

Savouring the Spirit of Ramadhaan



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MUSLIMAH
ROLE MODELS FOR THE MUSLIMAH

*Savouring the Spirit
of
Ramadhaan*

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A humble appeal is made to the readers to offer suggestions, corrections, etc. to improve the quality of this publication in the future. May Allah Ta'ala reward you for this.

The writers, editors and typesetters humbly request your du'aas for them, their parents, families, Asaatizah and Mashaayikh.

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Food for the Soul

Staring into the starlit sky,
sighting the crescent moon.
*Ramadhaan has at last come by,
and not a moment too soon.*

Depending on people's state of heart,
this month has different meaning.
*Some greedily fill the grocery cart,
while others see spiritual healing.*

Samoosas, pies and savouries galore!
Decadence and delight with every bite!
*Isn't Ramadhaan supposed to mean more?
What about the joy of Tahajjud at night?*

Many soothe their ailing souls,
And the pleasure of their Rabb they earn.
*While others fill haleem bowls,
And eat till they suffer heart-burn!*

Seated around the dastarkhaan,
hands raised like a beggar.
*A few turn their eyes to the naan,
while the rest cry to the Giver.*

Taqwa is the ultimate prize,
acquired by those who strive.

*Through the ranks they steadily rise,
as the Quraan brings their hearts alive.*

*Make this Ramadhaan one to cherish,
by attending to your imaan.
Don't allow your soul to perish,
through neglecting your Islam.*

*Braais and fast-food are always around,
we can easily enjoy them later.
Special moments in Ramadhaan simply abound,
there's no month that's greater.*

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Introduction

People are ‘creatures’ of habit. We all tend to have a daily routine revolving around the various responsibilities that weigh on our shoulders. *Making breakfast for the kids... seeing them off to school... preparing lunch... attending to the domestic chores... and the list goes on.* In general, we are all committed to our schedules, and many people have such hectic schedules that they never find any ‘me’ time to ‘redefine’ themselves or even just relax.

Seeing this to be an ideal opportunity, many resorts and spas cater for this exact need – by providing getaways in which people can unwind, recharge and refocus. For those whose ‘me time’ involves losing weight, there are even ‘boot camps’ available. If someone needs some ‘me time’ to kick a dangerous drug-habit, there are a multitude of drug rehabs to be found. In short, all these facilities assist one to ‘cut off’ from their normal environment and routine so that they can focus on something important and precious to them.

However, in the ‘rat race’ of today’s fast-paced lifestyle, people find even less ‘me-and-Allah’ time. Hence, Allah Ta‘ala, in His infinite mercy, provided us with the month of Ramadhaan. From abstaining from food, drink and relations during the day to standing in salaah at night, every aspect of this blessed month is ‘custom designed’ to assist us to enjoy some ‘me-and-Allah’ time

so that we can cut off from our distractions and reconnect with our Creator.

The secret to making the most of this sacred month is for one to enter the month prepared – especially mentally – so that the moment the moon is sighted, we ‘hit the ground running’ (get off to a good start). In this regard, the aspect of having the correct mind-set and focus cannot be stressed and emphasized sufficiently. *When a person’s focus is correct and they have a goal in mind, they not only make the most of the opportunity provided, but even enjoy it and take pleasure in it.* Exercising is exhausting, yet certain people do it day after day and relish the activity and exertion. The reason? ... *They are focused on the end result and know that the effort is worth it.*

In exactly the same way, by cultivating the correct focus, we will not only maximize on the month of Ramadhaan, but will even enjoy every moment of it. Standing in salaah, raising our hands in du‘aa at the time of iftaar, waking up for sehri and tahajjud – all these activities will take on a new meaning and will become beloved to us. *We will discover a newfound pleasure and ‘sweetness’ in connecting with Allah Ta‘ala that will urge us to relish and cherish every second. This is called ‘Savouring the Spirit of Ramadhaan’.*

With the aim of aiding us to cultivate this spirit, various Ramadhaan articles posted on the Uswatul Muslimah website were collected in this book.

We beg Allah Ta‘ala to accept this effort and assist us all to savour the spirit of Ramadhaan, aameen.

The 'Marathon' of Ramadhaan

Imagine a person who arrives at the starting line to run a 5km marathon, wearing the latest running shoes and carrying the most sophisticated water bottle. However, after the starting gun is fired, he does not begin running immediately, as he is still busy on a phone call. *Thereafter, when he eventually takes off from the line, he only makes it 400m before collapsing on the side, already exhausted from the exertion. What will we say regarding such a person?* The best shoes and the best energy drinks will be of no avail if he is not focused and did not train sufficiently. *If he did not develop stamina, he will not manage to run the marathon through to the end.*

Similarly, the month of Ramadhaan is a special month for exerting ourselves in 'ibaadah, with the night of 'Eid being our finish line where we will be awarded our prizes. *However, to make the most of this 'marathon', we will require two things; focus and stamina.*

Being focused means that there should be an absolute minimum amount of distractions to occupy our time and prevent us from engaging in 'ibaadah. From the instant the

moon is sighted, we should not waste a single second as every moment is precious.

We are now just two months away from this blessed month. If we have not already commenced our preparations for Ramadhaan, we should do so immediately. We should try to plan ourselves in such a way that when Ramadhaan commences, then apart from our basic, daily responsibilities (e.g. cooking, seeing to the children and home, etc.) **we do not have any other obligations, but remain free to devote ourselves to Allah's 'ibaadah.** Whether it is the preparation of savouries or even shopping for 'Eid, it should all be concluded during this period, before Ramadhaan, so that as far as possible, all our time is dedicated to Allah Ta'ala in Ramadhaan.

Stamina refers to developing the endurance to remain engaged in 'ibaadah for lengthy periods without one losing focus, concentration and motivation. If a person is not in the habit of reciting abundant Quraan Majeed, then when Ramadhaan arrives, even though he wishes to recite abundantly, he may find it difficult to do so as he becomes tired rapidly, especially while fasting. Similar is the case with performing lengthy rakaats of nafl salaah. **However, if one trains himself through gradually increasing his 'ibaadah from now, he will develop the endurance required.**

What you sow is what you will reap. If our preparations are thorough and outstanding, insha-Allah our progress and the benefit that we receive in Ramadhaan will also be spectacular and outstanding. Hence, Imaam Abu Bakr Warraaq Balkhi

(rahimahullah) said, “The month of Rajab is the month to sow the seeds, while the month of Sha’baan is the month to irrigate them, and it is during the month of Ramadhaan that the crop (which grew through the effort made in the two preceding months) will be harvested.” (*Lataa-iful Ma’aarif* pg. 234)

May Allah Ta’ala assist us all to spend these two months preceding Ramadhaan in a beneficial manner, and may He bless us to progress in the month of Ramadhaan, aameen.



Nani's Coming!

Imagine if you were married overseas with no relatives around you. Moreover, you haven't seen your parents and siblings for years. *Your children don't even know what their Nani's face looks like.* Out of the blue, your mother drops a surprise call that the entire family is coming over to visit for one full month.

Can words ever express the level of excitement at home??? You would be over the moon. You would turn the house upside down cleaning and scrubbing, perhaps even applying a new coat of paint. A special menu would be planned and your pantry would be stocked up. Your house and family would be shipshape and ready for the very special visitors.

Why is all this done? ... Because these guests are very important to you.

As the day draws closer, the anxiety increases and the wait becomes unbearable.

This is exactly the condition of the pious with regards to the month of Ramadhaan. Some of them begin preparing for it six months in advance. When the moon of Rajab would be sighted, Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) would beg Allah Ta'ala to allow him to witness the blessed month of Ramadhaan.

We also need to prepare for this great guest by ‘spring cleaning’ the thick layers of dust that have settled on our hearts through sins and disobedience, and by patching up with those whom we have cut off ties with. Let us draw up a spiritual ‘menu’ of the different acts of worship that we would complete in this month, laying greater emphasis on completing all our past qadhaa salaah.

When the ‘big day’ finally comes, and our guests arrive, we will spend maximum time with them. Perhaps we would stay awake the whole night catching up on the years of stories and ‘panchaat’. We would never ‘dump’ them in the lounge and continue with our daily routine, or leave them at home and go for a stroll in the mall, or a night out with the friends!!! We won’t even dream of allowing our children to go on an excursion, or spend their entire weekend in sport practice and league matches!!! *Never! That’s unimaginable!* Why? Because they mean too much to us. In fact, some might even freeze food in advance to spend more time with them.

If this great guest of Allah Ta’ala, the blessed month of Ramadhaan, means as much to us as well, we won’t allow it to merely pass whilst we continue with our normal lives. Rather we would definitely spend maximum time ‘in its company’ and stay awake during its nights.



I Don't Have my 'Eid Clothes yet!

“The last ten days are already here. I haven't found my 'Eid clothes as yet! I walked from one side of the mall to the other... shop to shop till I dropped... You name it and I saw it. Forget an outfit, I didn't even find a decent cloak. I got my last chance... I might get lucky at the 'Eid Fair. As for these two 'scamps', I just don't know what I am going to do for their second outfit. Don't talk about their 'Eid pyjamas. I can't understand how I am going to manage to finish my khatam, and still do all the baking. 'Eid is at my mother-in-law's place this year.”

Does this ring a bell? We need not waste our Ramadhaan in this way. Let us try to complete our errands before Ramadhaan and keep ourselves as free as possible. In this way we can maximise on the 'great bargains' that have been promised in this 'mega sale'.



Mega Sale

Some time back, a famous chain store opened a new branch nearby with ridiculous opening specials. Perhaps you won't believe if I tell you that there were people waiting at the gates since 3 am. By the time the store opened its gates, the traffic had backed up a few kilometres.

Now, what was it that got these people out of their cosy beds at this early part of the morning? What was it that deprived them of their dear sleep and prompted them to wait for such a long time in their cars, even suppressing the urge to relieve themselves? *It was nothing but the desire to save a few hundreds or thousands of rands.*

We are about to witness a “Mega Sale”, not just an opening special which lasts for a few days and saves us a few coppers. Rather it is a month long sale that can secure us the everlasting bliss of the Hereafter.

This sale also requires us to wake up from our cosy beds and get onto the musalla crying to our Allah Ta'ala in the early hours of the morning. It also requires us to spend hours, not in the shopping queue rather in the recitation of the blessed words of our Allah Ta'ala.

May Allah Ta'ala allow us to strike great bargains in this “Mega Sale,” aameen.

Haleem and Naan... or a Revolutionary Ramadhaan?

People often speak about the ‘one special moment’ that changed everything in their lives. For some, it’s the moment when they were struck by a brainwave that led to a revolutionary invention which rocketed them to fame and fortune. For a professional sportsman, it’s often the moment when they signed onto the team or scored the crucial goal. I am neither a sports star nor a genius inventor. *I am merely an ordinary Muslimah, like most of you out there, and my life did not change in a ‘single magical moment’. Instead, my entire life changed in a single Ramadhaan...*

I remember the period with crystal clarity. I was 18 years old, the countdown for the dreaded final matric exams had commenced and Ramadhaan was around the corner. Although I put up a brave front, I would never admit it, but my world was in turmoil and I was, in general, miserable, confused, stressed out and even a little scared.

I was always considered intelligent and never had to work hard to produce good grades. As I progressed through the years

in school, my above-average marks impressed both my teachers and family. While I was content to be the homely type and never entertained visions of varsity after school, they began to plot the course that my life would follow, taking it for granted that I would be complacent and would meekly ‘do as I was told’.

I remember Aunty Khairoon declare, with her mehndi-dyed finger wagging under my nose, *“You got brains, bachu (darling)! You a bright girl! Can’t waste that potential frying puri patha in the kitchen!”*

If Aunty Khairoon wasn’t pestering me, then her twin sister, Aunty Zaiboon, refused to get off my case. *“What you’ll do if your hubby divorces you, huh? You saw what happened to Nabeelah? Such a hari poiri (good girl) she was, and she had brains too, just like you! But she married young and now she’s divorced! You want the same future?”*

Auntie Zaiboon was so emotional when speaking that her hands would wave about, causing her designer bangles to clash and almost drown out the sound of her voice. She wore so much of gold that she was a walking advert for a jewellery store. A popular theory was that the sunglasses she wore were to protect her eyes from the glare of the few golden kilos she attached to herself daily.

The only exception to the ‘career craziness’ was my mother. Quiet, humble, kind, always pleasant and smiling, never outspoken – these are some of the words that aptly describe my mother. She was the silent yet supportive pillar that I could

always count on, and it was my mother alone who didn't pressurize me to pursue a career.

The pressure, as you can imagine, was immense, and it was only a matter of time before I buckled and gave in. Eventually, I ceased to resist and decided that it was simply easier to go with the flow. Now that I had a goal to achieve, I could no longer remain complacent with my grades, as decent as they were. I had to put in extra hours, with tuition and late night study groups, to ensure that I emerged ahead of the competition in a school of high achievers.

From that point on, although the world labelled me 'progressive', the reality was that I was heading downhill at an alarmingly rapid rate. *When I looked into the mirror, I no longer saw the shy, modest girl who had taken after her burqa-clad hijaab-hidden mother. No! I was taking the school by storm. Wherever I went, I caused heads to turn – the boys' in admiration and the girls' in envy. I traded in weekly ta'leem for weekend parties, surmah before sleeping for sleepless nights in mascara, five-times salaah for five social media platforms, daily Quraan recitation for studying the latest fashion guides, and worst of all – my priceless Islamic Identity for the cheap role of a so-called 'liberated woman'.*

I have to admit that I was not an entirely innocent brainwash-victim as I did not completely resist. I remember thinking to myself, under the onslaught of Auntie Zaiboon's campaign, "If they are so convinced that I will fail as a wife and end up a divorcee, then why are they so convinced that I will make a successful

professional? If I can't be a good housewife to my husband, what makes them think that I can be a professional, attending to the demands of thousands?"

All along, I knew that this was not who my Creator wanted me to be. *But ... you know how it is, don't you?* It's easier to go with the flow than go against the grain. Anyway, the idea of becoming an independent woman was now becoming an attractive one, and the voice of my feeble, crippled conscience was finally silenced.

With my new attitude and total makeover came a newfound popularity that made me the centre of attention. In time to come, I not only got involved with boys but actually went through them faster than a flu-patient goes through tissues. *I surprised even myself by partying like a rock star, and through it all, my naïve family failed to see beyond the 'innocent' angel who was apparently paving the path to her career success.* Because I attended so many study groups, it was easy to slip off to a party or meet a boy under the pretence of studying. *This life of sin, however, began to take its toll.*

The first time I did something REALLY bad, my conscience protested and complained, but the 'thrill' of the sin soon suppressed that irritating voice in the back of my mind. *After a while though, even the excitement of sin began to fade, leaving me hollow and miserable. No matter what I did, I felt ... empty, depleted and lost. I then became a 'sin junky'.*

You see, a sin junky is exactly like a drug junky. When a person takes a drug for the first time, he experiences a 'high', an absolutely 'sublime' sensation. However, the next time he pops a

pill, snorts a line or shoots up, it just doesn't match the first time. Eventually, he ups the dose or upgrades the drug, chasing his first high, not realizing that he is destroying his life, bit by bit.

A sin junky is exactly the same. You feel so miserable and empty, that you commit more sin, and worse sin, to try and experience the thrill again. *Take it from me, I'd know – sin is sneaky and deceptive. It makes you feel amazing and fantastic – but only for the moment.* Once the fun is over, the darkness re-envelopes and suffocates you until it forces you back for another fix.

I was by no means a fool. I was intelligent enough to know that I needed help. But help would only benefit me if I was willing to receive it.

One night, shortly before Ramadhaan, my eyes opened at 3am. Feeling thirsty, I crept out of my room and headed to the kitchen. As I passed the salaah room, I stopped dead in my tracks, hearing the sound of weeping. *What was going on? Was someone hurt?* My eyes strained through the darkness until I made out the form of my mother prostrate on her musalla in a remote corner of the room. I then heard her supplicate, *“O my Allah! Please! I beg You! It's not too late! Inspire her to change her life! The pious daughter I once had is dead! You revive her, O Allah! I can't complain or cry to anyone but You! I know the damage she is doing to herself and I need her to wake up and change! Help her to come back to You, O Allah!”*

I was shaken to my very core. This short du'aa, tinged with my mother's tears, had struck a chord within me, forcing me to confront what I had become. My thirst forgotten, I silently snuck up the stairs and slipped into bed but could not sleep. My mother's du'aa continued to ring in my mind, *too loud to ignore*. Finally, after much tossing and turning, I drifted off into a troubled sleep.

The next day, I arrived home after class and entered amidst the madness of the 'savoury crusade'. For the past week, Aunts Zaiboon and Khairoon had come, every day, to prepare their Ramadhaan savouries. The pressure of Ramadhaan's imminent arrival stoked their fiery tempers, and their raised voices drove my father to seek the sanctuary of the golf course. I wasn't in the mood to face my wehlan (rolling-pin)-wielding aunties either, so I took advantage of the ready-made distraction (*they were debating the pros and cons of upright vs chest freezers*) and silently escaped to my room.

I made wudhu and performed Zuhr Salaah, amazed at the long-lost peace I enjoyed in these few, simple actions. As I made the final salaam and stood, I spotted my mother in my doorway, carrying a plate of freshly baked pies. As our eyes met, my gaze dropped to the floor in guilt as I remembered the du'aa she'd made for me. My mother entered with a smile, placed the plate on my bed and gestured for me to join her. As I sat, I raised my gaze to her face and saw only love and compassion, giving me the courage to do what I should've done a long, long time ago.

“Mum...” I began, hesitantly. “Jee?” she replied. “I ... I ...” This single pronoun was all that I could choke out as my emotions overcame me and I began to sob, tears streaming down my cheeks. My mother immediately shifted closer and hugged me, patting my back and making those senseless yet comforting shushing sounds that are hardwired into every mother and child’s brain. I continued sobbing into her shoulder as I struggled to get my feelings under control. Finally, I blew my nose, wiped my face, sat up and squared my shoulders. I was ready.

I confided in my mother and managed to describe the serious mess that I was in without being specific on the details. After hearing me out, she said, “*Bachu (darling), we all mess up in life. But admitting it and making an effort to clean the mess takes courage. I’m proud of you for taking this step.*”

Not wasting a moment, she immediately phoned her uncle, a senior ‘aalim who was accepted and respected by not only the community but also other ‘Ulama. I was on the verge of seeking guidance through the limitless supply of YouTube clips when my mother shook her head at me in disapproval. “*If you are recovering from a major heart attack, will you consult a cardiologist or YouTube?* Our souls are even more important than our hearts as they take us beyond this world to the next. *We can’t entrust our Deen to random YouTube scholars, as entertaining and popular as they may be. We have to go to the specialist.*”

Moulana was very helpful and gave us practical and simple advice. As the upcoming Ramadhaan coincided with the school

holidays, he stressed the importance of my following a strict programme in this month to get my life back on track. And so, without further ado, I launched myself headlong into the Ramadhaan that healed, cleansed and saved me.

To undo the damage that I had wreaked on myself over the past year and a half, I needed to completely cut off from everything that could tempt me to evil. *I switched off my phone and disconnected the Wi-Fi. No WhatsApp, no Facebook, no Instagram, no e-mail, no nothing.* “If it’s urgent, they can always contact me on the house phone,” I reasoned. I chalked out a programme to recite five paras of the Quraan Majeed daily and asked my mother to ‘be on my case’ in case I became lazy. We made ta’leem for 30min daily, as a family, and would all sit around the dastarkhaan at the time of iftaar, engaged in our individual du’aas.

As far as possible, I avoided leaving home, and would sit with my mother and listen, over the receiver, to the programmes delivered by her uncle in the masjid. *With every day that passed, I found myself feeling more and more at peace as I perceived the darkness being dispelled from my soul.* I found an indescribable sweetness in reciting the Quraan Majeed and wondered, in amazement, as to how a person could ever turn to drugs in the presence of the Quraan Majeed.

Most of all, I engaged in abundant, excessive du’aa. I would sit in isolation and pour my heart out to Allah Ta’ala, admitting my wrongs and sins. I would speak to Him and say, “O Allah! You gave me so much! We have no shortage of money, beauty or intelligence, yet I

used Your very bounties to trample Your commands and to anger and displease You! O Allah! Only You are so merciful that despite my ingratitude, You still inspired me to repent and are still willing to forgive me. O Allah! I beg You to forgive me, and I beg You to save me from falling into sin again!" When I would wipe my hands over my face at the conclusion of my du'aa, whether it was at the time of Tahajjud or after salaah, I would perceive an exquisite sensation and would feel confident that Allah Ta'ala had accepted my du'aa.

By the end of Ramadhaan, I was a different person. I was a girl who after being on the brink of destruction, had gained salvation, and was thus determined to never stray from the path of righteousness again. I had restored my relationship with Allah Ta'ala and with Him on my side, I feared none – not even Aunts Khairoon and Zaiboon. I made my decision, a decision which I have never for a second regretted – I would not pursue a career.

My life changed in a single Ramadhaan and yours can too. It takes determination and the support of those around you, but it can be done. I know that every tear I shed in taubah (repentance) helped to extinguish the fire of punishment that I had ignited and fuelled with my life of sin. Ramadhaan afforded me the opportunity to emerge from the darkness to the light.

Ramadhaan is not merely a month of haleem and naan, it is the gateway to discovering the You that Allah Ta'ala wants you to be.

May Allah Ta'ala allow you to benefit from Ramadhaan as I did, aameen.



Interior Decor

Interior decor is an art. People spend much time, effort and money on their homes, offices and businesses in order to get that special finish and make it look as impressive and appealing as possible. Great pains are taken to ensure that the furniture 'blends in' with the surroundings, while the carpets are made to match the curtains. Just any ordinary bulb sticking out of the ceiling is unthinkable. A variety of light fittings are positioned in the proper places so that the light may reflect in the best way. The right 'tone' must be captured in the colour co-ordination. Several other trimmings and trappings are added for the final touch.

Allah Ta'ala has also given us a month for interior decoration - a month to decorate our hearts. The month of Ramadhaan is a time to truly make our hearts sparkle and shine and to look truly impressive in the sight of Allah Ta'ala.

The first part of interior decoration is to remove the cobwebs, scrape the rust and do a general thorough clean-up. The clean-up of our hearts requires sincere taubah. We will have to scrape off the rust of sin, remove the filth of jealousy, sweep out the dirt of malice, scrub away the pride and generally wash away all the evil within us with the flowing tears of earnest and sincere repentance.

The preferable procedure of repenting is very simple. Dedicate some time in solitude. Perform a proper wudhu. Thereafter get on to the musalla (prayer mat) and perform two rakaats of nafl salaah with the intention of the salaah of taubah. *Then simply let the tears of repentance flow. If the eyes cannot cry, just let the heart weep. Weep over our utter ingratitude.* Beg Allah Ta'ala's forgiveness by saying, *"O Allah! You granted me a heart to fill with love for You ... but I filled it with the love of the world, with even haraam love ... O Allah forgive me. You gave me hands to raise unto You, to hold the Quraan Majeed and to assist the needy ... but I used it to touch what You forbade, and to indulge in illicit 'chatting' on my phone ... forgive me."* This is just a little example.

Simply weep over every sin perpetrated and wash the heart clean. *However, when washing the heart with the tears of repentance, the detergent that is compulsory to use is "Deep Regret" for having transgressed the laws of Allah Ta'ala.* One must also have a firm determination that one will not return to the sin in future.

After removing the filth, rust and dust, the internal decor must commence. The purpose of fasting is to decorate the heart with taqwa – the fear of Allah Ta'ala and the constant awareness that *"Allah Ta'ala is Watching"*. While fasting, even if one is very hungry and thirsty, one nevertheless refrains from all eating and drinking. Why? Simply because it is the command of Allah Ta'ala ... and *Allah Ta'ala is Watching.*

Likewise, there should no more be any shameless dressing, harbouring ill-feelings, illicit chatting, zina, looking at haraam,

etc., because ... *Allah Ta'ala is Watching*. The heart with taqwa indeed is a billion times more sparkling and impressive in the sight of Allah Ta'ala than the most expensive decor that money can buy!!!

Ramadhaan is also a month to decorate the heart with various other important trimmings and accessories. Ramadhaan is a month of patience and compassion. *Therefore, paint the heart in the soft shades of patience. Tint it with the colour of tolerance and give it an elegant look by draping it with compassion.*

This Ramadhaan let us not waste much time in acquiring glittering garments, dazzling jewellery and shining shoes to decorate ourselves for 'Eid. While cleanliness and neatness are essential on the outside, the greatest effort must be made to decorate the inside – the heart.

May Allah Ta'ala enable us to truly adorn and decorate our hearts, aameen.



Great Opportunities

The month of Ramadhaan is a month of great opportunities. The opportunities that a Believer looks for are the opportunities of the Hereafter that make him closer to Allah Ta'ala.

Hereunder are some great opportunities which will bring us 'great returns'.

Tahajjud and Nafl 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. Ramadhaan is the ideal time, since we are waking up for sehri. Together with the physical nourishment, we should take some spiritual nourishment as well.

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. However, if one has outstanding qadha (missed) salaah then this should be read in place of the nafl salaahs.

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

- a. Mercy of Allah Ta'ala.
- b. Forgiveness of Allah Ta'ala.
- c. Emancipation from the fire of Jahannam.
- d. Entry into Jannah.

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

Recitation of the Quraan Majeed:

Ramadhaan is the month of the Quraan Majeed. The Quraan Majeed and all other divine books were revealed in this month. The pious predecessors completed the Quraan Majeed many times during the month of Ramadhaan. Some of them even made up to two khatams daily.

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.

Taraaweeh:

Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) has mentioned that when a person is in sajdah, he is the closest that he can be to Allah Ta'ala. (Saheeh Muslim #1083)

In the taraaweeh salaah, Allah Ta'ala is giving us 40 more opportunities (2 sajdahs x 20 rakaats) to be the closest to Him. Therefore, the taraweeh salaah should not be taken as a burden. Rather one should complete it with great enthusiasm. We should also ensure that our daughters also perform it.

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 domestics and garden boys.*

Taubah and Refraining from Sins:

Together with doing all the good actions mentioned above, one has to sincerely repent from all vices and totally refrain from committing any sin in this blessed month.

Insha-Allah, by refraining from sin in this month, Allah Ta'ala will give us the ability to completely abandon sin for the rest of our life. On the other hand, if one continues sinning in this month, all the rewards that have been accumulated will be lost.



The Month of the Quraan

The Month of Ramadhaan is synonymous with the recitation of the Quraan Majeed. Apart from it being revealed in this month, Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) would revise the Quraan Majeed with Jibreel (‘alaihi salaam) in the Month of Ramadhaan as well.

This dedication to the Quraan Majeed in the Month of Ramadhaan thereafter became the practice of the Aslaaf (pious predecessors). Hereunder are a few examples of this:

1. Aswad (rahimahullah) would complete the Quraan Majeed once every two days.
2. Imaam Abu Haneefah and Imaam Shaafi’ee (rahimahumallah) would complete the Quraan Majeed more than 60 times in the Month of Ramadhaan.
3. Imaams Zuhri, Maalik and Sufyaan Thauri (rahimahumallah) would stop all other works (even deeni related) and dedicate their time to the recitation of the Quraan Majeed. (Lataaiful Ma’aarif pg. 318)
4. Shaikhul Hadeeth Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya (rahimahullah) – the author of Fazaail e Aa’maal – completed an

entire Quraan daily in the month of Ramadhaan for 42 years. (Aap Beeti, pg. 75)

5. Shaikhul Hadeeth Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya (rahimahullah) says: “One Ramadhaan, I encouraged some of my associates to recite 61 Quraans. (Hazratjee) Moulana In’aamul Hasan (rahimahullah) – the third ameer of the Tableegh Jamaat – made 61 khatams. One friend made 56, and a few others made 60.” (Suhbate ba auliya pg. 204)

6. Shaikhul Hadeeth Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya (rahimahullah) mentioned regarding his daughters that during the month of Ramadhaan, despite them taking care of their many children and seeing to their household duties, they remained awake for long durations at night, to hear the recitation of the Quraan Majeed from different reciters. Together with this, they compete with each other to recite at least fourteen to fifteen paras (juz) of the Quraan Majeed during the day.

Moulana’s (rahimahullah) grandmother used to recite 40 paras (juz) of the Quraan Majeed daily. His great grandmother had the opportunity of hearing the entire Quraan Majeed being recited by her son in one rakaat of salaah. (Akaabir ka Ramadhaan, pg. 72).

Did you know?

If you recite only 6 pages after every salaah, you will be able to, insha-Allah, complete one khatam of the Quraan Majeed in Ramadhaan!

Freezer is not Working

Two weeks before Ramadhaan, you were pleasantly surprised by your ‘hubby’ with a gift that you needed most at that time... *the biggest upright freezer that can comfortably and neatly accommodate all those tupperwares of savouries that you made or ordered with sooo much of difficulty.* You unwrap it with excitement, plug it with anticipation and then fill it till capacity.

The next day, when you went to grudgingly take out some samoosas for an unexpected guest, you were shocked to see that all your savouries had melted and some were even giving off a stench.

Rushing to the phone you dial the customer care line number, “Your product is rubbish ... and all my Ramadhaan savouries are gone off ... I’m taking you’ll to court” you yell.

“But mam, did you follow all the instructions” asks the consultant. “What a silly question to ask... it’s only about switching it on” you scream.

“That’s the problem... did you check if the door was tightly shut?” You think to yourself, *“Oh no! It’s my fault. The door was left slightly open.”*

Just as leaving the door of the freezer open is a cause of it not freezing and results in major problems, *similarly committing*

sins together with the good actions that we carry out in the blessed month of Ramadhaan is a means of us not gaining the desired effect of the various acts of worship.

Let us strive to make this Ramadhaan a sin-free one in order to earn the great rewards and blessings that are contained therein.



Turning Point

Allah Ta'ala mentions in the Quraan Majeed, "Whoever honours the distinctive signs of (the Deen of) Allah Ta'ala, then it is from the piety of the hearts." (Surah Hajj v32)

Respect for the symbols of Deen denotes taqwa in a person's heart. In the past there were those mothers who, when the azaan was called out, would shout out to their children saying: *"Quickly switch off the haraam TV, azaan is going"*. When it was Friday they would say, *"Today is Jumu'ah, no TV"*, and when Ramadhaan arrived, they would announce, *"Listen children, Ramadhaan has come so there will be no TV in this house."* As a result, the Shaitaan box used to be covered and put away.

Outwardly, the mother seemed to have double standards, but in reality it was only a matter of time whereby the mothers respect for azaan, jumu'ah and Ramadhaan brought about a revolution within that home and the colours of Islam embraced that household.

Thus, we should try to abandon all our bad habits in the blessed month of Ramadhaan. *If our old habits come back into our lives after Ramadhaan each year, we should not lose hope but rather continue trying.* Allah Ta'ala in His infinite wisdom will one day make that particular Ramadhaan the turning point of our lives.

“There’s Enough Time”

Ramadhaan is the month to capitalize and gain, as Allah Ta‘ala offers us tremendous ‘bargains’. When the month of Ramadhaan arrives, people initially tend to be ‘charged’ and ‘motivated’. After a few days though, they relax and think, *“There’s more than enough time left! I can read Quraan later on! I can repent later on!”*

Worsening the situation are the distractions such as social media, WhatsApp, etc. which not only destroy our time but sometimes even draw us into severe sins such as gheebah (backbiting). For some people, the entire month passes in negligence. *Eventually, when the month comes to an end, we realize that we achieved very little or nothing at all!*

In order to make this Ramadhaan count and to derive maximum benefit from it, we have to learn to safeguard our time and use it wisely and productively. *If we learn the lesson of making every second count in the month of Ramadhaan, there will be hope of us using our time wisely out of Ramadhaan as well.*



Further Reduced - Don't Miss!

The signs at the front of your favourite clothing store first read '*End of Season Sale - 50% Off!*' However, twenty days have passed since the signs were first erected and they have now been changed for signs that read '*Further Reduced!*'.

The sale period has not only been extended, the bargains have become better and are now absolutely unbeatable. *Nobody wants to be left out.*

This is exactly the case with the final ten days of the blessed month of Ramadhaan. The entire month is the month of mercy, the month in which Allah Ta'ala forgives multitudes of his servants who turn to him in repentance. Furthermore, the entire month is host to such a bargain that for one fardh action, the servant is granted the reward of 70 fardh actions!

Enter the final ten days, however, and the deals are so fantastic, that Allah Ta'ala, for the duration of one of the odd nights, grants his servants the reward of 1000 months of worship!

If we have failed to make the most of this month and value its precious moments by making 'ibaadat, reciting the Quraan Majeed, etc. until now, then let us not lose hope and throw in the

towel. Rather, let us make the most of the remaining days, as by doing this we can still salvage our Ramadhaan and prevent it from having gone to waste.

Very often, it's the final moments that make all the difference. How many people lived their lives as disbelievers, but were blessed with the courage to bring imaan and shortly thereafter passed away? If we use the last moments of Ramadhaan fruitfully, there is hope that Allah Ta'ala will forgive us and overlook the fact that we failed to adequately appreciate this blessed month until now.

Hurry up and cash in before it's too late! These deals are not to be missed!



Wi-Fi Free

We often see the sign “Free Wi-Fi”. In fact, we often search for this sign, as people fear becoming ‘disconnected’. Whether in a hotel, airport, restaurant or anywhere else, this sign is a sure draw card, attracting people to the premises.

However, it is doubtful that any of us would have seen a sign saying “Wi-Fi Free”, even though this is the sign that we all need to hang in our homes at the very least for the last ten days of Ramadhaan.

The last ten days of Ramadhaan are unlike the first twenty days. It is most probably during one of the odd nights of these ten days that Lailatul Qadr (the Night of Power) occurs which is more virtuous than a thousand months. Showing his Ummah the importance of these ten days, Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) exerted himself even further during this blessed period.

After understanding the significance of these ten days, we all desire to exert ourselves and reap the great rewards offered by Allah Ta‘ala. However, there are numerous distractions which lie in ambush, waiting to ‘pounce’ and trap us, preventing us from fulfilling our ambition. Among these, perhaps the greatest distraction is the internet.

Be it novels, social media or anything similar, most of these distractions are facilitated by the internet. Hence, to ‘nip the distraction in the bud’, we should aim to make the last ten days (rather make the entire month of Ramadhaan) Wi-Fi and internet free.

By freeing ourselves of these distractions, we will find ourselves free to make the most of this blessed period. Furthermore, the internet is the cause of many evils and sins taking place. Hence, *disconnecting from the internet will undoubtedly aid us in connecting with Allah Ta‘ala, which is the very objective of the month of Ramadhaan.*

May Allah Ta‘ala assist us all to make the most of this blessed period and truly connect with Him.



Ramadhaan FAQ

1. Missing the fast due to pregnancy or breastfeeding:

Q: Will a woman be required to fast if she is weak and she is breastfeeding her infant child or she is pregnant?

A: If there is a genuine fear that she may endanger herself or the life of the breastfeeding child or the developing foetus, then in this case she may miss the fast and observe the qadhaa for it in the future.

2. Applying lip balm or lipstick whilst fasting:

Q: Can a woman apply lip balm or lipstick whilst fasting?

A: It will be permissible, provided the lip balm or lipstick does not contain any haraam ingredient and one does not suck on it and swallow the saliva.

3. Applying eye drops:

A: Will the fast be affected by applying eye drops whilst fasting?

Q: The fast will be valid.

4. Taking medication to prevent menstruation in order to fast:

Q: Can a female take medication to prevent her menstrual cycle during the month of Ramadhaan in order that no fast is missed?

A: Undoubtedly, a woman will not be able to fast if she experiences menstruation. However, it is still better that she avoids taking such medication.

5. When must a child be instructed to observe saum (fast)?

Q: From what age should a child be instructed to observe the Ramadhāan fast?

A: When the child reaches an age where he will be able to manage the fast then such a child should be encouraged to fast. However, there is no fixed age, as children will differ in their strength. Nonetheless, once the child reaches the age of ten, he should then be instructed to observe the entire fast.

6. Haidh (menstruation) terminating before sehri:

Q: A woman's haidh terminated around the time of sehri and by the time she completed her ghusl the time for sehri had expired. Will the fast of that day be necessary on her?

A: If the haidh lasted for less than ten days and the time which remained from the moment her haidh terminated until the time of the expiry of sehri was sufficient enough for her to merely take a fardh ghusl then she will have to observe the fast of that day.



The True ‘Eid

A group of people once passed by a monk in a monastery. Seeing him, they enquired, “*When do the people of this monastery celebrate ‘Eid?*” The monk replied, “*On the day that they are forgiven.*”

The monk then recited the following:

لَيْسَ الْعِيدُ لِمَنْ لَبَسَ الْجَدِيدَ ، إِنَّمَا الْعِيدُ لِمَنْ طَاعَتْهُ تَزِيدُ

‘Eid is not for those who merely wear new clothing. ‘Eid is actually for those whose good deeds increase.

لَيْسَ الْعِيدُ لِمَنْ تَجَمَّلَ بِاللِّبَاسِ وَالرُّكُوبِ ، إِنَّمَا الْعِيدُ لِمَنْ غُفِرَتْ لَهُ الذُّنُوبُ

‘Eid is not for those who merely beautify themselves by wearing attractive clothing and riding on exotic conveyances. ‘Eid is actually for those whose sins have been forgiven.

(Lataaiful Ma‘aarif pg. 483)

Annually, the Day of ‘Eid is eagerly anticipated by the Muslim Ummah and is viewed as an occasion of happiness and rejoicing. However, how many people spend their Ramadhaan in such a manner that they actually have something to celebrate? If the Ramadhaan was profitable, by them earning the mercy and

forgiveness of Allah Ta'ala and changing their lives, then this is definitely one of the greatest blessings that one can rejoice over.

If we have not appreciated this blessed month as we ought to have done, then it is still not too late. *There are still a few invaluable moments remaining which we can use to turn to Allah Ta'ala and seek His forgiveness.* If we do so, there is hope that Allah Ta'ala will shower His mercy on us and also include us among those who gained His mercy in this month.



'Eid Mubaarak!

It was the last day of Ramadhaan and the madrasah classroom was bubbling with excitement with every child discussing what pretty outfits they were going to wear, where they will be spending their 'Eid, and what they were expecting for 'eid (Eid presents). The echoes of "Eid Mubaarak" were heard all over the class.

'Aaishah was a shy little girl who wouldn't speak much. However, she had an enquiring mind and would try to understand everything correctly from her Aapa Raheemah. She asked unexpectedly: "Aapa! What does 'Eid Mubaarak mean?" The Aapa locked the kitaab cupboard, smiled at her and said: "May your 'Eid be blessed." "But how does it become blessed, Aapa?" She asked. "Is it just by saying 'Eid Mubaarak' or do we need to do certain things?"

Aapa Raheemah replied: "I like that question 'Aaishah! You are 100% correct. It does not become blessed just by saying 'Eid Mubaarak,' rather it is by us spending our 'Eid in a way that makes our Allah happy. I can only explain to you three very important things which will please our Allah Ta'ala and make our 'Eid a blessed one. We only have twenty minutes left to go home and Zahra never read her sabaq yet:

“Firstly, we must dress like true Muslimahs. We cannot wear clothes that show our body and shape, or make us look like ‘Tom Boys’.”

By this time the class had quietened down and everyone was listening to this interesting conversation.

“But Aapa, my mummy already bought me a sleeveless top and skinny tights. What must I do now because tomorrow is ‘Eid. Where am I going to get another outfit now?” asked Yumnah with a terrified look. “*Why don’t you look for a matching inner in your cupboard, borrow a skirt from Yusrah and tell your mummy that you like it that way,*” responded ‘Aaishah. “That’s a good idea,” said Aapa Raheemah.

Then she went on to explain: “Children! The second thing we need to do to make our Allah Ta’ala happy is that we mustn’t play with boys. **We must eat with the ladies and the boys must eat with the men.**” “But Aapa, in our house the uncles and aunties always eat together. *How am I going to change such a big thing now?* My mummy will tell me that if we separate the men and women everyone will get upset.” ‘Aaishah responded again and said: “That’s easy. You must explain to your mummy that it’s more important that Allah Ta’ala doesn’t get upset with us. This will be a start insha-Allah. Remember if we try to make Allah Ta’ala happy, he will make it easy for us and everyone will eventually understand.” Aapa Raheemah said, beaming with joy: “*Masha-Allah ‘Aaishah. That’s how a true Muslimah thinks.*”

“Lastly,” the Aapa explained: “**We need to make a point of meeting our relatives that are nearby, and phone those that are**

far away.” “But you know Aapa, my Gori Foi (father’s sister) lives in the next street, but mummy doesn’t allow us to visit her because they had an argument last year on ‘Eid Day. *It was so embarrassing.* Now even daddy is not speaking to his sister,” explained ‘Aaliyah. “Why don’t you try this?” said ‘Aaishah. “When you go home today, call your mummy and daddy, sit on their lap and act like you are crying. When they ask you what’s the problem, tell them: *‘How can I enjoy my ‘Eid when I haven’t seen my Foi and cousins for one whole year. I’m missing them so much.’* Then beg them to phone your Gori Foi and invite her for ‘Eid. Insha-Allah this will bring them back together and all of you would have a really happy and blessed ‘Eid together.”

“Excellent, Aaishah,” exclaimed the Aapa. “It seems like Allah Ta’ala has blessed you with great wisdom and understanding as He had blessed our mother Sayyidah ‘Aaishah (radhiyallahu ‘anha).”

“My beloved children! If we try to please our Allah Ta’ala on this auspicious day by doing these three things, insha-Allah our ‘Eid will really be mubaarak – a blessed one,” concluded Aapa Raheemah.



‘Eid Plead

Will we ever find a Christian wear a cloak or burqa’ on the occasion of Christmas, or a Hindu wear a kurta and topee on the occasion of Diwali?

The answer is so obvious, but the question is why ...

Because these people, though on falsehood, love their culture and are proud to identify themselves accordingly, during their days of celebration.

‘Eid is a big day, a noble day, and a beautiful day in the life of a Muslim. Muslims, who are the chosen ones to be favoured with the truth, ought to treasure their Islam and feel honoured to identify themselves as Muslims.

Let us not spoil things on the happy occasion of ‘Eid, by dressing ourselves and our children in the sad dressing and fashion of the disbelievers.



Never-Ending 'Eid

With the joyous occasion of 'Eid almost upon us, the environment is charged with excitement and happiness permeates the atmosphere. From children to adults – everyone welcomes the day of 'Eid with open arms and wishes that it would never end.

Now, imagine if every day of our lives could be 'Eid! *Wouldn't that be wonderful?* Fortunately, we don't have to limit this desire to the realm of our imagination – *we can make it a reality.*

Hasan Basri (rahimahullah) once mentioned, “Every day in which a person did not disobey Allah Ta‘ala is a day of 'Eid, and every day that a person spends in the obedience, remembrance and gratitude of Allah Ta‘ala is a day of 'Eid.” (*Lataaiful Ma‘aarif* pg. 485)

The day of 'Eid is a day of happiness. Hence, without happiness, a person would not feel as though it was the day of 'Eid. We must understand that Allah Ta‘ala is the only Giver of happiness, and He blesses only those people with true happiness whom He is pleased with. Hence, pleasing Allah Ta‘ala is the only way for one to become truly happy, and every day in which one was successful in pleasing Allah Ta‘ala will be a day of such happiness that one will feel as though it was the day of 'Eid.

Savouring the Spirit of Ramadhaan

May Allah Ta'ala bless us to live every day of our lives in a manner that is pleasing to Him so that every day of our life will be like the day of 'Eid, aameen.



‘Eid or Anti-climax?

Imagine receiving an elaborately wrapped gift platter filled with the most exotic sweet meats. From *burfee* to *magaj* and *jalebee* to *halwa*, the platter promises the taste buds a trip to gastronomic ‘heaven’. However, as you undo the wrapping and pull back the cellophane, you see a flash of movement. *No! A giant cockroach darts out from behind the burfee block and climbs over the goolaab jamoon in its race for freedom!*

This is a typical example of an anti-climax. A person expected one thing, and everything seemed promising, and suddenly, things turned out completely contrary to expectations.

‘Eid is the occasion when the servants of Allah Ta‘ala receive their prizes and rewards for obeying Allah Ta‘ala and worshipping Him faithfully throughout the month of Ramadhaan. *Hence, although ‘Eid is a joyous occasion, a Muslim’s greatest concern is that Allah Ta‘ala should crown his efforts with acceptance.* If Allah Ta‘ala does not accept his efforts, his hunger and exertion would have been to little or no avail.

Bearing this in mind, a Muslim will thus ensure that he continues to obey Allah Ta‘ala on this day, not descend into sin and transgression. In this regard, some of the avenues of sin that are most common on this occasion are those of intermingling

between non-mahram men and women, dressing inappropriately (e.g. revealing or body hugging clothing) and being lax regarding salaah.

To commit such sins on any occasion is bad – but on the occasion of ‘Eid is even worse. By behaving in this manner, how do we hope to gain the acceptance of Allah Ta‘ala?

When the cockroach is found in the platter, nobody wants to partake of the sweetmeats. Similarly, when the day of ‘Eid is spoilt with sin, it taints the efforts of the entire month of Ramadhaan.

May Allah Ta‘ala bless us all on this joyous occasion and crown our broken efforts with His acceptance.



Nurturing the Relationship

There are few methods that express love as eloquently as speech. Hence, a newly-wed couple who have the ‘misfortune’ of living apart for some time will often compensate for their separation by remaining glued to their phones, speaking to each other for hours on end. On the contrary, when two people have hatred and enmity for one another, they make it a point to avoid speaking to each other.

During the month of Ramadhaan, Muslims the world over remained glued to the Quraan Majeed, earnestly conversing with Allah Ta‘ala. The more they recited the Quraan Majeed, the more their love for Allah Ta‘ala grew and the closer to Him they became. However, how many of us have continued to converse with Allah Ta‘ala, through reciting the Quraan Majeed daily, as we used to in the month of Ramadhaan? Similarly, how many of us are still conversing with Allah Ta‘ala through the direct-line of du‘aa, as we used to during the month of Ramadhaan?

When a person has a close, bosom friend, and this friend suddenly gives him the cold shoulder, it greatly perturbs and hurts him as his beloved friend is now treating him as an enemy would. When we earnestly conversed with Allah Ta‘ala and did

our best to gain His nearness in the month of Ramadhaan, then what message is sent out when after the month of Ramadhaan, we seldom recite the Quraan Majeed and rarely raise our hands in du'aa? *Are we showing Allah Ta'ala a cold shoulder' (may Allah forbid!)?*

Just as we would not appreciate our near and dear ones suddenly abandoning us, we should not suddenly abandon our relationship with Allah Ta'ala, who is the Most Beloved and Dear to us. *Instead, if we strive to maintain our relationship with Allah Ta'ala, our love and bond with Him will grow until the next Ramadhaan, during which it will be boosted and increase even further.* In this manner, we will become closer and closer to Allah Ta'ala until He eventually summons us from this world.



Maintaining the Momentum

How many people do you know who one day looked into the mirror or stood on the scale and announced, “Enough!” The digits on the scale and the reflection in the mirror are both unbiased and don’t hesitate to tell a person that it’s time for him to shed those extra kilos.

How many people thereafter sacrificed their scrumptious snacks and exerted themselves in exercise, gradually achieving their goal weight? The answer to both questions is – quite a few actually. *However, an overwhelming amount of these people are unable to maintain their ideal weight and soon thereafter slip into their old rut of unhealthy and bad eating habits, only to regain the unwanted weight even faster than they had initially lost it.*

Hence, the key to a successful diet, more than losing the weight, is to maintain the weight and avoid regaining the burnt fat.

In exactly the same manner, most Muslims, during the month of Ramadhaan, embark on a diet from sins such as backbiting, lying, watching movies, dressing indecently, exploiting people, venting their anger and temper on those around them, etc.

However, once this blessed month terminates, most people consider themselves to be unchained and free to return to their previous lives of sin – just as the rebellious Shayaateen are unchained and allowed to freely roam the earth once again.

It is thus essential for us to maintain the momentum of good deeds and abstention from sins that we had built up during Ramadhaan. Our daily recitation of the Quraan Majeed, engaging in du‘aa, giving sadaqah to the poor, controlling our tempers and other righteous efforts should not cease merely because Ramadhaan has ended.

It should not be that we are ‘seasonal worshippers’ – Muslims who only show devotion and loyalty to Allah Ta‘ala in Ramadhaan and thereafter turn their backs to Allah Ta‘ala and befriend Shaitaan.

May Allah Ta‘ala assist us all to maintain the momentum of Ramadhaan, aameen.



The ‘Cold Shoulder’

“Excuse me! May I have your attention please!” Yet, despite the repeated requests, the plea fell on deaf ears and was totally ignored.

The above scenario plays out in many spheres of life. Sometimes, it’s an obstinate member of the staff that ‘plays dumb’ and chooses to ignore their employer. At times, it can be a friend that chooses to ignore us. *At other times, it can even be our own near and dear ones that give us the ‘cold shoulder’, and it is from these people that this treatment is most painful and upsetting.*

If a spouse hurts or upsets their partner, and out of disappointment, the partner gives them the ‘cold shoulder’ and ‘silent treatment’, it will hurt and disturb them more than if any other person had to ignore them. From one-word answers to point-blank silence, the anxiety and disappointment perceived will be so severe that one will lose their appetite and will even find it difficult to sleep!

When this is how seriously we treat the ‘cold shoulder’ from our near and dear ones, than how much worse will it be for us to give Allah Ta’ala the ‘cold shoulder’? However, this is precisely what many people unwittingly do.

During the month of Ramadhaan, many people increased their commitment to Deen and communicated regularly with Allah Ta'ala through reciting the Quraan Majeed, standing in salaah and raising their hands in du'aa. Somehow, when the moon of 'Eid was sighted, they casually turned away and gave Allah Ta'ala the 'cold shoulder'. After connecting with their Creator for one month, they inexplicably turned away and returned to their evil ways of old. *Do we really think that Allah Ta'ala will accept and tolerate this? For how long do we expect to 'get away' with this behaviour?*

If we want Allah Ta'ala to continuously show us love and mercy and shower His blessings upon us, we need to maintain our relationship with Him. A person who only maintains a relationship when it suits him is generally termed and regarded as a 'user'. *Let us be 'lovers' and 'devotees' of Allah Ta'ala – not users.*

May Allah Ta'ala assist us all to become and remain His devoted servants.

