

What type of Ramadan is yours?

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All thanks be to Allah. We seek His help, we seek His forgiveness. And we seek protection through Allah from the evil within ourselves, and from our bad deeds. This who is guided by Allah, nothing shall misguide him. And whoever is misguided by Allah; there shall be no guidance for him. I testify that there is no God but Allah, the only, with no associates, and I testify that Muhammad (PPBU) is His slave and messenger.

Allah says: {You who believe, fear Allah the fear He deserves. And do not die except as Muslims} 3.102.

Allah also says: {O People, fear your Lord who created you from a single soul; and from it He created its spouse, and from them both He spread many men and women. And Fear Allah through whom you are questioned and the blood relations. Surely Allah is ever an All Watcher over you.} 4-01

Allah also says: {O you who believe, Keep your duty to Allah and fear Him, and speak appropriately. He will direct you to do righteous good deeds and will forgive you your sins. And whosoever obeys Allah and His messenger then he has won glorious winnings.} 33-70,71

The most truthful of all is the Book of Allah. And the best guidance is that of Mohammad (PPBU), and the most evil of all events are the innovated, and each innovation is a trend, and every trend is deviation, and all deviations are in Hellfire.

Dear Muslims, in the not so distant past, from this place we talked about getting ready for Ramadan and how to welcome the holy month. And about the opportunity of Ramadan, and we hoped that we would be successful. We promised ourselves before Ramadan with a right return and a true repentance.

What type of Ramadan is our Ramadan this year? Is it the Ramadan of those who are lazy and those who postpone and keep saying "I will . . . I will do"? or is it the Ramadan of stepping up the gear and the diligence? Is it the Ramadan of repentance or the Ramadan of misery? Is it the Ramadan of mercy or resentment?

Well Ramadan is here and its crescent has appeared. Ramadan the Godly gift, and the present from Allah; who says in His book: {The month of Ramadan in which the Quran was revealed, a guidance for mankind and clear proofs for guidance and criterion. So whoever of you sights the start of the month then let them fast. And whoever is ill or on a journey, then the same number of days as replacement. Allah intends for you ease and for you He does not want difficulties. And you must complete the number of days, and you must glorify Allah for having guided you so that you may be grateful to Him.} 2-185.

Ramadan is a month that has one night within it that is worth a thousand other months. Ramadan is the most honored of all months. Ramadan is one of the next life's opportunities, which carries within it forgiveness of sins, and clearing of offences. This opportunity carries within it the eternal happiness of mankind. Where are the takers?

Ramadan is the school in which Muslims learn, and the worshipers become civilized. Ramadan comes with blessings and mercies. Ramadan is truly a welcomed visitor.

The messenger (PPBU) said: {when Ramadan starts, the gates of Paradise are opened, and the gates of Hell are closed, and Satans are chained.}

He was also reported saying: {On the first night of Ramadan, Satans are chained, and Jin are tied-back, the gates of Hell are closed, not one door is left open, and an announcement is called: You who seek good, come along, and you who seek evil hold back. And Allah has many who are set free from Hell fire. And that happens each night of the month}

The messenger (PPBU) also said: {whoever fasts Ramadan in faith and expectation, then all his/her previous sins are forgiven}.

The messenger (PPBU) also said: {The five daily prayers, and from a Friday to the next Friday, and from one Ramadan to the next. These are cleansers of what occurs between them; as long as the major sins are no committed}.

The messenger (PPBU) also said: {The sins of man in his people, and his money and his neighbours are cleared by prayers, fasting and charity}.

The messenger (PPBU) also said: {Every Muslim has an answered prayer if he/she says it during Ramadan}.

The messenger (PPBU) also said: {There are three whose prayers or invocation (Dua'a) are not denied: One who fasts until he/she breaks the fast, and one who is a just leader, and the prayer of one who was wronged or oppressed}.

Any month with all these virtues and nobleness is worth to be given attention. Have you prepared yourself to take advantage of it? The messenger (PPBU) used to give the good news to his companions about approaching Ramadan. He did this in order to encourage them and recharge their resolution, and to precondition their souls; all in order to deal well with Ramadan. And in order for the opportunity is not to be missed. One of the companions was reported saying (Ebn-Al-Fadl) that they used to pray to Allah six months earlier so He would allow them to make alive to Ramadan, and they used to pray the following six months in order that Allah would accept their deeds during Ramadan. And Ebn-Katheer used to say the following prayer: "O Allah, make me good so I would make it to Ramadan, and make Ramadan good for me, and receive it from me with acceptance".

When people meet Ramadan there are those who welcome it with happiness. And that is the case of the faithful. Allah says: {O mankind, There has come to you an advice from your Lord, and a healing for what's in the chests, guidance and mercy for the believers. Say: In the bounty of Allah, and in His mercy therein let them rejoice. That is better than what they accumulate} 10-57,58.

And there is another type of people, and may Allah protect you from belonging to that kind, who know not their God except during the month of Ramadan. They only pray and recite the Koran during this month. This is a form of false repentance. And another heartbreaking group of people who meet Ramadan with great discomfort, unease and weariness, on the basis that it is a month of starving during the day and glutton and over feeding at night. Some disobedient people see Ramadan to be limiting to their desires and lusts. One can only wonder how comes that people grumble about the month of the mercy and satisfaction of Allah.

Dear Muslim, one of Allah's mercies upon you is that He extended your life and allowed you get the benefits of this great month. Give thanks to Allah just for allowing you to live to Ramadan. Many who hoped and wanted to make it; were surprised by death; and did not make it to Ramadan.

One never knows if they will make it to next Ramadan in health, or in safety and security in person, or in family or in money. Some fast one Ramadan in full health, and the following Ramadan they are bedridden in sickness. If you live in security and you are settled in peace, comfort and freedom, think of those who fast and break their fasting as prisoners or refugees or exiled or fighting a war or fighting for their faith. Imagine yourself hungry, expelled, homeless or hunted suffering the pains of a siege or a blockade just as is happening to the Palestinians.

Ramadan is the month when you should feel for your fellow Muslims. A Muslim when fasting must feel for other brother Muslims everywhere. When you feel hungry during fasting, then think of the thousands of hungry people who await for a bite to eat. Is there any who is willing to provide a bite? And when one who is fasting feels the thirst should remember the thousands who await a drop of water. Is there any who is willing to provide a drink of water? And when he/she get dressed should remember the thousands with nothing to wear. Anyone is willing to provide cloths? Give thanks to Allah who gave you freedom, security, food, water and clothes during fasting, while others are denied the food to eat, and the clothes to wear. Give thanks to Allah for all His mercies.

A'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) said: "The messenger (PPBU) used to be more active during Ramadan than any other month."

The messenger (PPBU) said: {The best prayer after the compulsory prayers is a prayer at night}. And he also said: {this that stays up Ramadan in prayers in faith and expectation then all his/her previous sins are forgiven}

The act of night prayers during Ramadan is a recommended act. Every Muslim should ensure to do Taraweeh prayers. The messenger (PPBU) said: {whoever remains to do prayers with his/her Imam until the Imam leaves, then a full night praying is written for them}. In other words, one does an hour's prayers and it counts for a full night.

Let us not forget that attention is given first to the compulsory prayers in jama'a or group at a Mosque. Allah loves for us to get closer to Him through the compulsory acts of worship. Do not forget about the compulsory acts and concentrate on the recommended or optional acts.

Why not during this month try the pleasure of the Koran? and the pleasure of the supplication or dua'a? Why not try the time of Sahoor (just before dawn) and the time of sleep? Remember that Allah descends down in the last third of the night offering His mercies. Why don't we expose our selves to this Godly breeze and catch those mercies.

What a loss it is for those who miss this, and those who are misled and distracted; during the last part of the night and the time when Allah descends. Those who are distracted by playing, messing and watching the TV channels listening and watching what is unacceptable. What a waste for those slaves.

Let this be the start of the end to everything that takes you away from Allah. And the end to every thing that brings Allah's dissatisfaction and anger. Let it be the beginning of the true move towards doing good, and towards pleasing of the Lord of the Heavens and the earth.

The messenger (PPBU) stood at the Member and said: "Amen Amen Amen"; three times. He was asked later why he said amen three times. He said: {Gabrael (PBU) came and said: whoever witnesses the month of Ramadan (meaning: be alive for the month) and does not get forgiveness, and goes into Hellfire, Allah Has put him at a distance, say Amen, so I said: Amen}

Brothers and sisters, waste no time to repent before it is too late, and when no one, nothing and no money can bail you out. Have the intention, and build your determination and be assertive, and show Allah something He likes from you. Don't keep saying I will, I will. Now, is the time to act if you are serious; and if you are ready. This is the time for returning to Allah; and this is the time of mercy from Allah. Hurry and repent before the door is closed for you. Don't be with those who gain no forgiveness when Ramadan is over and done. The inelegant one is this who looks at his state; thinks of all his faults; and fixes himself before death shocks him. That is when no more deeds can be done. That is before he is transferred to the other life of judgment.

May Allah make our fasting true and accepted. And may Allah make us fast the days of Ramadan and pray its nights in faith and expectation for His reward. We ask Him to make us winners of the full reward, and make us witnesses of the night of Qadr. Amen.