

Ramadan, an Opportunity for Reflection and Change

(Translated)

A blessed month has come to us, a month whose arrival we rejoice in despite the pain, sorrow, and calamities we experience. A month about whose blessings and greatness are mentioned in many verses and hadiths: including the saying of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, about the first night of Ramadan: «وَيُنَادِي مُنَادٍ يَا بَاغِيَ الْخَيْرِ أَقْبِلْ وَيَا بَاغِيَ الشَّرِّ أَقْصِرْ» **“And a caller will call out, ‘O seeker of good, come forward. O seeker of evil, stop.’”** Whoever seeks good seeks it and strives for it, and whoever wants evil seeks it and strives for it, meaning everyone works according to the goal that he hopes for and wants.

Ramadan is the month of goodness and blessings, and a great opportunity to strive for success in this world and the hereafter. It is a season of obedience, and a field for competing in good deeds and achieving piety to attain the pleasure of Allah, which is true success. It is a special month of virtue, not only because it is the month of fasting and worship, but also because it is a valuable opportunity to reflect on our relationship with Allah and reevaluate the course of our lives to change for better, and to consider our true goals and define the concept of success in our lives, not from the Duniya perspective, but from a religious, spiritual and moral perspective.

People are divided into two types: those who have set their goal or goals and know what they want and what they will do, and those who do not know how their days will pass! This also happens in Ramadan: those who have set their goal and know what they want from Ramadan and what fruit they hope to reap. Another type is heedless, carefree, and negligent, who is attracted to the various distractions spread during Ramadan from satellite channels with their ridiculous and trivial programs, and who waste their time on social media and staying up late with their friends until dawn to no avail, then sleeping all day. Among them are those with narrow-minded natures who treat others badly under the pretext that they are fasting, who are lost in their misguidance and violations of Islamic law as if fasting is only abstaining from eating and drinking!!

Let us beware of all this, for it robs us of the best times and the best goals. Let us set our goals to follow the path of success by striving for reward and recompense and attaining the pleasure of Allah Almighty. Let us seek His Help, and not be helpless or distracted. The deprived is the one who is deprived of reward in the season of rewards, and the cheated is the one who wastes an expensive commodity for a cheap price.

Let us look at ourselves, each one sees one's situation honestly and transparently and sees one's goals:

Are our behaviors consistent with the spirituality of this month?!

Do we fast during the day as we should fast by abstaining from everything that angers Allah, whether in word or deed, or just from food and drink?

Do we do good deeds at night, such as prayer, glorification, praise, remembrance of Allah, etc., or do we do the distractions we mentioned above that attract many people in Ramadan?!

Do we contemplate the verses of the Qur'an, or are they just pages that we read and race to finish reading without contemplation, reflection, or application of its rulings?!

Do we show solidarity with family, friends and neighbors and act to fulfill the needs of the poor and needy, especially those who refrain from asking, and they have become too many nowadays under the current circumstances, or do we all say, “O Allah, I ask You for myself and my family, and my burden and worries are enough for me”?

As we all know that Ramadan is a month of worship, we should not forget that it is also a month of production and work, not a month of sleep, inactivity and laziness. There are many who use the Ramadan season as an excuse to leave work or neglect it, especially some public service employees. We find them not doing their work as they should and being lazy. Perhaps one of them said to you, “Can’t you see that I am fasting?” Not to mention the nervousness and bad attitude under the pretext of fasting!!

Ramadan is the month of blessings and goodness, including providing Iftar for those who are fasting. The Messenger of Allah (saw) said: «مَنْ فَطَرَ صَائِمًا كَانَ لَهُ مِثْلُ أَجْرِ الصَّائِمِ، وَإِنَّهُ لَا يَنْقُصُ مِنْ أَجْرِ الصَّائِمِ شَيْءٌ» **“He who provides a fasting person something with which to break his fast, will earn the same reward as the one who was fasting, without diminishing in any way the reward of the fasting person.”** Yes, there are banquets and iftar tables, but which fasting people and which ones? Are they for the poor, the needy, and relatives, or only for the rich and those with interests? Are banquets held to please Allah Almighty and to gain the reward of breaking the fast of a fasting person, or for showing off, boasting, ostentation, and hypocrisy?!

Likewise, Masjids are filled with worshippers, and after Ramadan you see them empty except for a few, as if Allah Almighty requested congregational prayer in Masjids only in Ramadan!!

Where is the spirituality in this holy month?!! Where is the actual closeness to Allah in it?

Just as we decorate our homes in joy for the arrival of the blessed month, we must decorate our souls, hearts and tongues to welcome it; by making our hearts illuminated with faith, love, solidarity and true tolerance, thinking well of others and mentioning them in a way that pleases them, and avoiding backbiting about them, as well as many of the wonderful Islamic morals and values that we lack in our dealings.

Ramadan is just a limited number of days, as the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said: «رَغِمَ أَنْفُ امْرِئٍ أَدْرَكَ رَمَضَانَ فَلَمْ يُغْفَرْ لَهُ» **“May he be abased who reaches Ramadan and is not forgiven.”**

In conclusion, we say that Ramadan can be summed up in two sentences: “Ramadan is short and does not tolerate negligence, and its arrival is a passing that does not accept slackness.” So, whenever we feel lazy, let us remember the words of Allah Almighty in the verse about fasting: ﴿أَيَّامًا مَعْدُودَاتٍ﴾ **“for a limited number of days.”** Yes, they are limited days and their reward is great and immense if we seize them well. May Allah make us and you among those whom He guides to seize them.

We ask Allah Almighty to be among those who are accepted in Ramadan and other than Ramadan. O Allah, let us reach the Night of al-Qadr and make us among the winners. O Allah, fulfil Ramadan for us and bring it back to us with goodness, blessings and prosperity, and that the promise of Allah Almighty and the glad tidings of His Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him, regarding the Islamic state have been fulfilled. May Allah accept our and your acts of obedience and righteous deeds.

**Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by
Muslimah Al-Shami (Um Sohayb)**