

Perhaps This Will Be Our Last Ramadan

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Abstract: This article presents Shahrullah al-Muazzam Ramadan as a divinely structured season of purification, moral restraint, and renewed covenant with Allah. It begins with practical preparations that align the home with worship: cleaning the Salaat area; washing and perfuming (non-alcoholic) Salaat clothing and the Sajjadah; reserving even a small, consistent space for Salaat; and keeping Qur'an and a Majmua of Adiy'at there with sincere repentance so that the place bears witness to one's Ibadah on the Day of Qiyamah. It recommends a Ramadan savings box-filled daily with whatever one can spare-for dignified charity before Eid al-Fitr, alongside sharing ift'ar with under-privileged families. It further urges Hifdh of a chosen surah with understanding, and abundant Istighfar and Taubah for sins that deprive one of Ni'mah. The article then cautions that Ramadan's objective is eroded by Munkar and time-wasting distractions: festival-style ift'ar dinners, the Khuraf'at of television and social media, purposeless market outings after ift'ar, and leisure pursuits that displace worship. Such practices weaken Taqwa, convert charity into self-promotion, and undermine the month's lesson of patience and compassion for the under-privileged. Charity, it argues, should be offered with dignity, as one would wish to receive it. It also emphasises reciting Qur'an with reflection, not repetition, and making mutual Dua for family and community—requesting that loved ones remember one another, cultivating sincerity and steadfastness. Viewing Ramadan as “provision for a long journey” to the Aakhirah, the article contrasts three attitudes: the devoted, who guard the tongue, fill the nights with Qur'an and Dua, and seek protection from Jahannam and entry into Jannah; the reluctant, whose fasting is limited to physical abstinence and whose nights dissolve into chatter and entertainment; and the indifferent, who remain unmoved and occupied with worldly routine, despite prophetic warnings about letting Ramadan pass without Maghfirah. Finally, Ramadan is framed as a training school meant to produce durable character after Eid al-Fitr. The article argues that post-Ramadan relapse into indecency and forbidden amusements negates the month's gains and contributes to communal humiliation. Authentic Islam is depicted as obedience and qualities—not faces, customs, or borrowed ideologies—calling believers to preserve Ramadan's spirit of salaam throughout the year.

Keywords: Ramadan; Taqwa; Sawm; Salaat; Taubah; Istighfar; Qur'an with understanding; Dua; Munkar; Ikhlas; Charity (Khairat); Aakhirah; Eid al-Fitr.

1. A Few Possible Ramadan activities:

1. Clean your home, especially the place you offer Salaat.
2. Wash and perfume (non-alcoholic) your Şalaat clothes and Sajjadah (Salaat rug).
3. Reserve one particular space in your home for Şalaat, even though it might be small.
4. Store your Şalaat clothes, Salaat mat, Qur'an, Majmua of Adiy'at (singular: Dua) in this place, and repent before Allah so that this place will bear Shahadah of your Ibadah on the day of Qayamah.
5. Have a labelled "Ramadan Savings Box" and every day put whatever amount in it you can with the intention of spending it on clothing and feeding orphans and the needy prior to the day of Eid al-Fitr.
6. A noble act that can be done during Shahrullah al-Muazzam (Ramadan) is sharing ift'ar with an under-privileged family every day.
7. If there is any particular Surah from Qur'an that you frequently recite, then promise Allah for the Hifdh of that particular Surah in this Mubarak month with the firm Niyyah of understanding it.
8. Doing Istaghf'ar and Taubah on sins which deprives one from different Naimah like children, Haj, Ziyarah of "Al Atab'at al-Aaliyy'at" (Shrines of Ahl al-Bayt), Nikah, health, Rizq and many other blessings of Allah. This month is one of the best times for acceptance of Taubah.
9. Include your nearest and dearest in your daily Dua, and also ask them to remember you in their Dua. In Sha Allah you will feel the benefit of this act.
10. Recite Qur'an and try to understand the meanings of its words as much as you can. Reading the Qur'an without understanding is akin to reading like a parrot which makes no sense. This Qur'an has been gifted to us to read and understand and then practice accordingly. Otherwise it doesn't make sense.

2. Avoid Munkar

The month of Ramadan is similar to a divine spring when blessings from Allah instill a new spirit in the believers who eagerly await its advent. Ramadan is the time to practice the true concept of Taqwa (fear of Allah). It is the month of purification and salvation, but there are some who even in this month are largely involved in activities which are condemned by the Shariah, such as:

- i). Food festivals in the name of ift'ar dinners
- ii). Khuraf'at of TV, Whatsapp or Facebook
- iii). Window shopping in markets just for fun after ift'ar
- iv). Playing and pleasure seeking activities instead of Ibadah.

The above mentioned acts of Munkar are causes of destruction and destroy piety. Many people spend money in the name of charity in Ramadan on public platforms for self-glorification which destroys its religious significance. Hadith Literature provides guidance that charity should be offered in the same manner as you would've liked receiving from others had you been in that

position i.e. in an honorable way. Moreover, Ramadan is meant to impart lessons of tolerance and patience so we can act on it throughout the year with sympathy for the under privileged.

3. Ramadan, a period of collection for the long journey:

People approach Ramadan in different ways. Its perception differs from people to people. Some view Ramadan as a period of expressing their undying love for Allah. For them, Ramadan is a valuable, precious, and rare occasion. They spend all their time doing good, convinced that the reward of each act is multiplied. For them, patience, sympathy, and generosity beautify the character. They guard their tongues and remain preoccupied in recitation of the Qur'an and Dua, seeking Taubah, requesting protection from Jahannam and pleading for Jannah. However, there are others who regard Ramadan as a painstaking task. It is a painful practice and a torturous month for them. They reluctantly keep Sawm and offer Salaat. Their concept of Siy'am is limited to physical abstinence from food, drink, and intimacy with their spouse. They spend their time chatting, watching TV, and wasting their nights in markets and restaurants. They are not inclined towards Khair'at, nor are they careful of their Ibadah. Their goal in Ramadan is to prepare for Eid. The following Hadith suitably describes their spiritless actions:

"Many are the ones who keep Sawm attaining nothing except hunger, and many perform Salaat by night attaining nothing except the discomfort of staying awake."

Yet a third group is hardly ever moved by Ramadan. They don't believe in Ibadah and remain busy in their worldly activities. They are not concerned with religion, and have neither the will nor time to change their daily routines, as per injunctions of the Shariah. The following Hadith should serve as a harsh warning to them:

"Jibra'el (as) appeared before me and said: 'Woe to him who found the blessed month of Ramadan and let it pass by without gaining forgiveness.'" "Upon that I said: Aameen".

4. A blessed month of training:

Ramadan is a school, which after completion of a month's course, gives result to each believer. Ramadan is a sacred training school where a believer learns how to recharge their spiritual batteries to gain provision for Akhirah. If one cannot attain advantage from this month then when will he? This is the month for renewing our Aqidah, strengthening our willpower, and seeking Taubah; a unique opportunity to fortify the bond of love with our Creator through Ibadah Zahirah and Aam'al Batinah. Salaat and Zakaat are inter-connected and linked to the category of Ibadah Zahirah. Instructions have been given that Faraid should be performed openly so that others might be inclined towards it. Khair'at is under the head of Aam'al Batinah which has direct link to Allah alone.

It is a noted fact that after each Ramadan many indulge in immoral, shameless and indecent activities during Eid holidays which Shariah condemns. People revert to entertainment in the form of music, forbidden films etc. and spend on gambling, drinking, and profligacy, and consider it part of celebrating Eid. Involvement of Muslims in such nefarious activities is the major cause of humiliation and fall of the Muslim power worldwide. Ramadan ends with Eid al Fitr but the deeds and actions displayed during Ramadan should serve as a facilitator which should be followed throughout the year.

Divine help shall not reach the corrupt by nature. Rahmah is not conferred upon those who only take the name of Allah and disregard true actions. Islam is a religion of qualities, not faces or personalities. It has no concern with any community or locality but it is universal and for all times. Instead of improving our character, we are happy with our own brand of Islam. The teachings of Islam have become so contaminated with foreign customs and un-Islamic ideologies that a Muslim convert has to make an effort to search for the Qur'an and authentic Sunnah of Islam or else he/she would remain confused and ignorant. Some time back a senior diplomat who converted to Islam a few months ago contacted me and requested that I suggest an authentic book of Muslim Customs and Traditions. I advised him that it is better to perform the Faraid of Islam and not to occupy himself with customs since they are not part of the religion.

Know that Ramadan is an appearance of blessings and can be a turning point in an individual's life; an opportunity of transformation towards an improved mode of life, and a change from the disgrace of sins to the beauty of submission. We should not lose the blessings of Ramadan by falling back on our previous careless ways. Take hold of this blessing which gives a new shape to life, and become worthy of being called a Muslim.

5. Dua for each Muslim:

May Allah grant us inspiration, strength and spirit to make this Ramadan a starting point towards a new phase of our life. May He grant us the ability to abide by Shariah. May Allah allow us this opportunity to utilize our time in a positive and constructive manner for His pleasure. Perhaps it may be our last Ramadan, our last opportunity to benefit from the special blessings and forgiveness that accompanies this month, for who knows whether we may be there to receive the blessings next year or not. On the following Dua of Al Imam Ali ibn al-Husain (as), better known as "Zayn al-Abideen," in a form of farewell Salaam I conclude this discussion: "Salaam be upon you (O month of Ramadan), a month which embodies the spirit of Salaam. Salaam be upon you whose companionship is not disliked, you whose friendly mixing is not blamed! Salaam be upon you, just as you have entered upon us with blessings."

Conclusion

Ramadan is not merely a date on the calendar; it is a divine intervention into routine-an annual opportunity to reorder priorities, refine character, and renew the believer's relationship with Allah through both Ibadah Zahirah and A'mal Batinah. The practical steps outlined-cleaning the Salaat space, organising the tools of Ibadah, designating a corner for Salaat, and keeping Qur'an and Adiy'at within immediate reach-are not aesthetic recommendations; they are discipline mechanisms. They reduce friction, create spiritual continuity, and quietly train the Nafs to return, again and again, to remembrance. When a believer builds a consistent place for Ibadah, that place becomes a witness of constancy; when one repents sincerely within it, the heart learns that the road back to Allah is always open. Equally, the suggested acts of social responsibility-the Ramadan savings box, the feeding of the needy, and the sharing of ift'ar with under-privileged families-clarify a central lesson: Ramadan is meant to expand Rahmah beyond the self. Hunger is not an end in itself; it is a teacher. It teaches restraint, empathy, and a sober

appreciation of those for whom hunger is not voluntary. Yet this moral education is easily sabotaged when the month is converted into a social season: extravagant ift'ar functions, hollow "charity" performed for applause, and nights surrendered to distractions. Such practices may coexist with Siyam, but they hollow out its spirit. The believer is therefore required to guard not only the stomach, but also the time, the gaze, and the intention.

The article's threefold depiction of people in Ramadan is, in truth, a diagnostic tool. The devoted understand that every Sawm is meant to produce Taqwa; their Tilawat of Qur'an is joined to reflection; their Dua is joined to humility; their silence is joined to restraint of the tongue. The reluctant perform the form while neglecting the essence, risking the very outcome warned about in Hadith literature: Ibadah that yields fatigue without transformation. The indifferent treat Ramadan as irrelevant, and in doing so, expose themselves to the gravest loss-allowing a month of Maghfirah to pass without seeking it. This classification is not for condemnation of others; it is an invitation for self-audit. A believer's task is to move-by effort, Taubah, and sincere Niyyah-from reluctance to devotion, and from devotion to permanence. The most decisive measure of Ramadan, however, appears after the moon of Eid. If Ramadan ends and the believer returns immediately to shamelessness, indecency, forbidden amusement, wasteful spending, or other forms of sins, then the month was approached as an interval, not as Tarbiyyah. Eid al-Fitr is a celebration, but it is not a license to undo the discipline Ramadan cultivated. The purpose of the "Madrasah" is that its Talim remain: truthfulness, modesty, restraint, patience, and generosity. The believer who carries these virtues beyond Ramadan has understood the month's objective; the one who abandons them has merely endured a ritual.

Finally, the article's insistence on authentic Islam-defined by Taat, qualities, and faithfulness to Qur'an and Sunnah, rather than personalities or customs-offers a crucial corrective. Customs may be culturally meaningful, but they cannot replace obligations; they cannot be used as a substitute for Fara'id, nor can they be allowed to confuse new adherents and the next generation. A community that rebuilds itself on clear Ibadah, sincere Taubah, dignified charity, and understanding of Qur'an is a community that protects its honour. Thus, Ramadan should be received as a turning point: a passage from heedlessness to vigilance, from sin to submission, from habit to purpose. The concluding Dua is therefore not ornamental; it is the proper end of serious counsel-asking Allah for strength, Istiqamah, and acceptance, and bidding farewell to Ramadan with Salaam, in the hope that its spirit remains alive in the months that follow.

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