**Advantages of the Month of Ramadan**

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**Introduction**

 Abu Hurairah may Allah be pleased with him reported: When the Month of Ramadan came, the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him said: "Ramadan, a blessed month, has come to you during which God has made it obligatory for you to fast. In it the gates of heaven are opened, the gates of Fire are locked, and the rebellious devils are chained. In it God has a night which is better than a thousand months. He who is deprived of its good has indeed suffered deprivation." (Narrated by Ahmed, Al-Nesai and others, graded as good by Al-Jawzaqany and as authentic by virtue of another Hadith by others)

 Ibn Rajab said: Some scholars said that this Hadith is evidence for permitting people to congratulate each other for the month of Ramadan. Why not while the believer is given glad tidings that the gates of Paradise are opened?! Why not while the guilty is given glad tidings that the gates of Hell-Fire are closed?! Why not while the wise is given glad tidings that the devils are chained?! This time (the month of Ramadan) does not resemble other times.

**Month of fasting has come with blessings … So honor this coming visitor**

Mu'alla bin Al-Fadl said: They (the antecedents) were supplicating to Allah to make them reach the month of Ramadan for six months, and were supplicating Him to accept it from them for six months.

 Yahia bin Abi Kathir said: They (the antecedents) used to say this supplication: "O Allah, make me reach Ramadan, make me benefit from Ramadan and take it from me accepted."

**1-**

Allah the Al-Mighty said: "Whoever works righteousness, man or woman, and has Faith, verily, to him will We give a new life, a life that is good and pure."

 This is the happiness in the world and in the Hereafter.

 The month of Ramadan and fasting during it have great wisdoms and many advantages; apparent and hidden, individual, devotional, psychological, healthful, and social. They also have countless positive effects regarding religious and worldly affairs.

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**2-**

Allah the Al-Mighty said: "O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that you may (learn) self-restraint."

 This verse refers to strive together towards all that is good, and to compete on completing acts of obedience, on perfecting dutiful acts and on following not innovating. Fasting is considered among the greatest means that lead to piety, which is considered the main core of success in the world and in the Hereafter.

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**3-**

Allah the Al-Mighty said: "(Fasting) for a fixed number of days; but if any of you is ill, or on a journey, the prescribed number (should be made up) from days later. For those who can do it (with hardship), is a ransom, the feeding of one that is indigent. But he that will give more, of his own free will; it is better for him. And it is better for you that you fast, if you only knew."

 The month of fasting is of few days and many rewards.

 It is out of Allah's Mercy that He facilitates for people; that He removes hardship from upon them, that He is kind to them; that He calls for their unity; that He joins the legal rules of fasting with visible matters, with considerable interests and with traditional, mental and innate wisdoms; and that He guides them to what is good for them in life and Hereafter.

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**4-**

Allah the Al-Mighty said: "The month of Ramadan in which was sent down the Qur'an, as a guide to mankind, also clear (Signs) for guidance and judgment (between right and wrong). So every one of you who is present (at his home) during that month should spend it in fasting, but if anyone is ill, or on a journey, the prescribed number (should be made up) by days later. Allah intends every facility for you; He does not want to put you to difficulties. (He wants you) to complete the prescribed period, and to glorify Him in that He has guided you; and perchance you shall be grateful."

 Allah has characterized the month of Ramadan with revealing the Holy Qur'an during it; it is the month of reciting the Holy Qur'an and meditating at it, of guidance, of celebrating remembrance of Allah, and of thanking Allah for completing Favor and facilitation.

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**5-**

Allah the Al-Mighty said: "When My servants ask you (O Muhammad) concerning Me, I am indeed close (to them): I listen to the prayer of every suppliant when he calls on Me: Let them also, with a will, listen to My call and believe in Me: that they may walk in the right way."

 The month of Ramadan is a time of answering supplications.

 Ibn Kathir said: Mentioning this verse that urges to make supplications, among the rules of fasting, guides to exert efforts in supplication when completing the prescribed period and at the time of every break of the fast. Imam Abu Dawood At-Taialesy narrated that Abdullah bin Amr reported that he heard the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him saying: "For every fasting person when breaking his fast, an answered supplication." And so hen Abdullah bin Amr was breaking his fast, he used to call his wives and children and supplicate … Imam Ahmed, At-Tirmidhi, Al-Nesai and Ibn Majah narrated that Abu Hurairah reported that the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him said: "There are three whose supplications are not turned back: A just ruler, a fasting person until he breaks his fast and the one who has been wronged."

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**6-**

Allah the Al-Mighty said: "Permitted to you, on the night of the fasts, is the approach to your wives. They are your garments and you are their garments. Allah knows what you used to do secretly among yourselves; but He turned to you and forgave you; so now associate with them, and seek what Allah has ordained for you, and eat and drink, until the white thread of dawn appear to you distinct from its black thread; then complete your fast till the night appears; but do not associate with your wives while you are in the Masjids. Those are Limits (set by) Allah: Approach not nigh thereto. Thus Allah makes clear His Signs to men: that they may learn self-restraint."

 The Prophet's companions were pleased with this permission and generosity from the Most Merciful of the Merciful (Allah). Allah has prescribed fasting to test which of us is best in deed and piety.

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**7-**

Allah the Al-Mighty said: "We sent it (the Qur'an) down during a Blessed Night: for We (ever) wish to warn (against evil). \* In that (Night) is made distinct every affair of wisdom."

 Allah also said: "We have indeed revealed (the Qur'an) in the Night of Decree. \* And what will explain to you what the Night of Decree is? \* The Night of Decree is better than a thousand months. \* Therein come down the angles and the Ruh (i.e. Gabriel) by Allah's permission, on every errand. \* Peace is this (Night) until the rise of dawn."

 The Night of Decree has a great reward and its good is better than good of eighty three years and four months.

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**8-**

Abu Hurairah may Allah be pleased with him reported: The Messenger of Allah peace be upon him used to encourage the people to pray Qiyam (the night prayer) in Ramadan, without insisting on that. He was saying: "Whoever spends the night of Decree in prayer out of faith and in the hope of reward, he will be forgiven his previous sins." The Prophet also said: "Whoever fasts during Ramadan out of faith and in the hope of reward, he will be forgiven his previous sins, and whoever spends the night of Decree in prayer out of faith and in the hope of reward, he will be forgiven his previous sins." (Agreed upon)

 Ramadan is the month of forgiveness.

 Abu Hurairah may Allah be pleased with him reported that the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him said: "May he be abased who passes through the whole of Ramadan before his sins are forgiven." (Narrated by At-Tirmidhi, Ibn Khuzaimah and Ibn Heban, graded as good and eccentric by At-Tirmidhi)

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**9-**

Jabir bin Abdullah may Allah be pleased with him reported that the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him said: "At every breaking of the fast Allah has people whom He frees (from the Fire), and that happens every night." (Narrated by Ahmed and Ibn Majah, graded as authentic)

 Abu Hurairah or Abu Saeed (a suspicion from Al-A'mash) reported that the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him said: Allah the Al-Mighty has people whom He frees (from the Fire), and that happens every night (in Ramadan), and each of these (people) has an answered supplication." (Narrated by Ahmed) There are other Hadith that witness for this Hadith. Al-Haithamy said: "The narrators of this Hadith are those of authentic Hadith."

 These are great advantages and beautiful rewards of the month of Ramadan. He who makes use of these hours and moments will, by Allah's Mercy, win with great reward and survive from great punishment, and Allah repents on those who repent.

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**10-**

Abu Hurairah may Allah be pleased with him reported that the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him said: "When Ramadan comes the gates of the Garden are opened and the gates of the Fire are locked, and the devils are chained." (Agreed upon)

 Abu Hurairah also reported that the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him said: "On the first night of the month of Ramadan, the devils are shackled, the jinn are restrained, and the gates of the Fires are shut such that no gate among them would be opened. The gates of Paradise are opened such that no gate among them would be closed, and a caller calls: 'O seeker of the good; come near!' and 'O seeker of evil; stop!' There are those whom Allah frees from the Fire. And that is every night." (Narrated by At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah, graded as good)

 Ramadan is a great opportunity for truthful repentance, for correcting the way and for coming to Allah with heart and other organs. So, beware of delaying and neglecting opportunities. They may not be repeated in your life.

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**11-**

Abu Hurairah may Allah be pleased with him reported that the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him said: "Allah the Exalted and Majestic said: 'Every act of the son of Adam is for him, except As-Siyam (the fasting) which is (exclusively) for Me, and I will reward him for it.' Fasting is a shield. When anyone of you is observing fast, he should neither indulge in obscene language nor should he raise his voice; and if anyone reviles him or tries to quarrel with him, he should say: 'I am fasting.' By Him in Whose Hand the soul of Muhammad is, the breath of one observing Saum (fasting) is sweeter to Allah than the fragrance of musk. The one who fasts, experiences two joys: he feels pleasure when he breaks the fast. He is joyful by virtue of his fast when he meets his Lord." (Agreed upon) The word of this Hadith is for Al-Bukhari.

 In the narration of Muslim: "The reward of every (good) deed of a person is multiplied from ten to seven hundred times. Allah (SWT) says: 'The reward of observing Saum is different from the reward of other good deeds; Saum is for Me, and I Alone will give its reward. The person observing Saum abstains from food and drink only for My sake'."

 Ramadan is the month of multiplying reward, educating the soul on devotion, giving precedence to what Allah loves over lusts and desires of the self, and educating it with good and great manners.

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**12-**

Ibn Abbas may Allah be pleased with them reported: "Allah’s Messenger peace be upon him was the most generous of humankind in charity, and he was at his most charitable in the month of Ramadan, until it was concluded. Gabriel would then come to him and present the Qur'an to him, and when Gabriel met him, Allah’s Messenger peace be upon him was more generous in charity than the winds sent with showering rain." (Agreed upon)

 Ramadan is the month of generosity, charity and dedicating to reciting the Holy Qur'an as the antecedents were doing. Some of them were reciting the whole Qur'an each night, others were reciting it every two nights, and others were reciting it every three nights. Astonishing matters were reported about Abu Hanifah and Al-Shaf'i regarding this affair.

 When Ramadan came, Al-Zuhari was dedicating to recite the Holy Qur'an, and to feed people.

 Also when Ramadan came, Malik used to leave reading Hadith and gathering with scholars, and was dedicating to reciting the Holy Qur'an.

 In addition, when Ramadan came, Sufyan Al-Thawry used to leave all acts of worshipping and dedicated to reciting the Qur'an. Sufyan said: When Ramadan came, Zubaid Al-Yami used to bring copies of the Qur'an and gathers his companions (to recite it).

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**13-**

'Aisha may Allah be pleased with her reported: "The Messenger of Allah peace be upon him used to strive more in worship during Ramadan than he strove in any other time of the year; and he would devote himself more (in the worship of Allah) in the last ten nights of Ramadan than he strove in earlier part of the month." (Narrated by Muslim)

 Ibn Abbas may Allah be pleased with them reported that the Prophet peace be upon him said: "(The performance of) 'Umrah during Ramadan is equal to Hajj (pilgrimage)." Or said, "Equal to the performance of Hajj with me." (Agreed upon)

 Zaid bin Khaled Al-Juhani may Allah be pleased with him reported that the Prophet peace be upon him said: "He who provides a fasting person something with which to break his fast, will earn the same reward as the one who was observing the fast, without diminishing in any way the reward of the latter." (Narrated by At-Tirmidhi who graded it as good and sound)

 The month of Ramadan has the honor of time, and so rewards are doubled during it. Accordingly, exert your efforts during it; it is a number of days and certain hours.

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**14-**

Abu Dharr may Allah be pleased with him reported: We fasted with the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him in Ramadan and he did not lead us in praying Qiyam until there were seven days left in the month, when he led us in praying Qiyam until one-third of the night had passed. Then he did not lead us in praying Qiyam when there were six days left. Then he led us praying Qiyam when there were five days left until one-half of the night had passed. I said: "O Messenger of Allah! What if we spend the rest of this night praying Nafl (i.e. supererogatory prayers)?" He said: "Whoever prays Qiyam with the Imam until he finishes, Allah the Al-Mighty will record for him the Qiyam of a (whole) night." Then he did not lead us in prayer or pray Qiyam until there were three days of the month left. Then he led us in praying Qiyam when there were three days left. He gathered his family and wives (and led us in prayer) until we feared that we would miss Al-Falah. I (one of the narrators) said: "What is Al-Falah?" He said: "The suhur (i.e. the predawn meal)." (Narrated by At-Tirmidhi who graded it as good and sound)

 'Aisha may Allah be pleased with her reported: "When the last ten nights of Ramadan began, the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him stayed up at night (for prayer) and he woke his family up and tightened his waist-wrap." (Agreed upon)

 The month of Ramadan is a school that teaches the good and righteous deeds, which include Qiyam (i.e. the supererogatory night prayer).

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**15-**

Abdullah bin Masood may Allah be pleased with him reported: The Messenger of Allah peace be upon him said to us: "Young man, those of you who can support a wife should marry, for it keeps you from looking at strange women and preserves you from immorality; but those who cannot should devote themselves to fasting, for it is a means of suppressing sexual desire." (Agreed upon)

 Fasting is among the best ways that suppress the devil's obsessions, discipline the desire and protects man's health and fitness. The greatest of all these purposes is that fasting is an act of obeying Allah, increases faith and so on.

 Fasting teaches condolence. Some antecedents were asked about the reason behind legislation of fasting, whereupon he said: "It is for that the rich would test hunger and so he would not forget hungry people. This is one of the wisdoms and advantages of fasting."

 Many antecedents used to share their food for breaking their fast with the poor or give it to them. Ibn 'Umar used to break his fast with the needy people. And when a needy people came to him while he was eating, he used to take from his food and give it to him.

 A beggar came to Imam Ahmed, and he gave him two breads that he was preparing for breaking his fast.

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**16-**

'Aisha may Allah be pleased with her reported: "The Prophet peace be upon him used to engage himself in I'tikaf (seclusion for prayers) in the mosque during the last ten nights of Ramadan till he passed away; thereafter, his wives followed this practice after him." (Agreed upon)

 I'tikaf is a seclusion that has good effects on the self and soul, for it leads to breaking relations with people to contact with Allah Alone. It is a faithful and divine school.

 Imam Al-Zuhari said: How wonderful Muslims are?! They abandoned I'tikaf while the Prophet peace be upon him did not leave it since he entered Madina until he died.

 'Ata' said: A man who observes I'tikaf is like a man who is in need to a great man, and so he sit on his door saying, "I will not go until you fulfill my need. And so the person observing I'tikaf; he is sitting in the house of Allah saying, "I will not leave until You forgive for me."

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**17-**

Anas bin Malik may Allah be pleased with him reported that the Prophet peace be upon him said: "Take a meal a little before dawn, for there is a blessing in taking a meal at that time." (Agreed upon)

 Abu Saeed Al-Khudri may Allah be pleased with him reported that the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him said: "There is blessing in taking the predawn meal, even if one of you only takes a drink of water; for Allah and the Angles send blessings to those who take the predawn meal." (Narrated by Ahmed) There are other Hadith that witness for this Hadith. Al-Mondhri said: "The transmitted chain of this Hadith is authentic." Al-Haithamy said: "The transmitted chain of this Hadith includes Rifa'ah; no one authenticated or defected him. And other its narrators are those of authentic Hadith."

 The blessing of the predawn meal is general; it includes life and Hereafter.

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