

Avoiding Post-Ramadan Letdown

How to keep the blessings and benefits alive for the rest of the year.

Almost invariably, it happens a few days after Ramadan is over. The letdown. Fasting is finished; the nightly prayers are over; the almost daily gatherings to break the fast as a group have vanished. We can eat, drink, and be merry again when the sun is out and shining. And that special feeling you have in your heart - the one that keeps you going despite the hunger and thirst you feel - gradually fades away. The spiritual high goes away, and all that you are left with are the bad habits you tried to shed during Ramadan, but mysteriously rear their ugly heads once Ramadan is over.

Yet, that is not supposed to happen. Ramadan is supposed to increase your faith and God consciousness: *Believers! Fasting has been prescribed for you - as it was prescribed for those before you - so that you may be conscious of God. (2:183)*. We are not supposed to be angels in Ramadan and demons at all other times. The lessons learned and spiritual benefits gained during the month of Ramadan are supposed to carry through for the rest of the year until next Ramadan.

Yet, they frequently do not. Is there anything we can do about it? Absolutely, and here are five tips we can follow to try to keep the spirit of Ramadan alive and well throughout the rest of the year.

Keep up the good habits learned during Ramadan.

More than just denying oneself food and drink, the fast of Ramadan is a complete body and soul fast. Although this should be the behavior of the believer at all times, when one is fasting, he or she should take special care not to harm anyone, curse anyone, or do anything wrong. In fact, the Prophet (pbuh) said: "Whoever does not give up forged speech and evil actions [while fasting], God is not in need of his leaving his food and drink." Well, once Ramadan is over, these good behaviors should continue.

For instance, if one took the opportunity of the month of Ramadan to try to curb talking about other people, then he or she should continue to refrain from doing so after Ramadan is over. We should continue to go to the mosque for congregational prayers.

It is so amazing to see the mosque - which was packed a few days earlier in Ramadan - be almost completely empty during *Isha*, or night, prayers when it is not Ramadan. If we can go to the mosque every day during Ramadan, we can go to the mosque every day throughout the rest of the year.

In fact, Ramadan is the perfect opportunity to quit smoking, which is prohibited during daylight hours during Ramadan. The nicotine found in tobacco smoke is more addicting than heroin, and it is one of the most difficult addictions to beat. I had a patient tell me once that it was easier to quit crack cocaine than cigarette smoking. If you can go without smoking for 14-17 hours per day during Ramadan, you can go without it for the remaining 7-10 hours. Ideally, there should be no Muslims who smoke, given the fact that they have to stop doing so for 30 days every single year. Sadly, however, the reality is quite different. Many, many Muslims smoke, and it saddens me - especially since I am a lung specialist who sees first hand the devastation wrought by cigarette smoking - to see groups of men outside the mosque immediately light up the moment sunset arrives.

Continue to fast throughout the year.

I must admit, this is the most difficult one for me to follow, but I must mention it anyway. The fast of Ramadan is obligatory for every adult Muslim, but there are numerous other fasts that Muslims are encouraged to undertake throughout the year, and we should try to participate.

For instance, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) encouraged Muslims to fast six days of the month after Ramadan, Shawwal. The reward is equivalent to fasting the entire year. In a few months, the season of Hajj will begin, and those Muslims who do not perform the Hajj are encouraged to fast the day of Arafat, when all the pilgrims will be standing on that plain and begging God for forgiveness. We should fast that day. Then there is the day of Ashura, the day which commemorates the exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt (and, for Shia, the murder of Imam Hussein, the Prophet's grandson), and Muslims are also encouraged to fast that day as well as the day before. (Ideally, Muslims should fast the first ten days of the month of Dhul Hijjah, when the Hajj occurs.)

For the very ambitious, the Prophet (pbuh) used to fast every Monday and Thursday, and if one is able, he or she could follow this *sunnah*, or tradition of the Prophet (pbuh). For the very, very ambitious, he or she could even fast in the tradition of the Prophet David (pbuh): fasting every other day.

If this is too much, perhaps we can fast one, two, or three days each month. Whatever the number, we should try to fast outside of Ramadan to help keep the spirit of the month alive in our daily lives. (Like I said, this is perhaps the most difficult suggestion for me to follow. It is particularly hard for me to fast outside of Ramadan.)

Continue the nightly *qiyam* prayers after Ramadan is over.

During the month of Ramadan, Muslims gather together and perform the *Isha*, or night prayer, and then special devotional prayers, called *Taraweeh*, in congregation. It is such a wonderful time, and it is perhaps - after actually getting to eat and drink - the best part of Ramadan. We are all together in the mosque, and we get to hear the entire Qur'an recited if we go every night of Ramadan. Why not continue this practice after Ramadan is over? Why not, at home, have your own "mini- *Taraweeh*"? You can either read what you have already memorized, or, you can read from the Qur'an itself. If you continue to do this throughout the year, it is quite possible to finish reading the entire Qur'an many times over. This is an excellent way to keep the feeling and spirit of Ramadan alive, even though Ramadan has long passed into fond memory.

Don't forget about charity.

Ramadan is also the month of charity. It was said that the Prophet (pbuh), already the most generous of all, was even more generous during the month of Ramadan. Along with teaching the believer discipline and spiritual focus, the fast of Ramadan is a potent reminder that there are millions of people around the world who must forgo food and drink *involuntarily*, out of sheer poverty. As a result, Muslims are frequently motivated to give to the poor during Ramadan, and the reward for an act of charity - already substantial - is multiplied many times over in the month of Ramadan. Frequently, Muslims discharge their obligatory annual alms tax, the *Zakah*, during the month of Ramadan.

Yet, that does not mean we should be stingy misers throughout the rest of the year. We should continue to be generous even when it is not Ramadan, perhaps devoting a little bit of what we earn to help the poor. You could even open a donor-directed fund or a charitable gift fund at a brokerage firm and invest your donations so you could give more. If you want to be even more ambitious, you can start your own charitable endowment, which was an essential aspect of the classical Islamic tradition, which has, unfortunately, gone by the wayside in modern times. **"I haven't seen you since last Ramadan..."**

Another one of the beautiful aspects of Ramadan (especially since it occurs *after* sunset) is the frequent invitations to people's homes for *iftar* meals. Here, Muslims gather and break their fast together. Not only do they frequently get to eat specially-prepared meals, but it is a great opportunity to spend time with family and friends.

Many times, it is an opportunity to see friends (and maybe even family) they do not normally get a chance to see during the rest of the year. Well, the same theme applies: if you can do it during Ramadan, you can do it any time other than Ramadan. Why not keep up the contacts made during Ramadan throughout the rest of the year? Have monthly gatherings at each other's homes or at a favorite restaurant. Whatever the case may be, let it not be another year when you say to a friend, "Wow! I haven't seen you since last Ramadan!"

For Muslims, the month of Ramadan - as the popular Christmas song goes - is the "most wonderful time of the year." The benefits and beauties of this month are boundless, and - even though I can drink my 24 oz French-Irish-Vanilla-Choco-Creme Coffeechino in the morning again - I am always feel a tinge of sadness that Ramadan is over.

Yet, we can keep the spirit of the month alive and well if we try to continue what we learned and did during the month of Ramadan throughout the rest of the year. For, that is the whole purpose of the fast, isn't it? *So that you may be conscious of God*, as the Good Book says.

Man's Greatest Enemy is His Ego

If you wish to be treated well, treat others well; if you wish that people should be just and fair to you, first be so yourself to set an example. Man's greatest enemy is his ego which manifests itself in selfishness. Even in his doing good, in his kind actions, selfishness is sometimes at work. When he does good with the thought that one day it may return to him and that he may share in the good, he sells his pearls for a price.

A kind action, a thought of sympathy, of generosity, is too precious to trade with.

One should give and, while giving, close the eyes. Man should remember to do every little action, every little kindness, every act of generosity with his whole heart, without the desire of getting anything in return making a trade out of it. The satisfaction must be in doing it and in nothing else.

Every step in evolution makes life more valuable. The more evolved you are, the more priceless is every moment; it becomes an opportunity for you to do good to others, to serve others, to give love to others, to be gentle to others, to give your sympathy to souls who are longing and hungering for it. Life is miserable when a person is absorbed in himself; as soon as he forgets himself, he is happy. (Hazrat Inayat Khan)

AFTER RAMADAAN CHANGE – GOOD AND BAD

With the end of Ramadan an important question is raised: Will Muslims continue to worship Almighty Allah with the same enthusiasm they have been doing in Ramadan?

In fact, many of the Muslims who are used to worshipping Almighty Allah during Ramadan by offering Tahajjud (late night Prayer), remembering Almighty Allah, and reciting the Qur'an do radically change after Ramadan. They abandon these good acts, succumb to worldly temptations, and fall into sins.

The masjids we see full of worshipers in Ramadan become almost empty after it. There are only a few who attend prayers in the mosque after Ramadan! Such a phenomenon requires contemplation and effective treatment on the part of reformers. In this article we will try to shed light on some of the reasons behind this phenomenon and prescribe some treatment for it.

The most outstanding reason for this phenomenon may be that many Muslims no longer regard Ramadan as a month for purifying oneself and worshipping Almighty Allah sincerely, but as a month for practicing certain traditions that people are not supposed to neglect. We find, for instance, that some Muslims observe fasting but neglect to perform prayer, and may even offer the Taraweeh Prayer without observing the prescribed Prayers.

It is not true faith that motivates those people to fast or offer Taraweeh Prayer as much as it is the habit of doing such things in Ramadan. That is why those people return to the sins they used to commit before Ramadan, as soon as this blessed month is over. Another reason for this phenomenon is the atmosphere of faith and peace that Muslims even the sinners among them, feel during this blessed month.

Almighty Allah causes evil spirits to be shackled in Ramadan and He causes the gates of Paradise to be opened. Besides, people find themselves inclined to obey Almighty Allah. This atmosphere makes it easy for people to get closer to Almighty Allah and avoid committing sins and wrongdoings.

However, when Ramadan is over and this atmosphere is gone, people return to the wrong way they used to follow before Ramadan. A third reason is that people of weak faith get easily bored of worship. This can be seen by observing the number of people who perform Taraweeh Prayer which shrinks gradually by the end of Ramadan in comparison to its beginning.

Sincere worship provides the souls with tranquility and serenity, yet it requires one to resist one's desires and whims so that it can be observed constantly.

To overcome these reasons, Muslims must bear in mind that their worship of Almighty Allah is not concerned with a certain place or time and that they are required to worship their Lord as long as they live. Allah Almighty says: [And serve thy Lord till the inevitable cometh unto thee.] (Al-Hijr 15: 99) [The inevitable here refers to death] Muslims are also to realize that Almighty Allah has bestowed the month of Ramadan upon them so that they may seek to get closer to Him Most High and vie in doing good for His sake.

If this is inculcated into the minds of Muslims, they will pay heed to worshipping Almighty Allah throughout their lives without relating this to the occurrence or departure of a certain month.

Concerning getting bored of worship, Muslims should take into consideration that sincere worship usually contradicts one's whims and desires, and this requires them to resist themselves and strive to be true worshipers.

Almighty Allah praises the believers who strive in His cause resisting their desires. He Almighty says: [And those who strive in Our (Cause), We will certainly guide them to Our Paths for verily Allah is with those who do right.] (Al-Ankabut 29: 69)

The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) also said: The (Hell) Fire is surrounded by all kinds of desires and passions, while Paradise is surrounded by all kinds of disliked undesirable things. (Muslim)

Hence, when a Muslim finds himself bored or tired of worship, he is not to yield entirely to this feeling; he should, rather, try to deal with it wisely. He should get some recreation, but at the same time he is not to give up worship altogether. He is to be moderate: neither should he excessively exhaust himself in worship, nor should he give vent to his desires of being amused and seeking worldly pleasures. One is to balance between spiritual and material desires.

When it comes to lacking the atmosphere of faith and peace that characterizes the month of Ramadan at times other than Ramadan, Muslims are to view this as a test of faith from Almighty Allah.

Believers are always tested in this life; the self's evil desires are a test and Satan's whispers are another test, and so on.

Wise is he who avoids wrongdoings even if he is inclined to committing them and trains himself to obey Almighty Allah even if there is no one to support him in this regard. Allah Almighty has not set a certain time for worshipping Him; He Most High ordains people to worship Him, [till the inevitable cometh.] (Al-Hijr 15: 99)

Finally, he who truly worships Almighty Allah in Ramadan will change for the best after it, for it is a sign that one's good deeds have been accepted when one is able to do further good deeds and vice versa.

Hence, we advise you, dear fasting Muslims, to continue performing good deeds that you were used to offering in this blessed month, bearing in mind that the most beloved deeds to Almighty Allah are those that are done constantly and regularly, even if they are little.

Allah Almighty says: [Say: truly, my prayer and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death, are (all) for Allah, the Cherisher of the worlds; no partner hath He: this am I commanded, and I am the first of those who bow to His will.] (Al-An'am 6: 162)

According to this verse, one's whole life is to be dedicated to serving Almighty Allah and obeying Him.

Are We Muslims Only in Ramadan?

It is now time for us to re-evaluate our Eemaan. Question yourselves, and in process improve yourselves. We claim to be Muslims, we claim to believe in Allah, but do we really believe in it with a firm heart, or is it just something we say? We claim to "believe" in the Unseen God, but we see the harmful effects of drinking, clubbing and smoking, yet we don't avoid them. Ask yourselves that if we don't even believe in what can be seen, do we really believe in the Unseen? Just "believing" in the existence of Allah does not make us Muslims, Shaitaan also, by the way, "believes" in Allah. We must act like Muslims also.

We must also do in actions that what we say in words and that what we know in thoughts. We say we're Muslims, but are we really? He is not a true Muslim whose hands and tongue are violent. Several of us stopped cursing and backbiting and lying during the month of Ramadan, but now what? Since Ramadan is over, should we return to those faults?

Are we Muslims only in Ramadan???

Every Muslim is to pray 5 times a day, every day, no exceptions. Several of us did that very promptly during Ramadan. Now that Ramadan is over, now what? Should we give up those prayers just because Ramadan is over?

Are we Muslims only in Ramadan???

We made duas because we understood that indeed it is Allah who listens and grants. We sought forgiveness from Allah because we realized our faults and felt guilty. We improved our conducts and lowered our voices and controlled our tempers because we realized that a Muslim is he whose actions represent peace and nobility. Now that Ramadan is over, will we go back to our same old self?

Are we Muslims only in Ramadan???

We tried our best to close our ears to that which was not permissible to hear, we tried our best to stop our tongues at times when we were about to say something which we are not allowed to say, we tried our best to lower our gazes at sights which we are not allowed to see. Now that Ramadan is over, do those things become permissible to us?

Are we Muslims only in Ramadan???

We refrained from going to clubs and watching movies and listening to songs during Ramadan because we realized these attributes do not represent Muslims. Now that Ramadan is over, should we return to our previous lifestyle? **Are we Muslims only in Ramadan???**

We were awake at nights, not spending time in clubs or with friends, but instead we were awake at nights to do ibaadat for the Will and Pleasure of Allah. Now that Ramadan is over, are we relieved of our responsibilities? **Are we Muslims only in Ramadan???**

We refrained from dawn to dusk, not only from the Haraam, but also the Halaal. The purpose of this abstinence was to create patience and virtue, and realize that if you want you can even stay away from the Halaal, so why can you not avoid the Haraam? Sure you can. You just need the will. Now that Ramadan is over, can we go back to eating, talking, watching, doing, and thinking Haraam? **Are we Are we Muslims only in Ramadan??????**

POST RAMADAN ADVICE by Shaikh Abdul Hamid

In the Name of Almighty Allah Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

With the successful completion of Ramadan, we pray *Insha Allah* that Almighty Allah Jallah Wa'ala in His Infinite Mercy and Bounty has accepted our fasting and our devotions, our good deeds, our *Taubah*, our *Ibadah* and our *Zakat*.

The Glorious month of Ramadan should have induced in us a greater awareness of our purpose in life and a discipline and determination to work towards that purpose for the next eleven months - *Insha'Allah; Ameen!* We cannot and must not return to our old, careless and sluggish ways for the struggle within us has to be constantly developed and renewed as commanded by Almighty Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala Who informs us with words of Truth and Wisdom in *verse 102 of Surah Al-I-Imran*:

"O you who believe! Have Taqwa of Allah according to His Right and die not save as Muslims."

During the blessed month of Ramadan, we were fasting during the day. We spent our nights in *Ibadah*. We were getting closer to Almighty Rabbul Ala'meen Most Gracious and Exalted through all our good deeds. During this most wonderful month, we were hoping for His Reward and fearing His punishment. Now that this most glorious month has sadly come to an end we have to face the future.

In fact, every day of our lives is another stage or another step towards the *Aghirah* where we will be presented with all our deeds, not just our good deeds that we performed during Ramadan but with all our deeds during our life on this *Doonya*.

Almighty Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala has shown His *Muhabbat* towards this *Ummah* by having blessed us with His *Din*, His Glorious Qur'an and with His Beloved Nabee Sallallahoo Alayhi Wasallam. Through him we were led out of the darkness and onto the *Path of Seerathal Mustaqeem*. This *Ummah* was then abundantly blessed with the great gifts of Salaat, Fasting, Zakat and Hajj. How truly unfortunate that we, the *Ummah* of Almighty Allah Azza Wajjal's Beloved Nabee Sallallahoo Alayhi Wasallam who have been raised for the benefit of mankind, are like a child born in a diamond mine. That little child has all the diamonds and other precious stones all around him or her, but he or she plays with them as if they were ordinary stones.

Our attitudes towards Islam are exactly similar, because the treasures which the world is searching for, and is suffering through being deprived of, have all been given to us by virtue of our having been born Muslims.

The *Kalimah Tawhid* (the creed of the Oneness of Almighty Allah), which shows us the *Straight Path*, has been drummed into us from our earliest childhood. Those magnificent and priceless prescriptions of *Ibadah*, and fasting which elevates mankind from a mere animal to a human level, we have inherited without effort.

That matchless practice of *Zakat* and the feeling of caring and sharing which purifies the heart as well as the financial systems of the world, without which people of the world are at loggerheads with each other, is ours as our birthright. Similarly *Hajj* has been part of our heritage for many hundreds of years.

This magnificent way is more effective and more powerful than any other ever conceived to propagate our movement throughout this *Doonya* and keep it alive for all eternity. This universal movement is more powerful than any other to draw human beings in the name of Almighty Allah Jallah Wa'ala and to make them into a brotherhood transcending race, ethnicity, colour and nationality.

With all these precious gems that we as an *Ummah* have been blessed with, I truly regret to say with the voice of my afflicted heart that we are surrounded by all these treasures, but how do we treat them? We play with them in the same way as that ignorant child who is surrounded by diamonds and regards them as mere stones. This makes our hearts bleed when we see the frittering away of such tremendous wealth and power through our ego our ignorance and our foolishness.

During this glorious month of *Tawhid* and *Taqwa*, we returned to our Most Loving and Glorious Creator and Maker with *Taubah*, repentance and by doing noble and good deeds. We exhorted ourselves to obey Almighty Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala. We realized the importance of worshipping none other than Him and the relative unimportance of this egotistical world.

As slaves and servants of Almighty Allah Tabaraka Wata'ala we should not return to disobedience after the end of Ramadan as the Lord of Ramadan is also the Lord of the remaining months. As confirmed Muslims, we should not demolish what we have established of our good deeds.

One of the signs of the acceptance of our good deeds is that they are followed by good deeds and to bear in mind that a return to disobedience after begging for forgiveness is a greater sin and evil than what was done before *Taubah*! The balance is in front of us that will weigh our good and evil deeds. This has been made crystal clear to us with words of Truth in verses 8 and 9 of Surah Al-Araf:

**"Whose balance will be heavy, they shall be the successors.
Whose balance is light, they are the ones who lost themselves
because they denied and rejected Our signs."**

We may all believe that that we have successfully passed the test of Ramadan and that Almighty Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala has accepted our fasting and our *Ibadah*. But immediately after we have performed our Salaat-ul-Eid, Almighty Allah Jallah Wa'ala makes us face new tests since the month of Ramadan was a type of training that will help us pass our next tests. Almighty Allah Kareem tells us that Ramadan is a golden opportunity for all of us to attain *Taqwa* and this *Taqwa* is what all of us would need to pass the trials that we will be tested with.

Almighty Allah Rabbul Al'meen tells us very clearly with words of wisdom in verse 1 of Surah Al-Ankabut that He is putting through trials:

"Does mankind think that they will be left alone by saying, 'We believe,' and they have not been tested?"

Without this *Taqwa* we will not be able to meet the challenges that Almighty Allah Jallah Wa'ala puts before us. The first and foremost test that we face after the completion of Ramadan is our *Salaat*.

How many of us who have attended and filled the Masaajids during the glorious month of Ramadan, then as soon as Ramadan has ended, we are not to be seen until next year?

How many of us have never missed a prayer during the great month of Mercy but as soon as the Eid prayer is over very few of us bother to offer the rest of the day's prayers on the Day of Eid itself. What happened to our *Taubah*, to our good deeds and *Ibadah* and our sincerity to Almighty Rabbul Ala'meen that we showed outwardly during the great month of Ramadan.

What happened to our sincerity and our willingness to please our Glorious Creator and Sustainer that we do not even bother to pray for the sake of pleasing our Lord while the performance of regular *Salaat* is much more important than the fast. Have we not paid any attention or heeded Almighty Allah's warning in verses 1 and 2 of Surah Al-Mulk:

"Blessed is He in Whose hand is the Sovereignty, and He is able to do all things. Who has created life and death that He may try you, which of you is the best in conduct. And He is Mighty, the Wise."

Alhumdoelillah! Ramadan taught us that Al- Islam is indeed a religion with a difference. It is not a collection of dogmas, rites or practices, but is a way of life, a system.

It is the *Din of Almighty Allah* and it is an attempt to grapple with actual realities and problems of life, working inwardly as much as outwardly. In its wonderful workings, Islam looks in as much as the inner nature of man as to its outwardly needs and goes completely hand in hand with the life of a *Muh'min's* faith. It is because in a congruent triangle, man, life and Almighty Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala are one.

Another most important truth is that once in Islam we come out of the jungle and into civilization. Islam the *Din* of Rabbul Ala'meen moves and breaths with the modern atmosphere. Can mankind therefore continue to ignore such a faith? Alas, those who ignore it put off their day of salvation.

Correspondingly, the more we as sincere Muslims hasten to live in accordance with Islam, the more we move ahead on the path of salvation, the path of destiny and the *Path of Seerathal Mustaqeem*.

The doing of good deeds, constant *Ibadah*, *Tilawat* of the Glorious Qur'an, sincere feelings of caring and sharing and, spending in the Way of *Fie Sabilillah* are vital since they help to keep the torch burning.

It is during this glorious and auspicious month that the brilliant light is there for all to see. All that is needed is an open heart.

Islam is an indissoluble link between absolute values and the virtues of change, between the fundamental certainties of revelation and the creative doubt that gives rise to scientific reflection.

Nations boast of their power, wealth, and culture, complete independence and democracy but the reality is quite different. Nations have gone astray and are doing things that humanity should be ashamed of.

We thank Almighty Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala abundantly for having blessed us with the great month of Ramadan. We thank Him abundantly for bringing us out of darkness and into the light of the Most Glorious Qur'an.

We thank Him for blessing us with knowledge of His Revelations; for teaching us wisdom, for blessing us with grateful hearts, and for helping us grow morally, intellectually and spiritually.

And so the story goes on and on, with Divine Attributes and satanic influences co-existing in the same individual who has embarked on this life involuntary to spend an allotted time on this *Doonya*, man having had no choice in his birth or death [Q.28:68].

After a life time when we are loaded with sins so heavy to carry to the *Aghirah*, the same sins that we had committed and had blamed on Shaythaan, now console ourselves by reciting *Duah* in complete humility and humbleness:

"O our Almighty Creator and Sustainer! We have been weighed down heavily with our sins, with our errors and with our mistakes.

Save us from drowning in the ocean of our sins and take us safely to the shores of Thy Mercy and Thy Muhabbat.

Make us detest being disobedient to Thee and make us love to comply with Thy commands."

"O Allah Jallah Wa'ala! Help us, in whatever little time that is left in our lives that is rapidly coming to an end, so that we do our duty towards Thee and in Thy way and in the service of mankind." "O Rabbul Ala'meen!

Do not accept from us our Taubah before death overtakes us and bring our lives to a satisfactory completion as dedicated Muslims with the last words of our breath being: "La Illalaha Illallahoo Muhammadar Rasoolulah."

Baarak Allaahu Feekum - wa-sal-Allaahu wa-Sallam 'alaa
Nabiyyinaa Muhammad Sallallahoo Alayhi Wasallam.
Was Salamualaykum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuhu.

THE END OF RAMADAN

We reached end of this blessed month. You've abstained from food, drink . I think that you've learned that you have much more power than you thought, haven't you? It was filled with many opportunities for you to discover this. From the length of time that you fasted, the prayers, the many deeds that you did, the moments of silence, the tears and the clarity that came through reflection.

What have you leant? Are you recognizing your potential? Is it becoming clearer that you are an ambassador of Allah and that means you have a job to do in this world? Like Muhammad peace be upon him, you are meant to be a mercy to those around you. You are to meant to go forward in your society and find a way to give back to those who were blessed with different things than you.

You are meant to own the things of this world with your hands and let Allah fill your heart with His Love and Light. It is time for you to shed all the things that have taken over your life. You've reflected on your priorities, so now, get them in order.

You have been given a noble mission, responsibility and privilege- to bring your gifts and talents forward and use it on behalf of the Creator of the universe to bring goodness to others; to help; to share; to do.... It starts wherever you are- in your home, your neighbourhood, village, town, city, province, county, state, country and world.

How can you do this? Get up, let go of your past, shed the judgments of short-sighted people, discipline your ego, leave the hurt behind but keep all the learning from it. Then, look forward. Your soul needs you to act now; your community needs your skills, so does your country and our world. Even more importantly though, **this is why you were created.**

If fasting taught you anything, it should have been the need to be constantly conscious of the Most Merciful and one of the most important ways you "remember" is through your compassionate citizenship and humble, non-judgmental service to others.

How will your family, community, society and country benefit from you? As Allah's ambassador, what will you do? Will you wake up now and do what you were meant to do or will you slip back into the monotonous servitude of people and things? Will your vision remain clear about your purpose or will you lose it now that the ritual fast is over?

You have a choice right now...I am urging you to do the right thing..**let us work together and live meaningfully, so that when death greets us, we can smile knowing that we will be reunited with our Lord and can look back and know, we did our best while we travelled on the earth.**

