

# Ramadan *Immersion*

## THE RAMADAN OF THE SAHABA

# Introduction

- Allah has singled out the month of Ramadān with many unique qualities and virtues.
- It is:
  - The month in which the Qur'an was revealed
  - The month of generosity and kindness
  - The month of repentance, forgiveness, and emancipation from the Fire.
- In it, the gates of Paradise are opened, the gates of Hell are closed, and the devils are chained.
- Within it is a night better than a thousand months.

# The First Night of Ramadan

**Abū Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:**

إِذَا كَانَ أَوَّلُ لَيْلَةٍ مِنْ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ صُفِّدَتِ الشَّيَاطِينُ وَمَرْدَةُ الْجِنِّ وَغُلِّقَتْ أَبْوَابُ النَّارِ فَلَمْ يَفْتَحْ مِنْهَا بَابُ الْجَنَّةِ فَلَمْ يُغْلَقْ مِنْهَا بَابٌ وَيُنَادِي مُنَادٍ: يَا بَاغِيَ الْخَيْرِ أَقْبِلْ وَيَا بَاغِيَ الشَّرِّ أَقْصِرْ وَلِلَّهِ عُتْقَاءُ مِنَ النَّارِ وَذَلِكَ كُلُّ لَيْلَةٍ

*“When the first night of Ramadān arrives, the devils and the rebellious jinn are chained, the gates of Hell are closed and none of them are opened, the gates of Paradise are opened and none of them are closed, and a caller calls out: ‘O seeker of good, come forward; O seeker of evil, desist.’ And Allah has those whom He frees from the Fire, and that occurs every night.”*

*(Narrated by al-Tirmidhī)*

# Guarding the Fast

**Abū Nu‘aym narrated in al-Hilyah from Abū Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that he and his companions, when they fasted, would sit in the mosque and say:**

*“We are purifying our fast.”*

They would guard their fasting from:

- Idle talk
- Indecent speech
- Falsehood
- Everything that could corrupt it or diminish its reward

Fasting is not only about abstaining from food and drink.

# Moderation in Eating

**Abū Ziyād narrated from Abū Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him):**

*“I had fifteen dates. I broke my fast with five dates, took five for my pre-dawn meal (suhūr), and kept five for my next iḥṭār.”*

**Although this moderation came from having little food, Abū Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) feared overfilling himself and warned against its consequences. He used to say:**

*“Woe to me from my stomach—when I fill it, it overpowers me; and when I leave it hungry, it reviles me.” – Hilyah*

# The Prophet's Guidance in Ramadan



## Ibn al-Qayyim said:

*“Among the guidance of the Prophet ﷺ in the month of Ramaḍān was increasing in all types of worship. Jibrīl (peace be upon him) would review the Qur’an with him during Ramaḍān. He was the most generous of people, and his generosity was at its peak in Ramaḍān. During it, he would increase in charity, kindness, recitation of the Qur’an, prayer, remembrance, and retreat in worship (i’tikāf). He would devote to Ramaḍān acts of worship that he did not devote to other months.”*

# The Righteous and the Qur'an

# Ramadan and the Qur'an

**The month of Ramadan has a special connection with the Noble Qur'an, as Allah تعالى says:**

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ...

*“The month of Ramaḍān in which the Qur'an was revealed” (al-Baqarah: 185).*

For this reason, the righteous predecessors were keen to increase their recitation of the Qur'an during Ramadan.

# Their Recitation

- ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān (may Allah be pleased with him) would complete the Qur’an once every day. – Fath al-Bari
- Al-Aswad ibn Yazīd would complete the Qur’an every two nights in Ramaḍān, and outside of Ramaḍān every six nights. – Siyar al-‘Alam al-Nubala
- Sa‘īd ibn Jubayr would complete it every two nights. – Siyar al-‘Alam al-Nubala

# Muhammad ibn Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī

## Musabbiḥ ibn Sa'īd said:

*“When the first night of the month of Ramaḍān arrived, Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī would gather his companions, lead them in prayer, and recite twenty verses in each unit of prayer. He continued this practice until he completed the Qur'an.*

*He would recite between half and one-third of the Qur'an during the pre-dawn hours (saḥar), completing the Qur'an at dawn every three nights. During the daytime, he would complete one full recitation of the Qur'an every day, and he would also complete a recitation at the time of breaking the fast every night.*

*He used to say: ‘At every completion of the Qur'an, there is a supplication that is answered.’” – Tarikh Baghdad*

# More Examples

- Imām al-Shāfi‘ī would complete sixty recitations of the Qur’an during Ramadān, all outside of prayer. – Siyar al-‘Alam al-Nubala
- Qatādah would complete the Qur’an every seven days regularly, but in Ramaḍān every three days, and in the last ten nights every single night. – Siyar al-‘Alam al-Nubala
- Al-Zuhrī, when Ramaḍān entered, would leave off the study of hadīth and gatherings of scholars and devote himself entirely to reciting the Qur’an directly from the mushaf.

# Hadith on Reciting Quickly

**There are two famous hadith that prohibit reciting the entire Quran in less than 3 days:**

*“Recite the whole of the Qur’an during every month. I said: I find power (to recite it) in a shorter period. He said: Then recite it in twenty nights. I said: I find power (to recite it in a shorter period even than this), whereupon he said: Then recite it in seven (nights) and do not exceed beyond it.” – Sahih Muslim*

*“He who recites the Qur’an in less than three (days), he does not understand it.” – Tirmidhi*

How do we reconcile these hadith with the actions of the righteous mentioned above?

# Reconciliation

**Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī said:**

"إنما ورد النهي عن قراءة القرآن في أقل من ثلاثٍ على المداومة على ذلك، فأما في الأوقات المفضّلة كشهر رمضان، والأماكن المفضّلة كمكة لمن دخلها من غير أهلها، فيستحبُّ الإكثار فيها من تلاوة القرآن، اغتنامًا لفضيلة الزمان والمكان، وهو قول أحمد وإسحاق وغيرهما من الأئمة"

*“The prohibition of reciting the Qur’an in less than three days applies to doing so consistently. As for virtuous times such as the month of Ramaḍān, and virtuous places such as Makkah for those who are not residents, it is recommended to increase recitation of the Qur’an, taking advantage of the virtue of time and place. This is the view of Aḥmad, Iṣḥāq, and others among the Imams.”*

# The Righteous and the Night Prayer

# Qiyām al-Layl

- Standing in prayer at night (qiyām al-layl) is the habit of the righteous, the trade of the believers, and the work of those who are truly successful and profitable. There are many reports describing the striving of the righteous predecessors in night prayer in general, and especially during the month of Ramaḍān.
- Abū Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him), his wife, and his servant would divide the night into three parts: one would pray, then wake the next; that one would pray, then wake another. In this way, his household would never be without someone standing in prayer during the night. – Sifah al-Safwah
- **Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said:**
  - *“I have not found any act of worship more difficult than prayer in the depth of the night.”*

# Tarāwīḥ – Number of Rak‘ahs

The scholars differed regarding the number of units (rak‘ahs) in the Tarāwīḥ prayer:

- **Ibn Qudāmah said:**

- *“The chosen view according to Abū ‘Abdullāh (Imām Aḥmad) is twenty rak‘ahs. This was also the view of al-Thawrī, Abū Ḥanīfah, and al-Shāfi‘ī. Mālik said: thirty-six.” – al-Mughnī*

- **The ḥadīth of al-Sā‘ib ibn Yazīd, who said:**

- *“They used to stand in prayer during the time of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb in the month of Ramaḍān, performing twenty rak‘ahs. They would recite verses numbering in the hundreds, and during the time of ‘Uthmān they would lean on staffs due to the length of standing.” – Malik*

- Most important thing here is to follow your community and local masjid.
- There are also opinions of 8 units, 30 units, and others.
- Respect the difference of between. We mustn’t be divided over secondary matters.

# Standing with the Imam

## Abu Dharr narrated:

*"We fasted with the Prophet, so he did not pray (the night prayer) with us until seven (nights) of the month remained. Then he (pbuh) led us in prayer until a third of the night had gone, then he did not lead us in prayer on the sixth. Then he led us in prayer on the fifth until half of the night had gone. We said to him: 'O Messenger of Allah! Wouldn't you lead us in prayer for the remainder of the night?' **He said: 'Indeed, whoever stands (praying) with the Imam until he finished, then it is recorded for him that he prayed the whole night.**; Then he did not lead us in prayer until three (nights) of the month remained. Then he led us in prayer on the third and he called his family and his women to pray with us until we feared missing the Falah" I (Jubair bin Nufair) said to him: "What is the Falah" He said: "The Suhur." -*

*Tirmidhi*

# Umar and Congregational Tarāwīh



## 'Abdur Rahman bin 'Abdul Qari reported:

*"I went out in the company of 'Umar bin Al-Khattab one night in Ramadan to the mosque and found the people praying in different groups. A man praying alone or a man praying with a little group behind him. So, 'Umar said, 'In my opinion I would better collect these (people) under the leadership of one Qari (Reciter) (i.e. let them pray in congregation!)'. So, he made up his mind to congregate them behind Ubai bin Ka'b.*

*Then on another night I went again in his company and the people were praying behind their reciter. On that, 'Umar remarked, 'What an excellent Bid'a (i.e. innovation in religion) this is; but the prayer which they do not perform, but sleep at its time is better than the one they are offering.' He meant the prayer in the last part of the night.*

*(In those days) people used to pray in the early part of the night." - Bukhari*

# Striving in Night Prayer

**‘Abdullāh ibn Abī Bakr said:**

*“I heard my father say: ‘We used to finish the night prayer in Ramaḍān and then hasten the servants to bring the food, fearing that dawn would arrive.’”*

**Al-Fuḍayl ibn ‘Iyād said:**

*“If you are unable to stand in prayer at night and fast during the day, then know that you are deprived and chained—your sins have chained you.”*

# The Righteous and Their Generosity

# The Prophet's Generosity

**'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās reported:**

*“The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was the most generous of people in doing good, and he was most generous during the month of Ramaḍān. Jibrīl (peace be upon him) would meet him every year in Ramaḍān until the month ended, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would review the Qur'an with him. Whenever Jibrīl met him, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was more generous in goodness than a swiftly blowing wind.” - Bukhari*

# Following His Example

## Imām al-Shāfi‘ī said:

*“I like for a person to increase in generosity during the month of Ramaḍān, following the example of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, due to people’s need during it and because many are occupied with fasting and prayer, which keeps them from earning their livelihoods.” – Al-Hawi al-Kabir*

## Ibn Rajab said,

*“Ibn ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) would fast and would not break his fast except with the poor. If his family prevented them from joining him, he would not eat dinner that night. When a beggar came to him while he was eating, he would take his portion of food, stand up, and give it to the beggar.”*

# Examples of Their Generosity

Ḥammād ibn Abī Sulaymān would provide ifṭār for fifty people every night during Ramaḍān, and on the night of ‘Īd he would clothe them and give each of them one hundred dirhams. – Siyar al-‘Alam al-Nubala

**Abū al-Suwwār al-‘Adawī said:**

كَانَ رِجَالٌ مِنْ بَنِي عَدِيٍّ يُصَلُّونَ فِي هَذَا الْمَسْجِدِ , مَا أَفْطَرَ أَحَدٌ مِنْهُمْ عَلَى طَعَامٍ قَطُّ وَحْدَهُ , إِنْ وَجَدَ مَنْ يَأْكُلُ مَعَهُ أَكَلَ , وَإِلَّا أَخْرَجَ طَعَامَهُ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ , فَأَكَلَهُ مَعَ النَّاسِ , وَأَكَلَ النَّاسُ مَعَهُ

*“There were men from Banū ‘Adī who used to pray in this mosque. Not one of them would ever break his fast alone. If he found someone to eat with him, he would eat; otherwise, he would take his food to the mosque, eat it with the people, and the people would eat with him.”*

– Kitab al-Karam wa al-Jud