

A teacher said very beautifully in Urdu poetry

Jaw zindagee guzaare gaa Ramzan kee tara
Mowt aaye gee us kow Eid kee chand kee taraa

The one who turns Ramadan into his entire life
For that person Allah(SWT) will give him Eid on the day he passes away

The month of Ramadan leaving is not the end of the journey, rather the journey has only just started. Ramadan is like a car battery which charges the alternator. It is a training ground before a marathon of the coming 11 months. When a car is serviced in the workshop, its potential is seen outside the workshop. Ramadan is a workshop for Taqwa to be seen out of Ramadan.

And alhamdulillah, I would like to congratulate you. For a whole month you have turned your lives around. As a qualified dietitian, I personally witness the challenge people go through trying to stick to a diet plan even for a single day. Yet you have maintained an 18 hour+ fast from food, water and your personal desires which is far more difficult. When we struggle to get up for fajr outside of Ramadan, you have woken daily and made your sleep your slave again and proven that you have great capacity with the Help of Allah(SWT). Outside of Ramadan, we struggle to make it to the masjid regularly, yet here you are sitting again for a fajr salaah in the masjid alhamdulillah. Outside of Ramadan, we cannot wake for tahajjud yet so many of you have completed your fardh and then between 11 and 23 units of additional night prayers for His Sake, alhamdulillah. Where we struggled to read the Qur'an or listen to a page of it outside of Ramadan, you have followed the beautiful example of the Prophet(SAW) who listened to it all from the lips of Jibreel (AS) in taraweeh and many of you have completed a whole Qur'an in less than a month. Outside of Ramadan, many may have spent hours watching videos and circulating profanities on social media, but in this month you have controlled your eyes and withheld your tongue instead spending them remembering Allah(SWT). Even those struggling with addictions have managed to make their habit a slave again, rather than the master. Well done - you have proven your capacity for good with the Help of Allah(SWT) - proven that you have the ability to rise to a status unmatched even by the angels by your subjugating your nafs and desires.

Now, the training programme is almost over. It's time to run the marathon. So how do we live a life like Ramadan? How do we ensure that this energy and strength does not fizzle out before the day of Eid or the month of Shawwal is over? Sadly, when Shaytaan is released

and shows us a little temptation whether through a chand raat party or Eid day celebrations with cars hired out for show, we succumb and we are already his slaves.

The word Ramadan is derived from the word Ramada which refers to the very hot, boiling soil which heats and purifies the metals within it - similarly, the dirt of our sins is seared off our hearts in this month through abstinence burning away our desires. Deep down each of knows the filth of our hearts - like rocks they hardly cry from the remembrance of Allah(SWT). But remember, that from rocks, Allah(SWT) also brings diamonds so there is always hope for us.

Many scholars explain that Laylatul If a person knows how to use his time, every single night of the year can be like laylatul qadr. Allah(SWT) can give unlimited rewards any night of the year. But if we learn how to talk to Allah(SWT), learn to beg and turn back to Him(SWT). So how can we keep up achieve more days and nights of good after Ramadan?

Living a life of Ramadan

1. Constantly check your intention

When we fast in Ramadan, we are absolutely focused on gaining taqwa - mindfulness of Allah(SWT). He is our ultimate purpose. And what comes after Ramadan is a real test of our intention while fasting. Did we fast for Him(SWT), or was it because everyone around us was fasting? Was it because of the shame of being called out? No, rather we fasted because we don't worship Ramadan, we worship the Lord of Ramadan.

'Aisha (Ra) narrated that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) died while Abu Bakr was at a place called As-Sunah (Al-'Aliya). On hearing of this tragic news, 'Umar stood up and said, <Wallahi maa maata Rasoolullah> "By Allah! Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) is not dead!" 'Umar (later on) said, "By Allah! Nothing occurred to my mind except that." He said, "Verily! Allah will resurrect him and he will cut the hands and legs of some men." Then Abu Bakr came and uncovered the face of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ), kissed him and said, "May my mother and father be sacrificed for you, (O Allah's Messenger (ﷺ)), <Tibta hayyan wa mayyitan> you were good in life and in death. By Allah in Whose Hands my life is, Allah will never make you taste death twice."

Then he went out and said, "O oath-taker! Don't be hasty." When Abu Bakr spoke, 'Umar sat down. Abu Bakr praised and glorified Allah and said, No doubt! Whoever worshipped Muhammad, <Fa ina Muhammadan qad maat, wa man kaan ya'budullaha fa innAllaha hayyun laa yamoot> then Muhammad is dead, but whoever worshipped Allah, then Allah is

Alive and shall never die.” Then he recited Allah’s Statement.

إِنَّكَ مَيِّتٌ وَإِنَّهُمْ مَيِّتُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

“(O Muhammad) Verily you will die, and they also will die.” (39.30) and

وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ أَفَإِنْ مَاتَ أَوْ
قُتِلَ أُنْقَلَبْتُمْ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِكُمْ وَمَنْ يَنْقَلِبْ عَلَىٰ عَقْبَيْهِ فَلَنْ يَضُرَّ
اللَّهَ شَيْئًا وَسَيَجْزِي اللَّهُ الشَّاكِرِينَ ﴿١٤٤﴾

“Muhammad is no more than an Apostle; and indeed many Apostles have passed away, before him, If he dies Or is killed, will you then Turn back on your heels? And he who turns back On his heels, not the least harm will he do to Allah And Allah will give reward to those Who are grateful.” (3.144)

The people wept loudly [Sahih al-Bukhari 3667]

Likewise, your Deen does not stop with the ending of Ramadan. So the first thing we need to do is question our own intention. If we are doing it for Allah(SWT), it’s very possible that we will be able to do it after Ramadan too inshaAllah.

2. Transform yourself

We pray that Allah(SWT) accepts our deeds but we cant be certain that any of our acts are accepted. However, scholars explain that there are signs of acceptance and I remember one Hajj that we were reminded that the sign of an accepted Hajj is that it is a turning point in your life - a true milestone after which you are not the same person you were before. You are transformed.

However, this transformation does not have to be enormous. No doubt, it will be difficult to keep up the consistency of all the deeds we did in Ramadan, but we must keep up

tahajjud? Is it time for tahajjud?” and the whole night would pass like this. The love for speaking to Allah(SWT) in this blessed time would keep him restless and it would become a true labour of love for anyone who adopted this approach.

In Safar 4 A.H., a delegation from the tribes of ‘Udal and Qarah came to Madinah and asked the Prophet [SAW] to send a group of Companions to instruct them in religion, claiming the existence of some Muslims among them. He sent six of his Companions including the great Sahabi Khubaib (RA). In an area called Ar-Raji’ between Rabigh and Jeddah, a hundred archers of Banu Lihyan clan surrounded the place and attacked them. The delegation of Muslims took shelter on some high ground but the bedouins offered them a guarantee of safety and they accepted. When they descended, the bedouins treacherously bound and killed many of them. The few who were captured were taken and sold in Makkah to the Quraish. The first was Khubaib who was detained for some time and then it was unanimously decided to crucify him. He was taken from the Holy Sanctuary to At-Tan‘im for crucifixion. He requested a respite to offer 2 Rak‘aa of prayer. He prayed a short salaah and after the final salaam, he turned to his executioners, and said: “Had I not been afraid that you would think that I was afraid of death, I would have prayed for a long time.” He then said: “O Lord! Count them one by one, exterminate them to the last one.” and he read some couplets which included “To Allah alone I complain of my helplessness and sufferings, And of the death, the confederates have prepared for me. Lord of the Throne! Give me endurance against their design, They have cut my flesh bit by bit, and I have been deprived of sustenance. They let me choose infidelity but death is preferable, Tears roll out of my eyes, though not of fear. By Allâh! I fear not if I die a Muslim, On what side I fall for the sake of Allâh. I will not show subservience to the enemy, If Lord so desires, He will bless my torn limbs and broken joints.”

Abu Sufyan then addressed him saying: “I adjure you by Allah, don’t you wish that Muhammad [SAW] were here in your place so that we might cut off his head, and that you were with your family?” Khubaib (RA) responded without delay, “By Allâh, I do not wish that Muhammad [SAW] were in this place or even that a thorn could hurt him while I sat with my family.” Khubaib was then crucified and returned happy to His Lord.

When we worship Allah(SWT), we are not doing Allah (SWT) a favour. Rather, we are doing ourselves a favour - if we are able to enjoy these sajda, we would realise the sweetness of Allah(SWT). Iqbal used to say people say we are going to do our farz, rather we act like it is paying a qarz (loan) i.e. we are relieving ourselves of a burden.

During the time of the Prophet (SAW), there was a young orphan who was getting a wall built from the edge of his house to his neighbour’s but there was a palm tree that was

causing a halt to the construction. The wall could not be continued unless the tree was either removed or added to the child's house. This tree belonged to the companion named Abu Lubabah (R.A.). The young boy (the orphan) came to Abu Lubabah (R.A.) and told him: "Give me that tree so I could construct the wall." Abu Lubabah (R.A.) replied: "No, it is mine." The boy then said: "Then sell it to me!" Abu Lubabah (R.A.) refused once again. The boy said: "By Allah, I am going to complain to Prophet of Allah!" He went and told what exactly had happened with him. Prophet (SAW) softly said: "Where is Abu Lubabah? Call Abu Lubabah!" He (SAW) then said to Abu Lubabah (R.A.): "Give him the tree" Abu Lubabah (R.A.) said: "No, O' Prophet of Allah, it is my haqq." Prophet (SAW) said: "O' Abu Lubabah, sell it to him." He replied: "No, O' Prophet of Allah it's mine." Hearing this, tears started flowing from the eyes of the young boy. Prophet (SAW) then said: "O' Abu Lubabah, give him a branch from this tree and you will have a tree in Jannah" Abu Lubabah (R.A.) said: "I don't want it," and then left. When Abu Dahdah (RadyAllahu Anhu) heard this and saw the boy crying, he went close to the Prophet (SAW) and said: "If I purchase the same tree, will I get the same offer?"

The Prophet (SAW) replied: "Yes" So Abu Dahdah (RA) ran after Abu Lubabah (R.A.) and said: "O' Abu Lubabah, do you know of my orchard? (His house was in the orchard and some scholars said it had 500 trees) It is yours for that tree!"

Abu Lubabah (RA) turned around and said: "Are you out of your mind?" Abu Dahdah (RadyAllahu Anhu) replied: "No, it is yours and O' people be witness!"

Then he went where Prophet (SAW) and the boy were and said to him "O' boy, that tree is yours!"

Abu Dahdah (RA) then went to his old orchard and called out from outside: "O' Umm Dahdah!" She (Ra) replied: "Yes, O' Abu Dahdah!" He said: "Come out of the orchard" She asked: "Why?" He said: "We have sold it to Allah and His Messenger for a tree in Jannah!" She said: "What a successful deal!" Then Umm Dahdah (Ra) took their children out of the orchard. They were carrying some dates, she got hold of their hands, opened them and threw the dates back into the orchard and said: "They are for Allah my children."

And thus, Abu Dahdah (RA) sold off his 500 trees plus his home for a tree in Jannah.

Remember, the month of Ramadan to the other months is like Yusuf (AS) to his brothers. Because of the taqwa, patience and good conduct of Yusuf (AS), his 11 brothers were forgiven - similarly, this month can be a means of forgiveness for the remaining 11 months. So, just like Yusuf(AS) was the most beloved to Yaqub (AS), Ramadan is the most

beloved month to Allah(SWT).

Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant. Someones sitting in the shade today because someone plant a tree a long time ago. Do something good today that will benefit others forever.

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