



باسمہ تعالیٰ

Ramadhāan – Month of Great Opportunities

Grand Event:

The magnanimity of any event can be gauged from the preparation made for it and by the number of individuals involved in it. An ordinary event has an ordinary preparation and a grand event has grand preparations. We are shortly to witness a grand occasion for which preparations have commenced not a week ago, not a month ago, but an entire year in advance. Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) said that jannah is decorated and beautified for the whole year in preparation for Ramadhāan.¹ Such a grand occasion that when it arrives, even the angels of Allah Ta‘ala get involved in it, and they seek forgiveness for the fasting person.² This grand moment is ... *The Month of Ramadhāan*.

The greatness and significance of this month can be adequately understood from the following ahaadeeth:

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال : قال رسول الله ﷺ : أَتَاكُمْ رَمَضَانُ ، شَهْرٌ مُبَارَكٌ ، فَرَضَ اللَّهُ ﷻ عَلَيْكُمْ صِيَامَهُ ، تُفْتَحُ فِيهِ أَبْوَابُ السَّمَاءِ ، وَتُعَلَّقُ فِيهِ أَبْوَابُ الْجَنَّةِ ، وَتُعَلَّقُ فِيهِ مَرَدَّةُ الشَّيَاطِينِ ، لِلَّهِ فِيهِ لَيْلَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ ، مَنْ حُرِمَ خَيْرَهَا فَقَدْ حُرِمَ . (سنن النسائي)
(٢٩٩/١)

Abu Hurairah (radhiyallahu ‘anhu) narrates that Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) said, “Ramadhāan has come to you. It is a blessed month. Allah Ta‘ala has made fasting in it compulsory upon you. In this month the gates of the heavens are opened, the gates of Jahannam are closed and the rebellious shayateen are chained up. Allah Ta‘ala has a night therein which is better than a thousand months. Whoever is deprived of its goodness is indeed deprived.”

عن عبادة بن الصامت رضي الله عنه أن رسول الله ﷺ قال يوما وحضر رمضان : « أَتَاكُمْ رَمَضَانُ ، شَهْرٌ بَرَكَتُهُ ، يُعْتَبِيكُمْ اللَّهُ فِيهِ فَيَنْزِلُ الرَّحْمَةَ وَيُخَطُّ الْخَطَايَا وَيَسْتَجِيبُ فِيهِ الدُّعَاءَ ، يَنْظُرُ اللَّهُ إِلَى تَنَافُسِكُمْ وَيُبَاهِي بِكُمْ مَلَائِكَتَهُ ، فَأَرَوْا اللَّهَ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ خَيْرًا ، فَإِنَّ الشَّقِيَّ مَنْ حُرِمَ فِيهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ ﷻ . » . رواه الطبراني ... (« مجمع الزوائد » رقم : ٤٨٤٥)

‘Ubaadah bin Saamit (radhiyallahu ‘anhu) reports that Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) said one day when Ramadhāan had drawn near, “The month of Ramadhāan, the month of blessings has come to you, wherein Allah Ta‘ala turns towards you and sends down to you His special Mercy, forgives your sins, accepts du‘aas, looks at your competition in good and boasts to the angels about you. So, show Allah Ta‘ala your righteousness. For verily, the most unfortunate person is he who is deprived of Allah Ta‘ala’s Mercy in this month.”

Being blessed with such a great month, and also being warned of not making the best of this month, let us see what great opportunities we have in this month.

Great Opportunities:

The month of Ramadhāan is a month of great opportunities. The opportunities that a believer looks for are the opportunities of the Aakhirah that make him closer to Allah Ta‘ala. Hereunder are some great opportunities which will bring us great returns.

1. Tahajjud/Nafil Salaah: The virtues of Tahajjud are many. Although we desire to wake up for Tahajjud throughout the year, many of us don’t get the opportunity. Ramadhāan is the ideal time, since we are waking up for sehri. Together with the physical nourishment, we should take some spiritual nourishment as well.

¹ عن ابن عباس رضي الله عنه أنه سمع رسول الله ﷺ يقول : « إِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ لَتُنَجَّدُ وَتَزَيَّنُ مِنَ الْحَوْلِ إِلَى الْحَوْلِ لِدُخُولِ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ ... » رواه الشيخ ابن حبان في « كتاب الثواب » والبيهقي واللفظ له ، وليس في إسناده من أجمع على ضعفه . (« الترغيب والترهيب » ٩٩/٢)

² عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال : قال رسول الله ﷺ : « ... وَتَسْتَعْفِرُ لَهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ حَتَّى يُفْطَرُوا ... » . (« مسند أحمد » ٢٩٥/١٣)
عن أبي سعيد الخدري رضي الله عنه قال : قال رسول الله ﷺ : « ... وَاسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ سَبْعُونَ أَلْفَ مَلَكٍ مِنْ صَلَاةِ الْعَدَاةِ إِلَى أَنْ يُؤَارِيَ بِالْحِجَابِ ... » . (« شعب الإيمان » رقم : ٣٣٦٢)

Apart from Tahajjud we should try to perform other nafl salaahs as well. The reward of a nafl in this month is equal to that of a fardh.³

However, if a person has outstanding qadha salaah then this should be read in place of the nafl salaahs.

2. Du'aa: Ramadhaan is a month of crying to Allah Ta'ala and presenting our needs before him, since du'aas are readily accepted in this month.

عن أبي سعيد رضي الله عنه قال : قال رسول الله ﷺ : « إِنَّ لِلَّهِ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى عُنُقَاءَ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ وَلَيْلَةٍ - يَعْنِي فِي رَمَضَانَ - وَإِنَّ لِكُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ وَلَيْلَةٍ دَعْوَةً مُسْتَجَابَةً » رواه البزار . (« مجمع الزوائد » رقم : ٤٨٥٥)

Abu Sa'eed Khudri (radhiyallahu 'anhu) relates that Rasulallah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) said: "During each day and night of Ramadhaan, Allah Ta'ala sets free a great number of souls from the fire of Jahannam and for every Muslim, during each day and night, there is at least one du'aa which is certainly accepted."

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال : قال رسول الله ﷺ : « ثَلَاثَةٌ لَا تُرَدُّ دَعْوَتُهُمْ : الصَّائِمُ حَتَّى يُفْطِرَ ... » . (« سنن الترمذي » ٢ / ٢٠٠)

Abu Hurairah (radhiyallahu 'anhu) reports that Rasulallah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) said, "There are three people whose du'aas are not rejected. The fasting person until he breaks his fast ..."

We also learn from the ahaadeeth that there are certain special du'aas which we ought to be making:

1. Mercy of Allah Ta'ala.
2. Forgiveness of Allah Ta'ala.
3. Emancipation from the fire of Jahannam.
4. Entry into Jannah.⁴

Furthermore, there are certain special occasions for du'aa as well, viz. sehri, iftaar, last ten nights, and especially the odd nights from the last ten.

3. Tilaawat: Ramadhaan is the month of the Quraan Majeed. The Quraan Majeed and all the other divine books were revealed in the month of Ramadhaan.⁵

Rasulallah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) would revise the Quraan Majeed with Jibreel ('alaihi salaam) in the month of Ramadhaan.⁶

The Salafus Saaliheen (Pious Predecessors) had a great attachment with the Quraan Majeed and completed it many times during the month of Ramadhaan.

1. Aswad (rahimahullah) would complete the recitation of the entire Quraan Majeed once every two nights in Ramadhaan.
2. Qataadah (rahimahullah) would complete the Quraan Majeed once a week out of Ramadhaan, every 3 nights in Ramadhaan and every night during the last ten nights of Ramadhaan.
3. Imaam Abu Haneefah (rahimahullah) and Imaam Shafi'ee (rahimahullah) would complete the entire Quraan Majeed 60 times during the month of Ramadhaan.
4. Imaam Zuhri (rahimahullah) would say in the beginning of Ramadhaan "It (the month of Ramadhaan) is only (for) reciting the Quraan Majeed and feeding others".

³ قال رسول الله ﷺ : « ... مَنْ تَقَرَّبَ فِيهِ بِحَصَلَةٍ مِنَ الْحَبْرِ ، كَانَ كَمَنْ أَدَّى فَرِيضَةً فِيمَا سِوَاهُ ... » . (« صحيح ابن خزيمة » رقم : ١٨٨٧)

⁴ قال رسول الله ﷺ : « ... وَهُوَ شَهْرٌ أَوْلُهُ رَحْمَةٌ ، وَأَوْسَطُهُ مَغْفِرَةٌ ، وَآخِرُهُ عُنُقٌ مِنَ النَّارِ ... » . (« صحيح ابن خزيمة » رقم : ١٨٨٧)

عن كعب بن عجرة رضي الله عنه قال : قال رسول الله ﷺ : « احضروا المنبر » فحضرنا فلما ارتقى درجة قال : « آمين » ... « قال : إن جبريل عليه السلام عرض لي فقال : بعد من أدرك رمضان فلم يغفر له ، فقلت : آمين ... » . (« شعب الإيمان » رقم : ١٤٧١)

قال رسول الله ﷺ : « ... وأما اللتان لا غنى بكم عنهما فتسألون الله الجنة وتعودون به من النار ... » . (« صحيح ابن خزيمة » رقم : ١٨٨٧)

⁶ شَهْرٌ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ

عن وائلة بن الأسقع رضي الله عنه أن رسول الله ﷺ قال : « أنزلت صحف إبراهيم عليه السلام في أول ليلة من رمضان ، وأنزلت التوراة لست مضين من رمضان ، والإنجيل لثلاث عشرة خلت من رمضان ، وأنزل الفرقان لأربع وعشرين خلت من رمضان . (« مسند أحمد » ١٩١ / ٢٨) . وفي رواية جابر رضي الله عنه : ... وأنزل الزبور على داود في إحدى عشرة ليلة خلت من رمضان ... رواه أبو يعلى ، وفيه سفيان بن وكيع وهو ضعيف . (« مجمع الزوائد » ١ / ٤٦٥)

⁷ عن ابن عباس رضي الله عنه قال : ... وكان جبريل يلقاه في كل ليلة من رمضان فيدارسه القرآن ... (« صحيح البخاري » ١ / ٤٥٧)

5. As soon as Ramadhaan began, Imaam Maalik (rahimahullah) would stop his lessons of hadeeth and sitting in the gatherings of the 'Ulama and would begin reciting from the Quraan Majeed.
6. When Ramadhaan began, Sufyaan Thauri (rahimahullah) would leave out all other nafl 'ibaadah and would focus towards reciting the Quraan Majeed.⁷

There are many incidents of our Akaabir as well:

1. Hazrat Moulana Khaleel Ahmad Saharanpuri (rahimahullah) would recite the Quraan Majeed from the time of ishraaq salaah till 11am.
2. Hazrat Shaikhul Hadeeth Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya (rahimahullah) completed an entire Quraan daily in the month of Ramadhaan for 42 years (Aap Beeti, pg. 75).
There is also a lengthy incident regarding his attachment with the Quraan Majeed in the month of Ramadhaan mentioned in Aap Beeti (pg. 76).
3. Hazrat Shaikh (rahimahullah) says: "One Ramadhaan, I encouraged some of my associates to recite 61 Quraans. (Hazratjee) Moulana In'aamul Hasan (rahimahullah) made 61 khatams. One friend made 56, and a few others made 60." (Suhbate ba Auliya pg. 204)
4. Hazrat Shaikh (rahimahullah) writes in "Virtues of Ramadhaan": "In our home, I am greatly happy at seeing how the women compete with each other, each one trying to recite more Quraan than the others, so that together with their housework, each one reads half to two thirds of the Quraan daily."

If we look at these incidents, we see that the practice of these Akaabir was so close to that of the Salafus Saaliheen (Pious Predecessors). It is for this very reason that we quote these Akaabir and follow them. Their lives were very close to the sunnah of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) and the way of the Salafus Saaliheen (Pious Predecessors).

4. Zikr: The hadeeth teaches us that we should make two particular forms of zikr in Ramadhaan, which are very pleasing to Allah Ta'ala, viz. The recitation of first kalimah and istighfaar.

قال رسول الله ﷺ : « ... فَأَمَّا الْخُصَلَتَانِ اللَّتَانِ تُرْضَوْنَ بِهِنَّ رَبُّكُمْ ، فَشَهَادَةُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ، وَتَسْتَعْفِرُونَهُ ... » . (« صحيح ابن خزيمة »

رقم : ١٨٨٧)

"Those actions which shall be to please your Rabb are that you should bear witness that there is no deity to worship except Allah (i.e. recite the Kalimah Tayyibah) and make istighfaar (beg Allah Ta'ala's forgiveness)."

5. Taraaweeh: This is one of the great 'ibaadaat of this month.

عن سلمان رضي الله عنه قال : خطبنا رسول الله ﷺ في آخر يوم من شعبان فقال : « ... جَعَلَ اللَّهُ صِيَامَهُ فَرِيضَةً وَقِيَامَهُ لَيْلَةً تَطَوُّعًا ... » .

(« صحيح ابن خزيمة » رقم : ١٨٨٧)

Salmaan (radhiyallahu 'anhu) reports, "On the last day of Sha'baan Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) addressed us and said, "... It is a month in which Allah Ta'ala has made fasting compulsory by day and has made sunnah the Taraaweeh Salaah by night."

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه أن رسول الله ﷺ قال : « مَنْ قَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ » . (« صحيح البخاري » ١٠/١)
Abu Hurairah (radhiyallahu 'anhu) reports that Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) said, "Whoever stands in salaah during Ramadhaan with firm faith and with hope of gaining reward, his past (minor) sins are forgiven"

Saa-ib bin Yazeed (rahimahullah) said that they used to perform 20 rakaats of Taraaweeh Salaah during the month of Ramadhaan in the time of 'Umar (radhiyallahu 'anhu) and they used to recite the long surahs in the

^٧ كان الأسود يقرأ في كل ليلتين في رمضان ... وكان فتادة يحتم في كل سبع دائما وفي رمضان في كل ثلاث وفي العشر الأواخر كل ليلة ، وكان للشافعي في رمضان ستون ختمة يقرأها في غير الصلاة ، وعن أبي حنيفة نحوه ، ... وكان الزهري إذا دخل رمضان قال : فإنما هو تلاوة القرآن وإطعام الطعام ، قال ابن عبد الحكم : كان مالك إذا دخل رمضان يفر من قراءة الحديث ومجالسة أهل العلم وأقبل على تلاوة القرآن من المصحف ، قال عبد الرزاق : كان سفيان الثوري إذا دخل رمضان ترك جميع العبادة وأقبل على قراءة القرآن . (« لطائف المعارف » ص ٣١٨)

salaah. During the era of ‘Uthmaan (radhiyallahu ‘anhu) they used to lean on their sticks due to the lengthy rakaats of Taraaweeh Salaah.⁸

The virtue of Taraaweeh Salaah can be understood from the following:

Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) has mentioned that when a person is in sajdah, he is closest to Allah Ta’ala.⁹

Hazrat Doctor ‘Abdul Hay ‘Aarifi (rahimahullah) used to say that in the Taraaweeh Salaah, Allah Ta’ala is giving us 40 more opportunities (2 sajdahs x 20 rakaats) to be the closest to him (Islaahi Khutubaat).

Therefore, the Taraaweeh Salaah should not be taken as a burden, rather one should complete it with great enthusiasm. Unfortunately, some people reject these 40 opportunities and suffice with 16 (8 rakaats Taraaweeh). How unfortunate! When the entire Ummah from the time of the Sahaabah (radhiyallahu ‘anhum) till this day are of the view that Taraaweeh Salaah is not less than 20 rakaats, how can anyone claim to know more!

6. Sympathy and Generosity:

These are great qualities at all times. However, in this month the reward for this is multiplied greatly. Let us open our hearts in feeding the poor, and lessen the workload of our Muslim domestic workers and servants.

قال رسول الله ﷺ : « ... وَشَهْرُ الْمُؤَسَّاسِ ، وَشَهْرٌ يَزْدَادُ فِيهِ رِزْقُ الْمُؤْمِنِ ، مَنْ فَطَرَ فِيهِ صَائِمًا كَانَ مَغْفِرَةً لِدُنُوبِهِ وَعِثْقًا رَقَبَتِهِ مِنَ النَّارِ ، وَكَانَ لَهُ مِثْلُ أَجْرِهِ مِنْ غَيْرِ أَنْ يَنْتَقِصَ مِنْ أَجْرِهِ شَيْءٌ » ، قَالُوا : لَيْسَ كُلُّنَا نَجِدُ مَا يُفْطِرُ الصَّائِمَ ؟ فَقَالَ : « يُعْطِي اللَّهُ هَذَا الثَّوَابَ مَنْ فَطَرَ صَائِمًا عَلَى نَمْرَةٍ ، أَوْ شَرْبَةِ مَاءٍ ، أَوْ مَدَقَّةِ لَبَنٍ ... مَنْ خَفَّفَ عَنْ مَمْلُوكِهِ غَفَرَ اللَّهُ لَهُ ، وَأَعْتَقَهُ مِنَ النَّارِ » . (« صحيح ابن خزيمة » رقم : ١٨٨٧)

“... It (Ramadhaan) is the month of sympathy. It is the month wherein a believer’s sustenance is increased. Whoever feeds a fasting person in order to break his fast, for him (the feeder) there shall be forgiveness of sins and emancipation from the fire of Jahannam, and he will receive the same reward as the one who he fed without that person’s rewards being decreased in the least.” The Sahaabah (radhiyallahu ‘anhu) said, “Not all of us possesses the means whereby we can feed a fasting person to break his fast.” Rasulallah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) replied, “Allah Ta’ala grants the same reward to the one who gives a fasting person to break his fast a mere date, or a drink of water, or a sip of milk ... Whosoever lessens the burden of his servants in this month, Allah Ta’ala will forgive him and free him from the fire of Jahannam.”

‘Abdullah bin ‘Abbaas (radhiyallahu ‘anhuma) reported that Rasulallah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) was the most generous of the men and he was the most generous during the month of Ramadhaan when Jibreel (‘alaih salaam) visited him. Jibreel (‘alaih salaam) would visit him every night and recite the Quraan Majeed to him. During this period, the generosity of Rasulallah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) would be even more than the rain bearing wind. In one narration it is mentioned that Rasulallah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) wouldn’t be asked for anything except that he gave it.¹⁰

When ‘Abdullah bin ‘Umar (radhiyallahu ‘anhuma) would fast, he would only break his fast with the destitute.¹¹

7. Path of Allah Ta’ala and I’tikaaf: The month of Ramadhaan is an ideal time to spend in the path of Allah Ta’ala. Two of the most important victories in Islam took place in this month, i.e. the Battle of Badr and the Conquest of Makkah Mukarramah.¹²

Another great opportunity that we have in this month is that of i’tikaaf. It was a continuous sunnah of Rasulallah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) and holds great virtue. This is such an act that if done correctly, one will

⁸ عن السائب بن يزيد رضي الله عنه قال : كانوا يقومون على عهد عمر بن الخطاب رضي الله عنه في شهر رمضان بعشرين ركعة ، قال : وكانوا يقرءون بالمئين ، وكانوا يتوكلون على عصيهم في عهد عثمان بن عفان رضي الله عنه من شدة القيام . (« سنن البيهقي » ٤٩٦/٢)

⁹ عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه أن رسول الله ﷺ قال : « أقرب ما يكون العبد من ربه وهو ساجد ... » . (« صحيح مسلم » رقم : ١٠٨٣)

¹⁰ عن ابن عباس رضي الله عنهما قال : كان رسول الله ﷺ أجود الناس ، وكان أجود ما يكون في رمضان حين يلقاه جبريل ، وكان جبريل يلقاه في كل ليلة من رمضان فيدارسه القرآن ، فلرسول الله ﷺ حين يلقاه جبريل أجود بالخير من الريح المرسلة . (« صحيح البخاري » ٤٥٧/١) وفي « مسند أحمد » (٤٨١/٣) : لا يُسأل عن شيء إلا أعطاه .

¹¹ كان ابن عمر رضي الله عنهما يصوم ولا يفطر إلا مع المساكين . (« لطائف المعارف » ص ٣١٤)

¹² إن عمر بن الخطاب رضي الله عنه قال : غزونا مع رسول الله ﷺ في رمضان غزوتين ، يوم بدر والفتح ... (« سنن الترمذي » ١٥٢/١)

Ta'leem and Timetable:

We must commence the ta'leem of Fazaail-e-Ramadhaan by Hazrat Shaikh (rahimahullah) in our homes to prepare us and our families for this great month.

In order to maximise on all these great opportunities, it is important for us to draw up a timetable. We should try to cut down on our working hours and spend as much time possible in the masjid. By reciting about 6 pages of the Quraan Majeed at each salaah time we will comfortably complete one khatam.