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رَمَضَان

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The Attitude Can Do It!

Being positive, alive, bouncy, adds that sparkle to your fast, and if you could add a smile to that what a blessing! Take note those who are sulky, dragging their lower lips with huge effort and vile accusation, you too can feel the 'high' this month, instead of being dull and morose. Ramadaan comes once a year, and even if I have to hear the moulvi's and their clichés a hundred times more, I'm grateful for being around, part of an annual phenomenon. Grateful for the reminders, actually!

We take life for granted. How do you know if perhaps this isn't your last Ramadaan fast in your life? Ok so even if you don't die before next Ramadaan, what if your health deteriorates and you end up in hospital, or the doctor says you can't fast!

With every year that has passed I've felt a subtle tug at my subconscious, a guilt that I was nowhere near my best behaviour. Or that I could have read more Qur'an, or I should have fed some poor person, or I should have been regular with taraweeh. Then the regret and the cloud of lost opportunity follows for a while.

Rajab and Sha'baan, the months preceding Ramadaan, all you hear is Ramadaan Ramadaan, but still, when Ramadaan comes, it hits you like the tsunami you weren't expecting.

How much this sounds like the warnings we ignore about the Day of Judgement! The signs are all there, but we can't get serious. We are drugged into a stupor by the duniya, while all the signs are flashing frantically around us.

Clearly this is not denial or disbelief, it's complacency. Comforts and illusion that pamper us to make us forget. Nobody likes leaving a warm bed in the last part of the night, to pray. You are deep in your own comfort-zone.

Attitude. If this gets put right there's hope. Once you've realised something is amiss and needs attention, you have already taken the first step. Then you have to convince yourself and constantly remind yourself. Aware and alert. Set up the attitude, it's time for change? This goes further than dressing smartly and dolling-up with expensive makeup. This is soul-deep.

So its RAMADAAN. A most ideal time to do the changes. To do what you do to make it a memorable month, and to encourage those around you. The attitude can do it! RAMADAAN MUBARAK!

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HAZRAT KHADIJATUL KUBRA ﷺ

Today, Islam is the greatest force in the world. Its enemies cannot do it any harm. It is like a mighty oak which the storms of the world cannot uproot. Yet there was a time when this mighty oak was a tiny sapling, and desperately needed someone to protect it from the hurricanes of idolatry and polytheism which threatened to uproot it.

Muslims may forget it but Islam cannot forget that in its infancy, it were Abu Talib and Hazrat Khadija ﷺ who protected it. They made Islam invulnerable. Abu Talib protected the sapling of Islam from the tempests of misbelief and heathenism; and Hazrat Khadija ﷺ irrigated it with her wealth. She did not let the sapling of Islam die from drought. In fact, she didn't even let it wilt from neglect. Protecting Islam was, for Abu Talib and Hazrat Khadija ﷺ, their foremost duty. Islam was their first love, and it was a love which they passed on, as their "legacy" to their children. If they - Abu Talib and Hazrat Khadija ﷺ - had protected the tree of Islam from its enemies in the lifetime of Hazrat Muhammed Mustafa ﷺ, and had "irrigated" it with vast quantities of gold and silver, their children and their grandchildren protected it, from its enemies after his death, and irrigated it with their blood. Their blood was the most sacrosanct blood in all creation. After all, it was the blood of Hazrat Muhammed Mustafa ﷺ himself - the Last and the Greatest of all Messengers of Allah, and the Chief of all Apostles and Prophets.

Hazrat Khadija ﷺ was an "eye-witness" of the birth of Islam. She nursed it through its infancy, through its most difficult, and through its most formative years. Islam was given shape and design in her home. If any home can be called the cradle of Islam, it was her home. She "reared" Islam. If any home can be called the "axis" of Islam, it was her home; Islam revolved around her home. Her home was the "home" of Quran Majid the Book of Allah, and the religious and political code of Islam. It was in her home that Gabriel was bringing Revelations from Heaven for ten years.

Hazrat Khadija ﷺ has collected more "firsts" in the history of nascent Islam than anyone else. She was the first wife of the last messenger of Allah. She was the first Believer. She was the very first mortal to declare that the Creator was only One, and that Hazrat Muhammed ﷺ was His messenger. Next to her husband, she was the very first individual who heard the Voice of Revelation. She was the first person who offered prayers to Allah with her husband. Whenever he went into the presence of Allah, she was his constant companion. She was the first Mother of Believers. She was the only wife of Hazrat Muhammed Mustafa ﷺ who did not have to co-exist with a co-wife. All the love, all the affection and all the friendship of her husband, were hers and hers alone exclusively!

When Hazrat Muhammed Mustafa ﷺ proclaimed his mission as the messenger of Allah, and told the Arabs not to worship idols, and called upon them to rally under the banner of Tauheed, a tidal wave of sorrows broke upon him. The polytheist began to thirst for his blood. They invented new and ingenious ways of tormenting him, and they made many attempts to stifle his voice forever. In those times of stress and distress, Hazrat Khadija ﷺ was a bastion of strength for him. It was only because of her and Abu Talib that the polytheist could not disrupt his work of preaching and propagating Islam. She made, in this manner, a most important contribution to the survival and propagation of Islam.

Hazrat Khadija ﷺ set basic standards that spell domestic peace, harmony, happiness and fulfillment, and she upheld and reflected them in her life. She demonstrated that the key to a family's strength and happiness is the degree of emotional closeness between its members. She spelled out the rights and duties of husbands and wives. The standards set by her, became the "blueprint" for family life in Islam. Hazrat Muhammed Mustafa ﷺ and Hazrat Khadija ﷺ spent twenty-five years together, and in those years, they formulated the "laws" that make a marriage successful and a life happy. Since then, even in temporal terms, the rest of the world has not been able to find better laws. Islam incorporated the same laws in its own programme. Hazrat Khadija ﷺ turned the abstractions of idealism into reality. Her life with Hazrat Muhammed ﷺ is concrete evidence of that fact. What she gave to the world was not merely a set of principles or theoretical ideas but an experience, rich in moments of pure enchantment with Islam, and subtle rhythms of love for Allah and His Messenger.

As mentioned earlier, the pagan Arabs had a sense of honor gone all awry. It was their "sense of honor" which impelled them to kill their daughters. Islam of course put an end to this barbaric and horrendous practice by making it at once a sin against Allah, and a crime against humanity. Besides putting an end to female infanticide, Islam also gave dignity, honor and rights to women, and it guaranteed those rights.

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RASULULLAH ﷺ SERMON ON RAMADAAN


Al-Imam Al-Baihaqi رحمه الله reported on the authority of Salman Al-Farsi رحمه الله that Prophet ﷺ delivered a sermon on the last day of the month of Sha'ban. In it He ﷺ said, "O People! The month of Allah (Ramadaan) has come with its mercies, blessings and forgiveness. ALLAH has decreed this month the best of all months. The days of this month are the best among the days and the nights are the best among the nights and the hours during Ramadan are the best among the hours. This is a month in which you have been invited by Him (to fast and pray). ALLAH has honoured you in it. In every breath you take is a reward of ALLAH, your sleep is worship, your good deeds are accepted and your invocations are answered.

Therefore, you must invoke your Lord in all earnestness with hearts free from sin and evil, and pray that ALLAH may help you to keep fast, and to recite the Holy Qur'an. Indeed!, miserable is the one who is deprived of ALLAH's forgiveness in this great month. While fasting remember the hunger and thirst on the Day of Judgement. Give alms to the poor and needy. Pay respect to your elders, have sympathy for your youngsters and be kind towards your relatives and kinsmen. Guard your tongue against unworthy words, and your eyes from scenes that are not worth seeing (forbidden) and your ears from sounds that should not be heard. Be kind to orphans so that if your children may become orphans they will also be treated with kindness. Do repent to ALLAH for your sins and supplicate with raised hands at the times of prayer as these are the best times, during which ALLAH Almighty looks at His servants with mercy. ALLAH Answers if they supplicate, Responds if they call, Grants if He is asked, and Accepts if they entreat. O people! you have made your conscience the slave of your desires. Make it free by invoking ALLAH for forgiveness. Your back may break from the heavy load of your sins, so prostrate yourself before ALLAH for long intervals, and make this load lighter. Understand fully that ALLAH has promised in His Honour and Majesty that, people who perform salaah and sajda (prostration) will be guarded from Hell-fire on the Day of Judgement.

O people!, if anyone amongst you arranges for iftar (meal at sunset) for any believer, ALLAH will reward him as if he had freed a slave, and ALLAH will forgive him his sins. A companion asked: "but not all of us have the means to do so" The Prophet ﷺ replied: Keep yourself away from Hell-fire though it may consist of half a date or even some water if you have nothing else. O people!, anyone who during this month cultivates good manners, will walk over the Sirat (bridge to Paradise) on the day when feet will tend to slip. For anyone who during this month eases the workload of his servants, ALLAH will make easy his accounting, and for anyone who doesn't hurt others during this month, ALLAH will safeguard him from His Wrath on the Day of Judgement. Anyone who respects and treats an orphan with kindness during this month, ALLAH shall look at him with kindness on that Day. Anyone who treats his kinsmen well during this month, ALLAH will bestow His Mercy on him on that Day, while anyone who mistreats his kinsmen during this month, ALLAH will keep away from His Mercy.

Whomsoever offers the recommended prayers during this month, ALLAH will save him from Hell, and whomever observes his obligations during this month, his reward will be seventy times the reward during other months. Whomever repeatedly invokes ALLAH's blessings on me, Allah will keep his scale of good deeds heavy, while the scales of others will be tending to lightness. Whomever recites during this month an ayat (verse) of the Holy Qur'an, will get the reward of reciting the whole Qur'an in other months. O people!, the gates of Paradise remain open during this month. Pray to your Lord that they may not be closed for you. While the gates of Hell are closed, pray to your Lord that they never open for you. Satan has been chained, invoke your Lord not to let him dominate you."

Ali ibn Talib رحمه الله said: "I asked, 'O messenger of ALLAH, what are the best deeds during this month?' He replied: 'O Abu Al-Hasan, the best of deeds during this month is to be far from what ALLAH has forbidden'."



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Assalaamu alaikum

The month of Ramadhan is finally here. This is the month of boundless mercies. This is the month that you should use to score as many bonus points as you can. Take advantage of the opportunities presented to you.

Let me explain how this can be done. I'm sure that many of you feel that you already know enough about what is required of you from Ramadhan. But, indulge me. I'm sure that there may be one or two points that may surprise you!

To many, Ramadhan merely means not eating and, spending more time in prayer. But what is the spirit of Ramadhan? For you to gain enough merit from this blessed month, you should approach each action with more care and thought. Do not go through them mechanically, to appreciate the deeper significance of your actions, would allow you to give it more importance, thus taking much more from it. Let me try to explain my thoughts in a more detailed manner to you.

The whole idea of abstaining from food and drink, should be an action that allows you to feel the hunger that many others feel on a daily basis. Your thoughts should not be around what the Ifthaar spread is going to look like; but, rather appreciate and be thankful that you, at least have unlimited choices to feast on. This act should make you even more thankful towards Allah Ta'ala that He has granted you so much.

When in prayer, do not simply go through the motions, try to create an awareness in yourself that you are in front of your Rabb. You are presenting yourself in front of the Most Supreme who is listening to you, watching you and the One who is the controller of your life. Be aware of each of your actions what do they represent and, are you performing them correctly? Be aware of His presence, just as you would be extra careful not to break traffic or school rules in the presence of an authority figure. You will find that your prayers would be more meaningful to you.



When you give in charity, do not do so grudgingly. What you have is not yours ... it is what Allah Ta'ala has gifted you. It is all the opportunities He has been generous enough to grant you. So, be generous enough to share with others less fortunate. It does not only have to be monetary, assist in all respects. Help make it easy for other individuals in whatever aspect they should need it.

Try to moderate your anger and your tongue. Do not be harsh in your speech rather, walk away from situations that would lead to hurtful words or idle talk like gossiping.

Try to emulate the character and personality of our Nabi ﷺ and his companions. Work on developing good character traits like humility, patience, sincerity, etc.

These are only a few aspects that I've touched on; I'm sure that you would be able to draw on a few more. Keep in mind that this month is an example on how you should be leading your life. So, what changes are you going to try to carry through into your lifestyle after Ramadhan? Use this month as a springboard to incorporating good habits and move towards a new, more meaningful approach to a fulfilled Islamic lifestyle.

Give it a try and see what doors this will open for you. Insha Allah.

... Ramadhan Mubarak from Yasmin Omar!

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FITRAH

1437 A.H./ 2016

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Hadith narrated by Ibn Umar (Radi Allahu anhu):

Rasulullah ﷺ enjoined the payment of one Sa' of dates or one Sa' of barley as Fitrah on every Muslim slave or free, male or female, young or old, and he ordered that it be paid before the people went out to offer the Eid prayer. (Bukhari Sharif)

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

1. It must be paid before Eidul Fitr Salaah.
2. It must be paid by those who have the minimum of nisaab of zakaat over and above their need on the day of Eidul Fitr.
3. If the Fitrah is not paid on the date due then the reward for it is lost but the obligation remains.
4. The Fidyah for persons unable to fasts is calculated at the rate of the Fitrah per day of fasts missed.

RAMADAAN HEALTH FAQ'S

Here are some frequently asked health questions about fasting during the holy month of Ramadan.

These answers have been put together by medical experts and Islamic scholars and researchers.

Should a person with diabetes fast?

People who have their diabetes under control, either by their diet or using tablets, may fast. However, their GP may require them to change their medication to help them take tablets outside fasting times. Those who need insulin to control their diabetes should not fast.

I get severe migraines when I don't eat and they get worse when I fast. Should I fast?

People with uncontrolled migraines should not fast. However, managing your migraines is possible with the right medicine and certain lifestyle changes. Ask your GP for further advice on controlling your migraines.

Should a person with high or low blood pressure fast?

People with well-controlled high blood pressure may fast. Their GP may require a change to their medicine to help them take tablets outside fasting times. Someone with low blood pressure who is otherwise well and healthy may fast. They must ensure they drink enough fluid and have enough salt.

Is fasting harmful when a woman is expecting a baby? Must pregnant women fast?

There's medical evidence to show that fasting in pregnancy is not a good idea. If a pregnant woman feels strong and healthy enough to fast, especially during the early part of the pregnancy, she may do so. If she doesn't feel well enough to fast, Islamic law gives her clear permission not to fast, and to make up the missed fasts later. If she is unable to do this, she must perform fidyah (a method of compensation for a missed act of worship).

Is Ramadan a good time to quit smoking?

Yes. Smoking is bad for your health. Ramadan is a great opportunity to change unhealthy habits, including smoking. Find out more about stopping smoking.

From what age can children fast safely?

Children are required to fast upon reaching puberty. It isn't harmful. Fasting before this age is tolerated differently depending on the attitude of the parents and the child's general health and nutrition.

Fasting under the age of seven or eight isn't advisable. It's a good idea to make children aware of what fasting involves and to practise fasting for a few hours at a time.

Can I use an asthma inhaler during Ramadan?

Muslim experts differ on this issue. Some say that using an asthma inhaler isn't the same as eating or drinking, and is therefore permitted during fasting. In their view, people with asthma can fast and use their inhalers whenever they need to.

But other scholars say that the inhaler provides small amounts of liquid medicine to the lungs, so it breaks the fast. They say that people with poor control of their asthma

must not fast until good control is achieved. Some people with asthma may opt for longer-acting inhalers so that they can fast. See your GP for further advice.

Can I swim during fasting?

Yes, but do not drink the water. A bath or shower or swimming has no effect on the fast. But no water should be swallowed during any of these activities as that would break the fast.

Can a person fast if they are getting a blood transfusion in hospital?

No. A person receiving a blood transfusion is advised not to fast on medical grounds. They may fast on the days when no transfusions are required.

I am on regular medication. Can I still fast?

If the medicine needs to be taken during fasting, do not fast. If this medication is required as treatment for a short illness, you can compensate for missed fasts by fasting on other days when you are well.

If you are on long-term medication then you could talk to your GP about whether you could change your medication, so that you can take it outside the time of the fast.

If your disease is unstable or poorly controlled, do not fast. Those who are unable to do the missed fasts later, due to the long-term use of medication, should do fidyah.

Does a breastfeeding woman have to fast?

No. Islamic law says a breastfeeding mother does not have to fast. Missed fasts must be compensated for by fasting or fidyah once breastfeeding has stopped.

Can a Muslim patient take tablets, have injections or use patches while fasting?

Taking tablets breaks the fast. However, injections, patches, eardrops and eyedrops do not break the fast as they are not considered to be food and drink (though there are differences of opinion among Muslim scholars on these issues). Islamic law says sick people should not fast.

Could dehydration become so bad that you have to break the fast?

Yes. You could become very dehydrated if you do not drink enough water before the fast. Poor hydration can be made worse by weather conditions, and even everyday activities such as walking to work or housework.

If you produce very little or no urine, feel disoriented and confused, or faint due to dehydration, you must stop fasting and have a drink of water or other fluid. Islam doesn't require you to harm yourself in fulfilling the fast. If a fast is broken, it will need to be compensated for by fasting at a later date.

Can I fast while I have dialysis?

People on peritoneal dialysis must not fast and should perform fidyah. Haemodialysis is performed about three times a week and causes significant shifts of fluids and salts within the body. Such patients must not fast and should perform fidyah.

BEHAVIOUR OF THE TRULY PIOUS

The first generation of Muslims, the pious Salaf, were undoubtedly the best of generations. Their character and way of life stand witness to this fact and is further confirmed by the statement of Allaah's Messenger,

'The best of generations are my generation, then those which follow them, then those which follow them.' (Reported by Muslim)

They were indeed, the best amongst those who implemented the teachings of our beloved Prophet Muhammad. So naturally it is their example that one must follow in all matters and Ramadaan is no exception. The Salaf were frugal with their own iftaar meals but generous hosts towards others.

'Abdullaah ibn 'Umar, for example, would prefer to eat his iftaar meal with the poor. Whenever he broke his fast at home, he never ate his fill, so that if a needy person visited, 'Abdullaah could give him his iftaar meal. Thus he would end up virtually "fasting" that whole night too! He used to give away sweets in charity saying, 'I am aware of Allaah's saying; "you shall not attain piety until you spend out of that which is beloved to you" [Ali 'Imraan: 92] and Allaah knows that I love sweets.'

Once when Al-Imaam Ahmad had prepared some bread for iftaar, a needy person called on him. Without hesitating he gave away all his bread, and went hungry. Ibn-ul Mubaarak used to prepare sweets for his brothers, despite the fact that he was fasting.

Al-Imaam Ash-Shaafi'ee, once said, 'It is beloved to me to see one increasing his acts of generosity during the month of Ramadaan, following the example of Allaah's Messenger, and for one's own good. There are many who become over-occupied with fasting and Prayers, forgetting the other benefits of the month of Ramadaan [i.e. Forgetting about the benefits and rewards for being generous towards others].'(Lataa'if-ul Maaarif)

The Prophet, said, 'The best of deeds is that of keeping your believing brother happy, or that of paying off a debt of his, or that of feeding him.' (Ad-daylamee, 1/1/123, AsSilsilah As-Saheehah/Al-Albaanee, 1494)

The most beloved of people to Allaah are those who are of most benefit [to others]. The most of beloved actions to Allaah, 'azza wa jalla, is when you make another Muslim happy, removing a hardship that has befallen him, paying off a debt of his or rid him of hunger. It is more beloved to me indeed that I walk with my Muslim brother to see to a need of his than performing i'tikaaf (secluding oneself) in a Masjid for a month?' (At-Tabaraanee/Al-kabeer, 3/209/2, As-Silsilah As-Saheehah, 906)

'The best of people is the one who is of most benefit to them' (As-Silsilah As-Saheehah, 426) 'The likeness [i.e. in terms of rewards] of the one who comes to [the aid of] a widow and [the aid of] a destitute is like that of a mujaahid (striver) in the cause of Allaah or that of someone who spends the night in prayers and the day in fasting. (Al-Mishkaat, 4951)

'Abdullaah ibn 'Amr ibn Al 'Aas, narrated that a man once asked Allaah's Messenger, , 'Which is the best [of actions] in Islaam?' He replied, 'Feeding [others] and extending the Salaam to those who you know and those you do not.' (At-Targeeb - Saheeh)

The Prophet, also said, 'Once there was a dog wondering around, dying of thirst, when a prostitute saw it. She then took off her shoe and used it to give the dog water [out of a well]. She was granted forgiveness [i.e. for her sins for being a prostitute, when she repented].' (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

If this huge reward was granted to a woman because of kindness to a dog, even though she was involved in major sin, can we imagine the rewards for kindness to an obedient, fasting Muslim?! Our Prophet, told us, 'Allaah, ta'aala, has singled out certain people with abundance for the benefit of His other servants and He shall let it run [i.e. their wealth] as long as they are persistent [in benefiting others with it]. If they cease to do so then He shall take it away from them and redirect it to others.' (At-Tabaraanee/Al-Awsat, 5295, As-Silsilah As-Saheehah, 1692)

We should be most active in spending our wealth to help those less fortunate. This Ramadaan, let us remember too, the saying of 'Ubaid Ibn 'Umair, rahimahu Allaah, 'On the Day of Judgement people will be gathered as hungry as they have ever been and as thirsty as they have ever been and as naked as they have ever been. Then, he who has fed [others] for the sake of Allaah, 'azza wajalla, Allaah will feed him till he is full. He who has given to water to others, for the sake of Allaah, 'azza wajalla, Allaah will give him water and he who has clothed others for the sake of Allaah, 'azza wajalla, Allaah will clothe him.'



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YOUMUL FURQAAN

THE BATTLE OF BADR

Ghazwa –e-Badr (battle of Badr) is the day that marks the the unbeatable glory of Muslim's valor and fearlessness. The day when Allah's help descended towards its pious people who left their homes, families and properties just for the sake and pleasure of Allah, the Lord of the Universe.

The battle of Badr is one of the great events of human history that occurred on Friday, the 17th Day of blessed month of Ramadan in the second year after migration from Makkah to Madinah (624 CE).

It deeply affected men's ideas and conduct. The battle of Badr deserves a place in any history of that period. It was the original cause of all the battles that followed.

Many problems lead to the battle of the Badr,

The Unfriendly Quraysh:

The Prophet ﷺ and his companion had migrated to Madinah. They stayed there peacefully; preaching and inviting more people to Islam but Quraysh remained hostile to them and rapid spread of Islam increased their anxiety. They, therefore, always looked for a chance to cause trouble and destroy the resettled Muslims of Madinah.

The jealousy of the Jews:

As Islam began to spread fast some Jewish monks and learned Rabbis like Abdullah ibn Salam embraced Islam. This inflamed the jealousy of the jews.

There were many other reasons as well which includes Power-seeking people like Abdullah ibn Ubayy became very unfriendly towards the Prophet ﷺ and his companions as he was abandoned to be crowned as Prophet ﷺ arrived in Madinah which aroused enmity towards the Muslims. The Quraysh prepare for an actual war, The Quraysh joined hands with Abdullah Bin Ubayy, the hypocrite.

In the month of Shaban 2H, the Muslims learned that a great trade caravan had started on its return journey from Syria and would be passing Madinah a few weeks later. It was reported that merchandise in this caravan of 1000

camels was worth 50,000 Dinars. About 70 men accompanied it led by Abu Sufyan bin Harb, one of the worst enemies of Islam in Makkah then.

Abu Sufyan realized at an early stage that the Muslims were planning to attack his caravan which increased his anxiety. He sent a fast-riding courier to Makkah with an urgent request to rescue the caravan.

On receipt of Sufyan's message, the Makkans led by Abu Jahl, set about raising a powerful army consisting about a 1000 armoured soldiers, seven hundred camels and over one hundred horses. However, the caravan reaches Makkah safely but the Muslim army consisting only 313 faithful Muslims 70 camels and two horses.

Faced by a powerful army, more than thrice their number, the Muslims now held a council of war. The Prophet ﷺ spent the whole night that fell between the sixteenth and the seventeenth of Ramadan, in prayer.

The Prophet ﷺ turned towards Qiblah, raised his hands and earnestly called on Allah, "O Allah! Of this little band of those, who have surrendered themselves to You, is destroyed, You will not be worshipped on earth...."

A sudden rainfall was rejoiced as a sign of favor from Allah which refreshed the men and laid the dust. It made firm the soft sand of the valley which enabled the Muslims to plant their feet firmly.

The battle opened with single combats between Utbah, his son Walid and his brother Shaybah from Quraysh and Hamzah ؓ, Ali ؓ and Ubaydah ؓ from Muslims who killed Utbah and Walid with ease while Shaybah wounded Ubaydah ؓ "Umair bin Al-Humam was the first martyr on the day of Badr."

Two young boys, the sons of Afra, an Ansari woman killed Abu Jahl. The Muslims won the battle by the help of Allah, in achieving this victory, the Muslims lost fourteen men: six immigrants and eight Ansars.

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"FAST TO BE HEALTHY", said the PROPHET ﷺ

HASINA BEGUM SAYED

Physicians today acknowledge the many benefits of fasting that ensure health and the soundness of one's body and mind. Some of these positive points have a direct influence on psychology and physique of the fasting individual. Including those of the digestive systems, such as chronic stomachache, inflammation of the colon, liver diseases, indigestion, and conditions such as obesity, arteriosclerosis, high blood pressure, asthma, diphtheria and many other maladies.

Islam announces fasting not as a negative act of humble contrition or penance, but as a practice possessing scientific significance serving to improve the welfare of body and spirit. Also fasting helps learn self-restraint from moral indecency by controlling two aspects of the human body, which are the root causes of human downfall, namely the stomach and the private parts.

A great deal of ailments originate from stomach indigestion. This is why the Messenger of Allah (saas) says:

"The son of Adam will never fill a container with something worse and evil than his stomach. It will suffice him some morsels (food) that will keep him on his feet, otherwise, he should divide his stomach into three parts: one third for his food, the other for his drink and the other third for his breath." (Ibn Hibban)

The saying indicates that the stomach is the origin of harmful bacteria. Stomach and intestines are first to be affected by fasting. They receive a complete rest. If they have been over worked, the rest they receive during the fast strengthens them. Ulcers and inflammation are frequently healed. A distended or prolapsed stomach shrinks to its normal size and resumes its original position. Morbid sensibilities and appetites are overcome.

The stomach is a muscle, and this muscle requires rest like any other muscle in the body. The only way in which the stomach can get rest is to deprive it of food, and when this is done, it at once begins to repair any injury done to it and to recuperate from the excessive work which had previously been thrown upon it.

As soon as the stomach empties, a general re-constructive process begins. Broken down cells are replaced by healthy ones, being nature's method of repairing the diseased or injured part of the organism. This replacement of tissues means that in time a NEW STOMACH is created - a new stomach in every sense of the word - and this stomach is enabled to digest food for long periods of time unless it too is abused.

The spleen, liver and kidneys derive striking benefits from the fast, though they may have added work thrown upon them during the early days of a fast. An enlarged spleen rapidly reduces in size. Abscesses of the liver and Kidney infections have been completely cured. These results are not surprising when we appreciate the fact that the toxic encumbrance of the liver lessens, it also reduces irritation to the kidneys.

The lungs are the direct purifiers of the blood and they are among the first organs to feel the beneficial effects of fasting. Any congestion of the lungs, is rapidly removed during the early days so that a free and unobstructed passage of air is readily provided and the feeling of clearness and the ability to talk and sing, together with a clearer range and depth of tone are sometimes observed in patients who are fasting.

It has been recently discovered that fasting renews the youth of all the cells of the bodily functions that distinguish youth from old age. Fasting enhances all of man's mental powers. Memory is strengthened and by association, powers of reasoning are improved. And often restores the sense of taste, sometimes entirely lacking or dulled. Inflammation of the bones and the teeth are greatly benefited by fasting.

Fasting is the greatest blood purifier. By the fast, the body burns the most useless and toxic materials contained in the blood stream and body. These non-assimilated food materials and wastes block and choke the small blood vessels and congest the lymph vessels.

Therefore, when you are fasting during the month of Ramadhan or otherwise, you must remember these processes are taking place within the body during the fast giving a rejuvenating and revitalising effect.

Apartheid Israel: JM Coetzee Delivers A Devastating Blow

Written by: IQBAL JASSAT

"Apartheid was a system of enforced segregation based on race or ethnicity put in place by an exclusive self-defined group in order to consolidate a colonial conquest, in particular to cement its hold on the land and its natural resources."

The above definition of apartheid was provided by South African novelist and Nobel-laureate JM Coetzee at the close of this year's Palfest literature festival in Ramallah.

Noting that it was not "productive" to compare Israel's policies with those of apartheid South Africa, because it "diverts one into an inflamed, semantic wrangle", Coetzee proceeded to locate the situation in Jerusalem and the West Bank within his definition of apartheid, and concluded by calling on the audience to "draw your own conclusions".

His poignant observation, remarkable as it is, fells a devastating blow to Israel, for it shatters the colonial regime's false facade of being a "democratic" state.

Shrewd, smart and brilliant is how I describe Coetzee's soft spoken demolition of Israeli Hasbara (a highly resourced propaganda outfit designed to spin its policies).

In a single sentence, after explaining the construct of apartheid as it existed in South Africa, he made the following observation, which unsurprisingly met with a thunderous applause:

"To speak of Jerusalem and the West Bank, we see a system of enforced segregation based on religion and ethnicity put in place by an exclusive self-defined group to consolidate a colonial conquest, in particular to maintain, and indeed extend, its hold on the land and its natural resources."
There you have it.

Apartheid in Jerusalem and the Occupied West Bank is built on the same foundations of apartheid in South Africa:

Enforced segregation;
Exclusive self-defined group;
Colonial conquest;
Maintain hold of land and natural resources.

In his brief remarks, Coetzee affirmed the power of words over the might of power in an appropriate setting amongst international literary stars.

The annual Palestine Festival of Literature (Palfest) was held in cities across historic Palestine. It is described as a traveling festival where giants such as

Coetzee, Pulitzer Prize finalist Laila Lalami and National Book Award winners Colum McCann and Barry Lopez, performed at events in Bethlehem, Nablus, Haifa, Ramallah and Jerusalem.

Due to severe restrictions by Israel's checkpoints which bar Palestinians' freedom of movement, the festival had to crisscross monstrous military points to reach audiences.

By day the international participants undertook what Palfest described as politico-historical tours which included meeting artists, authors and activists. By night they staged free public readings with their Palestinian counterparts.

Coetzee's brief sojourn brought him face to face with the physical realities of Occupation. His itinerary included Khalil/Hebron, Aida refugee camp, Silwan and Sheikh Jarrah neighborhoods in Jerusalem, Ein Hod, a Palestinian village destroyed in 1948, and a walk in the Ramallah hills with Orwell-prize winning author Raja Shehadeh.

Unlike the Hasbara sponsored trips undertaken regularly by South Africa's proIsrael lobbyists which are intended to whitewash and conceal crimes of dispossession, occupation and apartheid, Coetzee's visit was different.

Along with fellow literary icons, Coetzee's trip included Al-Aqsa Mosque which is revered by Muslims and its world renowned landmark, the Dome of the Rock.

Whether in Bethlehem or Al-Khalil (Hebron), expect that Coetzee would have seen how these historic cities have been ravaged by the occupation and severely divided by the monstrosity known aptly as Israel's apartheid wall.





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BY MOULANA
SHAH FAISAL
KHAN SAHEB

LAYLATUL QADR

Question 1- What are the blessings of Laylatul Qadr?

Answer 1- Alhamdulillah, the blessed night of Qadr in the blessed month of Ramadhaan has many blessings. Sayyiduna Ismail Haqi ؑ has stated, "This is a night of peace, people are protected from many troubles such as illness, evil, calamities, storms, thunders, lightning and other things. In fact, everything that descends in this night contains peace, benefit and goodness. In this night the devil cannot make people do evil and no magician's magic work, this night is full of peace."

[Ruh-ul-Bayaan Vol 10 page 485]

Sayyiduna Ubayd ibn Imraan ؑ said, "One night while I was making Wudhu at the Red Sea, I tasted the water which was sweeter than honey. I was extremely surprised. When I told Sayyiduna Uthmaan ؑ about it, he said, 'Oh Ubayd, it would be Laylatul Qadr'. He further said, 'Whoever spends this night remembering Allah it is as if he worshipped for more than a thousand months and Allah will forgive all his sins.'"

[Tazkira-tul-Wa'izin Page 626]

Question 2- What are the signs of Laylatul Qadr and why was Laylatul Qadr kept a secret?

Answer 2- Sayyiduna Ubadah bin Samit ؑ asked the Noble Prophet ﷺ about Laylatul Qadr. Rasoolullah ﷺ replied, "Laylatul Qadr is in the odd nights of the last ten days of Ramadhaan, i.e. 21st, 23rd, 25th, 27th, 29th or the last night of Ramadhaan, whoever worships in this night with faith in order to earn reward will be forgiven for all his previous sins."

Some of its signs are as follows:

- * the night will be open, bright and extremely clear
- * it is neither too hot nor too cold
- * the weather is quite normal on this night
- * the moon is clearly visible
- * the devils are not struck with stars the whole night.

One of the reasons why Laylatul Qadr was kept a secret, because it is as if Allah says, "I kept this night a secret so people would struggle hard to acquire it and earn reward for their struggles."

Question 3- What should you do on Laylatul Qadr?

Answer 3- Mother of the Believers Sayyidatuna Ayesha Siddiqah ؓ narrated that she asked the Prophet of Mankind, the Peace of our hearts and minds, Most Generous and Most Kind, ﷺ, "Ya Rasoolullah ﷺ! what should I recite if I find Laylatul Qadr?" The Holy Prophet ﷺ replied, "make this Dua

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوٌّ تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّيْ

O Allah You are Most Forgiving, You love Forgiving, therefore forgive me

RAMADAAN'S HEROES

Ramadaan marks the wisaal (death anniversaries) of many sacred personalities, including Bibi Fatimah az-Zahra ؓ the saintly daughter of the holy Prophet ﷺ, and his most honoured wives Bibi Khadija-til-Kubra ؓ and Bibi Aa'isha Siddiqah ؓ. The three are considered the most virtuous and excellent of all women since the arrival of Allah's final Messenger ﷺ, whose achievements exerted no small influence on the future of Islam.

The 21st Ramadaan is widely celebrated in honour of another great personality, Sayyiduna Ali ibni Abi-Talib ؓ, the 4th Khalif and one of the most revered from the family and companions of Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ.

The Martyrs of Badr sacrificed their lives in Islams first holy war, and are exalted till eternity in the pages of the holy Qur'an, for the occasion described as 'Yoomul Furqaan'. This sacred day falls on the 17th of Ramadaan (co-inciding with the wisaal of Bibi Aa'isha, ؓ).

It is considered virtuous to remember these noble, saintly, pioneers of our religion, with prayers, discussions or lectures, and any good deed as a token and blessing upon their souls! May Allah reward them endlessly and enshrine their legacy in our hearts!



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ROBOTS

BY FAIZEL KHAMKAR

With the advent of the industrial revolution the capitalist realised that the opportunity to fulfilling their ambition of controlling the wealth of the world and with it powers they needed an alternative to slaves as slavery was now taboo and the only way to unlock the wealth was human resources. Through promises of a better way of life the rural population was lured to industrial areas. These areas were the most despicable living areas (from which sprung the growth of urbanization) imaginable. Poverty, plagues, ill health and abject living conditions became the order of the day to the economic disenfranchised.

A new form of slavery was now enacted. Child labour was common. The working conditions were abysmal. The promise of a better life turned into a nightmare. Labourers were treated with disdain and become no more than tools dressed in flesh. Dispensable as human tools yet indispensable as a means of obtaining wealth and power. Spurned and caught in a trap from which there appeared no way out. Arising out of this over a period of time a movement to emancipate the work force appeared. With time this movement become stronger and more vociferous than the media who hailed these capitalist as champions. Labour became more regulated and the pittance given as wages started to increase. This however started to eat into the ever increasing profits and was seen as a threat to undeserved wealth and power.

It is interesting to know that a current discourse of changing the face of capitalism is underway. It is suggested that labour be given a presence on the board of various big corporations. This would then allow labour to understand why business decisions are made and at the same time would give business an understanding of the labour issues as seen through the eyes of worker. Germany is cited as an example of how effective this system can work. The incorrect presumption is that neither big business nor labour has an insight of the "other side". This assumption is absurd in the least and cannot work unless the labour representatives are subjugated or big business considers a more equitable sharing of wealth. Either of these arrangements must be discarded as real solutions as it will not happen on a consistent basis.

The loosening of the stranglehold on labour led to a process of dispensing with labour and bringing in machines. This was seen as a solution to sharing of wealth and increasing profits. The downside of this was that this machinery still needed humans to operate them. This however did not prevent the ever increasing of the use of machinery and over a period of time the shedding of employment had consistently occurred. This is one of the direct factors of the high unemployment rate experienced in most countries.

The global labour movement together with its allies has however increased its pressure to ensure fair compensation for the workers that are still in employment. This pressure is seen as an ongoing war against the ill-gotten wealth of the capitalist. The answer to the threat over its global economic stranglehold appears now to be the next phase of mechanizations and that is the development of robots. Irrespective of the reasons advanced by big business the truth behind such decisions need to be advanced.

China has already made massive strides in this area and it is expected that the robots will be in operation on a large scale by the year 2025. This will result in an estimate shedding of twenty percent of employment at current levels. Taking into account that China currently has one of the cheapest wages on the global front the international impact will be massive. The international Walk Free Foundation in their research came to a figure in excess of forty five million men, women and children globally are caught up in the economic slavery trap.

The above portrays a gloomy picture of the future. Crime, abuse, homeless people, starvation and the stripping of off the dignity of people are the ingredients of unrest and anarchy. On the other hand the consumption market will shrink as there will be less people able to afford products, even the most basic. This would result in more drastic reaction from the capitalist. This vicious cycle will continue until disaster stares all of us in the face.

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS FOCUS

BY FAKIR HASSEN

Berlin, GERMANY - An influential Muslim organisation in Germany has voiced concern over an alleged growing number of conversions to Christianity among refugees who hope to receive asylum status. The rising number of conversions among refugees made headlines in German media earlier this month, when nearly 80 Muslim refugees from Iran and Afghanistan converted to Christianity, in a baptism ceremony held by a Protestant church in Hamburg. Aiman Mazyek, chair of the Central Council of Muslims in Germany, said that decisions on asylum status should not be influenced by the ethnic or religious identity of refugees. Several churches in Hannover and Berlin have opened special courses in Persian, Arabic and Dari (spoken mainly in Afghanistan) to introduce asylum seekers to Christianity.

Islamabad, PAKISTAN - Pakistani President Mamnoon Hussain has called upon thinkers, researchers, teachers and students to play their due role in highlighting the true image of Islam by effectively countering a negative impression created by certain element. Addressing the 10th Convocation of the International Islamic University Islamabad, Mamnoon said that certain misled elements have wreaked havoc with their actions by misinterpreting teachings of Islam and their terrorist activities also brought lawlessness in Muslim societies.

Baltimore, USA - Tens of thousands of Muslims from across the country gathered for the 41st Islamic Circle of North America and Muslim American

Society convention, one of the largest gatherings of American Muslims. The three-day event's major highlight is honouring the Holy Qur'an as speakers from across the world delivered lectures to provide a better understanding of the sacred scripture. Speaking at the convention's opening, President Naeem Baig said this year they chose the theme of the Qur'an so as to explore the beauties of the holy book while dispelling the misinterpretations of the Islamic faith and Muslims in the U.S mainstream media and the rhetoric used by some politicians.

London, UK - A British Muslim mother who was planning to move with her three children to ISIS-held territories in Syria has lost parental custody after her arrest. The children - whose ages were not reported - are expected to live with relatives pending a decision by authorities over their long-term future. Their Northern Ireland-born 34-year-old mother, Lorna Moore, was sentenced to a two and-a-half year jail term after she was found guilty of failing to tell authorities that her husband Sajid Aslam, 34, was about to leave for Syria to join ISIS.

Bratislava - SLOVAKIA - Robert Fico began his third term as Slovakia's prime minister by stepping up his anti-Muslim rhetoric just weeks before the country assumes the rotating presidency of the EU Council. Fico has previously said his government would not allow Muslims to create "a compact community" in Slovakia and that integrating refugees is impossible. His country is

also a vocal opponent of a compulsory EU plan to redistribute refugees in member states and is suing the EU over it.

Vatican City, THE VATICAN - Pope Francis met the Grand Imam of Cairo's Al-Azhar Mosque at the Vatican in a historic encounter that was sealed with a hugely symbolic hug and exchange of kisses. The first Vatican meeting between the leader of the world's Catholics and the highest authority in Sunni Islam marks the culmination of a significant improvement in relations between the two faiths since Francis took office in 2013. Tayeb decided to accept the invitation to Rome as a result of the numerous conciliatory gestures Francis has made to the Muslim world since being elected in early 2013.

Makkah, SAUDI ARABIA - he Makkah governorate has announced that it plans to hand out five million free meals and bottles of water this Ramadan in Makkah and parts of Jeddah. The meals would be distributed at the Grand Mosque, roundabouts, checkpoints, hospitals and King Abdulaziz International Airport and Jeddah Islamic Port for pilgrims to break their fast.

Manama, BAHRAIN - The first floating hotel in the Arabian Gulf Region was officially opened by Bahrain Authority for Tourism and Exhibition Chief Executive Officer Shaikh Khalid bin Humood Al-Khalifa inaugurated the 'C Hotel'. He stressed the importance of the new milestone and said that the coral bay had become a major tourism destination for families.

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