

Ramadhan has finished:

What is next?

Khutbah Selection: Hafiz Sajjad

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى- وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهِ فَصَلَّى- بَلْ تُؤْثِرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا-
وَالْآخِرَةَ خَيْرٌ وَ أَبْقَى-

Successful indeed are those who purify themselves,
remember the Name of their Lord, and pray.

But you prefer the life of this world,
even though the Hereafter is far better and more lasting.

Refresher Course

We recently finished a course called Ramadan to reach “Taqwah”(Fear of Allah Most High). The Holy month of Ramadan came like **seasonal rain** and passed by. This rain did not water the plants and crops -it **showered upon the hearts**. It is sad, but true, that the hearts of most of us are stricken with **spiritual drought**.

Alhamdulillah, We **fasted**, gave **charity**, we did read the **Qur'an Kareem** and performed **taraweeh** and **Qiyamul Layl (Tahajjud)**. We avoided **gossip**, **slander** and **every evil** that would invalidate our fasting. But now that Ramadan has bid us farewell, many of us, regrettably, will put the **Qur'an Kareem back on the shelves**, will suspend fasting until next year and will overlook the night prayer. Masaajid have become empty. Musallien are missing. This is not the

way it should be, because all of these acts of worship carry rewards and are of benefit to us throughout the year, in addition to the fact there is no divine prescription limiting them to Ramadan.

Okay Ramadan has gone what is next.

Don't let vanish the fruits of Ramadan

Devil is about to busy again

The Prophet Peace and Blessings of Allāh upon him, said, “**When Ramadān enters the doors of the Heavens are opened, the doors of Hell are closed, and the Shayateen are chained.**” (Bukhari, Muslim, and others).

Hence they must have been looking forward to its end so that they can be **unchained**.

Some of the major **post-Ramadān changes** include:

The *Masājid* becoming **empty** while the malls become full to the brim.

The Qur’ān recitations **stop** while watching of the movies and listening to the music will start in full swing.

The gatherings of the Qur’ān *Tafseer* (commentaries), *Dars* (lessons) and *Bayāns* (Islamic lectures) in the *Masājid* cease while mixed gatherings, parties and un-Islamic celebrations resurface.

The glances that have been lowered rise up again.

Our **attachment** to the smartphones return to its **pre-Ramadān levels** and once again the virtual world of the **social media** becomes our second home.

Islamic attire like *Thawbs* (*kānzus* or *jubas*), *burkā's*, *hijābs*, *niqābs*, *topis* (caps) and turbans **disappear back into the wardrobes**.

The tongues lose their restraint and the vices of **lying, gossiping, backbiting, slandering, quarreling**, etc. reemerge.

The believers' hearts that have softened in Ramadān again **harden** and their generosity levels drop.

In short, **our piety levels dive** and we start going against the teachings of our Gracious Lord, Allāh the Lord of Might.

What is described above is just the **tip of the iceberg**. The situation could become much worse than that.

It's just like a person who has painted his house for a certain occasion and as soon as that occasion is over he voluntarily goes and brings a lorry load of filth to splash it all over his house and bring it back to its original state (or even worse). No sane person would do that, would he?

Shayāteen are **not the only ones to blame** for these deplorable changes in our daily lives. They can only act if they are given leeway. We have to be strong in resisting their manipulations and also in not giving in to our *Nafs* (ego, wicked inner self).

Allah has created some fruits and flowers that are seen in certain seasons only and we call them seasonal fruits or flowers. Ramadan is one of them. Ramadan is the spring season of virtues. However, He has not made us '**Seasonal Muslims**', limited to attaining piety during the period of Ramadān only.

Rather the believer is like the "**goodly tree**" that "brings its fruits at all times with the will of its Lord". (Quran 14:24-27)

It is only that Allāh with His infinite Mercy has provided us this month of Ramadān to elevate our status. Ramadān is actually a kind of training ground for us so that we get trained to be proper Muslims for the rest of the year.

Do not let Shaytān rob you off the treasures you may have acquired after sacrificing a great deal during the Blessed month of Ramadān.

May Allah protect us all and **inspire** us with the intention and ability to uphold and **practice His Deen until we meet Him**.

The **best deeds** are which are done **regularly** even with small portion e.g two rakat daily.

1. Balance

In Ramadan, it's not only our bodies that are cleansed through fasting, our spirituality is also improved through increased Salah and reading of the Qur'an Kareem.

Our **finances are cleansed through Zakah,**

our **social relationships are improved through coming together for community Iftar**, and our social contribution is increased through extra **Sadaqah** (Charity). The Ramadan spirit is developed through a balanced increase in every area of life, with each aspect having its own timing, amount, and purpose.

Don't allow Shaitan to be an anchor and halt your spiritual journey. Raise the sails of Iman to reach the beautiful shores of Pleasure of your Lord.. Would you rather invest for **short term returns**, or would it be more sensible to invest for **everlasting returns**?

Ways to maintain the good habits you picked during Ramadan:

► Make Du'a

It was Allah Most High who gave you the ability to keep the good habit in Ramadan, and only HE can help you maintain it afterwards. Make Du'a that Allah Most High helps you not only keep the habit, but that HE accepts it and makes it a way for you to grow in closeness to HIM.

► Make it a Habit

If you want to keep good habits, you've got to make sure they remain part of your daily schedule. For instance, fasting. Our beloved Messenger (Allah's peace be upon him) encouraged fasting on Mondays and Thursdays? He said: "A man's deeds are reported (to Allah Most High) on Mondays and Thursdays and I prefer that I should be fasting when my deeds are reported." (Hadith-Tirmidhi)

► Evaluate yourself Weekly

This helps you see the bigger picture. You'll be able to evaluate on a more long-term level how well you've been keeping your habit in practice. Weekly tahajjud. You can do the same thing on a monthly and yearly basis.

► Don't fall apart once you make one Mistake

The beauty of Taubah (repentance) in Islam, is that Allah Most High blesses us with this opportunity to return to HIM after doing something wrong. We should remember that the door of tauba is always open. Only Allah Most High is Perfect.

► Ask yourself WHY you kept the habit

Niyyah or intention is a key to Allah Most High's acceptance of our good deeds. If we developed a habit to impress others, for instance, we may be able to keep the momentum for a while, but most probably it'll wear out afterwards.

But if we maintained a habit sincerely for the sake of Allah Most High, Insha-ALLAH, not only will we be rewarded for it, but our intention will help us maintain the necessary motivation to continue to do good.

► Work your Way up slowly

A'ishah (Allah be pleased with her) reported that Rasulullah (Allah's peace be upon him) said: ***“Do good deeds properly, sincerely and moderately, and remember that you shall enter Paradise only through Allah Most High's Mercy, and also remember that the most beloved deed to Allah Most High is that which is regular and constant even if it is little.”*** (Hadith-Al-Bukhari)

The wisdom in this Hadith is tremendous and it is one way of keeping up good habits you have picked up in Ramadan.

For example, let's say you were motivated to read Qur'an Kareem for half-an-hour daily in Ramadan. But now that it's over, you feel

sluggish, lazy and want to give it up. Yet, you had wanted to maintain this habit after the blessed month was over.

Instead of trying to read Qur'an Kareem for the same amount of time, reduce the time period to as much as you are initially able to do, even if it's just ten or twenty minutes a day.

If you keep up this 'ten minutes a day' habit, Insha-Allah Most High, you will see the amount of Qur'an Kareem you read will increase slowly but gradually. perhaps even surpassing your Ramadan maximum in the long-term, Insha-ALLAH !

Fasting of Shawaal

The first thing to understand is the difference between what is known as fard and what is known as nafl. Fard is obligatory, it is what Allah requires us to do, and leaving it is a sin and we will be held accountable for it. An example is two rakah of Fajr prayer and the fasts of Ramadan.

Nafl literally means extra. Nafl worship is voluntary, it is not required from a Muslim, rather it is up to the individual to offer it. It is optional and voluntary. The Muslim is not sinful for neglecting nafl, but is rewarded for doing it. Therefore, nafl worship is recommended.

The Most Important Nafl Fasts

1. Six Days in the Month of Shawwal (the month following Ramadan or the 10th Islamic month)

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said,

“Whoever fasts during the month of Ramadan and then follows it with six days of Shawwal will be (rewarded) as if he had fasted the entire year.” [1]

It is forbidden to fast on the day of Eid or Eid-ul-Fitr to be specific. You can keep these six fasts anytime after the day of Eid and they do not have to be kept consecutively. If you wish you can fast them

separately as long as they are completed within the month of Shawwal. One fast is equal to 50 days in reward.

2. It is permissible for one who is performing a voluntary fast to break his fast

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: ***“The one who is fasting voluntarily is in charge of himself. If you wish you may fast and if you wish you may break your fast.”*** [8]

Abu Sa’id al-Khudri (may Allah be pleased with him) said: ***“I prepared food for the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) came to me with some of his companions. When the food was laid out, one of the men said: ‘I am fasting.’ The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: ‘Your brother has invited you and incurred expenses in your behalf.’ Then he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) asked him, ‘Break your fast and fast another day in its place if you wish.’ “*** [9]

Breaking a day of fasting during the month of Ramadan without a legitimate reason, on the other hand, is a serious sin even if the person makes it up later.

Imam Hasan Basri Said:

الحسن البصري : 'كل يومٍ لا يُعصى الله فيه فهو عيد ، كل يوم يقطعه المؤمن في طاعة مولاه وذكره وشكره فهو له عيد'

“Each day in which no act of disobedience to Allah Most High is committed is Eid and each day a believer spent in acts of obedience to his Lord is Eid.”

May Allah Most High accept our fasting, our Ibadah and other righteous actions, that our condition after Ramadan

be a better one, the state of our Ummah improves and that we are granted honour and submit to HIS obedience.
..Ameen