

Ramadan Recommendations

By Imraan Husain (Imam of Gold Coast Masjid)

When our spirits are ascendant, and our carnal lusts retreat, we will be able to engage in the type of fast described by one of our righteous forebears when he advised:

Fast your entire lifetime. Make death your 'Eid! Life itself is a fast for the righteous. Their fast is from all forbidden lusts. When death comes to them their fast has ended. At that time they find the new moon of 'Eid.

We encourage all believers to try to adhere to all of the Sunnats of Ramadan. We all should attempt to take the pre-dawn meal (Sahur), no matter how small, and hasten to break the fast, once sunset has been confirmed. The purpose of the month of Ramadan is to grow in obedience to the Real Lawgiver.

"O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those who preceded you; that perhaps you will be mindful of God". Al-Qur'an 2:183.

We encourage everyone to be especially generous during this blessed month. Our beloved Prophet (peace be upon him), was normally exceedingly generous. In Ramadan, he was even more benevolent.

Ibn 'Abbas, May Allah be pleased with him and his father, relates: *"The Prophet (peace be upon him), was the most generous of people. He was even more generous in Ramadan when Gabriel would meet him and review the Qur'an with him. Gabriel would come to him every night of Ramadan to review the Qur'an. During these times, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), was more generous than the freely blowing wind."*Al-Bukhari and Muslim

We encourage everyone to read through the entire Arabic text of the respected Qur'an at least once during this auspicious month, even though one may not understand its meaning. One must also endeavour to read through the English translation. Ramadan is, among other things, a celebration of the Qur'an. Our great Imams, Abu Hanifa, Ahmad, Malik al-Shafi'i, and others, May Allah have Mercy on them all, would cease teaching Hadith and Jurisprudence during Ramadan and devote themselves exclusively to the recitation of the Qur'an.

Allah SWT says, concerning His Majestic Book: *"The month of Ramadan is the month in which the Qur'an was revealed as guidance for mankind, as clear proofs of guidance, and the criterion of distinguishing right from wrong". Al-Qur'an 2:185.*

We encourage everyone to refrain from all of the sins of the tongue during Ramadan. In his seminal work, "Quickening the Religious Sciences" Imam al-Ghazali mentions them as the following: Speaking in matters that do not concern one; excessive speech; speaking about sinful matters; disputation and contestation; argumentation; excessively embellished speech; lewd, insulting, or crude speech; invoking the Curse of God on someone; singing indecent songs, or relating immoral poetry; excessive joking; sarcasm and ridicule; revealing secrets;

false promises; lying and false oaths; backbiting and slander; instigating tense relations between people; being two-faced; praising someone who is either undeserving, or unable to remain humble when praised; speaking about involved subjects and ideas one lacks the necessary knowledge or eloquence to adequately convey; ordinary folk speaking in subjects that are the domain of Ulama (Scholars of religion).

May Almighty Allah spare us from these ruinations both during and after Ramadan.

The Prophet (peace be upon him), said: *“Whoever fails to leave off ruinous speech, and acting on it [during Ramadan], God does not need him to leave off eating and drinking.”* Al-Bukhari

We encourage everyone to avoid all arguments, disputes, and unnecessary worldly entanglements during this blessed month. This is a time for deep devotion and dedication to Allah.

We encourage everyone to work to restore any severed relations or kinship ties they may be experiencing. This is a time when the gentle breezes of Divine facilitation are blowing. Any good we endeavour during this blessed month will come to bear its proper fruits, Insha Allah.

We encourage everyone to eat simply during this month. We can cut down on eating, especially during Iftaar. We should show our solidarity with our suffering brothers and sisters in other parts of the globe, and make our fasting a reality.

If one is in the habit of watching television, or listening to commercial music, one should also try to avoid, or at least cut down during the month of Ramadan. They are things that divert us from the remembrance of Allah in any case. During this special month when every letter we recite from the Majestic Qur’an is tremendously rewarded, we should busy ourselves with recitation, and drop frivolous pastimes as much as we can.

Those in the habit of hosting extravagant dinners and spending hours cooking during Ramadan should try to avoid doing so, as it is a time when everyone should be increasing acts of worship. Usually, the womenfolk are disadvantaged in this regard. While it is certainly virtuous to provide the wherewithal for the believers to break their fast, dates, water, and simple, easily prepared dishes suffice. The exception goes for those preparing Iftar food for the community as this is also a virtuous act.

Everyone should endeavour to pray the Taraweeh prayers. This is a practice that should not be left without an excuse. The Prophet (peace be upon him), mentioned, *“Whosoever stands for prayer during the nights of Ramadan with firm belief and hoping for reward, will have his/her prior sins expiated.”* Al-Bukhari and Muslim

The prayer is the symbol of our devotional life. Ramadan is a great time to rediscover the power of prayer, and to renew our commitment to our Lord through prayer.

These are some of the things we wish to share with you hoping that it will be of benefit to us all. Please take this message in the spirit with which we have conveyed it, as sincere advice. We wish you all a very successful Ramadan.