

There has come to you Ramadaan

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It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah said: The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said:

“There has come to you Ramadaan, a blessed month which Allaah has enjoined you to fast. In it the gates of heaven are opened and the gates of Hell are closed, and the strong devils are chained up. In it there is a night that is better than a thousand months, and whoever is deprived of its goodness is indeed deprived.”

Narrated by Ahmad, 9213; al-Nasaa'i, 2106. classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in *Saheeh al-Nasaa'i*, 1992.

This hadeeth brings glad tidings to the righteous slaves of Allaah of the onset of the month of Ramadaan, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) told the Sahaabah (may Allaah be pleased with them) that it had come, but he was not merely informing them, rather he was giving them glad tidings of a great occasion which is properly appreciated by the righteous who prepare themselves for it, because he (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) explained what Allaah has prepared in this month of the means of attaining forgiveness and the pleasure of Allaah. There are many such means, and whoever misses out on forgiveness in Ramadaan is indeed deprived. It is by the grace and blessing of Allaah to His slaves that He has prepared for them this great occasion in which they can compete in doing acts of worship and earning great reward.

The one who is truly blessed is the one who makes the most of months, days and hours, and draws close to his Lord by doing the acts of worship prescribed at those times.

(*Ahaadeeth al-Siyaam* by al-Fawzaan, p. 13)

Ramadaan has come, in which the gates of Paradise are opened and the gates of Hell are closed. The reason – and Allaah knows best – is that there is a great deal of goodness in Ramadaan and people turn more to the means of attaining forgiveness and Allaah's pleasure. So there is less evil on earth, as the strong devils are chained up and the Muslims occupy themselves with fasting, reading Qur'aan, remembering Allaah and all kinds of righteous deeds and good words. Ibn al-'Arabi (may Allaah have mercy on him) said: "The gates of Paradise are opened to increase hope, so that people will focus on striving to attain it, and to encourage the patient. And the gates of Hell are closed so that sin will decrease and good deeds will take the place of bad deeds and the route to hellfire will be blocked.

This explains to us why many sinners repent and turn to Allaah, and are keen to worship and obey Him and attend the mosques in this blessed month.

Ramadaan has come, and with it the caller who says: "O seeker of good, go ahead; O seeker of evil, desist." So answer this call, O Muslim, and hasten to do good deeds.

Ramadaan is one of the special occasions in life. Blessed is the one who makes the most of it, spending its nights in prayer and supplication and its days in fasting, reading Qur'aan, giving charity, upholding the ties of kinship, seeking knowledge and doing righteous deeds.

Our righteous forbears, the companions of the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and those who followed them in truth paid a great deal of attention to Ramadaan and rejoiced at its coming. They would pray to Allaah to cause them to live to see the next Ramadaan, then they would ask Him to accept it (their fasting and worship) from them.

They used to fast its days, protecting their fast from anything that would invalidate it or detract from it such as idle talk and entertainment, backbiting, malicious gossip and lies. They would fill its nights with qiyaam al-layl and recitation of Qur'aan. They would take care of the poor and needy by giving them charity, treating them kindly, feeding them and giving food to the fasting to break their fast.

They used to strive in worshipping Allaah and they used to strive in jihad against the enemies of Islam, fighting for the sake of Allaah so that the word of Allaah would be supreme and all religion would be for Allaah.

The great Battle of Badr, in which the Muslims were victorious over their enemies, took place on the 17th of Ramadaan.

The Conquest of Makkah took place on the 20th of Ramadaan, when the people entered the religion of Allaah in crowds and Makkah became the centre of Islam.

The month of Ramadaan is not a month of laziness and sleep, rather it is the month of jihad, worship and work.

So we should welcome it with joy and happiness, and celebrate and honour this occasion.

How can we not do that in the month that Allaah has chosen for the obligation of fasting and has prescribed qiyaam al-layl, in which He revealed the Qur'aan to guide mankind and bring them forth from darkness to light?

How can we not rejoice in a month in which the gates of Paradise are opened and the gates of Hell are closed, and the devils are chained up, when the rewards for good deeds are multiplied and people are raised in status, and sins are forgiven?

We should make the most of the opportunity of being alive, healthy and young, and spend our lives worshipping Allaah and obeying Him. *"And whosoever obeys Allaah and His Messenger, he has indeed achieved a great achievement (i.e. he will be saved from the Hell-fire and will be admitted to Paradise)"[al-Ahzaab 33:71 – interpretation of the meaning].*

We should make the most of the opportunity of the arrival of this blessed month to renew our covenant with Allaah to repent sincerely at all times from all sins and evil deeds, and to continually obey Allaah all our lives, heeding His commands and avoiding what He has forbidden, so that we may be with the successful on the Day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail, except him who brings to Allaah a clean heart. (cf. al-Shu'ara' 26:88-89).

Majmoo'at Rasaa'il Ramadaaniyyah, by Jaar-Allaah, p. 6

May Allaah help us and you to do that which He loves and which pleases Him