

The Message

Ramadan Special

RAMADAN

KAREEM

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



PROPHET'S RAMADAN KHUTBA



Assalamu'Alaikum

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

It was narrated by Salman the Persian (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (s) delivered a khutba on the last day of Sha'ban (on the eve of Ramadan). The Prophet (s) said: "O you people! A great and a blessed month has arrived for you. A month therein a night which is better than one thousand months. The fasting during this month is an obligation (Fareedah), and the extra prayers during its nights are voluntary. Anyone who comes closer to Allah through a good deed during this month is as if he performed an obligatory duty (Fareedah) during times other than Ramadan, and he who fulfils an obligatory duty in it will be like one who fulfils seventy obligatory duties in another month. It is the month of patience, and, the reward of patience is Paradise. It is the month of visiting of the poor, the sick and the needy so as to share their sorrows. It is the month where the nourishment, the sustenance and the income of the believing Muslim increase and they are blessed."

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

Some of the followers of the Prophet (s) said: "Not all of us may find food

to share with one so that he could break his fast." The Prophet said: "Allah will reward you even if you help the fasting Muslim to break his fast with a date, a sip of water, or a drink of milk . . . it is a month: its beginning is Mercy (Rahmah), and its middle part is Forgiveness (Maghfirah) and its last part is freedom from hellfire. Anyone who helps a slave to be freed, Allah will forgive him and free him from Hell. Increase in yourselves four characteristics: two by which you will please your Lord, and two others by which you cannot live without.

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

"It is the month of patience and the reward of patience is paradise"

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

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

Ameen.



EDITORIAL

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

Assalamu alaikum brothers and sisters in Islam,

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

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

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

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

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

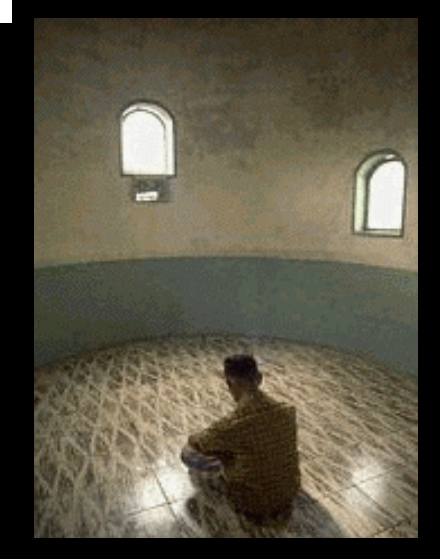
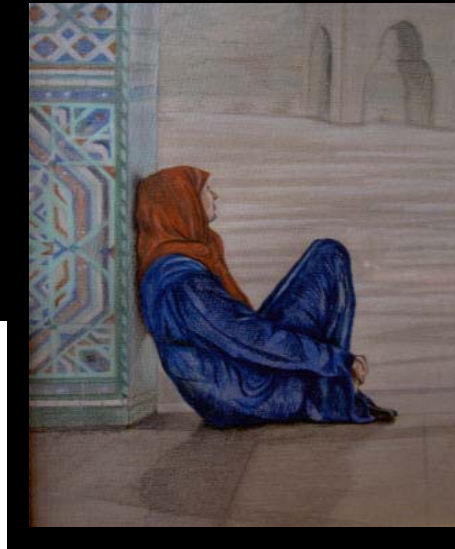
Your brother in Islam

Ahmed Aiche

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>The Prophet's Khutba</i>	2
<i>Time for Introspection</i>	4
<i>Benefits of Ramadan</i>	6
<i>Virtues of Ramadan</i>	8
<i>Character in Ramadan</i>	10
<i>What after Ramadan?</i>	14
<i>Amusements Page</i>	17

A TIME FOR INTROSPECTION...



In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

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

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

The above hadith, defines the essential need in the life of a Muslim for a return to Allah, or a time to take the self to account. The placement of the five daily prayers, the Friday congregational prayer and the annual fast of Ramadan share that common thread and purpose, which is to serve as a reality check. These serve as times to stop whatever it is we are doing in life and to reflect on our direction, whatever it may be. This introspection would inadvertently make us realise where we have fallen into error and it presents itself as an oppor-

tunity to make amends and get back on the straight path of life. The amendments come through repentance which arises out of deep seated *nadham* (regret) and *istighfar* (asking Allah for forgiveness). In other words, the five daily prayers, the Friday congregational prayer and Ramadan each present an opportunity, each spanned by its allotted time. The opportunity is there, it is for us to take recourse and identify how it can impact upon our lives and how we can best utilise its fruits to nourish use and serve as provisions for our journey through life.

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

[Al-Baqarah 2:197]

Ibadah (worship) in itself equates

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

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

The sole purpose of our creation and hence existence is so that

"Ramadan is not a time for sleep!"

we can fulfil through every breath we take, our purpose of being a servant of Allah and to spend every moment in our lives in *ibadah* or the worship of the One True God, Allah. This definition of worship extends far beyond the ritual acts of worship, that are in themselves reinforcing this broader understanding and enactment of *ibadah*. *Ibadah* therefore is living life itself in full acceptance of Allah and thus intentionally commit-

ting oneself to live life in accord with His guidance and instruction. So be it in youth or old age, be it at school or at work, on the road or the playground, the Muslim is in constant awareness of Allah, or is conscious of Allah and is thus in a constant state of *ibadah*. This is the ideal that we constantly strive towards and achieving this state is a continual and constant jihad (struggle or striving).

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

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

Fasting or As-Siyam does not merely mean to abstain from food, drink and lawful sexual intercourse from sunrise to sunset, but more importantly it is a period where one takes extra special care to guard the eyes, the ears, the tongue, and the limbs from any impropriety. Therefore, the need then arises to look at ways in which we could prepare ourselves for such an intensive challenge.

It is a period where the pains of hunger must be felt, where the

thirst of day, the weakness of body fuses together to create an atmosphere for the infusion of taqwa into the soul and the re-purification of the heart. It is a declaration of independence from the material realm and a statement of our utter dependence on the Ultimate Reality or Al-Haqq for our successes and rewards in this life and in the hereafter.

To understand how the annual exercise of fasting operates a training program for the establishment of taqwa within our ourselves, we can draw an analogy between fasting and training for marathons. Marathon runners train at high altitude in an atmosphere of less oxygen. They get tired a lot more easily and have to work much harder to achieve results, but in the process they condition their body to get used to less. With high performance attained under adverse conditions, under normal conditions even greater results are achieved. Similarly, with the reduction of food intake, we condition our souls towards high performance despite the adverse conditions. This month long training, leaves us primed and ready to take on many challenges in the following year. It is our declaration of our independence from the material and dependence on Allah, Who is the source of all sustenance and strength.

During the month of Sha`ban, in the example of the Prophet (s), we must begin fasting as often as possible in readiness for the treasurers of Ramadan. We must

make resolutions of what we want to achieve in the month of Ramadan. We must slowly build upon the reduction of diet, the increase of recitation and study of the Quran, *Dhikrullah* (Remembrance of Allah), *Dua* (Supplications), *Qiyam Al-Layl* (The Night Prayer) and good deeds – so that with the onset of Ramadan we can take on a lot more. Otherwise we would spend all of Ramadan just getting adjusted.

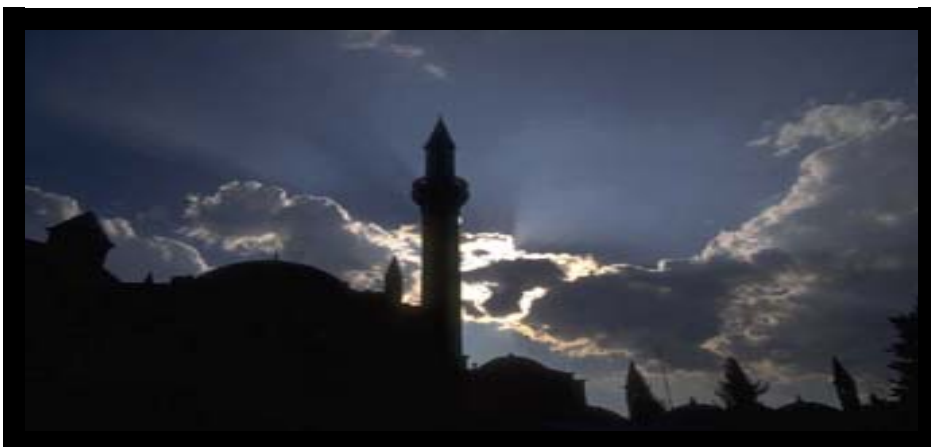
Unlawful food is the poison of the body and corrupts the soul, while lawful food is like medicine. Even the lawful in excess can kill you.

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

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

Your Brother in Islam

Maher Magrabi



REAPING THE BENEFITS OF RAMADAN

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

In the month of Ramadan it is very important that we spent a few moments to understand the wisdom and lessons that we can learn from this month of fasting. The companions of the Prophet would say: "Let it not be that the day that you fast and the day that you break fast be equal." Meaning one's behavior, attitude and outlook are the same whether one fasts or not i.e. fasting has no effect upon that person. This is why we need to reflect on some of the following lessons.



LESSON 1: Gaining Taqwa

Allah legislated fasting for gaining taqwa. "O you who believe, fasting has been prescribed upon you as it has been prescribed upon those before you, so that you may attain taqwa." (2:183). Taqwa in this case means to make a shield between oneself and Allah's anger and Hellfire. So we should ask ourselves when we break our fasts; 'Has this fasting day made us fear Allah more? Has it resulted in that we want to protect ourselves from the hellfire or not?'

LESSON 2: Drawing closer to Allah

This is achieved by reciting and reflecting on the Quran during the night and day, attending the Tarawih prayers, remembering Allah, sitting in circles of knowledge and, for those who can, making Umrah. Also for those who can, making Itikaf (seclusion) in the last ten nights of Ramadan, so as to leave all worldly pursuits and seclude oneself in a Masjid just thinking of Allah, so as to bring oneself closer to Allah (swt). When one sins, one feels distant from Allah. That is why one might find it hard to read the Quran and come to the Masjid. However, the obedient worshipper feels closer to Allah and wants to worship Allah more, because he is not shy from his sins.

LESSON 3: Acquiring patience and strong will

Allah has mentioned patience more than seventy times in the Quran and has commanded patience in more than sixteen ways in His Book. So when one fasts and gives up food, drink, and marital sexual relations for those daylight hours, one learns self-restraint and patience. This Ummah needs men and women who are strong willed, who can stand upon the Sunnah and the Book of Allah (swt) and not waver in front of the enemies of Allah. We do not need emotional people, who just raise slogans and shout, but when the time comes to stand upon something firm.

LESSON 4: Striving for Ihsan (righteousness and sincerity) and staying away from Riya' (showing off)

Ihsan means to worship Allah as if one seeks Him, and even though one does not see Him, Allah sees all. Hasan Al-Basri said, "By Allah, in the last twenty years, I have not said a word or taken something with my hand or refrained to take something with my hand or stepped forth or stepped back, except that I have thought before I have done any action, 'Does Allah love this action? Is Allah pleased with this action?'" So when one is fasting, one should gain this quality of watching oneself and also staying away from Riya' (showing off). That is why Allah said in a Hadith Qudsi, "Fasting is for Me and I reward it." (Al-Bukhari) Allah singles out fasting from all other types of worship saying, "Fasting is for Me", because no one knows whether you are fasting or not, except Allah. For example, when one is praying or giving charity or making Tawaf, one can be seen by the people, so one might do the action seeking the praise of the people. Sufyan Ath-Thawri used to spend the nights and the days crying and the people used to ask him, "Why do you cry, is it due to the fear of Allah?" He said, 'No.' They said, "Is it due to the fear of the Hellfire?" He said, 'No. It is not the fear of Hellfire that makes me cry, what makes me cry is that I have been worshipping Allah all these years and doing scholarly teaching, and I am not certain that my intentions are purely for Allah.'

LESSON 5: Refinement of manners, especially those related to truthfulness and discharging trusts.

The Prophet (pbuh) said: "Whoever does not abandon falsehood in word and action, then Allah (swt) has no need that he should leave his food and drink." (Al-Bukhari) What we learn from this, is that we must pay attention to the purification of our manners. The Prophet (pbuh) said:

"I was sent to perfect good manners." (Imam Malik) So we must ask ourselves, are we following the behavior of the Prophet (may Allah send His blessing and peace upon him)? Do we give Salam (salutation) to those we do not know and those we do know? Do we follow the manners of Islam, by telling the truth and only telling the truth? Are we sincere?



LESSON 6: Recognising that one can change for the better

The Prophet (pbuh) said: "Every son of Adam sins and the best of the sinners are those who repent." (Ibn Majah) Allah provides many opportunities to repent to Him and seek His forgiveness. If one was disobedient they can become obedient.

LESSON 7: Being more charitable

Ibn `Abbas said, "The Prophet (pbuh) was the most charitable amongst the people, and he used to be more so in the month of Ramadan when Jibril used to meet him on every night of Ramadan till the end of the month..." (Al-Bukhari). The Prophet (pbuh) said: "He who gives food for a fasting person to break his fast, he will receive the same reward as him, without nothing being reduced from the fasting person's reward." (At-Tirmidhi)



LESSON 8: Sensing the unity of the Muslims

The Prophet (pbuh) said, "... Those of you who will live after me will see many differences. Then you must cling to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly-guided Caliphs. Hold fast to it and stick to it." (Abu Dawud). In this month we sense that there is a possibility for unity because we all fast together, we break fast together, we all worship Allah (swt) together, and we pray Salat-ul-Eid together. Therefore we sense that the unity of Muslims is possible. It is possible for Muslims to be a single body, but this will only be achieved when obedience is only to Allah and His Messenger.



LESSON 9: Learning discipline

The Prophet (pbuh) made us adhere to discipline and strictness; strictness that does not lead to fanaticism or going outside the bounds that Allah has laid down. One cannot knowingly break the fast before the sunset, as this will not be accepted by Allah.

Muslims should learn to be very strict in their lives, because they are people of an important message which they mould their lives around.

LESSON 10: Caring for one's health

Fasting has many medical benefits and it teaches Muslims to take care of their health and to build strong bodies. The Prophet (may Allah send His blessing and peace upon him) said, "A strong believer is better and is more beloved to Allah than a weak believer, and there is good in everyone." (Muslim)

by Ali At-Tamimi

THE VIRTUES OF RAMADAN

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

Here it is again...

The earth rotated around the sun for 365 days, four seasons came and went, hour after hour, day after day, until finally the beautiful month of Ramadan arrived...

A month of fundamental consequence, for performing the fast helps Muslims become one step closer to completing the pillars of Islam. A month that Allah (swt), the Creator of the seven heavens and earths mentions in His great book, the Holy Quran. Ramadan is a month of many distinctions; it is the month that the Prophet (s) was most generous in, and a month that encouraged an increase in worship. During this blessed month, Allah (swt) granted the Muslims success



in numerous battles and campaigns. This was one of the most valuable gifts that was bestowed to this Ummah, this month that begins with mercy, and located in its center is forgiveness, and concludes with protection from the fires of hell.

One might ask; What distinguishes Ramadan? What makes it so special from any other month? I can fast on any day of any month; I can donate money anytime etc. So what makes Ramadan different? In response to these questions, we shall shift our focus and in doing so place our eyes and hearts on the words of The Almighty, All-Knowing who revealed Ramadan,

'The month of Ramadan in which was revealed the Quran, a guidance for mankind and clear proofs for the

guidance and criterion' Al Baqarah-185

The Quran, the word of Allah (swt), was the final book revealed by Allah (swt) to mankind, the seal of the Books revealed through the seal of the Prophets (s). The Quran relates the news of the people before and after us, and the stories of the prophets. It tells of the creation of the heavens, the laws by which we should live, and the creed in which we should believe. The Quran is the source of dignity for Muslims, within its pages are the solutions and cures to every problem faced by humanity. In it is the healing of the hearts and the joy of the souls.

'Allah has sent down the best statement, a Book (this Quran) its parts resembling each other (in goodness and truth) and oft repeated. The skins of those who fear their Lord shiver from it (when they recite it or read it). Then their skins and hearts soften to the remembrance of Allah.. .' Az.Zumar-23

This is the Quran, the final Book from the Creator of the universe, to the son of Adam. It is the nourishment on which our souls are sustained. The body needs food and water to survive and likewise your soul needs a source of sustenance. The human body is created from sand and earthly material, therefore its food is from the earth, whereas the soul is created in the heavens, therefore its food comes from the heavens.

Just ask yourself, when was



the last time you read the Quran? Some might say, last Ramadan, and the more unfortunate would say they have yet to read any of the Quran. What is most distressing is that large proportions of the Ummah have left the Quran, have not spent a second reading it and let alone understanding and implementing it.

And the Messenger (s) said, 'O My Lord! Lo! Mine own folk make this Quran of no account) AI-Furqan-29.

So Brothers and Sisters, let this be the last day that we leave the Quran unread. Let this hour be a witness for us, that we make the intention that from this day onwards we are going to read the Quran. Begin by reading a few verses, and continue slowly increasing the amount at a rate in which you only move forward. For those who are unable to read, search for a school, ask a friend to help you or go to the local mosque and surely there you will be able to find someone who is more than willing to teach you. **Everyone must try to learn!** We must continue in our struggle until we find ourselves improving. Initially it will be difficult, but a journey begins with one step, and learning the Quran begins with that first step, the sincere intention.

There is the value and great reward in the Quran, of which nothing on the face of this planet could equal, and nothing can outweigh it. Ramadan is the month of the Quran, where the rewards are multiplied and the doors of Heaven are opened, and the doors of Hell are closed. Let us come closer to Allah (swt) by reading the Quran, understanding the Quran, memorizing the Quran and implementing the Quran. As by Him who my soul lies in His Hands, there is no better time to do so more than this month, Ramadan, the month of the Quran.

We ask Allah (swt) to make us of those who read, practice and love the Quran, and we ask Him to forgive our sins, and accept our deeds in Ramadan and after Ramadan.

AMEEN

Your Brother in Islam

Rami Al-Sharawneh



**The Holy Prophet (s) said:
Allah decreed
"All the deeds of
Adam's sons
(people) are for
them, except
fasting which is
for Me, and I will
give the reward
for it."**

[Sahih Muslim]



**"Ramadan is a
month of many
distinctions; it is
the month that the
Prophet (s) was
most generous in,
and a month that
encouraged an in-
crease in wor-
ship".**

BUILDING MORAL CHARACTER IN RAMADAN

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

The root word of akhlaaq (moral character) is khalaqa, which means to create, shape and mould. The word akhlaaq is therefore related to the creation and nature of the human being. It represents more than just moral character; it also means "the true nature upon which Allah has created us". Every human being has been created with a pure fitrah (nature). It is our responsibility to preserve and care for this fitrah as Allah (swt) states in the Quran "Then he showed him what is wrong for him and what is right for him. He succeeds who purifies his own self and he fails who corrupts his own self" (91:8-10).

The cultivation of good akhlaaq is one of the primary objectives in the teachings of Islam that one should strive to master. Akhlaaq represents the beauty and righteousness of Islam. The Prophet (s) said, "Those nearest to me are those who are modest, always keeping a lowly gait, who love people and are loved by them. He also said "The best believer is the one who possesses the best akhlaaq". Allah praised the Prophet saying "and you have an exalted akhlaaq (character)"(68:4).

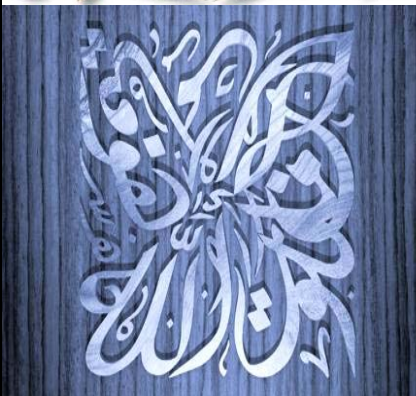
Imam Muslim mentions a hadith narrated by Aisha, in which she said about the Prophet; "His akhlaaq was the Quran". The Prophet's morals and character were the Quran. He would get angry in accordance with it and pleased in accordance with

it. He never got angry for his own sake, but if the sacred limits of Allah were violated he would become angry for Allah's sake.

The Prophet's akhlaaq were moulded by Allah and he said about one aspect of his mission "Verily I have been sent for the perfection of akhlaaq". He was humble and modest. He could not be distinguished from his companions in his clothing or sitting. A Bedouin would enter the mosque and would have to ask, "Which one of you is Muhammad?" He was the softest in temperament, merciful to people and forbearing and gentle especially to those who were uneducated and rude. The only way to mould our akhlaaq for the better is by following the sunnah (example) of the Prophet (s). He had the perfect balance of virtues- justice and mercy, courage and wisdom, enthusiasm and patience.

With the holy month of Ramadan upon us, we must take this opportunity to inculcate within ourselves the akhlaaq of the Prophet. This is the month of forgiveness and blessing and the month in which the doors of paradise are opened and the doors of hell closed. It is also the month of opportunity to earn rewards increased manifold and the best of us are those who take this opportunity to train themselves in cultivating a higher moral character.

By Sister Randa Najjar



HADITH OF THE MONTH...

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

Narrated by Abu Huraira (Radiallahu anhu),

The Prophet (s) said, "Allah (swt) decreed, 'All the deeds of Adam's sons (people) are for them, except fasting which is for Me, and I will give the reward for it.' Fasting is a shield or protection from the fire and from committing sins. If one of you is fasting, he should avoid sexual relations with his wife and quarrelling, and if somebody should fight or quarrel with him, he should say, 'I am fasting. By Him in Whose Hands my soul is in'."

The unpleasant smell coming out from the mouth of a fasting person is better in the sight of Allah than the smell of musk. Where Allah (swt) has admonished and threatened evildoers with punishment and misfortune, He has also opened the doors of mercy and reward for those who repent and seek penitence (feeling a sense of guilt and regretfulness for their previous actions). The month of Ramadan can be compared to the spring (season) of Allah's blessings for the Muslim believer, wherein the doors of the heavens of paradise, and abundant mercies are opened, and the sinful are



favoured by being pardoned and rewarded.

This month has reached us once again at a time when the nation is submerged in the huge waves of turmoil and uncertainty. It is our incumbent duty that not a single soul from among the Muslims remains deprived of its auspiciousness, prosperity and blessedness. It is essential that the Saum (fasting) be observed with all its importance and morals.

Throughout the month, one should strive to encourage fellow Muslims to come to the Masjid, and enlighten their hearts through the means of observing Tarawih, Tahajjud and the recital of the Quran. Ramadan provides a great opportunity to wash away the dirt of all sins by performing Salaat Istighfaar (forgiveness) and Taubah (repentance).

If one has a right due to another, one should fulfil it and clear all dealings. Care for the poor, needy, and lonely by paying attention to them. Treat sub-ordinates with kindness. The Prophet (s) advised all these acts and we should follow through these acts fully and wholeheartedly. How wonderful shall it be, if it so happens that the nation makes this vow that they will at least abstain from sinning and fulfil and execute fully all the rights due to Allah and His creation, then there is hope that our fate may change.

O Allah, forgive our sins, and grant us the Tawfeeq to be prosperous in attaining the blessings and mercy from you and to seek refuge from all trials, afflictions, mischief and evil.

Your brother in Islam,

Hesham Mourad

THE NIGHT OF POWER

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

“And I (Allah) have not created the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (alone)”.

[Surah Adh-Dhariyat 51:56].

Abu Hurairah (raa) reported that the Messenger of Allah (s) said: "Whoever performs the night prayer on the night of Al-Qadr with *Eman* (firm belief) and seeking reward will have all his past sins forgiven."

This hadeeth is evidence for the virtue of the night of Al-Qadr as well as performing *qiyaam* (night prayer) during it, as it indicates that it is a grand night, which Allah has honored and made better than a thousand months, with regard to its blessing and the blessings found in the righteous deeds that are performed in it. Due to this, whoever performs *qiyaam* (night prayer) with true faith and while seeking reward in it, will be forgiven his past sins. There were certain verses revealed in the Quran concerning the virtues of this great night:

Allah says: "We sent it (the Quran) down on a blessed night. Verily We are Ever-Warning. Therein (on that night) is decreed every matter of ordainment" (44:3-4) .

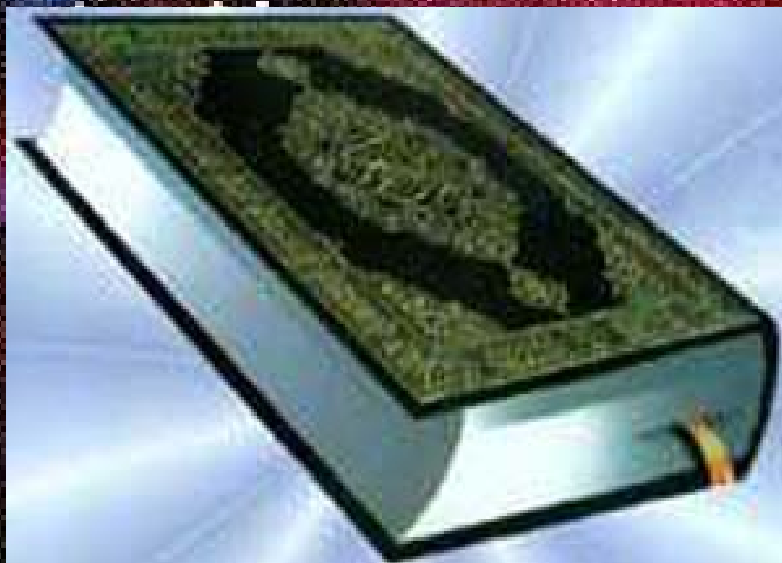
Therefore, it is a "blessed night" meaning it possesses much good and blessing due to its merit and the great reward that awaits the one who does good deeds in it. Among its blessings, is that Allah revealed the Quran in it. Allah says:

"Verily, We have sent it (the Quran) down in the night of Al-Qadr. And what will make you know what the night of Al-Qadr is? The night of Al-Qadr is better than a thousand months. Therein descend the angels and the *Rooh* (Jibreel) by their Lord's permission with all decrees. (All that night) there is peace, until the appearance of dawn" (97:1-5).

Ibn Katheer (*rahimahullaah*) said concerning Allah's saying: "Therein descend the angels and the *Rooh*": "This means that the descending of the angels increases during this night due to the vast amount of its blessings. The angels descend along with the descent of blessing and mercy, just as they descend during the time when the Quran is recited and encompass the gatherings in which Allah is remembered and spread their wings for the true seeker of knowledge, out of respect for him."

This night occurs only in Ramadan, since Allah revealed the Quran in it. He informs us that its revelation occurred during the month of Ramadan in His saying: "Verily, We have sent it (the Quran) down in the night of Al-Qadr." (97:1) and therefore marked the beginning of the twenty-three year period in which Allah (swt) revealed the Quran to Muhammad (s) and to the rest of mankind.

Thus, this is a grand night, which Allah has chosen for beginning the revelation of the Quran. Therefore, it is of paramount importance that every Muslim acknowledge its weight in worth, by guarding it and spending it in worship whilst having firm conviction and seeking the reward of Allah, in order that Allah may forgive all of his previous sins. It was for this very reason why the Prophet (s) warned us about being heedless of this night and being neglectful of spending it in worship, for the Muslim would be prevented from its good.



IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, MOST GRACIOUS, MOST MERCIFUL.

1. READ! IN THE NAME OF YOUR LORD AND CHERISHER, WHO CREATED-
2. CREATED MAN, OUT OF A CLOT (OF BLOOD):
3. READ! AND YOUR LORD IS MOST BOUNTIFUL,-
4. HE WHO TAUGHT (THE USE OF) THE PEN,-
5. TAUGHT MAN THAT WHICH HE KNEW NOT.

"WE SENT IT (THE QURAN) DOWN ON A BLESSED NIGHT. VERILY WE ARE EVER-WARNING. THEREIN (ON THAT NIGHT) IS DECREED EVERY MATTER OF ORDAINMENT" (44:3-4)".

Abu Hurairah (raa) reported that the Messenger of Allah (s) said: "Ramadan has come to you - a blessed month. Allah has made it obligatory upon you to fast in it. During this month, the gates of heaven are open, the gates of the Hellfire are closed and the evil devils are chained. To Allah belongs a night in it, which is better than a thousand months. Whoever is prevented from its good, then he has been deprived."

It is vital that every Muslim should increase in their supplications (dua) on the nights in which the night of Al-Qadr is sought and he should supplicate with that which the Prophet (s) instructed 'Aa'ishah (raa) with, when she asked him: "What if I know on which night the night of Al-Qadr occurs, what should I say?" So he (s) said: "Say: O Allah, indeed you are All-Pardoning. You love forgiveness, so forgive me."

Ibn Katheer (*rahimahullaah*) said: "It is recommended to supplicate a lot at all times and (to supplicate) more than that during the month of Ramadan, its last ten days and its odd days. And it is highly recommended to increase ones invoking with this supplication: 'O Allah, indeed you are All-Pardoning. You love forgiveness, so forgive me.'"

Reference: www.al-manhaj.com

*The Prophet (s) said:
"If a person performs a nafl (optional) act during this month, he will be entitled to receive the reward of a fard (obligatory) act performed in other months".*

WHAT AFTER RAMADAN?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

What Have We Gained From Ramadan?

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

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

of Ramadan?

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

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

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

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



Words Of Wisdom

Allah (swt) says: "...Eat and drink:
but waste not by excess, for Allah
loves not the wasters"
[Quran 7:31]

"The month of Ramadan in
which was revealed the Quran, a
guidance for mankind in clear
proofs for the guidance and the
criterion (between right and
wrong)."
[Surah al-Baqarah 2:185]

The Prophet (s) said: "the one who
observes the tarawih prayer at night
during the month of Ramadan with
complete faith and devotion only for
the sake of recompense of the hereaf-
ter, will have all of their previous
sins forgiven by Allah (swt)"



"...if somebody should fight or
quarrel with a fasting person, he
should say, 'I am fasting. By
Him in Whose Hands my soul is
in'."

"There is a door in paradise called Al-Rayyan, from which
only those who fast will enter on the Day of Judgment, and no
one else will enter from it. When they all enter, the door will
be shut closed and no one else will enter it."

[Al Bukahri and Muslim]



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FIND-A-WORD

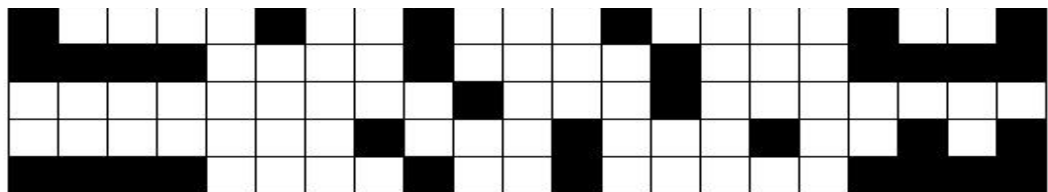
Aspects Of Ramadan

H D J K S G S F W W S X K C A
 Z A I T Z R K I A S D V A H B
 S M B E E R L F E P Z K T A S
 S D C N G L E N P L P V X R Q
 C L N A P M E V A H S W S I Z
 N A L O L V W B E A X I N T L
 M A W D I S C I P L I N E A E
 A E D G E C N E I T A P Z B C
 R L R A H U M B L E P T H L D
 C O Q I M C I T D Q I D I E P
 F O Z A Q A A W S B O Z W O L
 Q Q M M D Q R W X B U S A M N
 J V C N W R V A F N S N R H K
 F X N A R U Q C Q V C J A I I
 E Q J Y G Z T Z D R W Z T Y W

ALQADR
CHARITABLE
DISCIPLINE
EID
FORGIVENESS
HUMBLE
MANNERS
PATIENCE
PIOUS
QURAN
RAMADAN
REVELATION
TAQWA
TARAWIH
WILLPOWER

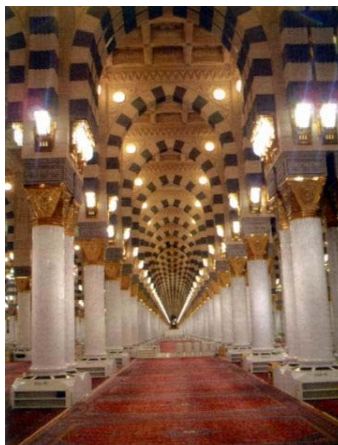
FALLEN PHRASE

Hint: An Ayah From the Koran



T H F A E
 D E U N O H B A O O
 H E A I S I E A N R O N C N D A
 C R E R C O O T M T W E D U T M D A T E
 C R E A Y L D R R L O H O L O R E F O F D

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



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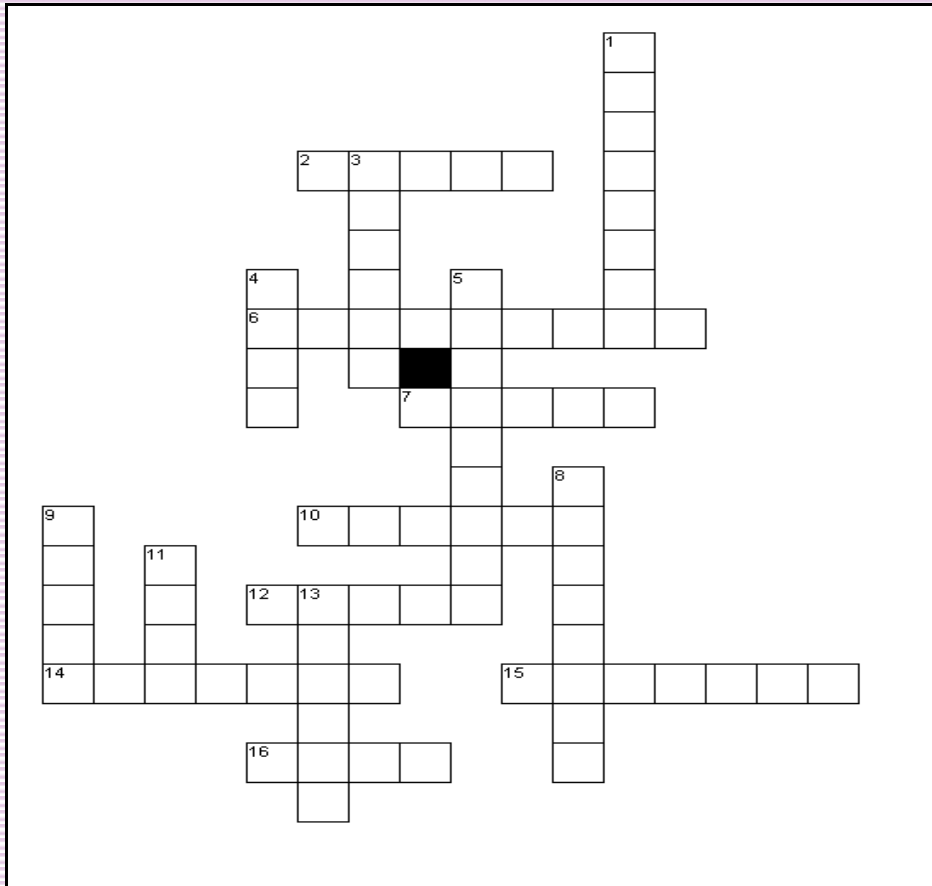
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AMUSEMENTS PAGE

ISLAMIC CROSSWORD



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

Across

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

Down

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

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SYDNEY for Ramadan

Day	Ramadan	Gregorian	Fajr	Sunrise	Dhuhr	Asr	Maghrib	Isha
Sun	1	26-Oct	4:32	6:01	12:40	4:20	7:18	8:42
Mon	2	27-Oct	4:31	6:00	12:40	4:20	7:19	8:43
Tue	3	28-Oct	4:29	5:59	12:40	4:21	7:19	8:44
Wed	4	29-Oct	4:28	5:58	12:39	4:21	7:20	8:45
Thu	5	30-Oct	4:27	5:57	12:39	4:21	7:21	8:47
Fri	6	31-Oct	4:25	5:56	12:39	4:21	7:22	8:48
Sat	7	1-Nov	4:24	5:55	12:39	4:21	7:23	8:49
Sun	8	2-Nov	4:23	5:54	12:39	4:21	7:24	8:50
Mon	9	3-Nov	4:21	5:53	12:39	4:22	7:25	8:51
Tue	10	4-Nov	4:20	5:52	12:39	4:22	7:26	8:53
Wed	11	5-Nov	4:19	5:51	12:39	4:22	7:27	8:54
Thu	12	6-Nov	4:18	5:50	12:39	4:22	7:28	8:55
Fri	13	7-Nov	4:17	5:50	12:39	4:22	7:29	8:56
Sat	14	8-Nov	4:15	5:49	12:39	4:23	7:30	8:57
Sun	15	9-Nov	4:14	5:48	12:39	4:23	7:30	8:59
Mon	16	10-Nov	4:13	5:47	12:39	4:23	7:31	9:00
Tue	17	11-Nov	4:12	5:46	12:40	4:23	7:32	9:01
Wed	18	12-Nov	4:11	5:46	12:40	4:23	7:33	9:02
Thu	19	13-Nov	4:10	5:45	12:40	4:24	7:34	9:04
Fri	20	14-Nov	4:09	5:44	12:40	4:24	7:35	9:05
Sat	21	15-Nov	4:08	5:44	12:40	4:24	7:36	9:06
Sun	22	16-Nov	4:07	5:43	12:40	4:24	7:37	9:08
Mon	23	17-Nov	4:06	5:42	12:40	4:25	7:38	9:09
Tue	24	18-Nov	4:05	5:42	12:41	4:25	7:39	9:10
Wed	25	19-Nov	4:04	5:41	12:41	4:25	7:40	9:11
Thu	26	20-Nov	4:03	5:41	12:41	4:25	7:41	9:13
Fri	27	21-Nov	4:02	5:40	12:41	4:26	7:42	9:14
Sat	28	22-Nov	4:02	5:40	12:42	4:26	7:43	9:15
Sun	29	23-Nov	4:01	5:39	12:42	4:26	7:44	9:16
Mon	30	24-Nov	4:00	5:39	12:42	4:27	7:45	9:18

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