

From Abu Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with him, the Messenger peace be upon him, said: "Islam began as something strange and it will return to being strange as it began. So Toobaa is for the strangers."

Reported by Bukhari and Muslim



IN THIS ISSUE

- 02 "OUR PREDECESSORS"
- 06 REMAINING STEADFAST ON OBEDIENCE
- 08 THE PROPHET'S QIYAAM ||
ADVISE TO PREGNANT WOMEN
- 09 VIRTUES OF THE LAST TEN NIGHTS
- 10 INDICATIONS OF THE NIGHT OF AL-QADR
- 11 ITIKAAF IN RAMADHAAN || ZAKAAT-UL-FITR
- 13 QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
- 14 RULINGS RELATED TO EID
- 15 CLASSIFIED ADS || Lectures

From the editor

Dr. Fadi Y. Kablawi

In the name of Allah most Gracious Most Merciful
 As Allah says in his Holy Book that he would not change the conditions of people until they change their own conditions. Every Muslim should feel the responsibility for what is happening to the ummah and its conditions; once that takes place, then it becomes clear for him and her to strive toward changing their own conditions if they want a better ummah.
 Such changes are not better done and achieved than during the month of Ramadan. Its during the month of Ramadan when we manage to break the habits of eating, drinking, praying, sleeping and socializing, so if we can do that, why then can't we break bad and forbidden habits like staying away from masjids, smoking, backbiting and slandering?
 This is a month when the rewards are multiplied many folds, gates of Heavens are open, gates of Hell are shut and devils are chained, so why would anyone still have any excuse not to take advantage of all these blessings and capitalize on these opportunities?
 It is during Ramadan when the feelings of Iman shoot up high in each one of us, so you find yourself more willing to come to Allah even from the second you hear that Ramadan is tomorrow. So let's each one of us change something he or she doesn't like or not pleased with in his or her life, and ask: why can't I contribute to the change of my Ummah's conditions?

The wisdom behind fasting

One of the Names of Allaah is Al-Hakeem (The All-Wise), Allaah is All-Wise in what He decrees, what He commands, what He prohibits, what He predestines and what He legislates. Allaah may make people aware of the wisdom behind certain matters or He may conceal it, or may make only some people realize the wisdom and not all people.
 In all cases, a believer is obliged to submit to his Lord and His decrees and commands even if he does not recognize the wisdom behind them, as Allaah Says (what means): "It is not for a believing man or a believing woman, when Allaah and His Messenger have decided a matter, that they should [thereafter] have any choice about their affair." [Quran 33: 36]

One of the commands of Allaah which He made people partly aware of the wisdom behind it, is fasting. Fasting has many inwardly and outwardly benefits, on the individual and the community. The following are some of these benefits which can be recognized by reason:

Attaining piety: Allaah Says (what means): "O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you that you may become pious" [Quran 2: 183]

Diminishing the strength of ones desires: Eating to one's fill and quenching the thirst and enjoying one's wife all the time can lead one to heedlessness and to ingratitude.

Focusing on the mention of Allaah and pondering: Continual fulfillment of desires makes one hard-hearted and blinds him from the right path. It also prevents the slave from mentioning Allaah and reflecting upon His signs and creation, all of which leads to heedlessness.

Narrowing the passage of the devil: Satan runs in the blood of the son of Aadam and fasting narrows his passage and thus lessens his effects, reduces one's desires and calms one's anger.

Strengthening one's willpower and determination: One, who can tolerate the pain of hunger and thirst and controls himself from having a sexual relation with his spouse whilst fasting, will strengthen his determination and willpower. This frees the person from being enslaved to his lusts and desires that are harmful to him.

Breaking one out of his regular routine: Some people lose their temper and become ill-mannered if their meal was delayed from its normal time or if they do not drink their

continue on page 2



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The Wisdom behind fasting *...continue from page 1*

morning coffee or afternoon tea. They have become so accustomed to a certain routine that changing it creates a problem for them. Such people are slaves to their routine and habits, and fasting helps the person overcome this behavior.

Realizing the size of the bounties of Allaah: Fasting makes rich people appreciate the favors of Allaah upon him, because Allaah has granted him what He has deprived many other poor people from. Refraining from such bounties and blessings for a short period through fasting, reminds the rich with those who are continuously deprived, and thus become grateful to Allaah and more merciful towards the needy.

A communal act of worship: This act of worship must be practiced by the entire Muslim community in the east and the west. The entire Muslim nation fast this month, even the ones who are normally disobedient fast during Ramadhaan in most cases. This increases the righteous environment which facilitates repentance to many people.

Increases the sense of honesty: The one who breaks the fast is breaching the pledge with Allaah and thus fasting improves and increases his sense of honesty when he refrains from anything that could break his fast even whilst in seclusion.

Medical benefits

Fasting protects the person from many diseases with the will of Allaah. Modern research proved that fasting has many health benefits, such as:

- It organizes the person's heart-beat and relaxes it since no blood is needed for digestion.
- It purifies the blood from fat and cholesterol and acids.
- It relieves the liver from the regular pressure.
- It reduces the production of the digestive glands which is usually the cause for ulcers.
- It protects the person from gaining weight, diabetes, kidney stones.
- It reduces the pressure on the heart arteries.

Some people are unable to fast due to their sickness, and thus Allaah permitted them to break their fast whilst sick and mandated that they make up for the days they missed. Allaah Says (what means): "So whoever among you is ill or on a journey [during them]-then an equal number of days [are to be made up]" [Quran: 2: 184] 

This is what our predecessors used to do...

Muslims know the great reward of providing something for the fasting person to break the fast. The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "He who provides for the breaking of the fast of another earns the same reward as the one who was observing the fast, without diminishing in any way the reward of the latter." [Ahmad, At-Tirmithi, Ibn Maajah and An-Nasaa'i]

Knowing the examples set by the righteous predecessors in this regard increases one's determination to follow in their footsteps. Many of the righteous predecessors used to let others share the meal at breaking their fast or favor others over themselves by providing them with food and spending their night hungry.

Some of these examples:

- Ibn 'Umar, may Allaah be pleased with him, used to fast and break his fast with the poor people. If his family prevented the poor from joining him, he would abstain from eating that night.
- When a beggar came to Ibn 'Umar, may Allaah be pleased with him, he used to give him his share of food. When he returned, he would find that his family had eaten the remaining food in the bowl. Hence, he would fast the next day without having eaten anything.
- When Ramadhaan began, Imaam Az-Zuhri, may Allaah have mercy upon him, used to say, "(It is a month of) reciting the Quran and offering food."
- Once a beggar came to Imaam Ahmad, may Allaah have mercy upon him, while he was fasting. He gave the beggar two loaves of bread that he kept for his Iftaar meal. Having done this, he did not have anything to eat until he fasted the day that followed.
- Al-Hasan Al-Basri, may Allaah have mercy upon him, used to feed his friends while he was on a voluntary fast and used to entertain them while they were eating.
- 'Abdullaah ibn Al-Mubaarak, may Allaah have mercy upon him, used to feed his travelling companions different kinds of dessert and other food while he was fasting.
- Ash-Shaafi'i, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said, "I like that one increases his generosity in Ramadhaan following the example of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, because of the need of people during this month and because of their preoccupation with fasting and prayer more than gaining their livelihood."

This is better than our Hajj this year!

Once 'Abdullaah ibn Al-Mubaarak, may Allaah have mercy upon him, set out to perform Hajj. While he was passing through a country, a bird that they had with them died; so, he ordered

...continue on page 3

This is what our predecessors used to do...

...continue from page 2

them to throw it on a rubbish heap. When his fellow travelers moved forward before him and he was walking behind them, he noticed a girl who came out from a nearby house to the rubbish heap. She took that dead bird, wrapped it and hastened home. He followed her and asked her why she had taken the dead bird.

She said, "My brother and I have nothing but this waist sheet and have no food to eat but what is thrown in this rubbish heap. Eating dead animals became permissible for us days ago. Our father had money; however, he was oppressed, his money was robbed and he was killed."

What did Ibn Al-Mubaarak, may Allaah have mercy upon him, do in this tragic situation?

He asked the caravan to give him back his luggage and said to his trustee who held the money, "How much money do you have?" The agent said, "One thousand dinars". Ibn Al-Mubaarak, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said, "Take twenty dinars that would suffice us in our return journey to Marw (Merv) (his town) and give her the remaining amount. This would be better than our Hajj this year." Then, he returned to his homeland.

There are many Muslims like this girl living in a state of poverty, hunger and homelessness.

All this happens in the presence of the immense riches of Muslims whose Zakaah (obligatory charity) amounts to billions!

The calculated Zakaah to be paid by Arab traders in one year exceeds fifty-six billion USD.

But the main problem is that this money needs noble souls like the soul of 'Abdullaah ibn Al-Mubaarak, may Allaah have mercy upon him, filled with faith and elevated by piety.

'Abdullaah ibn Al-Mubaarak, may Allaah have mercy upon him, was Shaykh Al-Islam, the most knowledgeable and pious person during his lifetime. He was a Haafith (prominent scholar) of Hadeeth and used to set out for Jihaad. He traveled far and wide in order to seek knowledge, perform Jihaad and conduct trade. He spent money abundantly for the sake of Allaah The Almighty by supporting his fellow Muslims and helping them perform Hajj with him. He died in Ramadhaan 181 AH, may Allaah Have mercy upon him and be pleased with him.

Societies need people like those...

A righteous predecessor said, "Charity cannot be perfect except with three characteristics: hastening, belittling and concealing it." This is a high standard of etiquette that is only reached by noble souls. This was the custom of the noble and generous righteous predecessors.

Mansoor ibn 'Ammaar, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said, "I visited Al-Layth ibn Sa'd, may Allaah have mercy upon him, alone. He took out a bag containing a thousand dinars from under him and said, 'O Abu As-Sariyy, do not tell my son about this so that he would not belittle your status.'"

Bistaam At-Taymi, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said, "Hammaad ibn Abi Sulaymaan used to visit me. He used to stay with me all day without eating anything. When he wanted to depart, he would say to me, 'See what is beneath the pillow and ask them to benefit with it.' I would find many dirhams."

A noble person said, "I knew someone who used to distribute

charity during the forenoon of Ramadhaan because this is the best time away from being noticed by people for everyone was sleeping, and so were the neighbors and the people in the road."

The Shaykhs of our Shaykhs used to be generous and benevolent and maintain their kinship ties and if the person whom they give charity had a high status, they used to exaggerate in concealing their charity. Some of them used to send their son with the charity telling him, "Say to so and so my father greets you and says to you this is what he owes you and asks that you forgive him for the delay." Then, the son hands him the money thinking that his father has a favor upon the one who gave them the money!

These generous souls graduated from the school of generosity and extreme courtesy; the school of Ramadhaan. These souls are strengthened with the texts of the Quran and Sunnah, so, they become sublime and elevated.

Seizing the Opportunity

Ramadhaan is the chance of a lifetime for a believing slave of Allaah The Almighty. There are hundreds of opportunities in this month that can be utilized in an optimum manner so as to have the best result, such that a believer will be pleased to see in his record of deeds.

Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): {On a Day when their tongues, their hands and their feet will bear witness against them as to what they used to do.} [Quran 24:24]

Some of these great opportunities are:

1- The opportunity to give:

This month gives us numerous opportunities for giving and being generous towards people, such as providing fasting people with food to break their fast, giving charity, teaching people, helping the destitute and distressed people, and so on. It is an opportunity for those involved in charitable work to urge people to give more and utilize the positivity of people.

2- Opportunity to do good deeds:

Ramadhaan gives you a push, an impetus and incessant energy to do righteous deeds. In this month, you pray the Taraaweeh (voluntary supererogatory prayers) for the sake of Allaah The Almighty and give charity. The companions of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, used to do Jihaad (armed struggle) in this month to make the word of Allaah The Almighty superior. Thus, it is also a chance for the Mujaahids (soldiers) in all the occupied Muslim lands to invest their power in resisting the disbelievers and supporting Islam and Muslims.

3- The opportunity of achieving self-discipline:

Whoever fasts the entire month of Ramadhaan, achieves a great training in discipline and obedience that gives him a spiritual push to perform good deeds and abandon procrastination and excuses which only lead to distress and grief.

4- The opportunity to be organized:

Whoever ponders on this noble month will discover the need to be very organized so that a person sticks to a particular schedule because there are times specified for various acts, such as a time for fasting, breaking the fast, and so on. Accordingly, this will lead to better utilization of time by doing useful action. Hence, the person would try to organize his time to achieve his goals in the best way.

...continue on page 4

This is what our predecessors used to do...

...continue from page 3

5- Opportunity to make Da'wah:

In this month, people have the desire to do all kinds of good deeds. Devils are chained in this month and hearts are more inclined to doing good deeds. Thus, this is your opportunity to make Da'wah with your relatives, kindred, and neighbors. It is a good chance to spend one's time and resources in the field of Da'wah to spread Islamic teachings among Muslims.

6- Opportunity for social solidarity:

This month is a golden opportunity for being dutiful to parents, maintaining kinship ties, doing friends favors, fulfilling the right of the Ummah (Muslim nation) by supporting the poor and the needy and providing assistance to charitable societies through guiding them to the poor and needy who do not ask people to give them charity. In this month, the Muslim pays Zakaah (obligatory charity) if its time is due, to be paid to its deserving recipients. People in this month empathize with and experience the feelings of the weak and poor people and do their best to support them. Hence, Allaah The Almighty will give them the best reward.

7- Opportunity to strengthen one's will:

This noble month is a great chance for the seekers of goodness through which a person can cultivate resoluteness which helps them fast completely for the entire duration of Ramadhan. Accordingly, the person can start putting an end to smoking, consuming drugs and alcohol and other harmful habits in this month, as well as other months. The person would also be able to control his desires and whims which prevent him from exercising his will-power and resoluteness. Shaykh Mustafa As-Sibaa'i was right when he said, "Fasting is a manifestation of manhood and high resoluteness."

8- Regulating food intake and losing weight:

Ramadhan is an opportunity to preserve one's health for those who would like to regulate their eating habits and try to decrease eating and drinking, which is essentially for the benefit of the body, but becomes harmful when it exceeds the limits. Hence, this leads to harmful effects for the body and soul.

9- Increase in the number of repenting people:

It is well-known that devils are chained in Ramadhan, so it is a good chance to utilize the inclinations of the heart to perform worship and good deeds. There are large numbers of people who repent and stop committing sins and misdeeds. Thus, Ramadhan is a chance for mentors to exert more effort in disciplining the souls which turn to worship and provide them with a program that strengthens their faith. Repentant hearts are full of goodness.

10- Rewarding the self:

There is a great chance in this month to reward or punish the self for its good or bad deeds. Therefore, 'Eed comes as a reward for those who did well in this great month. On the other hand, those who do evil acts in this month, Allaah The Almighty does not need them to abstain from their food or drink. During this month we can enjoin ourselves to do righteous deeds. If our souls rebel, we should discipline them by depriving them of their desires in order to help us obey Allaah The Almighty.

11- Motivation:

This month motivates the believing souls and revives dormant energies in the souls to obey Allaah The Almighty. In this month, the person is motivated to exert efforts against his own self. In a Qudsi Hadeeth (sacred narration), the Messenger of Allaah, sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said that Allaah The Almighty said: "He (the

fasting person) abandons his food, drink and sexual desire for My Sake." [Al-Bukhaari and Muslim]. Moreover, every night some people will be freed from Hell because of their fasting and piety. This great motivation is a main reason behind fasting and offering voluntary night prayer. The Prophet, sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "Whoever fasts Ramadhan out of faith and seeking the Reward of Allaah, his past sins will be forgiven." [Al-Bukhaari and Muslim] Is there a greater reward or motivation than this?

12- Being attached to mosques:

During this great month, we can accustom ourselves to becoming attached to mosques. Hence, we will be among the seven categories of people to be under the Shade[1] of Allaah The Almighty on the Day of Judgment when there will be no shade but His. Waiting for the next prayer after finishing the current prayer is one of the reasons to be under the Shade of Allaah The Almighty. A person will gain the virtue of staying in obedience to Allaah The Almighty by waiting for the 'Ishaa' (night) Prayer, for example, after ending the Maghrib (sunset) Prayer. One can utilize this time by reciting the Quran, remembering Allaah The Almighty and praying. One should observe I'tikaaf (staying in seclusion) in the last ten days of Ramadhan to be in seclusion with the Lord of the Worlds seeking His Guidance and hoping for His acceptance and an answer to his supplications for being saved from Hell and admitted to Paradise.

13- Asking for forgiveness in the hours before dawn:

Ramadhan gives us the chance to ask for the forgiveness of Allaah The Almighty at a time during which most Muslims are negligent. It is the time preceding dawn because this is the time to have Suhoor (pre-dawn meal) before starting the fast at the break of dawn. This time is a great opportunity that must be seized by the believers to ask for the forgiveness of Allaah The Almighty at this time when Allaah The Almighty descends[2] to the lower heaven. Among the characteristics of the believers mentioned in the Quran, Allaah The Almighty Says (what means):

- {and those who seek forgiveness before dawn.} [Quran 3:17]
- {And in the hours before dawn they would ask forgiveness.} [Quran 51:17]

14- Repentance in Ramadhan:

The mercy and blessings of Allaah The Almighty descend abundantly and Allaah The Almighty frees many people from Hell in this month. Thus, it is a good chance for sinful and negligent people to turn over a new leaf with Allaah The Almighty by sincerely repenting and abandoning sins and misdeeds.

15- Revising the Quran:

The month of Ramadhan is a chance for those who have forgotten the portions of the Quran they had once memorized to revise them during the night and day through offering voluntary night prayers, and reciting it while reflecting on its meanings and rulings. The righteous predecessors used to pondering over the Quran and recite it completely many times in the noble month of Ramadhan.

16- 'Umrah equals Hajj:

One of the virtues of this month is that it is a great opportunity for those who want to perform 'Umrah (lesser pilgrimage). The Prophet, sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "Performing 'Umrah in Ramadhan equals (the reward of) performing Hajj." [Al-Bukhaari and Muslim] It is a great pleasure and gain for those who perform 'Umrah in Ramadhan sincerely for the sake of Allaah The Almighty following the Sunnah (tradition) of the Messenger of Allaah, sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam.

...continue on page 5

This is what our predecessors used to do...

...continue from page 4

17- Inviting new reverts to Islam:

Ramadhan is a good chance to call non-Muslims to Islam, incline their hearts to Islam, make them feel the greatness of this religion, the truthfulness of its law and the falsehood of other religions. Numerous callers to Islam affirm that many people revert to Islam in Ramadhan -- more than any other time because of the great rite of fasting, its merits and how the Muslims interact during this time.

18- Purifying hearts:

This month provides us with a great chance to renew our brotherly relations and restore kinship ties which were severed due to quarrels or disputes. The believer will seek refuge in Allaah The Almighty from the devil and purify his heart to cleanse it from grudges and envy. He renews his relations with his kindred and relatives according to the Islamic Sharee'ah (Islamic legislation) along with fulfilling the rights of Muslims which were ordained by Allaah The Almighty. It is important to utilize this month to reconcile disputing people. It is well-known that this act results in a great reward and virtue.

19- Good speech:

It is a chance to be accustomed to saying good words, shunning foul words, avoiding repaying a bad deed with a worse deed, repaying the bad deed with a good deed, and overlooking people's offenses. The Prophet, sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, guided the fasting person by saying: "When any one of you is observing fasting on a day, he should neither indulge in obscene language nor should he raise his voice; and if anyone reviles him or tries to quarrel with him he should say, 'I am fasting.'"

20- Renewal and change:

It is a good chance for whoever wants to renew his faith and change his life for the better. It is a practical starting point to remove the cover resulting from the accumulation of sins from the heart. It is a chance to motivate the self to do whatever pleases Allaah The Almighty so that it would certainly know that it has changed the path of its life to a new, much desired and longed for path.

21- Patience:

Ramadhan is an intensive course for learning the three aspects of patience: patience with obeying Allaah The Almighty by fasting the days of Ramadhan, patience with stopping evil deeds by abandoning foul words, evil actions and whatever displeases Allaah The Almighty, and patience with the decree of Allaah The Almighty by being patient with the obligation of fasting this month completely. Once Al-Ahnaf ibn Qays, may Allaah have mercy upon him, was told, "You are a very old man and fasting weakens you." He replied, "I save it for a long journey and being patient with obeying Allaah The Almighty is easier than being patient with His punishment."

22- Reducing consumption:

One of the benefits of this month is the reduction of our consumption of food and drink. However, many people do not adhere to this, but instead buy different kinds of food as if Ramadhan were the month of eating and drinking. However, the reality of this month is to reduce eating, drinking and to be economical without stinginess or extravagance. Rather, the person should adopt a moderate approach by following a rational way without buying everything he desires.

23- Upbringing of children:

Parents could instill the love of doing virtuous deeds and abstaining from vice in the hearts of their children. They could make them love fasting, prayer, and recitation of the Quran in different ways. What a nice tradition it is to gather the children half an hour before Iftaar (the time for breaking the fast) to explain to them what they do not know and supplicate Allaah The Almighty before the Athaan is called, raising their hands beseeching Allaah The Almighty and reciting the invocations mentioned in the Quran and Sunnah (Prophetic tradition) .

24- Supplication:

The times of entreating Allaah The Almighty are times when the believers feel tranquility and happiness. The best time for entreating Allaah The Almighty is in Ramadhan. The verse on supplication was mentioned in the middle of the verses on fasting Ramadhan in order to remind the believers of the significance of supplication in this month. So, the Muslim should not forget himself and his fellow Muslims in supplications hoping that Allaah The Almighty will relieve him and all Muslims of distress and sadness.

25- Entering Paradise:

There is a great chance to enter Paradise in this month -- especially the people who fast out of faith and hope for the reward of Allaah The Almighty will have a gate in Paradise called Ar-Rayyaan to enter from it. Moreover, there will be an immense reward for the fasting people on the Day of Resurrection. Fasting is observed for the sake of Allaah The Almighty and it is He Who will immensely reward His fasting slaves.

26- Thanking Allaah The Almighty:

In this month, there is a great chance to thank and praise Allaah The Almighty especially if the person obeys Allaah The Almighty and avoids sins. Consequently, the person would praise Allaah The Almighty and thank Him by his heart, tongue and actions because Allaah The Almighty favored him by enabling him to do virtuous deeds and avoid vice. Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): {And to glorify Allaah for that [to] which He has guided you; and perhaps you will be grateful.} [Quran 2:185]

In conclusion:

This description of the opportunities available to us in Ramadhan has been compiled after deep thought, in order to present them to fellow Muslims hoping that they will be fulfilled. By Allaah The Almighty Who is the only One worthy of worship, Ramadhan is the best month for striving for rewards and the most beloved month by Muslims. In this month, the gates of Paradise are opened and the gates of Hell are closed. So, we congratulate those who spend Ramadhan in performing acts of obedience and those who neglect this great chance by not fulfilling its rights will surely have cause for great remorse and regret. ❏



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In the name of Allah Most Gracious Most Merciful

And here is Ramadan again knocking our doors to invite us to Paradise as wide as the heavens and the earth. My beloved brothers and sisters in Islam, with the return of this blessed month lets remember:

It is another year has passed from our lives, and we are one year closer to meet Allah, so have we done enough to be happy to meet him? He who knows that he will meet his Lord should know he will be asked; so did we prepare the answer?

The blessings of Allah bestowed over us from security and shelter. Most of us were not worried in the past year where to sleep and if they are safe or not, but millions of men and women all over the world indeed were!

None of us had to sleep hungry or thirsty due to the bounties of Allah on us, but we have brothers and sisters all over the world if not dying from hunger, they are suffering. These blessings and bounties should remind us to show Allah some gratitude, and Ramadan is the best arena to do that. So lets not forget about the hungry and thirsty in Palestine, Pakistan, Iraq, Afghanistan, Chechnya, Somalia, China and every where else where Allahu Akbar is chanted out loud.

Remember that this is the month of Qura'an and worship, so let us declare altogether with one voice, O Allah, we have returned to you, so accept us. May Allah give us the opportunity to serve him in this month the way He is pleased. ❖

Remaining steadfast on obedience

There are lessons for us all in the passage of the days and nights - and the days are moving away from us as quickly as the clouds. The people shall continue advancing until they finally end up in Paradise or Hell. Also, the rapid rate at which the days and nights are running away from us during these present times confirm the foretelling of 'time compression'. This is one of the signs of the Last Hour that the Prophet sallallaahu alaihi wa sallam informed us of. This is therefore, a great opportunity for the wise amongst us to awaken, perform good deeds and repent sincerely. Allaah Says what means: "And it is He who has made the night and the day in succession for whoever desires to remember or desires gratitude." [Quran 25: 62] Muslims have recently spent a whole month enjoying the blessings of their Lord between supplication, prayer, remembrance of Allaah, almsgiving and recitation of the Quran. But, alas, the days and their memories of them have passed away so quickly, as if they were autumn leaves blown away by a strong wind.

When one compares the people's spiritual condition during Ramadhaan to that after it, they will certainly see signs of laziness and negligence in terms of performing righteous deeds. It is as if acts of worship and repentance were only meant for Ramadhaan! Such people are ignorant of the fact that Allaah is the Lord of all months and that Ramadhaan is only meant to be an occasion when one renews their resolve to worship Allaah and persevere in that. That is why Allaah Says, after prescribing fasting for His slaves, what means: "...That you may become righteous." [Quran 2: 183]

In view of this, it becomes incumbent upon us to consider the reality of worship and its internal impact on us - and not its outward forms. For there are some of us who have nothing to show for their fasting except hunger and thirst and will have no reward for their worship

except tiredness and sleeplessness. This is further confirmed when one hears people asking one another merely about the number of times they have recited the Quran and listened to sermons and admonitions during Ramadhaan. Are these people ignorant of how Allaah dealt with the people of 'Aad, who were very tall like lofty pillars, the like of which were not created in the land before? Do they not read about what happened to 'Aad, Thamood and the people of Prophet Loot? Do they not consider the Quran carefully? Had it been from other than Allaah, they would surely have found therein many contradictions.

Where are the hearts that are submissive to Allaah? Many hearts have become fertile ground for heedlessness. The youth are stuck in their exuberance for this life and the elders are doing no righteous deeds. We have neglected the Book of our Lord publicly and privately and therefore we are as far from sincere deeds as Mount Safaa is from Mount Marwah. Allaah Says what means: "Then do they not reflect upon the Quran, or are there locks (upon) their hearts? Indeed those who reverted back (to disbelief) after guidance had become clear to them - Satan enticed them and prolonged hope for them." [Quran 47: 24-25]

Do not be deluded by your determination to shun the dictates of your whims in Ramadhaan only to yield to temptation after it, for lustful desires are wickedly intriguing. Remember that many a brave man has been dealt a deadly blow by those whom he overlooked. The one who becomes negligent of his duties to Allaah after he has been doing them perfectly, or who falls back into committing sins after he has abstained from them is actually the farthest one from prosperity and salvation - even if he does deceive himself with seasonal acts of worship. He is also likely to be punished by being deprived of the joy and sweetness of worship. As for the believing men and women, who are inwardly as pure as they are outwardly and who worship Allaah at all times, they will taste the sweetness of worship and Allaah will provide for them for all of their needs. They are the ones who sincerely follow the path of the Prophet sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam constantly in their worship of Allaah.

Ramadhaan is distinguished among other months as far as acts of worship are concerned, but this does not mean that acts of worship should only be performed during Ramadhaan. The Messenger of Allaah sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam was always generous and his generosity increased during Ramadhaan. He used to seek refuge with Allaah from abandoning committing good deeds after performing them constantly. He sallallaahu alaihi wa sallam would say: "I seek refuge with You from recession after advancement." Allaah also warns against this when He Says what means: "And do not be like she who untwisted her spun thread after it was strong..." [Quran 16: 92]

A supplication of the Prophet sallallaahu alaihi wa sallam also confirms this. He would say: "O Allaah! Make this life for me an increase in good deeds." Therefore, we can see that he did not restrict the performance of good deeds to Ramadhaan alone, but followed the commandment of his Lord which means: "And worship your Lord until there comes to you the certainty (i.e. death)." [Quran 15: 99]

Human beings are no doubt imperfect. Islamic law, therefore, does not burden us with that which would exceed our capabilities. We are however required to hold fast, at all times, to the trustworthy handhold (the religion of Islam). This will make us attain the pleasure of our Lord in this world and the next and will save us from destruction as well as protecting us

continue on page 7

Remaining steadfast on obedience

...continue from page 6

from all evils. This is despite however little our acts of worship may amount to. The Messenger of Allaah sallallaahu alaihi wa sallam said: "O people! Do whatever you can of righteous deeds, for Allaah will not cease to accept your deeds and bless you as long as you do not become apathetic. The most beloved of all good deeds to Allaah is the one done continuously even if it is little." [Al-Bukhaari & Muslim]

In view of this, we must understand that there are established acts of worship that must be performed at all times and never fluctuate, even after Ramadhaan like Salaah (prayer), Zakaah (obligatory charity), invocation of Allaah and repentance, which Allaah enjoins on His slaves when He Says what means: "...And turn to Allaah in repentance, all of you, O believers, that you might succeed." [Quran 24: 31]

The Messenger of Allaah sallallaahu alaihi wa sallam used to say: "I seek the forgiveness of my Lord and repent to Him one-hundred times a day."

Now that you know this, it becomes incumbent on you to put it into practice, for you have tasted the sweetness of worship and closeness to Allaah in Ramadhaan, do not therefore, ruin that with your sins. Moreover, the continued observation of acts of worship or negligence in them is an indication of the inner-workings of the heart, for it is the most changeable organ in the human body. That is why the Prophet sallallaahu alaihi wa sallam said: "The heart was given that name because of its inconstancy. The similitude of the heart is like that of a feather at the bottom of a tree which the wind blows hither and thither." [Ahmad] The Messenger of Allaah sallallaahu alaihi wa sallam used to say in his supplication: "O turner of the hearts! Establish my heart firmly on your religion."

It is your right to celebrate 'Eed for it is Allaah who made joy and happiness among the rewards for certainty of faith and made sorrow and distress among the recompense for displeasure and doubt. 'Eed should be an occasion for wholesome recreation and amusement. It is when people exceed the limits of Allaah in their celebration and harm others that it becomes unlawful. This is because in these instances, people do not give Allaah His due rights, nor do they thank Him for His blessings. 'Ali bin Abi Taalib, may Allaah be pleased with him, saw some people playing around in a manner that is displeasing to Allaah on the day of 'Eed and remarked: "If Allaah has accepted these peoples fasting then these are not the actions of the grateful and if Allaah did not accept their fasting then such is not the behaviour of the fearful."

Ibn Al-Qayyim, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said about happiness: "Surely, Allaah shall bring this ware (happiness and joy) to its merchants (i.e. those who know how best to rejoice) and those who know its value, though it may, on the way, fall into the hands of those who do not appreciate its value, for many are carriers of knowledge who are not themselves

knowledgeable and many are carriers of knowledge unto those who are better than them in understanding." Allaah Says what means: "The example of those who were entrusted with the Torah and then did not take it on (by neglecting their duty towards it) is like that of a donkey who carries volumes (of books)..." [Quran 62: 5]

The Muslim should therefore, not exceed the limits when rejoicing for Allaah does not love such people. This is because excessive joy generates arrogance and disdain for the truth. While commenting on the saying of Allaah which means: "From the evil of the retreating whisperer (a devil who makes evil suggestions to man but disappears when one remembers Allaah)." [Quran 114: 4] One of the Quranic commentators said: "The devil occupies the heart of man whenever he is happy or sad, but when he remembers Allaah he withdraws." So fear Allaah during joyful moments for the sincere Muslim does not transgress the limits, nor does he deviate from the truth due to his happiness. Ali Ibn Abi Taalib said: "Every day in which one does not disobey his Lord is a cause for celebration."

The Wise Law-Giver has prescribed for you the fasting of six days in the month of Shawwaal. The Messenger of Allaah sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam said: "Whoever fasts (the whole of) Ramadhaan and then follows it up with six days fasting in the month of Shawwaal, is like the one who fasts for the whole year (in terms of reward)." It is better to observe this fast immediately after 'Eed and do them in succession, but there is no harm if one separates between them or fasts them anytime during that month. I must add that these six fasts are not obligatory.

Whoever fasts them will be rewarded for that and whoever does not, will not be punished. If one is however consistent in fasting it for years and then becomes unable to do so in a particular year due to illness or travel, they will get the same reward as if they fasted them. This is because the Messenger of Allaah sallallaahu alaihi wa sallam said: "If a man is sick or travels, what he used to do while he was resident and healthy will be written down for him."

However, it is not permissible for someone to fast these six days before they make up for the days that they missed during Ramadhaan. One will only get the reward for the six days fasting in Shawwaal if they have completely fasted the whole of Ramadhaan. Finally, let whoever wants an additional reward endeavour to fast on the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth day of every month for the Prophet sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam has explained that whoever fasts them is like the one who fasts perpetually.

Fear Allaah as He should be feared and be conscious of Him in private and in public. Worship Him as if you see Him, for even though you do not see Him, He sees you.

Allaah Says what means: "And rely upon the Exalted in Might, the Merciful. Who sees you when you arise. And your movement among those who prostrate. Indeed, He is the Hearing, the Knowing." [Quran 26: 217-220] ❏

The Prophet's Qiyaam in Ramadhaan as described by the companions

Qiyaam (optional night prayer) is one of the recommended acts of worship, and it is even more recommended during the month of Ramadhaan. Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam, said: "Whoever establishes prayers during the nights of Ramadhaan faithfully (out of sincere faith) and hoping to attain Allaah's rewards, all his past sins will be forgiven." [Al-Bukhaari and Muslim]

The Prophet, sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam, has also informed us that the one who stands in prayer with the Imaam until he finishes the prayer, he will be counted as if he prayed the entire night. Abu Tharr, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: "We fasted (i.e. during Ramadhaan) and the Prophet, sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam, did not lead us in prayer (i.e. for Qiyaam) until there were seven days remaining for the end of the month, then he led us in prayer and prayed for one third of the night, then he refrained from praying the sixth night before last, then the next night he led us in prayer for half of the night, so we asked him: 'O Messenger of Allaah! Why don't you lead us in prayer for the entire night?' He, sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam, replied: "Whoever performs prayer with the Imaam and stays with him until he finishes, his prayer is equal to observing prayer during the whole night" then he refrained from praying until there was three nights remaining in the month, then he led us in prayer for the remaining nights, and he called his wives and family to attend, and he would pray until we feared to miss the Suhoor meal (i.e. the predawn meal)." [Abu Daawood]

It is also reported that he, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam, used to pray the Qiyaam prayer during Ramadhaan and lead his companions in some of the nights, but then he refrained from leading them in prayer. Anas, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: "The Messenger, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam, was praying Qiyaam one night during Ramadhaan, and as I was about to stand next to him another man came and then another until we were a group praying behind him. When he, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam, felt us behind him, he shortened his prayer, then he finished and entered his house and prayed a long prayer that he would not pray when we are with him. The next day we asked him: 'Did you feel that we were praying behind you?' He, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam, replied: "Yes, and this is why I shortened my prayer." [Muslim]

'Aa'ishah, may Allaah be pleased with her, said: "The Messenger, sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam, went out one of the nights of Ramadhaan in the middle of the night and prayed in the mosque, and some men prayed behind him. The next morning people mentioned this so the next night more people gathered behind him during prayer. The next day people again told one another and the congregation increased, and the third night he, sallallaahu `alayhi

wa sallam, came out again and prayed with people behind him. On the fourth night the mosque had more people than it could hold, but the prophet, sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam, did not come out until it was time to pray Fajr. After he finished the Fajr prayer he turned around and said to the people: "It is not that I was unaware of your presence in the mosque but I feared it would become obligatory upon you, and then you would be unable to adhere to it." [Al-Bukhaari and Muslim]

He, sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam, used to pray eleven Rak'ahs and would prolong his recitation of the Quran during them. Abu Salamah asked 'Aa'ishah, may Allaah be pleased with her: "How many Rak'ahs did the Messenger, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam, used to pray during Ramadhaan?" She replied: "He never prayed more than eleven Rak'ahs during Ramadhaan or other than Ramadhaan. He used to pray four, do not ask how well-performed they were, or how long they were. Then he would pray another four, do not ask how well-performed they were, or how long they were. Then he would pray three. I asked him: "O Messenger of Allaah! Do you sleep before praying the Witr prayer (i.e. the odd numbered prayer)?" He replied: "O 'Aa'ishah! My eyes sleep but my heart never sleeps." [Al-Bukhaari and Muslim]

Huthayfah, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported: "I offered Qiyaam with the Prophet, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam, one night, and he started reciting chapter Al-Baqarah. I thought that he would bow at the end of one hundred verses, but he continued reciting; I, then, thought that he would perhaps bow on completing the whole chapter in a Rak'ah, but he proceeded on, and started reciting chapter An-Nisaa'; he then started chapter Aal `Imraan and his recitation was unhurried. And when he recited the verses which referred to the Glory of Allaah, he glorified Him (by saying Subhaanallaah - Exalted is Allaah and Far Above any imperfection), and when he recited the verses that entailed supplication, he supplicated, and when he recited the verses that mention seeking Refuge of the Lord, he sought (His) Refuge. Then he bowed and said: "(Subhana Rabbiyal-'Atheem) My Lord, The Great is far above any imperfection" his bowing lasted about the same length of time as his standing (and then on returning to the standing posture after Rukoo`) he said: "(Sami` Allaahu liman hamidah, Rabbana wa lakal hamd.) Allaah listened to him who praised Him. Our Lord the praise is Yours" Then he stood about the same length of time as he had spent in bowing. He then prostrated himself and said: "(Subhana Rabbiyal-'A) My Lord, The Supreme is far above any imperfection" and his prostration lasted nearly the same length of time as his standing." [Muslim] The narration in the book of Imaam Ahmad indicated that this took place during Ramadhaan. ❏

Advice to pregnant and breastfeeding mothers

Allaah has mandated fasting for every post-pubescent person who is physically fit to fast and has promised an abundant reward in return. He has, however, relieved those with sound excuses and exempted them from fasting, permitting them to break their fast until the reason for which they have been exempted is gone. However, He obliged them to make up for these missed days; Allaah Says (what means): {The month of Ramadhaan [is that] in which was revealed the Quran, a guidance for the people and clear proofs of guidance and criterion. So whoever sights [the new moon of] the month, must fast it; and whoever is ill or on a journey - then an equal number of other days. Allaah intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship ...} [Quran: 2:185]

Pregnant and breastfeeding mothers are examples of such people whom Allaah has exempted from fasting. The following is some general health advice that would help such mothers with the approach of the month of Ramadhaan: You must consult your doctor to decide whether or not you are able to fast during pregnancy or while breastfeeding. She will check you and assess the case accordingly.

If a pregnant or breastfeeding mother fears harm upon herself because of fasting, then it her religious right to break the fast.

A pregnant woman who may face problems if she fasts must have a well balanced meal at the time of breaking her fast. Her meal must include starches that supply the body with the required calories, like rice, bread or pasta. A pregnant woman usually needs around 2250 calories daily,

...continue on page 16

The virtue of the Last Ten Days of Ramadhan and Laylat Al-Qadr

The last ten days of Ramadhan are blessed by Allaah with unique virtues. Among such virtues is that Laylat Al-Qadr (the Night of Decree) is among them. About this Night, Allaah, The Most Exalted, Says (what means): “Ha, Meem. By the clear Book. Indeed, We sent it down during a blessed night. Indeed, We were to warn [mankind]. On that night is made distinct every precise matter - [Every] matter [proceeding] from Us. Indeed, We were to send [a messenger]. As mercy from your Lord. Indeed, He is the Hearing, the Knowing.” [Quran 44:1-6]

Allaah sent down the Quran on this Night which He, The Most Exalted, described as blessed. It was reported from a group of the Salaf (righteous predecessors) - including Ibn ‘Abbaas, Qataadah, Sa’eed ibn Jubayr, ‘Ikrimah, Mujaahid and others, may Allaah be pleased with them- that the night on which the Quran was sent down was Laylat Al-Qadr.

The phrase (which means): “On that night is made distinct every precise matter,” indicates that on this night the destiny of all creatures for the coming year is decreed. On that night it is written who will live, who will die, who will be saved, who will be doomed, who will be destined for Paradise, who will be destined for Hell, who will be granted honour, who will be humiliated, where drought and famine will occur, and everything else that Allaah Wills in that year.

Ibn ‘Abbaas, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: “You may see a man furnishing his home or plowing his field, and he is one of those who are going to die,” i.e., it has been decreed on Laylat Al-Qadr that he is one of those who are going to die (in the coming year). And it was said that on this night, the destiny of people is shown to the angels.

The meaning of “Qadr” is veneration or honor, i.e. it is a night that is venerated because of its special characteristics, and because the one who stays up during this night becomes a person of honor. And it was said that Qadr means constriction, in the sense that the knowledge of precisely when this night is, is hidden. Al-Khaleel ibn Ahmad, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said: “It was called Laylat Al-Qadr because the earth is constricted by the great numbers of angels on that night, and Qadr means constriction.”

It was also said that Qadr means Qadar (decree), i.e., that on this night the decrees for the coming year are ordained, as Allaah Says (what means): “On that night is made distinct every precise matter.” [Quran 44:4] and because the decrees of Allaah are decided and written down on this night.

So Allaah has called it Laylat Al-Qadr, because of its great value and high status with Allaah, and because so many sins are forgiven and so many faults are concealed during this night. For it is the night of forgiveness, as it was reported that the Prophet, sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam, said: “Whoever stays up during Laylat Al-Qadr out of faith and in the hope of earning the reward of Allaah, all his previous sins will be forgiven.” [Al-Bukhaari and Muslim]

Allaah has given this night special characteristics which make it unique, such as:

1. It is the night on which the Quran was sent down, as we have stated above. Ibn ‘Abbaas, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: “Allaah sent down the Quran at one time from Al-Lawh Al-Mahfooth (the Preserved Tablet in the Seventh Heaven) to Bayt Al-‘Izzah (House of Pride) in the first Heaven, then it was revealed to the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam, in stages according to events over twenty-three years.” [Ibn Katheer]

2. Allaah described it as being better than a thousand months, as

He Says (what means): “The Night of Decree is better than a thousand months.” [Quran 97:3]

3. Allaah described it as being blessed, as He Says (what means): “Indeed, We sent it down during a blessed night.” [Quran 44: 3]

4. On this night, the angels and the Spirit [Jibreel (Angel Gabriel)] descend, “i.e., many angels descend on this night because it is so blessed, and the angels come down when the blessings and mercy of Allaah come down, just as they come down when the Quran is recited, and they surround the circles of Thikr (gatherings where Allaah is mentioned), and they spread their wings for the one who sincerely seeks knowledge, out of respect for him.” [Ibn Katheer]

Jibreel is specifically mentioned as a sign of respect for him.

5. This night is described as peace, i.e., it is safe, for the devils cannot do any evil or cause any harm on this night, as Mujaahid, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said: “On this night, many people are saved from punishment because of what they do to worship Allaah, The Most Exalted.”

6. Allaah Says (what means): “On that night is made distinct every precise matter.” [Quran 44:4], the affairs of that year are dispatched from the Preserved Tablet to the angels who record the decrees: who will live, who will die, what provision people will be given, what will happen until the end of that year, every matter of ordainments is decreed, and it cannot be altered or changed. [Ibn Katheer]

All of this is already known to Allaah before it is even written down, but He makes known to the angels what is to happen, and commands them to do whatever they are enjoined to do.

7. Allaah revealed a Chapter concerning this night which will be recited until the Day of Resurrection, in which He mentions the honor and great value of this night. This is the Chapter in which Almighty Allaah Says (what means): “Indeed, We sent the Qur’an down during the Night of Decree. And what can make you know what is the Night of Decree? The Night of Decree is better than a thousand months. The angels and the Spirit descend therein by permission of their Lord for every matter. Peace it is until the emergence of dawn.” [Quran 97:1-5]

The verse (which means): “And what can make you know what is the Night of Decree?” [Quran 97:2] serves to draw attention to the importance and great significance of this night.

The verse (which means): “The Night of Decree is better than a thousand months.” Means that worship during it is better than worship during a thousand months (which means over eighty three years). This is a great virtue, the value of which no one can fully understand except The Lord of the Worlds, The Most Exalted.

Laylat Al-Qadr is in the last ten days of Ramadhan, as stated in the narration of Ibn ‘Umar, may Allaah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam, said: “Seek Laylat Al-Qadr in the last ten days of Ramadhan.” [Muslim]

It is more likely to be one of the odd-numbered nights, because of the narration of ‘Aa’ishah, may Allaah be pleased with her, who said that the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam, had said: “Seek Laylat Al-Qadr in the odd-numbered nights of the last ten nights.” [Al-Bukhaari]

We should seek it especially in the odd-numbered nights, i.e., on the twenty-first, the twenty-third, the twenty-fifth, the twenty-seventh and the twenty-ninth. It was also reported that the Prophet, sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam, said: “Seek it in the last ten nights, on the odd-numbered nights.” [Al-Bukhaari and Muslim]

...continue on page 12

Indications of the Night of Al-Qadr (Power)

Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): {The angels and the Spirit descend therein by permission of their Lord for every matter. Peace it is until the emergence of dawn.} [Quran 97:4-5] It is narrated on the authority of Zirr ibn Hubaysh, may Allaah have mercy upon him, that he heard Ubayy ibn Ka'b, may Allaah be pleased with him, on being told that 'Abdullaah ibn Mas'ood, may Allaah be pleased with him, had said, "He who stands for (supererogatory) prayer (every night) throughout the year, will happen to witness the Night of Al-Qadr", commented, "By Allaah except for whom there is no deity, that is in (the month of) Ramadhaan. (He took an unrestricted oath) By Allaah, I know the night: it was the night on which The Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, ordered us to stand in prayer, that is, the eve of the twenty-seventh day, and its sign is that the sun rises whitish on that day without having rays." [Muslim]

According to another narration of this, "Its sign is that the sun rises in the next morning white without rays, as if it were a round tray." [Ibn Hibbaan]

It is also narrated on the authority of Ibn Mas'ood, may Allaah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "Indeed, the Night of Al-Qadr is on the middle night of the last seven (nights) of Ramadhaan. The following morning, the sun rises pure without rays." Ibn Mas'ood, may Allaah be pleased with him, said, "I looked at it and found it just the same as described by the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam." [Ahmad]

The virtue of the Last Ten Days of Ramadhaan and Laylat Al-Qadr

...continue from page 9

It is most likely to be on the night of the twenty-seventh. This is according to the saying of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam: "Laylat Al-Qadr is the night of the twenty-seventh." [Ahmad and Abu Daawood] The view that it is the night of the twenty-seventh is the opinion of most of the Companions, may Allaah be pleased with them, and the majority of scholars. Ubayy ibn Ka'b, may Allaah be pleased with him, used to assert, without saying "Inshaa Allaah-God willing" that: "...it was the night of the twenty-seventh. Zurr ibn Hubaysh, may Allaah be pleased with him, said to Ubayy, may Allaah be pleased with him: 'I said: What makes you say that, O Abu'l-Munthir (i.e. Ubayy)?' He, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: 'By the signs of which the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, told us: that the sun rises that morning with no visible rays.'" [Muslim]

The fact that it is more likely the night of the twenty-seventh - Allaah knows best - does not mean that this is always the case. It could be any of the other odd-numbered nights of the last ten days of Ramadhaan. Some of the scholars ruled that it is more likely that it moves and does not come on a specific night each year.

Allaah has concealed this night so that His slaves will strive to seek it, and will strive hard in worship, just as He has concealed the blessed hour of Friday.

Therefore, we should strive hard during the days and nights of these ten days, seeking Laylat Al-Qadr and following the example of our Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and we should strive in supplication and seeking to draw close to Allaah Almighty. ❖

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "The Night of Al-Qadr is on the twenty-seventh or the twenty-ninth [of Ramadhaan]. On that night, the angels on earth are more numerous than its pebbles." [Ahmad]

It is narrated on the authority of 'Ubaadah ibn As-Saamit, may Allaah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "Indeed, the sign of the Night of Al-Qadr is that it is bright and pure as if the moon is shining in it, still and tranquil, neither cold nor hot. On it, it is impossible for a star to be shot [at a devil] until morning comes. Its [other] sign is that in the morning after it, the sun rises brightly and without rays, similar to a full moon; and it is impossible for Satan to come out with it on that day." [Ahmad]

It is further narrated on the authority of Jaabir, may Allaah be pleased with him, that he said: "The Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: 'I was shown (in a vision) the night of Al-Qadr, but later I forgot it. It is one of the last ten nights of Ramadhaan. It is shining and bright, neither hot nor cold, as if it has a full moon revealing its stars. On it the devil does not come out before its dawn rises.'" [Ibn Khuzaymah and Ibn Hibbaan]

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn 'Abbaas, may Allaah be pleased with them, that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said, concerning the night of Al-Qadr: "It is a shining night, neither hot nor cold, and in the morning next to it the sun rises red with no rays." [Ibn Khuzaymah]

Benefits and rulings

First: It is permissible for a religious scholar to hide some information that he knows if he sees that hiding it may be beneficial, just as Ibn Mas'ood, may Allaah be pleased with him, concealed his knowledge about the Night of Al-Qadr lest the people would rely on that and slacken to stand in prayer in all the last ten nights of Ramadhaan.

Second: A religious scholar nevertheless has to tell the people what they need to know, just as Ubayy, may Allaah be pleased with him, told the people the date and sign of the night of Al-Qadr.

Third: It is permissible for scholars to strive their utmost, depending on their personal reasoning, and even differ about determining the benefits and evils of this. It is not forbidden so long as it is based on sound Ijtihad (exertion of effort) and a sincere search for the truth.

Fourth: The Night of Al-Qadr is one of the last ten nights of Ramadhaan; most likely an odd-number night, most probably the 27th night, as Ubayy Ibn Ka'b, may Allaah be pleased with him, took oath to that.

Fifth: These texts provide evidence for the fact that the Night of Al-Qadr has many signs, including:

1. Angels descend on it in great numbers, led by Jibreel (Gabriel), may Allaah exalt his mention, to witness the praying people in their mosques. Indeed, they are more numerous than pebbles. But this sign does not appear to humans.
2. Safety and peace are widespread on it due to the acts of worship done by servants in obedience of Allaah The Almighty.
3. The next morning, the sun rises whitish without rays. The reason for that, as mentioned by religious scholars, is that the angels (who had descended on that night) then ascend to the heavens with their wings or lights screening the rays of sun due to their immense number.
4. Among its characteristics is that it is a pure still night, neither cold nor hot, and this cold and heat are relative, depending on the

...continue on page 11

Indications of the Night of Al-Qadr (Power)

...continue from page 10

climate of each country or region. The point is that it is neither cold nor hot in relation to the nights prior to and next to it.

5. Satan does not come out with the sun of the following morning because the sun always rises between the two horns of Satan, except in the morning next to the night of Al-Qadr.

Sixth: Most of those signs mentioned above do not appear to people except after the end of the night of Al-Qadr, perchance that those who offered acts of worship on it would thank their Lord for helping them to stand in prayer and worship on it, and those who indulged on it would regret their indulgence and be determined to do their best to seize it in the coming year.

Seventh: These signs are a characteristic every Nights of Qadr, past, present and future, and not specific only to the lifetime of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam.

Eighth: A Muslim really must strive to seize the opportunity of all the goodness that lies in it. ❖

I'tikaaf in Ramadhaan

I'tikaaf means staying in the mosque for a specific purpose, which is to worship Allaah. It is prescribed in Islam and is mustahabb (recommended) according to the consensus of the scholars. Imam Ahmad said, as was narrated from him by Abu Daawood: "I have not heard from any of the scholars that it is anything other than Sunnah."

Az-Zuhri said: "How strange the Muslims are! They have given up I'tikaaf, despite the fact that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, never abandoned this practice from the time he came to Madinah until his death."

The benefits of I'tikaaf

There are many hidden benefits in the acts of worship and much wisdom behind them. The basis of all deeds is the heart, as the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "In the body there is an organ which if it is sound, the entire body will be sound, and if it is corrupt, the entire body will be corrupt. That organ is the heart." [Al-Bukhaari and Muslim]

What corrupts the heart most is distractions and preoccupations - such as food, drink, sex, talking too much, sleeping too much and socializing too much, and other distractions - which divert people from turning to Allaah and cause the heart to be unfocused and unable to concentrate on worshipping Allaah. So Allaah has prescribed acts of worship, such as fasting, to protect the heart from the negative effects of these distractions. Fasting deprives a person of food and drink and sex during the day, and this denial of excessive enjoyments is reflected in the heart, which gains more strength for seeking Allaah and frees it from the chains of these distractions which take a person from thinking of the Hereafter by occupying him with worldly concerns.

Just as fasting is a shield which protects the heart from the influences of physical excessive indulgence in food, drink and sex, so I'tikaaf offers an immense hidden benefit, which is protection from the effects of excessive socializing. For people may take socializing to extremes, until it has a similar effect on a person to the effects of over-eating.

I'tikaaf also offers protection from the evil consequences of talking too much, because a person usually does I'tikaaf on his own, turning to Allaah by praying Qiyaam al-Layl, reading Quran, making Dhikr,

reciting du'aa, and so on.

It also offers protection from sleeping too much, because when a person makes I'tikaaf in the mosque, he devotes his time to drawing closer to Allaah by doing different kinds of acts of worship; he does not stay in the mosque to sleep.

Undoubtedly a person's success in freeing himself from socializing, talking and sleeping too much will help him to make his heart turn towards Allaah, and will protect him from the opposite.

The connection between fasting and I'tikaaf

No doubt when a person has all the means of purifying his heart by keeping away from all the things that can distract him from worship, this will be more effective in helping him to turn towards Allaah with devotion and humility. Hence the Salaf regarded it as mustahabb to combine fasting and I'tikaaf. Imam Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said: "It was not reported that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, ever did I'tikaaf when he was not fasting. Indeed, 'Aa'ishah, may Allaah be pleased with her, said: 'There is no I'tikaaf except with fasting.'" [Abu Daawood]

Allaah did not mention I'tikaaf except in conjunction with fasting, and the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, did not do I'tikaaf except in conjunction with fasting.

The view that fasting is a condition of I'tikaaf was narrated from Ibn 'Umar and Ibn 'Abbas. It was also the view of Malik, al-Awza'i and Abu Haneefah, and different opinions were narrated from Ahmad and Al-Shaafi'ee.

With regard to the words of Ibn al-Qayyim, "It was not reported that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, ever did I'tikaaf when he was not fasting", there is some room for debate. It was reported that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, did I'tikaaf in Shawwaal (Al-Bukhaari and Muslim), but it was not proven that he was fasting on these days when he did I'tikaaf.

The most correct view is that fasting is mustahabb (recommended) for the one who does I'tikaaf, but it is not a condition of his I'tikaaf being valid. ❖

Zakaat-ul-Fitr (post-Ramadhaan obligatory charity)

It was narrated on the authority of Ibn 'Umar, may Allaah be pleased with him, that he said, "The Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, enjoined the payment of one Saa' (double handful) of dates or one Saa' of barley as Zakaat-ul-Fitr for every Muslim, slave or a free person, male or female, young or old, and he ordered that it should be paid before people went out to offer the 'Eed Prayer." [Al-Bukhaari and Muslim]

In another narration, Naafi', may Allaah have mercy upon him, added, "Ibn 'Umar used to give Zakaat-ul-Fitr on behalf of every young and old person. He even used to give on behalf of my children. Ibn 'Umar, may Allaah be pleased with him, would give Zakaat-ul-Fitr to those who had been officially appointed for its collection. People used to give Zakaat-ul-Fitr (even) a day or two days before the 'Eed." [Al-Bukhaari]

It was narrated on the authority of Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri, may Allaah be pleased with him, that he said, "We used to give one Saa' of food, or one Saa' of barley, or one Saa' of dates, or one Saa' of cottage cheese or one Saa' of raisins (dried grapes) as Zakaat-ul-Fitr." [Al-Bukhaari and Muslim]

It was narrated on the authority of Ibn 'Abbaas, may Allaah be

...continue on page 12

Zakaat-ul-Fitr

(post-Ramadhaan obligatory charity)

...continue from page 11

pleased with him, that he said, "The Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, made Zakaat-ul-fitr obligatory as a means of purifying the fasting person from idle talk and foul language and to feed the needy. Whoever pays it before the prayer, it is an accepted Zakaah (for him), and whoever pays it after the prayer, it is simply a type of charity." [Abu Daawood and Ibn Maajah] [AL-Haakim: Saheeh; it meets the conditions stipulated by Al-Bukhaari] [AL-Albaani: Hasan]

It was narrated on the authority of Qays ibn Sa'd, may Allaah be pleased with him, that he said, "The Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, ordered us to pay Sadaqat-ul-Fitr before the obligation of Zakaah. Once Zakaah was ordained, he neither ordered nor forbade us while we were still paying it." [An-Nasaa'i, Ibn Maajah and Ahmad] [AL-Haafith in Al-Fat'h: Saheeh]

Benefits and rulings:

First: Zakaat-ul-Fitr is obligatory for every Muslim and it was ordained even before the obligatory Zakaah on property and wealth. The obligation of Zakaat-ul-Fitr remained as it was even after the obligation of Zakaah on property and wealth.

Second: It is obligatory for every Muslim to pay Zakaat-ul-Fitr on his behalf and on behalf of those whom he is obligated to provide for, like his wife and children.

Third: If the wife and children earn their living or have money, it is preferable that every person pays it on his or her behalf because they are obliged to pay it. However, it is permissible for their guardian to pay it on their behalf even if they have their own money.

Fourth: The opinion of the majority of scholars is it should be given as food not money because the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, neither ordered paying it in the form of money nor paid it as such and none of the Companions paid Zakaat-ul-Fitr as money despite its occurrence every year. Also, when food is given to the poor man, it benefits him as well as his family. This is unlike giving him money, which he may save and leave his family hungry. Additionally, paying the value of Zakaat-ul-Fitr does not manifest this great ritual.

Fifth: The starting time of paying Zakaat-ul-Fitr is the night of 28th of Ramadhaan. The Companions, may Allaah be pleased with them, would pay it one or two days before 'Eed. The deadline of paying it is the time of the 'Eed Prayer as supported by Hadeeths.

Sixth: Zakaat-ul-Fitr is paid to those who deserve it, such as the poor and the needy, since the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "...and to feed the needy." It is not correct to pay it to neighbors or relatives who do not deserve it, as some people exchange it like the meat of Udh'hiyah (Sacrifice) or 'Aqeeqah (a celebration of birth). However, this is different. Zakaat-ul-Fitr must be given to those who deserve it; the meat of the Udh'hiyah and 'Aqeeqah, however, can be gifted. It is also incorrect to pay Zakaat-ul-Fitr every year to a specific family who was once poor and are not so anymore. It is not permissible for the Muslim to keep on paying them Zakaat-ul-Fitr after they have become well-off.

Seventh: It is preferable for the Muslim to give Zakaat-ul-Fitr to the poor people in his country; yet, it is also permissible to transfer it to other countries particularly if their people desperately need it and he does not know any poor person who needs it in his country, or that there are other Muslims who can give the needy in his country Zakaat-ul-Fitr.

Eighth: Zakaat-ul-Fitr involves many pearls of wisdom and benefits, such as:

1- Showing gratitude for the favor of Allaah The Almighty that one has completed fasting and finished after Ramadhaan. Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): {To complete the period and to glorify

Allaah for that [to] which He has guided you; and perhaps you will be grateful.} [Quran 2:185]

2- It is a Zakaah on the body which Allaah The Almighty has sustained for a whole year.

3- It purifies the slave's fasting from the idle talk, foul language and the like. The Hadeeth stated that Zakaat-ul-Fitr purifies the fasting person from idle talk and foul language.

4- It gives comfort to the poor and the needy and prevents them from begging on the day of 'Eed, so that they will be happy and satisfied like all other Muslims on 'Eed.

5- It trains the fasting person in generosity and giving, and protects him from stinginess and niggardliness.

Ninth: It is permissible for a group of Muslims or one family to pay their Zakaat-ul-Fitr for a single needy person just as it is also permissible for a single Muslim to distribute his Zakaat-ul-Fitr among several needy people.

Tenth: Zakaat-ul-Fitr becomes obligatory by the sunset of the last day of Ramadhaan. So, if the Muslim dies before sunset, Zakaat-ul-Fitr would not be obligatory for him because he died before it became obligatory for him. Similarly, if the Muslim had a baby after sunset on the night of 'Eed, it would not be obligatory for him to pay Zakaat-ul-Fitr on behalf of the baby. Yet, it is recommended to pay it on its behalf.

Eleventh: Zakaat-ul-Fitr is not obligatory for the Muslim on behalf of his workers and servants unless this is stipulated in the contract. However, it is permissible for the employer to pay Zakaat-ul-Fitr on behalf of his employees as a type of donation and kindness towards them.

Twelfth: If the Muslim forgot to pay Zakaat-ul-Fitr at its due time and did not remember to do so except after the 'Eed Prayer, he should pay it. There would be no blame on him because he is excused by his forgetfulness.

Thirteenth: If the Muslim authorized someone to deliver Zakaat-ul-Fitr to its legal recipients, it should be delivered to them before the 'Eed Prayer. However, if the poor man asked the giver to keep it with him till the former would come to the latter, it would be permissible for the person authorized to keep it even till after the 'Eed Prayer. ✨

Question & Answer

If a sister was pregnant and her fasting in the month of Ramadan was limited due to her state and she was unable to make up the fast before the next Ramadan, she would have to provide food to one needy person. My question: Is it provided from her money (she doesn't work for a living but has some money in a personal account) as it was her fast that wasn't completed? Or is it from her husband's money as he is considered the provider of the family?

Answer:

If this woman broke the fast fearing for her fetus or her child then she has to feed one needy person for each day she missed fasting and it is the husband who should pay for that. She also has to make up the days she missed as soon as she is able to.

However, if she broke the fast fearing for herself, then she does not have to feed a needy person in expiation, but she has to make up the days she missed.

This is so, only if she made up the days before the following Ramadhaan arrived or did not neglect to do so but was unable to do that. Otherwise she should make up the missed days and also expiate by feeding a needy person for each missed day.

Allaah Knows best.

Question & Answer

When I first fasted in Ramadan I did not know much about religion and now I have a doubt that I ate in Ramadan though I am not sure so what I should do!

Answer:

We hope that you are not required to make up or expiate for the days which you doubted that you broke the fast. In principle when a Muslim fasts, he does not eat or drink and this principle cannot be overruled with doubt. Moreover, if one drinks or eats during the day in Ramadhan while he does not know that this is forbidden due to being brought up in the countryside where there are no scholars, or that he is a new Muslim, then he is excused for breaking the fast and he is not obliged to make up the days he broke the fast according to the view of many scholars, may Allaah have mercy upon them,; this is also the opinion of the Shaafi'ee School of jurisprudence.

Zakariyya Al-Ansaari, may Allaah have mercy upon them, from the Shaafi'ee School of jurisprudence, said: "If a person who breaks the fast by eating out of forgetfulness or out of ignorance, this does not invalidate his fast even if he ate a lot. For instance, this applies to one who is a new Muslim or he was brought up in the countryside where there are no scholars."

Finally, it should be noted that a person who reaches the age of puberty is obliged to acquire the religious knowledge by which his belief and his individual obligations are accepted and performed correctly.

Allaah Knows best.

In Ramadan when I make Wudu and I doubt whether water has entered my throat so I don't know if my (Sawm) is true or not?

Answer:

A fasting person is ordered not to inhale water strongly lest the water should enter the throat. Laqit Ibn Sabrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet, sallallahu alayhi wa sallam, said: "Exaggerate when rinsing your nose unless you are fasting". (At-Tirmithi, Ibn Maajah and others).

If a fasting person takes precautions not to let water enter his throat, but doubts whether some water entered his throat, the fast is still correct and such doubts do not have any effect on the validity of fast.

Even if one is sure that water has indeed entered his throat accidentally it does not affect the fast, according to the most correct opinion of the scholars. This rule is confirmed by Imaam Ibn Qudaamah, may Allaah have mercy on him, in his book al-Mughni. Allah knows best.

I had to make up for a day of fasting that I missed last Ramadhan and I actually did that before the advent of the current Ramadhan. Here is my question: Having performed the Fajr Prayer, I slept and when I woke up, I looked at the clock and thought that the sun had already set. So, I drank a cup of water and then returned to sleep again. When I woke up again, I did not remember whether it had in fact been before or after sunset when I drank the water. I did not remember the exact time because I was sleepy when I looked at the clock. Should I make up for this day after ending this current Ramadhan? Thank you.

Answer:

If you drank water while being unsure of whether or not it was still daytime (i.e., the two possibilities, that the sun set or not, were of the same degree), then undoubtedly you would not be free from

liability and you would be required to make up for that day because the basic premise is that it was still daytime and this premise would not have changed unless you were certain or most likely believed that it had ended.

If you drank water while thinking that the sun set and the day ended, you would not be required to make up for that day because the opposite was not proved to you.

Finally, we would like to state the following: It is impermissible for a Muslim to delay the obligatory prayer beyond its prescribed time without a valid excuse. Rather, every accountable (sane and pubescent) Muslim (man and woman) is obliged to perform the prayers on time. Missing prayers due to oversleeping is a valid excuse only if one exerted all means to wake up and perform them on time and nonetheless slept through them. However, one is sinful if he/she misses a prayer due to failing to utilize all available means to wake up and perform the prayer on time. And Allaah Knows best.

During the month of Ramadhan and after breaking her fast at sunset, a woman intended to perform ablution for Maghrib prayer but detected the commencement of menses in the form of a brown secretion which preceded blood flow. It seemed to her to have begun flowing a short while earlier. Should she make up for the fasting of that day, as she was not fully certain of whether or not it flowed from her before or after sunset? Perhaps it flowed before the Maghrib Athaan (call to prayer) while she was unaware.

Answer:

The brown fluid she experienced known as the 'brownish discharge' is considered menses only if it flowed from her at the time of her usual menstruation. In case it is considered as menses and she was unsure as to whether it flowed from her before or after sunset, then her fast is valid because menstruation is considered to exist only at the time when she first became aware of it, for the general rule is attributing an incident (menses in our case) to the most recent time (after sunset in our case) and not earlier than that.

Allaah Knows best.

Last Ramadhan, I was menstruating, and on the last day of my menstruation, I had my Sahoor (pre-dawn meal) and had the intention of fasting. No blood discharge occurred during the day and I completed my fasting until sunset. However, I did not perform Ghusl except at the time of the Maghrib prayer. What is the Sharee'ah ruling on this? Is my fasting that day valid?

Answer

If your menstruation ended before the crack of dawn, then your fasting that day would be valid. Delaying Ghusl after being pure from menstruation does not invalidate fasting. Nevertheless, it was incumbent upon you to perform Ghusl immediately after seeing the sign of purity in order to perform the obligatory prayers at their due time.

You are required to make up for the Maghrib and 'Ishaa' prayers of that day if your menstruation had stopped before dawn and there was enough time to perform Ghusl and perform these two prayers. You are also required to make up for the other prayers of that day: the Fajr, Thuhr and 'Asr prayers.

You are also required to return back to Allaah and repent from that sin, which was to deliberately delay prayers after their due time.

If your menstruation stopped after the crack of dawn, fasting that day would be invalid and you would be required to make up for it.

And Allaah Knows best.

Rulings Related to Eid

It was narrated on the authority of Anas, may Allaah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, arrived at Madeenah and found its people celebrating two days. The Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, asked: “What are these two days?” They replied, “These are two days that we used to celebrate in the pre-Islamic era.” The Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, said: “Allaah has given you instead two days better than them: Eed Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adh’haa.” [Abu Daawood, An-Nasaa’i, Ahmad, and Abu Ya’la] [Al-Haakim: Saheeh (it meets the conditions stipulated by Muslim)] [Ibn Hajar: Saheeh] [Al-Albaani: Saheeh]

Abu ‘Ubayd, the freed slave of Ibn Azhar, said, “I witnessed the Eid with ‘Umar ibn Al-Khattaab, may Allaah be pleased with him, and he said, ‘These are two days which the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, forbade us from fasting: the day when you end your fast (of Ramadhaan) and the other day when you eat of your sacrifices.’” [Al-Bukhaari and Muslim]

It was narrated on the authority of Abu Sa‘eed, may Allaah be pleased with him, that he said, “The Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, forbade us from fasting the day of ending the fast [i.e. Eid Al-Fitr] and the day of slaughtering [i.e. Eid Al-Adh’haa].” [Al-Bukhaari and Muslim]

It was narrated on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbaas, may Allaah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, went out on the day of [Eid] Al-Fitr and performed two Rak’ahs (units of prayer) with no prayer before or after them. [Al-Bukhaari and Muslim]

It was narrated on the authority of Umm ‘Atiyyah, may Allaah be pleased with her, that she said, “The Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, ordered us to bring out the adolescent girls, menstruating women and the virgins on Eid Al-Fitr and Al-Adh’haa, but (stated that) the menstruating women should keep away from the prayer place and witness the goodness and the Muslims’ gathering and supplications.” [Al-Bukhaari and Muslim]

Benefits and rulings:

First: Allaah The Almighty blessed the Muslims with Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adh’haa that made them in no need of any of the festivals of the pre-Islamic era.

Second: The two Sharee’ah-approved Eid’s are distinct from the festivals of the disbelievers with all their various ideologies and beliefs in many ways, such as:

1- Their times are established by the visual sighting of the moon, not by astronomical calculations. Unlike the disbelievers’ festivals; which are established by astronomical calculations.

2- The two Eid’s are connected with great acts of worship and rituals, such as fasting, Zakaat-ul-Fitr, (post Ramadhaan obligatory charity) Hajj and Udh’hiyah (sacrificial animals).

3- The rituals of the two Eid’s are acts of worship which bring the Muslim closer to Allaah The Almighty, such as the Takbeer (saying ‘Allaahu Akbar’ (Allaah is the greatest), the Eid Prayer and its Khutbah (sermon). This is contrary to the disbelievers’ festivals; which combines various rituals of disbelief and misguidance and includes activities that are based on desires and misconceptions.

4- Righteousness, kindness and mutual support appear in the Eid’s by the payment of Zakaat-ul-Fitr and the giving away the meat of Hady and Udh’hiyah (sacrificial animals). None of the two Eid’s has any connection with the other false beliefs, such as Christmas Day, the stars, memorials, or sanctification of human beings, ethnicities and nationalisms. All rituals of the two Eid’s are offered with full sincerity to Allaah The Almighty.

The Muslim has to thank Allaah The Almighty for this immense favor by adhering to His commands and avoiding His prohibitions even on the days of Eid and other happy occasions.

Third: Neglecting religious obligations is a sign of being ungrateful for the blessing of Eid as is women’s non-observance of their Islamic dress, intermixing with men, forms of extravagance in clothing, food and celebrations, and prevalence of musical instruments and singing.

Fourth: It is an act of Sunnah that the Muslim takes a bath before the Eid Prayer and wears the best of his clothes. This was the practice of the righteous predecessors.

Fifth: It is an act of Sunnah that the Muslim eats some dates in the morning before he goes to the place of the Eid Prayer. The Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, did so. He should also hasten to have his breakfast in the morning of Eid in compliance with the order of Allaah The Almighty.

Sixth: It is an act of Sunnah that women and children go out to attend the Eid Prayer and witness the Muslims’ supplications. However, the menstruating women should avoid the place of prayer, although they can listen to the Khutbah and supplications.

Seventh: It is an act of Sunnah that the Muslim goes to the place of the Eid Prayer on foot and takes one road for going and another road for returning, as the Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, was authentically reported to have done this.

Eighth: It is preferable for the Muslim to wait in the prayer place to listen to the Khutbah and say amen to the supplications. The Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, said regarding the menstruating women: “To witness goodness and the Muslims gatherings and supplications.”

Ninth: There is no voluntary prayer before or after the Eid Prayer. However, if the Muslim entered the prayer place or the Masjid, he is required to perform Tahiyat-ul-Masjid (two Rak’ahs for greeting the mosque) even if it is at a time in which prayer is prohibited. That is because Tahiyat-ul-Masjid is one of the prayers that could be performed at the prohibited times.

Tenth: It is recommended for the Muslim to busy himself with Takbeer till the Imaam comes for prayer, because Takbeer is the recommended act of worship at that time. Nonetheless, the Muslim may recite the Quran or perform voluntary prayers on condition that it is not a prohibited time. However, saying Takbeer is preferable.

Eleventh: If people did not recognize the day of Eid except after the sun had become in the middle of the sky, they should perform the Eid Prayer on the next day. If the Muslim joined the Imaam in Tashah’hud (the final, seated part of the prayer), he should sit with him and complete two Rak’ahs after him, each starting with Takbeer. Twelfth: If the Muslim misses the Eid Prayer, he should not make up for it. This is the preponderant opinion because there is no evidence on making up for it if the Muslim misses it.

Thirteenth: Showing happiness in Eid is permissible as long as it does not go beyond what is lawful, or involve prohibitions or neglecting obligations. The Muslim should spend generously on his family and children on the day of Eid because happiness is one of the rituals of Eid which in turn is one of the rituals of Islam.

Fourteenth: Muslims should gather for having food together on Eid because this conduct highlights the ritual of Eid, creates harmony and brings hearts together on this great day.

Fifteenth: There is no harm in exchanging congratulations on Eid. It was reported that when the righteous predecessors, may Allaah have mercy upon them, met on the day of Eid, they would congratulate one another, saying, “May Allaah accept it from you and us.” Congratulatory formulas may differ according to people’s traditions, countries and eras so long as they do not involve prohibited words or imitation of the disbelievers. It is not permissible to congratulate with the words that the disbelievers exclusively use in their prohibited festivals. ❖

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A LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

In my name, and my family name at Middle East Fashion, I would like to offer my sincere congratulations to my Dear friend Dr. Kablawi, for another great accomplishment in establishing this rich magazine to our Muslim community in South Florida, which adds another bright light of knowledge, and to enrich us and feed our souls with the best Islamic teaching and education. At the same time, I would like to call on all brothers and sisters to extend the hands of good to support this Islamic publication with every way possible, in order for it to continue giving, growing and reaching every house with the name of Allah, then the support of the good hearts, minds, and hands.

May Allah accept all your actions and efforts in serving our community, "AMEEN".

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Advice to pregnant and breastfeeding mothers

...continue from page 8

and these calories must come from food sources that are rich in vitamins and minerals, such as iron and calcium. We also advise her to drink a large glass of fruit juice immediately after breaking her fast. She should stay away from meals that are difficult to digest, like deep fried foods, as this may cause indigestion. Moreover, she must avoid overeating because this may cause difficulty in breathing. Any pregnant woman who suffers from complications during pregnancy, like high blood pressure, diabetes, kidney infections or heart problems must refrain from fasting because her health situation does not permit her to fast, as these complications risk the health of the fetus.

If a pregnant woman fasts, then she must take a good share of rest during the daytime.

If a pregnant woman fasts, then we advise her to eat a light meal between Iftaar (the meal at sunset) and Suhoor (the predawn meal). A pregnant woman must consult her doctor before she fasts to decide whether or not she is physically able to fast. This is so because in the first months of pregnancy she must eat balanced meals which the fetus needs in order to grow normally, otherwise, she may endanger its health as well as hers.

A pregnant woman who intends to fast - and whose fasting will coincide with the last months of pregnancy - must be careful as this period is more critical than the first few months, unless her pregnancy has been normal throughout the first period. If a pregnant woman needs to exert more effort than usual to care for her children or take care of her house, for example, and this exhausts her and makes her thirsty and hungry, then it would be better for her not to fast. Otherwise, if these things do not cause any abnormal physical stress, then she can fast. ✨

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Al Ghurabaa is a monthly magazine committed to bringing awareness of the pure religion of Islam.

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