



رَمَضَانَ

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Time for Reflection

The purpose of Islamic shariah, rituals and practices is to create an ordered and disciplined society, where every individual is valued and all live in peace and harmony. Rights of others are established and a form for behaviour implemented. However there is another deeper and a more profound significance of the shariah for the soul and that is to provide a congenial environment for it to grow and develop (from the degenerate to the content soul).

Hence, satisfying the deepest yearnings of the Heart. The following supplication of Khawaja Abdullah Ansari b beautifully captures the soul's longings for its Creator:



*I live only to do Thy will
My lips move only in praise of Thee
O Lord, whoever becometh aware of Thee
Casteth out all else other than Thee
O Lord, give me a heart
That I may pour it out in thanks giving
Give me life
That I may spend it
In working for the salvation of the world
O Lord, give me understanding*

*That I stray not from the path
Give me light
To avoid pitfalls
O Lord, give me eyes
Which see nothing but Thy glory
Give me a mind
That finds delight in the service
Give me a soul
Drunk in the wine of Thy wisdom*

(The Sufi Path of Love, an anthology of Sufism by M Smith)



The month of Ramadan is an ideal time for harbouring such thoughts and purifying the heart. The beloved Messenger ﷺ has variously described this time of the year as the spring of righteousness. For example he ﷺ says "The gates of paradise are opened, this is the month of mercy" once he ﷺ said, "If Muslims knew, the greatness of Ramadan then they would wish that the whole year was Ramadan."

Abu Hurraira narrates the blessed Messenger ﷺ said, "Ramadan has come to you as a blessed month. During this month Allah has prescribed fasting for you, the gates of heaven are opened and the gates of hell are closed. The rebellious devils are chained. There is a night in this month that is better than a thousand months, whoever misses it is indeed deprived of enormous blessings" (Bukhari)

Our worldly lives consume most of our time if not all, we work and earn, we worry about our jobs and wealth, we work hard to improve our economic position. But how much time do we give to our spiritual development ? Very little!

Ramadan is an opportunity for us to wind down some of our worldly activities and to focus on spiritual development. So how should we go about it ? Rasool ﷺ said we should engage in four activities:

1. Recite the Kalimah regularly and often as possible
2. Constantly seek Allah's forgiveness.
3. Ask for paradise.
4. Seek Allah's refuge from hell fire.

Let us resolve to dedicate our precious time for the most precious purpose of our life in the blessed month of Ramadan.