

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

# Submitters Perspective

Monthly Bulletin of International  
Community of Submitters

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## What do we take from Ramadan?

The month of Ramadan is near at hand. It is due to the immense mercy of God that we are able to observe fasting no matter the climatic conditions. Every year we get this month stuffed with huge amounts of God's bounties. But what do we take from it? What do we take from Ramadan?

Each year as we begin Ramadan, we plan to take maximum benefit out of it by way of becoming more reverent to God. We hope to use the month to grow our souls and increase our level of submission. We try to put in extra efforts in each and every deed to make it more righteous. We read more Quran, be more God-conscious, do more righteous works. God willing, during the month, we are able to achieve those goals, so that at the end of the month, we have raised the bar of reverence for ourselves. But what happens as we get into the next month and the month after that? Do we maintain that new level of piety and faith, or do we get complacent, allow ourselves to regress and let our devoted God-awareness fade away?

If we can allocate time to read the Quran for an extra 20-30 minutes every day during Ramadan, why is it so

hard to allocate that same time a month later? If we can find time to commemorate God more frequently during Ramadan, then why can't we continue that routine around the year? If we can become more charitable during Ramadan, then why shouldn't we carry on that practice every day after Ramadan?

Ramadan is not just a month to be set aside for worshiping God more seriously. We are expected to strictly follow all these practices seriously around the year. It is how we live our lives every single day for as long as we stay in this world. God has given us this opportunity to focus on ways to grow our souls and get back to the Paradise. Fasting lends us an opportunity to leave our comfort zone and put in more physical and mental effort to become more conscious of God and His commandments. It is indeed a golden chance to become God centric and try to get closer to God.

*[73:8] You shall commemorate the name of your Lord, to come ever closer and closer to Him.*

God revealed Quran in this month, which is one of the biggest blessings

we have received from Almighty God. This scripture is our true guide to make it to Paradise. God gave us this book and wisdom to understand it out of His infinite mercy.

*[2:185] Ramadan is the month during which the Quran was revealed, providing guidance for the people, clear teachings, and the statute book. Those of you who witness this month shall fast therein. Those who are ill or traveling may substitute the same number of other days. GOD wishes for you convenience, not hardship, that you may fulfill your obligations, and to glorify GOD for guiding you, and to express your appreciation.*

Even though we did not strongly support the absolute authority of God, He has not left us to struggle without help or direction in this world. He made everything easy for us to fulfil the obligations. And to guide us and teach us, He gave us Quran for which we need to be more appreciative and thankful to God.

We all know that Ramadan comes full of bounties. God's benevolence overflows to its peak. Therefore, observing Ramadan brings many blessings from

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God and opportunities to be appreciative. God asks us to fast, for it has many physical as well as spiritual benefits. Fasting also remits our sins. It is best for us “if we only knew”. He designed us and He knows what is best for our bodies and for our souls.

*[2:183] O you who believe, fasting is decreed for you, as it was decreed for those before you, that you may attain salvation.*

Ramadan is a quiet and peaceful month. In this month the atmosphere becomes very favourable for meditation, for reflecting on our deeds, for becoming more reverent, for Quran study and for identifying personal weaknesses. We know that God does not necessarily give us what we desire but He grants us that which is necessary for us. Therefore, we must imbibe the habit of appreciating the blessings of God.

*[14:34] And He gives you all kinds of things that you implore Him for. If you count GOD's blessings, you can never encompass them. Indeed, the human being is transgressing, unappreciative.*

God brought us into this world knowing nothing. He gave us the sense of hearing, the eyesight and the brains. And these wonderful bodies with their complex systems. Their functions are unimaginable. But we take it all for granted. We forget the important commandment about eating which is, “Eat Moderately”. Fasting in Ramadan teaches us to adhere to this valuable command of God.

*[7:31] O children of Adam, you shall be clean and dress nicely when you go to the masjid. And eat and drink moderately; Surely, He does not love the gluttons.*

*[16:114] Therefore, you shall eat from God's provisions everything that is lawful and good, and be appreciative of God's blessings if you do worship Him alone.*

Ramadan is a practice that gives us an opportunity to remember God and

to remember those less fortunate people. When we feel hungry or thirsty on these long hot days, we can immediately remember that the reason we're not eating or drinking is because God told us to fast. It acknowledges that we are doing this just to please God alone. So, we remember God most of the time in Ramadan. This is a habit we need to continue around the year.

We know that a large percentage of the world's population faces hunger and thirst every single day. Too many children go to bed hungry. Too many people have to walk miles to fetch drinking water that we wouldn't consider safe to drink. We are so blessed that we turn on a tap and water flows out of it. I remember some forty years ago when I used to go to my native place for a summer vacation, there was an acute shortage of drinking water. I have seen ladies from my family fetching drinking water from a distance of 1 km away from our house. We have to be more appreciative for the tap water we receive in our homes. We are also blessed that near our house we simply walk into a market and are surrounded by various choices of cereals, snacks, fruits, vegetables, etc. This is a blessing from God. We get an opportunity to thank God every time when our stomach rumbles during Ramadan. All through the year we drink water just for quenching our thirst. But in Ramadan we appreciate the real taste of it when we break the fast after sunset. Therefore, God asks us to be thankful for all the good things He has provided to us. Ramadan makes us more appreciative. This habit we must continue throughout the year; this is one more take away from Ramadan.

*[14:7] Your Lord has decreed: "The more you thank Me, the more I give you." But if you turn unappreciative, then my retribution is severe.*

*[2:172] "O you who believe, eat from the good things we provided for you, and be thankful to GOD, if you do worship Him alone."*

We know our body is accompanied with a jinn, who tries to instigate our

soul. We need to say to ourselves, “I'm not going to let my body rule my soul. I'm going to tame this unruly body and put my soul in charge”. This capability of controlling our inner desires comes strongly in the month of Ramadan. And we need to carry on this quality until next Ramadan, knowing only God is in full control.

*[4:126] To GOD belongs everything in the heavens and the earth. GOD is in full control of all things.*

Fasting in Ramadan is very intimidating to non-Muslims. They wonder how we can cope with it in severe hot summers. For us it is nothing less than a miracle that we do it with ease. God has designed our body so well that it adopts the new eating habits and timings within a couple of days. This is indeed a great blessing of God. He knows well the limits of our tolerance.

*[2:286] GOD never burdens a soul beyond its means: to its credit is what it earns, and against it is what it commits...*

Praise God, it is due to immense mercy and grace of God that we fast with ease to please God. We need to carry on this feeling of trust in God after Ramadan. He not only supports and takes care of us in Ramadan but also supports us always.

*[3:160] If GOD supports you, none can defeat you. And if He abandons you, who else can support you? In GOD the believers shall trust.*

So, this Ramadan, let's focus more on spiritual growth, being God conscious, doing more charity and good deeds, responding with good words, and good thoughts. Let's try to perfect ourselves. I know we can't be perfect (only God is perfect), but let's try to be good. Try to be more reverent to God and really grow our souls.

*[3:102] O you who believe, you shall observe GOD as He should be observed, and do not die except as Submitters.*

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*[2:152] You shall remember Me, that I may remember you, and be thankful to Me; do not be unappreciative.*

Then, when the final days of Ramadan come, let us strive to keep hold of the ways in which we strengthened our submission in this month. Hang onto the gains we made and the growth we achieved. We entered Ramadan at one level. We used the month to glorify, praise and commemorate God and thus gradually raised ourselves up. As we exit the month, God willing, we are standing at a higher level. We now can choose to move forward maintaining this new level of submission, or we can allow ourselves to be pulled backwards to the previous level. Let's choose to consolidate our gains and keep moving forward.

*[15:98-99] You shall sing the praises of your Lord, and be with the prostrators. And worship your Lord, in order to attain certainty.*

*[33:41-42] O you who believe, you shall remember GOD frequently. You shall glorify Him day and night.*

Abdul G

\* \* \* \* \*

## Focus on growing our souls this Ramadan

My brothers and sisters, every year we prepare for Ramadan. A whole month to fast from dawn to sunset. Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. During the fast, we don't eat or drink, nor have sex during the day time hours. We refrain from bad habits and bad thoughts. And this is the point I would like to make. This Ramadan—work on: no bad habits, no bad thoughts.

*[17:38] All bad behavior is condemned by your Lord.*

Brothers and sisters, I know we all do our best at these things. But I'm asking all of

us this Ramadan, let's focus more on getting rid of bad habits and bad thoughts. We are all pretty much aware of the physical aspect of what it does for our body, such as cleansing of body, giving organs a rest, rebuilding of cells and tissue and so on. God does excuse us from fasting if one physically can't do it (2:184).

So this Ramadan, let's focus more on spiritual growth, like being God conscious as a goal throughout the month, reading through the whole Quran maybe more than once this month, more charity and good deeds, responding with good words, breaking bad habits like smoking, losing your temper, yelling at spouses, children and friends. Tone it down. Just anything that's not healthy to our soul, let's give it up. Find good thoughts. Let's focus on perfect, one hundred percent (I know we can't be perfect, but let's try) good behavior. More reverence of God, more meditation. Let's really reach for the heaven, past the stars and moon. Our souls can grow by leaps and bounds, so let's really focus on growing our souls. Let's try to be perfect this Ramadan. The physical body will submit. This is a gift of remembrance.

God-consciousness is our goal this Ramadan.

*[3:102] O you who believe, you shall observe GOD as He should be observed, and do not die except as Submitters.*

*[2:152] You shall remember Me, that I may remember you, and be thankful to Me; do not be unappreciative.*

Sura 97 Destiny

*In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful [97:1-5] We revealed it in the Night of Destiny. How awesome is the Night of Destiny! The Night of Destiny is better than a thousand months. The angels and the Spirit descend therein, by their Lord's leave, to carry out every command. Peaceful it is until the advent of the dawn.*

Carolyn

[from Submitters Perspective, June 2015]

## Count your blessings and be thankful to God

*Reflections and Information on Ramadan and Fasting*

The religious practices instituted by God, such as fasting in the lunar month of Ramadan, are not ordeals but rather great opportunities for us to develop our souls. They are blessings from God. If we can practice our religious duties the way we are supposed to, we get many benefits. Furthermore, these practices allow us to be more conscious of God in our lives.

Many people concentrate on the things they lack and get upset about what they do not have compared to others. If we want to be happier, we should count our blessings and think about all the things God has already given us. We should remember and reflect on the following verse of the Quran: *[16:18] If you count GOD's blessings, you cannot possibly encompass them. GOD is Forgiver, Most Merciful.*

*[14:34] And He gives you all kinds of things that you implore Him for. If you count GOD's blessings, you can never encompass them. Indeed, the human being is transgressing, unappreciative.*

We should try our best to count our blessings, even though we cannot encompass them all. We have so much to be thankful for if we just think about them and remind ourselves! How about reflecting on our bodies and the infinite variety of things God created for us? We should remember God's blessings in the good times as well as when we go through the times of tests. We should not be unappreciative and heedless.

A wise person once said : "We don't need more to be thankful for; we just need to be more thankful." How true! Furthermore, if we appreciate God's blessings and thank God for them, He rewards us with more. This is God's

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promise in 14:7 that *“The more you thank Me, the more I give you...”*

### For Our Own Good

Some people entertain the idea that God should not need our prayers and appreciation of His blessings. The way they think is as if God has ego and needs to satisfy Himself. Nothing can be further from the truth! They are the ones who have big egos. God makes it clear that He does not need any of our worship or any of us, but He’s pleased for us if we make the right choice and decide to be appreciative (39:7). Therefore, if we are appreciative, it is for our own good (31:12).

### Ramadan is Special

*Ramadan* (also spelled as *Ramadhan*, *Ramzan*, so on) is a special month for Muslims. It is the lunar month during which the Quran was revealed, provided guidance for the people, clear teachings and the statute book (2:185). We also understand that God revealed the Quran into Prophet Muhammad’s heart on the 27<sup>th</sup> night of Ramadan, in the Night of Power or Destiny (17:1, 44:3, 97:1-5). It was then gradually released into his memory in accordance with God’s will and written down by him with the help of Gabriel over a period of 23 years.

### No Hardship in Religion

Not only has God given us this great blessing of fasting in Ramadan, He is

also compassionate in accommodating every kind of situation. For example: [2:185] ... *Those who are ill or traveling may substitute the same number of other days. GOD wishes for you convenience, not hardship, that you may fulfill your obligations, and to glorify GOD for guiding you, and to express your appreciation.*

God knows us better than we know ourselves. He is the One who created us. Even though He gives us alternatives to perform our responsibility when we are unable to fast, He emphasizes that if we can fast, it is best for us (2:184). We know that *“God never burdens any soul beyond its means...”* (2:286), and that *“The remembrance of God is the most important objective.”* (29:45).

### Physical Benefits of Fasting

Besides nourishing our soul, the real self, fasting also has numerous, scientifically proven benefits for our physical health and the mental well-being of our body. The time, length and nature of the fast all contribute to its overall positive effect. Fasting gives our digestive system a rest and improves our physical health. In his book, *“Fasting and Eating for Health,”* Joel Fuhrman, M.D. notes that *“The fast does not merely detoxify; it also breaks down superfluous tissue—fat, abnormal cells, atheromatous plaque, and tumors—and releases diseased tissues and their cellular products into the circulation for elimination.*

Toxic or unwanted materials circulate in our bloodstream and lymphatic tissues, and are deposited in and released from our fat stores and other tissues. An important element of fasting detoxification is mobilizing the toxins from their storage areas.”

### Lunar Calendar and Ramadan

A lunar calendar is based on phases of the moon. The *Hijri* calendar consists of 12 months (9:36). A lunar month is approximately 29.5 days (the time it takes for the moon to orbit the earth). Because a lunar month is, on the average, one day shorter than a solar month, a lunar year is 10-12 days shorter than a solar year. Therefore, the Month of Ramadan comes 10-12 days earlier each year. This way we get to fast when the days are very warm and long in summer as well as when they are cool and short in winter. This beautiful design by God is also a test for us to see if we will fast regardless of the length or temperature of the days of Ramadan.

Happy, peaceful and blessed Ramadan to all, God willing.

*Abdullah*

*[adapted from Submitters Perspective, September 2009]*

### Ramadan 2023

Fasting starts **March 22**, God willing, for USA and Canada. For more details (including dates for your location), visit: <https://masjiduntucson.org/Ramadan/>