



RAMADHAAN

PREPARATION PACK

Tayyibun Institute UK



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Tayyibun Institute UK
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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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Wisdom and Benefits behind Fasting

The objective behind fasting is to restrain the soul from (its) desires and to prevent it from those things, which are beloved to it. And its purpose is to control the soul's strength, so that it can be prepared to attain what is found in it (the fast) from success and joy for the soul. Through the fast, one curbs his hunger and thirst and is reminded of the condition of the hungry stomachs of needy people.

Through fasting, one narrows the passages the Shaytaan has inside the servant (of Allah) by narrowing the passages of food and drink. Also, it prevents the forces of the limbs from getting too accustomed to things that are harmful to it in this world and the hereafter. And each of the soul's body limbs and energies can cease their rebelliousness (to Allah) and be harnessed by its bridle.

So therefore, the fast is the bridle of those who fear and obey Allah *'azza wa jall* and the shield for those waging war (against desires). And it is a garden for the righteous and devoted servants of Allah. And it is for the Lord of the worlds, over all other actions (done to please Allah). This is since the person who fasts, in fact does nothing. He only abandons his desire and his food for the sake of the One whom he worships.

So fasting is an abandonment of those things that the soul loves and desires, preferring instead Allah's love and contentment. And it is a secret kept between the servant and his Lord - no one else is aware of it. Fasting has an amazing effect in preserving one's outer limbs and inner capacities as well as protecting the soul from being overtaken by destructive components, which can ruin and destroy it. And it has a remarkable effect in causing all the harmful things that prevent the soul from being healthy to be emptied out. So fasting guards and protects the health of the person's heart and bodily limbs. And it returns the soul all that the hands of the desires has taken from it. So it is from the greatest ways of improving one's Taqwaa, as Allah *'azza wa jall* says: *"O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you in order that you attain Taqwaa."* [Surah al-Baqarah, Ayah 183]

The Prophet *sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* said: *"Fasting is a shield."* And he commanded those who had intense desires for marriage but were not able to marry, to observe fasting, making it a shield against those desires (of marriage).

When the benefits of fasting are borne witness to by sensible minds and upright intuitions, one will come to realise that Allah prescribed it as a mercy for mankind, goodness to them and a protection and shield for them.

The Prophet's *sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* guidance concerning it was the most perfect of guidance, and the best for reaching the desired objective and the easiest on the soul.

Since restraining the soul from what it loves and desires is from the most difficult and hardest of things, its obligation was delayed until the middle of Islam, after the Hijrah. This was at the point when the Tawheed and the Prayer had become firmly established in the souls of the Muslims and when they loved the commands of Allah. So their souls were lead to its obligation in gradual steps. It became obligatory in the second year of Hijrah.

When the Messenger of Allah *sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* died, he had fasted nine Ramadhaan months in total. Originally, it was obligated as an option left to the people to choose whether they

wanted to fast or to feed needy people for every day. Then that option was transferred into the final obligatory fasting. And the matter of feeding people was left only for the old men and women who did not have the ability to fast.

Fasting had three stages. The first stage was its being obligated with the option of fasting or feeding a needy person. In the second stage, only the fasting was allowed, but if the person fasting slept before breaking his fast, he was forbidden from eating and drinking until the following night. This was abrogated in the third stage. And this is the stage at which the Religion has settled with until the Day of Judgement.

Al-Hafidh Imaam Shams ud deen Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (Rahimahullah)
Compiled from *Zaad al-Ma'aad*

Ramadhaan, the Month of Barakah

Bismillah,

Allah 'azza wa jall says,



"The month of Ramadhaan in which the Qur'an was revealed, guidance for people and clear proofs of guidance and criterion. So whoever is present for the month let him fast through it. Anyone ill or on a journey (who does not fast) should make up an equal number days (outside Ramadhaan). Allah wants ease for you and does not want hardship for you so that you complete the period and glorify Allah for what he guided you and perhaps you will be grateful". [Surah al-Baqarah, Ayah 185]

In these ayat from the Qur'an Allah 'azza wa jall tells us the importance of the month of Ramadhaan. One of the greatest favours he has given us is the Qur'an a guide and criterion between right and wrong.

Ramadhaan is a month of mercy and blessings for the believers. It is a season for worship, generosity and kindness. It is an occasion to become closer to Allah and strengthen the relationship with him. There are plenty of opportunities to please Allah 'azza wa jall. Ramadhaan is the month to revive and strengthen Eemaan, our Eemaan increases and decreases. The sign of strong Eemaan is the amount of worship one does. The doors of mercy are wide open and the doors of Allah's punishment are firmly closed. The forces of evil, shayateen are chained up. Nothing stands between us and success except our following of desires.

Abu Hurayrah *radhiAllahu `anhu* narrated that Allah's Messenger *sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* said, "When Ramadhaan comes the doors of Jannah are firmly opened and the doors of the fire are firmly closed and the shayateen are chained." (al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Once the Prophet *sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* said to the Sahabah *radhiAllahu `anhum*, “*Ramadhāan has come, a blessed month, Allah has made it obligatory for you to fast... (an-Nasai and al-Baihaqi)*”

Ramadhāan is not just about hungry days and long nights in the Masjid. It is not an excuse for laziness or weakness. To the contrary it is a time for strength and to exert one's effort in the worship of Allah. Two of the greatest victories for Muslims happened in Ramadhāan, the victory at Badr and the conquest of Makkah, the centre of the Muslim world and the focus of Muslims through out the world.

The real purpose of Ramadhāan is to come out a better person at the end of the month. Ramadhāan cleans away the sins that may have accumulated over the year. At the end of the month a Muslim should hope to be forgiven and saved from the hellfire. There are several ways of achieving forgiveness, through fasting, praying at night, reading the Qur'an, feeding the poor, and so on.

The Prophet *sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* said, “*Whoever fasts in Ramadhāan with Eemaan and seeking reward (from Allah) his past sins will be forgiven*”. (al-Bukhari and Muslim)

The Prophet *sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* is also reported to have said, “*Whoever prays during Ramadhāan with Eemaan and seeking reward (from Allah) his past sins will be forgiven*”. (al-Bukhari and Muslim)

To achieve forgiveness through these actions two conditions must be met:

1. Complete and truthful Eemaan
2. A desire for the reward from Allah *'azza wa jall*

Siyam

Fasting doesn't only involve going hungry for the day. The objective of fasting is to gain Taqwaa, piety, by doing what Allah commands and keeping away from what He forbids. Fasting means avoiding all that is forbidden, avoiding looking at haraam, listening to haraam, speaking haraam, etc. Otherwise the only gain from fasting is hunger and thirst.

The Prophet *sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* said, “*Perhaps someone fasting, his share is hunger and thirst*”. (al-Hakim and Ibn Khuzaymah)

The Prophet *sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* said, “*Whoever does not abandon false words and deeds Allah has no need for him to leave his food and drink*”. (al-Bukhari)

One of the Salaf said, “The easiest fast is keeping away from food and drink”.

Jabir said, “When you fast let you hearing sight and tongue abstain from lying and haraam leave harming the neighbour. You should be calm and collected the day of your fast. Don't make the day you fast the same as the day as you don't”.

Qiyam (Praying at Night)

To receive the desired result from Salaah at-Tarawih it should be performed calmly with humility and without haste. Two Rakaah with humbleness and concentration are better than twenty quick ones. Quality of the Salaah is more important than quantity. The Prophet prayed long at night. When he read the Qur'an in the Salaah he reflected on the meanings. The Sahabah followed the same example. They didn't race to finish one Juz in twenty Rakaah. What is important is that the Qur'an is read in a manner that the listener can follow and take heed.

Ihsaan (Generosity and Kindness)

Since this is the month of mercy, Allah 'azza wa jall has mercy on those servants who are merciful to others. The Prophet *sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* was the most generous of people. He was most generous in Ramadhaan. This is a chance to be grateful for what Allah has given us by giving to others in need. Sadaqah and Zakah are means of strengthening the ties amongst Muslims. They provide a way for the more fortunate to show the less fortunate that their suffering is felt. Fasting should remind us of the hunger of those who are constantly fasting not by choice but by necessity.

One of the Salaf was asked why fasting was enjoined. He replied so that the wealthy may taste hunger and not forget the poor.

Fasting, Praying, feeding other deeds will help us to enter Jannah.

The Prophet *sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said, *"In Jannah there are rooms, the inside can be seen from the outside and the outside from the inside"*. They asked, *"Who are they for?"* He answered, *"For one who speaks good words, feeds others, fasts regularly and prays at night while people are asleep"*. (at-Tirmidhi, Ahmad)

Qur'an

Ramadhaan is the month of Qur'an. Muslims should use this month to get acquainted with the Book of Allah 'azza wa jall. If Muslims held onto the Qur'an and followed it they would not be in this state of weakness and humiliation. The Qur'an is a book of guidance, a manual for life not just for Ramadhaan. The practice of the Prophet was to read the whole of the Qur'an in Ramadhaan. Many of the Salaf read it many more times than this. Some of them left other acts of Ibadah for reading the Qur'an showing the importance they gave to it. Reading it is not simply for barakah but for the message it conveys.

Let us remember that this Ramadhaan if we change ourselves for the better Allah will change our condition for the better. Allah 'azza wa jall does not change the condition of a people until they change themselves.

We ask Allah to praise and grant peace upon the Messenger *sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, his family and followers.

Ustadh Abu Talha

Ustadh Abu Talha graduated from Madinah Islamic University (K.S.A) with a BA Hons in Shari'ah and specialises in the field of Fiqh and Aqeedah. The Ustadh has studied under the Scholars of the Prophet's Masjid and is currently a teacher at the Tayyibun Institute UK.

Understanding the Qur'an

One of the ayaat that mentions the Ahlul Kitaab, Allah 'azza wa jall says:

And there are among them (Jews) unlettered people, who know not the Book, but they trust upon false desires and they but guess.'

This *ayaah* says that among the people of the book, there are illiterates (in terms of not understanding the book of Allah), they have the book with them but they have no clue what the book is talking about. All that they learn from the book is what fits their worldly interests. They were selective in what they would learn. If something would benefit them in their *dunya* then they would learn otherwise they would leave it aside. They follow doubts and conjecture.

What does this *ayaah* mean? Ibn Taymiyyah *rahimahullah* says, 'Ibn Abbas *radhiAllahu `anhu* and Qatadah *rahimahullah* interpreted the meaning of the *ayah* 'ummiyyoon' (illiterate) as meaning, 'they do not understand the meaning of the book. They learn it, they memorise it, and they recite it without understanding it and do not know what is being talked about. Ibn Taymiyyah *rahimahullah* the meaning of 'illiterate' in this verse does not mean that they cannot read or write. They read it, memorise it and teach it yet they don't understand what the book is talking about. They are satisfied by only reciting it.'

In our current times, you would find that television stations and radio stations broadcast Qur'an. They do this because they know the people do not understand so the people will not follow the Qur'an- they will merely listen to it without any understanding. Even in the state of Israel they broadcast Qur'an! Let the people listen to Qur'an for the people don't understand and will not follow it. This is a problem that exists among us now. Subhan'Allah, as if (the ayaat) is referring to us.

Imaam Ahmed rahimahullah narrates that the Rasul (sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam) said something and then he (sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam) said, "That would happen when knowledge is lost." One of the Sahabah (Ibn Lubayd) said, "O Messenger of Allah (sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam), how can knowledge be lost? When we have studied Qur'an, we are teaching it to our children and our children will teach it to theirs." The Rasul (sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam) said, "Woe to you! I thought you were one of the most learned men of Madinah. Can't you see the Jews and Christians have Torah and Gospel (tawrath and injeel-their scriptures) with them and they are not benefiting anything from them?"

So Rasulullah is telling Lubayd our neighbours right here- you can see them, they have the Towrath, they have the Gospel but they're not benefiting from it. So Rasulullah *sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* is telling us a time will come when the Qur'an will be with us and we will not benefit from it.

The Qur'an is not to be put on the shelf, decorated and covered. In fact Abu Darda *radhiAllahu `anhu* said, 'Whenever the time comes when you will decorate your mosques and decorate your mushafs, that is the time when you will be destroyed.' This is because that is an indication you

are favouring symbols over substance, my mosque looks beautiful- look how beautiful the mosque is, and the Qur'an is written with gold letters and covered with velvet covering so you do not want even touch it or read it because it looks so good. So, you don't even open it to read it because its so expensive and wonderful, it looks beautiful. Abu Darda states when this happens, *radhiAllahu `anhu* 'You will be destroyed!'

At the time of Abu Darda *radhiAllahu `anhu* the Qur'an was written on bones, leaves and pieces of leather, it's was a collection of these. If people were to see the Qur'an written on bones or other pieces, they would be quick to say that such a thing is disrespect to the Qur'an- 'This is disrespectful you are writing it on bones?' Now the issue has become 'respect' of Qur'an but don't touch it, don't read it, and don't follow it (people don't think that not following the Qur'an is disrespect to it). We have lost track of what the Qur'an should do for us or how we should study the book of Allah *subhana wa tala*

Allah says:

***'(This is) a Book (the Qur'an) which We have sent down to you, full of blessings that they may ponder over its Verses, and that men of understanding may remember.'* [Surah Saad, Ayah 29]**

'Do they not then think deeply in the Qur'an, or are their hearts locked up (from understanding it)?' [Surah Muhammad, Ayah 24]

Allah 'azza wa jall is not only asking us to recite the Qur'an, rather He is asking us to meditate and contemplate over the Qur'an. We have to have tadabbur (deep contemplation).

How did the Sahabah study the Qur'an? If we take the example of Abdullah ibn Umar *radhiAllahu `anhu*, he says: 'It took me fourteen years to finish memorising Surah al-Baqarah.' Fourteen years! I mean we could memorise Qur'an in a year, how come it took Abdullah ibn Umar *radhiAllahu `anhu* fourteen years to memorise just Surah al-Baqarah? He *radhiAllahu `anhu* was so happy after memorising it, he said 'and then I slaughtered a camel and I invited all the people to come to a feast.' It was such an important event for him, he memorised Surah al-Baqarah he made this huge invitation and called everyone to come over, because of memorising the Surah it was a great day of celebration for him. Now we can memorise Qur'an now within a few months- how come it took him so long?

The reason is, as narrated by one of the *Tabi'een*, who said, 'I met with some of the Sahabah of the Rasul *sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* and they told me that the way they would study Qur'an is that they would take ten ayaath and they would study these ten ayaath, they would study the eemaan, the ilm, and the halaal and haraam in the ayaah, then memorise the ayaath and then they'd move onto the next ten ayaath. They would never move onto the next ten ayaath until they applied it. Not until it became alive and a second nature to them. I was told this by many of the Sahabah, not just one.' This is their method- take ten ayaath, study the ayaath, memorise the ayaath, learn the eemaan in them, because eemaan in the beginning is knowledge, in the initial stages ie. 'Fahlam La illaha illAllah', know there is no God worthy of worship but Allah, so it starts by ilm. Then you have the emotional commitment to it later. You cannot have tasdeeq

unless you have ilm, you cannot believe in something unless you know it. So they (the Sahabah) would learn the eemaan in it, they would apply the halaal and haraam, (memorise), then move onto the next ten ayaath.

Imaam Muhammed al-Ghazali *rahimahullah* said, 'I memorised (the whole) Qur'an when I was ten years old', here he was talking about a problem we have in the modern method of education in the teaching of Qur'an, he said '.....as a kid I memorised the whole book but I didn't understand anything. Because of the mode I was in (of just reciting without learning and understanding), when I grew up and was attempting to learn and understand the Book of Allah, I was finding it very hard because I was programmed to just repeat the verses'. He says 'It took me a lot of effort, struggle, and striving until I was able to break that cycle and start thinking and contemplating over the ayaat of Allah *'azza wa jall*.' So, we have to go through the struggle in order to understand the Book of Allah. One key that might help us is that the Book of Allah does not throw its gems upon you, you have to look for them; it does not offer us the benefit unless we are keen for learning and receiving the guidance. This is something that is interesting about the Qur'an.

Allah *'azza wa jall* says:

***'And We send down from the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe (in Islamic Monotheism and act on it), and it increases the Zalimun (polytheists and wrong-doers) nothing but loss.'* [Surah Isra, Ayah 82]**

The Qur'an draws some people closer and it draws some people further (away). If you want to benefit from Qur'an, the Qur'an will benefit you and if you do not then Allah *'azza wa jall* will honour His Book (regardless with or without you), with the Zalimeen it (the Qur'an) adds to their loss (of the oppressors)- to turn away even further. This is part of the uniqueness of the Book of Allah. We need to have tadabbur of the Book of Allah- I (Imaam Anwar) am not saying you take fourteen years to memorise Surah al-Baqarah if you can do it in a month- do it, but the point is that after we memorise it we have to take the next stage that is to apply it and not just reciting without understanding. Rasulullah *sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam* said, "In the last days (of the world) there will appear young people who will recite Qur'an and it doesn't even go past their throats" (al-Bukhari), they have taken the Qur'an as something that is just recited, (they don't understand it- they might be doing it for monetary reasons but then the Book of Allah *'azza wa jall* is not used (correctly). So, its used for opening a ceremony, or closing a ceremony, and that's it.

All of my life I am alive the Qur'an (remains) sitting on the shelf, and then when they die the people pull it out and recite some Qur'an and then it goes back on the shelf. And when I die they'll pull it out off the shelf and shall recite some ayaath on me! When I am already dead, and then it will go back onto the shelf. So the Qur'an only comes out in the celebrations and in the times of death.

When there is a marriage they recite Surah al-Fatihah and when someone dies Surah Yaseen is recited, that is all that the Book of Allah is used for- Marriage and death! Subhan'Allah, the Book of Allah *'azza wa jall* was the moving force behind the early Muslims. What made the Sahabah different? It was the Qur'an, nothing else. Qur'an completely changed the Sahabah from people who were at the lowest levels and it made them the role-models of humanity. It the Qur'an that

was the power that made them into the great Nation, the Book of Allah will do the same for us if we have tadabbur- we need to have tadabbur of the Book of Allah *subhana wa tala*.

An example of how the Qur'an was studied is Mujahid, Mujahid was one of the *Mufasssireen* of the Qur'an- if you study Qur'an you'll always find his name, he studied the Qur'an with Ibn Abbas *radhiAllahu `anhu*. He was a student of Ibn Abbas. It is said that he went over the entire Qur'an three times with Ibn Abbas, going over each and every ayaah, asking him questions about every single ayah in Qur'an. Mujahid says, 'I would stop Ibn Abbas after every ayaah, asking him about its meanings.' He did this three times!

Living the Book of Allah '*azza wa jall* and taking it very seriously in our life demands that we love the Book of Allah. If we read and recite the Qur'an and feel you don't have that attachment to it then a person might not get the benefit. That can be understood from the saying of Uthman ibn Affan *radhiAllahu `anhu*, 'If the hearts are pure, they will never satisfy their hunger from the Book of Allah' you'll always want more. If we love the Book of Allah '*azza wa jall*, we will never be able to have enough.

When one of the Taabi'een in order to find out more about the life of Abdullah ibn Umar *radhiAllahu `anhu*, (they asked questions to the Sahabah to emulate them- to follow their footsteps), this Tabi'ee, he learned about Abdullah ibn Umar, he studied with him but he wanted to know how his life was in private- what does Abdullah ibn Umar do at home? So, he asked the servant of Abdullah ibn Umar, 'What does Abdullah ibn Umar do when he is in the privacy of his own home?' The answer was simple, no sophistication- no complication, he said: 'He would go to prayers and recite Qur'an in between,' that's his life! Very easy and simple. If he wasn't doing business, and he wasn't in jihaad in ribaat (the frontlines) for he Abdullah ibn Umar spent twelve years in ribaat in the areas of al-Dibijaan and Armenia. 'If he was at home this is what he would do. He'd go home recite Qur'an and wait for salaah', that's his life, living with Qur'an. I (Imaam Anwar) kind of find that very difficult as a comparison when you look at the life Abdullah ibn Umar and you observe our lives when months would pass and will not even open the Book of Allah! For Abdullah ibn Umar *radhiAllahu `anhu*, his life would revolve around the Book of Allah, reciting Qur'an all throughout the day.

Uthman ibn Affan *radhiAllahu `anhu* who said, 'If the hearts are pure, they will never satisfy their hunger from the Book of Allah', he would start Qiyaamul-Layl reciting Qur'an in two Rakaat and the night would be over, and he would be still going on reciting Qur'an. When you imagine standing in two rakaah and reciting the Book of Allah *subhana' wa tala* -how many hours has it taken him for two rakaah? Four? Five hours? Allah Alaam but I would assure you he would not feel any pain or boredom because of the involvement with the Book of Allah, Allah '*azza wa jall* would make it easy for him.

Rasul *sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam*, would stand up for salaah and his feet would swell, it would become sore and injured because of standing up all night! And his wife 'Aishah *radhiAllahu `anha* would say, 'Why don't you rest? Didn't Allah forgive all of your sins?' You don't have to do this. You don't have to go through all of this pain Allah has already forgiven you of all of your sins.

What did Rasulullah say? 'Shouldn't I be a grateful Servent?' (*Bukhari and Muslim*). And Rasulullah was so involved in his ibadaah he wouldn't be feeling that pain. He had love for

salaah, he said "The most beloved thing for me is standing for salaah, that would be the best moments of my life"

What we need is to develop this relationship with the Book of Allah, take it seriously.

In our studies, let's not get distracted from the Book of Allah '*azza wa jall*'. It is good to study different Islamic Sciences, but let's not get distracted from studying the Book of Allah '*azza wa jall*'. Sometimes we will study everything but Qur'an and then we think that we are studying Islamic studies. But, if you're not studying the Book of Allah '*azza wa jall*' then it would be problematic to call that an Islamic curriculum. We have to empathise on Qur'an and to have a comprehensive understanding of the Book of Allah not only on the individual level but also in the way we perceive and view the world.

An example before closing (the lecture): The Sahabah *radhiAllahu `anhum* recited the Qur'an and this was the only source of knowledge for them, they didn't know anything else. Before Islam they were illiterate people, ignorant- they knew nothing. Take for example Umar ibn al-Khattab *radhiAllahu `anhu*, what was his knowledge? Umar ibn al-Khattab was once seen laughing and then crying; one after the other. They asked why he was laughing, and then crying? He said, "I laughed and I cried because I remembered my days of Jahiliyyah, I laughed because I remembered the day I was travelling and I forgot to take my 'god' (a portable idol), idols they would take with them on travel- small idols, they had big huge idols in Makkah but then they had portable idols they'd take with backpacks with them on their travels. Umar ibn al-Khattab forgot to take this small idol with him, when he felt like doing worship he remembered he had forgotten to bring an idol along. So he took his food- dates, and he moulded them in the form of an idol and made sujood to it, an idol made out of dates. After a while he became hungry, so he ate his 'god,' he had it for dinner! He said that's why I was laughing.

They asked him so why was he crying? He said, the reason I am crying is because I remembered the day I buried my daughter alive. After I prepared the grave for her, some dirt came on my beard so my daughter cleaned my beard for me before I threw her into the grave. And he cried.

He laughed and he cried when he was a Muslim, because as a Muslim these were things that made him laugh and cry, but without Islam it wasn't funny and it wasn't sad- it was normal. Without Islam making sujood to dates, then eating that 'god' was absolutely fine and acceptable. And without Islam killing his daughter by burying her alive was something acceptable. It was Islam that changed him, it was Qur'an that changed Umar ibn al-Khattab- so, the Sahabah had nothing without Islam. They didn't have any formal education, they didn't learn anything- they were illiterate. What they were after Islam was what they learned from the Book of Allah.

'Umm Haram (bint Milhan) *radhiAllahu `anha*, the sister of the mother of Anas ibn Maalik, studied the Qur'an and realised that this religion would spread and there would be jihaad on the path of Allah in land and on sea. So she went to Rasul *sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* and said, "I want to be one of those who will go feesabillaah in the sea, I want to be with them." For them this was something abnormal because the people of Makkah and Madinah never travelled in the sea. Remember, they're in a Peninsula in the middle of the desert, Subhan'Allah the Arabs had no Navy and no commercial trade even by the sea- their trade is with Yamaan and as-Shaam and that's it all in land. The ones who had experience with the oceans and the sea were the ones in the coastal areas. And none of the Sahabah lived in the coastal areas.

So, she said I want to be of those who go to jihaad by sea, Rasulullah *sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* made du'aa for her so that she would be with them. (*Bukhari hadeeth no.129*)

And she was with the ones who went in the early jihaad under the Khilafah of Muawiyyah bin Abi Sufyan *radhiAllahu `anhu*. She understood this religion through studying the ayaath that Allah has subjected the sea to us.

Allah *subhana wa tala* says:

'And He it is Who has subjected the sea (to you), that you eat thereof fresh tender meat (i.e. fish), and that you bring forth out of it ornaments to wear. And you see the ships plowing through it, that you may seek (thus) of His Bounty (by transporting the goods from place to place) and that you may be grateful.' [Surah Nah, Ayah 14]

Even though she never went on board a ship in her life (previously), she understood just by reading Qur'an that one day this deen (Islam) would spread through the sea and Allah has subjected the sea to us.

Now in the world, there are twenty or thirty thousand ships sailing on the oceans of the world. The oceans make up about 8/10 of the surface of the face of the earth and not one of these ships is manufactured by the Muslims, not even one. Amongst all of these twenty or thirty thousand ships or vessels sailing on the ocean not one submarine belongs to Muslims. So where are we from the understanding of Qur'an where he mentioned he has made the sea subjected to us? Where is our understanding of the Qur'an? When the Sahabah understood this, and they were people who had no involvement whatsoever with the ocean they immediately established a navy and commercial fleets. Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan *radhiAllahu `anhu* was the one who established this, founder of the Islamic Navy and also the Islamic commercial fleets that then became the dominant commercial force all over the world for a few centuries, in terms of Navy and in terms of commercial trading. So it is clear that we are quite far away from having the right understanding of the Book of Allah *'azza wa jall*.

We ask Allah *'azza wa jall* to give us fiqh (understanding) of His Religion and to benefit us all, Aameen.

Imam Anwar al-Awlaki (Hafidhahullah)

Transcribed by: 'Abd al Fattaah (Abu Rawaahah) from the lecture '*Understanding the Qur'an*'

Nourishing and nurturing Love for the Lord of the Worlds Allah

The statement 'To know him is to love him' holds not truer than when stated in respect to the Creator and Sustainer of all things, he who has tasted the sweetness of eemaan worshipping Allah shall testify willingly that pleasing his Rabb in accordance to the Sunnah of our the Messenger was a pleasure beyond expression of words.

Without doubt Allah is truly deserving of all reliance, praise, prostration, and struggle for his deen- with this holding true the question may arise as to what means a slave of Allah can foster this innate muhabah and devotion towards his Sustainer, some of these include:

1. To recognise the bounties (and favours) Allah has bestowed upon His slaves

These bounties [are so many that they] cannot be counted or enumerated. [Allah says:] *"If you count the blessings of Allah, never will you be able to count them."* [Surah Ibrahim, 34]

Hearts naturally have love for those who do good to them. Love for a blessing is from the general aspects of thanking the one who has bestowed a bounty. It is said that thanks is with the heart, tongue and limbs.

2. Another cause is to have knowledge of Allah by His Names, Attributes and Actions.

The one who knows Allah *'azza wa jall*, loves Him. Whoever loves Him, obeys Him. Whoever obeys Allah is honoured by Him. Whoever Allah honours, He will have him live close to Him. Whoever lives close to Him, has attained the glad tidings.

3. One of the great causes [that leads to having love of Allah] is the specific knowledge that comes about through pondering over the creation of the heavens and the earth and what Allah has created

In the Qur'an, there are many mentionings of the signs of Allah that indicate His Greatness, Power, Majesty, Perfection, Eminence, Compassion, Mercy, Strength, Subjugation and other of His beautiful Names and exalted Attributes. Whenever one's knowledge of Allah is strengthened, one's love for Him is also strengthened and one's love for obeying Him is also strengthened. He will then experience the pleasure of worship, whether it be in prayer, remembrance or other forms of worship.

4. Another cause that will bring about love for Allah is to act towards Allah with sincerity and purity while going against one's desires

This is a cause for Allah *'azza wa jall* to bless a slave and when He blesses the slave, the slave loves Him.

5. One of the greatest causes that bring about one's love for Allah is increasing one's remembrance of Allah

Whenever a person loves something, he remembers it more often. And it is through the remembrance of Allah that the hearts find tranquillity. In fact, one of the signs of having love for Allah is the constant remembrance of Allah *'azza wa jall* by one's heart and tongue.

6. One of the causes that brings about Allah's love for His slave is reciting the Qur'an often and pondering over its meaning

In particular reciting and reflecting over verses that contain Allah's Names, Attributes and Actions, having fondness for that action will lead the slave to love Allah and Allah to love Him.

7. Another of the causes of love for Allah is thoughts as to the meeting with Allah

Remembering what has been mentioned in the Qur'an and Sunnah concerning the believers seeing their Lord in the Hereafter and visiting them and gathering together on the Day of Abundance.

That will definitely bring about in a person love for Allah.

Imaam Zain ad-Din Abu al-Faraj 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Rajab al-Hanbali (Rahimahullah)

Compiled from *'Instinshaq Naseem ul-Uns min Nafahaati Riyaadil-Qudus'*

Translated by: Shaykh Jamaal al-Din Zarabozo

Adapted and edited by: **Tayyibun Institute UK** www.tayyibun.com

Those who fast will be called from the gate of al-Rayyaan

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

Allah has enjoined upon the Muslims fasting the month of Ramadhan, and He has promised a great reward to those who fast. Because the virtue of fasting is so great, Allah 'azza wa jall has not specified the reward for it, rather He said – in a hadeeth qudsi – “... *except for fasting, for it is for Me, and I shall reward for it.*”

The virtues of the month of Ramadhan are many. For example, that which Allah has promised those who fast, namely the gate of al-Rayyaan. This is the name which was narrated in the hadeeth whose authenticity is agreed upon. Sahl radhiAllahu 'anhu said that the Prophet sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam said: “*In Paradise there is a gate called al-Rayyaan, through which those who used to fast will enter on the Day of Resurrection, and no one but they will enter it. It will be said, 'Where are those who fasted?' They will get up, and none will enter it but them. When they have entered, it will be locked, and no one else will enter.*” (al-Bukhaari, 1763; Muslim, 1947).

Among the ahadeeth which explain the reward for fasting are the following:

It was narrated from Abu Salamah that Abu Hurayrah radhiAllahu 'anhu said: “*The Messenger of Allah sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam said: 'Whoever fasts Ramadhan out of faith and seeking reward, his previous sins will be forgiven.'*” (Narrated by al-Bukhaari, al-Eemaan, 37).

It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah radhiAllahu 'anhu said: “*The Messenger of Allah sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam said: 'Allah says: "Every deed of the son of Adam is for him, except for fasting; it is for Me and I shall reward for it." Fasting is a shield and when one of you is fasting he avoid sexual relations with his wife and quarrelling. If somebody should fight or quarrel with him, he should say, 'I am fasting.' By the One in Whose hand is my soul, the unpleasant smell coming out from the mouth of a fasting person is better in the sight of Allah than the smell of musk. The fasting person will have two moments of joy: one when he breaks his fast, and the other when he meets his Lord; then he will be pleased because of his fasting.'*” (Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 1771)

Secondly:

It is known that Paradise has many gates, because Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Adn (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens), which they shall enter and (also) those who acted righteously from among their fathers, and their wives, and their offspring. And Angels shall enter unto them from every gate” [Surah al-Ra'd, Ayah 23]

"And those who kept their duty to their Lord (Al-Muttaqoon – the pious) will be led to Paradise in groups till when they reach it, and its gates will be opened (before their arrival for their reception) and its keepers will say: Salaamun 'Alaykum (peace be upon you)! You have done well, so enter here to abide therein" [Surah al-Zumar, Ayah 73]

In the saheeh ahadeeth it says that there are eight gates:

It was narrated from Sahl ibn Sa'd radhiAllahu 'anhu that the Prophet sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam said: "In Paradise there are eight gates, among which is a gate called al-Rayyaan, which none will enter but those who fast." (Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 3017).

It was narrated from 'Ubaadah radhiAllahu 'anhu that the Prophet sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam said: "Whoever bears witness that there is no god but Allah alone, with no partner or associate, and that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger, and that 'Eesa is the slave of Allah and His Messenger, and a word which Allah bestowed on Maryam and a spirit created by Him (cf. al-Nisa' 4:171), and that Paradise is true and Hell is true, will have the right to be admitted by Allah to Paradise through whichever of the eight gates he wishes, because of his good deeds." (Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 3180; Muslim, 41)

One of the bounties that Allah 'azza wa jall has bestowed upon this ummah is that He opens all the gates of Paradise during the month of Ramadhaan, not just one gate. Whoever says that there is a gate in Paradise called 'Baab al-Radwaan' has to produce evidence for that.

It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah radhiAllahu 'anhu that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "When Ramadhaan begins, the gates of Paradise are opened and the gates of Hell are closed, and the devils are chained up." (Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 3035; Muslim 1793)

We ask Allah 'azza wa jall to make us among those who will enter Paradise. May Allah bless our Prophet Muhammad sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam.

And Allah knows best.

Shaykh Saleh al Munajjid (Hafidhahullah)
IslamQA.com

A practical Ramadhaan Checklist

1) Ask Allah 'azza wa jall to help you to reach Ramadhaan and to get the most out of it as the Salaf used to do

Here are a few ahadeeth to remind you of the excellence of Ramadhaan and fasting:

Once the Prophet sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam said to the Sahabah radhiAllahu 'anhum, "Ramadhaan has come, a blessed month, Allah has made it obligatory for you to fast, the doors of the Heavens are opened up the door of hell are closed the rebellious shayateen are tied up, in it is a night that belongs to Allah is better than a thousand month,s one who is deprived its goodness is truly deprived" (an-Nasai and al-Baihaqi)

Abu Hurayrah narrated that Allah's Messenger *sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam* said, "The five prayers, one Jum'ah to the next, one Ramadhaan to the next are all expiation of anything between as long as the major sins are avoided" (Muslim)

Abu Hurayrah *radhiAllahu `anhu* narrated that Allah's Messenger *sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam* said, "When Ramadhaan comes the doors of Jannah are firmly opened and the doors of the fire are firmly closed and the shayateen are chained" (al-Bukhari and Muslim)

In a version of Muslim "The doors of mercy are firmly opened and the doors of Jahannam are firmly closed and the shayateen are tied up"

Abu Hurayrah *radhiAllahu `anhu* narrated that Allah's Messenger *sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam* said that Allah said, "All the actions of the son of Adam is for him except fasting it is for me and I reward it. As-Siyam is a shield. On the day that one of you is fasting he must not speak bad and he must not become angry. If someone abuses him or fights him let him say I am fasting I am fasting. By the one in whose hand is the soul of Muhammad the smell from the mouth of one fasting, with Allah, is better than the smell of musk. One fasting has two joys when he opens his fast he rejoices and when he meets his lord he will rejoice with his fast." (al-Bukhari)

Siyam and Qur'an will intercede for a Muslim:

The Prophet *sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam* said, "Siyam and Qur'an will intercede for the servant on the day of judgement. Fasting will say my Lord I stopped him from his food and pleasures in the day. The Qur'an will say I stopped him from sleep at night. Let me intercede for him. They will be allowed to intercede". (Ahmad)

2) Fast everyday with eemaan and pure intention seeking reward from Allah alone Ask Allah

The Prophet *sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam* said, "Whoever fasts in Ramadhaan with Eemaan and seeking reward (from Allah) his past sins will be forgiven". (al-Bukhari and Muslim)

3) Increase recitation of the Qur'an, the Prophet used to read the whole Qur'an in Ramadhaan

Ibn 'Abbas *radhiAllahu `anhu* narrated that Allah's Messenger was the most generous of people and he was the most generous in the month of Ramadhaan when Jibreel met him. Jibreel used to meet him every night of Ramadhaan to teach him the Qur'an. Allah's messenger was the most generous person, even more generous than the strong uncontrollable wind (in readiness and haste to do charitable deeds). (al-Bukhari, Muslim)

4) Have Suhoor

The Prophet *sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam* said, "Have Suhoor because it is blessed". (al-Bukhari and Muslim)

5) Delay Suhoor as was the Sunnah

Aisha *radhiAllahu `anha* narrated that Bilal *radhiAllahu `anhu* used to pronounce the Adhan at night, so Allah's Messenger *sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam* said, "Carry on taking your meals (eat

and drink) till Ibn Um Maktum pronounces the Adhan, for he does not pronounce it till it is dawn. (al-Bukhari, Muslim)

6) Say Du'aa during the fast because the Prophet *sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* said that three people's supplication is not rejected one of them is the fasting person

Three supplications will not be rejected (by Allah), the supplication of the parent for his child, the supplication of the one who is fasting, and the supplication of the traveler. (al-Bayhaquee, at-Tirmidhi)

Ask for the good of this life and the next for yourself, your family and Muslims in general.

7) Hurry to open your fast soon as it is time

Sahl Ibn Saad *radhiAllahu `anhu* narrated that Allah's Messenger *sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* said "People will remain on good as long as they hasten the *fitr*". (al-Bukhari and Muslim)

8) Say Du'aa before opening the fast

The Prophet *sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* said, "The fasting person has a supplication that is answered when he opens his fast". (Ibn Majah and al-Hakim)

9) Open fast with dates

Salman Ibn Amir *radhiAllahu `anhu* narrated that the Prophet *sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* said "When one of you opens his fast he should do so with dates for it is blessed if he doesn't find dates then water for it is pure" (Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah)

10) Say this Du'aa on opening fast:

(The thirst has gone, the veins are quenched and the reward is due insha'Allah)" (Abu Dawud)

11) Give Sadaqah and be kind to people. Feed the poor and invite others for Iftar

*The Prophet *sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* was the most generous of people and he was most generous in Ramadhan. (al-Bukhari and Muslim)*

The Prophet *sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* said, "Whoever gives Iftar to someone fasting he will have the same reward without decreasing the reward of the person fasting". (at-Tirmidhi and an-Nasai)

12) Avoid anything that diminishes the fast such as, lying, backbiting, cheating, getting angry and arguing

The Prophet *sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* said, "Whoever does not abandon false words and deeds Allah has no need for him to leave his food and drink". (al-Bukhari)

The Prophet *sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* said, "Perhaps someone fasting, his share is hunger and thirst". (al-Hakim and Ibn Khuzaymah)

13) Ask for forgiveness since this is the month Allah 'azza wa jall frees people from the fire

Allah's Messenger *sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said, "Jibreel appeared to me and said, may he be distanced, the one who reaches Ramadhaan and is not forgiven..." (al-Hakim)

Abu Umamah *radhiAllahu 'anh*u narrated that The Prophet *sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said, "At every fitr Allah frees people from the fire" (Ahmad)

14) Pray At-Tarawih with Khushu. If you pray in the Masjid complete the Salaah with the Imaam

The Prophet *sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said, "Whoever prays during Ramadhaan with Eemaan and seeking reward (from Allah) his past sins will be forgiven". (al-Bukhari and Muslim)

15) Try harder the last ten nights especially the odd nights

The Prophet *sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* would strive in Ramadhaan more than he would in any other month and more so in the last ten days. (Muslim)

16) Say this Du'aa in the nights that Laylatul-Qadr is likely to fall on:

(O Allah you are Forgiving and love forgiveness so forgive me). (at-Tirmidhi)

17) Ask Allah 'azza wa jall to accept all your good actions during this month

Ustadh Abu Talha

Ustadh Abu Talha graduated from Madinah Islamic University (K.S.A) with a BA Hons in Shari'ah and specialises in the field of Fiqh and Aqeedah. The Ustadh has studied under the Scholars of the Prophet's Masjid and is currently a teacher at the Tayyibun Institute UK.

Concerning 'Itikaaf

It's Prescription:

1. 'Itikaaf (secluding oneself in the Masjid) is a recommended act in Ramadhaan as well as any other day in the year. The source for that is found in Allah's saying: "...**while you are making 'Itikaaf in the Masaajid.**" And there are also many authentic ahadeeth about the Prophet's *sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* 'Itikaaf and narrations from the Salaf about it also. They are mentioned in the Musannafs of Ibn Abee Shaybah and 'Abdur-Razzaaq.

It is authentically reported that the Prophet *sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* made 'Itikaaf in the last ten days of Shawaal (reported from a hadeeth of 'Aishah *radhiAllahu 'anha* classified by al-Bukharee, Muslim and Ibn Khuzaymah as saheeh) and that 'Umar (*radhiAllahu 'anh*u) said to the Prophet (*sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam*): "I made an oath (to Allah) in the Days of Ignorance that I would make 'Itikaaf for one night in the Masjid al-Haraam, (should I do it)?" The Prophet (*sallAllahu 'alayhi wa*

sallam) responded: "Fulfill your oath." So he made 'Itikaaf for one night. (al-Bukharee, Muslim and Ibn Khuzaymah)

2. Observing it in Ramadhaan is established in the hadeeth of Abu Hurayrah *radhiAllahu `anhu*: "Allah's Messenger (sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam) would make 'Itikaaf for ten days in every Ramadhaan. But when it was the year in which he died, he made 'Itikaaf for twenty days." (Saheeh al-Bukhaaree, Ibn Khuzaymah)

3. The best time to do it is in the last part of Ramadhaan because the Prophet (sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam) would make 'Itikaaf during the last ten days of Ramadhaan until Allah took his soul (in death). (Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim and Ibn Khuzaymah (2223) and it is referenced in Al-Irwaa (966) and Saheeh Abee Dawood)

It's Conditions:

1. It's observance is not legislated except in the Masaajid, based on Allah's saying: "***And do not have intercourse with them (your wives) while you are making 'Itikaaf in the Masaajid.***" (***Surah al-Baqarah: 187***) (al-Haafidh Ibn Hajr said: "The point of evidence found in this ayah is that if it were correct to do 'Itikaaf in someplace other than a Masjid, the forbiddance of having sexual relations would not be specifically mentioned, because sexual intercourse is forbidden during 'Itikaaf according to the consensus of the scholars. So it is understood through the mentioning of "***Masaajid***" that the meaning is that 'Itikaaf is not correct except in it the masaajid.)

And 'Aishah (*radhiAllahu `anha*) said: "*The Sunnah for the one doing 'Itikaaf is that he should not go out (of the Masjid) except for some need that he must fulfil. He should not witness a funeral, nor should he touch his wife, or have intercourse with her. And there is no 'Itikaaf except in a Masjid that establishes the Jamaa'ah (congregational prayer). And the Sunnah for the one doing 'Itikaaf is that he should be fasting (on the day he makes 'Itikaaf).*" (Saheeh al-Baihaqee, Hasan Abu Dawood)

2. The Masjid should also hold the Jumu'ah prayers so that he is not forced to leave the Masjid to pray the Jumu'ah prayer. This is because going out for it is an obligation, based on 'Aishah's saying in one of the narrations from the previous hadeeth: "...and there is no 'Itikaaf except in a Masjid that holds the Jumu'ah prayer." (al-Bayhaqee reported on Ibn 'Abbaas that he said: "Verily, the most hated of things to Allah are the innovations. And verily from the innovations is making 'Itikaaf in the masaajid that are located in the houses.")

Furthermore, I came upon an authentic hadeeth that clearly specifies the "*Masaajid*" mentioned in the previous ayah to mean the three Masaajid: Masjid al-Haraam, Masjid an-Nabawee and Masjid Al-Aqsaa. The hadeeth is: "*There is no 'Itikaaf except in the three Masaajid.*" (Saheeh at-Tahaawee, al-Isma'eelee, and al-Baihaqee)

According to what I came across, those among the Salaf who held this opinion were Hudhayfah Ibn Al-Yamaan, Sa'eed Ibn Al-Musayyib and 'Ataa. However, he ('Ataa) did not mention Masjid Al-Aqsaa. Others held the opinion that it was any congregating Masjid (in which the Jumu'ah prayer is held), without restriction. And yet others disagreed saying it can even be done in the Masjid of one's home. And there is no doubt that adhering to what complies with the hadeeth about it is what deserves to be followed. And Allah, Glorified and Exalted, knows best.

3. It is from the Sunnah for the one making 'Itikaaf to observe fasting, as has been stated by 'Aa'ishah (*radhiAllahu `anha*). (Saheeh al-Baihaqee, Hasan- Abu Dawood) (Imaam Ibn Al-Qayyim

said in *Zaad Al-Ma'aad*: "It is not reported on the Prophet (sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam) that he made 'Itikaaf while not fasting. Rather, 'A'ishah (radhiAllahu `anha) said: 'There is no 'Itikaaf except with fasting.' And furthermore, Allah did not mention 'Itikaaf except with the fast. And the Prophet (sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam) did not do it unless he was fasting. So the correct opinion is in the evidence, which the majority of the scholars adhere to: that fasting is a condition for 'Itikaaf. And this is the opinion that Shaykh al-Islam Abul-'Abbaas Ibn Tamiyyah favoured." And he adds to this that it is not legislated in the Religion that one who goes out to the masjid for prayer or other than that is supposed to make an intention for the amount of time he will spend in 'Itikaaf. This is what Shaykh al-Islam clarified in his *Ikhtiyaaraat*.)

What is permissible for the person making 'Itikaaf:

1. It is permissible for him to leave the Masjid in order to fulfil a need. It is also permissible for him to stick his head out of the Masjid to have it washed and combed. 'A'ishah (radhiAllahu `anha) said: *"The Messenger of Allah (sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam) entered his head in my presence while he was making 'Itikaaf in the Masjid, and I was in my apartment. So I would comb his hair, [and in one narration: I would wash it, even though there was the threshold between me and him, and I would be menstruating], and he (sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam) would not enter the house unless he had a [human] need, while making 'Itikaaf."* (al-Bukhaaree, Muslim, Ibn Abee Shaybah, and Ahmad)
2. It is permissible for the one making 'Itikaaf and others to make wudoo (ablution) in the Masjid, based on the saying of a man who would serve the Prophet (sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam): *"The Prophet would make a light wudoo (ablution) in the Masjid."* (Hasan al-Bayhaquee, Saheeh Ahmad (5/364))
3. He may set up a small tent in the back of the Masjid in which to make 'Itikaaf. This is since 'A'ishah (radhiAllahu `anha) would set up a *khibaa* (one type of house of the Arabs made from fur or wool) (tent) for the Prophet (sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam) when he would make 'Itikaaf. And this was from his (sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam) command. (al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

And one time he made 'Itikaaf in a small tent that had a mat covering its doorway. (From a hadeeth narrated by Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudree radhiAllahu `anhu, reported by Muslim and Ibn Khuzaymah in their Saheehs. It is referenced in Saheeh Abee Dawood)

The Allowance of a woman to make 'Itikaaf and visit her husband (who is making 'Itikaaf) in the Masjid:

4. It is permissible for a woman to visit her husband while he is making 'Itikaaf. And he may walk with her to bid her farewell up to the door of the masjid, based on the saying of Safiyyah (radhiAllahu `anha):

"The Prophet (sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam) was making 'Itikaaf in the Masjid during the last ten days of Ramadhaan, so I went to visit him one night, and his wives were with him. So I spoke to him for an hour, then I got up to leave and he said: 'Don't rush, I'll go out with you.' So he got up with me to escort me out." And her dwelling used to be in the home of Usaamah Ibn Zayd. Then they walked until they reached the door of the Masjid, which was by the door of Umm Salamah. Then two men from the Ansaar passed by and when they saw the Prophet (sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam), they rushed away. So the Prophet (sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam) said: 'Slow down! This is (my wife) Safiyyah Bint Huyai' So they said: 'SubhaanAllah, O Messenger of Allah.' He (sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam) said: 'Verily, the Devil flows through the human like the flowing of blood. And I feared lest he put some evil into your hearts.'" [Or he

(sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam) said: "something into your hearts." (Hadeeth narrated by Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudree (radhiAllahu `anhu), reported by Muslim and Ibn Khuzaymah in their Saheehs. It is referenced in Saheeh Abee Dawood)

In fact it is even permissible for a woman to make 'Itikaaf along with her husband in the Masjid or by herself, based on the statement of 'A'ishah (radhiAllahu `anha): "One of the wives of Allah's Messenger (sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam) made 'Itikaaf with him while she was in the state of Istihaada (bleeding between periods) [in another narration it states she is Umm Salamah] and she would see red (blood) or yellowish traces (come out of her). And sometimes we put a tray beneath her when she offered the prayer." (al-Bukhaaree and it is referenced in Saheeh Sunan Abee Dawood) *

And she also said: "The Prophet (sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam) would observe 'Itikaaf during the last ten days of Ramadhaan, until he died. Then his wives observed 'Itikaaf after him." (al-Bukhaaree, Muslim and others)

There is proof in this that it is permissible for the women to make 'Itikaaf also. And there is no doubt that this is on the condition that their guardians grant them permission to do that. And it is also on the condition that the place is free from any *fitnah* and intermingling with men, based on the many evidences for that and also on the Fiqh principle: "Preventing an evil takes precedence over bringing about a good."

5. Having sexual intercourse nullifies one's 'Itikaaf, based on Allah's saying: "And do not have sexual relations with them (your wives) while you are making 'Itikaaf in the Masaajid."

And Ibn 'Abbaas (radhiAllahu `anhu) said: "If the person making 'Itikaaf has sexual relations then he nullifies his 'Itikaaf and must start it over again." (Saheeh Abee Shaybah (3/92) and 'Abdur-Razaaq (4/363)) (The meaning of his saying: "must start it over" is that he must redo his 'Itikaaf). There is no recompense (*kaffarah*) that is binding upon him due to a lack of anything being mentioned about that by the Prophet (sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam) and his Companions.

Shaykh Muhammed Nasir ud deen al-Albani (Rahimahullah)

Compiled from 'Qiyaam Ramadhaan'

Adapted and edited by: **Tayyibun Institute UK** www.tayyibun.com

Editor's Note: * The Fuqahaa' state when in a state of major impurity that one cannot observe salaah, enter the Masjid, touch the Mushaaf, etc. this principle apparently contradicts the hadeeth in question. However, a means to resolve this has been suggested that the Masjid referred may be the Prophets Masjid which was adjacent to the home of the wives of the Mothers or that the impurity was not of such a state that would put her in such conditions.

Ramadhaan in Captivity

Allah 'azza wa jall said in [Surah al-Baqarah, Ayah185]: *"The month of Ramadhaan is that in which was revealed the Qur'an, a guidance for people, clear proofs of guidance and a criterion (to judge between right and wrong)."*

It was reported by Abu Said al-Khudri *radhiAllahu 'anhu*, that the Messenger of Allah *sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: *"Whosoever fasts one day in the Path of Allah, a distance of seventy years journey will be placed between him and the Hell Fire."* (Saheeh Muslim)

The Pious Predecessors would spend six months of every year preparing for Ramadhaan and the other six months asking Allah to accept the deeds that they did in Ramadhaan.

Preparation for the prisoners to receive Ramadhaan begins a couple of months before Ramadhaan, with brothers starting voluntary fasts once a week or so. Once Shabaan begins, the frequency of these voluntary fasts increases to twice a week and more approaching the days just before Ramadhaan.

Voluntary fasts are different in prison as you will, depending on the time of the year you fast, always be given your food either significantly before or significantly after your fast has opened. In other words, either your food will be cold by the time you get to eat it (there are no microwaves or cookers here) or you will have to wait about an hour or two to eat. Since you are allowed a watch, but no alarm of any sort, it really is a 'hit and miss' what time you have suhoor. Ramadhaan is different because of the large number of Muslim prisoners fasting and so you will get your food more or less on time and if the gap is too large, some prisons will give you a flask to keep your food warm.

Officers on each wing are usually instructed by the Imaam to wake up fasting Muslim prisoners for suhoor, about 30-40 minutes before Fajr. Suhoor here consists of a 'pack' that you are provided the evening before and it contains cereal, milk, dates, a sandwich and a fruit. There is no hot suhoor.

After completing suhoor and making wudu quietly (taking care not to wake sleeping non-Muslim prisoners who neighbour you), brothers will normally sit and make dua in the tranquil, pre-dawn time whilst waiting for Fajr. Once Fajr begins, a quiet adhaan is followed by individual prayer in your cell. If you are near other Muslim prisoners, you may hear their recitation during their Fajr prayer. Fajr is followed by morning duas and some prefer to sleep until the morning.

The day passes quickly. If you have a strict programmes of remembrance duas, Qur'anic recitation/memorisation and extra prayers to do, there is little time for much else once showers, phone calls, washing clothes etc are factored in.

Towards the end of the day, whilst brothers are collecting their food, they might return to their cell to find a chocolate bar, or a fruit, or a snack etc. left by an anonymous donor who wishes to follow in the footsteps of the Prophet's (*sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) Sunnah by being more generous than the fleeting wind in Ramadhaan. Since these eatables need to be purchased via a weekly 'canteen' order system based on limited spending quotas, the actual value of the

chocolate or snack far exceeds its monetary value. It is not like a supermarket where one can buy limitless supplies of groceries. Indeed, these canteen groceries are the 'currency' between prisoners which they use to pay each other for favours etc. Therefore, since the reward of a deed is commensurate to the intention behind it, such small acts of generosity have the potential of great reward. The additional benefit of such anonymous generosity is that the recipients will always make dua for the donor whilst opening their fast.

The last half-hour or hour before Maghrib is spent alone in the cell, in remembrance, duas and seeking forgiveness. As the time of Maghrib enters, brothers give the adhan individually. Sometimes, a recorded adhan can be heard echoing around the exercise yard adjacent to the wing. One's fast opens in peace and tranquillity, proceeded by more duas for the fast and the deeds of the day to be accepted by the One for Whom they were performed.

As the fast opens, there is not the feeling of guilt usually associated with opening a fast on a table full of all types of food. Some brothers said that they would always feel guilty when opening their fast outside prison, at a table spread with all types of food and drink. They would feel guilty when thinking about what poor and needy Muslims or Muslim prisoners would be opening their fast with. However, when one is on the other side of the guilt trip, with nothing but dates and water to open the fast, this feeling disappears, more so when one is a captive for the sake of one's deen and not due to the committing of any crime.

After praying Maghrib, you will sit to eat your food. Sometimes the food is not enough so you might supplement it by adding cold grated cheese or cold hard boiled egg (both provided sometimes for suhoor) to your plain boiled rice. Alternatively, a bowl of cereal or peanut butter sandwich (if you have previously purchased peanut butter in your weekly 'canteen') also does the trick. Though this food might not reach the quality or quantity of what you might eat outside prison, this food has the taste of honour and dignity, which cannot be purchased outside prison, even with gold or silver. You are further grateful when you think of Muslim prisoners around the world, such as in Guantanamo Bay, where the iftar meal is purposely served two hours after Maghrib, or America, where the food of Muslim 'terror' suspects is thrown into their cell via a hatch and they need to scoop it up from the floor before eating it. [The above are not rumours but based on actual testimonies.]

Soon it is time for Isha and Taraweeh prayers. This is one of the most enjoyable parts of Ramadhan in captivity. Brothers pray Taraweeh individually by reading from their Qur'ans and there is no limit to the time that you can spend on your prayer. The nearby cells of Muslim prisoners praying Taraweeh resonate with the humming of their Qur'anic recitation: a recitation which comes from the heart and reaches the heart. The Qur'an means more in prison than outside and you have feelings whilst reciting the Qur'an in prison that you do not have outside. Each verse becomes alive in prison and it has a direct relevance to your individual situation. Whilst in Taraweeh, you can stop to think about a particular verse or repeat it over and over again as the Messenger of Allah (*sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam*) used to do. You will not experience this pleasure with the Qur'an if your heart is rusty and full of the darkness of sins. The Qur'an is pure and only a pure heart can derive maximum benefit from it.

Eventually you retire to sleep with the full knowledge that, if Allah accepts your fast for that day, you will be rewarded by moving away from the Hell Fire a distance of seventy years. The hadith mentioned earlier on refers to a fast whilst striving or struggling in the Path of Allah, not as is

mistakenly believed, just any fast. Of course, fasting anywhere has huge rewards but this hadith specifically refers to a fast 'fee sabeelillah' (in the Path of Allah). The occurrence of good dreams increases in Ramadhan whilst in captivity. The only sadness you feel as you nod off is that there is one less day remaining of Ramadhan and it will never return.

Babar Ahmad

British Political Prisoner MX5383
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Source: 4th Letter from Babar Ahmad

www.freebabarahmad.com

www.cageprisoners.com

Note: From behind bars our brother writes to the outside world, to those who still remember him and all other Prisoners of Faith describing the condition, humble lives and dwellings spent in the blessed Month, beautiful to witness after all the hardship how the true slaves Allah as ever express sabr and shukr alhamdulillah. For those unaware this article is not a new one but several years old- how it is that Ramadhan after Ramadhan passes us by whilst we remain carefree, seemingly having no time even to pause and reflect on the trials of our brothers and sisters in need.

We ask of you to do whatever is in your means to assist your fellow believers Inshaa Allah, please remember to sincerely make du'aa to Allah 'azza wa jall for the believers across the Ummah, all those under occupation and detainment- from the likes of imprisoned scholars such as Ahmad Musa Jibril, Shaykh Dr. Ali al-Timimi, etc. or our beloved brothers such as Babar Ahmad who may face extradition, to even our honourable sisters such as Dr. Aafia Siddiqui- may Allah protect them all and grant them victory over their enemies- Aameen.

Protecting Our Deeds

Bismillah walhamdulillah was salaatu wa salaamu ala Rasulullah

We are all aware what effort we put into the month of Ramadhan. A month in which Allah 'azza wa jall has made acts of worship easy for us to perform, the Masajid prepare daily with taraweeh qiyaam and suhoor and iftaar. Do we have any excuse not to have raised ourselves in this month?

It is said that Ramadhan is like a mirror, a time for you to truly evaluate your relationship with Allah. In this month of ease did you fulfill your expectations and the goals you set? Do you feel that you have become more patient? Did you refine your manners? Did you become more charitable? And more importantly, do you feel you have gained Taqwaa? Has Allah 'azza wa jall not told us that it is Taqwaa that we are supposed to gain during the fast, Allah says ***"Fasting is prescribed as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may attain Taqwaa"*** [Surah al-Baqarah, Ayah 18]

Now that Ramadhan is over, I think we all realise that the leaving of food, drink and relations with our spouses only paved that way for us to recognise the greatness of Allah and what blessings He has given us. Allah 'azza wa jall tells us in the Qur'an, ***"...and if anyone of you were to count Allah's blessings you would not be able"*** [Surah an-Nahl, Ayah 18].

Our bodies become weak, but our souls strengthened through the worship of our Lord. We thought after the Laylatul Qadr, we hoped for Allah's forgiveness and mercy, but the questions arises, what action will remain with us after Ramadhan?

After praying taraweeh every night, after fasting day, after giving charity regularly, what stays with us? What will we continue to do after the month of Ramadhaan? When this month of mercy and blessing has finished, it is important that we continue to worship Allah, Allah says in the Qur'an *"...and worship your Lord until there comes unto you the certainly (i.e. death)" [Surah al-Hijr, Ayah 99].*

We are ordered to worship Allah 'azza wa jall as he has prescribed, with sincerity and devotion, but should be aware and very careful not to undo all that we have gained in Ramadhaan.

Allah tells in the Qur'an, *"And do not be like her who undoes the thread which she has spun, after it has become strong..." [Surah an-Nahl, Ayah 92].*

Ibn Kathir *rahimahullah* in his tafseer quotes Mujahid and Qatadah explaining this verse, "This is like the one who breaks a covenant after confirming it". Like a person who offered all that worship in the month of Ramadhaan, and when it was over, returns to disobedience.

If we look at the hadith of the Prophet *sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* he said, *"Verily the beloved actions to Allah are those which are continuous, even though they may be little"* (Recorded by Muslim)

We are not necessarily expected to keep up that level of worship after Ramadhaan, but rather be continuous and constant in our worship. Imam An Nawawi *rahimahullah*, said commenting on this hadith, *"The incentives for us doing actions continuously even though it may be little, is better than one who occasionally offers alot of worship"*. (Sharh Sahih Muslim)

Why is this the case? The one who is continuous in his worship is constantly remembering Allah 'azza wa jall, whereas the other who worships Allah in a great amount only occasionally, is seen as neglectful.

Another important point for us to contemplate is the matter of the acceptance of our deeds; this indeed is a matter of great importance. As we are fully aware, we do not know whether Allah has accepted our efforts in Ramadhaan or any other time. So how should we be after worshipping Allah?

If we look at the pious predecessors, we will see that they went to great lengths to perfecting their worship, then after this they would show great concern for the acceptance of their actions. They did this because they feared that their actions would not be accepted. Allah 'azza wa jall tells us in the Qur'an, *"Veily Allah only accepts from those who are Mutaqeen (pious)" [Surah al-Maidah, Ayah 27].*

Malik bin Dinar *rahimahullah* said: "Fear that an action is not accepted is more difficult than performing the action itself". Fudalah ibn Ubaid *radhiAllahu `anhu* said, "For me to know that Allah has accepted from me an action the size of a mustard seed, is more beloved to me than this world and everything within it".

Does the reaction of the pious predecessors make us think about our own reaction? Or do we feel that the mere offering of that action was sufficient?

May Allah 'azza wa jall make us from those who not only offer our deeds but with sincerity and hope and also help us to reflect on what we have done.

We will not know whether our deeds have been accepted until the Day of Judgment, but the scholars have mentioned that there may be some indications or signs that a servant's efforts have been accepted by Allah. For example, a servant upon reflection after Ramadhan sees that he has increased his worship and he is more sincere in his worship. During the month he made sincere du'a to Allah, that he increases in his worship and now he finds himself like that Allah 'azza wa jall answered his du'a. This is a state not only we should ask for during Ramadhan and just after it, but a state which we continue to be in, and also which we die upon.

May Allah 'azza wa jall accept whatever we offered in the month of Ramadhan, and may he make us from those whose dua's are accepted- Ameen.

Wa akhir dawaana anihamdulillahi Rabbil alamin

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