

THE MONTH OF
RAMAḌĀN

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ

THE MONTH OF
RAMAḌĀN

Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī

The Month of Ramaḍān

1st Edition – 2022

Published in the UK by
Azhar Academy Ltd
Kudhail Industrial Complex
54-68 Little Ilford Lane
Manor Park
London
E12 5QA

www.azharacademy.com
trade@azharacademy.com
Tel: 020 8911 9797

Copyright © Zakariya Goga

All rights reserved. Aside from fair use, meaning for use of educational purposes or review, no part of this publication may be reproduced without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

Translation & Typesetting | Mohammad Zakariya ibn Isma'il
Cover design | Ariful Hazam
Editor | Amaal Vadukul
Cover photo | www.pexels.com - Ali Arapođlu
Contact | asaluka.mzg@gmail.com
ISBN: 9781848282179 (UK)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ
عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى
الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

O you who believe, decreed upon you is fasting as it
was decreed upon those before you, so that you
may become righteous.

Qurʾān 2:183

Contents



FOREWORD	1
BIOGRAPHY OF AUTHOR	3
TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION AND NOTES ON TEXT	5
THE VIRTUE OF FASTING	7
THE VIRTUE OF GENEROSITY DURING RAMAḌĀN	33
THE VIRTUE OF RECITING THE QUR'ĀN DURING RAMAḌĀN	45
THE MIDDLE TEN DAYS OF RAMAḌĀN AND UP TO THE SECOND HALF OF RAMAḌĀN	57
THE LAST TEN DAYS AND NIGHTS OF RAMAḌĀN	73
SECLUSION	83
THE LAST SEVEN NIGHTS OF RAMAḌĀN	89
FAREWELL RAMAḌĀN	109
APPENDIX – SUPPLICATIONS FROM THE TEXT	131

Foreword



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ
 وَعَلَى أَهْلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ وَمَنْ تَبِعَهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ إِلَى يَوْمِ الدِّينِ
 وَبَعْدُ:

Imām Abū'l-Faraj ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī رحمه الله was a scholar of unusual merit. On one hand, he was an accomplished scholar and expert of various Islamic disciplines, such as Prophetic traditions (*ḥadīth*), jurisprudence (*fiqh*), principles of jurisprudence (*usūl al-fiqh*) and, in particular, *ḥadīth* criticism and biographical knowledge of *ḥadīth* narrators (*ʿilm al-rijāl*). His masterpiece in the latter, entitled *Sharḥ ʿIlāl al-Tirmidhī*, and many other beneficial works are a great testament to his academic brilliance and vast knowledge. On the other hand, he was also known for asceticism (*zuhd*), piety, righteousness, and worship. His sermons were regarded as very effective, full of blessings, and moved the hearts of those who sat in his gatherings. In essence, he combined knowledge and practice, theory and action, theology and spirituality. His works, numbering over seventy, in the academic and spiritual dimensions of Islām are clear evidence of his mastery in both.

One of his most delightful and much-admired works is: *Laṭāʾif al-Maʿārif fī mā li Mawāsim al-ʿĀm min al-Waḏāʾif* (Subtleties of Knowledge on the Duties Throughout the Seasons of the Year) – a detailed treatise on the merits, virtues, and practices for the months of the Islamic calendar. It is a rare work that delightfully combines the above-mentioned two dimensions of academic rigour and spiritual profundity. It is rich with Qurʾānic verses, Prophetic traditions, often grading them, and written in accordance with the style of *ḥadīth* scholars (*muḥaddithūn*) and jurists (*fuqahā*). At the same time, it employs the style of a

preacher and spiritual reformer, and encourages love and proximity to Allāh ﷻ through worship, abstinence from sins, repentance, preparation for death, and providing oneself the provision of the Hereafter. It is lit with heart softening, emotional and motivational poetry – often his own – enhancing the reader’s experience.

The book is divided into various chapters, in accordance with the order of Islamic months, beginning with Muḥarram and ending with Dhu’l-Hijjah. Each chapter is then divided into a series of sections that cover particular aspects related to that month. The chapter on Ramaḍān is the most comprehensive, given its importance, and beautifully elucidates the salient acts of worship relating to it, such as fasting, Qur’ān recitation and night prayer. It helps the reader transform their relationship with this blessed month and maximise it.

Due to its importance, my very dear friend, Dr Zakariya ibn Isma’il Goga, has translated the chapter on Ramaḍān with much care and diligence. Due to time constraints, I was unable to go through the entire translation, but from the parts I was privileged to read, I found the translation to be accurate, lucid and befitting this wonderful work.

May Allāh ﷻ have mercy on the soul of Imām ibn Rajab and grant him a high station (*maqām*) in the Hereafter. May Allāh ﷻ reward the translator and approve of this valuable endeavour, and may He make this work beneficial for its readers, *āmin*.

(Mufti) Muhammad ibn Adam al-Kawthari (حفظه الله)

Darul-Iftā | Leicester | UK

Friday 21st January 2022 | 18th Jumādu’th-Thānī 1443 AH

Biography of the Author

Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī رحمته الله



Abu'l-Faraj, Zaynu'd-Dīn, 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn Ḥasan رحمته الله was born in 736AH/1335CE in Baghdad. He inherited the name Ibn Rajab, by which he is more famously known, from his grandfather who was nicknamed 'Rajab' as he was born in the sacred month of Rajab.

He began his primary studies with his father and grandfather, who were both notable scholars of their time. He then travelled extensively to seek sacred knowledge throughout various Muslim lands, including Syria, Jerusalem, Egypt, Makkah and Madinah. On completion of his studies, he settled in Damascus and taught students of his own until the end of his life.

His most notable teacher was the great scholar and master Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah. He also had the honour of studying under Zaynu'd-Dīn al-'Iraqī, Ibn an-Naqīb, Muḥammad al-Khabbāz, Dāwūd al-'Aṭār, Ibn Qādī al-Jabal, Aḥmad bin 'Abdul-Hādī al-Ḥanbalī, al-Ḥāfiẓ Al-'Alā'ī, 'Abu'l-Faṭḥ al-Maydūmī and Nāsiru'd-Dīn bin al-Mulūk, may Allāh رحمته الله have mercy on them all.

Ibn Rajab authored many works. Of these, the most famous in the West is his commentary of Imām Nawawī's Forty Ḥadīth, known as *The Compendium of Knowledge and Wisdom*, which has been translated into English. It is worth noting that Ibn Rajab himself initiated the work on *Faṭḥ al-Bārī*, which is one of the most important commentaries of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. He passed away after completing seven volumes of this work up to the chapter of the funeral prayer. Twenty years later, Ibn Ḥajar completed this monumental work, and he is known as the main author of *Faṭḥ-ul-Bārī*.

Of him, Ibn Ḥajar رحمته الله said:

(Ibn Rajab) was highly proficient in the science of Ḥadīth in terms of the names of reporters, their biographies, their chains of transmission, and awareness of their meanings.

Of him, Ibn Nāsirud-Dīn رحمته الله said:

The Shaykh, the Imām, the great scholar, the ascetic, the example, the blessing, the Ḥāfiz, the trustworthy, the authority, one of the ascetic Imāms and devout scholars.

Of him, Ibn Fahd al-Makkī رحمته الله said:

(Ibn Rajab), may Allāh have mercy on him, was a pious and self-disciplined Imām. The hearts inclined towards him with love, and the various groups united in acceptance of him. His gatherings for reminding the people were of great benefit and used to open the hearts.

Of him, Imām adh-Dhahabī رحمته الله said:

Our teacher, (Ibn Rajab), was one of the pious scholars; (he was) of those who renounced worldly life and abandoned positions of authority. He would speak out with the truth, even if it was bitter.

Ibn Rajab passed away in Damascus at the age of 59 on Monday, 4th RamaḌān 795AH/1393CE. He is buried in the Bāb aṣ-Ṣaghīr graveyard, and upon his bequest, he was placed next to one of the well-known Ḥanbalī scholars of the past generations, ‘Abdul-Waḥīd ibn Muḥammad ash-Shirāzī.

Ibn Rajab’s legacy still endures in 2022, and *in shā’ Allāh* - if Allāh wills - it will continue to be of benefit until the Last Day. This is a testimony to his sincerity and devotion to Allāh رحمته الله. May his secret remain sanctified and perpetual divine outpourings of mercy descend upon his soul, *āmīn*.

Translator's Introduction and Notes on the Text



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
وَالصَّلَاةِ وَالسَّلَامِ عَلَيَّ حَبِيبِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ

This book is based on the chapter of RamaḌān from Ibn Rajab's work *Al-Laṭā'if Al-Ma'ārif* (*The Subtleties of Knowledge*). I was signposted to this book some 15 years ago by one of my dearest friends, advisors and benefactors, the astute scholar, outstanding Mufti, and teacher of *ḥadīth*, Mufti Muhammad ibn Adam al-Kawthari, may his shadow be extended over us.

Ibn Rajab's exposition of the significance of each month of the Islamic calendar in *Al-Laṭā'if Al-Ma'ārif*, and the recommended practices of faith during them, is a refreshing read in an age where the inheritance of cultural customs has clouded Prophetic tradition.

In this work, Ibn Rajab presents numerous *aḥadīth* and narrations from many sources, and from many generations of 'ulamā', awliyā' and 'ārifīn (scholars, saints and gnostics) since the time of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ. A key objective of Ibn Rajab's work is to exhort the believers to strive and benefit from the sacred time of RamaḌān and its great gifts. Its purpose is *not* to give legal verdicts; any queries the reader might have about matters of worship should be referred to a scholar of sacred knowledge.

Upon advice, I have removed statements which elaborate on the grading of Prophetic traditions to allow the translated text to flow. Those who are interested in the grading of the traditions and citations of quotes can refer to the original Arabic text. Qur'ānic verses appear in bold in the text and are referenced in the footnotes as follows - Qur'ān, 97:5 (referring to the fifth verse

of the ninety-seventh chapter, *Sūrah Qadr*). Additional notes from the translator are identified with [Tr].

It is a great honour that Allāh ﷻ blessed us with completing Ibn Rajab's noble work in the sacred month of Rajab – we thank Him ﷻ for everything, and ask His pardon for our shortcomings and errors, and He ﷻ is the All-Pardoning, All-Merciful and Most Generous.

I would like to sincerely thank all those who assisted in bringing this book to fruition, particularly the editor, and the bright young Mawlāna who assisted greatly with translating some of the more difficult portions of the text and poetry. May all of your lives follow the trodden path of the Prophet ﷺ and may you be granted his company in Paradise as reward, *āmin*.

Muhammad Zakariya ibn Isma'il

Friday 18th February 2022 | 17th Rajab 1443 AH

The Virtue of Fasting



It has been cited in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* collections¹ that Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *‘Every action of the son of Ādam is for him. One good deed is rewarded from ten times its equivalent to being multiplied by up to seven hundred. Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم says, “Except fasting, as it is indeed for Me exclusively, and I shall reward (the one fasting) for it. Indeed, he has abandoned his desires, food, and drink for My sake.” For the one fasting, there are two moments of joy: joy at the time of breaking the fast, and joy at meeting his Lord. The scent from the mouth of the one fasting is more fragrant to Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم than the fragrance of musk.’* In another narration it says, *‘Every action of the son of Ādam is for him except fasting; this is for Me.’*

It is related in a tradition of al-Bukhārī that [the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said], *‘Every (good) action is an expiation (for a bad deed), and fasting is for Me and I shall reward (the one fasting) for it.’* Imām Aḥmad has narrated it with slightly different wording, *‘Every (good) action of the son of Ādam is for himself an expiation (for a bad deed), except fasting; fasting is for Me, and I shall reward (the one fasting) for it.’*

As for the first tradition, in which the rewards of actions are multiplied, fasting is singled out exclusively. The reward of every single action is multiplied by at least ten to seven hundred times *except* for fasting, which is not restricted (in reward) to the multiplication of this amount. Rather, Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم multiplies its reward without restriction to a particular number, as fasting is from patience. Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم states: **Indeed those who observe patience shall be given their reward in full without measure.**² In reference to this, according to one narration, the

¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ* al-Bukhārī and *Ṣaḥīḥ* Muslim

² Qur’ān, 39:12

Prophet ﷺ called Ramaḍān *‘the month of patience’*.³ In another tradition cited by at-Tirmidhī, the Prophet ﷺ stated, *‘Fasting is half of patience.’*

Patience has three categories, all of which are encompassed in fasting:

- 1) Patience with obedience to Allāh ﷻ;
- 2) Patience with the prohibitions of Allāh ﷻ;
- 3) Patience with the decree of Allāh ﷻ that may be challenging.

For indeed, by (fasting) one is observing patience with obedience to Allāh ﷻ; patience with what Allāh ﷻ has prohibited for the one fasting with regards to desires; and patience with what the one fasting experiences (i.e., the discomfort of hunger, thirst and weakening of the body and lower-self⁴).

This state of discomfort that [sometimes] arises from good actions results in reward for the one who is in that state of obedience. Just as Allāh ﷻ states in reference to those who strive: **That is because they suffer neither thirst nor fatigue, nor hunger in the cause of Allāh, nor do they take any step to raise the anger of disbelievers, nor inflict any injury upon an enemy but is written to their credit as a deed of righteousness. Surely, Allāh wastes not the reward of the good-doers.**⁵

In reference to the virtue of the month of Ramaḍān, Salmān ﷺ narrates, *‘It is the month of patience, and the reward for patience is Paradise.’*⁶ In the tradition cited in [the work of] aṭ-Ṭabarānī, narrated from Ibn ‘Umar ﷺ it says, *‘Fasting is for Allāh ﷻ (alone), [and] no one knows the degree of reward (of this deed) except Allāh ﷻ.’*

The multiplication of the reward of actions is due to certain causative factors, such as the honour of place or time.

³ Abū Dāwūd, Ibn Mājah

⁴ The word used in the Arabic text is نفس - *nafs*, which can be understood as the lower-self that urges to desires and appetites such as food, drink and intimacy, and sometimes rebellion. [Tr]

⁵ Qur’ān, 9:120

⁶ Ibn Khuzaimah

Sanctity of the place in which the action occurs: a good example is the reward for the ritual prayer, which is multiplied in the mosques of Makkah and Madinah, as established in the tradition of *Ṣaḥīḥ* al-Bukhārī. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, ‘*A ritual prayer in this mosque of mine is better than one thousand ritual prayers in any other mosque except al-Masjid al-Ḥarām (the sacred mosque of Makkah).*’ Another narration adds, ‘*For indeed it is more virtuous.*’

Similarly, it has been narrated that (the reward) of fasting is multiplied (further) by virtue of the *Ḥaram* (sacred precinct), ‘*Whoever passes RamaḌān in Makkah, [and] fasts and stands (in prayer) whilst present (in Makkah), it is easy for Allāh ﷻ to record for them the reward of one million RamaḌāns observed elsewhere.*’⁷ [The tradition] also mentions other great rewards.

Sanctity of time: such as the month of RamaḌān and the first ten days of Dhu’l-Ḥijjah. The tradition of Salmān ؓ indicates to us the virtue of RamaḌān, ‘*Whoever does a voluntary good deed in it (RamaḌān), has the reward of carrying out an obligatory act of worship in any another period. Whoever does an obligatory act of worship (in RamaḌān), has a reward of seventy obligatory acts in any other period.*’

At-Tirmidhī narrates from Anas ؓ, ‘*The Prophet ﷺ was asked, “Which charity is the most virtuous?” He ﷺ replied, “That which is given during RamaḌān.”*’ Other traditions cited in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* collections state that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, ‘*One ‘Umrah (voluntary pilgrimage) during RamaḌān is given the reward of a Ḥajj (the obligatory pilgrimage),*’ or he ﷺ said that an ‘Umrah in RamaḌān earns a reward which is ‘*equivalent to Ḥajj with me.*’

Another tradition narrates that, ‘*Indeed, the actions of the one fasting are multiplied (in reward).*’ Abū Bakr ibn Abī Maryam mentions that his *Shuyūkh* (teachers) would say, ‘When the month of RamaḌān approaches spend in

⁷ Ibn Mājah

charity freely, for indeed spending in charity is multiplied (in reward) just as one spends time in the service of Allāh ﷻ.’ One *tasbīh*⁸ in (RamaḌān) is more virtuous than one thousand *tasbīh* in any other given period.

Imam An-Nakha‘ī said, ‘One day’s fast during RamaḌān is more virtuous than fasting for one thousand days (outside of RamaḌān); one *tasbīh* in (RamaḌān) is more virtuous than one thousand *tasbīh* (outside of RamaḌān), and one bow (*rukū‘*) in (RamaḌān) is more virtuous than one thousand bows (outside of RamaḌān).’

Fasting during RamaḌān is what Allāh ﷻ has made obligatory upon His servants, and [He] made it one of the pillars of Islām, upon which the entirety of Islām is established. Therefore, when fasting itself has its reward multiplied by virtue of its special status compared to all other actions, then (the reward of) fasting during RamaḌān is also multiplied compared to fasts at other times, by virtue and honour of this sacred period. [The ‘special status’ of fasting is that it is exclusively for Allāh ﷻ.]

The reward can also be multiplied by other factors such as the status of the one carrying out the action for Allāh ﷻ, their proximity to Him and their God-consciousness (*taqwā*). And just as this nation has its reward multiplied in comparison to previous nations, multiplication of reward has also been guaranteed.

As for the second narration (on page 7), the exclusivity of the fast compared to every other action, goes back to the concept that every action is for (the benefit) of the servant. Fasting is exclusively for Allāh ﷻ alone and connected to Him, in contrast to every other action of His servant. The exclusivity of the fast will be expounded later, Allāh ﷻ willing.

And in the third narration (on page 7), the exclusivity (of fasting) is in reference to the concept of atonement (of sins) by virtue of actions. How excellent is the

⁸ To glorify Allāh by saying سبحان الله ‘*subhān Allāh*’ ‘glory be to Allāh’

explanation of Sufyān ibn ‘Uyaynah رضي الله عنه: ‘This (tradition) is from the most splendid and established of traditions. On the Day of Judgement, Allāh ﷻ will take account of His servant’s actions including the wrong ones, until there is nothing left (to account for) except the fast. Allāh ﷻ will absolve the wrongdoings entirely and enter them into Paradise by virtue of fasting.’⁹

From this, it can be extrapolated that as the fast is entirely for Allāh ﷻ, it is not possible for anyone to take the reward of fasting. Rather, its reward is safeguarded with Allāh ﷻ for the person concerned. Therefore, it has been said by Sa‘īd ibn Jubair رضي الله عنه and others that, ‘Every [good] action can be cancelled out by a wrong action for the person concerned until there remains no reward. For indeed it has been narrated that good deeds and sinful deeds will be weighed against each other on the Day of Judgement. Should the good deeds exceed the bad, the person concerned will enter Paradise.’ Al-Ḥākim has narrated a tradition from Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه which supports what has been said about fasting that, ‘*Its reward will not be lost by compensating for sinful actions or otherwise. Rather, its reward is given to its full extent and supports the person concerned until entry into Paradise.*’

As for the statement of His ﷻ, ‘*For indeed it is for Me,*’ – Allāh ﷻ has exclusively taken it upon Himself to increase the outpouring of reward of fasting compared to every other action. The jurists, sages and others have spoken extensively on the meaning and causes of this. From the finest of what has been mentioned there are two meanings:

The first: Fasting alone requires abstaining from the needs and desires which one is naturally inclined to, for the sake of Allāh ﷻ. This is not found in any other form of worship except fasting. (For example), when in a state of *iḥrām* (the sacred state required for pilgrimage) one does not engage in marital relations, but one is permitted to eat and drink. This also applies to *i’tikāf* (seclusion in the mosque, typically in RamaḌān) where one abstains from

⁹ Al-Baihaqī, *Shu‘ab al-Imām*

marital relations, but may eat and drink when not fasting. [Fasting alone requires a servant to abstain from all three natural desires simultaneously.]

Consider the example of the ritual prayer: if the one praying abandons all their desires, it will not effect the prayer, so long as it is for a short time. The general rule is that it is preferred to delay the ritual prayer should the person desire food if it has been served. In this scenario, it has been ordered to eat first, and then pray.

A group of scholars have even permitted a drink during long ritual prayers. Ibn Zubair رضي الله عنه would do this in his prayer as reported by Imām Aḥmad. This contrasts with fasting, [where a servant abstains from drinking] for the entire day. The one fasting abstains from their desires although their lower-self might incline towards them. [This might be more challenging] during the summer months which may have intense heat and longer days. It has been narrated that a special trait of the sign of faith is fasting during summer. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ used to fast whilst travelling in the intense heat during Ramaḍān in contrast to [many of] his Companions. Abū Dardā' رضي الله عنه said, 'We were travelling with the Prophet ﷺ during Ramaḍān, and we would place our hands over our heads due to the intense heat. None amongst us would be fasting except the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and 'Abdullāh ibn Rawāḥah رضي الله عنه.'

In the tradition of the *Muwaṭṭa'* (of Imām Mālik) the Prophet ﷺ was staggering due to thirst from fasting in intense heat (or thirst [alone] has also been mentioned), so water was poured over his head رضي الله عنه. Allāh ﷻ alone knows, and no one else, when the cravings of the lower-self intensify (and it could easily satisfy its urges), and yet it restrains itself for His sake. This is a proof of the vitality of faith, as the one fasting believes they have a Lord who is always aware of them. Allāh ﷻ has prohibited the servant from fulfilling their desires, despite being naturally inclined to do so, (especially) when alone. And so, [the servant] obeys Allāh ﷻ, and fulfils His command, avoiding His prohibitions from fear of chastisement, and longing for His reward. Allāh ﷻ acknowledges them for this, and singles out this particular action for Himself, in contrast to every other deed of His servant. After this He says, '*For My sake, they have abandoned their*

desires, food, and drink. Some of the pious predecessors have said, ‘Glad tidings for the one who, for the sake of an unseen promise, abandons a desire!’

When a fasting believer becomes cognisant that in the abandonment of desires lies the pleasure of their Master, the preference of their Master’s pleasure overrides any desires. Refraining from desires for the sake of Allāh ﷻ becomes their motivation, by virtue of knowing Allāh ﷻ is taking note of them. The reward, outcome, and pleasure of their Lord takes precedence over their own desires and urges, especially when in solitude. Rather, the believer dislikes to indulge their whims and desires when alone more than being struck by a painful blow.

Most believers would not break their fast without a valid reason on account of knowing Allāh’s ﷻ displeasure in breaking the fast (before the allotted time) during this month. A sign of faith is that the believer dislikes fulfilling their own desires in the knowledge of Allāh’s ﷻ displeasure in doing so. So, their pleasure lies in what pleases their Master despite it being contrary to their desire. [The believer’s] pain lies in what displeases their Master despite it being contrary to the natural desires of the lower-self. When the one fasting abstains from what is prohibited from food, drink, and marital intimacy then it is imperative that even more emphasis is placed on [abstaining from] what is categorically prohibited (at all times) such as fornication, alcohol, stealing, usurping and murder. These things enrage Allāh ﷻ in any given circumstance, time, or place. Once faith is firmly established in the believer, they dislike all these things more than being killed or beaten.

That is why the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ made clear that from amongst the signs of the presence of the sweetness of faith is that (the believer) ‘*detests the thought of returning to disbelief after Allāh ﷻ rescues them from it, just as they loathe being flung into the Fire.*’¹⁰ Prophet Yūsuf ﷺ said, ‘**My Lord, prison is dearer to me than that which these women call me to.**’¹¹

¹⁰ As cited in al-Bukhārī

¹¹ Qur’ān, 12:33

Someone asked Dhun-Nūn al-Miṣrī, ‘When will I truly love my Lord?’ He replied, ‘When what (Allāh ﷻ) dislikes becomes your primary concern above patience (itself).’ Others have said, ‘Your liking what your beloved dislikes is not from among the signs of love.’ Most people seek to carry out [extra] duties that faith does not necessitate nor demand; as a result most people would refuse to break their fast without a valid reason. However, from amongst the ignorant are those who would refuse to break their fast even if the fast is harming (their health), despite illness being a valid excuse, and Allāh ﷻ preferring them to take the concession. Habit causes them to press on (with the fast regardless,) although [at the same time, some of them] prepare (to carry out) what Allāh ﷻ has prohibited such as fornication, alcohol, stealing wealth or commodities and committing murder, [and these sins might be within and outside of RamaḌān]. Such a person seeks to follow their desires rather than what faith requires. Whoever acts in the spirit of what faith requires, finds immense joy in patiently abstaining from what the lower-self inclines to that displeases Allāh ﷻ. Perhaps they advance towards a (state of) disliking everything that Allāh ﷻ dislikes, and they abstain from [these matters] even when the lower-self inclines towards them.

*If Your pleasure lies in me remaining awake
 then Allāh’s peace be upon my drowsiness
 What is there to my wounds
 If Your pleasure lies in my pain?
 Punishment for Your sake is sweetness.
 Distance for Your sake is actually proximity
 You are to me like my soul.
 Nay, You are more beloved to me than that
 Enough for me is love
 For what You love, I love*

The second: Fasting is a secret between the servant and their Lord. No one else takes note of them save Him ﷻ, as [fasting] is attached to an internal resolve that no one is cognisant of except Allāh ﷻ. Similarly (no one except He ﷻ is aware of the servant) abstaining from their desires that are habitual, and

[perhaps] carried out in secret. Therefore, it is said that not even the guardian scribe angels document this act (due to its secrecy). It has also been said that there is no ostentation in this (act) - just as the likes of Imām Aḥmad and others have said. Traditions have been narrated in reference to this, and this is the preferred opinion of Abū ‘Abīd and others.

Returning to the first point under discussion: a clear sign of the vitality of a servant’s faith is that they control the desires of their lower-self in private for the sake of Allāh ﷻ, who alone commands and prohibits them. Allāh ﷻ loves that His servants conduct themselves well with Him ﷻ, concealing this from others. The people who love Him ﷻ, love to conceal their actions, so that He ﷻ alone is aware of them. To the extent that some would prefer even the guardian scribe angels to be oblivious of any good deeds that might be facilitated for them.

Some would say when one of their secrets were to be revealed, ‘There was a sweetness in life when my dealings were solely between Him ﷻ and me.’ Then they would call for death upon themselves and pass away.¹² The real lovers (of Allāh ﷻ) are extremely scrupulous in concealing the secrets between them and Him ﷻ, as He ﷻ loves them, and they love Him.

A breeze of longing arrived

When you came bearing their greetings,

So conceal the statements from the travellers

And don’t relay the safeguarded secret

For indeed I loath making mention of my beloved to my companions

As for His ﷻ statement, ‘*He abstains from his desires, food and drink for My sake,*’ - in it lies an indication to the gist of what we have made mention. The one who is fasting draws close to Allāh ﷻ by leaving what the lower-self desires of food, drink, and marital intimacy - and these are the greatest types of its desires.

¹² This is something not recommended, refer to Imām Suyūṭī’s *Sharḥ aṣ-Ṣudūr* [Tr]

Gaining proximity (to Allāh ﷻ) by abandoning the desires through fasting has many benefits, including:

- 1) **Breaking the desires of the lower-self:** Satiation, constant hydration and excessive marital intimacy can incite the lower-self towards wrong, haughtiness and heedlessness.
- 2) **The heart's abandonment (of other distractions, and its inclination) towards reflection and remembrance.** Overindulgence in what is pleasurable hardens and blinds the heart, distracting the servant from remembrance and reflection, and instead directing it towards heedlessness. Emptying the stomach of food and drink enlightens the heart, consequently softening it and removing its hardness, such that it inclines it towards remembrance [of the Divine], and reflection.
- 3) **The wealthy understand the value of the blessings of Allāh ﷻ upon them.** This is through contemplation that what has been prohibited for them [while fasting] is the normal state of many of the poor regarding the blessings of food, drink, and perhaps marital relations. The wealthy person remembers the poor and deprived while fasting for a specified period, and the resulting discomfort they may encounter. This then necessitates gratitude for what Allāh ﷻ has blessed them with of wealth, and will encourage mercy and generosity with it towards another needy believer.
- 4) **Fasting constricts the blood vessels** which Satan uses to pass through the offspring of Ādam, as indeed [it is known that] Satan passes through them. The whispers of Satan are subdued through fasting, and fasting weakens the intensity of anger and passionate desires. Hence the Prophet ﷺ described the fast as a shield because it protects against the lower desires.

Know - one cannot reach complete proximity to Allāh ﷻ by refraining from permissible desires or pleasures while fasting, except by abandoning what Allāh ﷻ has prohibited in all states (whether fasting or not). Lying, oppression, injustice in relation to people's lives, wealth and property are examples of what must be abandoned [in all states]. The Prophet ﷺ said, '*The one who does not*

*abandon giving a false testimony and fraudulent behaviour, then Allāh has no need of their giving up of food and drink.*¹³

In another tradition, it is narrated that [the Prophet ﷺ said], ‘*Fasting is not just abstaining from food and drink; indeed fasting is abstaining from meaningless talk and obscenity.*’¹⁴ Al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū Mūsā al-Madīnī said, ‘This tradition fulfils the criteria of *Ṣaḥīḥ* Muslim.’

Some of the pious predecessors would say, ‘The easiest aspect of fasting is refraining from food and drink.’ Jābir رضي الله عنه would say, ‘When you fast, then “fast” (with) your hearing and sight, and from lying with your tongue, and (from) the prohibited, and (from) harming your neighbours, [such that] a stillness and tranquillity will descend upon you on the day of your fast. Do not make the day of your fasting and day of not fasting the same.’

*If my hearing is not on guard,
Nor my gaze lowered, or speech muted
Then my portion of fasting is simply hunger and thirst
If I say I am fasting today, I am not really fasting*

The Prophet ﷺ said, ‘*Perhaps the one fasting has nothing allotted to them from the fast except hunger and thirst. And perhaps the one standing in prayer has nothing allotted to them from their standing except fatigue.*’¹⁵

The secret to all of this is that drawing close to Allāh ﷻ by refraining from the permitted is not complete except by abandoning the prohibited. The one who partakes in the prohibited, and then tries to draw near (to Allāh ﷻ) by refraining from the permissible is akin to one who resorts to leaving the obligatory and tries to draw near with optional acts. (In this case) the fast is [legally] valid according to the majority (of scholars) as one is not commanded to repeat it. This is because an action is only rendered void by doing what is

¹³ Al-Bukhārī

¹⁴ In other words, one should “fast” i.e., completely abandon meaningless talk, and avoid obscenity in all states, not just when fasting. [Tr]

¹⁵ *Musnad* Imām Aḥmad

specifically prohibited (to deem the action void). [That is to say, fasting is only invalidated if a person does the actions prohibited while fasting.] This is the principle of the majority of scholars.

Imām Aḥmad cites in his *Musnad* that two ladies were fasting at the time of the Prophet ﷺ and they both were at the brink of death due to thirst. This was mentioned to the Prophet ﷺ and he called for them, and ordered them to induce themselves to vomit. Their vomit filled an entire container with blood, pus, flesh, and undigested meat. The Prophet ﷺ then said, ‘*These two ladies were fasting from what Allāh ﷻ has permitted for them but partook in what Allāh ﷻ has prohibited for them. One sat with the other and they began to consume the flesh of people (i.e., backbiting).*’

Allāh ﷻ knows best, but this elucidates what has been said in the Qurʾān, that the prohibition of food and drink during the day for the one fasting immediately follows the prohibition of consuming the wealth of people through sinful means.¹⁶ The prohibition of these matters [misappropriation of property, backbiting etc] always applies in every time and place, in comparison to food and drink [which is only prohibited during the period of fasting]. This is an indication that just as one obeys the order of Allāh ﷻ by refraining from eating and drinking during the day because of fasting, one should obey the order of Allāh ﷻ from staying well away from misappropriating another’s wealth. Prohibitions are indeed (to be avoided) in any state; they are not permitted at any time.

As for the saying of the Prophet ﷺ, ‘*The one who is fasting has two joys: (the first joy) at the time of breaking their fast, and (the second) joy when they meet their Lord.*’ As for the joy at breaking their fast, it is because the lower-self is naturally inclined towards what it enjoys from food, drink, and marital intimacy. This is particularly so when the desire is intense. Naturally therefore, the human being becomes elated. If this is also beloved to Allāh ﷻ, then it is a praiseworthy act in terms of Islamic law, as well as a source of joy for the fasting

¹⁶Qurʾān, 2:183-188

person when they break their fast. Just as Allāh ﷻ has prohibited the one fasting to partake in these desires during the day, He ﷻ has made them permissible during the night. In fact, it is beloved to Him ﷻ that the servant hurries towards partaking in these things from the beginning of the night (at the time of *Maghrib*) until the end (before the start of *Fajr*). Allāh ﷻ sends His blessings, and the angels pray for blessings upon those who partake in the predawn meal (*suhūr*).

The one who is fasting abstains from their desires during the day for the sake of Allāh ﷻ, in obedience to Him ﷻ, and consequently draws closer to Him ﷻ. He then rushes towards these desires during the night in obedience to Him ﷻ, and as a result also draws closer to Him ﷻ. As abstention from these (desires) is only due to His ﷻ command, and partaking in them (once the fast is over) is only due to His ﷻ command, the servant is in a state of obedience in both cases. That is why it has been prohibited to continuously fast (i.e., fast for continuous days without eating food at sunset, nor the predawn meal (*suhūr*)). When the one who is fasting hastens towards breaking the fast in order to draw close to their Master, and eats, drinks, and praises Allāh ﷻ, it is hoped that the servant will be forgiven, and attain His ﷻ divine pleasure through this.

In the tradition of *Ṣaḥīḥ* Muslim it is narrated that, '*Indeed Allāh ﷻ is certainly pleased with His servant that they consume a morsel of food and then praise Allāh ﷻ for that, and they drink a beverage and then praise Allāh ﷻ for that.*' Perhaps their supplication is answered at this moment; Ibn Mājah has narrated a tradition to correlate this: '*Indeed, for the one fasting, there is a supplication at the time of breaking their fast that is not rejected.*' If one intends by eating and drinking to strengthen the body, to be able to fast, and stand in night vigil, then they will be rewarded for these intentions. Similarly, if one intends by sleeping at night that they are strengthened for good actions during the day, their sleep then becomes worship.

In another tradition the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘*The sleep of the one fasting is worship.*’¹⁷ Hafṣah bint Sīrīn said that Abū ‘Āliyah said, ‘The one fasting is in a continuous state of worship, even when asleep in bed, so long as they do not backbite anyone [in their waking state].’ At this Hafṣah used to say, “How wonderful that I am considered to be in a state of worship while sleeping in my bed!”¹⁸

So, the one fasting is in a state of worship during their night and day, and their supplications are answered during the period of fasting, and at the time of breaking their fast. By day, the servant fasts and is patient, and by night they eat and are grateful. Imām at-Tirmidhī and others have narrated the tradition, ‘*The one eating and in a state of gratitude is upon the same rank as the one fasting in a state of patience.*’

The one who grasps the virtue of what we indicate, experiences far more than the joy of the fasting person at the time of breaking their fast! The real indication (of virtue) at the breaking of their fast is Allāh’s grace and mercy upon them. The Words of Allāh ﷻ are understood: **Say, be joyful at Allāh’s grace and His mercy [upon you]! This is better than what you gather.**¹⁹

The condition, however, is that the meal at the time of breaking the fast is permissible (*ḥalāl*).²⁰ If the breaking of the fast is with the prohibited (*ḥarām*), then the servant is from those who fasted from that which Allāh ﷻ made permissible and broke the fast with that which Allāh ﷻ prohibited. Their supplication will not be answered, just as the Prophet ﷺ said about the one on a long arduous journey, who ‘*raised his outstretched hands towards the heavens (supplicating)– ‘O my Lord, O my Lord!’ while his food is ḥarām,*²¹ *his drink is ḥarām, his clothing is ḥarām, and he has been nourished by the ḥarām – how then can he be answered in this state?*’²²

¹⁷ *Al-Jāmi‘ aṣ- Ṣaghīr*, Imām Suyūfī

¹⁸ Abdu’r-Razzāq

¹⁹ Qur’ān, 10:57

²⁰ ‘Permissible’ here means to consume permitted foods which are purchased with ḥalāl income i.e., not from illicit means such as usury or gambling etc [Tr]

²¹ Prohibited

²² Muslim

As for the joy experienced at the time of meeting their Lord – [the servant] will find what is stored as a reward for fasting with Allāh ﷻ greater than what they needed. Just as Allāh ﷻ says, **‘Whatsoever good you shall send on for your souls, you shall find it with Allāh, better and greater in reward.’**²³ And He ﷻ says, **‘The Day whereon each soul shall find presented whatsoever it had earned of good.’**²⁴ And He ﷻ says, **‘Then whosoever has worked good of an atom’s weight shall see it.’**²⁵

We have already mentioned the statement of Ibn ‘Uyaynah that the reward of fasting will not be used as compensation for a sin, rather, it is safeguarded with Allāh ﷻ for the one fasting until they enter Paradise (by virtue of it). In the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad, ‘Uqbah ibn ‘Āmir ؓ narrates that the Prophet ﷺ said, *‘There is no action of each day except it is sealed.’*²⁶

[Prophet] ‘Īsā ؑ said, *‘Indeed, in the night and day there are two storehouses. Pay attention therefore to what you deposit!’* Days are therefore storehouses for people for what they acquire of good and evil deeds. On the Day of Judgement these deposited deeds will be revealed to their owners. As for the God-conscious, they will find respect and honour in their storehouses. The sinners will view their stores with grief and regret.

Those who fast are of two types:

The first type of those who fast: Those who abstain from food, drink, and desires for the sake of Allāh ﷻ and hope for Paradise from Him in return. These people are trading with Allāh ﷻ. Allāh ﷻ does not diminish the reward of the one who acts with excellence, nor does He ﷻ disappoint the one dealing with Him ﷻ. Rather, He ﷻ gives them an enormous profit. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said to

²³ Qur’ān, 73:20

²⁴ Qur’ān, 3:30

²⁵ Qur’ān, 99:7

²⁶ The full wording of the tradition is: *There is no action of each day except that it is sealed. So when a believer falls ill, the angels say, ‘O our Lord, Your servant has been prevented (from carrying out his usual good deeds due to illness)’. The Lord replies, ‘Document for him (in his book of good deeds the reward) of what he would habitually do until he recovers or passes away.’* Perhaps Ibn Rajab is trying to emphasise the reward of fasting being guaranteed for the next world. [Tr]

a man, ‘*Never do you leave a thing out of taqwā²⁷ with Allāh except that Allāh grants you something better than it.*’²⁸ The one fasting will be given whatever they wish from food, drink, and intimacy in Paradise. Allāh ﷻ says, ‘**Eat and drink to your heart’s content as a reward for what you did in days gone by.**’²⁹ Mujāhid said, ‘This was revealed for those who fast.’

Ya‘qūb ibn Yūsuf al-Ḥanafī said, ‘It has reached us that indeed Allāh ﷻ will say to His saints (*awliyā*) on the Day of Judgement, ‘*Oh my saints, I would look at you often during the (existence of the) world with your lips parched from thirst, (and your) sunken eyes and churned stomachs. Today dwell in bliss and drink from the vessel before you, and eat and drink to your heart’s content as a reward for what you did in days gone by.*’

Ḥasan³⁰ said, ‘A maiden of Paradise will give a glass (of drink) to a saint of Allāh as he reclines with her upon the riverbanks of honey and say, “Allāh ﷻ gazed upon you on a clear, bright, and long day. You were overtaken by unquenchable thirst at noon. So He ﷻ boasted to the angels about you and said, ‘*Look at my servant, he is abstaining from [marital relations with] his spouse, and desires, pleasures, and food and drink solely for My sake, longing for what is with Me (as reward). Bear witness that indeed I have certainly forgiven him!*’ So, on that day He forgave you and married you to me.”’

The tradition in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* collections narrates that the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘*In Paradise there are two gates known as Ar-Rayyān. Those who fasted will enter through them and no one else will enter through them.*’ In one narration it is added – ‘*And when they (all) enter, it will be locked.*’ In another narration, it is ‘*Whoever enters from (the gates of Rayyān) will drink, and the one who drinks will never experience thirst again!*’ In the tradition of Abdur-Raḥmān ibn Samurah ﷺ cited by aṭ-Ṭabarānī and others, he narrated that the Prophet ﷺ slept for a long time and (then woke) and said, ‘*I saw a man from my nation*

²⁷ *Taqwā* has many meanings including piety and God-consciousness, and awe of Allāh ﷻ. These qualities help engender love of Allāh ﷻ, self-control, and obedience with the commands and prohibitions of Allāh ﷻ.

²⁸ *Musnad Aḥmad*

²⁹ Qur’ān, 69:24

³⁰ When Ibn Rajab mentions ‘Ḥasan’ this refers to Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, rather than Ḥasan ﷺ who was the grandson of the Prophet ﷺ. [Tr]

panting from thirst; each time he reached my Ḥawḍ³¹ he was prevented from it. The fasts of Ramaḍān [which he had completed] arrived and quenched his thirst! Ibn Abī Dunyā has narrated a tradition from Anas رضي الله عنه [that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said], ‘*The fragrance of musk will be blown into the mouths of those who kept fasts, and a tablecloth will be placed for them [i.e., a feast will be spread out] under the Throne (of Allāh سبحانه), they will be able to eat while the Reckoning takes place for the people!*’ Anas رضي الله عنه has [also] narrated [that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said], ‘*Indeed Allāh سبحانه has a table spread [i.e., a banquet laid out] the like of which the eye has never seen, nor the ear ever heard, nor the heart ever contemplated. No one save those who fasted will be able to partake of it!*’

Some of the pious predecessors said, ‘It has reached us that a feast will be laid out for those who fast; they will eat from it whilst others will have their actions accounted for. The [latter] will say, “O Lord! Are we being taken to account whilst they are eating?” It will be said, “Whilst they were fasting you were eating, whilst they were standing for the night prayer (*tahajjud*), you were sleeping!”’ Some have seen Bishr ibn Ḥārith in the world of dreams and before him was a table spread from which he was eating. It was said to him, ‘Eat O one who would not eat; drink O one who would not drink!’ Some of the righteous would fast (so frequently) that their backs would eventually hunch, their voices would become subdued, and (eventually) they would pass away. A friend of one of the righteous saw him in his dream and asked him of his state (in the Hereafter). His righteous friend laughed and said:

*He was clothed with a dazzling robe and
Dishes surrounded him, presented by servants
Then he was freed and told, ‘O reciter (of Qur’ān) rise!
For by my life – indeed the fast has brought you blessings!’*

At the time of the predawn meal (*suḥūr*) during Ramaḍān some of the knowers of Allāh سبحانه witnessed an unseen caller crying out, ‘*Lo, those who are fasting are*

³¹ This refers to the *Ḥawḍ al-Kawthar* - Cistern of Abundance. On the Day of Judgement, the water from this Cistern will quench the thirst of the believers, and the one who drinks from this water will never be thirsty again, for eternity (as narrated by al-Bukhārī and Muslim). May Allāh سبحانه grant you and I the honour of drinking this blessed water from the blessed hands of the blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. [Tr]

not disappointed! Reflect on this statement, and therefore increase in fasting! A knower of Allāh ﷻ saw in his dream that he was made to enter Paradise. He heard a caller exclaim, ‘Can you remember keeping a day’s fast for Allāh’s ﷻ sake?’ ‘Yes,’ he replied, so [the narrator said], ‘My container of blessings was extracted for me from Paradise.’

For the one who abandons food, drink, and desires for a short period in the temporary world, Allāh ﷻ replaces (them) with food and drink that never ceases and a spouse who never dies. During the month of RamaḌān, those that fast are wedded [to spouses of Paradise]. In the tradition of aṭ-Ṭabarānī, [it is related that], ‘*Indeed, Paradise adorns and refreshes itself year upon year to welcome RamaḌān. Maidens of Paradise call out, “O Lord! During this month cool our eyes³² by engaging us in marriage with your servants whose eyes are cooled by us.”*’ In another tradition it is narrated, ‘*Indeed, the maidens of Paradise call out during the month of RamaḌān, “Is there anyone suitable for marriage (so) Allāh ﷻ can marry us to him?”*’

The dowry of the maiden of Paradise is the night vigil (*tahajjud*), and (night vigil) is achieved during RamaḌān more than any another period. One of the righteous who perpetually fasted and stood at night in prayer, prayed one night in the mosque and then began to supplicate. His eyes were overcome [with fatigue and he slept]. In his dream, he saw a group of beings who he knew were not human. In their hands were platters upon which were rolls of bread as bright as white ice. Upon each roll was a pearl that resembled a pomegranate. They said, ‘Eat!’ He said, ‘I am intending to fast.’ They replied, ‘The owner of this house is requesting that you eat!’ He went on to narrate, ‘In the dream I began to eat, and I took hold of the pearl. They said, “Leave it, it will grow into a tree with fruits much better than this for you.” “Where?” I asked. They said, “In an abode that does not decay, [with] fruits that never change, a kingdom that never ends and garments that never ruin. In it is pleasure, springs, [all manner of things to bring] coolness of the eyes, spouses that are pleasing, and contentment for you. Neither weak nor will they weaken. So upon you is to

³² ‘Coolness of the eyes’ is an Arabic expression for something which brings great pleasure, comfort and joy. [Tr]

remain focussed upon your goal, for this (world) is but a trance until you travel on and reach your (real) abode!” Only two Fridays elapsed after this dream and he passed away. He was seen on the night of his death by one of his friends to whom he had narrated his dream, and he said to him, ‘Won’t you marvel at the growth of the tree I informed you of?’ He asked, ‘How has it flourished?’ He replied, ‘Don’t ask, no one can describe it! One will not witness the likes of al-Karīm [the Most Generous One] once [His] grace is portioned for him!’

O people! Will you not converse with the Merciful during this month? Won’t you become eager for what Allāh ﷻ has prepared for the obedient ones in Paradise? Won’t you seek out what He ﷻ has elucidated of everlasting blessings, understanding that knowledge of this information is not like witnessing it?

The one who wishes for the Kingdom of Paradise

[Should] then abandon negligence

And stand in the depths of the night

With the light of the Qur’ān

Following a fast with a fast

As this life is temporary

Indeed the real life is with Allāh

In the Abode of Safety

The second type of those who fast: Those who fast in this world from everything save Allāh ﷻ, safeguarding the mind and what it gathers (in thought), protecting the stomach and what it contains, remembering the concept of death and (how life) perishes - [these are the ones who] wish for the Next Life, and abandon the adornment of the lower world. [For them] (their meeting in the Next Life) is the [real] Eid *al-Fiṭr* - the day they meet their Lord and the ecstasy experienced by gazing at Him.

The fasting of the elect

Safeguards the tongue from slander and lies

As for the knowers of Allāh, and those intimate ones,

Their fast is safeguarding the heart from others and distractions

For the knowers of Allāh ﷻ no palace can compensate [for the pleasure of] gazing at their Master; and no river will quench the thirst of their desire to witness Him. Their aspirations are much greater than that!

*The aspiration of the servant is great,
Desirous to gaze at You
Others fasts from what is essential,
Yet my fast is from everything save You!*

For the one who fasts from their desires in this world, Paradise will be their reward tomorrow. For the one who fasts from everything save Allāh ﷻ, then their Eid will be on the Day of Judgement: **As for those who strive for their meeting with Allāh, Allāh's appointed time is surely coming.**³³

Bishr al- Ḥārith was seen in a dream and was asked about his condition, he said, 'He ﷻ was fully aware of my disinclination for food, so He ﷻ made it permissible for me to gaze at Him ﷻ.' One of the pious was asked, 'Where can I find you in the Next World?' He replied, 'Amongst the group of those gazing at Allāh ﷻ.' [They asked], 'Well, how are you so sure (of this)?' He replied, 'By virtue of lowering my gaze from everything impermissible, avoiding everything disliked and sinful, and by my begging Him to make my Paradise just gazing at Him ﷻ.'

*O Love of the hearts, who do I have save You?
Have mercy on this sinner, I have come to You
I have no request O My Master in Paradise
Save wanting to gaze at You*

O those who repent often! Maintain fasting from desires and [refraining from] caprice by day, [such that] the Day of the great meeting (with Allāh ﷻ) overtakes the (joy) of Eid *al-Fitr!* Don't prolong your hopes due to the perception of finding the appointed time (of fate) delayed, as indeed most days

³³ Qur'ān, 29:5

of (potential) fasting have passed and the Eid of meeting (your Lord) has drawn near!

The Day of Gathering is the accumulation of all days

This is my Eid, I have no Eid save this day!

As for the Prophetic statement, ‘*The breath from the mouth of the one fasting is more fragrant with Allāh ﷻ than musk,*’ the breath (of the one fasting) is a result of the air which rises up from the remnants of gastric fluid in the empty stomach. It is a repugnant smell for people in this world. However, it is fragrant with Allāh ﷻ as it reflects obedience to Him ﷻ, and seeking out His pleasure. Similarly, the blood of a martyr will come on the Day of Judgment flowing with the colour of blood yet bearing the fragrance of musk. From this, one can deduce why some disliked the use of the *siwāk*³⁴ whilst fasting, while other scholars [only] preferred not to use it. The first of those who inclined to this opinion from those whom we came to know was ‘Aṭāh ibn Abī Ribāh. This is well known amongst the scholars. Indeed, those who dislike [using *siwāk* when fasting], only dislike it towards the end of the day as this is the period where repugnant breath is noticed [and this smell is beloved to Allāh ﷻ, so they prefer that it is not removed]. There are three opinions of when it is disliked (to use the *siwāk*): firstly, at the entry of the time of the ‘Aṣr prayer; secondly, at the declining of the sun after the zenith; and thirdly, when performing the *Zuhr* prayer at its beginning time. The third opinion is what is endorsed by Imām Aḥmad.

There are two actual meanings to this statement:

The first meaning: Just as fasting is a secret between the servant and their Lord in this world, Allāh ﷻ shall unveil [this secret] to His creation such that the people of fasting be known and their reward of secretly fasting in the world be made manifest. It is narrated by Abū Shaykh al-Aṣbahānī, from Anas ﷺ [that the Prophet ﷺ said], ‘*Those who fasted will come out from their graves and*

³⁴ *Siwāk* or *miswāk* - a tooth stick used by the Prophet ﷺ habitually to clean his teeth. [Tr]

they will be known for the fragrance from their mouths which will be more fragrant than musk!

Makhūl said, ‘The people of Paradise will observe a fragrant breeze and say, “O our Lord, we have not found a breeze more fragrant than this since entering Paradise.” It will be said to them, “This is the fragrance from the mouths of those who used to fast. The breath of the fasting was fragrant in the world and perceived through [spiritual and literal] inhalation before the Next World.”’

This has two explanations:

First: What can be perceived from the apparent - ‘Abdullāh ibn Ghālib was from the dedicated worshippers, in particular with regard to prayer and fasting. When he was buried, the fragrance of musk emanated from his grave. He was seen in a dream and was asked of this fragrance which emanated from his grave. He replied, ‘This is the fragrance of recitation and hunger.’

Second: What the souls and hearts inhale and smell - love and compassion for those who fast sincerely is instilled in the hearts of the believers. In the tradition of Ḥārith al-‘Ash‘arī ؓ, the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘*Indeed, [the Prophet] Zakarīyyā ؑ said to the children of Israel, “I have mandated fasting upon you. The similitude of this (fasting) is like a man amongst a group of criminals who has a hidden pouch with a beautiful fragrance (although it usually carries money). All of them are amazed by his fragrance. Indeed the [the breath of] the one fasting is more fragrant with Allāh ﷻ than the scent of musk.”*’³⁵

Sometimes, when the fasting of the sincere (person) is a secret between them and their Master, Allāh ﷻ reveals their secret to His servants and it becomes manifest. The revelation of the secret was the reward for it being private [and sincerely for Allāh]. In the tradition [it is narrated] that, ‘*Never does one hide a secret except Allāh covers it in the garment of manifestation.*’³⁶

³⁵ At-Tirmidhī

³⁶ Haythamī, *Majmū‘ al-Zawā‘id*

Yūsuf ibn Asbāṭ said, ‘Allāh ﷻ revealed to one of His Prophets, “Tell your people, that [when] you conceal your actions for My sake, it is upon Me to reveal them!”’

Respect lies in subduing the desires for the Lord of them

Their impoverishment before their Beloved is their treasure

Their concealment of their secrets is in fact fame

Incapacity in abstaining from desires for His sake results in confusion

The second meaning: Certainly, whoever worships Allāh ﷻ and obeys Him, [and] seeks His pleasure in this world through good actions disciplines their lower-self in this world by virtue of their actions. Yet the effects of these actions, [such as fatigue, hunger, thirst etc] are sometimes disliked by the lower-self, but they are not disliked by Allāh ﷻ. Rather [the servant’s] eagerness to obey His commands and seek His pleasure are beloved to Him and approved of by Him. His Divine Grace of giving glad tidings to those who perform good actions in this world brings comfort to their hearts, so what they actually experience is not in reality difficult, regardless of their perception in this world.

Some of the pious narrated that Allāh ﷻ promised Prophet Mūsa ﷺ that He would converse with him on the thirtieth night. So he fasted for thirty days and found an unpleasant smell emitting from his mouth. He therefore loathed to converse with his Lord in this state, so he took a tooth stick and began to brush his teeth. When the appointed time came Allāh ﷻ said to him, ‘O Mūsa, were you not aware that the breath of the one fasting is more fragrant to Us than musk? Return and fast for another ten days.’

Like this phenomenon, the fragrance of the blood of the martyr on the Day of Judgment is like musk. The dust of those who strive in the path of Allāh ﷻ will be a fragrant powder for the people of Paradise. There is also a narration regarding this. In this world, many things seem insignificant due to customary

notions, until and unless it is linked with His obedience and pleasure. Then it becomes wholesome in its reality.

The breath of those who fast is more fragrant than musk. The two garments worn by those in *iḥrām* when visiting His house [the *Ka'bah*] are more splendid than normal clothing. The tears of remorse through *taqwā* of Him ﷻ from those who have wronged themselves is more virtuous than praising Him. The broken state of the humble in front of His Greatness is the pillar of support. Dejection of those who are in a state of fear of His Power is actual honour. Concealing the love of those who love Him is more excellent than general secrecy. Sacrificing the self in His service is life. The hunger of those fasting for His sake is satiation. Quenching of thirst lies in remaining thirsty in search of His pleasure. The striving of those who strive in His service is relaxation.

Humility of the novice whilst in love is honour

Humbleness before his Beloved is honour

Today the gust of the winds of proximity breezed upon the hearts, the agent of admonition came to the emigrants [to Allāh ﷻ, guiding them] towards goodness. Union became the joy of those separated, pardon became the joy of the sinner, and salvation from the Fire became joy for the criminals.

When the devils are locked and chained during the month of RamaḌān, the fire of desire is calmed by fasting, the grip of caprice disappears, righteousness governs the intellect, and there then remains no excuse for the sinner to engage in sin. O cloud of heedlessness of the heart - disperse! O the light of piety and faith - rise! O pages of righteous actions of the righteous - elevate! O hearts of those who fast - be humble! O feet [and limbs] of those who strive - prostrate and bow to your Lord! O eyes of those who stand in night vigil - do not become drowsy! O sins of those who oft-repent - do not return! O land of caprice - swallow your water! O heaven of souls - cease! O the lightning of longing of those struck with love - brighten! O thoughts of the knowers of Allāh - think freely! O concern of the lovers of only Allāh ﷻ - do not lose hope! O Junayd - be delighted! O Shiblī - come forth! O Rābi'ah - lend an ear!

During these days those who fast have blessings spread out for them like a banquet, and there is none amongst them except that they are all invited. **O our people! Answer the caller who summons to Allāh!**³⁷

O aspirations of the of the believers - hurry! Glad tidings to the one who responded to the call and then achieved success, and woe to those who do not respond and flee from this door!

I ask you O Bānata'l-Ajra about

When they stopped following me

Did my heart depart with them?

Or did it grow weak, and then they did not follow me?

We travelled and the truthful joined us

Only the claimants of love separated from us

Woe to me! Will they accept me when I come to them?

Or will you see them turning me away from their door?

Or will you see me as I stand before them

[and] Permit me to enter amongst them... or dismiss me?

³⁷ Qurʾān, 46:31

The Virtue of Generosity during RamaḌān



In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* collections, the tradition of Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه is cited in which he said, ‘The Prophet ﷺ was the most generous of people, and he was even more generous during RamaḌān when Jibrīl عليه السلام came to him, and they both revised the Qur’ān. Jibrīl عليه السلام would come to him every night during RamaḌān, and they would revise the Qur’ān. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was the most generous person, even more generous in goodness than the strong winds.’³⁸

Imām Aḥmad has added something extra in his narration: ‘(The Prophet) ﷺ would not be asked about anything except that he would give.’ Generosity is defined as giving openly and being plentiful in giving. One of the principal attributes of Allāh ﷻ is generosity. In the tradition cited by at-Tirmidhī, narrated by Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqās رضي الله عنه it is related that the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘*Indeed Allāh is generous and loves generosity; He is noble and loves nobility.*’

In the tradition narrated by Abū Dharr رضي الله عنه, the Prophet ﷺ stated that Allāh ﷻ said, ‘*O my servants - if the first and last of you, those alive and those who have passed away, the young and old amongst you were gathered in a place, and every single person from amongst you asked for anything they desired, and then I would give to everyone - My Kingdom will not diminish at all - just as if one of you were to pass an ocean and dip a needle into it, and then lift it out - that is because I am indeed the Most Generous, the Most Resourceful, [and] the Most Majestic; I do as I please. My giving is a word, My punishment is a word - certainly, when I decree something, I say to it: “Be - and it is.”*’³⁹

In the famous narration from Fuḍail ibn ‘Iyāḍ (it is said), ‘Every night Allāh ﷻ says, ‘*I am the Most Generous, and from Me comes generosity. I am the Noble*

³⁸ In the harsh environment of Arabia, winds or breezes were regarded as good fortune. [Tr]

³⁹ *Musnad Aḥmad*

and from Me comes nobility. For Allāh ﷻ is the Most Generous of those who are generous, and His Generosity multiplies during specific periods (of time) such as the month of Ramaḍān. It was in (Ramaḍān) that (the following verse) was revealed: **And when my servant asks you about Me, then indeed (know) I am near, I answer the call of the supplicant.**⁴⁰

In the tradition cited by at-Tirmidhī and others (the following is related): *'It is announced by a caller during (Ramaḍān) - O desirer of good - advance, O desirer of evil - halt! Allāh ﷻ decrees salvation from the Fire every night (of Ramaḍān).'* In the tradition of Abū Hurayrah ؓ from Imām Mālik's *Muwaṭṭa'* the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ stated, *'I have only been sent to perfect noble character.'* Allāh ﷻ has made it a natural disposition for His Prophet ﷺ to have the finest and most complete character, and he ﷺ was the most generous of people.

Ibn 'Addī narrated a tradition from Anas ؓ [that the Prophet ﷺ said], *'Should I not inform you about the Most Generous of the generous? Allāh ﷻ is the Most Generous of the generous, and I am the most generous of the children of Ādam. The most generous of those after me is a man who learns knowledge and imparts this knowledge. He will then be raised on the Last Day as a nation. And (the most generous is also) a man who strives in the path of Allāh ﷻ.'* We infer from this that (the Prophet ﷺ) was absolutely the most generous of the children of Ādam, just as he ﷺ was the most virtuous, the most knowledgeable, the most courageous, and the most complete in every praiseworthy trait.

The generosity of (the Prophet ﷺ) was in reference to every aspect of what is regarded as being defined as generous: from exerting himself in disseminating knowledge and spending (in charity), to striving with his own being for the sake of Allāh ﷻ to convey His religion and guide His servants; to benefitting them in all affairs such as feeding the hungry, teaching the ignorant, fulfilling their needs and carrying their burdens.

⁴⁰ Qur'ān, 2:186

(The Prophet ﷺ) always possessed these lofty traits from reaching maturity [and even before this]; for this reason, Khadijah ﷺ said to him when he was first informed (of Prophecy), ‘By Allāh, Allāh ﷻ will never disgrace you. You keep good relations with your kith and kin, you help the poor and destitute, you serve your guests generously, and you assist the calamity-afflicted ones.’⁴¹ These lofty qualities increased unfathomably after prophecy.

In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* collections Anas ﷺ narrates that, ‘The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was the most excellent of people, the most courageous of people, and the most generous of people.’ *Ṣaḥīḥ* Muslim also cites a tradition from Anas ﷺ that, ‘The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was never asked for anything in Islām except he would give it. A man came to him ﷺ and he was given (enough) cattle (to fill the space) between two mountains. He returned to his people and said, “O people, accept Islām! For indeed Muḥammad ﷺ gives like the one who does not fear poverty!”’ In another tradition, a man came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked him for cattle (to the amount that would fill the space) between two mountains, and he was given this as requested. He then returned to his people and said, ‘O people! Enter Islām, for indeed Muḥammad ﷺ gives without fearing poverty!’

Anas ﷺ said, ‘This particular man became Muslim solely for worldly benefit, yet the evening did not pass and Islām became more beloved to him than the entire world and what it contains!’ Safwān ibn Umayyah ﷺ said, ‘The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ gave me what he gave me, (and whilst doing so) he was the most loathed human being to me. He did not stop gifting to me until he became the most beloved human being to me.’⁴² Ibn Shihāb said, ‘(The Prophet) ﷺ gave a hundred cattle on the day of Ḥunain, then another hundred, then another hundred!’ As narrated in al-Wāqidi’s accounts of [the Prophetic] battles, the Prophet ﷺ gave Safwān ibn Umayyah ﷺ a valley filled with camels and cattle on the day (of the battle of Ḥunain). Upon which Safwān said, ‘I testify that no one can be pleased by this except the soul of a Prophet!’

⁴¹ Al-Bukhārī

⁴² Muslim

In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* collections, Jubair ibn Muṭʿim رضي الله عنه narrates that a Bedouin caught up with the Prophet ﷺ during the return from Ḥunain and asked him to distribute (spoils of war) between them. The Prophet ﷺ said, *‘Had I access to large numbers of cattle I would allocate them for you, and you will not find me to be miserly, nor a liar, nor lacking courage (to do so).’*

It is also narrated from Jābir رضي الله عنه that ‘Never was the Prophet of Allāh asked for anything to which he replied “No.”’⁴³ He ﷺ said to Jābir رضي الله عنه, *‘If the wealth of Bahrain came to me, I would distribute it like this, like this, [and] like this,’* and he gestured with his hands as he said this to indicate all of it.

Al-Bukhārī cites a tradition from Sahl ibn Saʿīd رضي الله عنه: ‘A sleeveless outer garment was gifted to the Prophet ﷺ and he wore it as he was in need of it (due to the lack of clothing he ﷺ possessed).⁴⁴ A man asked for it and (the Prophet ﷺ) gifted it to him, so those present criticised him for this and said, “(The Prophet ﷺ) was in great need of it, and you know well he never refuses the one who asks!” The man replied, “I only asked for it so it can be my shroud!” - and it ended up being his shroud.’

The entire generosity of the Prophet ﷺ was for Allāh’s ﷻ sake and for seeking His pleasure, because he ﷺ indeed would give wealth freely - whether to a poor person, or to one in need, or for spending in the path of Allāh ﷻ, or to soften the hearts of people towards Islām, whose acceptance of the faith would consequently strengthen it.

(The Prophet ﷺ) would prefer others over himself, his family and his children resulting in him giving so willingly it would shake the kingdoms of Persia and Rome, whilst he ﷺ chose to live a life of poverty for himself. A month or two would pass, and the stove would not have been lit in his home. At times, (the Prophet ﷺ) would tie a rock upon his blessed abdomen to subdue hunger. Once while a maid was serving him ﷺ, [his daughter] Fāṭimah رضي الله عنها complained to him ﷺ about the difficulty of managing (her) domestic affairs. She sought this

⁴³ Al-Bukhārī

⁴⁴ Perhaps this garment was similar to a modern-day shawl. [Tr]

of Jibrīl's ﷺ close companionship at this time, as well as from increased study of this noble message [i.e., the Qur'ān] which encourages nobility and generosity. There is no doubt that the company a person keeps influences their character. One of the poets lavishly praised a king who was generous, so he was gifted a year's wages. The poet took this wealth and distributed all of it to people in need as he recited and sang:

My hand and his hand touched in seeking riches

I had no idea generosity from his hand would be distributed by me!

This poem reached the King, and he further increased his wages. Some of the other poets lavishly praised those who were generous, but [in reality this praise] is not befitting for anyone except the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ:

His hand is forever open

To the degree that if he ﷺ even wanted to close it, his fingers wouldn't allow it

When you go to him ﷺ, you will see him illumined

As if you gave him ﷺ what you were actually asking for

He ﷺ is like an ocean, no matter which direction you come from

Goodness is at the depths of his state, generosity is his shore

If he ﷺ had nothing in his hand save his soul

Fear Allāh when asking him, as he ﷺ would have given that!

Shiblī ﷺ heard someone say, 'O Allāh, O Generous One!' then he lamented and cried, 'How is it possible for me to describe Al-Ḥaqq⁴⁷ as generous when Creation describe (others) with this quality?' - and then he recited the poem above as mentioned. Then he said, 'Definitely O Generous One, for indeed You generously gave me this body and graciously saw to my concerns, for You are the Most Generous of the Generous in the absolute sense; for others give in order to be praised, but Your giving is without end, limits or even description.

⁴⁷ The Truth, one of the Ninety-Nine known Divine Names and Attributes of Allāh ﷺ. [Tr]

Therefore, O Generous One who surpasses all other generous ones, [it is only] with this (quality of Yours) that every giver gives!

In reference to the increase of (Allāh's) generosity in this month specifically there are many examples:

- 1) Honour of the time and the increase in reward during this period. At-Tirmidhī cites a tradition from Anas رضي الله عنه which says, *'The best charity is charity given out during Ramaḍān.'*
- 2) Assistance with acts of obedience for those who fast, stand in prayer, (and) engage in remembrance. It becomes incumbent upon those who assist [another to good deeds] to receive a reward similar to theirs. Just as one who prepares for battle has actually engaged in battle, the one who sees to the needs of the family (of the one who has left for battle) has also actually engaged in battle [i.e., has the reward of engaging in battle]. Zaid ibn Khālid رضي الله عنه narrates that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *'He who feeds one who is fasting shall receive the same reward (as the fasting person) without decreasing in the reward of the one who is actually fasting.'*⁴⁸ Aṭ-Ṭabarānī has cited extra wording to this tradition as narrated from our blessed mother 'Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها: *'The one fasting does not do an action of good, except that the reward is also allotted to the one who fed him, as long as the nourishment of food remains within him.'* Ibn Khuzaima cites in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* the tradition of Salmān رضي الله عنه regarding the virtue of the month of Ramaḍān: *'It is the month of sympathy, a month in which the sustenance of a believer is increased. Those who feed a fasting person shall have their sins forgiven, their necks freed from the Fire and receives reward similar to (the one who is fasting) with no decrease in their reward at all.'* They asked, 'O Messenger of Allāh, not all of us can find something to feed the (one who is) fasting.' He صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, *'Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم will grant this reward to the one who feeds a fasting person with diluted milk, or a date or even a sip of water. For the one who satiates a fasting person like this, Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم will quench the thirst of the one who feeds a fasting person*

⁴⁸ Aḥmad, an-Nasā'ī, at-Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah

like this with a drink from my fountain, after which there is no thirst, until they enter Paradise.'

- 3) Indeed, the month of Ramaḍān is the month in which Allāh's generosity is upon His servants in the form of His mercy, forgiveness, and salvation from the Fire, particularly during the Night of Power. Allāh ﷻ will show mercy to those merciful servants, just as the Prophet ﷺ said, '*Indeed Allāh's mercy is only upon His merciful servants.*'⁴⁹ So therefore, Allāh ﷻ is vastly generous to the one who gives generously to His servants. And reward can be in the form of [*tawfiq* -divine assistance to perform different] types of (good) actions.
- 4) Combining fasting and charity is from (the actions which) necessitate Paradise, just as the tradition of 'Alī ؑ states that the Prophet ﷺ said, '*Indeed in Paradise are rooms from which one can see the outside of it from the inside, and vice versa.*' (The Companions) asked, 'Who is this for O Messenger of Allāh?' He ﷺ replied, '*For the one who is courteous in speech, prepares food (for others), regularly fasts and stands in prayer at night whilst people are asleep.*'⁵⁰ All of these aforementioned elements are found in Ramaḍān. A believer combines fasting, standing in night prayer, charity, and courteous speech, as indeed it is prohibited for the one fasting to engage in gossip and obscenity. Fasting, ritual prayer, and charity connect the one performing them to Allāh ﷻ. Some of the pious predecessors said that ritual prayer causes the one performing it to reach up to half of the path (to Allāh ﷻ); and fasting causes them to reach the door of the King; and charity takes them by the hand and causes them to enter upon the King. In the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Imām Muslim, Abū Hurayrah ؓ narrates that the Prophet ﷺ said, '*Who from amongst you is fasting this morning?*' Abū Bakr ؓ said, '*I am.*' He ﷺ then said, '*Who from amongst you has followed a funeral procession?*' Abū Bakr ؓ said, '*I have.*' He ﷺ then said, '*Who has fed a poor person today?*' Abū Bakr ؓ said, '*I have.*' He ﷺ then said, '*Who has given in charity?*' Abū Bakr ؓ said, '*I have.*' He ﷺ then said, '*Who from amongst you has visited a sick person?*' Abū Bakr ؓ said, '*I have.*' He ﷺ then said, '*Never does a person combine these actions except that they will enter Paradise.'*

⁴⁹ Al-Bukhārī and Muslim

⁵⁰ At-Tirmidhī, Aḥmad

- 5) Combining fasting and charity results in the expiation of sins, protection, and distance from the Hellfire. Standing in the night prayer (*tahajjud*) particularly complements this. It has been established from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ that indeed he said, ‘*Fasting is a shield.*’⁵¹ In another tradition [it is narrated that] ‘[Fasting is like] *a shield for one of you from the Fire, just like his shield during battle.*’⁵² In the tradition of Mu‘ādh ﷺ, the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘*Charity extinguishes sins just as water extinguishes fire. And a man standing (in prayer in the depths of the night) also has his sins forgiven.*’⁵³ This has been elaborated upon in the narration of Imām Aḥmad. In a *Ṣaḥīḥ* tradition of al-Bukhārī, the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘*Protect yourself from the Fire, even if it is with a piece of a date.*’ Abū Dardā’ ﷺ used to say, ‘Perform two units [of prayer] during the darkness of the night [in preparation for] for the darkness of the grave; fast during an intensely hot day [in preparation for] for the Day of Rising; and give in charity for protection from the evil of the Day of Difficulty.’
- 6) It is inevitable that there will be deficiency and imperfection during fasting. The condition of expiation of sins through fasting is taking extra care to do what has been enjoined, and avoiding the prohibited, as it is narrated in the tradition of Ibn Ḥibbān in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. The majority of fasting people do not safeguard their fast from what is prohibited. Therefore, it is prohibited for someone to say, ‘I fasted for the whole of RamaḌān,’ or ‘I stood in night prayer throughout it.’ Charity compensates for any deficiencies or shortcomings during (fasting). Therefore, it is necessary to pay the *Zakāt al-Fiṭr* at the end of the month of RamaḌān as a purification for any shortcomings (and sins) of the one fasting. Both fasting and charity have been mentioned as deeds which expiate a broken oath, or a violation of *iḥrām* (the sanctified state for pilgrimage), or for marital relations during RamaḌān (whilst fasting). Allāh ﷻ had (initially) given the Muslims a choice of expiating sins by fasting or feeding the poor. This was then abrogated, so feeding the poor was only an option for those who struggle to fast, for instance in old age. A person who delays making up missed fasts of one

⁵¹ Al-Bukhārī, Muslim, an-Nasāʿī

⁵² An-Nasāʿī, Ibn Mājah, Aḥmad

⁵³ At-Tirmidhī, Aḥmad, Ibn Mājah

RamaḌān until after RamaḌān of the following year, is required to combine making up missed fasts with feeding a poor person for each day of RamaḌān. This is to increase the (expiation for delaying the completion of the missed fasts), as per the ruling of the majority of the scholars and some of the Companions رضي الله عنهم. This also applies to the one who breaks the fasts for other reasons such as pregnancy and breast-feeding, as per the ruling of a group of scholars.⁵⁴

- 7) The fasting person refrains from eating or drinking for Allāh's سبحانه sake alone. The state of those who are firm in abstaining from food and drink is that of those who shun desires. They are those who remain steadfast solely for the sake of Allāh سبحانه. It has been legislated for the one fasting to open their fast while also providing the means for others to open their fast. This is because food is pleasing to them, and so naturally, they share this favour by feeding others for the pleasure (of Allāh سبحانه). This then also becomes a means of gratitude to Allāh سبحانه for the blessings of food and drink. The servant acknowledges this [blessing] well, particularly as it was prohibited for them [during the fast]. The real value of a blessing is only understood when it is taken away. One of the pious was asked, 'Why has fasting been legislated?' He replied, 'So the rich can taste hunger, and therefore remember the hungry.' Thus, this is one of the wisdoms and benefits of fasting. We have already mentioned earlier the tradition of Salmān رضي الله عنه, [where the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said] '*And this is the month of giving.*' For the one who does not have the ability to prefer others over themselves in this month, there is little hope of reaching the [higher] state of giving freely. Many of the pious predecessors would be very generous in sharing the food with which they broke their own fasts, to the extent of preferring others to eat first, while remaining hungry [themselves]. Ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنهما would fast and would only break his fast with the poor. If his family would prevent him from doing so, he would refuse to eat that evening. If he was about to eat and someone asked him for food, he would stop eating, and stand and give [food to] the one asking. He would return to his family only to find they had eaten [the meal], and so he would rise again in the morning fasting without having eaten anything. Another of

⁵⁴ Refer any personal queries with regards to making up missed fasts to a reputable scholar or Mufti. [Tr]

the pious predecessors who was fasting desired food, and at the time of breaking his fast, food was placed before him. He heard someone ask, ‘Who will lend to a rich one?’ He replied, ‘A slave with only a few good deeds.’ He then stood and took his food and gave it to (the person who had asked), and he went to sleep hungry. A man came to Imām Aḥmad asking for food, so he gave him what had been prepared for his own *iffār*, and remained hungry, rising in the morning in the state of fasting. Ḥasan al-Baṣrī would prepare food for his companions although he was constantly fasting himself, and he would sit fanning them (to cool them down due to the heat) as they ate. Imām Ibn Mubārak prepared various foods including sweet dishes for his companions during a journey on which he was fasting. May peace be on these souls, may Allāh’s ﷺ mercy be upon these spirits for nothing remains of them save their accounts and stories. How many are those who withhold what they should share, and how few of those who prefer themselves over others!

Don’t compare our mention to their mention

The one sitting is not the same as the one walking!

Imām Shāfi‘ī said, ‘I love a man who increases in his generosity, seeing to the needs and rectification of people, being kept busy with their fast and prayer over his [own] occupation during the month of RamaḌān, striving to imitate the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ. Qādī Abū Ya‘lā and others from our colleagues have made similar statements.

The Virtue of Recitation of the Qur'ān during Ramaḍān



Traditions also point to the preference of studying the Qur'ān during Ramaḍān, gathering for this purpose and reciting the Qur'ān to those who are more learned. In this lies an indication of the preference for the abundance of recitation of the Qur'ān during the month of Ramaḍān.

In the tradition of Fāṭimah رضي الله عنها who narrates from her father صلى الله عليه وسلم, 'Jibrīl عليه السلام would recite the entire Qur'ān to him صلى الله عليه وسلم once a year, and twice in the year of his صلى الله عليه وسلم passing away.'⁵⁵ In the tradition of Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه, 'The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would study and review the Qur'ān with Jibrīl عليه السلام at night.' This indicates the preference of reciting the Qur'ān in abundance at night during Ramaḍān. For indeed the night severs preoccupation with the affairs of the day, gathers the mind, and engages the heart and tongue towards reflection, as per the verse, '**Indeed, worship in the night is more impactful and suitable for recitation.**'⁵⁶

The month of Ramaḍān has an exclusive relationship with the Qur'ān. Allāh عز وجل states: **The month of Ramaḍān is the one in which the Qur'ān was revealed.**⁵⁷ Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه stated, 'It was revealed in its entirety from the Sacred Tablet to the House of Grandeur⁵⁸ [in the lowest sky] on the Night of Power.' This is confirmed by the words of Allāh عز وجل: **Indeed We sent it (Qur'ān) down on the Night of Power.**⁵⁹ And also His words: **Indeed We revealed it (Qur'ān) on a blessed night.**⁶⁰ The tradition of 'Abīd ibn 'Umair رضي الله عنه that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم began receiving revelation of the Qur'ān in the month of Ramaḍān has already been mentioned.

⁵⁵ Al-Bukhārī

⁵⁶ Qur'ān, 73:6

⁵⁷ Qur'ān, 2:185

⁵⁸ *Bayt al-'Izzah*, is described as being in the heaven of this worldly dimension. Not much else has been mentioned about this. [Tr]

⁵⁹ Qur'ān, 97:1

⁶⁰ Qur'ān, 44:3

In the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad, Wā'thilah ibn al-Asqa' ؓ narrated from the Prophet ﷺ 'The Scrolls of Ibrāhīm were revealed on the first night of the month of Ramaḍān, the Tawrah (Torah) was revealed on the sixth of Ramaḍān, the Injīl (Gospels) were revealed on the thirteenth of Ramaḍān, and the Qur'ān was revealed on the twenty-fourth of Ramaḍān.' The Prophet ﷺ would prolong his recitation in the night prayer during Ramaḍān more than usual. Ḥudhayfah ؓ once prayed with the Prophet ﷺ on one night of Ramaḍān, and he ؓ said, 'He ؓ recited al-Baqarah, then an-Nisā', then Āle 'Imrān. Never did he ؓ pass a verse that caused fear except he ؓ would pause and supplicate. We had not even performed two cycles when Bilāl ؓ came and gave the call to prayer [for *Fajr*]!' Imām Aḥmad and Nasā'ī cite 'He did not perform even four cycles of prayer [i.e., the night prayer]!'

'Umar ؓ ordered Ubayy ibn Ka'ab ؓ and Tamīm ad-Dārī ؓ to stand in prayer with the people during the month of Ramaḍān. The Qārī would recite two hundred verses per cycle, to the point that some would lean on their staffs due to the long standing in prayer. They would not cease until the *Fajr* prayer. In one tradition, they would tie ropes between the pillars and support themselves by this means (to remain standing). In one tradition 'Umar ؓ gathered three masters of Qur'ān recitation and ordered for the quickest in recital to recite thirty verses with the people, the one who was medium-paced in reciting to do twenty-five verses, and that the one with the most prolonged recitation should do twenty verses. They would recite surah al-Baqarah in eight cycles of prayer during *Tarāwīḥ* of Ramaḍān. In the period of the next generation, the *Tābi'ūn* (the successors of the Companions), those who would recite it (Sūrah al-Baqarah) in twelve (prayer) cycles would be viewed as being gentle (with the congregation). Ibn Manṣūr said that Ishāq ibn Rawāhah was asked, 'How much should one recite in *Tarāwīḥ* prayers during Ramaḍān?' 'Nothing short of ten verses,' he replied. It was then said to him, 'The congregation won't be pleased with that.' He said, 'Won't they be pleased? So then do not lead them in prayer if they are not pleased with the recital of ten verses from Sūrah al-Baqarah! Then, once you reach shorter verses, then recite the equivalent of ten verses from Sūrah al-Baqarah [in length] in each cycle of prayer.' Imām Mālik also

would dislike reciting less than ten verses [equivalent to 10 verses of Surah al-Baqarah in length].

Imām Aḥmad was asked about the traditions mentioned about ‘Umar رضي الله عنه and the different paces of recitation, and the difficulty it might impose upon people, particularly when Ramaḍān has short nights as the affair should only be guided by what the people can tolerate. So Imām Aḥmad addressed some of his companions with whom he was praying in Ramaḍān, saying, ‘These people are weak, so recite five, six, or seven (verses).’ The (one who asked the question) said, ‘I recited in this way [as directed by Imām Aḥmad] and completed the recital [of the entire Qur’ān] on the twenty-seventh night.’ Ḥasan said, ‘The one who ‘Umar رضي الله عنه ordered to lead the people in prayer would recite five to six verses.’ The statement of Imām Aḥmad alludes to adapting [the duration of] the recital based on the states of the believers, so as not to be a burden upon them. Others have also said this from among the jurists of the companions of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah and others. Abū Dharr رضي الله عنه narrates, ‘The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم stood for *Tarāwīḥ* on the twenty-third night for one third of the night, and on the twenty-fifth night for half the night. They asked him صلى الله عليه وسلم “Would you pray with us for the remainder of the night?” He صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, “*When a man prays with the Imām until he has departed, it is written for him (as if he prayed) for the remainder of the night.*”⁶¹

Essentially this elucidates that standing in night vigil for a third of the night, or half of it, is considered equivalent to standing in prayer for the entire night, provided that this is with the Imām. Imām Aḥmad acted on this tradition and would pray with the Imām until the Imām left (the congregation), and he would not leave until the Imām left. Some of the pious predecessors said, ‘Whoever stands for half the night (in night vigil) has indeed stood for the entire the night.’

The *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd cites a tradition narrated by ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ رضي الله عنه from the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who said, ‘*Whoever stands (in night vigil) and*

⁶¹ At-Tirmidhī

recites ten verses will not be regarded as from the heedless, whoever stands and recites one hundred verses will be regarded as from the obedient, whoever stands and recites one thousand verses will be regarded as from those who receive an enormous reward!' In the tradition of Tamīm رضي الله عنه and Anas رضي الله عنه it is narrated that, 'Whoever recites one hundred verses at night will be regarded as one who has stood (in vigil) the entire night.'⁶² Ibn Mas'ūd narrated, 'Whoever recited fifty verses during the night prayer will not be regarded as from the heedless; whoever recited one hundred verses will be regarded as from the obedient; whoever recited three hundred verses will have an enormous reward.'⁶³

Therefore, whoever wishes to increase and prolong their recital whilst praying on their own, should prolong (the recital) as they wish, as alluded to by the Prophet ﷺ. Similarly, whoever prays in congregation and is pleased by the prayer (of the Imām) should he prolong the recital, [should continue until the Imām completes the prayer].

Some of the pious predecessors would complete (the entire Qur'ān) during the night vigil prayers (*tahajjud*) every three nights during Ramaḍān, some every seven nights (such as Qatādah), and some others every ten nights (such as Abū Rajā' al-ʿUṭāridī). Some would recite [and complete] the Qur'ān during Ramaḍān in prayer and out of prayer. Aswad would recite the entire Qur'ān every two nights during Ramaḍān. Nakha'ī would also do this [complete a Qur'ān every two nights] specifically during the last ten nights of Ramaḍān, and (he would complete a Qur'ān) during the first twenty nights of Ramaḍān every three nights. Qatādah would complete a Qur'ān every seven days throughout his life, and in every three nights during Ramaḍān; specifically completing a Qur'ān every night during the last ten nights. Imām Shāfi'ī and Imām Abū Ḥanīfah would complete sixty recitations of Qur'ān during Ramaḍān outside of the prayer.⁶⁴ Qatādah would also teach the Qur'ān during Ramaḍān, however

⁶² Aḥmad

⁶³ Aṭ-Ṭabarānī

⁶⁴ Those of us who were fortunate to spend Ramaḍān with Shaykh-al-Ḥadīth Ḥaḍrat Mawlāna Yusuf Motala رحمته الله have witnessed many of his disciples complete the recital of the entire Qur'ān in one day. Some two completions and some three within a twenty-four-hour period. I will never forget one particular Ramaḍān in which the Imām completed the entire Qur'ān in three night-vigils. An absolute marvel to

when Ramaḍān entered Zuhrī would say, 'It is only for the recital of Qur'ān and feeding others.'

Ibn 'Abdul-Ḥakam said that as Ramaḍān entered Imām Mālik would leave the teaching of *ḥadīth* and circles of knowledge, and instead strive in the recitation of the Qur'ān from the *muṣ-ḥaf* (the Qur'ān manuscript). 'Abdu'r-Razzāq said that as Ramaḍān entered, Sufyān ath-Thawrī would leave all types of worship and exert himself in the recitation of the Qur'ān. During Ramaḍān, 'Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها would recite from the *muṣ-ḥaf* from pre-dawn until sunrise and sleep once the sun had fully risen. Sufyān said that Zubaid al-Yamī would reach for the copies of the Qur'ān as Ramaḍān approached and would hand them to his companions.

The prohibition of reciting the Qur'ān in less than three days is only to prevent this from becoming a habitual practice. However, it is actually preferred to increase in the recitation of the Qur'ān in particularly blessed times, such as Ramaḍān (especially the last ten nights when the Night of Power is sought); and in particularly blessed places such as Makkah, especially if visiting, in order to profit from these blessed times and places. This is the opinion of Imām Aḥmad, Ishāq and others of the Imāms.

Know that the believer combines for himself two specific elements to strive in during Ramaḍān. Striving during the day with fasting and striving during the night with night vigil (*tahajjud*). For those who combine these two elements of striving, giving them their due right and remaining steadfast upon them, there will be an endless reward. Ka'ab رضي الله عنه said, 'On the Day of Judgement a caller will call out, such that every harvester (of good deeds) shall be given their due and more, [while] (the people of the Qur'ān and those who fasted) will be given an endless reward, and these two elements will also be a means of intercession with Allāh ﷻ.' Just as [it is related in] the tradition from the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad from 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ said, '*Fasting and*

witness this occurring in the 21st century in England. After my initial acquaintance with Ḥaḍrat, رحمه الله, each Ramaḍān I would ask him how I should spend my time and each year he would reply, "In recitation of the Qur'ān". I stopped asking after three years of the same answer. Ḥaḍrat نور الله مرقدہ would often lament that we generally do not even recite the Qur'ān let alone read, understand and act on its guidance. [Tr]

Qur'ān are two intercessors for the servant on the Day of Judgement. Fasting will say, 'O Lord, I prevented him from food and desires during the day.' The Qur'ān will say, 'I prevented him from sleep during the night, so let me intercede for him!' Both will intercede (on behalf of the servant).' Thus, fasting intercedes for the one who abstains from food, drink, and desires [out of obedience to their Lord's command]. This includes abstaining from what is usually permissible (such as eating, drinking and marital relations), and abstaining from that which is always prohibited or disliked to look at, listen to, or earn (such as unlawful wealth). So, when a person abstains from the permissible and the prohibited, fasting intercedes for them with Allāh ﷻ on the Day of Judgement, saying, 'O Lord! I prevented him from seeking his desires, allow me to intercede on his behalf!' This is exclusively for the one who guards their fasts and abstains from fulfilling their desires.

As for the one who is careless with their fast and does not abstain from that which Allāh ﷻ has prohibited (by virtue of fasting), then it befits them that (the fast) strikes their face saying, 'May Allāh ﷻ ruin you, just as you were reckless with me!' (Something similar has been narrated about the ritual prayer)⁶⁵. Some of the pious predecessors would say that when a believer's time comes (and death approaches), it is said to the angel, 'Smell the scent of his head!' To which the angel replies, 'I can sense the Qur'ān in his head!' It is then said, 'Smell the scent of his heart!' To which the angel replies, 'I can sense the fast in his heart!' It is then said, 'Smell the scent of his feet!' He replies, 'I can sense standing (in night vigil – *tahajjud*) from his feet!' It is then said, 'He guarded himself, may Allāh ﷻ guard him!'

Similarly, the Qur'ān will only intercede for the one whom it prevented from sleep during the night. For indeed the one who recites it while standing in the night vigil prayers (*tahajjud*) has given it its true right, and so it will intercede for them. The Prophet ﷺ made mention of a man and said, '*This one, the Qur'ān will not allow him to rest.*'⁶⁶ This means he would not sleep, preferring rather

⁶⁵ Fasting and prayer can be legally valid, but their virtue and reward can be reduced through carelessness. [Tr]

⁶⁶ Aḥmad

that the Qur'ān would be 'his pillow' [i.e., he would recite it in the night vigil prayers, rather than sleep].

Imām Aḥmad cites the tradition of Buraidah رضي الله عنه in which the Prophet ﷺ said, *'Indeed the Qur'ān will meet the one who was connected with it on the Day of Judgement when their grave is split open, in the form of a man with pale skin and say, 'Do you recognise me? I am your companion who made you thirsty during activity and kept you awake during your nights!' Every businessman leaves behind his trade. He will then be given a kingdom on his right and everlasting life on his left, a noble crown will be placed on his head. It will then be said to him, 'Recite and ascend through the ranks and rooms of Paradise – for your elevation will continue as much as your recital continues – slowly or quickly!' ['Slowly or quickly' refers to the pace of recital.]*

It is narrated in the long tradition of 'Ubādah ibn aṣ- Ṣāmit رضي الله عنه that: *Indeed, the Qur'ān will come to the one connected to it in the grave and will say to that person, 'I am the one who kept you up at night, [and made you] thirsty during the day, and prevented you from your desires, [and I prevented you from] listening to (the prohibited) and seeing it. You will find me to be from your sincerest friends!' They will then ascend (in their ranks of Paradise), asking for a bed and pillow, and a bed from Paradise will be allocated to them, as well as the clothes of Paradise, and the jasmine of Paradise. Then the Qur'ān will be placed at the centre of their grave and will create an expansion which Allāh ﷻ wills.*

Ibn Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه would say, 'It is imperative for the reciter of the Qur'ān to be known by his night when people are sleep, by his day when people are busy, by his tears when people are laughing, by his reservation when people are mingling, by his silence when people are conversing, by his humility when people are haughty and by his sadness when people are joyful.' Muḥammad ibn Ka'ab would say, 'We would recognise the reciter of the Qur'ān by his withdrawn appearance, indicative of his sleepless nights, and his long standing in night vigil (*tahajjud*).' Wuhaib ibn al-Ward related, 'It was said to a man, "Do you not sleep?" He replied, "The marvels of the Qur'ān prevent me from

sleeping!” [In another narration, it is related that] A man accompanied another for two months and never saw him sleep. He asked, “I have never actually seen you sleeping!” He replied, “The marvels of the Qur’ān prevent me from sleeping – never do I finish one marvel except I stumble upon another!”

Aḥmad ibn Abī al- Ḥawārī said, ‘I recite the Qur’ān and look intensively at each verse. My intellect is dazzled by it. I wonder in amazement at those who have memorised the Qur’ān – how can they possibly sleep? How are they then preoccupied with matters of this world, while they recite the words of Allāh ﷻ? Indeed, had they understood well what they were reciting, and sought enjoyment from Him ﷻ they would have preferred engaging with it, and their sleep would disappear due to the immense joy of what they have been given!’

Dhun-Nūn poetically said:

By its warnings and promises the Qur’ān prevented

The eyes from sleeping during the night, without rest

The words of the Great King were understood

An understanding that humiliated and humbled necks

So whoever has (memorised a portion) of the Qur’ān and sleeps the night and does not act by it during the day, the Qur’ān rises for them as an agent of punishment; it will demand its rights that were carelessly neglected. Imām Aḥmad cites the tradition of Samura ؓ that the Prophet ﷺ saw in his dream a man lying on his neck, while another man stood carrying a rock in his hands, and then smashing it upon the head of (the one lying down). The rock would roll along, and as it disappeared, he would take (another) whilst the head resumed its original state – and this would carry on repeatedly. He was asked about this, and it was said, ‘This is a man to whom Allāh gave the Qur’ān, and yet he slept instead of (reciting) it during the night, and he did not act upon it during the day, and so this will carry on happening to him until the Day of Judgement.’ Al-Bukhārī has also cited this with a different wording.

In the tradition of ‘Amr ibn Shu‘aib, narrated from his father, who narrated from his grandfather, who narrated from the Prophet ﷺ, ‘*The Qur’ān will resemble a man on the Day of Judgement. A man will come forward who memorised it [the Qur’ān by heart] but who breached its orders, and (the Qur’ān) will then resemble a punishment. He will say, ‘O Lord, indeed I truly memorised it (the Qur’ān)!’ (It will be said to him) ‘How wretched a carrier! You transgressed My prohibitions and were heedless of My obligations! You preferred the path of My disobedience and abandoned My obedience!’ Proofs against him will continue until it is said, ‘Such is his affair!’ and he will then be taken by the hand and flung until he is dragged by his nose to the Fire. The righteous man who memorised it and was careful with its orders will be bought forward and (the Qur’ān) will resemble a favourable intercessor, and (the man) will say: O Lord, indeed I truly carried (the Qur’ān)!’ (It will be said to him), ‘A good carrier, (who was) careful with My boundaries, acting on My obligations, staying well away from My disobedience, and who followed My obedience!’ Proofs for him will continue until it is said, ‘Such is your affair!’ - and he will be taken by his hand, made to wear garments of brocade, crowned with a king’s crown, and given a cup of wine to drink.’⁶⁷*

O one who is reckless with their life of disobedience! O one who neglects this month – nay – is reckless of even this day! O one who continues to procrastinate and delay – and what wretched matters to persist in! O one who makes the Qur’ān and month of RamaḌān an agent of punishment! What hope is there for the one who makes an intercessor his punishment?

Woe to those whose intercessor becomes his agent of punishment

At the blowing of the horn on the Day of Judgement

Perhaps for the one fasting, their portion of the fast is (nothing but) hunger and thirst, and for the one in night vigil their portion of it is (only) drowsiness. Any night vigil that does not prevent one from filth and evil, only increases one in distance (from Reality). Any fast that does not prevent one from a false

⁶⁷ Ibn Abi Shaybah

testimony, or acting in accordance with (falsehood), has no effect on them save abhorrence and rejection. O people! Where are the effects of fasting? Where are the lights of the night vigil?

Should you wail in remorse O dove of the tree

At the sow thistle – then where is the witness to the sadness?

Is it my dryness or the dryness of your tears?

Tears are not accepted without real proof!

O servants of Allāh ﷻ – this month of RamaḌān, in which the Qur'ān was revealed, the worshippers are attentive throughout it! This Book of Allāh ﷻ is amongst you, and it is recited to you during (this month), and you ought to pay heed to it! It is the Qur'ān – had it been revealed to a mountain, you would have seen it crumble out of humility! Knowing this, is there then anyone with a heart to tremble, or eye to weep, or fast [to complete], or night vigil to strive in, with the hope of intercession? A heart that is empty of God-consciousness is hollow and spiritually barren; the darkness of sins accumulates upon it, and it cannot see nor hear!

How many verses of the Qur'ān are recited to us, and yet our hearts are like rocks or even harder? How many a RamaḌān passes, and yet our states remain like the states of the wretched? Is there not a young person amongst us who subdues their passion, or an older person who abandons what is ugly, so that they can reach the station of the elite? Where are we in comparison to those people who (immediately) answered the call to Allāh ﷻ when they heard it? Those whose hearts trembled when the verses of Allāh ﷻ were recited to them? Those who fasted, and their tongues, hearing and sight also fasted? Are they not [the best] role-model for us? Our states compared to the chosen ones are more distant than the distance between [the two sacred mounts of] Şafā and Marwa! Every time our speech is beautified, our actions become evil – and there is no Power nor Might save with Allāh ﷻ the most High, the Great, and our complaint is to Allāh ﷻ!

*O soul! The righteous have succeeded by virtue of piety
They have seen the truth, yet my heart remains blind
O their excellence! As the night covered them
Their light outshone the light of the stars
They uttered remembrance during their nights
Their lives were beautified by their utterance
Their hearts were made free through remembrance
Their tears were like pearls arranged in perfect order
Their night vigil for them was an opening of light
Solitude with the All-Forgiving was their good fortune
Woe to you O soul! Will you not wake?
Take benefit before death approaches
Time has passed in neglect and folly
So hasten to what remains, and profit!*

The Middle Ten Days of RamaḌān, up to the Second Half of RamaḌān



In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* collections, it is narrated in the tradition of Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ would enter into the state of *i’tikāf* (seclusion) in the mosque annually during the middle ten days of RamaḌān until the night of the twenty-first. On the morning after this night, he would end his *i’tikāf*. [At a later time], (the Prophet ﷺ) said, ‘*He who wishes to perform i’tikāf in the mosque with me, then he should do so during the last ten (nights). Tonight I was shown (which night is the Night of Power) then I was made to forget about it. I was indeed shown whilst prostrating in the midst of clay and water during the early dawn, so seek it during the last ten nights and in particular during the odd nights.*’

That night the heavens sent rain; the roof of the Prophet’s Mosque was (made of) wood and leaves, so water leaked through. The Prophet ﷺ opened his eyes, and upon his brow was the remnant of water and clay from the morning of the twenty-first (of RamaḌān). This tradition alludes to the fact that the Prophet ﷺ would perform *i’tikāf* in the masjid during the middle ten nights of RamaḌān [in an earlier part of his life] in order to seek the Night of Power. This sequence of events indicate that this was something repeated by him ﷺ.

In one version of the tradition in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* collections, it is narrated that (the Prophet ﷺ) would indeed perform *i’tikāf* (in the mosque) during the first ten (nights), [then at another time] he ﷺ would seclude during the middle ten (nights), and after this he ﷺ said, ‘*An (angel) came to me and said, “Indeed this is the last ten (nights), so whoever from amongst you would like to perform i’tikāf should do so.”*’ And so the people performed *i’tikāf* with (the Prophet ﷺ). This indicates that this was practised before (the Prophet ﷺ) was informed about the (Night of Power) falling within the last ten (nights). Then, when it was revealed to him ﷺ, he would perform *i’tikāf* during the last (ten nights,

annually) until Allāh ﷻ took his soul ﷻ. This has been narrated from ‘Ā’ishah, Abū Hurayrah and others ﷺ.

It has been narrated that ‘Umar ﷺ gathered a group of Companions and asked them with regards to the Night of Power. One said, ‘We witnessed it during the middle ten (nights), then it reached us that it is indeed (found) during the last ten (nights).’ The tradition that completed this discussion will be mentioned later, Allāh ﷻ willing.

Ibn Abū ‘Āṣim cited in his work *The Book of Fasting* the tradition of Khālid ibn Maḥdūj in which Anas ﷺ stated, ‘Indeed the Prophet ﷺ said, “*Seek it on the first night, or the ninth, or the fourteenth.*”’ This alludes to the fact that it was sought during two nights of the first ten (nights), and one night during the middle ten (nights), and this was the fourteenth. The tradition of Wāthilah ibn al-Asqā‘ has been mentioned previously in which the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘*Indeed the Bible was revealed on the thirteenth of Ramaḍān.*’⁶⁸

There are narrations which instruct to seek the Night of Power during the latter half of Ramaḍān, and specific (nights) of the middle ten nights that are part of this latter half, and two in particular: the nights of the seventeenth and nineteenth.

Firstly: Aṭ-Ṭabarānī has cited a tradition from ‘Abdullāh ibn Unais ﷺ, in which he asked the Prophet ﷺ regarding the Night of Power. He ﷺ replied, ‘*I witnessed it, and then forgot it* [i.e., the particular night on which it occurred]. *Seek it during the latter half (of Ramaḍān).*’ [‘Abdullāh continued], ‘I then returned (to the Prophet ﷺ) and asked him ﷺ (for more detail), and he ﷺ said, ‘*Seek it on the twenty-third night of what remains of the month.*’

And Allāh ﷻ knows best. Based on this understanding, Ubayy ibn Ka‘ab ﷺ would perform the *qunūt*⁶⁹ in the *Witr* prayer every night in the latter half of Ramaḍān, hoping to attain the Night of Power within (these nights). Also, from

⁶⁸ Al-Baihaqī

⁶⁹ Specific supplication during the *Witr* prayer. [Tr]

the days and nights within a virtuous period, the latter parts are even more blessed than the first (parts) - such as the Day of *ʿArafah* (which falls on the ninth day of the ten days of *Hajj*), or Friday (*Jumuʿah* - which is the last day of the week for Muslims). Similarly, the latter parts of a regular day and night are also more virtuous than other parts.⁷⁰ Such is also the case with [the time after] the middle prayer of *ʿAṣr*, as indicated in the *ṣaḥīḥ* traditions regarding it. The narrations of the pious predecessors in relation to this are abundant.

Secondly: Abū Dāwūd in his *Sunan* cites a tradition of Ibn Masʿūd رضي الله عنه who heard the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم say, *‘Seek (the Night of Power) on the seventeenth night of Ramaḍān, the twenty-first, and the twenty-third night.’* Then he رضي الله عنه remained silent. In another version [it is related that it is] *‘the nineteenth night.’* It is said the correct opinion is with the tradition of Ibn Masʿūd رضي الله عنه, as it is established that indeed (the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, *‘Seek the Night of Power on the seventeenth night, the morning of the Day of Badr, or the twenty-first night.’* One version states, *‘the seventeenth night, and if one cannot, then the nineteenth night.’*

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī cites a tradition from Abū Muhazzam, who narrated from Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه, that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *‘Seek the Night of Power on the seventeenth or nineteenth, or the twenty-first, twenty-third, twenty-fifth, twenty-seventh or twenty-ninth (night).’* Therefore, based on this tradition, seek it on the odd nights of the latter half (of Ramaḍān). There is a tradition of ʿĀʾishah رضي الله عنها who said the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would ‘tighten his belt’⁷¹, and abandon his bed once the time of breaking the fast had entered on the night of the nineteenth of Ramaḍān.

A group of Companions would seek it on the seventeenth night and say, ‘The morning after is the Day of Badr!’ ʿAlī, Ibn Masʿūd, Zaid ibn Arqam and ʿAmr ibn Ḥārith رضي الله عنه have narrated this, and from them others have [also] narrated that it is on the nineteenth night.

⁷⁰ The latter part of Islamic daytime is between the *ʿAṣr* and *Maghrib* prayer times. The latter part of the night is before the *Fajr* prayer. Both are virtuous time periods even on a regular day. [Tr]

⁷¹ I.e., the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would strive even more than before in his worship. Some scholars have said this also means abstaining from marital intimacy during this period. [Tr]

The dominant opinion of the scholars of Prophetic biography and Prophetic expeditions is that the Night of Badr is the seventeenth night (of RamaḌān), which fell on the night of *Jumu‘ah* (Thursday night). ‘Alī, Ibn ‘Abbās and others ﷺ have narrated this. There is a narration of Ibn ‘Abbās ﷺ that it is on the second night. Zaid ibn Thābit ﷺ would give life to the seventeenth night of RamaḌān unlike any other night of the month. He ﷺ would say, ‘Indeed Allāh ﷻ separated truth from falsehood, and humiliated the leaders of the disbelievers in the morning of (the seventeenth night).’ Imām Aḥmad mentioned this statement from the people of Madinah, ‘Seek the Night of Power on the seventeenth night!’ The People of Madinah would have witnessed it (solely) on the seventeenth night, had the Prophet ﷺ not [also] established seeking it during the last ten (nights). ‘Āmir ibn ‘Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair was known to fast continuously from the seventeenth night [he would not break his fast, but rather keep two consecutive fasts only breaking his fast on the nineteenth night]. The People of Makkah were known to stay awake on this night and perform *‘Umrah* (the minor pilgrimage).

The companions of Abū Ḥanīfah - Abū Yūsuf and Muḥammad - both stated that ‘The Night of Power is within the latter half of RamaḌān, with no specification as to which night exactly, even though Allāh ﷻ [of course] knows its exact time.’ Ibn Abī Shaybah narrates that ‘Abdur-Raḥmān ibn al-Ḥārith ibn Hishām said, ‘The Night of Power is the seventeenth night (when it is) the night of *Jumu‘ah* (Thursday Night).’ The apparent (meaning) here is that the Night of Power coincides with the night of *Jumu‘ah* (Thursday night) in order to synchronise with the Night of Badr. With a strong chain of narration, Abū Shaikh al-Aṣbahānī cites a narration from Ḥasan who said, ‘A young servant of ‘Uthmān ibn Abī al-‘Āṣ said to him, “O Master, during a (particular night) in this month (of RamaḌān), the water of the sea becomes (more) salty!” He replied, “Inform me when this night occurs.” When this night appeared (the servant) informed him, and (‘Uthmān ibn Abī al-‘Āṣ) found the water to be (more) salty. This occurred on the seventeenth night (of RamaḌān).’ In the tradition of Jābir, as collected by Abū Mūsa al-Madīnī, it has been narrated that he said, ‘The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ would go to Quba on the morning of the seventeenth of RamaḌān, regardless of the day.’

It is said that *al-Isrā' wa'l-Mi'rāj* (the Night Journey of the Prophet ﷺ and his Ascension through the heavens) was also on this night. Ibn Sa'īd mentioned from Al-Wāqidī from his teachers that 'The *Mi'rāj* (Ascension through the heavens) was on the Saturday night, being the seventeenth night (of RamaḌān) before the *Hijrah* (emigration to Madinah). The *Isrā'* (Night Journey to the Sacred Precinct of Jerusalem) occurred on the seventeenth night of the (month of) Rabī' al-Awwal, one year before the *Hijrah* (the migration from Makkah to Madinah).' These are the opinions of those who detach the *Isrā'* (Night Journey) from the *Mi'rāj* (Ascension), based on their separate mention in the Qur'ān – *Sūrah an-Najm* (chapter 53) refers to the *Mi'rāj*, and the *Isrā'* is mentioned in *Sūrah al-Isrā'* (chapter 17).

It is said that prophecy commenced on the seventeenth of RamaḌān. Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn 'Alī al-Bāqir said, 'Jibrīl ﷺ descended to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ on the night of Saturday and Sunday. Then, in the Cave of Ḥirā, Jibrīl ﷺ informed him of prophecy from Allāh ﷻ on Monday, the seventeenth of RamaḌān.' The correct opinion of what has been related in the traditions of this particular night, is that it was the Night of Badr, as mentioned previously, and this is the seventeenth night. It has (also) been said this was the nineteenth (night). The dominant opinion is that it is the seventeenth night, and the following morning is known as the Day of Criterion - the day on which the two great armies met. It was called the 'Day of Criterion' as on that day Allāh ﷻ distinguished between truth and falsehood, and Allāh ﷻ gave victory to the people of Truth, and to Truth itself over falsehood and its people. The Word of Allāh ﷻ and His Oneness were elevated. His enemies from the polytheists and the people of the Book were abased. This occurred in the second year after the Migration, as the Prophet ﷺ came to Madinah during Rabī' al-Awwal in the first year of the Migration, and RamaḌān was not made obligatory in that year. At this time, (Prophet ﷺ) fasted on the tenth of Muḥarram [being the Day of 'Ashūrā', a day on which the Jews also fast], and then RamaḌān was made obligatory in the second year, and this was the first RamaḌān the Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims fasted. On the Saturday of the twelfth night of [this particular]

RamaḌān, the Prophet ﷺ went in search of the Caravan of Quraish which was returning from Syria via Madinah. He ﷺ broke his fast during this journey.

Ibn Musayyib said that ‘Umar ؓ related, ‘We were on an expedition with the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ during RamaḌān on two occasions – at Badr, and at the Conquest of Makkah - and we broke our fasts during these expeditions.’ The rationale for these expeditions was the needs of the Companions, especially the Emigrants: **There is a share for the poor emigrants, who were expelled from their homes and their properties, seeking the grace of Allāh and His goodwill, and supporting [the cause] of Allāh and His Messenger. They are the truthful ones.**⁷² This Caravan (in reference to Badr) had large amounts of the enemies’ wealth and merchandise, much of which had been stolen and misappropriated from the believers’ homes and wealth through oppression and hatred. In reference to this, Allāh ﷻ revealed: **Permission to fight is given to those who are fought, because they have been oppressed, and indeed Allāh has the power to give them victory.**⁷³ So, the Prophet ﷺ set forth to take the wealth of these ruthless disbelievers, who had oppressed the friends of Allāh ﷻ, His people, and His army. This was in order to return the homes and wealth to the friends of Allāh ﷻ, His people, and the oppressed, such that they might have *taqwā* in worship, obedience and striving against His enemies. Spoils of war are from that which Allāh ﷻ has permitted for this community; it was not permitted for anyone prior to them. The number present with the Prophet ﷺ was just over three hundred and ten, which is similar to the number of believers who crossed the river [with Prophet Dāwūd ؑ] and fought with him against Goliath upon the riverbank.

Cited in the *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd is the tradition of ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Amr ؓ who said that the Prophet ﷺ left for the expedition of the Day of Badr with three hundred and fifteen fighters, like the number of those [who fought] against Goliath. The Prophet ﷺ supplicated in their favour as he left for the expedition, ‘*O Allāh, indeed they are barefoot - so carry them; indeed they are unclothed - so clothe them; indeed they are hungry - so satiate them!*’ And so Allāh ﷻ gave

⁷² Qurʾān, 59:8

⁷³ Qurʾān, 22:39

them victory on the Day of Badr, and what was overthrown was overthrown! There was not a man (of the Companions), except that he returned with a camel or two, and apparel [and armour], and satiated. The Companions of the Prophet ﷺ left with little preparation or provision, as they did not leave expecting a full-blown battle or combat. They had left for the sole reason of seizing the trade caravan. The Prophet ﷺ had two Companions accompanying him on the journey, and they would share one camel between them. Both of them said to him, ‘O Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, ride the camel, and we will walk.’ He said, *‘Neither of you are stronger than me, such that you walk [whilst I ride], nor am I in less need of the reward than you!’* Between all the Companions there were no more than two horses; some have said three and others have said one.

The polytheists were made aware of the Prophet ﷺ setting forth in search of their caravan, so Abū Sufyān ؓ diverted the caravan towards the coast and sent a message to the people Makkah of this news, imploring them to defend their caravan. So (the people of Makkah) left in uproar, with their leaders and honourable (ones) setting out for Badr. The Prophet ﷺ then gave the Muslims an indication that war was imminent. The Emigrants⁷⁴ spoke, but the Prophet ﷺ did not reply, as his desire was only (to hear the opinions of the Helpers⁷⁵). The Prophet ﷺ acknowledged that their oath of allegiance with him was to protect him, rather than their homes [and livelihoods], or to gain wealth [through combat]. Sa’d ibn ‘Ubādah ؓ stood up and said [to the Prophet ﷺ], ‘It seems you want the Helpers (*Anṣār*) to speak! By the One in whose hand my soul lies, should you order us to plunge into the sea, we would do so, (just as) we would hamstring our camels if you ordered us!’ Miqdād ؓ told (the Prophet ﷺ) ‘We will not say to you as the Children of Israel said to Mūsā ؑ **“Go, you and your Lord fight, we are remaining right here!”**⁷⁶ Rather, we will fight on your left side and your right, and behind you, and in front of you!’ The Prophet ﷺ became happy at this and prepared for battle.

⁷⁴ The believers who had migrated from Makkah to Madinah were known as the Emigrants – *al-Muhājirūn* ؓ. [Tr]

⁷⁵ The believers of Madinah were known as the Helpers – *al-Anṣār* ؓ. [Tr]

⁷⁶ Qur’ān, 5:24

He ﷺ remained that night, which was the night of *Jumu‘ah* (Thursday Night), the seventeenth of Ramaḍān, standing in prayer, weeping and supplicating to Allāh ﷻ for divine assistance against His enemies. In the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad, ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib ﷺ narrated, ‘I looked around at us, and there was not one amongst us except that he was asleep, apart from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, who was praying and weeping under a tree until morning arrived.’ (‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib) also narrated that, ‘We were drenched from the rain on the night of Badr, so we moved to a tree to take shelter, with animal skins (overhead). The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ remained that night supplicating to His Lord beseeching, *“If this group (of companions) are annihilated, then You will not be worshipped!”* When the time for the dawn prayer approached, a call was heard “O servants of Allāh - the prayer!” So people emerged from this shelter under the tree, and the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ led us in prayer, and (after this) he urged us (to remain steadfast) in battle. Allāh ﷻ assisted His Prophet ﷺ and the believers with His divine aid, with an army from His armies, as He stated: **Remember when you begged Your Lord for help, and He answered you saying ‘Indeed, I will support you with a thousand angels rank by rank!’ And Allāh did not make it except as glad tidings to reassure your hearts. There is no victory except from Allāh. Indeed Allāh is Mighty, Wise.** ⁷⁷

In the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Imām al-Bukhārī it is narrated that Jibrīl ﷺ asked the Prophet ﷺ ‘How do you regard the people of Badr from amongst you?’ He ﷺ replied, *‘From the most virtuous of the Muslims!’* Jibrīl ﷺ said, ‘Such is the case for the angels who were present at Badr!’ Allāh ﷻ states: **And Allāh certainly helped you at Badr while you were humble⁷⁸ and: So it was not you that killed them, but Allāh killed them, and you did not throw when you threw, but Allāh threw!**⁷⁹ When the Prophet ﷺ saw the (enemy), he remarked, *‘O Allāh, this is the Quraish! They have come with all of their arrogance, denying Your Messenger, so bestow upon me what You have promised me!’* Jibrīl ﷺ then came to (the Prophet ﷺ) and told him to take a handful of sand and throw it towards them. So (the Prophet ﷺ) took a handful of earth from the valley (they were in), and

⁷⁷ Qurʾān, 8:9-10

⁷⁸ Qurʾān, 3:123

⁷⁹ Qurʾān, 8:17

threw it towards them, saying, ‘*May your faces be disfigured!*’ There was not a single disbeliever except that the particles (of what was thrown) penetrated his eyes, nostrils and mouth; and then they were all defeated.

Ḥakīm ibn Ḥizām said, ‘We heard a noise on the Day Badr that came from the heavens, as if it was the sound of a rock striking [the side of] a basin - the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ threw what he threw and we were victorious! When news of this reached the people of Makkah, they asked how their forces were doing, and they were told, “[They are doing] badly! By Allāh it was nothing except that we confronted them - and shoulder to shoulder we exchanged (blows in battle) with them! They killed us and took us as captives as they pleased! By Allāh, we didn’t just contend with people, but we were faced with men upon horses that were suspended between the heavens and earth - an impossible adversary!”

On that day, Allāh ﷻ decreed the death of the leaders of the Quraish, including ‘Utbaḥ ibn Rabī‘ah, Shaybah, Walīd ibn ‘Utbaḥ, Abū Jahl and others. The (Companions) took seventy (of the Quraish) as captives. The events of Badr (are recorded in) considerable detail which has been condensed and oft-mentioned in the books of *tafsīr* (Qur’ānic exegesis), and the *Ṣaḥīḥ* collections as well the *Sunan, Masānīd, Maghāzī*,⁸⁰ and other historical accounts. The only purpose of mentioning them here is to take heed from some of the accounts. Iblīs (Satan), the enemy of Allāh, came to the polytheists in the form of Surāqa ibn Mālik (Surāqa was close to Ḥārith ibn Hishām⁸¹), and sparked courage in them, with promises of victory. However, when (Iblīs) saw the angels, he fled and dived into the sea. Allāh informs us of this with His words: **And remember when Satan made their works fair-seeming to them, [saying] ‘There is none that can overcome you today, and I am by your side!’ Then, when the two parties faced each other, he turned on his heels and said, ‘Indeed this is where I leave you - I see that which you do not see! Indeed, I fear Allāh.’ And Allāh is severe in retribution!**⁸²

⁸⁰ Other types of *aḥādīth* collections, and accounts of military expeditions. [Tr]

⁸¹ Ḥārith ﷺ was the brother of Abū Jahl, and also from the leaders of Quraish who fought at Badr and Uhud. He later became a Muslim, and a Companion of the Prophet ﷺ.

⁸² Qur’ān, 8:48

In the *Muwaṭṭa'* (of Imām Mālik) there is a tradition that the Prophet ﷺ said, *'Satan was not seen more dejected, cast out, and embarrassed than on the Day of 'Arafah, except after what he saw on the Day of Badr!'* It was asked what Satan saw on the Day of Badr, and the Prophet ﷺ replied, *'He saw Jibrīl descending with the angels!'*

For Iblīs, the enemy of Allāh, runs and flees from the Light of Allāh and His Oneness; it is by these that (Satan's) helpers from the disbelievers and polytheists are repelled. So when Satan despaired at the divine assistance of Allāh to His Prophet ﷺ, and the victory of His religion over all religions, he became satisfied at simply causing trouble between Muslims (instead), attempting to give licence to destructive sins, as he lost hope in them leaving their religion. It is just as the Prophet ﷺ said, as narrated in *Ṣaḥīḥ* Muslim: *'Indeed Satan has lost hope in being worshiped in the Arabian Peninsula, however he is committed to causing discord between you!'* In the tradition of 'Amr ibn Aḥwaṣh ؓ, as narrated by Imām Aḥmad, an-Nasā'ī, at-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah, the Prophet ﷺ said during the farewell *Hajj*, *'Indeed Satan has lost all hope in being worshiped in this city of yours forever; however, he will assist you in some actions that will ruin your (good) deeds, and he will be content with that!'*

Al-Ḥākim narrates a tradition from Ibn 'Abbās ؓ (which is *ṣaḥīḥ* according to the criterion of Imām al-Bukhārī and Imām Muslim) that the Prophet ﷺ delivered a sermon during the farewell *Hajj* and said, *'Indeed Satan has lost hope in being worshipped in this land of yours. He is however content in being obeyed in everything else that leads to ruin of your actions! So beware O people! I have indeed left with you two matters, you will not go astray if you hold tight to them: the Book of Allāh and the way of His Prophet.'* Nothing has been a greater burden upon Iblīs (Satan) than the Prophecy of Muḥammad ﷺ and the spread of his call (to Allāh ﷻ) from the east to the west of the Earth. He has despaired of the community (of the Prophet ﷺ) collectively returning to polytheism.

Saʿīd ibn Jubair ؓ said, ‘When Iblīs saw the Prophet ﷺ standing in prayer in Makkah, he let out a shriek, sharp and loud! When the Prophet ﷺ conquered Makkah, he shrieked again and gathered his progeny and said, “Despair of returning the community of Muḥammad towards polytheism after this day! However, cause them trials in their religion, spread (the concept of) lamenting (over their dead) amongst them, and [distract them with] (blameworthy) poetry!”’⁸³

Aṭ-Ṭabarī cites with a sound chain of narration from Mujāhid, who narrates from Abū Hurayrah ؓ, who said, ‘Indeed, Iblīs let out a sharp loud shriek when the Opening of the Book (*Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*) was revealed, and this was revealed in Madinah.’ It is a known statement of Mujāhid that ‘Iblīs screamed on four occasions: when he became the accursed, when he was expelled from Paradise, when Muḥammad ﷺ was given prophecy, and when the Opening of the Book (*Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*) was revealed, and it was revealed in Madinah.’ Wakīʿ also cites this, as well as others. Some of the successors of the Companions said, ‘When this verse was revealed: **And those, who, when they have done a sin or wronged themselves, remember Allāh and ask forgiveness for their sins,**⁸⁴ Iblīs wept with intense bitterness at the intense joy of the (repentant) sinners brought about by this revelation. And (Iblīs) has remained in a state of alarm, distress and misery since the advent of revelation of the Prophet ﷺ, (and) after what he witnessed of (the Prophet ﷺ), his community, and their focus and direct hatred against him.

Thābit ؓ related, ‘When the Prophet ﷺ was granted revelation, Iblīs said to his devils, “Something [momentous] has just occurred - go and find out what this is!” So they dispersed, then returned and said, “We have no idea!” Iblīs said, “I will bring you news (of what has happened)!” He left, then returned and exclaimed “Muḥammad has been granted prophecy!” He then sent his devils to the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ and found that their records of their evil deeds were empty. (Iblīs) said, “What is the matter with you all, that you could not tempt them with any (evil)?” They replied, “We have never encountered a

⁸³ Ibn Abī Dunyā

⁸⁴ Qurʾān, 3:135

people like them before! We attempt to afflict them, and they then stand in prayer and (any evil) is erased!” (Iblīs) said, “Perhaps over time Allāh will gradually open up the world for them, and here you can distract them with their worldly affairs!””

Ḥasan رضي الله عنه narrated that Iblīs said, ‘I enticed the community of Muḥammad صلى الله عليه وسلم towards disobedience, but my back was broken by virtue of (them seeking) forgiveness, so I enticed them towards sin for which they will not seek forgiveness - their base desires!’ Iblīs will be seen in a completely dejected state during the periods when [the believers] are forgiven and (their eventual) expiation from the Fire (following the great intercession of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم), just as he is not seen in a more diminished and despicable state than on the Day of ‘*Arafah*.⁸⁵ This is due to what he witnesses of the descent of mercy and forgiveness from Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم, which is at its most abundant (on this specific day). Aside from the Day of Badr, (Iblīs) has not witnessed anything like it.

It has been narrated that when Iblīs witnessed the descent of forgiveness to the community of Muḥammad صلى الله عليه وسلم during *Hajj* on the Day of Sacrifice whilst in Muzdalifah, he began to throw dust upon his head, and cried out, lamenting, and wailing. On seeing this, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم smiled at the perplexity of this filthy being. During RamaḌān, Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم is especially gentle with the community of Muḥammad صلى الله عليه وسلم. (Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم) chains the devils and the rebellious *jinn* so that they are unable to do what they usually do in other months in terms of enticing towards sin. Therefore, during RamaḌān this community (of Islām) commit fewer sins.

In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* collections, Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrates a tradition of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم where he said, ‘*When RamaḌān enters the doors of the heavens open, the doors of Hell are closed, and the devils are chained!*’ In the narrations of Muslim [it is narrated that], ‘*The doors of mercy are opened.*’ Also from (*Ṣaḥīḥ* Muslim), Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrates a tradition of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم where

⁸⁵ The most important day of *Hajj*, when the pilgrims turn to Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم in supplication and seek His forgiveness. [Tr]

he ﷺ said, ‘*When Ramaḍān comes, the doors of Paradise are opened, the doors of Hell are closed, and the devils are shackled.*’

In the tradition narrated in at-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah, the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘*On the first night of the month of Ramaḍān, the devils and rebellious jinn are shackled, the doors of Hell are closed and will not be opened, [while] the doors of Paradise are opened and will not be closed! A caller calls out, “O desirer of good - advance! O desirer of evil - disperse!” Allāh emancipates (people) from the Fire and that is (during) every night!*’ In the narrations of an-Nasā’ī (it is related that), ‘*The rebellious devils are chained.*’

Imām Aḥmad cites a tradition from Abū Hurayrah ؓ, who states the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘*My community has been given five things in Ramaḍān that no other community before them have been given. Firstly, the breath of the one fasting is more fragrant than musk with Allāh ﷻ. Secondly, the angels seek forgiveness for them at the time of breaking the fast. Thirdly, Allāh ﷻ adorns Paradise for them every night and says, “The time is near when My faithful servants shall cast aside the great trials of the world and come to you!” Fourthly, the rebellious devils are shackled, so they cannot tempt to evil as they might do in other months. Fifthly, on the last night of (Ramaḍān), they are forgiven!*’ Someone asked, ‘O Messenger of Allāh, is this on the Night of Power?’ He replied, ‘*No, but the one performing (good actions) should have his reward when he completes his actions.*’

During the Night of Power the angels spread across the Earth and ruin the dominion of the devils, just as Allāh ﷻ says, ‘**The angels and the Spirit descend therein by the command of their Lord, with His decrees for every affair.**’⁸⁶ Imām Aḥmad cites in his *Musnad* the tradition of Abū Hurayrah ؓ who narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘*On this night, the angels on the Earth are greater in number than grains of sand!*’ Cited in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Ibn Ḥibbān, Jābir ؓ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said that on the Night of Power, ‘*The devils will not come out until the break of dawn.*’ In the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad, the tradition of

⁸⁶ Qur’ān, 97:4-5

‘Ubādah ibn Ṣāmit رضي الله عنه is narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said of the Night of Power, ‘*No meteorite will be seen until dawn. From one of its signs is that the sun will rise without its usual brightness, [which is] similar to the (brightness) of a full moon. The devils are not permitted to roam on this day.*’

Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه is noted to have said, ‘Indeed everyday Satan rises with the sun except (after) the Night of Power! This is because (the sun) rises without [its usual] brightness.’ With reference to Allāh’s ﷻ statement: **It is all peace till the rising of the dawn**⁸⁷ Mujāhid said this means safety from illness, and from Satan and his mischief. He also said, ‘The Night of Power is a night of peace; illness does not occur during it, and nor is Satan sent forth.’ He also has said, ‘It is a moment of peace where Satan is unable to cause trouble, nor do ailments occur.’ Ḍaḥḥāk narrated that Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه said, ‘During this night the rebellious *jinn* are shackled, and the demonic *jinn* are chained. Every door of the heavens is opened, and Allāh ﷻ accepts the repentance of all who repent. This is why Allāh ﷻ said, ‘**It is all peace till the rising of the dawn.**’ Ubayy ibn Ka‘ab رضي الله عنه is related to have said, ‘Satan is unable to afflict anyone with miserliness, an illness, or any type of evil, and the food of the predawn meal (*suhūr*) will not fall short.’ There is a tradition from Anas رضي الله عنه [that the Prophet ﷺ said], ‘*A shooting star will not occur, nor will a dog bark.*’ All of the aforementioned narrations elucidate that on (the Night of Power), the devils are prevented from roaming the Earth and they are barred from eavesdropping around the heavens.

O offspring of Ādam! Had you known the value of your soul, you would not destroy it through transgression! You have been chosen especially from all of Creation, and your promised end is Paradise! If you have *taqwā*, then you have taken to the attitude of those with *taqwā*. Preoccupation with the life of this lower world is the work of Satan, and he has only been given respite in [this lower worldly realm]. So how can you be pleased with yourself when you abandon your responsibilities, and instead emulate Satan with his work, and tomorrow you may be with him and his followers in the Fire? Indeed, We only

⁸⁷ Qur’ān, 97:5

expelled (Satan) from the heavens, when he was too arrogant to prostrate to your father (Ādam), because [of his jealousy of] your [value] with Allāh ﷻ. [It is as though Allāh ﷻ says,] ‘We seek your closeness (to Us) so that you can become Our exclusive [and special] group of people - yet you turn away and incline towards Our enemy - **Would you then take him and his progeny as friends instead of Me, while they are an enemy to you? What a wretched exchange for the wrong-doers!**⁸⁸

May Allāh take care of the one

Who is engrossed in the forbidden

Even if he does not take care of himself

We upheld our longstanding promise, yet he did not

You kept company of those we prohibited you from

It is befitting that there remains for you no reconciliation!

Rejoice O Muslims! For your sake, the eight doors of Paradise are open during this month - its breeze is blown into the hearts of the believers! All the doors of Hell are closed, the feet of Iblīs and his progeny are shackled! During this month the evil effect of Iblīs is suspended, the despicable ones of his progeny are removed (from the lands), so that no (satanic) effects remain - they are his puny offspring that are nourished in their nests with evil desires! However, during the days (of RamaḌān) they migrate from these nests, and the axe of repentance and seeking forgiveness smashes the sides (of their nests). (Souls) leave their prison, entering the fortress of piety and faith, therefore gaining protection from the punishment of the Fire. The (devils’) backs are broken by the utterance of *tawḥīd*,⁸⁹ and they complain of pain from the fractures thereof! In every place of virtue, they remain distraught, and during this month they wail at what they witness descending of mercy and forgiveness. The party of Satan flees and the party of the Merciful are victorious! No dominion of (Satan) remains except upon the disbelievers. The dominion of desires withdraws, and

⁸⁸ Qur’ān, 18:50

⁸⁹ Utterances which reflect the oneness of Allāh ﷻ

the kingdom of God-Consciousness (*taqwā*) prevails - **So learn a lesson, O you with insight!**⁹⁰

O how I regret - the heart wails in remorse!

Oust from me cravings and playful enjoyment

The intellect has overcome the armies of desire

Don't assume nor be astonished should there be reconciliation

Truth reproached my heart and gave it a shock

My heart awoke and from within came a cry

Hasten towards repentance before death

For the caller is calling us to hurry and hasten

O servants of Allāh - the month of Ramaḍān has passed halfway, so who amongst you has been scrupulous and held themselves to account for the sake of Allāh ﷻ? Who amongst you has fulfilled the rights of this month as they should be (fulfilled)? Who amongst you is resolute, building for yourself eternal abodes upon abodes before the doors of Paradise shut? Nay, rather indeed your time during this month has been seized by little action - so increase in your actions, as it is as though you have turned away [up to this point]! Every other month before this has passed, but what will you do in what remains of Ramaḍān?

Half of the month has passed, O regret and remorse!

Those who have striven have been granted success with Paradise

The neglectful have awoken, poor and broken - like me!

O woe to the magnitude of what has been missed!

Whoever misses the season of cultivating

Will not see produce except sorrow and regret

Good fortune for the people of God-consciousness is multiplied

During this month in which the rope of Allāh is fortified!

⁹⁰ Qurʾān, 59:2

The Last Ten Days and Nights of Ramaḍān



In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* collections the tradition of ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها narrates, ‘As the last ten (days and nights of Ramaḍān) entered, the Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم would “tighten his belt”, giving life to its nights and waking his family (to engage in worship).’ This is the wording in (*Ṣaḥīḥ*) al-Bukhārī; the wording in (*Ṣaḥīḥ*) Muslim is: ‘(The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم) would give life to the night, wake his family, strive (to engage in worship), and “tighten his belt.”’ In the tradition of Muslim, it is also related from (‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها) that, ‘The Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم would strive (in worship) during the last ten (nights) unlike any other (nights). The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would single out the last ten (nights) of Ramaḍān for engaging in good actions that he would not do during the remaining months of the year, such as giving life to the night⁹¹ - and this means giving life to the *entire* night.’

[Another] narration is related from ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها that, ‘(The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم) would give life to the entire night.’ In the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad it is recorded with a different transmission (of narrators), from ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها that ‘The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would pray and sleep during the (first) twenty (days and nights of Ramaḍān). When the (last) ten (days and nights) entered he would prepare himself and “tighten his belt.”’

Al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū Nu‘aim cites a tradition narrated from Anas رضي الله عنه: ‘The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would stand (in *tahajjud*- night vigil) and also sleep (at night) during Ramaḍān. When the twenty-fourth (night) entered, he would not take to his bed.’ This explains that “giving life to the night” meant giving life to the majority of it. It has been narrated from some of the early generations of Banū Hāshim, perhaps narrated by Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī, that the meaning of this is giving life to at least half of the night. (Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī) said, ‘Whoever gives life to half of the night has given life to the entire night.’ The statement

⁹¹ Engaging in supererogatory worship, typically prayer and supplication, by night. [Tr]

of ‘Ā’ishah ؓ has already been mentioned that ‘the Prophet ﷺ would fast the whole of Sha‘bān, (or) he would fast during Sha‘bān except a few (days).’⁹² This is strengthened by the tradition of *Ṣaḥīḥ* Muslim, narrated by ‘Ā’ishah ؓ when she said, ‘I would not have known that (the Prophet) ﷺ stood the entire night (in worship) until the (following) morning.’

Some of the Shāfi‘ī scholars commented on the concept of giving life to the night before the two Eids: its merit is attained through giving life to the majority of the night. Some have said its merit is attained even by an hour (of worship). Imām Shāfi‘ī states this in his work *al-Umm*, narrating from the finest people of Madinah to support this point. Some have narrated from Ibn ‘Abbās ؓ that, ‘Giving life to the night (of Eid) is attained by performing *‘Ishā’* prayer in congregation and being resolute in performing the *Fajr* prayer in congregation.’ In his *Muwatta’*, Imām Mālik states, ‘It has reached me that Ibn Musayyib said, “Whoever catches the *‘Ishā’* prayer in congregation on the Night of Power has definitely taken a portion of (reward) from it!”’ Imām Shāfi‘ī also said, ‘Whoever performed the *‘Ishā’* and *Fajr* prayers [in congregation] on the Night of Power has certainly taken a portion of (reward) from it!’

There is a tradition, cited by Abū Shaikh al-Aṣbahānī, narrated by Abū Hurayrah ؓ that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, ‘*Whoever prays the last ‘Ishā’ of Ramaḍān in congregation has caught the Night of Power!*’⁹³

In a tradition narrated by ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib ؓ, ‘The Prophet ﷺ said, “*The one who witnessed Ramaḍān as a Muslim with sincerity - fasting during the day, worshipping regularly by night, lowering their gaze, protecting their private parts, tongue, and hands, diligently performing their prayers in congregation, and coming early to the Friday prayer - then they have indeed fasted for the month and deserve reward! They have caught the Night of Power, and succeeded by virtue of attaining the reward of salvation from the Lord, All-*

⁹² In Ibn Rajab’s chapter of the month of Sha‘bān. [Tr]

⁹³ This has been narrated with different chains of transmission.

Mighty and Magnificent!” As cited by Ibn Abī Dunyā, Abū Ja‘far said, ‘Salvation is not the same as reward for an action - (the former is much greater)!’⁹⁴

The Prophet ﷺ would wake his family for prayer during the (last) ten nights, (in a manner) unlike any other nights. In the tradition of Abū Dharr ᓃ, the Prophet ﷺ would stand in *tahajjud* prayer with them on the twenty-third, twenty-fifth and twenty-seventh nights. (Abū Dharr ᓃ specifically mentioned that he himself would gather his family and womenfolk on the twenty-seventh night). This elucidates that as it is the odd nights in which the Night of Power is sought out, he would ensure they remained awake. Aṭ-Ṭabarānī cites a tradition of ‘Alī ᓃ that the Prophet ﷺ would wake his household, both young and old, on the (nights) of the last ten of RamaḌān in order to pray.

Sufyān ath-Thawrī said, ‘It is beloved to me that when the last ten (days and nights) enter, I strive during the night and stand in *tahajjud* prayer; I (also) encourage my family and children to stand in prayer if they are able to do so.’ In an established tradition it is cited that the Prophet ﷺ passed by Fāṭimah and ‘Alī ᓃ one night and said to both of them, ‘*Will you not rise and stand in prayer?*’⁹⁵ When the Prophet ﷺ completed his *tahajjud* prayer, he would wake ‘Ā’ishah ᓃ to join him in the *Witr* prayer. It has been narrated to encourage one’s spouse for *tahajjud* prayer, waking them (gently) by sprinkling drops of water upon the face. (It is narrated) in the *Muwaṭṭa’* that ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ᓃ would pray as much as Allāh willed for him to pray up until half of the night had passed, and then he would wake his family for prayer saying to them, ‘The prayer! The prayer!’ and reciting the verse: **Enjoin the prayer on your family, and be steadfast in it yourself.**⁹⁶

The wife of Ḥabīb ibn Muḥammad said to him during the night, ‘The night is passing, and before us is a long road and we have little provision! The caravan of the righteous has outstripped us, and we have been left behind alone!’ (Then she poetically recited):

⁹⁴ The next paragraph has been omitted, as it discusses in detail the finer rulings of taking an oath. This is something only a few with spiritual prowess would do in reference to the Night of Power. [Tr]

⁹⁵ Al-Bukhārī

⁹⁶ Qur’ān, 20:132

O sleeper during the night, for how long will you slumber?

Rise and stand O beloved one, for the promise has come!

Take from the night and its hours

A portion of worship when others tire, then sleep

Whoever sleeps so much so that the night passes

Has not reached the destination, nor have they strived!

Say to the intelligent and God-conscious -

Your appointed place is the abode from which you won't be evicted!

[With regard to the statement that] the Prophet ﷺ would 'tighten his belt': there are differing opinions on the meaning of this.

Some have suggested this (expression) illustrates the intensity and seriousness of his striving in worship, and stresses the importance of it, such as if it were said figuratively, 'So-and-so has tightened the garment at the waistline, and is striving in such-and-such action [worship or otherwise].' (ʿĀʾishah رضي الله عنها) said, '(The Prophet ﷺ) would be serious and "tighten his belt"', (which emphasises how the Prophet ﷺ) combined an increase in his worship- ('tightening his belt') - with firm resolve.

The correct meaning of this statement ('tightening his belt') is that (the Prophet ﷺ) would withdraw from his wives, and this is the explanation of the early Imāms such as Sufyān ath-Thawrī. This has been clearly narrated in the traditions of ʿĀʾishah رضي الله عنها and Anas رضي الله عنه which explain that the (Prophet ﷺ) would not take to his bed until RamaḌān passed. In the tradition of Anas رضي الله عنه, 'He would abandon his bed and remain in *i'tikāf*-in seclusion from his wives.' The Prophet ﷺ would habitually remain in *i'tikāf* in the mosque during the last ten nights. According to the consensus of scholarly legal opinion, marital relations with one's spouse are prohibited in the *sharīʿa* for the one in *i'tikāf*. With regards to the (latter part of the) verse: **So now be intimate with them, and seek that which Allāh has prescribed for you**⁹⁷, some of the pious predecessors said that this is

⁹⁷ Qurʾān, 2:187

in reference to seeking the Night of Power. To elaborate: Allāh ﷻ has indeed made it permissible to be intimate with one's spouse during the nights of fasting, up to the predawn meal (*suḥūr*); however, (Allāh ﷻ) has also ordered to seek out the Night of Power, [so believers should prioritise this above other permissible acts, such as marital intimacy] to avoid the risk of being preoccupied, and thus missing the Night of Power. (Allāh ﷻ) instructed (the believers) to seek out the Night of Power by standing in night vigil with *tahajjud* prayers, specifically on those nights where it is hoped the Night of Power may be witnessed. So, from this (we learn that) the Prophet ﷺ would remain with his family during the first twenty (days and nights) of RamaḌān, and then enter into *i'tikāf*, secluding himself from his wives, and separating himself [from worldly matters] in order to seek the Night of Power during the last ten (nights).

In reference to delaying the predawn meal (*suḥūr*), 'Ā'ishah ﷺ and Anas ﷺ narrate that (the Prophet ﷺ) would make his late evening meal his predawn meal during the last ten nights. Ibn Abī 'Āṣim cites the tradition of 'Ā'ishah ﷺ: 'During RamaḌān, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ would rise (in prayer) and sleep, and when the last ten (days and nights) appeared, he would "tighten his belt", distance himself from his wives, take a ritual bath (*ghusl*) in between the two calls to prayer (of *Maghrib* and *'Ishā'*), and make his evening meal the predawn meal.' Aṭ-Ṭabarānī cites the tradition of Anas ﷺ: 'When the last ten (days and nights) of RamaḌān entered, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ would abandon his bed, remain in seclusion from his wives, and make the evening meal his predawn meal.'

The two *Ṣaḥīḥ* collections contain evidence which supports the above-mentioned narrations. Abū Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that, 'The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ prohibited us from continuous-fasting (*ṣawm al-wiṣāl*).⁹⁸ A man from the Muslims said to him ﷺ 'Do you do continuous-fasting O Messenger of Allāh?' He ﷺ replied, '*Who amongst you is like me? I [can do] continuous-fasting as, my Lord feeds me and quenches my thirst.*' When they refused to stop continuous-fasting, (the Prophet ﷺ) (also did it) with them for two days. Then

⁹⁸ *Ṣawm al-wiṣāl* (continuous-fasting) can refer to fasting consecutive days without breaking the fast at all; this type was prohibited by the Prophet ﷺ. [Tr]

the new moon was seen, and he ﷺ said, ‘*If (the crescent) had not appeared, I would have made you fast for a longer period*’, as if it was a reproof to them for refusing to stop (continuous-fasting).’

This elucidates that (the Prophet ﷺ) did continuous-fasting with the people towards the end of the month. [But] it has [also] been narrated by ‘Āṣim ibn Kalīb from his father, who narrated from Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that, ‘The Prophet ﷺ did not ever keep continuous-fasts [i.e., he ﷺ did not do *ṣawm al-wiṣāl* where the fast was not broken at all]; rather, he ﷺ would delay his meal after *Maghrib* until the predawn [thus combining his *iftār* and *suḥūr*].’⁹⁹

Imām Aḥmad cites a tradition narrated by ‘Alī ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ would do continuous-fasting until the time of predawn [meaning that he ﷺ would prolong his fast to this time, and then break it]. Aṭ-Ṭabarānī cites a tradition of Jābir ﷺ (which is) also (similar to this). Ibn Jarīr aṭ-Ṭabarī cites a tradition of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ would do continuous-fasting until predawn so some of his Companions followed suit, yet he ﷺ prohibited them and they said, ‘You are doing this (so we are trying to emulate you)!’ He ﷺ replied, ‘*You are not like me, I am under the shade of Allāh, He feeds me and quenches my thirst!*’

Ibn Jarīr insists that the Prophet ﷺ would not do continuous-fasting (without breaking the fast); rather he ﷺ would (prolong the) fast up to the time of predawn specifically [and then break it, sometimes combining his *iftār* and *suḥūr*]. This therefore is permissible for those who are able to do so, yet disliked for others. An opinion of one of our teachers is that it is disliked to continue fasting throughout the entire night. (Our teacher) said, ‘Some of them have abstained (from eating) with the intention of delaying (the *iftār*) rather than prolonging the fast. This is done either to strengthen their worship, or perhaps from fear of the distractions that eating creates, or for other reasons.’ Therefore, following the opinion to prolong the fast up to the predawn meal, with the intention of worship and drawing closer (to Allāh ﷻ), is permissible,

⁹⁹ The permitted type of *ṣawm al-wiṣāl* is where the fast is prolonged and sometimes *iftār* and *suḥūr* are combined. [Tr]

[as long as it does not cause hardship]. If there is (any) hardship, it is disliked to do this. This is why Imām Aḥmad and Ishāq said, ‘It is not disliked to continue the fast up to the predawn meal,’ [as long as this does not cause hardship].

Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī cites a tradition of Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī ؓ who narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘*Do not fast continuously; if anyone of you wishes to prolong the fast, then do so [only] up to the time of the predawn meal.*’ They said, ‘Indeed, you fast continuously don’t you O Messenger of Allāh?’ He ﷺ said, ‘*I am not like you; I continue (to fast, because) I have One who feeds me and quenches my thirst!*’ Outwardly, this indicates that the Prophet ﷺ would continue fasting the whole night. He ﷺ would only do this as he ﷺ recognised the need for (extra) enthusiasm in striving during the (last) ten nights. (However, by not eating until the predawn meal) he would not be weakened [or prevented] from performing good actions, as Allāh ﷻ would feed him ﷺ and quench his thirst.

There is a difference of opinion on what is meant by food here. It is said (the Prophet ﷺ) was given food from Paradise to eat. This is problematic; if this was the case, then this is not continuous-fasting, and this contradicts their statement to him ﷺ ‘you fast continuously’. However, ‘Abdur-Razzāq has cited in his book, narrating from Ibn Jarīj, from ‘Amr ibn Dinār ؓ that, ‘Indeed the Prophet ﷺ prohibited continuous-fasting.’ (The Companions) said, ‘Indeed, you fast continuously don’t you (O Messenger of Allāh)?’ He ﷺ replied, ‘*You are unaware, perhaps my Lord feeds me and quenches my thirst.*’

In the tradition of Anas ؓ as narrated by Muslim, (the Prophet ﷺ said), ‘*Indeed I continue (to fast); my Lord feeds me and quenches my thirst!*’ [With regard to this] statement, if the Prophet ﷺ was eating and drinking during fasting hours [in the worldly sense], then this would negate the fast.

The correct understanding is rather that [the statement] is an indication of openings and divine outpourings from Allāh ﷻ for the Prophet ﷺ while fasting, resulting from deep remembrance, love, and intimacy. [Hence, it is] deep

experiential knowledge of the Divine, and Lordly bestowal (of divine gifts) that nourishes and enriches (the Prophet ﷺ), rather than [worldly] food and drink.

Words of Your remembrance keep her busy

From food and inclination towards seeking provisions

By Your Noble Countenance for her is illumination

During travel, behind her is a cameleer

When she complains of the length of the journey, or tires

The joy of arrival resulting in union overtakes her!

Remembrance of Allāh ﷻ is nourishment for the heart of the gnostic, over (and above) the need for [worldly] food or drink:

You are My Lord when I am thirsty

My nourishment when I need to eat

When those who strive are hungry, the food of intimate communication satiates them, so let us scorn at the one who sells the joy of intimate communication (with their Lord) for a mere morsel of food!

O you who filled the lover with longing

How did your concealed secret become well known?

This is the Master coming towards His servants

There is no life for a heart which has no cognisance

It is stressed to delay the meal after *Maghrib* (*iftār*) during the nights where the Night of Power is sought out. Zir ibn Ḥubaish said on the twenty-seventh night, ‘Whoever amongst you that can delay your evening meal then do so, and break your fast with full-fat milk.’

As for taking a ritual bath (*ghusl*) between *Maghrib* and ‘*Ishāʿ*’, this has been mentioned in the tradition of ‘Ā’ishah ؓ, ‘(The Prophet ﷺ) would take a ritual bath in between the two calls of prayer,’ meaning the calls of *Maghrib* and ‘*Ishāʿ*’.

It has been narrated in the tradition of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would take a ritual bath between the two evening prayers every night, meaning during the last ten (nights). As cited by Ibn Abī ‘Āṣim, it has been narrated from Ḥudhayfah رضي الله عنه that he stood in prayer with the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم during one of the nights of RamaḌān. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then took a ritual bath and Ḥudhayfah رضي الله عنه screened him from being seen. Ḥudhayfah رضي الله عنه then took a ritual bath with the leftover water, and the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم screened him from being seen.

In another narration of Ḥudhayfah رضي الله عنه, he said that he stood in prayer during one night of RamaḌān in a room constructed from date palm wood, and a bucket of water was passed to him. Ibn Jarīr said, ‘It was preferred to take a ritual bath during every night of the last ten nights.’ An-Nakha‘ī would take a ritual bath every night of the last ten (nights). Some would take a ritual bath and perfume themselves during the nights in which the Night of Power was sought. Zir ibn Ḥubaish would recommend taking a ritual bath on the night of the twenty-seventh of RamaḌān. Anas ibn Mālik رضي الله عنه was reported to take a ritual bath, perfume himself and don a beautiful robe, trousers and shawl on the twenty-fourth night (of RamaḌān), and as dawn entered, he would remove them, and not wear any similar clothing after this [night].

Ayyūb as-Sakhtiyānī would take a ritual bath on the twenty-third and twenty-fourth nights, and don two new garments, perfume himself and say, ‘The twenty-third night is for the people of Madinah, and the night that follows is our night (meaning for the people of Basra).’ Ḥammād ibn Salamah said, ‘Thābit al-Bunānī and Ḥumaid ibn Abī Ḥumaid aṭ-Ṭawīl would both wear the best of clothing, perfume themselves and the mosque with fine perfume, and burn incense on the night that the Night of Power was sought.’ Thābit said, ‘Tamīm ad-Dārī رضي الله عنه would purchase a beautiful robe for one thousand dirhams and don this on the night it was hoped to be the Night of Power!’

This demonstrates that it is preferred to wash, clean, beautify and perfume oneself, and don the finest clothing on the nights in which the Night of Power is sought, which is similar to the etiquettes of *Jumu‘ah* and the two Eids. In fact, it is stipulated to beautify one’s clothing for every ritual prayer as Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم says,

‘Don your adornment [when] at worship.’¹⁰⁰ Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه said, ‘It is more befitting, and a right of Allāh ﷻ, to beautify oneself for Him.’

Outward beauty is incomplete without beautification of the inward, (which is) through seeking forgiveness and returning to Allāh ﷻ, and purification from the dirt of sin and its ruinous effects. For indeed outward beauty with a ruined internal state is of no benefit whatsoever. Allāh ﷻ said, **‘O Children of Ādam! We have bestowed upon you garments to cover your nakedness and as an adornment. And the garment of *taqwā* (God-consciousness) is best.’¹⁰¹**

If one does not don the clothing of piety

They will actually be naked, even if clothed in the (finest) apparel

The best clothing of a person is obedience to their Lord

There is no good in the one who is disobedient to Allāh!

Intimate communication with the Kings of this world is not complete except with beautification of one’s outward and inward states. *Purification* of these two states (the inward and outward) is exclusively for the King of Kings ﷻ, the One who knows the secret and hidden. He ﷻ does not look at your outward; indeed He only looks at your heart and deeds. Whoever stands in front of Him ﷻ should beautify for Him their exterior with fine garments, and their inward with the garment of *taqwā* (piety). Shiblī poetically said:

They say tomorrow is Eid, so what will you wear?

I replied, ‘A Close One [Allāh] has quenched the thirst of his love!’

Poverty and patience are the two garments,

Underneath is a heart that witnesses his Beloved every Eid and on Fridays

The best clothes which you should don for the Beloved

On that great day of visiting, is the garment which is discarded

My entire existence is sin if I am absent from what I long for

The true day of Eid for me is the day I see and listen

¹⁰⁰ Qur’ān, 7:31

¹⁰¹ Qur’ān, 7:26

Seclusion – I'tikāf



The two *Ṣaḥīḥ* collections cite the tradition of ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها: ‘Indeed the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would enter into seclusion (*i’tikāf*) (in the mosque) during the last ten (days and nights) of RamaḌān until Allāh ﷻ took his soul.’ *Ṣaḥīḥ* al-Bukhārī cites the tradition of Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه: ‘The Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم would seclude himself (in *i’tikāf*) in the mosque every RamaḌān for ten days. In the final year of his life he secluded himself for twenty (days).’ The sole purpose for the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to (perform *i’tikāf*, and) seclude himself during these ten (days and nights) was to seek the Night of Power, withdrawing from [worldly] affairs - freeing his mind to allow for intimate communion with His Lord, and remembrance and supplication. He would completely withdraw himself from others, and not mix with them, nor be preoccupied with them. Therefore, Imām Aḥmad concluded it is preferred that the one in seclusion in the mosque does not mingle with people, even for matters of teaching and learning, or having one’s recitation (of Qur’ān) checked. Rather, it is more virtuous to remain in solitude, conversing with their Lord, and engaging in remembrance and supplication. This type of seclusion (*i’tikāf*) is the legislated type of seclusion in the mosques specifically, so that the Friday prayer and communal prayers are not missed. As for the type of seclusion that cuts one off completely from the Friday and communal prayers - this is prohibited. Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه was asked with regards to the one who fasts during the day and stands in prayer all night, but does not attend the communal or Friday prayers; he replied, ‘That one is (destined for) Hell.’

Therefore, the legislated seclusion (*i’tikāf*) for this community is seclusion in the mosques, specifically during RamaḌān, and exclusively during the last ten (days and nights) of (RamaḌān), just as the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did. The one in seclusion (*i’tikāf*) has compelled their soul to be in a state of obedience to Allāh ﷻ, and remain in His remembrance, distancing their soul from anything that preoccupies it, and keeping their heart and limbs preoccupied with their Lord

and what draws them closer to Him. So nothing of concern remains for them save Allāh ﷻ and what pleases Him. [It is] just as Dāwūd aṭ-Ṭāʿī said one night: ‘Your concern overrides all concerns! Between myself and insomnia a pact is made, my longing to gaze at You has made all pleasures insignificant, and [it is] a barrier between me and my whims!’

What is the matter with me that I should be concerned with anything save You?

Whatever diverts my heart towards its caprice is despicable

What should I do if my hopes are ruined or withered?

A substitute can replace me, but there is no [substitute] for Him!

The true purpose of seclusion (*iʿtikāf*) is to sever all connections with creation by connecting one’s entire being to the Creator. Every moment of strengthening experiential knowledge of Allāh ﷻ, love for Him, and intimacy with Him - habituates a person to separating (from everything) except Allāh ﷻ in all states. Some would remain in solitude at home, alone with their Lord and would be asked, ‘Do you not feel isolated?’ They would reply, ‘How can I be lonely when (Allāh ﷻ) said, “*I am with the one who remembers Me?*”’

Solitude with You resulted in isolation from my friends

In solitude I remained, and found You to be my unseen Companion!

O Night of Power for the worshippers – bear witness to it! O feet [and limbs] of the devoted ones - bow and prostrate to your Lord! O tongues of those who ask - take care in your requests and strive!

O People of the night – strive!

Perhaps the caller is not rejected

No one stands at night in vigil save

The one who has high aspirations and seriousness!

For the lovers (of Allāh ﷻ), the Night of Power is a night of privilege by virtue of intimacy with their Master and proximity to Him. Indeed, they flee from the ([usual] effects) of the night [such as sleep].

*That night I stayed under its shadow
Which was in my estimation the Night of Power!
It was peace, a cause of happiness
By virtue of union until the rising of the dawn!*

O one who wasted their life with absolutely nothing - set right what you missed during the Night of Power for indeed it might compensate for an entire lifetime!

*A night in which His promise became a reality
My evening companion after such a long time
Through this the heart was cured
This one night was equal to many nights!*

Allāh ﷻ says, ‘Verily We have sent it down on the Night of Power. And what will make you know what the Night of Power is? The Night of Power is better than a thousand months!’¹⁰² There is a difference of opinion regarding the actual descent [of the Night of Power itself], and the wisdom of this descension of the angels during the Night of Power. Kings and royalty do not like to enter their abode until it is adorned with (fine) furniture and beds, and their slaves are beautified with their clothing and garments. So when the Night of Power occurs, the Lord orders the angels to descend to the Earth as the worshippers beautify themselves with acts of obedience (such as fasting and prayer), while their mosques (are beautified) by lanterns and lights. So the Lord says (to the angels), ‘You criticised the children of Ādam and said, “**Will You place in it someone who will act corruptly there?**”¹⁰³ So I, the Lord Himself, said to you, “**Verily I know that which you know not!**”¹⁰⁴ So go to them during this night, so that you can see them standing, prostrating, and bowing, and know that with knowledge I have indeed chosen them over the rest of Creation!’

¹⁰² Qurʾān, 97:1-3

¹⁰³ Qurʾān, 2:30

¹⁰⁴ Qurʾān, 2:30

Mālik said, ‘It has reached me that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was shown the age in years of people before him - or whatever Allāh ﷻ willed of this. It was as if the lifespan of the Prophet’s nation was reduced, and so they were unable to carry out the actions other (nations) were able to do by virtue of *their* long lives. So Allāh ﷻ gifted (the Prophet ﷺ and his community with) the Night of Power, which is better than a thousand months!’ Mujāhid has narrated that the Prophet ﷺ made mention of a man from the tribe of the Children of Israel who wielded a sword for a thousand months, and so the Muslims were amazed at this. So Allāh ﷻ revealed the chapter of the Night of Power [*Sūrah* 97, *al-Qadr*] - which is better than a thousand months - [a night] in which a person might wield their sword in the path of Allāh (and earn a reward equivalent) to one thousand months! An-Nakha‘ī said that an action during (this night) is better than an action which is carried out (continuously) for one thousand months.

The two *Ṣaḥīḥ* collections cite the tradition of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘*Whoever stand in night vigil on the Night of Power with faith and hope of reward - their past sins will be forgiven!*’ The tradition of ‘Ubādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit ﷺ is cited in the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad that the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘*Whoever stands (in night vigil) seeking (the Night of Power), and then attains it - their past and future sins will be forgiven!*’ The *Musnad* (of Imām Aḥmad) and an-Nasā‘ī cite the tradition of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said of RamaḌān, ‘*In it is a night better than one thousand months! Whoever is deprived from (acquiring) the goodness of it has indeed been deprived!*’ Juwaibar asked Ḍaḥḥāk, ‘Would those who are experiencing dysfunctional uterine bleeding or menses, the traveller, and [even] the one sleeping [still] benefit from the Night of Power in your opinion?’ He replied, ‘Yes indeed! Everyone whose good deeds are accepted by Allāh ﷻ will be given their due (reward) on the Night of Power!’

Brothers and sisters! The affair depends on the acceptance (of Allāh), not upon striving (alone) - the piety of the heart is more important than the action of the limbs. Perhaps the one standing for *tahajjud* prayer in the night vigil receives nothing but sleep and slumber as a reward of his standing. How many a person that stands in night vigil is actually barred (from reward), while the one

sleeping receives mercy! [Perhaps] the heart of the one sleeping is in a state of remembrance, while the heart of the one standing in night vigil is in a state of transgression!

If destiny is in your favour

The one sleeping is akin to the one standing!

Nonetheless, the servants are [still] instructed to endeavour to acquire goodness, and strive towards performing good deeds – and this is easily achieved by anyone created for this. As for the fortunate ones - their actions are made easy for them, and as for the unfortunate ones - their actions are made easy for them. **Then as for the one who gives (in charity) and is mindful (of Allāh), and believes in the Good, for him We shall indeed make easy the path to ease. And as for the one who is miserly and considers himself self-sufficient, and rejects the Good, for him We shall indeed make easy the path to hardship.**¹⁰⁵ So hasten, hasten to enrich yourself with good actions from what remains of this month! Perhaps this will set right what has been lost and wasted from life so far!

Life has been spent in negligence

In play and in complete forfeiture

O what loss of that which I have wasted

From the passing day of my entire life

What do I have of what I have wasted

From my life, what excuses can I present?

So we have not neglected from what

Necessitates gratitude and praise

O how Allāh has singled out for us

A specific month, and what a month!

A month in which the Merciful sent down

Within it the most magnificent remembrance

Is there a month similar to it

¹⁰⁵ Qurʾān, 92:5-10

*In which there is the Night of Power?
How many established narrations
Cite the goodness that lies within it?
From firm narrators we have heard
It is to be sought during the odd nights
Good fortune to the one who seeks it
Specifically during these last ten nights
During the periods in which angels descend
With spiritual lights and much goodness!
Indeed He said: Peace! It is
Present until the rising of the dawn
Alas! Treasure it!
As it is indeed for the soul an investment for the future
For how many during it are given
Salvation from the Fire, yet they are unaware?*

The Last Seven Nights



The two *Ṣaḥīḥ* collections cite the tradition of Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه: ‘Indeed, men around the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw in a dream that the Night of Power was during the last seven (nights), and so the Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “*I can see from your dreams - it is concluded (that the Night of Power) falls on the last seven (nights). So whoever wishes to seek (the Night of Power), then seek it during the last seven (nights).*” *Ṣaḥīḥ* Muslim cites the tradition of Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, ‘*Seek (the Night of Power) during the last ten (nights). If one of you struggles, then do not let the last remaining seven (nights) pass!*’ We have previously made mention that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would strive during the month of Ramaḍān in seeking the Night of Power. (In doing so), the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم secluded himself in *i’tikāf* during the first ten (days and nights) on one occasion, then he صلى الله عليه وسلم searched for (the Night of Power); (while at other times), he صلى الله عليه وسلم performed *i’tikāf* during the middle ten (days and nights) - and this occurred more than once. Then, this affair of his صلى الله عليه وسلم was settled through seclusion (*i’tikāf*) during the last ten (days and nights) in search of (the Night of Power), and (the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم) ordered seeking it during this period.

In the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* collections, the tradition of ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها is cited in which the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, ‘*Seek the Night of Power during the last ten (nights) of Ramaḍān.*’ In the tradition of al-Bukhārī, the wording is: ‘*During the odd (nights) of the last ten (nights) of Ramaḍān.*’ (Imām al-Bukhārī) also related the tradition of Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, ‘*Seek (the Night of Power) during the last ten (nights) of Ramaḍān.*’ *Ṣaḥīḥ* Muslim cites the tradition of Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, ‘*Seek (the Night of Power) during the last week (of Ramaḍān).*’ The traditions on this point are numerous. (The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would instruct (the Muslims) to seek it during the odd (nights) of the last ten (nights). In the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Imām al-Bukhārī, Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه states the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, ‘*Seek it during the last ten (nights) of Ramaḍān, in particular during the ninth, seventh and fifth nights that remain.*’ In one narration of (al-Bukhārī, it is related that): ‘*(The Night of Power) is during the (last) ten - the seventh*

[night] that has passed [meaning the twenty-seventh night], *or the seventh [night] that remains* [meaning the twenty-third night].’

Imām Aḥmad, an-Nasā’ī and at-Tirmidhī cite the tradition of Abū Bakrah رضي الله عنه who said, ‘I would not seek it except (by referring to) what I heard from the Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم, that is (to seek it) during the last ten as indeed I heard him صلى الله عليه وسلم say, “*Seek it during the tenth, seventh, fifth, third and last night of what remains.*” During the first twenty days of Ramaḍān, Abū Bakrah رضي الله عنه would pray the equivalent of what he would pray in an entire year; when the last ten (days and nights) entered, he would exert himself [even more] and instruct (the Muslims) to seek (the Night of Power) during the last seven (nights).

It is cited by Imām Aḥmad in his *Musnad* and an-Nasā’ī that Abū Dharr رضي الله عنه said, ‘I would question people about the Night of Power, and so I asked, “O Messenger of Allāh, tell me about the Night of Power, is it during Ramaḍān or not?” He صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, “*Indeed it is during Ramaḍān.*” I said, “Will it occur so long as Prophecy remains? Will it cease when (Prophecy) ceases, or will (the Night of Power) continue until the Last Day?” He صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, “*Rather, it will remain until the Last Day.*” I said, “Which part of Ramaḍān will it be in?” He صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, “*Seek it during the first and last ten (nights).*” I asked, “Which particular (night) of the twenty (nights) is it?” He صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, “*During the last ten (nights) and don’t ask me any more about it.*” The Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم changed the conversation, but my curiosity overwhelmed me, making me heedless, and I said, “*O Messenger of Allāh, I implore you by my right, why will you not inform me which (night) it is of the (last) ten (nights)?*” He صلى الله عليه وسلم became so angry with me - I have not witnessed this level of anger since the day I entered his companionship and (he صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, “*Seek it during the last seven (nights), and don’t ask me any more about it.*”

Ibn Ḥibbān cites in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, as does al-Ḥākim, that (the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, ‘*Did I not prohibit you from asking about (its specificity)? Indeed had Allāh permitted me to inform you of it, I would have. I have faith it will fall during the last seven (nights).*’ In this narration, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم elucidates that the Night of Power lies in the last seven (nights), and he صلى الله عليه وسلم did not elaborate

further. This further indicates a higher probability (of the Night of Power being) on the twenty-third night, or the twenty-fifth night, than the twenty-first night, as the twenty-first night is not even in the last seven (nights). It has been narrated through another chain (of transmission) from the Prophet ﷺ that he ﷺ explained it falls on the twenty-seventh (night) – which we will explain – Allāh ﷻ willing.

There is a difference of opinion as to the start of the last seven (nights); some have said the first of the (last) seven is the twenty-third night by calculating the remainder of the incomplete month - as by this there is certainty. This is narrated from Ibn ‘Abbās ؓ and we will discuss this later – Allāh ﷻ willing. In the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī, it is cited that Bilāl ؓ said, ‘(The twenty-third night) is the start of the last seven (nights) of the last ten (nights).’ Ibn Abū Shaybah cites and states himself, ‘The twenty-third night,’ and this is the opinion of Imām Mālik who said, ‘In my opinion - and Allāh knows best - that the ninth (remaining night) is the twenty-first night, the seventh (remaining night) is the twenty-third night, (and) the fifth (remaining night) is the twenty-fifth night.’ ‘Abdul-Mālik ibn Ḥabīb interprets this, saying that this is only deduced if the month is shortened (i.e., 29 nights not 30). However, this opinion [tends to be disregarded], as this conclusion is reached from careful calculation during these nights themselves [so the total number of remaining nights is still unclear]. It is not possible for it to be absolutely binding to follow [this opinion], should the month be reduced (in its number of days) at its end.

Ayyūb as-Sakhtiyānī would take a ritual bath (*ghusl*) on the twenty-third night and perfume (himself) with fragrance; and on the night of the twenty-fourth he would say, ‘The twenty-third night is for the people of Madinah, and the twenty-fourth night is our night (i.e., for the people of Basra.)’ Similarly, Thābit and Ḥumaid would follow suit. Some would specifically strive (in worship) on the twenty-fourth night.

It is narrated from Anas ؓ and Ḥasan: ‘I observed the sun diligently for twenty years; the sunrise had a reduced glow to it after the twenty-fourth night.’ Al-Bukhārī cites Ibn ‘Abbās ؓ in this narration. It is said thus: ‘It is established

that (the Night of Power) is on the twenty-third night (at the beginning of the last week).’ Abū Sa‘īd and Abū Dharr رضي الله عنهما likewise would calculate the entire month, and for them the last seven nights commence on the twenty-fourth night. Some have taken this opinion, (such as) Ibn ‘Abdu’l-Barr, and deduced that it depends on the completion of the month. On this point, the Prophet ﷺ instructed to complete the month should the sky be overcast with cloud (and the crescent moon is obscured as a result), whilst being mindful of the shortening of the month. Some of our colleagues have preferred this (opinion).

In the aforementioned tradition of Anas رضي الله عنه, it is narrated that that the Prophet ﷺ would not take to his bed on the twenty-fourth night. This is narrated in the Prophetic traditions which indicate the first (night) of the remaining seven (nights) is the twenty-third night. In his *Musnad*, Imām Aḥmad narrates from Jābir that ‘Abdullāh ibn Unais رضي الله عنه asked the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ about the Night of Power when the twenty-second night had passed. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, ‘*Seek it during the remaining last seven (nights) of the month (of Ramaḍān).*’

It is also cited in the *Musnad* from ‘Abdullāh ibn Unais رضي الله عنه that (the Companions) asked the Prophet ﷺ about the Night of Power on the eve of the twenty-third night, and (he ﷺ) said, ‘*Seek it on this night.*’ So, a man asked, ‘Is this therefore the first of the eight (remaining nights)?’ The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ replied, ‘*This is not the first of the eight (remaining nights), rather it is the first of the seven (remaining nights). Indeed, the month is not complete.*’ It is also narrated in (the *Musnad*), from Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ asked, ‘*How many (days) have passed from the month?* We replied, ‘Twenty-two (days) have passed and eight remain.’ The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ replied, ‘*Rather, indeed twenty-two (days) have passed and seven remain. Seek (the Night of Power) tonight.*’ This was deduced specifically for this particular month as the Prophet ﷺ was informed about its reduction (to 29 days rather than 30), but this opinion is far-fetched. The actual difference of opinion is deduced from the remainder of the tradition of Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه, which narrates: ‘Then the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, “*Months are such and such, such and such, and such and such,*” – [indicating ten with his blessed hands twice], and then obscuring his thumb on

the third time, [indicating twenty-nine in total].’ This elucidates that as a general rule the month was always calculated as twenty-nine days due to certainty, as concluded by Ayyūb and Mālik and others. Based on their opinion, the seventh night [remaining from the month] occurs on the night of the twenty-third, the fifth [remaining] night occurs on the night of the twenty-fifth, and ninth [remaining] night occurs on the night of the twenty-first.

It is narrated that Nu‘mān ibn Bashīr رضي الله عنه would dislike calculating the Night of Power based on what had already passed of the month, explaining that the Companions would work it out based on what *remains* [of the month]. This supports the statement of the Prophet ﷺ: ‘*Seek it on the ninth, seven and fifth [remaining nights].*’ Al-Bukhārī cites a tradition of ‘Ubādah رضي الله عنه, and Muslim cites the tradition of Abū Sa‘īd رضي الله عنه, that the probable indication here is that the ninth, seventh and fifth can refer to what remains, *or* what has passed. As for the tradition of Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه and Abū Bakrah رضي الله عنه, and what has been deduced so far - this is based on what remains of the month, rather than what has passed. Therefore, the focal point of the differing opinions is whether one calculates (the Night of Power) based on a complete month (thirty days), or a shortened month (twenty-nine days). The tradition of Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه as cited by al-Bukhārī in two transmissions raises doubt as to whether it is based on what has passed or what remains.

Abū Dāwūd aṭ-Ṭayālīsī narrates the tradition of Abū Dharr رضي الله عنه about the Prophet ﷺ standing in night vigil (*tahajjud*) with (the Companions) during particular (nights) of the last ten nights. Its exact wording is that the Prophet ﷺ stood in night vigil with them during the even (nights) of the last ten, thus calculating the odd nights based on what remained from the month and projecting its completion (to be thirty days). They stood in worship during these nights, concerned not to miss the good fortune of the twenty-eighth night - which is the third (night) of what remains. It is said that this is what some narrators have concluded based on their understanding - and Allāh knows best.

Logical deduction dictates that for the one who calculates the remaining nights of the month based on the month being short (29 days), it is incumbent that the

first (night) of the last ten is the twentieth night, as ten nights [of Ramaḍān] will not be achieved unless the ten nights start on] the twentieth night.

It is said the last ten (nights) start after the passing of the twentieth day of the month [i.e., on the twenty-first night], regardless of whether the month is complete (as thirty days) or not. This is how it is formulated as being the last ten (nights) and standing in vigil during these (nights) is regarded as standing in vigil during the last ten (nights). This is similar to what has been said about fasting on the (first) ten days of Dhu'l-Ḥijjah, where fasting only consists of nine days. This is why Ibn Sīrīn would dislike the phrase: 'He kept the ten fasts of Dhu'l-Ḥijjah.' He would say, 'Rather only say *nine* fasts.' As for those who did not dislike this, and this is the majority, they say, 'Fasting extends to the tenth day.' However, it is impossible to fast on this day, as it is the Day of Sacrifice [and the day of Eid, when fasting is prohibited], therefore extending it to 'ten' [days is nominal, rather than actual], and Allāh knows best.

People have differed greatly about the Night of Power. Some have said it is lifted (i.e., that it will never descend again). The tradition of Abū Dharr رضي الله عنه refutes this. Muḥammad ibn Ḥanīfah narrates that it occurs every seven years, yet this has a weak chain of transmission. Others have said it does occur every year such as Ibn Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه, Abū Ḥanīfah and a group of scholars of Kufa. The majority hold the opinion that it occurs every year in Ramaḍān. Others have said that it occurs every month. Some of the earlier scholars said it is the first night (of Ramaḍān), whilst others have said it is during the latter half of it. Abū Yūsuf and Muḥammad have been narrated to hold the view that it is the Night of Badr, despite the difference of opinion about whether this is the seventeenth or nineteenth night. The majority say it falls within the last ten (nights), and the correct difference of opinion lies in the discussion of which night of the (last) ten. Ḥasan and Mālik were known to seek it during every night of the (last) ten – the even and odd nights. Some of our scholars would adhere to this and say that this is because the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, '*Seek it on the ninth or seventh or fifth remaining (nights).*' This would be the even nights should one estimate the completion of the month (to be a full 30 days). Should one forecast the full completion of the month based on what remains [of it], then the affair is

suspended (in judgement) as [the actual end of the month] is not known prior to its occurrence. Should the month be a complete (30 days), then one should seek (the Night of Power) on the even nights; however, should the month fall short (of 30 days), then one should seek it on the odd nights. **In conclusion, it is incumbent to strive in night worship (and seek the Night of Power) on both the odd and even nights.**

The majority say that some nights are favoured over others, and the odd nights are more favoured. Furthermore, they differed on which odd (night) specifically is preferred. Some favoured the twenty-first night, and this is a famous (opinion) of Imām Shāfi‘ī, based on the tradition of Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī رضي الله عنه as mentioned previously. It is narrated from him to seek it on the twenty-first and twenty-third night. In his work *al-Qadīm*, Imām Shāfi‘ī states, ‘My opinion - and Allāh knows best - is that there are stronger traditions in reference to the twenty-first and twenty-third night.’ (And this was the night ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه passed away). (Others) have said [the Night of Power should be sought in] the seventeenth, twenty-fourth and twenty-seventh night. It is narrated that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and Ibn Mas‘ūd رضي الله عنه would seek it on the twenty-first and twenty-third night.

Another opinion of Imām Shāfi‘ī cites that his preference was the twenty-third night, and this is the position of the people of Madinah. Sufyān ath-Thawrī mentioned this from the people of Makkah and Madinah. From those who narrated that (the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم) would wake his family during (these nights) are Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه and ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها, and this is also the opinion of Makḥūl. Rishdīn ibn Sa‘d narrates from Zuhra ibn Ma‘bad who said, ‘I was inconvenienced by a nocturnal emission while I was at sea in enemy territory during the twenty-third night of RamaḌān. I left to have a ritual bath (*ghusl*) and fell into the water. The water was [extra] salty, and so I called out to my companions to inform them I was immersed in the salty water.’¹⁰⁶ [In another narration, it is related that] Ibn ‘Abdul-Barr said, ‘This night [of the twenty-third] was known as the night of Juhanī for the people of Madinah in honour of ‘Abdullāh ibn Unais al-

¹⁰⁶The people of knowledge (*‘Ulamā’*) say that the seawater changes on the Night of Power. [Tr]

Juhanī رضي الله عنه. It is narrated from him that the Prophet ﷺ instructed him to stand in night vigil during it.’

Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim cites that the Prophet ﷺ said the following about the Night of Power: ‘*I was shown that I was prostrating in the morning in water and clay.*’ *On the morning of the twenty-third day, he completed his prayer and on his forehead were [indeed] the remnants of water and clay.*’ Sa‘d ibn Musayyib said, ‘The Prophet ﷺ was with a group of his Companions and said, “*Shall I not inform you of the Night of Power?*” The replied, “Of course O Messenger of Allāh!” He remained silent, and then said, “*I said what I said to you before and I knew of it; then I was made to forget. Do you know which day we were in such and such a place, and which night it was? [And] which journey?*” They said, “We travelled until we stood firm against the (other) group, and this was on the twenty-third night.”’ ‘Abdur-Razzāq (also) cites this in his collection.

A group gives more importance to the twenty-fourth night, as narrated by Anas رضي الله عنه, such as Ḥasan and the people of Basra. Ḥumaid, Ayyūb and Thābit were very particular about these two nights of the twenty-third and twenty-fourth.

[Another] group places more importance on the twenty-seventh night. Thawrī narrates from the people of Kufa that, ‘We say, “(The Night of Power) is on the twenty-seventh night, based on what has reached us from Ubayy ibn Ka‘ab رضي الله عنه.”’ From those who said this were Ubayy ibn Ka‘ab رضي الله عنه (who would swear by this (being the Night of Power), and not say *in shā’ Allāh* – if Allāh wills), Wazīr ibn Hubaish and ‘Ubādah ibn Abū Lubābah.

Ibn Abī Shaybah cites that Qanān ibn ‘Abdullāh al-Nahmī said, ‘I asked Zir about the Night of Power, and he replied, “‘Umar, Ḥudhayfah and a group of the Companions رضي الله عنهم of the Prophet ﷺ would not doubt that the Night of Power fell on the twenty-seventh night!”’ This is also the opinion of Imām Aḥmad and Ishāq. Abū Qalābah and others believe it differs over the course of the ten nights, while others narrate it specifically differs between the odd nights. Those who say the last ten are Muzanī and Ibn Khuzaimah. Ibn ‘Abdu’l-Barr narrates this opinion from Mālik, Thawrī, Shāfi‘ī, Aḥmad, Ishāq and Abū Thawr. **The**

correct view is that it is wrong [to seek the Night of Power on only *one* night]; their opinion is to seek it during *every* night of the (last) ten (nights).¹⁰⁷

As already mentioned, there is a difference of opinion about which night is preferred. The dominant opinion is [that the Night of Power] lies on the twenty-seventh night, because Ubayy ibn Ka‘ab ؓ would swear by this, saying [it is confirmed], ‘through signs and indications given to us by the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, that the sunrise on morning following [the Night of Power] loses its [usual] brightness,’ (as cited by Muslim). (Muslim) also cites different wording from Ubayy ibn Ka‘ab ؓ: ‘By Allāh, indeed I know which night it is - it is the night that we were instructed to stand in vigil by the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ - and it was the twenty-seventh night!’

Imām Aḥmad cites the tradition of Ibn ‘Abbās ؓ that a man asked, ‘O Messenger of Allāh ﷺ I am a very old and exceptionally thin man, and standing in prayer is difficult. So, direct me to a particular night, perhaps Allāh will grant me enabling grace (*tawfīq*) to catch the Night of Power!’ He ؓ replied, ‘*Be vigilant on the seventh!*’ The chain of narration follows the same criteria as those held by al-Bukhārī. Imām Aḥmad also cites the tradition of Ibn ‘Umar ؓ that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, ‘*Whoever amongst you would like to seek it (the Night of Power), then seek it on the twenty-seventh night.*’ Shabābah, Aswad ibn Āmir and Wahb ibn Jarīr narrate something similar from Shu‘bah, with extra wording (in Aswad’s narration), ‘[Seek the Night of Power] on the seventh remaining (night).’

Shu‘bah said, ‘An established scholar informed me that Sufyān said, “On the seventh *remaining* (night),” – meaning that Sufyān did not actually say “the twenty-seventh night.”’ Aḥmad said in a narration from his son Ṣāliḥ that “The “established scholar” here is Yaḥyā ibn Sa‘īd.’ Yet Shu‘bah said, ‘I am not sure which of the two [meaning the twenty-seventh or twenty- third] nights.’ The affair therefore returns to ambiguity in the wording of Shu‘bah. Ibn ‘Umar ؓ said, ‘(The Companions) would not cease to mention from the Prophet ﷺ that

¹⁰⁷ The people of Kufa would seek the Night of Power every night, but believed it to be the 27th night based on the opinion of Ubayy ibn Ka‘ab ؓ.

(the Night of Power) is on the seventh night of the last ten (nights), and they would say the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, “*I can see you form your opinion that (the Night of Power) lies on the seventh of the last ten (night). So whoever wishes to seek it, then they should seek it on the seventh night of the last ten (nights).*” This is cited by Ḥanbal ibn Ishāq from ‘Ārim, from Ḥammād, and similarly cited by aṭ-Ṭahāwī from Ibrāhīm ibn Marzūq from ‘Ārim. Al-Bukhārī cites (it) in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* from ‘Ārim; however he does not mention the wording ‘*the seventh night*’, rather he narrates [that the Prophet ﷺ said], ‘*Whoever wishes to seek it, then seek it during the last ten (nights).*’

‘Abdur-Razzāq cites the tradition of Ibn ‘Umar ؓ who said, ‘A man came to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and said, “O Messenger of Allāh ﷺ I saw in a dream that the Night of Power was on the seventh night!” The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, “*I can see you form your opinion that it lies on the seventh night, so whoever amongst you wishes to seek it, then seek it on the seventh night.*” Ma‘mar said, ‘Ayyūb would take a ritual bath (*ghusl*) on the twenty-third night, indicating that he would consider (the Night of Power) to be on the seventh remaining (night).’

Tha‘labī cites in his exegesis from the chain of narration of al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Abdul-A‘lā from ‘Abdur-Razzāq, who said (the following) with regards to the tradition of the ‘*seventh remaining night*’: The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, ‘*I can see you form your opinion that it lies on the twenty-third (night), so whoever amongst you wishes to stand in night vigil during this month, then stand on the twenty-third night.*’ This [particular] wording is not recorded in the collections of traditions (*aḥādīth*); [it is only recorded in Tha‘labī’s *tafsīr* (Qur’ānic exegesis)], and Allāh knows best.

Abū Dāwūd cites in his *Sunan*, with a chain of transmission in which all the narrators are strong, from Mu‘āwiyah ؓ from the Prophet ﷺ that the Night of Power is the twenty-seventh night. Ibn Ḥibbān cites (this) in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* which is corroborated by ‘Abdur-Razzāq. In the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad there is a tradition narrated by Ibn Mas‘ūd ؓ that a man came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked, ‘When is the Night of Power?’, and he ﷺ replied, ‘*Who from amongst you*

*remember the night of Sahbāwāt?*¹⁰⁸ ‘Abdullāh ﷺ said, ‘I do, may my parents be sacrificed for you! In my hands were dates that I intended to eat discretely for the predawn meal (*suḥūr*), delaying it till (just before) the entry of the dawn prayer. This was as the moon rose.’ Ya‘qūb ibn Shaibah cites this in his *Musnad*, stating the chain of narration is sound, with the extra wording, ‘This was the twenty-seventh night.’

It is also narrated by Ibn Mas‘ūd ﷺ in the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad, that the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘*Indeed the Night of Power is during the middle of the last seven (nights) of Ramaḍān.*’ When we calculate the first of the last seven nights, it is the twenty-fourth; and the twenty-seventh night is the middle of the seven (nights), as before it and after it are three nights. Therefore, because of this, the twenty-seventh night is given precedence, as it is from the last seven (nights) in which the Prophet ﷺ instructed (us) to seek (the Night of Power) - and this is agreed upon. The inclusion of the twenty-third (night) in the last seven (nights) is differed upon, as already explained. There is no difference of opinion that the twenty-fifth (night) is given importance. The tradition of Abū Dharr ﷺ about the Prophet ﷺ standing in night vigil during each night of the last seven (nights) supports this. He ﷺ stood in night vigil for one third of the night on the twenty-third night, and stood for half the night on the twenty-fifth (night), and stood for the entire night on the twenty-seventh (night), to such an extent the fear of missing this night [meant that the Prophet ﷺ] would gather his family and the people on these nights.

All of this indicates the importance of every (night) of the last seven. This is what Ibn ‘Abbās ﷺ witnessed when in the presence of ‘Umar ﷺ and those Companions with him. This has been narrated in various chains of narrations as cited by ‘Abdur-Razzāq from Ma‘mar, from Qatādah and ‘Āṣim, who both heard from ‘Ikrimah, who said that Ibn ‘Abbās ﷺ said, ‘‘Umar ﷺ and the Companions of Muḥammad ﷺ were called and asked about the Night of Power. They all agreed that it falls on (one of the) the last ten (nights).’ Ibn ‘Abbās ﷺ related, ‘‘I said to ‘Umar ﷺ - I know or I believe - which night this is.’ ‘Umar

¹⁰⁸ Sahbāwāt is a place near Khaibar

ﷺ asked, “Where did you come to know of this?” I replied, “Indeed Allāh created the seven heavens and the Earth; the prostration is done upon seven [limbs]; the circumambulation of the Sacred House [the *Ka‘bah*] is seven [circuits]; (and) the stoning of the pillars [which represent the devil] at *Hajj* is (also) seven.” ‘Umar ﷺ said, “You have been very insightful with this issue and we have not!” Qatādah narrated extra wording from Ibn ‘Abbās ﷺ, ‘We eat from seven and this is the Word of Allāh: **Then We cause therein the grain to grow, and grapes and vegetables, and olives and palms, and enclosed gardens luxuriant, and fruits and herbage!**’¹⁰⁹ However, in this narration (a debate exists as to whether it is) the seventh (night) that has passed or remains. Ibn Shāhain cites from the narration of ‘Abdul-Wāḥid ibn Ziyād, from ‘Āṣim al-Aḥwāl, who was informed by Lahīq ibn Ḥumaid and ‘Ikrimah, who both said that ‘Umar ﷺ asked, ‘Does anyone know which night is the Night of Power?’ And a similar tradition has also been narrated.

Ibn ‘Abbās ﷺ said the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘*(The Night of Power) is in (the last) ten (nights) - during the seventh (night) that has passed or the seventh (night) that remains.*’ Ibn ‘Abdu’l-Barr narrates with a strong chain through the transmission of Sa‘īd ibn Jubair ﷺ who said, ‘Amongst those of the Emigrants sitting close to ‘Umar ﷺ was Ibn ‘Abbās ﷺ; so they gathered round, asking about the Night of Power, and persisted therein. Some said, “We considered it [to be] during the middle ten (nights), then it reached us that it is during the last ten (nights).” Some said, “The twenty-first night,” while others said, “The twenty-third night,” and yet others said, “The twenty-seventh”. ‘Umar ﷺ then said, “O Ibn ‘Abbās - speak!” He replied, “Allāh knows best!” ‘Umar ﷺ said, “Indeed we know Allāh knows best! We only ask for your knowledge on this!” So, Ibn ‘Abbās ﷺ said, “Indeed Allāh is unique and loves that which is unique, and odd in number. He created from His creation seven heavens, then established Himself above them. He created seven earths, and made within [our world] seven days. The pillars of the devils are pelted with seven [pebbles at *Hajj*]; humans were created from seven (elements), and their sustenance is from seven.” ‘Umar ﷺ said, “Humans were created from seven (elements), and their

¹⁰⁹ Qur’ān, 80:27-31

sustenance is from seven, and this is how I understood this affair,” - he then recited (from the Qurʾān): **And assuredly We created man of an extract of clay¹¹⁰ and It is We Who pour forth water, pouring, thereafter We cleave the earth in clefts, then We cause therein the grain to grow, and grapes and vegetables, and olives and palms and enclosed gardens luxuriant, and fruits and herbage. A provision for you and for your cattle,¹¹¹** and then he said ‘herbage’ is for animals. Ibn Saʿd cites this narration in his compilation and adds, ‘As for the Night of Power, we view it - if Allāh wills - to fall only on the twenty-third night of what has passed, or the seventh (night) of what remains.’

ʿĀṣim ibn Kalīb narrates from his father, from Ibn ʿAbbās ؓ: ‘One day, ʿUmar ؓ called for the most senior Companions of Muḥammad ؐ and said to them, “Indeed the Messenger of Allāh ؐ said with regards to the Night of Power what you assuredly know: *‘Seek it during the odd (nights) of the last ten.’* So what is your opinion of which odd night it is?” One expressed his view saying “It is the ninth, seventh, fifth and third.” (ʿUmar ؓ) said, “O Ibn ʿAbbās - speak!” I said, “[Do you want] my opinion?” ʿUmar ؓ replied, “[Indeed] I am asking for your opinion!” I said, “Indeed I heard Allāh often make mention of seven,” - and then he mentioned what has already been mentioned. In another narration, ʿUmar ؓ said, ‘You all struggled to say anything similar to what this young lad [referring to Ibn ʿAbbās ؓ], who has not even matured, has said.’ This is cited by Ismāʿīlī in the *Musnad* of ʿUmar ؓ, and al-Ḥākim, who said the chain is *ṣaḥīḥ*. Thaʿlabī cites in his exegesis with extra wording that Ibn ʿAbbās ؓ said, ‘I only view it to fall on the twenty-third night - the seventh night of what remains.’

Muslim ibn Kaisān aḍ-Ḍabbiyy al-Mulāʾī narrates from Mujāhid, from Ibn ʿAbbās ؓ that ʿUmar ؓ said to him, ‘Inform me of your opinion regarding the Night of Power,’ - and made mention of what has already been mentioned. In this (narration it is also stated) that Ibn ʿAbbās ؓ said, ‘I do not view it save that it is on the seventh remaining night of Ramaḍān.’ So ʿUmar ؓ said, ‘I have established my opinion upon your opinion.’ It is narrated from Muḥammad ibn Kaʿab from Ibn ʿAbbās ؓ that ʿUmar ؓ gathered with a group of the

¹¹⁰ Qurʾān, 23:12

¹¹¹ Qurʾān, 80:25-32

Companions of the Prophet ﷺ and discussed the Night of Power - and it mentions what has already been mentioned with extra wording that Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه said, ‘The oft-repeated seven (verses of *Sūrah al-Fātiḥa*) were given; marriage to seven [types of] family members was prohibited in His Book; the seven categories of inheritance were gathered in His Book; and we fall into prostration upon seven (limbs) of the body, so I deduce it to be in the last seven (nights) of RamaḌān.’ There is nothing in these narrations that specifies the twenty-seventh night [in particular], rather within some there is an indication that (the Night of Power) moves between the third and seventh (remaining nights). Some say it is the twenty-third night as it is the first of the seven remaining nights according to (Ibn ‘Abbās’ رضي الله عنه) opinion. It is correct that Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه would sprinkle water on his family (in order to wake them) on the twenty-third night.

‘Abdur-Razzāq and Ibn Abī ‘Āṣim cite that some of the latter scholars have concluded from the Qur’ān that (the Night of Power) is on the twenty-seventh night on two counts:

Firstly: Allāh ﷻ repeatedly mentions the Night of Power in the chapter of Power (*Sūrah al-Qadr*, *sūrah* 97) in three places. The Night of Power has nine letters, and nine multiplied by three equals twenty-seven.

Secondly: Allāh ﷻ says **Peace, it (the Night of Power)**¹¹² and the word ‘it’ is the twenty-seventh word of the chapter, with the number of words in the chapter being thirty in total.

[However,] Ibn ‘Atiyāh says, ‘This is the anecdotal type of exegesis and not outright knowledge.’

By virtue of this, some have given extra weight to the twenty-seventh night through signs and indications of what has been narrated, and through experiencing supplications being readily accepted during it. It has been

¹¹² Qur’ān, 97:5

mentioned already that Ubayy ibn Ka‘ab ؓ concluded this through the lack of brightness of the rising sun on the morning after [the Night of Power]. ‘Abdah ibn Abū Lubābah said, ‘It is the twenty-seventh night,’ and gauged this through astronomy as cited by ‘Abdur-Razzāq. ‘Abdah has been narrated to have tasted the water of the sea on the twenty-seventh night, and it was [extra] salty, as cited by Imām Aḥmad with a chain of narration.

Some of the pious predecessors who would circumambulate (perform *tawaf* around the *Ka‘bah*) on the twenty-seventh night saw angels circumambulating in the air above the heads of the people. Abū Mūsa al-Madīnī narrates through Abū Shaikh al-Aṣbahānī with a chain to Ḥammād ibn Sha‘ib, from a man amongst them who said, ‘I was with a group of people, and when the last ten (nights of RamaḌān entered) I would look to the night. A man asked me, “What are you looking at?” I said, “The Night of Power.” He replied, “Sleep! I will inform you of it.” When the twenty-seventh night entered, he came and took me by the hand and led me to the date palm trees, and there lay the leaves of the palm trees on the ground. He then said, “We do not see this occur throughout the whole year except on this night.”’ Abū Mūsa mentioned (with a chain of transmission) that a man who was crippled supplicated to Allāh ﷻ on the twenty-seventh night and he was cured; a crippled women was similarly [cured after supplicating on the twenty-seventy night]. There was once a man from Basra who was mute (and) dumb, and unable to speak for thirty years; he supplicated to Allāh ﷻ on the twenty-seventh night and he was cured, and he began to speak.

On the twenty-seventh night - which was the night of *Jumu‘ah*, Al-Wazīr Abu’l-Muzaffar ibn Hubairah mentioned he saw a door wide open in the heavens, which resembled the *Ka‘bah*. He said, ‘I then thought it was the sacred chamber of the Prophet ﷺ, and it did not cease to be like this until I turned to the east to look at the sun rising. I turned back and found this vision to have ceased.’ He continued, ‘If it occurred on the night of Friday during one of the odd nights then we hope this is (the Night of Power), rather than one of the other nights.’ Know, however, that all of these signs do not guarantee that it is the Night of Power.

Salamah ibn Shabīb narrates in his book (entitled) *The Virtue of Ramaḍān* that, ‘Ibrāhīm ibn al-Ḥakam narrated to us that his father narrated and said that Farqad narrated to (him), ‘People from amongst the Companions were in the mosque and they heard a voice from the heavens, and saw a light from the heavens, along with a door in the heavens - and this was during the month of Ramaḍān. So, they informed the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ of what they had seen. They were certain that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, “*As for the light, this was the Light of the Lord, the Mighty, Most High. As for the door, this was the door of heaven, and the speech was the speech of the Prophets. This phenomenon occurs every year in Ramaḍān, yet on this particular night the veil was lifted.*”

As for what to do on the Night of Power - it has been established that the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘*Whoever stands in night vigil on the Night of Power with faith and hope shall have their previous sins forgiven.*’¹¹³ [As mentioned previously,] night vigil is essentially giving life to (the night) through standing in prayer. ‘Ā’ishah ﷺ was instructed to also supplicate during it.

Sufyān ath-Thawrī said, ‘Supplication on this night is more beloved than (optional) ritual prayer. When one recites (Qur’ān) and supplicates, having hope that Allāh ﷻ will answer their supplication and beseeching (Him ﷻ) - perhaps he will have enabling grace (*tawfiq*).’ His point here is that plentiful supplication is far more virtuous than optional ritual prayer which does not contain much supplication within it. Should one recite and supplicate (in the ritual prayer) then this is better still [i.e., it is better to supplicate in optional prayer, rather than either supplicating alone, or praying by itself without supplication]. The Prophet ﷺ would stand in night vigil during the nights of Ramaḍān and would recite [Qur’ān] with a measured recitation. He ﷺ would not pass a verse of mercy except that he would ask (for mercy), nor would he pass a verse of punishment except he would ask for refuge [from it]. The ritual prayer of the (the Prophet ﷺ) would therefore combine supplication and reflection. This is the most complete and virtuous act during the last ten (nights), and other (nights generally) - and Allāh knows best.

¹¹³ Al-Bukhārī and Muslim

Sha‘bī would say about the Night of Power that ‘its night is like its day.’ Imām Shāfi‘ī said in his work *al-Qadīm*, ‘I prefer to strive during the days of (RamaḌān) in a similar manner to the striving of its nights.’ This concludes that the preference is for striving throughout both the last ten days and the last ten nights of RamaḌān, and Allāh knows best. For the lovers, their nights are prolonged, and each year they eagerly count the days in anticipation of the ten nights (of RamaḌān). So, when [the last ten nights of Ramadan arrive], they have achieved what they longed for, and they serve their Beloved.

*The lover has torn the garment of patience
I have grown confused in all my affairs
Ah! Upon those nights wasted in heedlessness
They were nothing like the Night of Power!*

The breezes of the period before dawn carry the remorse of the sinners, the breaths of the lovers, and the tales of those who turned often in repentance. Then without any tangible written elements - they have a reply, an answer:

*I know the gust of the morning breeze
Brings words of love to the beloved
My critic does not know that due to my intense love
Staying awake is more beloved to me than taking rest*

So when the message arrives at the time of the cold period before dawn carrying the words of the beloved, no one will understand the content of it save the one who has written it to him:

*The morning breeze brings with it the bearers of their greetings,
So don’t talk about the travellers
Do not spread our secrets for indeed I am protective
Of mentioning my beloved to my companions*

O [Prophet] Ya‘qūb ﷺ in his chambers, the fragrance of [Prophet] Yūsuf ﷺ has reached you! Had you inhaled the fragrance you would see after your blindness and find what you lost in poverty!¹¹⁴

*I had a heart that I should live in accordance with
 However I was wasted, due to its constant oscillations
 O Lord! Return it to me for indeed
 My patience is running out in seeking it
 Rescue me so long as my heart remains beating
 O Succour of those seeking safety!*

If the sinners stood during this period before dawn, broken-hearted and raising their excuses, [like the brothers of Prophet Yūsuf ﷺ, who said,] ‘O ‘Azīz! Distress has touched us and our household, and we have brought poor goods, so give us full measure, and be charitable unto us,’¹¹⁵ - light will descend upon them: ‘No reproach upon you today! May Allāh forgive you; and He is the Most Merciful of the Merciful!’¹¹⁶

*I complained to Allāh just as the complaint
 Of the children of Ya‘qūb about Yūsuf
 Indeed harm has befallen me and You are the One
 Who knows my state and can see my standing
 My limbs are of no worth and are in need
 Of pardon from the Generous One
 I have indeed come as a pauper, desperate
 For Your generosity, so have Mercy and Pardon on this humiliated one
 Fill my vessel and give freely
 To this weak, useless and debased one*

‘Ā’ishah ﷺ asked the Prophet ﷺ, ‘What do you think I should say if I catch the Night of Power?’ He ﷺ replied, ‘Say: *O Allāh, indeed You are the One who*

¹¹⁴ Prophet Ya‘qūb ﷺ went blind with grief when he lost his son Yūsuf ﷺ; his sight later returned when Prophet Yūsuf ﷺ sent his cloak to his father ﷺ. [Tr]

¹¹⁵ Qur’ān, 12:88

¹¹⁶ Qur’ān, 12:92

*pardons, You love to pardon, so pardon me!*¹¹⁷ The Pardoner [Al-‘Afū] is from the Names of Allāh ﷻ, and He is the Forgiver of the sins of His servants, and the Eliminator of the effects of (the sins) upon them. He loves to pardon and so He loves to pardon His servants. He loves that his servants pardon each other, just as when one forgives another, they [themselves also] experience His pardon. His pardon is dearer to Him than His punishment.¹¹⁸

The Prophet ﷺ supplicated, *‘I seek refuge in Your pleasure from Your displeasure, and in Your pardon from Your punishment.’* Yaḥyā ibn Ma‘ādh said, ‘Had it not been that pardon was the most beloved thing to Him, the most honourable of people would not have sinned.’ He is indicating that many of His close ones and lovers are afflicted with some forms of sin, in order that they might be pardoned, as He loves to pardon. One of the pious predecessors said, ‘Had I known what the most beloved of actions is to Allāh ﷻ, I would have striven to carry it out.’ He then saw someone say to him in the dream state, ‘You intend for something which can never be, indeed Allāh loves to pardon and forgive, and He loves most [of all] to pardon so that all of His servants can be graced with His pardon; yet He does not guide anyone to the [sinful] actions (which necessitate pardon).’ In the tradition of Ibn ‘Abbās ؓ, [it is narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said] *‘Indeed Allāh looks to the believers from the community of Muḥammad on the Night of Power and pardons them and has mercy upon them, except four: the alcoholic, the one who disobeys their parents, the one who harbours malice, and one who severed the ties of kinship.’*

When the knowers of Allāh ﷻ became fully aware of His Majesty they fell humble; when the sinners heard of His Pardon, they became hopeful. There is nothing for them except Allāh’s Pardon or the Fire. Had it not been for the hope in His Pardon, the sinners’ hearts would have shattered through despair [at the thought] of losing hope in His Mercy. However, when they remembered Allāh’s pardon, they breathed [relieved and grateful], and revelling in the coolness of

¹¹⁷ The Arabic of this supplication is: تَجِبُ الْعَفْوُ فَأَعْفُ عَنِّي [Allāhumma innaka ‘afwwun, tuḥibbu’l-‘afwa, fa‘fu ‘anni]

¹¹⁸ ‘Afū (pardon) is complete elimination of sins from one’s record of deeds, whereas *maghfirah* (forgiveness) is where the sin is excused but remains in one’s records. The Prophet ﷺ taught us to ask for both, and for ‘afū particularly in RamaḌān – see supplication in footnote 116. [Tr]

His pardon. Some from the earlier generations would supplicate, ‘O Allāh, my sins have become great and numerous in their types, yet they are minute in comparison to Your pardon - so pardon me!’ Another said, ‘My crime is great, but Your pardon is greater, so let Your pardon come between my crime, O Generous one!’

O great sinner - Allāh’s pardon of your sin is greater

The greatest of crimes in comparison to Allāh’s pardon is but minute!

Indeed, we have only been instructed to ask for pardon on the Night of Power after striving in carrying out good actions during the nights of the (last) ten. Indeed the knowers of Allāh ﷻ would strive in carrying out good actions, but then view themselves as not having done any good deeds, in terms of their state or speech, so they would return often (to their Lord) asking for His pardon, in a similar state to that of the sinners. Yaḥyā ibn Mu‘ādh said, ‘He is not a knower of Allāh whose purpose of hope in Allāh is anything other than His Pardon.

If proximity to You is not befitting for me

Then Your pardoning of [my] sins is Your Grace

Muṭarrif would supplicate, ‘O Allāh, be pleased with us, and if You are not pleased with us, then [at least] pardon us!’ The one whose sins are great would not have hope in His pleasure, [but yet] their end hope would be His pardon. The one whose knowledge of his Lord is complete would not see themselves save in this condition [of being pardoned].

O Lord, Your servant has come to You

With a burden of sins and a burden of wrongs

Let his shame suffice for You!

From sins which have passed

Burden upon burdens of sins are carried

From what we have committed and wasted

Indeed we earnestly seek Your

Complete pardon from punishment!

O Lord pardon and forgive

For You are the Best of those to forgive!

Farewell Ramaḍān



It has been cited in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* collections that Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, ‘*Whosoever fasts during Ramaḍān with faith and hope (in Allāh’s pleasure) will have their past sins forgiven. Whosoever stands in night vigil on the Night of Power with faith and hope (in Allāh’s pleasure) will have their past sins forgiven.*’ The two *Ṣaḥīḥ* collections also narrate another tradition of Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, ‘*Whoever stands in night vigil during Ramaḍān with faith and hope (in Allāh’s pleasure) will have their past sins forgiven.*’ An-Nasā’ī has a narration from the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that ‘*Whosoever fasts in Ramaḍān with faith and hope (in Allāh’s pleasure) will have their past and future sins forgiven.*’ Similar to these traditions, this has been mentioned in the tradition narrated by ‘Ubādah ibn Ṣāmit رضي الله عنه, with reference to night vigil (*tahajjud*), specifically during the Night of Power.

Forgiveness (of sins) as a reward for fasting is on the condition that one protects the fast from that which it needs to be protected from [i.e., prohibitions]. In the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad and the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Ibn Ḥibbān, it is narrated by Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī رضي الله عنه that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, ‘*Whoever fasts during Ramaḍān and knows its boundaries and then protects (the fast) from that which it needs to be protected from [i.e., its prohibitions] will have their previous (sins) expiated.*’ The dominant opinion regarding this applies only for the expiation of minor sins. This is indicated through what Imām Muslim has cited in the tradition of Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, ‘[In the periods of time between] *the five obligatory prayers, [from] one Friday prayer to the next Friday prayer, [from] one Ramaḍān to the next Ramaḍān - an expiation (of sins) occurs (in the period) between them, so long as the major sins are avoided.*’ There are two differing opinions in reference to this statement:

Firstly: Expiation of sinful actions is conditional on avoiding major sins. So, whoever does not avoid the major sins will not have expiation for (their) major or minor sinful actions.

Secondly: The objective of these obligatory actions (mentioned in the tradition) is to specifically expiate minor sins, regardless of whether major sins are avoided or not. These (actions) however do not intrinsically act as a cause of expiation of major sins.¹¹⁹

Ibn Mundhar said during his night vigil on the Night of Power, ‘It is hoped that the major and minor sins are forgiven during this (Night).’ Others have also said similar things in reference to fasting. The dominant opinion is that major sins [also] require sincere repentance [for them to be forgiven]. We will mention this discussion in another chapter.¹²⁰

The tradition of Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه elucidates that each of these three – 1) fasting in RamaḌān, 2) night vigil, and 3) night vigil on the Night of Power – are a means of expiation of sins that have been committed previously. As for the Night of Power, it is solely a means of expiation of sins for the one who witnesses it as per the tradition of ‘Ubādah ibn Ṣāmit رضي الله عنه that has already been mentioned. This is regardless of whether (the Night of Power occurs) during the first ten, middle or last (ten nights); and regardless of whether (the Night of Power is) apprehended or not [i.e., that one senses that the Night of Power has been witnessed]. The expiation of sins (if the Night of Power is witnessed) is not delayed up to the end of the month.

As for the (portion of the reward of) fasting and night vigil during RamaḌān, [which is the] expiation of sins *is* delayed until after the completion of the month. When the month of RamaḌān is completed, the believer has completed the fasting and night vigils of RamaḌān. It is therefore a prerequisite to complete the two means (of forgiveness), which is fasting and night vigil during

¹¹⁹ Ibn Rajab recommends making sincere repentance for any major sins, rather than relying on good deeds alone to act as an expiation for them. [Tr]

¹²⁰ The Author is referring to another chapter in his work *Al-Laṭā’if Al-Ma’ārif*, rather than a sub-section of this chapter on RamaḌān. [Tr]

RamaḌān, for the forgiveness of one's previous sins. It has been said, 'They are forgiven upon completion of the night vigil on the last night of RamaḌān and upon fulfilling [the requirements of RamaḌān] up to the (final) parts of the (last) day. [The reward of] forgiveness as a result of fasting is delayed until the completion of the fast at the end of the day, and they are forgiven (as a reward) for their fasting on the night of Eid. This is indicated in the tradition of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ cited by Imām Aḥmad that the Prophet ﷺ said, '*My community has been given five distinctive features during RamaḌān that have not been given to any other community: the breath of the one fasting is more fragrant with Allāh than musk; the angels seek their forgiveness until the fast is broken; Allāh decorates and adorns Paradise every day and says, 'The time is near when My loyal servants shall put away their burdens (of the world) and come to you'; the devils are chained so they are not able to take them towards whichever (sinful actions) they would usually do in other months; and they are forgiven on the last night of it.'* It was asked, 'O Messenger of Allāh is this the Night of Power?' 'No,' he replied, 'However the servant is to be rewarded when completing their work.'

It is narrated that those who fast are hopeful that they are forgiven on the day of Eid. The day of Eid has also been named the 'Day of Freedom' (from the Fire). Zuhri said, 'When the day of Eid occurs, people proceed towards the place of Eid prayer; Allāh is cognisant of them and says, 'O My servants, for Me you fasted, for Me you stood in night vigil – (so) return! I have forgiven you!' Muwarriq al-ʿIjlī said to one of his friends during the gathering of the Eid prayer, 'People return to their homes on this day akin to those who have just been given birth to by their mothers [i.e., sinless].' In the tradition of Abū Jaʿfar al-Bāqir, (it is narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said), '*Whoever witnesses RamaḌān and fasts during its days and prays their portion (of tahajjud) during its nights, lowers their gaze, safeguards their chastity, tongue and hands, ensures the ritual prayers are performed in congregation, attends the Friday prayer, and fasts the entire month - has earned their reward, has witnessed the Night of Power, and has succeeded in achieving the salvation of the Lord!*' Abū Jaʿfar said, 'This salvation [and pardon] is not similar to the salvation [or pardon] of rulers. Those who fast the entire month of RamaḌān and stand in night vigil

(throughout the month) have indeed fulfilled their tasks which were expected from them. What remains for them is reward and this is (in the form) of forgiveness.’ So when they leave on the day of Eid for the Eid prayer, their reward is allotted to them and they return to their homes receiving their complete reward, just as (it is narrated) in the tradition of Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه recorded by Salamah ibn Shabīb (in his book *Virtues of Ramaḍān*, as well as others), that the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘*On the day of Eid angels descend onto the Earth and stand at the beginning of the streets and call out with words heard by the entire creation save the jinn and humans, “O community of Muḥammad, proceed towards the generous Lord who gives in abundance and forgives the greatest of sins!”* When they leave their place of prayer Allāh says to His angels, “*O My angels what is the reward now for those who have completed their work?*” They will say, “*Our God and Master, their reward should be given (in full)!*” Allāh will then say, “*Bear witness, all of you, indeed due to their fasting and night vigil I have made their reward My ultimate pleasure and forgiveness. Disperse, you are all forgiven!*”’

*I did not sell my heart to you except to be connected to you
And I will not hand it over unless it is directly hand to hand
If you honour what you say, then I will do the same
If you do not, then the deposit will remain in my hands*

Whosoever falls short in fulfilling their actions shall have their reward diminished accordingly, and so there is no one left to blame save themselves. Salmān رضي الله عنه said, ‘The ritual prayer is equivalent to a measure, so whosoever fulfils it with due diligence shall be given its full measure (of reward) and whosoever does not give it its full due, then you know what is said for those who do not give things with full measure [in reference to *Sūrah Muṭaffifīn*¹²¹].’ Therefore, fasting and all good actions are upon this manner [of giving each action its full due], so whoever fulfils this, then they are from the best of Allāh’s servants who fulfil what is due upon them; while whoever does not give this its

¹²¹ This is in the eighty-third chapter of the Qurʾān: **Woe to the defrauders! Who, when they take a measure from people, take in full. But if they give by measure or by weight to them, they cause loss. Do they not think that they will be resurrected, for a tremendous Day, the Day when mankind will stand before the Lord of the worlds?** Qurʾān, 83:1-6

full due, then woe to those who are *muṭaffifīn*! Do they not have shame - those who give all their efforts to [fulfil] base desires, yet do not fulfil what is due [from them] for the fast or ritual prayer? Nay destroyed are these sinners! The Prophet ﷺ said, ‘*The worst of people are those who steal from their own ritual prayer.*’¹²² Just as there is ruin for those who do not give their full diligence to matters relating to the world, what [then] is the state of the one who falls short in giving what is due to the matters of religion? **So woe be to such performers of prayers. Those who are heedless of their prayers!**¹²³

*Tomorrow souls will be given their due for what they have earned
Those who harvested will see their produce
If excellent, they have been excellent to their souls
And if wicked, then what a tragic outcome!*

The pious predecessors strived in completing their actions to the best of standards, after which they would be deeply concerned if (their actions and efforts) would be divinely accepted, and they feared (them) being rejected. These are the ones who: **Give whatsoever they give, while their hearts are fearful because they will be returning to their Lord.**¹²⁴

It has been narrated that ‘Alī ﷺ said, ‘Let it be that the concern of the acceptance of your actions is far more intense than the deep worry of (performing) the action itself. Have you not heard Allāh ﷻ say, ‘**Allāh accepts only from the God- fearing?**’¹²⁵ Faḍālah ibn ‘Ubaid said, ‘I would much rather know - and it would be more beloved to me than the world and all that it contains! - that Allāh ﷻ has accepted an atom’s worth of goodness from me, as indeed Allāh ﷻ said, ‘**Allāh accepts only from the God- fearing.**’

Ibn Dinār said, ‘The fear of the action not being accepted should be more intense than the (carrying out of the) action itself.’ ‘Aṭā as-Sulaymī said, ‘Be warned! Fear that the action is not for other than Allāh!’ ‘Abdul-‘Azīz ibn Abū

¹²² Aḥmad

¹²³ Qur’ān, 107:4-5

¹²⁴ Qur’ān, 23:60


¹²⁵ Qur’ān, 5:27

Rawād said, ‘I passed by a group who strove hard in carrying out good actions. So when they did this, a deep sense of worry fell upon them – were (their good deeds [and efforts]) accepted or not?’ Some of the pious predecessors said, ‘Some used to supplicate to Allāh for six months that they reach RamaḌān, then they would supplicate for six months after RamaḌān that their actions were accepted!’

‘Umar ibn ‘Abdul-‘Azīz set forth on the day of Eid (to the congregational prayer) and said in his sermon, ‘O people, indeed you kept fasts and stood in night vigil for thirty days for the sake of Allāh, and then set forth on this day in order to seek that Allāh accepts you [and your deeds]!’ Some of the pious predecessors would display sadness on the day of Eid, so it was remarked, ‘This is indeed a day of joy and happiness!’ He replied, ‘You are correct; however, I am a servant who has been ordered by my Master to do a certain action, (and) I am unsure whether He has accepted it from me or not!’

Wubaib ibn al-Ward saw a group of people laughing on the day of Eid and so he remarked, ‘If these people have had their actions of fasting accepted, then this is not the way of those who give true thanks! And if their fasting is not accepted, then this is not the way of those who fear (Allāh)!’ Ḥasan said, ‘Allāh has made the month of RamaḌān an opportunity to race and compete in obedience to Him in order to gain His Divine Pleasure. So a group have surpassed [others] in this and have triumphed, (while) others had lagged behind and lost out. Therefore (is it not) strange for one to be engrossed in play and laughter on the day in which the excellent triumph and the deceivers lose out?’

*Perhaps You are angry, yet my heart is unaware
Peace be to both worlds if You are pleased*

It has been narrated that on the last night of the month of RamaḌān, ‘Alī  would call out, ‘O woe to me! Who is this one who has been accepted, so I that I may congratulate him, and who is this one who has been deprived, so I can

console him?' Ibn Mas'ūd ؓ would say the same and add, 'O accepted one - how pleasant for you! O rejected one - may Allāh resolve your predicament!'

*Woe to me, who will be accepted from us?
 Congratulations to the one who is accepted
 O one who is a failure! O rejected one!
 [O one] who turns away from Him without being accepted
 If [this is] so, then indeed Allāh will
 Humiliate this person greatly*

What good has been gained by the one who missed the goodness of RamaḌān? What has been achieved by the one who was excluded from (the goodness of RamaḌān)? How many are there of those who receive a portion of acceptance and forgiveness during (RamaḌān), compared to those who receive a portion of loss and dejection? Perhaps the portion for the one standing in night vigil is just tiredness, and for the one fasting there is nothing but hunger and thirst.

*What should I do, if that is what fate decrees?
 Recovery is for someone else, and I am still broken
 I am a prisoner of my own sins, tied down, outcast
 Is it at all possible to change what has been decreed?*

*The people have travelled, and my misfortune has left me behind
 They have become close and my turning away has distanced me
 Enough, enough! For how long will You turn me away
 My enemies are my illness and all of them are coming towards me*

*The means of Your desires has weakened my desire
 After turning away from You, grief is befitting for me
 My plans are constricted and You know my state
 Have mercy, as a slave is stood eagerly at your door!*

The avenues of [achieving] forgiveness are increased in the month of Ramaḍān – and these include:

- Fasting, night vigil and in particular [attaining] the Night of Power as mentioned
- Feeding those who are fasting, reducing the burden on dependants, and on those over whom one has power or authority, as mentioned in the tradition of Salmān رضي الله عنه.
- Remembrance of Allāh ﷻ as per the tradition [in which the Prophet ﷺ said], ‘*The one who remembers Allāh during Ramaḍān is forgiven.*’¹²⁶
- Seeking forgiveness. The supplication of the one fasting is accepted at the time of breaking of the fast. Due to this Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه would supplicate at the time of breaking the fast, ‘O Allāh, O (One who is) vast in forgiving, forgive me.’ In reference to the virtue of the month of Ramaḍān, Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه said, ‘(Allāh) forgives (all) during it except those refuse.’ They asked, ‘O Abū Hurayrah, who is the one who refuses?’ He replied, ‘The one who refuses to seek Allāh’s forgiveness.’
- The angels seek forgiveness for those fasting until the time of breaking the fast as mentioned earlier.

Therefore, the one who does not achieve forgiveness is indeed from amongst those who are totally deprived, when the avenues of acquiring forgiveness are so plentiful during Ramaḍān!

In the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Ibn Ḥibbān, it is narrated by Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ descended from the pulpit and said, ‘*Āmīn, Āmīn, Āmīn!*’ He was asked, ‘O Messenger of Allāh, [why have] you descended the pupil saying “*Āmīn, Āmīn, Āmīn*”?’ He ﷺ replied, ‘*Indeed Jibrīl came to me and said, “Whoever passes Ramaḍān and is not forgiven will enter the Fire, and may they be distant from Allāh - say ‘Āmīn!’” So I said ‘Āmīn.’ (Jibrīl then said), “And (the person) who has parents, (and) one or both are alive, and they are not shown compassion, and then (this person) passes away - they will enter the Fire and may they be*

¹²⁶ Aṭ-Ṭabarānī and al-Baihaqī

distant from Allāh - say ‘Āmīn!’” So I said ‘Āmīn.’ (Jibrīl then said), “Whoever makes mention of you (O Muḥammad) and then does not send blessings upon you,¹²⁷ and (they) pass away, (they) will enter the Fire - and may they be distant from Allāh - say ‘Āmīn!’” So I said ‘Āmīn.’ Imām Aḥmad, at-Tirmidhī and Ibn Ḥibbān also cite this with a different chain from Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه with the wording, ‘*May he perish!*’ with at-Tirmidhī stating it is a sound tradition. Saʿīd narrated from Qatādah that it has been said, ‘Whoever is not forgiven during Ramaḍān will never be forgiven in another given time.’

In another tradition,¹²⁸ it is narrated that, ‘*If they are not forgiven during Ramaḍān, then when will they ever be forgiven, if it is not during this month? When will they ever be accepted if (they are) rejected on the Night of Power? When will they ever be rectified if (they are) not rectified during Ramaḍān? When will the one afflicted with the two illnesses of ignorance and heedlessness ever be cured [if not in this month]?*’

Any (tree or plant) that does not bear fruit during the season of harvest is [instead] fuel for the Fire. The one who procrastinates in the season for sowing seeds will not see the harvest on the day of harvesting, and regret and loss [will be their lot].

The month has passed - O what regret!

The (successful) servants have been singled out with the triumph of Paradise

The neglectful paupers have become broken

Like me, O woe to me, how great the deprivation

The one who misses the period of sowing (seeds)

Will see nothing blossom except concern and regret

The first part of Ramaḍān is mercy, the middle is forgiveness, and the end is salvation from the Fire. This has been narrated by the Prophet ﷺ in the tradition of Salmān al-Farsī رضي الله عنه, as cited by Ibn Khuzaimah in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. This has

¹²⁷ Commonly known as *ṣalātu-wa-salām* or supplicating for the Prophet ﷺ when he is mentioned: صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ [ṣalla Allāh ‘alayhi wa sallama – May Allāh bestow prayers and blessings on him]

¹²⁸ This tradition has not been cited or referenced in the original text. [Tr]

also been narrated in the tradition of Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه as cited by Ibn Abū Dunyā and others. The entire month is mercy, forgiveness and salvation, and this is why the *ṣaḥīḥ* tradition states: *‘Indeed during (the month of Ramaḍān) the doors of mercy are opened!’*

At-Tirmidhī and others cite that (the Prophet ﷺ said), *‘Indeed for Allāh there are many who have salvation from the Fire - and this is during every night.’* However, mercy overwhelms everything else during the first period (of Ramaḍān) - and this is for those of excellence and those who have *taqwā*. Allāh ﷻ says, **‘Verily the mercy of Allāh is always close to the good-doers,’**¹²⁹ and Allāh ﷻ says, **‘My mercy encompasses everything. I shall ordain mercy for those who fear Me and give *zakāt* and those who believe in Our revelations.’**¹³⁰ In the first period of the month, there is an outpouring of mercy upon those who have *taqwā*, and (Allāh ﷻ) deals with the people of excellence with virtue and excellence. As for the middle-period, forgiveness overwhelms everything else, and so (Allāh ﷻ) forgives those who fast during it. If some minor sins are committed, it does not prevent forgiveness as Allāh ﷻ says, **‘Surely your Lord is full of forgiveness for people, despite their wrongdoing.’**¹³¹ As for the final period of the month, it is salvation from the Fire for the one who is ruined, and the Fire is necessary (as a punishment) for committing major sins.

In the tradition cited by Salamah ibn Shabīb and others, narrated by Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه, the Prophet ﷺ said, *‘During every night of Ramaḍān Allāh [grants] salvation from the Fire to a million (souls) at the time of breaking the fast, and when the night or day of Jumu‘ah arrives, a million (souls) are given salvation from the Fire in every hour - (and) the Fire (had been previously) necessary for all of them! When the last night of the month of Ramaḍān enters, the number of individuals who are granted salvation is equivalent to the total number of those who were granted salvation from the start to the end of the month!’* Just as the day of sacrifice is the ‘Greater Eid’, as prior to it is the Day of ‘Arafah (which is a day unlike any other day in the world in which so many are granted salvation

¹²⁹ Qurʾān, 7:56

¹³⁰ Qurʾān, 7:156

¹³¹ Qurʾān, 13:6

from the Fire), - the day of (Eid) *aḷ-Fiṭris* is a celebration for the entire community as those who fasted and may have committed major sins are granted salvation from the Fire [on this day]. And (on this day) the sinners join the ranks of the righteous. It is therefore a true day of Eid for those granted salvation on these two days, and for whoever is not (granted salvation), then this is the day of admonition for them.

Eid of the beloved is not visiting the Eid gathering

It is anticipation in waiting for the leader and the King

Indeed Eid is to be with Allāh

Being noble and close to Allāh's protection

Some of the knowers of Allāh ﷻ were seen on the night of Eid weeping and saying:

By virtue of introversion how many have I alienated?

Will You not show kindness and generosity to me now?

The joy of Eid encompasses everything

Yet my sadness is increasing and never ending

If I have perpetrated a crime

Then my excuse lies in my caprice, I will not return to it!

When forgiveness and salvation from the Fire (of Hell) are both a direct reward of fasting and standing in night vigil during RamaḌān, Allāh ﷻ orders (His servants) at the completion of its period to proclaim His Greatness and show gratitude to Him ﷻ. As (Allāh ﷻ) says, **'So that you may complete the prescribed period and proclaim the greatness of Allāh for guiding you, and perhaps you will be grateful!'**¹³² Therefore, gratitude is for the One who graced His servants with *tawfīq* (enabling grace) and the assistance to fast; (gratitude is also for) His forgiveness, and (gratitude is for) salvation from the Fire (as a reward for fasting). Their gratitude is demonstrated by their remembrance of (Allāh ﷻ); and that they remember Him, thank Him, and fear Him as is befitting for Him

¹³² Qur'ān, 2:185

ﷺ. With reference to the verse *Fear Allāh as He should be feared*,¹³³ Ibn Mas‘ūd رضي الله عنه has indeed expounded further saying (this means), ‘To obey and not transgress, to remember and not forget, to show gratitude and not be ungrateful.’

O those who engage in the greatest of sins! [Remember that] there is much treasure during these days of generosity! There are no substitutes (for the days of Ramaḍān), nor (anything of) similar worth. How many of those criminals and transgressors have been granted salvation from the Fire during it? And so, the one who has been granted salvation from the Fire (during Ramaḍān), has certainly succeeded with a great reward, and acquired an unmerited, yet enormous favour of Allāh ﷻ! O the one whose Master grants salvation from the Fire - it is incumbent on you to never return to the enslavement of the burdens (of sin) after becoming free! Your Master distances you from the Fire, yet do you draw near to it? He saves you from it, (and) yet do you throw yourself into it rather than fleeing from it?

Should one be saved from the Fire after

Committing actions worthy of it - how fortunate [they are]!

If mercy is for those who do good, then the sinner should not despair; if forgiveness is declared for the people of *taqwā*, then those who transgress against their souls are not (necessarily) veiled from it!

If the sinner cannot have hope in Your Pardon

Then who will show affection to the sinners?

If only the excellent have hope in You

Then who does the sinner supplicate to, who can they have hope in?

Why should we not have hope with our Lord?

Why should we not desire His Forbearance?

When it is stated in the two Ṣaḥīḥ¹³⁴

Towards His servants, He is more merciful than their mothers!

¹³³ Qur’ān, 3:102

¹³⁴ Al-Bukhārī and Muslim

Say, "O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allāh. Indeed, Allāh forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful." ¹³⁵ O sinners - and we are all sinners - do not despair of the Mercy of Allāh ﷻ by virtue of your evil actions. How many like you have been granted salvation from the Fire during these days? So have an excellent opinion of your Master, seek His pardon for indeed no one is destroyed with Allāh ﷻ except the one who destroys themselves!

*When your sins have caused you damage then its cure
Is to raise your hands in the darkness of the night
Don't despair of the Mercy of Allāh, for certainly
Your despair of this is from the greatest of sins
For His Mercy to the elect is honour
And His Mercy to the sinners is grace*

It is incumbent for the one who longs for salvation from the Fire during the month of the Ramaḍān to seek the avenues that necessitate salvation from the Fire - and this is effortless during this month. Abū Qalābah would set free his most beautiful maid in the hope of being granted salvation from the Fire by emancipating her. In the tradition of Salmān ﷺ that Ibn Khuzaimah has cited in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, (it is narrated): 'He who feeds the one fasting during (Ramaḍān) is granted salvation from the Fire. He who lightness the burden upon his subordinates is granted salvation from the Fire.' (It is also narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said), 'So increase in four things during it, two of which please your Lord and two of which you cannot do without. As for the two elements that please your Lord, they are the testimony [of tawḥīd] that there is no deity except Allāh, and seeking (His) forgiveness. As for the two which are indispensable, they are asking Allāh for Paradise, and seeking His protection from the Fire.'¹³⁶

¹³⁵ Qurʾān, 39:53

¹³⁶ A simple statement to incorporate all four is: لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ، أَسْأَلُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ النَّارِ - *Lā ilāha illa 'Llāh, astaghfir Allāh, asaluka'l-jannata wa a'ūdhu bika mina'n-nār* - There is no deity but Allāh, I ask Allāh for forgiveness, I ask You for Paradise, and I seek Your refuge from the Fire. [Tr]

These four elements mentioned in this tradition are a means of salvation and forgiveness. As for the declaration of *tawhīd*, it obliterates and wipes away sins and no sins remain, nor can (any sinful) action surpass it [i.e., the declaration of *tawhīd* can be a means of forgiveness for any sin]. It equates to breaking the bonds of the shackles around the ankles that then necessitates salvation from the Fire. Allāh ﷻ grants salvation from the Fire to whoever states (the declaration of *tawhīd*) four times on waking and in the evening. Allāh ﷻ prohibits the Fire for whoever says it with sincerity of the heart.

As for seeking forgiveness, then it is from the greatest means of acquiring forgiveness, as seeking forgiveness is essentially supplicating that one is forgiven by Allāh ﷻ, [and granted His pardon]. The supplication of the one fasting is readily accepted (both) while fasting, and at the time of breaking the fast. The statement of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ has been mentioned already - ‘One is forgiven during (RamaḌān) - except the one who refuses.’ They asked, ‘O Abū Hurayrah, who refuses?’ He replied. ‘The one who refuses to seek Allāh’s ﷻ forgiveness.’ Ḥasan said, ‘Increase in seeking forgiveness for indeed you do not know when mercy descends.’ Luqmān said to his son, ‘O child, keep your tongue busy in seeking forgiveness, for indeed there is a specific hour (during the twenty-four-hour period) in which Allāh ﷻ does not reject the one who asks.’ Allāh ﷻ has combined *tawhīd* and seeking forgiveness with His words: **So know that there is no god save Allāh, and ask forgiveness for your sins.**¹³⁷ In some narrations it is mentioned that Iblīs (Satan) said, ‘I destroyed mankind through sins, and they destroyed me by virtue of (saying) “There is no deity save Allāh”, and through seeking forgiveness.’ Seeking forgiveness is to be done at the completion of all acts of righteousness. Ritual prayer, the pilgrimage, night vigil and the ending of a gathering are all completed with (seeking forgiveness). If (one’s utterances were) the remembrance (of Allāh), then (seeking forgiveness) follows (this) befittingly, and if (one’s utterances were) futile (speech), then (seeking forgiveness) is expiation for it. Therefore, it is imperative to complete the fasting of RamaḌān with seeking forgiveness.

¹³⁷ Qur’ān, 47:19

‘Umar ibn ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz wrote to the towns and cities ordering them to complete the month of Ramaḍān with seeking forgiveness, (general) charity - *sadaqa*, and giving in charity (before Eid¹³⁸), as charity purifies the one fasting from futile and lewd acts. Seeking forgiveness ‘patches up’ what has been ‘torn’ of the fast due to futile and lewd acts. Therefore, some of the earlier scholars said, ‘Indeed for the one fasting, giving in charity is akin to the prostration of forgetfulness of the ritual prayer.’ ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz further wrote, ‘Say as your father Ādam ﷺ said, **‘Our Lord! We have wronged our souls, and if You do not forgive us and have mercy on us, we shall surely be of the losers.’**¹³⁹ Say as Nūh ﷺ said, **‘And if You do not forgive me or have mercy on my, I shall be of the losers.’**¹⁴⁰ Say as Ibrāhīm ﷺ said, **‘And Who I hope will forgive me my sin on the Day of Recompense.’**¹⁴¹ Say as Mūsā ﷺ said, **‘My Lord! verily I have wronged my soul, so forgive me.’**¹⁴² Say as Yūnus ﷺ said, **‘There is no god but You! Glory be to You! Verily I have been of the wrong-doers.’**¹⁴³

Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه is reported to have said, ‘Backbiting violates the fast, and seeking forgiveness rectifies it. So whoever amongst you can perform a rectified fast then do so.’ Ibn Munkadir explains the meaning of this statement: ‘Fasting is a shield from the Fire so long as it is not violated. Vile speech violates this shield, and seeking forgiveness rectifies what has violated it. Therefore, our fasting requires seeking of forgiveness and righteous actions that act as an intercessor [for any violations of the fast].’ How many of our fasts have been violated by futile speech, then rectified, and yet further violations overtook this rectification? How many of us patch up what has been torn from (the fast) with the thread of good deeds, yet then cut it with the double-edged sword of sins? Some of the pious predecessors would seek forgiveness after the prayer from what fell short during it, just as the sinner would seek forgiveness from their sins. If this is the state of the elect with their worship, then what should be the

¹³⁸ Known as *Zakāt al-Fiṭr* [Tr]

¹³⁹ Qurʾān, 7:23

¹⁴⁰ Qurʾān, 11:47

¹⁴¹ Qurʾān, 26:82

¹⁴² Qurʾān, 28:16

¹⁴³ Qurʾān, 21:87

state of sinners like us in our worship? Have mercy (upon yourself) O one whose ‘good works’ are sins, and (whose) entire state of obedience is heedlessness.

I seek Allāh’s forgiveness from my fasting

From my prayer, (for) every single one throughout my life

Every single one of my fasts are violated

And my prayers, every single one of my prayers

I am awake in the darkness however

My sleep is better than my state of wakefulness

The suggestion of the Prophet ﷺ to ‘Ā’ishah ؓ on the Night of Power to ask for pardon is very similar to this. As the believer strives during the month of RamaḌān with fasting and night vigil, and then draws near to the completion (of the month) with the Night of Power approaching, they do not ask Allāh ﷻ for anything except pardon, as if like a sinner who has fallen short (of giving worship its due). Ṣilah ibn Ashīm would give life to the entire night and supplicate in the predawn time, ‘O Allāh I ask You to rescue me from the Fire and include me with those who muster the courage to ask You for Paradise!’ Muṭarrif would supplicate, ‘O Allāh be pleased with us; should You not be pleased with us then [at least] grant us pardon!’ Yaḥyā ibn Mu‘ādh said, ‘A knower of Allāh is not (a knower of Allāh) unless their end hope with Allāh is pardon.’

Should proximity not be befitting for me

Forgiveness from sins is grace from You!

Seeking forgiveness is most fruitful when accompanied with repentance. This is the (means) of untying the knots of persistence in sins. Whoever seeks forgiveness with their tongue alone whilst their heart is attached to sins, and is resolute on returning to transgressions after the passing of the month - then their fasting is rejected, and the doors of acceptance are closed. Ka‘ab ؓ said, ‘Whoever fasts during RamaḌān and tells themselves that, “After RamaḌān I will not disobey Allāh!” - they will enter Paradise without any reckoning or

questions. Whoever fasts during Ramaḍān and tells themselves that after Ramaḍān they will disobey Allāh, their fasts are rejected.’

*Had it not been for piety and intelligence about the fear of destruction
I would have indeed sinned in my youth every type of sin imaginable
What has passed has passed; and then you will not see
It returning in the coming nights that are yet to pass*

Abū Dāwūd cites in his *Sunan* from Abū Bakrah رضي الله عنه that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, ‘*Let not one of you say I fasted throughout the month of Ramaḍān and stood (in night vigil) throughout Ramaḍān.*’ Abū Bakrah رضي الله عنه said, ‘I am unsure as to whether this is an indication of the disliking of attributing piety to oneself, or a warning from being negligible.’

Where are those who safeguard the fast when they fast, and stand properly during the night vigil? They excel in their submission and progress (to Allāh) with peace. Nothing remains except those who boast when they fast, and those who marvel at their own standing when they stand in night vigil! How different is the passionate one compared to the indifferent one, the one present to the one absent, the one hidden and the one apparent?

As for asking for Paradise and seeking refuge from the Fire, this is from one of the most important supplications as indeed the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, ‘*Our humming [of utterances in constant supplication] is based on these two.*’¹⁴⁴

The one fasting longs for the acceptance of supplications, so it is imperative to only supplicate for important affairs. Abū Muslim said, ‘I have not presented a supplication (to Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم) except that I have attached seeking protection from the Fire with it.’ He then recited the verse: **The residents of the Fire cannot be equal to the residents of Paradise. (Only) the residents of Paradise will be successful.**¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁴ Abū Dāwūd

¹⁴⁵ Qurʾān, 59:20

In the tradition (it is narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said), ‘*Seek goodness throughout (each) day of yours. Set forth in (seeking) the breezes of your Lord’s Mercy, for indeed the winds of mercy impact whoever He wills from amongst His servants. Ask Allāh to conceal your faults and settle your fears.*’¹⁴⁶ For whoever is bestowed with joy will never suffer after this. From the greatest of (Allāh’s) breezes (of mercy) that happens to pass is that *one* period of acceptance (of supplication) in which the servant asks for Paradise and salvation from the Fire, and their request is accepted, and (so the servant) triumphs with endless happiness. Allāh ﷻ says, ‘**Whoever is spared from the Fire and is admitted into Paradise will (indeed) triumph.**’¹⁴⁷ And He ﷻ says, ‘**The Day it comes no soul will speak except by His permission. And among them will be the wretched and the prosperous. As for those bound for misery, they will be in the Fire, where they will be sighing and gasping, staying there forever, as long as the heavens and the earth will endure, except what your Lord wills. Surely your Lord does what He intends. And as for those who were [destined to be] prosperous, they will be in Paradise, abiding therein as long as the heavens and the earth endure, except what your Lord should will - a bestowal uninterrupted.**’¹⁴⁸

The triumphant one is not the one whose world gives them comfort

Rather, the triumphant one is the one who is granted salvation from the Fire

O servants of Allāh! Indeed the month of RamaḌān is bound to depart and there is little time left. So whoever amongst you have excelled during it, then upon you is excellence in its completion! Whoever has been careless, then [strive to] complete (RamaḌān) with goodness, as actions are (judged) by [the state of] their endings. Profit from what is left of its nights and days; deposit righteous actions that will bear witness for you with the All-Knowing King, and part from it with the purest of farewell greetings!

¹⁴⁶ Al-Baihaqī

¹⁴⁷ Qur’ān, 3:185

¹⁴⁸ Qur’ān, 11:105-108

Peace from the Merciful at all times

During the best month and period which has passed

Peace upon the month of fasting for it is

Indeed, from the Merciful a source of peace

Its days and period of obedience have passed; written against you are sins and what you have wasted, as if you are cut off from the path whilst those who strove achieved their objective. Do you not see this condemnation of yourself? Can you not hear?

Our days have been wasted! Can they return?

How farfetched! How can time return once again?

On that day when souls will buy and sell

One's brother will be unable to offer even one dirham

The hearts of the people of *taqwā* during this month are constantly longing, its separation results in the pain of regret.

Separation has grieved you, what will you do?

Will you exercise patience or will you become perplexed?

Should you cry when they are close

Then how will you be when they bid farewell?

How is it possible for the believer's tears not to flow at its departure, whilst they are oblivious of whether their lifespan will encompass the return of (another) RamaḌān?

I remembered the days and nights gone by

From remembrance of them tears began to flow

Alas! Will one day from these days return?

Is there a possibility of this period returning to me?

Is it possible to unite with the beloved once separated?

Is it possible for the full moon that has set to rise again?

Where is the fire of desire of those who strive during their days? Where is the restlessness of those who stand in night vigil during their nights?

*Listen to the sighs of those who yearn
 If you can lend an ear to listen to them
 My beloved has gone and my tears
 Have bid him farewell, flowing quickly
 Should the mountain who cannot articulate
 Carry this burden of separation from its beloved
 It would not be able endure this
 Let alone be able to articulate its sentiments*

If the state of the one who profited from it is apprehension, then what is the state of the one who has ruined their days and nights? What benefit do the tears of the one who was careless bring when their predicament is so great, and their heedlessness so large? How many have advised the unfortunate, and the advice was not accepted? How many have called towards righteousness, and none responded towards righteousness? How many have witnessed those who have arrived (at reaching the state of *taqwa*) yet they themselves are so far? How many have passed by those who are traversing the path, yet they remain motionless? To such an extent their time (life) is cut short, and ruin overtakes them, regretful of negligence, when there is no benefit (left) in regretting and hoping for rectification during such a limited time.

*Will you leave whom you love when you are near,
 Then seek whom you love when they have gone far?
 You cry in yearning after they have gone far
 And ask about their destination, where they have travelled
 You ceased asking about them when they were present
 And now you long for their home to inform you about them?
 Blame only yourself and not your conveyance
 Die miserable for you have only yourself to blame!*

O month of Ramaḍān be gentle, the tears of the lovers are overflowing, their hearts are about to burst from the pain of separation. Perhaps the stance of bidding farewell puts out the fire of longing which has charred (the hearts). Perhaps a period of penitence and renunciation rectifies what has ruined the fast. Perhaps the one cut off from the caravan is from the accepted and (will eventually be one who) joins (it). Perhaps the sins are erased, and perhaps the one for whom the Fire was necessary is granted salvation. Perhaps mercy from the Master upon the sinner is granted...

Maybe, just maybe, before the time of separation

You will acquire everything good that you hoped for

The broken soul revived and the repentance accepted

Salvation for the sinner, and the unfortunate one fortunate

وكل اللهم وسلم على سيدنا وحبيبنا محمد
وعلى أهله وأزواجه وصحابته أجمعين



Appendix - Supplications from the Text



- 1) ‘Ā’ishah ﷺ asked the Prophet ﷺ, ‘What do you think I should say if I catch the Night of Power?’ He ﷺ replied, ‘Say:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوٌّ، تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّي

Allāhumma innaka ‘afwwun, tuḥibbu’l-‘afwa, fa‘fu ‘annī

O Allāh, indeed You are the One who pardons, You love to pardon, so pardon me!

- 2) The Prophet ﷺ said, ‘So increase in four things during it, two of which please your Lord and two of which you cannot do without. As for the two elements that please your Lord, they are the testimony [of tawḥīd] that there is no deity except Allāh and seeking (His) forgiveness. As for the two which are indispensable, they are asking Allāh for Paradise, and seeking His protection from the Fire.’

A simple statement to incorporate all four is:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ، أَسْأَلُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ النَّارِ

Lā ilāha illa`Llāh, astaghfir Allāh, asaluka`l-jannata wa a‘ūdhu bika mina`n-nār

There is no deity but Allāh, I ask Allāh for forgiveness, I ask You for Paradise, and I seek Your refuge from the Fire.

- 3) Once while a maid was serving him ﷺ, [his daughter] Fāṭimah ﷺ complained to him ﷺ about the difficulty of managing (her) domestic affairs. She sought this particular maid from him ﷺ to assist her in her home. He ﷺ instead ordered her to seek assistance through the glorification, remembrance and praise [of Allāh], which is recited when retiring to sleep.

Famously known as *Taṣbīḥ Fāṭimah*, which comprises saying 33 times each:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ، الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ

Subḥān Allāh, Al-ḥamdu`li-Llāh, Allāhu akbar

Glory be to Allāh, all praise belongs to Allāh, Allāh is the greatest

