

Fasting: Fourth Pillar of Islam

Holy Quran on Fasting

The Holy Quran states: 'O ye who believe, fasting is prescribed for you during a fixed number of days as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may safeguard yourselves against every kind of ill and become righteous.[2:184]

The True Purpose of Ramadhan

The true purpose of Ramadhan, as of all forms of Islamic worship is to draw people closer to Allah. Though normal pursuits and occupations are carried on as usual, the emphasis on moral and spiritual values and concentration on them are intensified, and everything is subordinated to the main purpose. The hearing, the sight, the tongue, the mind are all under stricter control. For instance, not only vain talk, but much talk is also eschewed, so that there should be greater concentration on remembrance of Allah and reflection upon His attributes. The Holy Prophet said: 'He who abstains from food and drink during the period of the fast but does not restrain himself from uttering a falsehood starves himself to no purpose.' It is related of him that during Ramadhan, his own concern for and care of the poor, the needy, the sick and the orphan was intensified manifold, and that his charity knew no limit.[Hazrat Ch Zafrullah Khan (ra)]

Recitation of the Holy Quran

During the last Ramadan of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) Gabriel (peace be on him) repeated the Qur'an twice with him. In following this Sunnah (practice) we should try and finish two readings of the Qur'an during Ramadan. If reciting it twice is not possible then it should be done at least once. The rest can be listened to during *dars* and at *Taraweh*. People who go out to work can listen to audio recordings of the Qur'an while on the go, in their cars etc. Effort should be made to read and listen to as much of Qur'an as possible. [Friday Sermon, Sep 4, 2009]

Laylat-ul-Qadr [Night of Destiny]

Hudhur said in a few days we will enter the last ten days of Ramadan, during which, according to traditions, *Laylatul Qadr* falls. This is a night of particular spirituality in which God looks down on His servants in a special way. Muslims in general give a lot of significance to the last ten days of Ramadan. Even those who are not so attentive in the first two sets of ten days of the month try and improve their spiritual condition in the last ten days. People in our Community are also inclined to enhance their worship of God in the last ten days. Ahadith prove that *Laylatul Qadr* falls in the last ten days of Ramadan and it is a night of tremendous significance. However, can it make one a true believer and servant of God if effort is only made in the last ten days of Ramadan and the rest of the year is spent in disregard? God states that He created men and *Jinn* so that they may worship Him. Concentration of worship in search of a special spiritual night in the last ten days of Ramadan to make up for an entire life time's worship takes one away from this basic objective of creation. [Friday Sermon, August 27, 2010]