

Welcome 'O Ramadhan'

رَمَضَان

RAMADHAN & FASTING

Better Preparation, Better Results

"In the month of Ramadhan the Qur'an was revealed, a book of guidance with proofs of guidance distinguishing right from wrong, therefore whoever of you is present in that month let him fast."

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Ramadhan - History & Concept of Fasting

Alhamdulillah, Allah All-Mighty has gifted us with another Ramadhan. It is a month of great sales and offers for those who believe in Allah and the hereafter. Below is a humble effort to address some of the key points:

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1. History of Ramadhan

Ramadan is a historic month that existed within the Arab calendar from pre-Islamic times. The most notable events in Ramadhan are the revelation of the Quran and fasting.

Allah, the All-Mighty said:

“In the month of Ramadan the Qur'an was revealed, a book of guidance with proofs of guidance distinguishing right from wrong, therefore whoever of you is present in that month let him fast. But who is ill or on a journey shall fast a similar number of days later on. Allah desires your well-being, not your discomfort. He desires you to fast the whole month so that you may magnify Him and render thanks to Him for giving you His guidance.”

(al-Baqarah 2:185)

2. Concept of Fasting – Why do Muslims fast?

Allah, the All-Mighty said:

“O you who believe, the fasts have been enjoined upon you as they were enjoined upon those before you, **so that you may be God-fearing**. For days few in number. However, should any one of you be sick or on a journey, then (he should fast) a number of other days (equal to the missed ones); and those

who do not have the strength, (they do not opt for fasting,) on them there is a fidyah (compensation), that is, the feeding of a poor person. Then whoever does good voluntarily, that is better for him. However, fasting is better for you, if you only knew. (184)

The month of Ramadan is the one in which the Qur'an was revealed as guidance for mankind, and as clear signs that show the right way and distinguish between right and wrong. So those of you who witness the month must fast in it. But the one who is sick, or is on a journey (should fast) as much from other days (as he missed). Allah intends (to provide) ease for you and does not intend (to create) hardship for you. All this is so that you may complete the number (of fasts as prescribed) and proclaim the Takbir of Allah for having guided you, and (so) that you may be grateful. (185) When My servants ask you about Me, then (tell them that) I am near. I respond to the call of one when he prays to Me; so they should respond to Me, and have faith in Me, so that they may be on the right path.”

(Al-Baqarah 2:183-186)

What is Taqwa?

Taqwa is when a person obeys Allah and abstains from

disobeying him due to his constant awareness that Allah is All-Watching and All-Knowing.

Once a person fasts with the correct intention then Allah grants him the gift of Taqwa.

Fasting also aids a person in self control and restraint. Since an individual wakes up unlike a normal day, he will now give up his fresh glass of water, then breakfast, lunch and snacks etc. He is controlling his appetite and the desire to eat and taste food.

Thereafter once he is able to control his eating appetite, which is one of the most challenging desires, then it becomes easy to control other appetites, like sins etc.

He achieves sympathy for the poor and deprived. It is by fasting that a rich person feels how to live with an empty stomach and how the poor feel all the time.

Luton Muslim Journal

Luton Muslim Journal is a monthly journal which promotes Islam and Muslim contribution to the wider society. It has no affiliation with any political organisation. The journal covers various topics which effects Muslims and society.

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Ramadhan - virtues and greatness of fasting

3. Fadhaail- General virtues of Ramadhan & Fasting

- > Allah will personally reward a fasting person or He will be the reward. Both express the extreme nature of the reward.
- > Fasting is a shield from sin, this is why Prophet (May Allah's peace be upon him) advised a person who cannot get married due to some reason, to fast.
- > Fasting is also abstaining from quarrelling and other sins.
- > The smell due to hunger coming out of a fasting person's mouth is more dearer to Allah than musk (prestigious perfume).
- > Benefits from two joys; one when having iftaar after a day-long fast and the other will be when meeting Allah.

A detailed Ahadeeth on the virtue and concept of fasting

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported:

Allah's Messenger (May Allah's peace be upon him) said, "Allah said,

'All the deeds of son of Adam (people) are for them, except fasting which is for Me, and I will give the reward for it.' Fasting is a shield from the fire and from committing sins. If one of you is fasting, he should avoid sexual relation with his wife and quarrelling, and if somebody should fight or quarrel with him, he should say, 'I am fasting.' By Him in Whose Hands my soul is' The unpleasant smell coming out from the mouth of a fasting person is better in the sight of Allah than the smell of musk. There are two pleasures for the fasting person, one at the time of breaking his fast, and the other at the time when he will meet his Lord; then he will be pleased because of his fasting."

(Saheeh Al-Bukhari)

Narrated by Abu Hurairah: Allah's Messenger (May Allah's peace be upon him) said,

"Fasting is a shield (or a screen or a shelter). So, the person observing fasting should avoid sexual relation with his wife and should not behave foolishly and impudently, and if somebody fights with him or abuses him, he should tell him twice, 'I am fasting.'" The Prophet (May Allah's peace be upon him) added, "By Him in Whose Hands my soul is, the smell coming out from the mouth of a fasting person is better in the sight of Allah than the smell of musk. (Allah says about the fasting person), 'He has left his food, drink and desires for My sake. The fast is for Me. So I will reward (the fasting person) for it and the reward of good deeds is multiplied ten times.'" (Saheeh Al-Bukhari)

Allah will reward the fasting people personally, after mentioning such a great reward for every deed, He didn't mention the reward for fasting but rather kept it vague and His personal responsibility to reward him. This shows the enormity of fasting.

The reasons for fasting being so great;

Patience

Fasting has an extreme level of patience, as Imam Tirmidhi narrated that 'fasting is half of patience.'

Allah promised the patient people reward without any fixed figure.

3 Types of patience

1. Patience in Allah's obedience: e.g. desire demands sleeping or eating but the order of Allah is given preference
2. Patience in refraining from Haram: e.g. Natural desires demand watching and creating unlawful relationships outside marriage, but one exercises patience by refraining from it.
3. Patience over calamities and trials from Allah: e.g. loss of family member or wealth and poverty, so a person remains patient by not complaining or resorting to Haram means like theft etc.

Fasting includes all 3 types of patience:

A. Naturally a person wants to eat and not fast but due to Allah's command he remains patient and executes it.

B. During the day, a fasting person has many temptations from drinking, or relationship with his wife, but since Allah has prohibited it he exercises patience by refraining from it.

C. A fasting person feels hungry and thirsty, especially in hot countries or if he is working but he endures that poor condition for the sake of Allah.

Fasting requires the most Taqwa and abstentions. The greatest Taqwa is when a person has access to the prohibited act but refrains from it for the sake of Allah.

Haji: Although it is very tiring and testing, one can, however eat and drink, and it is also only for a few days unlike Ramadhan which prohibits eating and drinking from sunset to sunrise for the duration of a month.

Salah: Although there are great restrictions, it is only for a short while.

Highest level of Ikhlaas (Sincerity)

People only fast for Allah. It is very easy for a person to be unfaithful by eating or drinking secretly but sincere people who fast, abstain from it, thus it becomes 'pure' for the sake of Allah.

Fasting is for Me, I will reward him

On the day of judgement when a person has compensated all his bad deeds through his good deeds and still has bad deeds left, Allah will wipe out the remaining bad deeds through fasting and admit him in Jannah. (Bayhaqi)

Benefits of fasting

Fasting people become healthy spiritually and physically. The nafs (desires) and peoples' appetite and diet come under control.

Ar-Ray'yan – Door in Jannah designated for the fasting people

Narrated by Sahl:

The Prophet (May Allah's peace be upon him) said,

"There is a gate in Paradise called Ar-Ray'yan, and those who observe fasts will enter through it on the Day of Resurrection and none except them will enter through it. It will be said, 'Where are those who used to observe fasts?' They will get up, and none except them will enter through it. After their entry the gate will be closed and nobody will enter through it." (Saheeh Al-Bukhari)

Ramadhan - Virtues and greatness of fasting & Time Management

Door of Jannah are open & Doors of Jahannam are closed, Devils are chained

Narrated by Abu Hurairah:

Allah's Messenger (May Allah's peace be upon him) said, "When the month of Ramadhan starts, the gates of the heaven are opened and the gates of Hell are closed and the devils are chained." (Saheeh Al-Bukhari)

Abu Hurairah narrated that:

The Messenger of Allah (May Allah's peace be upon him) said: "On the first night of the month of Ramadhan, the Shayatin (devils) are shackled, the jinns are restrained, the gates of the Fires are shut such that no gate among them would be opened. The gates of Paradise are opened such that no gate among them would be closed, and a caller calls: 'O seeker of the good; come near!' and 'O seeker of evil; stop! For there are those whom Allah frees from the Fire.' And that is every night." (Jami Tirmidhi)

Past sins are forgiven

Narrated by Abu Hurairah:

The Prophet (May Allah's peace be upon him) said, "Whoever established prayers on the night of Qadr out of sincere faith and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his previous sins will be forgiven; and whoever fasts in the month of Ramadhan out of sincere faith, and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his previous sins will be forgiven." (Saheeh Al-Bukhari)

Warning to people who do not stop lying and gossip

Narrated by Abu Hurairah:

The Prophet (May Allah's peace be upon him) said, "Whoever does not give up forged speech (lies) and evil actions, Allah is not in need of him; leaving his food and drink (i.e. Allah will not accept his fasting.)" (Saheeh Al-Bukhari)

Barakah in Suhur: pre-dawn meal

Narrated Anas bin Malik: The Prophet (May Allah's peace be upon him) said,

"Take Suhur as there is a blessing in it." (Jami Tirmidhi)

Anas (bin Malik) narrated that: Zaid bin Thabit said:

"We ate Suhoor with the Messenger of Allah, then we stood for the Salat." I (Anas) said: "How long was that?" He said: "About the length of fifty Ayahs." (Jami Tirmidhi)

One must try his best to eat at suhoor time since there are blessings in it. Those who have early morning work can follow a timetable which is easy for them even if they have to eat earlier because Allah will reward them as long as they have the desire to eat at the sunnah time.

There is goodness in prompt Iftaar - breaking fast

Narrated by Sahl bin Sa'd: Allah's Messenger (May Allah's peace be upon him) said,

"The people will remain on the right path as long as they hasten the breaking of the fast." (Saheeh Al-Bukhari)

It is sunnah to eat as soon as the sun sets for iftaar time. After waiting for few minutes to be on the safe side in case of any

mistakes in the clock one must not delay any further. Most Masajid will print the timetable with a cautious delay by a few minutes.

Sins between One Ramadhan to another is forgiven

Abu Hurairah reported:

Verily the Messenger of Allah (May Allah's peace be upon him) said: Five (daily) prayers, from one Friday prayer to the (next) Friday prayer, from Ramadhan to the next Ramadhan are expiations for the (sins) committed in between (their intervals) provided one abstains from the major sins. (Saheeh Muslim)

One must sincerely ask Allah for forgiveness for major sins. Major sins are disobedience to parents, lying, backbiting and missing Salah.

4. Time management & maximizing the rewards

In a narration by Muslim, the Messenger of Allah (May Allah's peace be upon him) said, "The reward of every (good) deed of a person is multiplied from ten to seven hundred times..."

'The night of Power is better than a thousand months'

(Surah Al-Qadr)

Ramadhan is a month of earning and creating a huge mountain of reward. To top it up, Allah has created the night of power in the last ten odd nights which will be better than a thousand months. It will be utterly foolish for any believer to live through Ramadhan and not gain anything and not maximise its benefits.

Below is a list of 10 very rewarding acts to be performed in Ramadhan

1. Purifying one's intention- Allah rewards a person according to his/ her intention
2. Always partake pre-dawn meal (suhur) as late as safely possible, even with a glass of water
3. Making dua at the time of breaking the fast
4. Do Iftar (breaking the fast) on time
5. Feed others at Iftar even if it's with a glass of water
6. Abstaining from all forbidden deeds
7. Abundant recitation of the Qur'an
8. Increase in charity
9. Performing taraweeh and tahajjud prayers
10. Do I'tikaaf (seclusion in the Masjid for the last 10 days, for women in one specific room in the house)

PLEASE USE THE RAMADHAN CHECK LIST PROVIDED ON PAGE 5

(By Mawlana Muhammad Rayhan)



Daily Checklist
Ramadhan 1437[illegible]

Qiyaam Ramadhan – Taraweeh (its concept and the number of rakats)

Yahya related to me from Malik from Ibn Shihab from Abu Salama ibn Abd ar-Rahman ibn Awf from Abu Hurairah that: the Messenger of Allah (May Allah's peace be upon him) used to exhort people to watch the night in prayer in Ramadan but never ordered it definitely. He used to say, "Whoever watches the night in prayer in Ramadan with trust and expectancy, will be forgiven all his previous wrong actions."

Ibn Shihab said,

"The Messenger of Allah (May Allah's peace be upon him) died while that was still the custom, and it continued to be the custom in the caliphate of Abu Bakr and at the beginning of the caliphate of Umar ibn al-Khattab."

(‘Mu’wat’ta Imam Malik – Book of Prayer in Ramadhan)

Salah is the coolness of the eyes for the true believers and it is very beloved to Allah all round the year but in Ramadan it will become more rewarding and beloved to Allah. This is why, along with fasting, the Prophet (May Allah's peace be upon him) mentioned: 'Whoever does Qiyaam (stands in prayer, prays salah) with the hope of reward from Allah, will be forgiven.'

What is the concept of this special prayer of Ramadhan which is known as Qiyaam Ramadan or Taraweeh?

To earn forgiveness from Allah by spending the night in a lengthy Salah until one is so tired that he has to lean on a stick as the companions of the Prophet (May Allah's peace be upon him) did.

Brief explanation of the number of rakats of taraweeh and if taraweeh and tahajjud are the same type of prayer

The idea behind writing this explanation is so the readers understand the idea and the background information behind the different views hence they can tolerate one another and refrain from being deluded by Shaytan into arguing over the matter, and as a result lose the main object of the salah.

The root cause of the differences in rakats

The majority of the Imams and the early Muslims understood the taraweeh and tahajjud to be two different salahs. Most of the great imams of fiqh (Islamic law) and hadeeth always had separate chapters for tahajjud and Ramadhan salah (Qiyam Ramadhan) clearly indicating that there is special Ramadhan prayer and there is tahajjud prayer which is for the entire year. They even had a discussion on 'should a person pray with immediately after taraweeh or leave it for after tahajjud to be the last prayer of the night', since outside Ramadhan it was the sunnah of the Prophet to pray with salah after tahajjud as the last prayer of the night.

Tahajjud was sanctioned by Allah in Makkah through the Quranic verse:

And during the night, wake up for Salah of tahajjud, an additional prayer for you. It is very likely that your Lord will place you at Praised Station. (Surah Bani Isra'eel 17:79)

Initially tahajjud was compulsory in makkah and later it was made an optional prayer. On the contrary the taraweeh narrations are from Madinah and the Prophet only prayed it for 3 nights and left it fearing that it may become compulsory for the people.

Some Imams have explained taraweeh and tahajjud to be the same and their view was accepted by a very small minority of Muslims. The first recorded explanation of this view is 400 years after the early Imams, whereas the taraweeh and tahajjud prayers being separate salahs are seen in the early books of fiqh (Islamic law) and hadeeth collections.

Prophet (May Allah's peace be upon him) praying Taraweeh in Ramadhan (Qiyam Ramadhan)

Ibn Shihaab Narrated that he said 'Urwa informed me:

That he was informed by `Aisha,

"Allah's Messenger (May Allah's peace be upon him) went out in the middle of the night and prayed in the mosque and some men prayed behind him. In the morning, the people spoke about it and then a large number of them gathered and prayed behind him (on the second night). In the next morning the people again talked about it and on the third night the mosque was full with a large number of people. Allah's Messenger (May Allah's peace be upon him) came out and the people prayed behind him. On the fourth night the Mosque was overwhelmed with people and could not accommodate them, but the Prophet (May Allah's peace be upon him) came out (only) for the morning prayer (Fajr). When the morning prayer was finished he recited Tashah-hud and (addressing the people) said, "Amma ba'du, your presence was not hidden from me but I was afraid lest the night prayer (Qiyaam) should be compulsory on you and you might not be able to carry it on." So, Allah's Messenger died and the situation remained like that (i.e. people prayed individually)."

(Saheeh Bukhari –Book of Praying at night in Ramadhan)

The above hadeeth shows that the Prophet (May Allah's peace be upon him) never wanted taraweeh to become compulsory therefore never encouraged or continued to perform in jama'ah. This hadeeth doesn't show how many rakats he prayed.

There is no authentic narration from the Prophet as to how many rakats he prayed. In this case we will look into the actions of the companions because they were the best in understanding and practicing upon the Quran and Sunnah.

Taraweeh – Sahabah era

Umar (May Allah be pleased him) ordered the sahabah to perform in one big jama'ah (congregation)

Malik related to me from Ibn Shihab from Urwa ibn az-Zubayr that Abd ar-Rahman ibn Abd al-Qari said,

"I went out with Umar ibn al-Khattab in Ramadan to the mosque and the people there were spread out in groups. Some men were praying by themselves, whilst others were praying in small groups. Umar said, 'By Allah! It would be better in my opinion if these people gathered behind one reciter.' So he gathered them behind Ubayy ibn Kab. Then I went out with him another night and the people were praying behind their Qur'an reciter. Umar said, 'How excellent this new way is, but what you miss while you are asleep (tahajjud prayer in the last part of the night) is better than what you watch in prayer (taraweeh prayer now).'

He meant the end of the night (praying Salah in the last portions which is the tahajjud Salah), and people used to watch the beginning of the night in prayer (Prayer beginning of the night is taraweeh because it is read at Isha time)."

Qiyaam Ramadhan – Taraweeh (its concept and the number of rakats) Continued

(‘Mu’wat’ta Imam Malik – Book of Prayer in Ramadhan)

20 Rakats Taraweeh

Yahya related to me from Malik that Yazid ibn Ruman said, "The people used to watch the night in prayer during Ramadan for twenty- three rakats in the time of Umar ibn al-Khattab."

(‘Mu’wat’ta Imam Malik – Book of Prayer in Ramadhan)

The above hadeeth is authentic and it clearly shows they prayed 20 Rakats Taraweeh (3 extra for witr). The fiqh and history books of the early Imams testify to the fact that this was the normal consistent practice since the time of Umar from the both haramain (Makkah and Madinah) to the entire Islamic world. However some Imams added extra optional salahs in-between the long rest they used to have after 4 Rakats like Imam Malik and others.

Others narrations on the Rakats of Taraweeh

Yahya related to me from Malik from Da'ud ibn al-Husayn that he heard al-Araj say,

"I never saw the people in Ramadhan, but that they were cursing the disbelievers (the enemies from them)." He added, "The reciter of Qur'an used to recite surat al-Baqarah in eight rakats and if he did it in twelve rakats the people would think that he had made it easy."

(‘Mu’wat’ta Imam Malik – Book of Prayer in Ramadhan)

Yahya related to me from Malik from Muhammad ibn Yusuf that as- Sa'ib ibn Yazid said,

"Umar ibn al-Khattab ordered Ubayy ibn Kab and Tamim ad-Dari to watch the night in prayer with the people for eleven rakats. The reciter of the Qur'an would recite the Mi'in (a group of medium-sized ayahs) until we would be leaning on our staffs from having stood so long in prayer. And we would not leave until the approach of dawn."

(‘Mu’wat’ta Imam Malik – Book of Prayer in Ramadhan)

The above narrations clearly show that there were 12 and 8 rakats of taraweeh. This was read before the Sahabah agreed on 20 rakats because most early Imams and the practice of the early Muslims do not show 8 or 12 rakats. Some scholars commented on the status of the above narrations that they are weak.

Is Taraweeh 8 rakats?

Those who believe Taraweeh to be 8 rakats quote the following hadeeth;

Narrated by Abu Salama bin `Abdur Rahman: that he asked `Aisha "How was the prayer of Allah's Messenger (May Allah's peace be upon him) in Ramadhan?" She replied, "He did not pray more than eleven rak'at in Ramadhan or in any other month. He used to pray four rak'at -let alone their beauty and length (extremely beautiful and lengthy Salah) - and then he would pray four - let alone their beauty and length - and then he would pray three rak'at (witr)." She added, "I asked, 'O Allah's Messenger (May Allah's peace be upon him) Do you sleep before praying the witr?' He replied, 'O `Aisha! My eyes sleep but my heart does not sleep."

(Saheeh Bukhari –Book of praying at night in Ramadhan)

The above hadeeth mentions that the prophet (May Allah's peace be upon him) did not pray more than 8 rakats night pray besides Isha and witr. It is very problematic to understand this hadeeth literally for taraweeh and tahaj'jud because there are numerous authentic ahadeeth confirming various rakats of night prayer. This hadeeth shows the general practice of the Prophet's tahaj'jud which was 8 Rakats, in and out of Ramadhan.

2 Rakats-Tahaj'jud Narration

Narrated Abu Sa'id and Abu Hurayrah:

The Prophet (May Allah's peace be upon him) said:

If a man awakens his wife at night, and then both pray or both offer two rakats together, the (name of the) man will be recorded among those who mention the name of Allah, and the (name of the) woman will be recorded among those who mention the name of Allah.

(Abu Dawood- Book of Salah)

Tahaj'jud Salahs to be read in pairs and 6, 10 rakats.

(Abu Dawood)

We can conclude that Tahaj'jud is not only 8 rakats but starts from 2 and goes up to over 10 rakats therefore it will be incorrect to say taraweeh or tahaj'jud to be only 8 rakats.

This hadeeth is understood by majority Imams to be regarding tahaj'jud because the hadeeth mentions inside and outside Ramadhan. The differences between taraweeh and tahaj'jud have been discussed above.

They (only 8 rakat-group) also reject the overwhelming narrations of Umar and the companions praying 20 rakats which is against the understanding of the majority of the early and later Imams and also the hadeeth, fiqh and history books of Islam.

Conclusion

Praying 20 rakats of taraweeh is proven through authentic narrations to be the practice of the sahabah and they understood Islam better than any other people. Therefore Muslims should try their best to pray 20 and feel confident that it is authentic. However the Prophet left reading taraweeh with the sahabah fearing it may become compulsory hence we must not make taraweeh compulsory but regard it as 'sunnah' which means there is a great reward in reading it but one must not regard a person missing it occasionally to be sinful etc.

Allah knows best

By Mawlana Muhammad Rayhan

Basic laws of fasting

By Mawlana Muhammad Rayhan

Definition of fasting: To Abstain from eating, drinking and sexual intercourse, from early dawn to dusk.

-Intention must be made before dawn, if someone misses it then at least by midday

Conditions of fasting

1. Muslim
2. Baligh (mature)
3. Being sane

Make-up (Qadha) means to keep the fast at a later fast. One fast for one-missed fast.

Expiation/ Kaffarah means to keep one fast as a replacement and also keep 60 fasts as a penalty.

Things that do not break the fast

1. If the fasting one ate, or drank, or had sexual intercourse out of forgetfulness [that he was fasting], his fast is not broken.
2. If he slept and then had a wet dream, or looked at a woman and ejaculated, or oiled [his head], or underwent blood-letting, or used antimony [in his eyes], or kissed, his fast is not broken.
3. If one is overcome by vomiting, his fast is not broken.
4. If he applied drops inside his urethra (penis), his fast is not broken according to Imam Abu Hanifah.

Things that are Disliked for the Fasting Person

1. If someone tastes something with his mouth (did not swallow it), his fast is not broken, but it is disliked for him to do that.
2. It is disliked for a woman to chew the food for her infant if she has some alternative.
3. Chewing anything does not break the person's fast, but it is disliked. If any juice is swallowed then it **will break** the fast.

Things that Break the Fast and Require Makeup

1. If he ejaculated on account of a kiss or touch, then make-up is due upon him.

There is no harm in kissing if he feels himself safe, but it is disliked if he does not feel safe.

2. Makeup is due, but not expiation, for someone who had intercourse in other than the private parts and ejaculated.
3. If one deliberately made himself vomit a mouthful then makeup is due upon him.
4. The fast of someone who swallows pebbles or iron is broken.
5. Whoever had an anal enema, or applied nose-drops, or ear-drops, or treated a torn belly or a skull-fracture with medicine such that it reached his body cavity or his brain, his fast is broken.
6. If someone had suhur thinking the dawn had not [yet] risen, or broke his fast thinking the sun had set, and then it turned out that the dawn had risen, or that the sun had not set,

makes up that day, but there is no expiation due on him.

7. Someone who lost consciousness in Ramadan does not make up the day on which the loss of consciousness occurred, but he makes up that which came after it.

8. If an insane person regained sanity with part of Ramadan [remaining], he makes up what passed of it.

9. If a woman menstruates, she stops fasting and makes up [fasting for the days of menstruation].

10. Whoever enters into an optional fast, or an optional prayer, and then spoils it, makes it up.

Things that Break the Fast and require Makeup and Expiation

1. Expiation is due on someone who deliberately has sexual intercourse in one of the two passages, or eats or drinks something which provides nutrition, or is used for treatment
2. The expiation is like the expiation for zihar (60 fasts)
3. There is no expiation for spoiling a fast in other than Ramadan.

Those who may Postpone Fasting

1. Someone who is sick in Ramadan, and fears that if he fasts his sickness will increase, breaks his fast and makes [it] up [later].
2. If one is a traveller who is not harmed by fasting, then for him to fast is preferable, but if he does not fast and makes it up [later] it is permissible.
3. The pregnant or nursing woman, if they fear for their children, do not fast and make it up, and there is no penalty due upon them.

Making up Missed Fasts

1. The makeup of Ramadan may be performed separately if one wishes, or consecutively if one wishes.
2. If one delayed it until another Ramadan entered, he fasts the second Ramadan, and makes up the first after it, and there is no penalty due upon him.
3. If the sick or the traveller dies while they are in that condition, makeup is not incumbent upon them. But, if the sick recovers, or the traveller takes up residence, and then they die, makeup is incumbent upon them for the extent of the health or residence.

Redemption (Fidyah)

1. The aged man who is not capable of fasting does not fast, and for every day he feeds a poor person, just as one feeds in expiations.

2. Whoever died with makeup [fasts] of Ramadan due upon him, and bequeathed for it, his guardian, on his behalf, feeds for every day to one poor person : half a sa` of wheat (1.7kg) , or one sa` of dates, or one sa` of barley (3kg).

(Mukhtasarul-Qudoori)

I'tikaaf

By Mawlana Numan

I'tikaaf in Ramadhan: To remain in the Masjid for the last 10 days of Ramadhan. It is also to avoid leaving the Masjid without absolutely necessary reasons.

The objective of I'tikaaf is to seek Allah's pleasure in his house having left behind the hassle of dunyah—worldly matters. It is a wonderful opportunity to seek the night of power as it falls in the last 10 days of Ramadhan.

This is the very reason why the Messenger of Allah always performed I'tikaaf.

Virtues of I'tikaaf

Abu Hurairah and Aishah narrated:

"The Prophet would perform I'tikaaf during the last ten (days) of Ramadan until Allah took him." (Jami Tirmidhi)

Ali Ibn Hussain (RA) narrates from his father that Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "He who observes the ten days I'tikaaf during Ramadhan will obtain the reward of two Hajj & two Umrah." (Bayhaqi)

Abdullah Ibn Abbas (RA) reported that Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi wasallam) said: "Whosoever for Allah's sake did even one day of I'tikaaf, Allah would keep him away from Jahannam by trenches." (Tabarani)

Ibn Abbas (RA) reported that the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, (about him who engages in I'tikaaf), "that he is safe from sin & he also gets that reward which everyone (outside I'tikaaf) gets for pious deeds." (Ibn Majah)

Conditions of I'tikaaf

The following are conditions for performance of I'tikaaf:

- 1.To be fasting in Ramadhan
- 2.To be a Muslim
- 3.To be sane
- 4.To be pure and clean from major impurity, monthly menses, and bleeding of child-birth
- 5.To perform I'tikaaf in a Masjid (for males only)
- 6.Intention for I'tikaaf

Women can perform I'tikaaf at home.

Additional points:

1. Seclusion is praiseworthy. It comprises remaining in the mosque, with fast and the intention of seclusion.
2. It is prohibited for the secluded one:
 - to have sexual intercourse
 - to touch [with lust]
3. If the secluded one had sexual intercourse, by night or day, his seclusion is invalidated.
4. He should not exit from the mosque except for a human need (toilet), or [for] Jumu'ah [prayer].
5. There is no harm in his buying or selling in the mosque without bringing the goods there.
6. He should speak only well, but [intentional] silence is disliked for him.
7. Whoever obligated upon himself seclusion for [a number of] days is obliged to seclude himself for them along with their nights, and [the days] are consecutive, even if he did not stipulate consecutiveness.

(Mukhtasarul-Qudoori)



Laylatul Qadr - Night of Power

By Hafiz Sadikul Islam

What is Laylatul Qadr?

“Verily We have sent it (The Qur’an) in the Night of Power (Laylatul Qadr). And what will make you aware of what the Night of Power is? The Night of Power is better than a thousand months. Therein descend the angels and the Ruh (Jibrael) by Allah’s permission with all decrees. Peace until the appearance of dawn.” (Qur’an: Al Qadr 1-5)

This surah revealed in the Holy Qur’an perfectly describes what occurs within this blessed night. If a person were to worship in abundance in this night his reward would multiply as if he had worshipped more than a thousand months. Bearing in mind that in the month of Ramadhan a person’s Nafl (optional) action is equal to a Fard (compulsory) action and a Fard action is equal to 70 Fard actions. So the weight of an action in this night will be a great amount for an individual.

When is Laylatul Qadr?

Aishah narrated:

"The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H) would stay in I'tikaaf during the last ten (nights) of Ramadan and he said: 'Seek the Night of Al-Qadr during the last ten (nights) of Ramadan.'" (Jami Tirmidhi)

“The Prophet (P.B.U.H) came out intending to tell us about Laylatul-Qadr, however two men were arguing and he said: “I came out to inform you about Laylatul-Qadr but so and so, and, so and so were arguing, so it was raised up, and perhaps that is better for you, so seek it on the (twenty) ninth and (twenty) seventh and the (twenty) fifth.” (Bukhari)

“Allah’s Messenger (P.B.U.H) used to practice I’tikaaf in the last ten nights and say: ‘Seek out Laylatul-Qadr in the (odd nights) of the last ten days of Ramadhan.’” (Bukhari, Muslim)

From the above Ahadeeth we see that Laylatul Qadr occurs in the last ten days and it falls in the odd nights. However, there are some narrations of Laylatul Qadr falling on the 24th night of Ramadhan. The overall conclusion is that we should seek out Laylatul Qadr in the last ten nights of Ramadhan. We should also try and do more worship in these ten nights as any of the nights could be Laylatul Qadr.

Dua to be recited on Laylatul Qadr

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنَّكَ عَفُوٌّ ، تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ ، فَاعْفُ عَنِّيْ

O Allah verily You are Most Forgiving (One who Pardons), You love to forgive (pardon), so forgive (pardon) me.

Tirmidhi

Ramadan: Health Tips

By Dr Salih Ahmed

(GP, Sanatain Student-Zuhri Academy)

There are great physical benefits to fasting during the month of Ramadan. Below are some general tips to having the best Ramadan and staying healthy:

- It is important to have two meals during the day – Suhoor and Iftar
- Try to avoid huge feasts at Iftar time
- A combination of a well balanced meal is important, this should comprise of:
 - Meat, poultry or fish
 - Fruit and Vegetables
 - Dairy products
 - Breads, cereals and potatoes
 - Some fat and sugar
- Foods that break down slowly and release their energy of the long fasting hours is most important – complex carbohydrates. Some examples:
 - Barley,
 - Oats
 - Lentils - dahl
 - Flour - chapatis
 - Rice
- Other foods that digest slowly and provide energy are those rich in fibre:
 - Potatoes (with the skin on)
 - Vegetables
 - Figs (sunnah)
 - Cereals
- Try to avoid heavily processed food and those high in fat and sugar:
 - Indian mithai
 - Samosas, pakoras, chips etc..
- Furthermore it has been shown that fatty, oily food makes reflux (acid) symptoms worse
- Be mindful that stimulants and caffeine based products act as diuretics (make you urinate) and will dehydrate you further:
 - Coffee
 - Coke
 - Tea (it has the same amount of caffeine as coffee)
- The long hot summer days this year provides a big challenge to remain hydrated. Important to drink fluids alongside water that contain vitamins and salts to replenish stores in the body:
 - Fruit juices
 - Isotonic drinks



Diabetes & Fasting:

- Diabetic patients should visit their GP regarding fasting during the month of Ramadan.
- Those people with poorly controlled Diabetes, that have regular 'hypos', those that have complications (kidneys, nerves, eyes) are advised not to fast
- If you are on insulin, you are likely to need less insulin at the start of the fast
- Note using insulin during the fast does not invalidate your fast
- It is important to monitor blood sugar levels during the fast as low levels can lead to adverse health problems
- If your sugar level drops below 3.3mmol/L à end your fast immediately
- Metformin does not cause 'hypos', however Gliclazide does and you need to see your doctor or Diabetes Nurse regarding possible changes in medication prior to Ramadan
- Always carry something sugary (high in glucose) with you

Diabetes & Pregnancy:

- Evidence of fasting in pregnancy is inconclusive:
 - Some studies show fasting during the first trimester can lead to lower birth weight however other studies have not found this to be true
 - Some studies show little or no issues with babies of mothers that have fasted, others show some evidence of health problems in later life
 - Fasting, physiologically does not appear to be harmful to mother and baby
- If you are planning to fast, see your midwife in advance for an assessment and advice
- Most important factor for fasting pregnant women is their own health and nutrition
- Main danger signs to be aware of:
 - Failure to put on weight as the pregnancy progresses
 - Dehydration
 - Reduced baby movements
 - Feeling faint/dizzy



By Mawlana Thaqib (Zuhri Academy)

Ramadhan in the home

I would like to begin this article with a dua; May ALLAH, the Almighty, give us all life to be able to witness the beautiful month of Ramadhan. May He enable us all with the ability to spend our Ramadhan correctly and effectively.

As we approach the beloved month of Ramadhan, a month in which we, as Muslims, return back to the purpose of our creation i.e. Ibaadah. We should fast during the day and worship during the night. Many will Insha'Allah complete the recitation of the Quran, whilst others may sit in I'tikaaf.

Returning to our original state of servitude to our creator should be a lifelong goal and not just a month a year. How can we make this experience enjoyable so that it becomes a regular part of our life?

One of the most important things to do is to create an environment in the home where everyone feels the Ramadhan vibe. Here are some pointers we can work on Insha'Allah.

1. Daily Islamic circles: fix a time in the day where the whole family would sit and discuss a virtue of Ramadhan or maybe a story from the Quran.

2. This is a great time to engage the kids. Create daily challenges and a reward system. E.g. whoever fasts, prays salah and recites Quran will get this reward. An alternative, you can even base the size of the Eid gift on Ramadhan achievements.

3. For a couple, this is an amazing time to increase your spiritual relationship. Compete in good actions: Who can read the most Quran? Who can observe their Salah the best (for men in the Masjid and for the women in the beginning time of prayer)?

4. Pray together

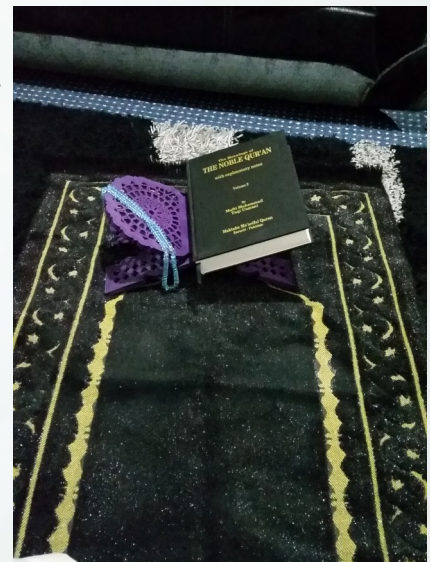
Use this beautiful opportunity to make dua together at iftaar time. One makes the dua while the other says ameen. Take turns if you want. Tahajjud salah is another amazing opportunity to get closer to your creator. Before you have your suhoor pray at least 2 rakahs (you can pray up to 8) together. The male should lead the prayer.

5. Be courteous to each other

There is no guarantee as to whose worship is more accepted by Allah. Therefore we should all try to facilitate for each other. If the husband is at work all day make his domestic responsibilities easy upon him and vice versa. It is essential we allow everyone in the house the opportunity to focus on worship.

6. Be charitable

Whatever little you can save and put towards charity. In Ramadhan one must try to be charitable throughout the month. Give what you can, but do it regularly. This will of course increase the barakah within the home.



Dates - A Wonderful Treat

By Mawlana Abdul Hamid



History of Dates

Amongst various fruits which are frequently mentioned and honoured in the Holy Quran and Hadith, dates are mentioned the most. The Holy Quran mentions dates 25 times. It is a fruit which will be enjoyed by the people of Jannah, and it has become an associated symbol of Muslims during the month of Ramadhan as the fast is broken with it.

Dates have been consumed and their various benefits experienced by many human beings for over 7000 years. Its medical significance and nutritious properties can be observed from the Quran as Maryam Bint Imran was ordered to consume dates for easing the discomfort of her labour. Allah says in Surah Maryam Ayat 24 "And shake toward you the trunk of the palm tree; it will drop upon you ripe, fresh dates."

BREAKING FAST WITH DATES AND WATER

The Prophet said: "Break your fast by eating dates as it is purifying," (Ahmad).

Another Hadith mentions that, "If you have a date, break your fast with it, if you don't have it, break the fast with water as it is purifying." (Abu Dawood)

BENEFITS OF DATES

Dates are very rich in fibre and contain all the ingredients needed for the nourishment of body such as calcium, sulphur, iron, potassium, phosphorus, manganese, copper, B6 & other vitamins, folic acid, proteins and sugar.



Parental responsibilities towards their children during Taraweeh

As Ramadhan is approaching people are gearing up for fasting and long night prayers. It is the coolness of people's eyes to see a large congregation of old and young standing and listen to the hafiz reciting from the book of Allah, but do we know where many children end up in the name of taraweeh?

Taraweeh prayers are just round the corner and it's nice to bring children along for the prayers during the blessed month. It gives children experience of the blessed environment and helps their Imaan grow and establish the love for their salah. However, we need to make sure the children are old enough and don't do such things that causes any inconvenience to other Musallis (worshippers) and also for the safety of themselves and the masjid itself. We see children coming to the masjid with their parents but as soon as the parents start salah they are running around the prayer area, youngsters in the hallways, teens outside the masjid in the parking lot etc. This will distract people praying and bring unwanted attention from the neighbors.

We as parents and guardians have to ensure that our kids are safe and secure at all times. It's fardh upon us. Not all children are the same therefore we see some very well behaved that make us smile.

There are some things that we can do to (ensure) our children are behaving during prayer

- 1) Teach your children how to behave in the masjid.
- 2) Get them excited about salah/taraweeh reward. Tell them about the reward of praying taraweeh.
- 3) Be a role model, keep yourself away from talking at the back during salah.
- 4) Treat them well for their patience and stillness, give them a smile and look of love for their hard work.
- 5) Make their Eid presents depend on their behavior during taraweeh.
- 6) Do not expect them to go every day to taraweeh. If it's difficult in a big masjid to control them try a smaller place.

And if it's too hard, leave them at home and wait (until) they have grown up a bit more.....

By Mawlana Nabil Ahmed (Imam Masjid Bilal, Ustadh- Zuhri Academy)



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Computer Games and Your Child

By Dr Abu 'Abdillah | Al-Hikmah School Luton

If you are a parent of teenagers and below, chances are that if they have not yet been glued to the world of games on computers or consoles, online or off-line; they definitely will busy themselves on this new generation of technically mastered and digitally designed world of web very soon. And this epidemic brings a genuine cause of concern because while it is difficult to prevent them entirely from playing, at the same time you don't want them to have emotional and physical developmental hiccups that may affect their lives in adulthood.

Developmental psychology research has found that on an average, teenage children have been spending 14 hours every week on video games; while 8.5% American teens are ADDICTED to it! Problem became slightly more complicated since the beginning of the millennium violent games have been consistently becoming more and more popular across the school age groups, boys and girls alike. Before we talk about the negative effects of excessive gaming; first it must be understood clearly that three factors play the overall role in determining how much impact the games may have in the life of a young mind entering into the reality from their 'virtual reality'. As parents we must be careful about - the duration of playing time, type of games they are playing and last, but not the least, the type of personality of the children themselves.

Depending on these three factors children are found to be associated with attention deficit and more aggressive behaviour, along with physical effects like nausea, headache and dizziness. More significantly, ones with more virtual hours than playing outside not only have growing health issue like obesity, but also they exhibit poor social development with low self-competence. Research found that academic underachievement and interpersonal skills are

associated more with young boys preferring to violent games. We also sometimes fall short in parenting by not knowing who they are meeting on virtual platform as identities of players cannot entirely be trusted. This has come on recent news with devastating revelations of acts of vengeance after losing games online.

On the other hand, research also found that the education and non-violent types of games do have constructive influence in a child's development. Simple things like, following instructions, solving problems, pattern recognition and reading with quantitative elements have positive impact; but understandably less popular due to the lack of the wow factor. Hand-eye-coordination, fine motor skills spatial reasoning also have good contribution to development and a balance of all the above need to be weighed at home as family for our children.

Let us find moderation in everything, do we really want to open and leave a good door unattended as a leisure and supposedly fun activity to allow the children's mind to be accessed by bad exposure to violence and loss of sense of reality, including risks of obesity? As long as the games are not causing children to be neglectful to the obligations like prayers, dutifulness to parents; not taking long hours of isolation and definitely does not involve gambling or other immoral ethos like killing, witchcraft, nudity; we can allow children to enjoy without jeopardising anything in short or long term with issues harming them both physically and spiritually.



Advice to Students and Working People on Fasting

Can we shorten the fast to specific hours | Practical advice

We have reached the pinnacle of lengthy Ramadhan-day light hours in the UK. The longest days are in June and it falls right in the middle of Ramadhan. The question is – do we still need to keep such a lengthy fast from dawn to dusk, or can we shorten it?

Allah wants ease, not hardship

Although Allah clearly mentions that ‘He wishes ease for us and doesn’t wish ‘hardship’ and the Prophet (May Allah send peace and blessings upon him) said ‘Deen is easy’ (Bukhari), this does not mean Allah will not test us with difficult circumstances. We must remember not long ago we kept fasts in short and cold days. The days being long are another test for the believers, and through the last few years we have seen that IT IS POSSIBLE to fast and continue with the daily tasks! Nevertheless, the endurance is much greater hence the reward is larger!

There are NO theological bases for shortening the fasts

There are NO theological bases for shortening the fasts to specific hours as Allah, the All-Mighty said “And complete the fasts to the night” (Al-Baqarah 2:187). We must follow the natural phenomenon, if the night is early then we end our fasts early and if it is late then we follow the command of Allah by fasting till late.

Allah had already excused sick and elderly people from fasting if they don’t have the capacity to fast. There is no need to change the fundamentals of Islam by changing the ‘dawn to dusk’ order of fasting.

Practical advice

Dr Salih Ahmed has dedicated an article in this journal titled ‘Ramadhan health tips’, the gist of it is that ‘our diet is the most important aspect of fasting’. Everyone must ensure that they eat and drink properly, without missing suhoor, the pre-dawn meal and learn how to save energy.

Young children

Children, who are mature Islamically, must be encouraged to fast. Parents and guardians must ensure that they consume a healthy suhoor meal. Also, write letters to schools to exempt them from sporting activities during Ramadhan.

Children in primary schools, who are mainly non-Baligh (immature Islamically) should abstain from fasting during school days. Parents can train them to fast during the weekends and for specific hours. Fasting is not compulsory on them hence they can avoid them for the summer period.

May Allah make all the ibadaat (worship), in particular fasting, easy for us. Aameen.



Hafiza Maariya Aslam 6 months on...

Luton Muslim Journal very kindly printed an article about the 7-year-old Hafiza from Luton in the January edition. This Hafiza is my daughter Maariya Aslam and I would like to share her achievements and progress since this article. Also, before this article was circulated I had already, recently set up a Facebook page to inspire other parents and children.

With the publicity gained from the January LMJ article, I was approached and interviewed by an internet social media giant. The effects of this publicity were pretty much instantaneous and Hafiza Maariya was printed and talked about all over the world. Alhamdulillah, the response has been in the majority very positive and Maariya's achievement has been shown as a real life case of inspiration. We have also had dealings with radio stations and mainstream television including Islam Channel and the BBC. Unsurprisingly, the BBC internet articles were published in many languages worldwide and the TV piece has been watched by millions and again, been overwhelming received with positive comments and appreciation.



The sheer positivity of this story has led me to set up the Facebook page that showcases Hafiza Maariya at all the charity event openings, award ceremonies and recital videos. Posts about frequently asked questions, Quran ayahs and their relevance together with inspirational images are also posted daily. The overall aim is for anybody who is struggling or feeling disillusioned with their progress with hifz to contact us so we may offer practical assistance. This was my biggest obstacle when I was teaching Maariya. I wanted to be able to relate to someone and ask them questions. Hifz is a very achievable journey, but a very testing one too. The time you spend learning gradually increases and the timetable you follow constantly evolves. You are always wondering if what you are doing is the correct method. What everyone needs to know is that it's ok to feel confused and upset. They should also accept that children will make mistakes and have unproductive days while they are still learning their hifz. May Allah swt make it easy for all who have chosen this path.

In just a few months we have over 16,000 likes and our page is called: **Quran Hafiza Maariya and Mummy**

Our link is: www.facebook.com/HafizaMaariyaAslam7

As well as Maariya fulfilling various charitable events and imminent Ramadan projects, the young Hafiza is still diligently working on improving her hifz daily. She is also in the process of learning Arabic language and learning to translate the Quran. Again, Alhamdulillah, progress is being made.

Finally, we would like to thank Luton Muslim Journal for supporting us through our journey.

Please like and share our page and make dua that Hafiza Maariya is a future voice in Islam.

By Um Maariya Aslam

Sicily, Al-Idrisi (1100-1165) and the Tabula Rogeriana

By Dr Mamnun Khan, Ramadhan, 1437

Muhammad al-Idrisi was born in Ceuta (in between Spain and Morocco) in the year 1100. He descended from the Berber Idrissi dynasty of Morocco. From an early age, Al-Idrisi travelled with his family and gained extensive knowledge of the geography of Andalusia and North Africa. He also travelled to Portugal, Hungary and other parts of Europe. During this period there was much political instability in Andalusia which made Al-Idrisi, like many others, leave the region and to enter Sicily. While in Sicily he worked for a Christian Norman King by the name Roger II, who was ruling over vast numbers of Muslims.

Sicily is Italy's largest island and the largest island in the Mediterranean. Its strategic location as a stop-over into Italy and mainland Europe from the sea meant that Sicily was repeatedly invaded by different peoples in the last 2000 years. Initially invaded by the Roman's, followed by the Greeks and then by the Byzantines. The Byzantines were defeated by the Aghlabids of Ifriqiya (Tunisia), led by Asad ibn al-Furat (759-828) – a scholar who is reported to have studied with Imam al-Malik in Medina and Imam Muhammad al-Shaybani and Imam Abu Yusuf in Kufah. The first major city to come under Muslim rule was the city of Palermo in around 831, although the conquest efforts had been underway for many decades before, thwarted by repeated outbreaks of plague and strong counter-attacks by the Byzantines. Palermo was established as the capital of the Aghlabid Emirate of Sicily. It wasn't until 902, some seven decades later, that Muslims took over the second major city of Syracuse in the south. And by 965 the rest of the island was taken.

However, by 1072, Muslim hold on Sicily weakened. This was mainly due to infighting and division which started initially with the overthrow of the Aghlabid's by the Kalbid dynasty which was allied to the Fatimid rulers who had by then taken control over much of North Africa. Over time, ethnic, political and economic rivalries divided Muslims into competing factions and small principalities. Eventually, this allowed the Christian Norman's (descendants of Vikings from Northern Europe) to invade. By 1095 the last city in the south, Noto, fell from Muslims ending a period of 264 years of Muslim rule. Though, Muslim influence and Islam continued in Sicily long after the end of Muslim rule.

During the rule of Aghlabids they introduced land reforms, built irrigation systems and introduced new fruits like sugarcane, lemon, oranges etc. Agriculture and commerce flourished as a result. By the middle of the 11th century, Palermo was the second largest city in Europe with a population of around 350,000, second only to the Cordoba in Spain. It also became one of the great places of tolerance and peaceful coexistence between Christian, Jews and Muslims. Christians and Jews lived freely in return for the jizya tax or military service. Muslims were subject to Islamic Law, including the zakat tax. These measures meant that under Muslim rule there was freedom of religion, law and order, and society as a whole flourished. However, under Christian Norman rule, such arrangements did not exist, and the treatment of Muslims was dependent on the temperament of the Norman king in power at the time.

Under early Norman Kings it became increasingly difficult for Muslims to practice their religion publicly. However, there were periods of peaceful co-existence, particularly under the reign of King Roger II from 1130 to 1154. Under his reign, Sicily became one of the wealthiest states in all of Europe, and attracted many people. It was during this period that the great geographer Al-Idrisi, working for Roger II, completed his world atlas known as Tabula Rogeriana. Al-Idrisi incorporated the knowledge of Africa, the Indian Ocean and the East Asia gathered by merchants and explorers to create what was at the time the most accurate map of the world. He also wrote a book with geographical information with the title "The book of pleasant journeys into faraway lands" (Kitab nuzhat al-mushtaq fi'khtiraq al-'afaq). It was Al-Idrisi and his atlas which inspired the many famous explorers in history, including the likes of Ibn Battuta (1304-1368), Christopher Columbus (1451-1506) and Vasco De Gama (1460-1524).

But by 1184, when one of the great Muslim travellers, Ibn Jubair, visited Palermo, he described the situation as tense. "The Muslims of this city," he wrote, "preserve the remaining evidence of the faith. They keep in repair the greater number of their mosques, and come to prayers at the call of the muezzin. In their own suburbs they live apart from the Christians. The markets are full of them, and they are the merchants of the place [in other parts of Sicily, it was Muslims who were the merchants]. They [Muslims] do not congregate for the Friday service since the khutbah is

Sicily, Al-Idrisi (1100-1165) and the Tabula Rogeriana

forbidden [by the Normans]. On feast-day only may they recite it [the khutbah] with intercessions for the Abbasid Caliphs. They have a qadi [Islamic judge] to whom they refer their lawsuits, and a cathedral mosque where, in this holy month [Ibn Jubair was in Palermo during Ramadhan 1184], they assemble under its lamps. The ordinary mosques are countless, and most of them are used as schools for Qur'an teachers. But in general these Muslim do not mix with their brethren under non-Muslim patronage, and enjoy no security for their goods, their women or their children. May Allah, by His favour amend their lot with his beneficence."

In fact, after the period of Roger II, Muslims came under increasingly oppression, and many started emigrating to

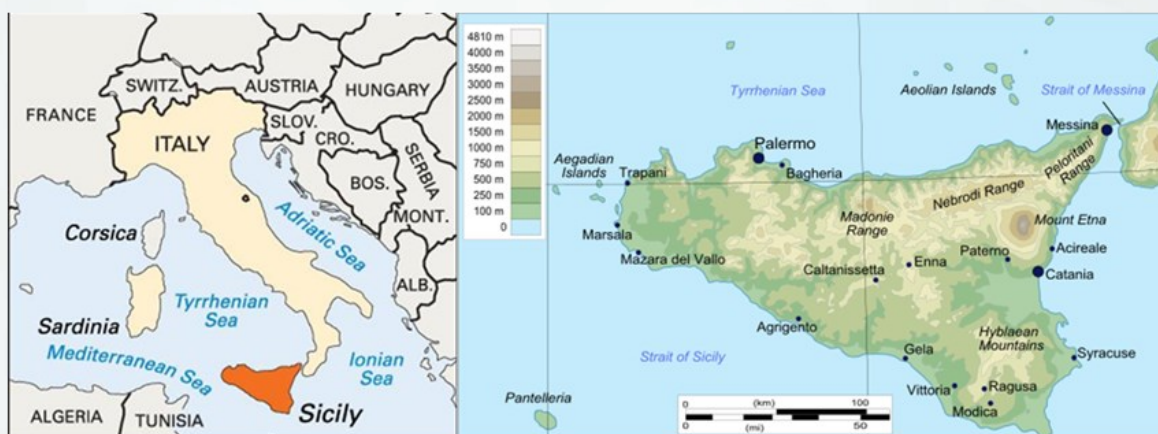
Muslim lands. News of the Crusades in the Muslim heartlands worsened relations between Muslims and Christians. In 1189, Palermo's Muslims were massacred and many were forced into exile. By 1266 the last Muslims were forced from the island, ending over 400 years of Islam in Sicily.

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Left map shows Sicily in relation to mainland Italy.
Right map shows Palermo in the north and Syracuse in the south east of Sicily



The map drawn by Al-Idrisi



মাহেরমজানের মর্যাদা ও ফজিলত

রোজার গুরুত্ব ও তাৎপর্য

মোহাম্মদ সানা-উল গাজী

রোজা ইসলামের অন্যতম স্তম্ভ ও শ্রেষ্ঠ ইবাদত। আত্মসংযম, আত্মনিয়ন্ত্রণ, আত্মশুদ্ধি, ধৈর্য ও তাকওয়া অর্জনের অন্যতম প্রধান উপায় রোজা। এ ইবাদতের মাধ্যমেই মহান আল্লাহর নৈকট্য লাভ করা সম্ভব হয়। আল্লাহভীতি বা তাকওয়া অর্জন এবং আধ্যাত্মিক উন্নতি সাধনেও সাওম বা রোজা অপরিহার্য ও অনিবার্য ইবাদত। মানুষের নৈতিক উন্নয়ন ও দৈনিক শৃংখলা বিধান, পারস্পরিক সম্প্রীতি-সহানুভূতি এবং সামাজিক সাম্য ও উন্নয়নের ক্ষেত্রেও সাওম বা রোজার ভূমিকা খুবই গুরুত্বপূর্ণ।

সাওম আরবি শব্দ। বাংলায় আভিধানিক অর্থ বিরত থাকা, কঠোর সাধনা, আত্মসংযম ইত্যাদি। আধ্যাত্মিকতা অর্জনের প্রধান মাধ্যম রমজান মাসের সিয়াম সাধনা। অর্থাৎ রোজার মাধ্যমে আধ্যাত্মিক উন্নতি সাধিত হয়। রোজা শুধু আবশ্যকীয় ইবাদতই নয়; বরং আত্মিক উন্নতি ও নৈতিক উৎকর্ষ সাধনেও এর ভূমিকা ব্যাপক। কাম-ক্রোধ, লোভ-লালসা, হিংসা-বিদ্বেষ ইত্যাদি মানবিক কুপ্রবৃত্তি থেকে দূরে রাখে রোজা। শয়তানের প্রবোচনা ও নফসের কুমন্ত্রণা থেকে আত্মাকে হেফাজত রাখতেও রোজার ভূমিকা অগ্রগণ্য। এ জন্যই রাসূল সা: রোজাকে 'ঢাল' হিসেবে উল্লেখ করেছেন। রোজার মাধ্যমেই একজন মুসলিম কৃষ্ণ সাধন করে নিজেকে আত্মসংযমী করে গড়ে তুলতে পারে। সিয়ামের কঠোর শৃংখলা ও নিয়ন্ত্রণ রোজাদারকে প্রকৃত মুসলিম হওয়ার সুযোগ করে দেয়। মুসলমানেরা রোজার মাধ্যমেই মহান আল্লাহর সাথে গভীর ও নিবিড় সম্পর্ক গড়ে তুলতে পারে। রোজার মাধ্যমেই মানবরুদয়ে তাকওয়া বা আল্লাহভীতি সৃষ্টি হয়। রোজাদার ক্ষুধা-তৃষ্ণা কাতর হয়েও শুধু মহান আল্লাহর ভয়ে পানাহার ও অন্যান্য বর্জনীয় বিষয় থেকে বিরত থাকে। সুযোগ থাকা সত্ত্বেও একমাত্র আল্লাহর সন্তুষ্টি ও ভালোবাসা লাভের আশায় ইদ্রিয় স্বাদ-ভৃষ্টি থেকে বিরত থাকেন রোজাদার। তাকওয়া অর্জন ও তাকওয়াভিত্তিক জীবন গঠনই সিয়াম সাধনার প্রধান উদ্দেশ্য। মহান আল্লাহ তায়ালা তাকওয়া অর্জনের উদ্দেশ্যেই রমজানের রোজাকে ফরজ বা আবশ্যকীয় করেছেন। অন্যান্য ইবাদতের চেয়ে রোজার পদ্ধতি ও মর্যাদা ভিন্ন। স্বাভাবিক কারণেই নামাজসহ অন্যান্য ইবাদত প্রদর্শিত হয়। কিন্তু রোজা কোনোরূপ প্রদর্শন ছাড়াই বীরবে-নিভৃতে পালন করা যায়। রোজার গোপনীয়তা সম্পূর্ণ ব্যক্তির ইচ্ছাধীন। এ জন্য আল্লাহ রাক্বুল আলামিন রোজার জন্য বিশেষ প্রতিদানের ঘোষণা দিয়েছেন। সত্যতা ও ন্যায়পরায়ণতাসহ বিভিন্ন মানবীয় গুণাবলি বিকাশ এবং মানবজীবনের সার্বিক সফলতার জন্য আত্মসংযম-আত্মনিয়ন্ত্রণ একান্ত প্রয়োজন। সংযম সাধনা ছাড়া মানবিকতার বিকাশ হয় না। এ ছাড়া বলিষ্ঠ ব্যক্তিত্ব অর্জনের জন্যও নিজের প্রবৃত্তি ও আবেগ নিয়ন্ত্রণ করা প্রয়োজন। আর সিয়াম সাধনার মাধ্যমেই তা অর্জন সম্ভব হয়।

রোজার পুণ্য ও লক্ষ্য অর্জনের জন্য পানাহার বর্জনের সাথে পাপচার-অগ্নীনতা বর্জনও শর্ত। অন্যথায় রোজার মূল উদ্দেশ্য সাধনই ব্যর্থ। এ জন্য রাসূল সা: বলেছেন, 'যে ব্যক্তি মিথ্যা ও অগ্নীনতা থেকে বিরত থাকতে না পারে তার পানাহার থেকে বিরত থাকার কোনো প্রয়োজন নেই' (বুখারি)। পারস্পরিক সহানুভূতি-সহমর্মিতা ও সামাজিক সম্প্রীতি-ভাতৃবোধসহ মানবিক গুণাবলি প্রতিষ্ঠিত করতে রোজার ভূমিকা অনন্য। ভোগবিলাসে অভ্যস্ত মানুষেরা রোজার মাধ্যমে ক্ষুধা-তৃষ্ণার ভয়ঙ্কর যন্ত্রণা কিছুটা হলেও উপলব্ধি করতে পারে। এতে দরিদ্র-নিরন্ন মানুষের প্রতি বিতশালীদের সহানুভূতি-সহমর্মিতাবোধ আগ্রত হয় এবং সমাজে সাম্য-মৈত্রীর পরিবেশ গঠন করতে সহায়তা করে। রোজা মুসলিম সমাজে পবিত্র-পুণ্যময় পরিবেশ সৃষ্টি করে। রোজার মাধ্যমে মানুষ ধাবিত হয় পুণ্যের দিকে এবং দূরে থাকার সুযোগ পায় অন্যায়-পাপাচার থেকে। কঠোর সংযম সাধনা-সংচিন্তায় রোজাদারের মন পাপ-পঙ্কিলমুক্ত হয়ে পবিত্র হয়ে ওঠে। তাই রোজার মাসে সমাজের সর্বত্র সৌম্য-শান্ত পূতপবিত্রতা বিরাজ করে। আর গোটা সমাজ মহান আল্লাহ

মাহে রমজানের মর্যাদা ও ফজিলত

তায়ালার রহমতের ফলস্বরূপ অতিশীত হয়ে ওঠে। প্রকৃতপক্ষে আধ্যাত্মিক-নৈতিক উন্নতি, পারস্পরিক সহানুভূতি-সহমর্মিতা, সামাজিক উন্নয়ন-সম্প্রীতি অর্জনের লক্ষ্যে রোজার কঠোর সংযম সাধনা এক অনন্য ইবাদত। তাই মুসলিম সমাজে রোজার গুরুত্ব ও তাৎপর্য ব্যাপক ও অসাধারণ। আসুন আমরা সবাই যথাযথভাবে সিয়াম সাধনার মাধ্যমে মহান আল্লাহ তায়ালার সন্তুষ্টি, দুনিয়ার শান্তি ও পরকালীন মুক্তির পথ অন্বেষণ করি। আমিন!

রমজানের জরুরী কিছু টিপস:

যে সব কারনে রোযা মাকরুহ হয়:

- ❖ নিষিদ্ধ কোন জিনিস চিবালে বা চোখে দেখলে।
- ❖ কোন দ্রব্য মুখে দিয়ে রাখলে।
- ❖ গরগর করে কুলি করলে বা নাকের ভিতর পানি ঢেলে নিলে।
- ❖ ইচ্ছাকৃতভাবে মুখে থুথু জমা করে গলাধঃকরণ করলে।
- ❖ মিথ্যা কথা বললে।
- ❖ গীবত করলে।
- ❖ রোযার কারণে অস্থিরতা প্রকাশ করলে।
- ❖ গালাগালি বা ঝগড়া-ফ্যাসাদ করলে।
- ❖ সমস্ত দিন নাপাক অবস্থায় থাকলে।
- ❖ কয়লা চিবিয়ে অথবা পাউডার, পেস্ট, মাজন, ইত্যাদি দিয়ে দাঁত মাজলে।

যে সব কারণে রোযা ভঙ্গ হয়:

- ❖ ইচ্ছাকৃতভাবে কোন খাদ্য বস্তু পানাহার করলে।
- ❖ রাত মনে করে সুবহি সাদিকের পর সাহরি খেলে।
- ❖ সূর্যাস্তের পূর্বে ইফতার করলে।
- ❖ কোন কিছু আহার করলে।
- ❖ রোজা ভেঙ্গে গেছে, এই ধারণায় পুনরায় খেলে।
- ❖ দাত হতে ছোলা পরিমাণ কোন জিনিস বের করে খেলে।
- ❖ নাকে-কানে এমনভাবে ঔষধ ব্যবহার করলে যাতে পেটে বা মাথায় পৌঁছে যায়।
- ❖ পেশাব-পায়খালার রাস্তা দিয়ে ঔষধ বা অন্য কিছু ব্যবহার করলে।
- ❖ স্ত্রী সহবাস করলে।

যে সব কারণে রোযা ভঙ্গ হয় না:

- ❖ অনিচ্ছাকৃতভাবে গলার ভিতর ধূলা-বালি, ধোঁয়া বা মশা-মাছি প্রবেশ করলে।
- ❖ সুগন্ধি ব্যবহার করলে বা অন্যকিছুর ঘ্রাণ নিলে।
- ❖ অনিচ্ছাকৃতভাবে কানে পানি প্রবেশ করলে।
- ❖ অনিচ্ছাকৃতভাবে বমি হলে।
- ❖ চোখে সুরমা ব্যবহার করলে।
- ❖ নিজ মুখের থুথু, কফ, ইত্যাদি গলাধঃকরণ করলে।
- ❖ শরীর ও মাথায় তেল ব্যবহার করলে।

মাহেরমজানের মর্যাদা ও ফজিলত

- ❖ ভুলক্রমে পানাহার করলে।
- ❖ গরমের কারণে ঠাণ্ডা অনুভবের জন্য গোসল করলে।
- ❖ মিসওয়াক করলে।
- ❖ স্বপ্নদোষ হলে।

যে সব কাজ অধিক করণীয়:

- ❖ আমলে মনযোগী হন (নামায, তেলওয়ায, জিকির)।
- ❖ সেহরি ও ইফতারের সময় বেশী পানি পান করুন।
- ❖ অতিরিক্ত ভাজাপোড়া, তেলযুক্ত ও চর্বিযুক্ত খাবার পরিহার করুন।
- ❖ সেহরি ও ইফতারের পর ভালভাবে দাঁত পরিষ্কার করুন।
- ❖ দাঁত, মাড়ি, চোয়াল ও মুখগহবরের যে কোন সমস্যায় আপনার নিকটস্থ ডেন্টিস্ট/দাঁতের ডাক্তারের পরামর্শ নিন।

সুস্থ থাকার কিছু টিপস

১. রমজানে যাদের ঔষধ খেতে হয় তাদের প্রয়োজনে চিকিৎসকের পরামর্শ নেয়া উচিত।
২. রোজায় পর্যাপ্ত পুষ্টি উপাদান গ্রহণ, পানি শূন্যতা রোধে পর্যাপ্ত পানি পান এবং পর্যাপ্ত বিশ্রাম দরকার।
৩. সেহরীর সময় অতিরিক্ত আহার করবেন না। খাদ্য তালিকায় পর্যাপ্ত আঁশ জাতীয় শর্করা খাবার রাখুন। বেশী আমিষ খান এবং খাদ্য তালিকায় রাখতে হবে সবজি-ফল।
৪. দিনের গরমের সময় ঠান্ডা যায়গায় বিশ্রাম নিন। সম্ভব হলে শারীরিক পরিশ্রম কমিয়ে দিন।
৫. ইফতারির সময় শরবত, দুধ, ফলের রস বেশী না খেয়ে মাগরিব এর পর হালকা খাবার যেমন সুপ ও অন্যান্য হালকা খাবার খেতে হবে। রক্তে চিনির মাত্রা স্বাভাবিক পর্যায়ে আনতে খাদ্য তালিকায় মিষ্টি জাতীয় খাবার রাখুন।
৬. রাতের খাবারের ক্ষেত্রে সুস্থ খাদ্য তালিকা অনুসরণ করুন। অতিরিক্ত খাবার বর্জন করুন এবং পর্যাপ্ত পানি পান করুন।
৭. চা, কফি, কোমল পানীয় পান থেকে বিরত থাকুন।
৮. বেশী করে ফল খেতে পারেন।
৯. ইফতারির পর থেকে ঘুমাতে যাবার আগ পর্যন্ত অন্তত ৮/৯ গ্লাস পানি পান করুন।
১০. ইফতারির পর ১৫-২০ মিনিট হাটার অভ্যাস করুন।
১১. তেলে ভাজা খাবার ও অধিক মসলাযুক্ত ঝাল খাবার পরিহার করুন। এসব খাবারে বুক জ্বালাপোড়া ও হজমে সমস্যা হয়।
১২. কয়েক বার দাঁত ও মুখ পরিষ্কার করুন।
১৩. দিনে কয়েকবার হাত মুখ ধুয়ে নিবেন।
১৪. ধূমপান ত্যাগ করুন।

মাহে রমজানের মর্যাদা ও ফজিলত

১৫. পর্যাপ্ত ঘুমালোর জন্য আপনার ঘুমের একটা নির্দিষ্ট সময় নির্ধারণ করুন।

১৬. রোজা রেখে অধিক ও অপ্রয়োজনীয় কথাবার্তা থেকে বিরত থাকুন।

১৭. রোজায় যাদের অ্যাজমা, ডায়াবেটিস, আলসার ও উচ্চ রক্তচাপ আছে তারা চিকিৎসকের পরামর্শ অনুযায়ী ঔষধ সেবন পুনঃনির্ধারণ করুন।

১৮. রোজা রেখে আকস্মিক কোল অসুস্থতা যেমন; অভিমাগ্রায় দুর্বলতা, মাথা ঘুরানো হলে চিকিৎসকের পরামর্শ নিন।

১৯. গুরুতর অসুস্থতায় রোজা ভঙ্গের প্রয়োজন হলে চিকিৎসকের পরামর্শ নিন অথবা শরীয়তের বিধান অনুসরণ করুন।

২০. প্রতিদিন অব্রত ১টা মাল্টিভিটামিন ক্যাপসুল সেবনের চেষ্টা করুন।



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Ramadhan Poem


In Ramadhan we Muslims fast,
With it, Allah forgives the sins of our past.
From dusk till dawn with belief and satisfaction,
Knowing Allah multiplies our rewards for every good action.
It was in this holy month when the Quran was revealed,
For the fasting person; Ramadhan is a Shield.
Ramadhan protects us from the hellfire as we refrain from bad deeds,
Controlling our desires and suppressing our greed.
Giving in charity and praying through the night,
Hoping for reward to make our hereafter bright.
In the last ten days Laylatul Qadr we seek,
One night of exceeding worship as its rewards are unique.
The blessings and virtues of this month we must exert to attain,
There is no guarantee that we'll live to see another Ramadhan again.

By Mawlana Aminul Islam



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Discover Islam Luton, in Partnership with Luton foodbank have launched the Ramadhan Fast-A-Thon campaign directed towards those that wont normally be fasting this Ramadhan.

Why not encourage your non-Muslim friends, colleagues and neighbours to skip a meal and donate the equivalent amount towards Luton Foodbank or a charity of their choice on the 17th of June 2016.

Whoever participates can then contact Luton Foodbank and join all participants in a free Iftaar meal and presentation at Mashwi Restaurant on Crawley Road, Luton.

Find out more about Discover Islam Luton & the work we do by making a visit to our centre: 37c Upper George St. or by visiting our website www.discover-islam.co.uk

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Precious Supplications For Ramadhan & Fasting

Intention for fasting

وَيَصُومُ غَدَ نَوَيْتُ مِنْ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ

Wa bisawmi ghadinn nawaiytu min shahri ramadan

I intend to keep the fast for tomorrow in the month of Ramadan
[Abu Dawud]

When breaking the fast- Iftar

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي لَكَ صُمْتُ وَبِكَ آمَنْتُ وَعَلَى رِزْقِكَ أَفْطَرْتُ

Allahumma inni laka sumtu wa bika aamantu wa 'ala rizq-ika aftarthu

O Allah! I fasted for You and I believe in You and I break my fast with Your sustenance
[Abu Dawud]

ذَهَبَ الظَّمْأُ وَابْتَلَّتِ الْعُرُوقُ، وَتَبَّتْ الْأَجْرُ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ

Dhahabadh-dhama'u wab-tallatil 'urūūqu, wa thabatal ajru InshaAllah

The thirst is gone, the veins are moistened and the reward is confirmed, if Allah Wills
[Abu Dawud]

When you are fasting, and someone is rude or quarrels with you

إِنِّي صَائِمٌ ، إِنِّي صَائِمٌ

Inni sa'iim, inni sa'iim

I am fasting, I am fasting
[Sahih al-Bukhari, Muslim]

Upon Sighting of the new Moon

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ ، اللَّهُمَّ أَهْلُهُ عَلَيْنَا بِالْأَمْنِ وَالْإِيمَانِ ، وَالسَّلَامَةِ وَالْإِسْلَامِ ، وَالنَّوْفِيقِ لِمَا تُحِبُّ رَبَّنَا وَتَرْضَى ، رَبَّنَا وَرَبُّكَ اللَّهُ

Allahu Akbar. Allahumma ahillahu 'alayna bil-amni wal-imaani, was-salaamati, wal-Islami, wat-tawfeeqi lima tuhibbu Rabbana wa tardha. Rabbuna wa RabbukAllahu

Allah is the Greatest. O Allah bring us the new moon with security and faith, with peace and in Islam, and in harmony with what our Lord Loves and what pleases Him. Our Lord

Precious Supplications For Ramadhan & Fasting

and your Lord is Allah
[at-Tirmidhi]

Upon seeing the first dates of the season

اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ لَنَا فِي ثَمَرِنَا ، وَ بَارِكْ لَنَا فِي مَدِينَتِنَا وَ بَارِكْ لَنَا فِي صَاعِنَا ، وَ بَارِكْ لَنَا فِي مُدَّنَا

Allahumma barik lana fi thamarina, wa barik lana fi madinatina, wa barik lana fi saa'ina,
wa barik lana fi muddina

O Allah! Bless us in our dates, and bless us in our town, bless us in our saa' and in our
Mudd'

(saa' and Mudd' are measurements used in the Prophet's time)
[at-Tirmidhi]

Upon breaking the fast in someone's home

أَفْطَرَ عِنْدَكُمْ الصَّائِمُونَ، وَأَكَلَ طَعَامُكُمْ الْأَبْرَارُ، وَصَلَّتْ عَلَيْكُمْ الْمَلَائِكَةُ

Aftara 'indakumus saa'imuna, wa akala ta'aamakumul-abraaru, wasallat 'alaikumul
mala'ikah

May those who are fasting break their fast in your home, and may the dutiful and pious
eat your food and may the angels send prayers upon you.

[Abu Dawud, Nasa'i]

On Lailatul Qadr - the Night of Power

Aishah (radhiya Allahu anha) narrates, that she said: "O Messenger of Allah! What if I
knew which night Lailatul-Qadr was, then what should I say in it?" He said 'Say

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوفٌ ، تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّي

Allahumma innaka 'affuwwun tuhibbul 'afwa fa'fu 'anni' "

O Allah You are The One Who pardons greatly, and loves to pardon, so pardon me.
[at Tirmidhi]



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