the [Prophet], peace and blessings be upon him said, **"Whoever fasts [the month of] Ramaḍān and follows it with six days of Shawwāl, then that is the fast [equivalent to the fast] of a year.**" (Narrated by Muslim) The reason for this is, the reward of one's deeds is multiplied by ten. Therefore, fasting the month of Ramaḍān is equivalent to the fasting ten months, and the fasting six days is equivalent to the fasting sixty days, i.e., two months. Which results in a total of one year of fasting. So do not let this great favor pass you!

It is not stipulated that the fasting six days of Shawwāl be done consecutively nor is it necessary to start right after 'Eid. It is sufficient to fast any six days of Shawwāl. The fasting can also be performed every Monday and Thursday, or any other days.

The scholars differed on whether someone is obligated to make up any missed days of Ramaḍān before starting the six of Shawwāl to get the reward of it or not. The grace of Allāh is vast; therefore one will not be deprived from the reward - Allāh willing - if the six days are fasted before making up the missed days of Ramaḍān. If the reward of fasting the six days is achieved, then all is well and good. Otherwise, the reward of fasting in general will be achieved and this itself is a great reward. Abu Umāmah reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"Whoever fasts a day for the sake of Allāh, Allāh makes between him and Hellfire a trench similar [in distance] to what is between heaven and Earth."** (Narrated by At-Tirmidhī and graded as authentic by Al-Albānī in Ṣaḥeeḥ Al-Jāmi' 6233) Abu Hurairah, Allāh be pleased with him, also reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, **"Whoever fasts a day for the sake of**

Allāh, Allāh moves away his face from Hellfire for seventy years because of that day." (graded as authentic by Al-Albānī in Ṣaḥeeḥ Al-Jāmi' 6334)

Hence, the one should be steadfast and persistence with the obedience of Allāh and be on that state until one dies. Allāh, the Exalted said, *"And worship your Lord until comes to you the certainty[death]."* (Ar-Ra'd 15:99) Allāh, the Exalted, also said about Jesus, peace be upon him, that he said, *"And [Allāh] has enjoined upon me prayer and Zakāh as long as I remain alive."* (Maryam 19:31) There is no end goal at which one stops performing good deeds except death. So beware – O Muslims - from complacency after Ramaḍān; and be cautious from committing sins after Ramaḍān just as you were cautious during Ramaḍān. Know that this life is farm the hereafter; whoever plants goodness will harvest goodness, and whoever plants evil will harvest evil.

The devils are let loose after Ramaḍān and their chains are broken. The believer is faced with enemies, their leader being the accursed Satan and the self consistently commands evil. Allāh, the Exalted said, *"Verily, the [human] self is a persistent enjoiner of evil, except those upon which my Lord has mercy."* (Yūsuf 12:53) He, the Exalted, also said, *"And indeed We have created man, and We know what his own self whispers to him."* (Qāf 50:16)

After Ramaḍān the whispers of one's self and whispers of the Devil convene, but the plot of the Devil is weak as Allāh informed us. The objective is for one to be aware of his enemies, to take preventive actions from the traps of the Devil. One should fortify himself from the Devil with the remembrance of Allāh, the Exalted; and whoever holds firmly to Allāh, Allāh will protect him from the deception of the Devil.

The month of Ramaḍān is a spiritual school, where one learns several lessons. The most significant lesson that one should gain from the month of fasting is, that there is a sweetness that accompanies worshipping and believing in Allāh. There is enjoyment in obedience, and delight in the souls from being connected to Allāh. The difference between the joy of obedience and the joy of committing sins is that the joy of obedience is ever lasting, connected to the blessings of the next life. Even when hardship exists, the hardship will eventually fade; but joy will remain from obeying Allāh and achieving its reward every time it is remembered. On the other hand, the joy of committing a sin is limited to the time it is committed. Then the joy disappears leaving behind sighs and regret in this life and the punishment in next, if the sinner did not repent and return to his Lord.

The Muslim in Ramaḍān tastes the sweetness of worshipping Allāh and of being in connection with Him. The souls of the believers are raised and elevated from being enslaved to the desires and low actions, because the believers have preferred what is beloved to Allāh over what is beloved to the human nature. Worshipping Allāh is the reason behind the creation of man. Allāh, the Exalted said, *"And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me."* (Adh-Dhariāt 51:56) The equivalence of being distracted from the worship of Allāh by worldly affairs is the like that of a traveler who gets distracted during his way without reaching his destination.

The word "worship" is a collective term for everything that Allāh loves and pleases Him, from speech and actions, apparent or hidden.

It is a common misconception that Islam restricts worship into specific limited forms and detaches religion from life and reality. The entire life of a Muslim is worship. *"Say, 'Indeed my prayer, my rites of sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allāh, Lord of all that exists."* (Al-An'ām 6:162) Thus, it is from the distinguishing characteristics of Islam that it is a religion that encompasses all aspects of life. The demeanor of a Muslim is apparent when he is among his family or at work. While a good intention can transform a permissible actions into acts of worship, **"Actions are but by intentions."**

Good manners and the dealing with people in a pleasant way are also acts of worship. In fact, acts of worship will not bear their fruits or achieve their purpose without it. Allāh, the Exalted said, *"And whoever turns away from My remembrance, indeed, he will have a life of hardship, and We will gather him on the Day of Resurrection blind."* (Ṭā-hā 20:124) He, the Exalted, also said, *"O you who have believed, let not your wealth and your children divert you from the remembrance of Allāh . And whoever does that, then those are the losers."* (Al-Munāfiqoon 63:9)

[The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said,] **"Whoever does not give up false statements (i.e. telling lies), and acting upon it, Allāh is not in need of his [fasting] leaving his food and drink."** [He, peace and blessings be upon him, also said,] **"The one who's prayers does not stop him from immorality and bad conduct, then there is no prayer for him."** The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, mentioned about a woman who used to fast, stand [her night in prayers], give charity, and harm her neighbors, he said, **"She is in Hellfire."**

Let not our conduct be like the conduct of some people who starts misbehaving once Ramaḍān ends, and they start their 'Eid day with sins and wickedness. As Ramaḍān ends, we must have achieved an increase in our worship to Allāh, understood the reality of the meaning of worship, and acted upon its requirements.

All the praise be to Allāh, this completes the book Blessed Ramaḍān Lounging Sessions. I ask Allāh, the Exalted, to make it an asset for its author and its reader on *"The day when neither wealth nor children will benefit [anyone], but only he [will prosper] who comes to Allāh with a sound heart."* (Ash-Shu'arā' 26:88-89)