Profit from Ramadhān

by Shaykh Muhammad Saleem Dhorat
O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed upon you just as it was prescribed upon people before you, so that you may become God-fearing.

(Glorious Qur'ān 2:183)

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FOREWORD
As is his usual practice at the beginning of Ramadhān each year, Shaykh Muhammad Saleem hafizullah talks to his congregation about the blessings, virtues and benefits of the blessed month of Ramadhān, explaining how they should value this blessed month and spend it with utmost care in order to acquire the Nearness and Pleasure of Allah.

One of these talks was transcribed and published as two separate articles in the monthly journal, Riyādul Jannah, of which Shaykh is also founder and editor.

As Ramadhān 1420 approaches, it seemed an appropriate time to bring together these articles and publish them in the form of a booklet, thereby making these wise and beneficial advices available to a much wider audience.

We begin the booklet with another article of Shaykh entitled ‘The Blessed Month of Ramadhān’ and, on his instruction, include some important directives given by Shaykh Muhammad Badre ‘Ālam , a great scholar in the field of Hadeeth. The booklet finally concludes with rules regarding fasting, compiled by Shaykh himself and previously published and distributed as a leaflet and a colour poster (available free of charge from the Academy).

We ask Allah to give us the tawfeeq to adopt these advices so that we can all Profit from Ramadhān, Āmeen.

Isma’eel Dhorat
Rajab 1420 (October 1999)

THE BLESSED MONTH OF RAMDHĀN
Knowledge of the virtues and benefits of the blessed month of Ramadhān will develop the understanding of the value and importance of this month, which in turn will create enthusiasm and eagerness to make this month a fruitful one. For this reason, a few Ahādeeth of our beloved Rasool ﷺ are mentioned hereunder.

THE GREAT MONTH
O people, there comes upon you a great month, a most blessed month, in which lies a night greater in worth than one thousand months. Allah has made compulsory fasting in this month and has decreed wakefulness at night (i.e. tarāweeh) sunnah. Whosoever tries drawing nearer to Allah by performing any nafl (optional) deed in this month, for him shall be such reward as if he had performed a fardh in any other time of the year. And whoever performs a fardh, for him shall be the reward of seventy fardh in any other time of the year. This is indeed the month of patience, and the reward for true patience is Jannah; it is the month of sympathy with one’s fellow men; it is the month wherein a true Believer’s rizq (provision) is increased. (Ibne Khuzaymah)
The month of Ramadhān, the month of blessings has come to you, wherein Allah turns towards you and sends down to you His special Mercy, forgives your faults, accepts prayers, observes your competition for doing good deeds and boasts to the angels about you. So show to Allah your righteousness; for verily, the most pitiable and unfortunate one is he who is deprived of Allah's Mercy in this month. (Tabrāni)

The doors of Jannah are opened on the first night of Ramadhān. Not a single door is closed until the last night of Ramadhān. (Bayhaqi)

And in this month, four things you should endeavour to perform in great number; two of which shall be to please your Lord, while the other two shall be those without which you cannot make do. Those which shall be to please your Lord, are that you should in great quantity recite the Kalimah Tayyibah: Lā ilāha illallāh, and make much ‘Istighfār’ (beg Allah's Forgiveness). And as for those without which you cannot make do, you should beg Allah for entry into Jannah and seek refuge with Him from the fire of Jahannam. (Ibne Khuzaymah)

**SUHOOR (SEHRI)**

Verily, Allah and His Angels send mercy upon those who eat suhoor. (Tabrāni)

Eat suhoor because in suhoor lies barakah. (Mishkāt)

**DAYS OF RAMADHĀN**

The fishes in the sea seek forgiveness for those fasting until they break their fast. Allah decorates His Jannah every day and then says, ‘The time is near when My pious Servants shall cast aside the great trials and come to me.’ (Ahmad)

During each day and night of Ramadhān, Allah sets free great number of souls from Hell. And for every Muslim, during each day and night, at least one du‘ā is certainly accepted. (Bazzāz)

**SAWZM (FASTING)**

Sawz (Fasting) is a shield, as long as he (the fasting person) does not tear it up. (Nasa‘ee)

**NOTE:** Fasting is a protection from Shaytān or from Allah's Punishment in the Hereafter. One who indulges in sins whilst fasting such as lies, backbiting etc., they become the cause of the fast becoming wasted.

All good deeds are for the one who renders them, but Fasting. Fasting is exclusively for Me (Allah). (Bukhāri)

Fasting is a shield and a powerful fortress. (Ahmad, Bayhaqi)
I swear by that Being in Whose Possession is the life of Muhammad! The odour of the mouth of a fasting person is sweeter to Allah than the fragrance of musk. (Bukhāri)

Fasting is exclusively for Allah, the reward of it (being limitless) no one knows besides Allah. (Tabrāni)

**IFTĀR**

Whosoever gives something to a fasting person in order to break the fast, for him there shall be forgiveness for his sins and emancipation from the fire of Jahannam; and for him (the one who gives) shall be the same reward as for him (whom he fed), without that person's (the one who was fed) reward being diminished in the least. (Ibne Khuzaymah, Bayhaqi)

Whoever gave a person, who fasted, water to drink, Allah shall give him a drink from my fountain where after he shall never again feel thirsty until he enters Jannah. (Ibne Khuzaymah)

The fasting person experiences two (occasions of) delight: at the time of iftār and at the time he will meet his Lord. (Bukhāri)

Not a single prayer made by a fasting person at the time of breaking fast is rejected. (Ibne Mājah)

**LAYLATUL QADR (NIGHT OF POWER)**

Whoever stands in prayer and worship in the night of power with Imān and with sincere hope of gaining reward, all his previous sins are forgiven. (Muslim)

Look for the night of power among the odd numbered nights of the last ten days of Ramadhān. (Mishkāt)
I’TIKĀF

It is related by Aboo Hurayrah that Rasoolullah observed i’tikāf for ten days every year in the month of Ramadhān. In the year he passed away he observed it for twenty days. (Bukhāri)

Those who observe (i’tikāf) are prevented from all sins and they obtain reward as if they are rendering all good deeds. (Mishkāt)

He who observes the ten days of i’tikāf during Ramadhān will obtain the reward of two Hajj and two ‘Umrah. (Bayhaqi)

LAST NIGHT OF RAMADHĀN

Rasoolullah said, ‘On the last night of Ramadhān the fasting Muslims are forgiven.’ The Sahābah inquired, ‘O Rasoolullah, is that the night of power?’ Nabee replied, ‘No! But it is only right that a servant should be given his reward on having completed his duty.’ (Ahmad)

THE MONTH OF BLESSING, MERCY AND FORGIVENESS

It is reported in a Hadeeth that Rasoolullah said, “When Ramadhān comes, the gates of Jannah are thrown open, the doors of Jahannam are closed and the Shayāteen are imprisoned.” (Bukhāri)

From the three things mentioned in this Hadeeth, we can deduce that in the blessed month of Ramadhān, Allah makes the acquiring of Jannah and deliverance from the fire of Jahannam easy. This is the month of blessing, mercy and forgiveness. Each and every minute and second of Ramadhān sees mercies and blessings from Allah descending upon us; hundreds and thousands of people are forgiven and are honoured with freedom from Jahannam.

Obeying Allah and fulfilling His Commands becomes easy during this month. On ‘ordinary’ days, the performance of two rak‘at nafl after ‘Ishā Salāh seems difficult and tiresome. However, in Ramadhān, a person will still be eager to continue in Salāh despite having performed twenty rak‘at of tarāweeh. This ease and desire are all from Allah, for He has made this month such that there is great eagerness to devote oneself to ‘ibādah.
We can thus conclude that to gain Allah’s Pleasure, save oneself from Jahannam and gain entry into Jannah (which should be the desire, ambition and objective of every Muslim), there is no better time than the month of Ramadhān. All that is required to reap the fruits of this month is to create in our hearts the desire, ambition, devotion, zeal and eagerness and that we exert effort to acquire the Pleasure of Allah ﷻ. With a combination of all these qualities within us, we should come to the Court of our Lord and Creator with the intention of acquiring His Pleasure, and put ourselves in prostration, shedding tears and asking for forgiveness. Inshā’allah, we have complete faith that we will be honoured with forgiveness very quickly.

**SOME DIRECTIVES**

With this in mind, through the teachings of our pious predecessors (in the light of the Qur’ān and Hadeeth), there are certain guidelines which, if followed properly, will make the month of Ramadhān fruitful for us, and all these precious moments will benefit us in both worlds, inshā’allah.

**ABSTINENCE FROM SINS**

The first thing that we should bear in mind is that in this blessed and valuable month we should not commit any act of disobedience to Allah. To abstain from sin is an ‘ibādah in itself. Just as the performance of two rak‘at of nafl is regarded an act of worship, abstaining from a sin when the opportunity presents itself is also an act of worship. For example, if one is confronted with a member of the opposite sex whilst walking in the streets and the nafs creates the urge to gaze, but self-control prevails and the gaze is lowered, this is an act of ‘ibādah for which that person will be rewarded. We must take utmost care not to commit a single sin – major or minor – under any circumstances during the month of Ramadhān.

**TWO ENEMIES**

Shaytān and nafs are our archenemies who work to mislead us and both are very cunning. A critical look at our lives will reveal that we are normally only aware of the good deeds that we have performed; we tend to forget the evil ones. If a person was to sit down at the end of a day and evaluate whether he had spent his day doing good deeds or bad deeds, he will only dwell upon the good things that he has done, for example, Salāh, tilāwah, tasbeeh, and so on. In other words, he will only consider the good deeds that he was expected to perform and see whether or not he has performed them. He will never ponder
over the deeds that he was supposed to refrain from, such as watching television, backbiting, looking at non-mahram persons, etc. Such things that he is expected to avoid are never taken into account. For example, a person might have spent his day performing all his fardh Salāh, fasting and tilāwah of the Qur’ān, but at the same time he involved himself in backbiting, looking at non-mahram women and various other sins. At the end of the day, when he reflects on his actions, he will consider himself successful because he will only see the virtuous acts. Shaytān and nafs will make sure he overlooks the sins he has committed. This is how Shaytān and nafs deceive us. They let us perform a few good deeds but at the same time involve us in committing various other sins. We are then misled into being satisfied with the performance of the good deeds while we forget the sins.

**EFFECT OF COMMITTING SINS**

Sadly, this is often our state in the month of Ramadhān as well. It is deduced from a Hadeeth of Rasoolullah ﷺ that when one spends the day or night in ‘ibādah but also commits sins during that time, then these devotions go unrewarded. Rasoolullah ﷺ has also said, “Many of those who fast, obtain nothing through such fasting except hunger; and many of those who perform Salāh during the night, obtain nothing by it, except the discomfort of staying awake. ” (Ibne Mājah)

From this Hadeeth we can deduce that in spite of fasting all day, we will gain nothing because we do not stay away from evil and sin in that state. Similar is the case of one who spends his night in ‘ibādah but does not refrain from sins, such as lying, backbiting, missing Fajr Salāh, etc.

The consequences and effects of committing sins are so great that they destroy good deeds. Rasoolullah ﷺ has stated this about one particular disease: “Abstain from hasad (jealousy), because hasad devours good deeds like fire devours wood. ” (Aboo Dāwood)

**WHAT IS ‘HASAD’?**

Hasad is that condition of the heart which desires the destruction of some quality or bounty that somebody has been blessed with by Allah. The ‘hāsid’ (jealous person) is not usually concerned whether the bounty falls in his share or not. For example, if someone has ‘ilm, honour, wealth, beauty, piety or any other good quality, a jealous person will always yearn for those things to be lost or ruined and probably desire them for himself. Jealousy may seem very trivial to us, yet
its effects are devastating! This, however, should not be confused with ‘ghibtah’, which means to see some bounty in someone and desire for the same without wishing its destruction from him/her.

Hence, the first thing we must endeavour to do in Ramadhān is abstain from sins. Optional ‘ibādāt are important too; but more than that we should make effort to keep away from sins. May Allah give us all the tawfeeq to practice this. Āmeen.

**TELEVISION AND VIDEO**

In Ramadhān, if we take a look in our societies, we will find that even in Ramadhān, television and video continue to entertain many families. We are all aware of the harmful effects of television and yet in the month of Ramadhān, when the Rahmah (Mercy) of Allah ﷺ descends on earth like heavy rain, the television remains switched on. During heavy rain, a person will get soaked wet even if he was to walk only a few yards. Similarly, as the Mercy of Allah ﷺ is descending upon us in abundance, if we take only a few steps towards acquiring this Mercy, it will not leave us deprived. However, anyone who is busy watching television, is depriving his home of this limitless Mercy. The television and video act as an umbrella which prevents the Mercy of Allah ﷺ descending upon the home and the inhabitants. My humble request is that you make a firm resolution to remove televisions and video recorders from your homes for good.

There are yet other families who, although abstaining from watching television during the month of Ramadhān, record all their favourite programmes and watch them as soon as Ramadhān is over! To record programmes on video in the month of Ramadhān is also a grave sin. In addition, we make du‘ā in Ramadhān and repent for our sins and make a promise to Allah ﷺ not to commit sins again. If we record programmes to view later, then we are showing by our actions that we are only refraining from sins during the month of Ramadhān and we have no intention to do so afterwards. We have no sincerity, for as soon as Ramadhān is over and Allah ﷺ brings us the day of ‘Eed – the day of happiness – we shall once again begin to commit sins and disobey our Creator. How dangerous is this situation!

**TOTAL REJECTION OF SINS**

We must save ourselves from sins completely. Consider the month of Ramadhān as a training ground to instill good habits which we can continue throughout the year and beyond. I request my