



THE MESSAGE

Spreading the Light of Knowledge



RAMADHAN SPECIAL

ISSUE 8 - Sep 2006

Free of charge

We welcome any donations to help with printing costs.

Time is money...or is it?

In the name of Allah, The Most Beneficent, The Most Merciful.

Welcome to another Ramadhan issue of The Message. Some readers may wonder what does time have to do with Ramadhan. The answer quite simply is that it has everything to do with Ramadhan. Today we have been brought up with the notion that "time is money". From the Islamic perspective this is couldn't be further from the truth. For a Muslim who is striving for the hereafter "time is good deeds". Whilst money may be the currency for this life, on the Day of Judgement the only acceptable currency will be the good deeds we have done in this life. These good deeds will be weighed up on the Scales on the Day of Judgement against our bad deeds. Also those people we have wronged in this life and have not sought forgiveness from before we die, we will have to compensate using our good deeds on the Day of Judgement. And should you run out of good deeds to compensate someone then some of their bad deeds will be given to you. Of course this compensation will be proportional to the wrong you did to them in this life.

Imagine you had a business that was losing thousands of pounds per day. We would of course do everything in our power to put a stop to this. Everyday in the same way we are losing out on good deeds. For every minute that passes that we don't perform a good deed then we have lost that time forever. Yet we seem to do little to stop this loss. Doing a good deed could be anything from greeting someone with a simple smile, helping someone, being kind to an animal, doing dhikr (remembrance of Allah) or even moving that broken bit of glass we sometimes see on the pavement but never move out of the way. Of course these must all be done with the thought that you are doing it for the sake of Allah to seek His pleasure. Also let us not forget one of the best and most important compulsory good deeds we can do and have been ordered to do: to perform our five daily prayers on time every day.

Viewing our time from a different perspective you could say that as time passes so the number of sins we commit and have to account for also increases as well. A wise man once worked out that if he only committed a minimum of one sin (minor or major) a day that he had to repent for then already at his advanced age he had many thousands of sins to repent for. This is food for thought indeed considering we easily commit many sins per day not just one. For the sake of argument let us say an individual starts puberty at 14 years of age (in Islam the age of puberty is when a person becomes accountable for their actions) and dies at the age of 70. If this person commits a minimum of one sin per day, then that equals 20,440 sins (56yrs X 365 days) to account for after death. That is a lot of bad deeds to be put on the negative side of the Scales on the Day of Judgement.

So how does one counteract this? Firstly we should try our best to repent from sins everyday. The Prophet (peace & blessings of Allah be upon him) out of awe of his creator used to ask forgiveness from Allah more than a hundred times a day despite the fact Allah had forgiven all his past and future sins! We should also try to do as many good deeds as possible to counteract our bad ones. This goes back to our original question of what does Ramadhan have to do with time. Ramadhan is the month in which Allah multiplies the reward for good deeds many times over. It is also the month when the doors of forgiveness are wide open. This means we can play some catch up and do as many good deeds as possible and help our balance of deeds come out of loss and into profit. Also maybe through asking for Allah's forgiveness some of our previous sins will be wiped away as well.

So we should make the best of this Ramadhan to do as much good as possible as it could easily be our last one. It is also a golden opportunity for the Muslim to renew their Iman(faith) and character.

All good that comes from this magazine is from Allah and any mistakes are ours so please forgive us for any shortcomings. - The Message Team.



Contents

- 2 Reality & Obligation in Ramadhan**
Are you really making the best of this special month? An excellent overview of things we should and shouldn't do to get the best from this Ramadhan.
- 4 One Hour a Day**
An excellent reminder on why time is a premium for Muslims and why we should donate some for the sake of Islam.
- 5 The Impact & Effects of Sin**
Did you know that committing sins has an effect on our everyday lives?
- 6 Advice to Muslims in Ramadhan**
Excellent advice for during and after Ramadhan.
- 7 The Night of Al-Qadr**
What is Laylat al-Qadr? When should you seek it?
- 8 Easy Good Deeds**
Some very easy to do good deeds with big rewards.

Email or write to us with your comments and feedback and please let us know what you think. Let us know what articles you would like to see.

The Message
C/O Bristol Muslim Cultural Society, 404 Stapleton Rd, Easton,
Bristol, BS5 6NQ - Tel: 01 17 952 1803 - Email: bmcs@bmcs.org.uk

Or email the editor directly on riz160@yahoo.co.uk

Please put "The Message" in the subject heading when emailing us.

This magazine is produced entirely on a voluntary basis and is printed with donated funds. Hence without further donations or sponsorship the magazine will not be able to continue. All donations large or small are welcome.

Please note Bristol Muslim Cultural Society does not finance this publication nor is it able to. As a result as already mentioned, The Message relies on the kind support of our readers and sponsors.



ISLAMIC TIMES

It's a sign of the times...

This issue is sponsored by The Islamic Times Newspaper

See advert on page 8

Reality & Obligation in

Ramadhan

During this Ramadhan do not let the sweetness of our deeds vanish into the night, leaving only emptiness. When one contemplates the texts on fasting, its wisdom and goals in Shariah, and looks at the reality of the Muslim communities, one realizes a wide gap between the reality and our obligations. Remember that Ramadhan is a bounty that Allah blessed His servants with, to strengthen their faith, and increase their piety (Taqwa). Allah said: "O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become pious." (Al-Baqarah 2:183).

This article is an attempt to present the essential causes of this gap and some remedies. The primary reason for the gap is ignorance about the goals of fasting and the wisdom behind it. Many Muslims ignore the purpose and wisdom of fasting. Fasting is done merely to conform to the social environment without contemplation. If one is not aware of the divine wisdom of Shariah and its fruits in this world and in the hereafter, one will not apply it in the right way.

Goals of Fasting

Achieving Taqwa: is one of the most important wisdom of fasting. Fasting brings on Taqwa as it lessens the desire of the stomach and mutes the sexual appetite. Whoever fasts frequently would overcome these two desires more easily. This deters against committing abominations and sins and assist in controlling life leading to Taqwa.

Strengthening willpower and acquiring patience: The Prophet (sallallahu alayhe wa sallam) called Ramadhan the month of patience as it increases one's will power to control his desire and the selfishness of his soul. This training allows him to be strong in following Allah's commands. The most important being to carry the Message and propel it forward. The person trains himself to be patient in obeying Allah by stopping at the limits set by Allah both by way of action and abstention. Allah said: "These are the limits set by Allah, so approach them not." (Al-Baqarah 2:187).

Fasting is pure worship: The fact that he is abstaining from food and drink both in public and in secret shows his honest faith and strong love of Allah, and his knowledge and feeling that Allah is all-knowing of everything. For this reason Allah has made the reward for fasting greater than for any other type of worship. Allah said in the hadith Qudsi: "Every deed of the son of Adam will be multiplied [in rewards], the good deed by ten of its like, up to seven hundreds, up to whatever Allah wills, except fasting, it is for Me and I will reward it. He abandons his desire and his food for My sake." (Related by Muslim) Ibn al-Qayyim said: "...And people may see that a person is not eating in front of them, but the fact that he is really abandoning his food and his desire for the sake of God is a thing that nobody can find out about, and that is the essence of fasting." (Zaad al-Ma'ad 2/29).

Relieving Muslims from life's distractions: Eating, drinking, and socializing all distract a person and weaken ties with Allah. It is by the Mercy of Allah that Muslims are ordered to fast so as not to be bothered by the intrusion of these activities. Nor by the thought

about them nor the anticipation for them when devoting themselves to all types of worship. Either reading the Qur'an, offering additional prayer or making I'tikaf. For this reason the Prophet (sallallahu alayhe wa sallam) said: "Fasting is a shield, and a secure fortress against Hell fire" (Related by Ahmad).

Discovering Allah's Blessings: A person experiences the hardship of the poor. He should then be thankful to Allah Who has blessed him with His bounty while others are deprived. This should make him more sympathetic and willing to share this bounty. The poor rediscovers that fasting helps a person be more devoted to worship. More able to concentrate and meditate. He should then be able of this devotion all year long, a blessing he should thank Allah for.

Acquiring strength and endurance: It has been discovered that depriving the body of food for a period of time helps its defense and endurance mechanism. This in turn protects the body from certain diseases.

Remember that fasting is not only dependent on abstentions: Many believe that fasting consist only of certain abstentions, forgetting that Allah established certain acts of worship with fasting. Among which are:

Qiyamul-layl: The Prophet (sallallahu alayhe wa sallam) said: "Whoever performed the night prayer during Ramadhan out of belief and anticipating God's rewards, will be forgiven his previous sins." (Related by Muslim). Performing Umrah: The Prophet (sallallahu alayhe wa sallam) said: "An Umrah during Ramadhan is like a Hajj with me." (Related by al-Hakim).

Offering Iftar (meal) to those who fasted. The Prophet (sallallahu alayhe wa sallam) said: "Whoever feeds a fasting person has the same reward as him, except that the reward of the fasting person will not be diminished." (Related by Ahmad).

Reading and completing the Qur'an: The Prophet (sallallahu alayhe wa sallam) said: "Fasting and [reading] Qur'an will intercede for the person: fasting will say: O Lord I forbade him eating and drinking so let me intercede for him, and the Qur'an will say: I deprived him from his night sleep so let me intercede for him," he then said: "So they will intercede." (Related by Ahmad). The Prophet (sallallahu alayhe wa sallam) used to recite the whole Qur'an to Angel Jibreel each Ramadhan.

Giving in charity: Ibn Abbas (radhiallahu anhu) said: "The Prophet (sallallahu alayhe wa sallam) was the most generous among people, and he was more generous during the month of Ramadhan." (Related by Muslim).

I'tikaf: which is to confine oneself in the masjid for prayer and invocation leaving the worldly activities. Ibn Abbas (radhiallahu anhu) said: "The Prophet (sallallahu alayhe wa sallam) used to perform I'tikaf during the last ten days of Ramadhan." (Related by Muslim). It is surprising that many people have abandoned I'tikaf though the Prophet (sallallahu alayhe wa sallam) never abandoned it from the time he arrived to Madinah until he died.

Supplication: In the verses dealing with fasting, Allah said: "And when My slaves ask you (O Muhammad) concerning Me, then answer them, I am indeed near to them. I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me." (Al-Baqarah 2: 186). This is an encouragement for the fasting person to increase his invocation. The Prophet (sallallahu alayhe wa sallam) said: "Three invocations will be answered: The invocation of the fasting person, the invocation of the oppressed, and the invocation of the traveller." (Related by Muslim).

Repentance: Ramadhan is the time of repentance and return to Allah, for it is a time when the devils are chained, and when many people are saved from hell fire every night by the grace of Allah.

Applying oneself in all good deeds in the last ten days of Ramadhan: Aysha (radhiallahu anha) said: "When the last ten days come, he (sallallahu alayhe wa sallam) would pray most of the night and wake his family, and apply himself, and tighten up his loincloth.", and she also said: "The Messenger of Allah (sallallahu alayhe wa sallam) used to strive in the last days of Ramadhan more than he did during the other days." (Related by Muslim).

Abstaining from vain talk: Sins decrease the reward of fasting although they do not annul it. The Prophet (sallallahu alayhe wa sallam) said: "Fasting is not [only] abstaining from eating and drinking, but abstaining from vain and obscene talk, so if someone insulted you or wronged you say: I am fasting." (Related by al-Hakim) and he also said: "Whoever does not abandon lying, then Allah does not need him to abandon his food and drink." (Related by al-Bukhari).

Common errors made during Ramadhan

Excessive spending: Ramadhan should be a time to avoid being wasteful, and learning to be prepared in facing harder times by distinguishing the needs from the luxuries. Unfortunately, many people go beyond their limits to spend during Ramadhan. Whether in the varieties of food that they savor each night, or by the other types of spending.

Staying awake during the night and sleeping during the day: Some people sleep during most of the day when they are fasting. Ramadhan is not a time of being lazy, and this do not allow the full benefit from the experience of fasting. It is as if they have only inverted their nights into days and vice versa. In addition, some may spend a great portion of the night indulging in eating and drinking and socializing

Spending more time in socializing: Because people invite each other more often during Ramadhan they do tend to spend more time socializing with friends, and relatives. While it is a good deed to feed the fasting person, this should not result in precious time lost in vain talk. Use the occasion for remembering Allah and offering additional prayers, and for the Da'wah to Allah.

Insisting on performing a certain number of Rakaas during the Tarawih (night) prayer to the point of not praying behind the Imam and thus forfeiting the benefit of congregational prayer. This might also bring hatred and disagreement between the Muslims of one community.

Reading Qur'an too fast: Some insist on finishing the whole Qur'an once or more, even if they have to read very fast. Although reading the Qur'an many times is desirable, this should not be done hastily, especially during the Tarawih prayer without pondering upon its meaning. Allah ta'ala said: "This is a Book which We have sent down to you, full of blessings that they may ponder over its verses," (Saad 38:29), and the Prophet (sallallahu alayhe wa sallam) said: "Those who read the Qur'an in less than three days do not grasp [its meaning]"

Socializing in I'tikaf: Many people are eager to do I'tikaf but some confine themselves in the masjid not to pray and worship Allah but to talk and socialize.

The ways of doing good are numerous in Ramadhan Many people try to perform more than they are able to. By going beyond their capabilities, they end up not performing any deed in the desired way.


Scholars and Dai'ahs should assume a more prominent role in educating the people - both by talking to them and by giving the best example in their behavior which should comply to the Shariah and following the Sunnah.

The Muslim should realize that his priorities dictate that he does what benefits him in the Hereafter and should not put worldly interests first.

The Muslim should apply himself to deepen his sense of following the Sunnah of the Prophet (sallallahu alayhe wa sallam), in every aspect of his life, at all times and especially during the month of Ramadhan. This necessitates seeking more knowledge about the Fiqh of fasting and its etiquette, assimilating the wisdom and goals of fasting, and facilitating the means that allow all the Muslims to benefit from their fasting.

We ask Allah to accept our fast and our good deeds.

From Al-Jumuah Magazine, Vol 8, Issue 9

Source of article islaam.com. 

ONE HOUR A Day



**"Time is our capital in this life.
It has to be invested for the maximum possible return."**

When the Prophet, sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam, received the order to 'Arise and warn', he started calling others to Islam and continued to do so, day and night, until he died. Time was very important for him and he used every minute of it in the best possible way. He would meet regularly with his companions to teach them Qur'an and to warn them from disobeying Allah. He was an example to them in speech and in deeds.

The result of this education was that the companions' faith became the most important thing for them. And when they had to choose between their home, tribe and good living on the one hand and the companionship of the Prophet, sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam, on the other hand, they chose the latter and emigrated for the sake of Allah and exemplified sacrifice for the sake of one's belief. After thirteen years of hard work and sacrifice in Makkah, the Prophet and his companions were granted victory in Madinah.

How do our efforts today compare with those of the Prophet and his companions? One year of our life has passed. How many good deeds have we prepared for the day of judgment? What did we, as individuals and communities, do for Islam? Were we distracted by our money and our children from the obedience of Allah and Jihad for His sake? Allah said: "O you who believe! Let not your money or your children divert you from the remembrance of Allah. If any act as such, then surely they are the losers." (Qur'an, 63:9) The Prophet, sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam, said: "No servant will be let go on the day of judgment until he is asked about the four matters: His lifetime: How did he spend it? His knowledge: What did he use it for? His money: Where did he

gain it from and what did he spend in it? And his body: In what did he wear it away?" (at-Tirmidhee) Have we used our bodies for fasting, praying, enjoining good and forbidding evil or have we used them up by succumbing to our desires?

Muslims have to realize the importance of time: that it is their capital in this life and that it is to be invested for the maximum possible return. Suppose for a minute that every Muslim dedicates one hour a day to work for the sake of Allah. In financial terms, this would generate a minimum of 1 billion dollars a day, 360 billion dollars a year! If such amount were to be reserved for Islamic work, it would change the face of the earth. Suppose that every Muslim were to spend one hour calling others to the path of Allah: millions would enter Islam!

Muslims today need to build their Ummah and revive it. And this does not come through futile discussions but rather through work, sincere, continuous, careful and planned. We need to strengthen the body of this Ummah and protect it from the dangers surrounding it. We need to deepen the awareness of the Muslims about their identity, their history, their wealth and that they are one single nation. And to start with, we need to invest in the Muslim individual because he is the real instrument for change.

Article courtesy of the Editorial from The Friday Report (now Al Jum'ah Magazine), V/1

From islaam.com. **END**

By (the Token of) Time
(through the ages),

Verily Man is in loss,

Except such as have Faith, and
do righteous deeds, and (join
together) in the mutual teaching
of Truth, and of Patience and
Constancy.

Surah Al-Asr (Surah 103)





When Allah commands us to give up sins and to avoid them it is not because our sins will harm Him. It is only us who will benefit by avoiding sins. Likewise, we alone will be affected by the sins we commit. It was the habit of the righteous ancestors to think about their sins whenever they were faced with hardship in anything. In fact, sins have many bad effects on the lives of the sinners. How can sins change our lives? What are the effects of sins on our well-being? Imam Ibn Al-Qayyim Al-Jawziyah explains to us these effects in his well-known book Al-Jawab Al-Kafi...

The Effects of Sins:

Prevention of knowledge: Knowledge is a light which Allah throws into the heart and disobedience extinguishes this light. Imam Ash-Shafi`i said: "I complained to Wakee` about the weakness of my memory, so he ordered me to abandon disobedience and informed me that knowledge is light. He said that the light of Allah is not given to the disobedient."

Prevention of sustenance: Just as righteousness brings about sustenance, the abandonment of righteousness causes poverty. There is nothing which can bring about sustenance like the abandonment of sins.

Prevention of obedience (to Allah): If there was no other punishment for sin except that it prevents one from obeying Allah then this would be sufficient.

Disobedience weakens the heart and the body: The fact that it weakens the heart is clear. Disobedience continues to weaken the heart until its life ceases completely.

Disobedience reduces one's lifespan and destroys any blessings: Just as righteousness increases one's lifespan, sinning reduces it.

Legacy of the cursed: Every type of disobedience is the legacy of a nation from among those which Allah destroyed. Sodomy is a legacy of the people of Lot, taking more than one's due right and giving what is less is a legacy of the people of Shu`aib, spreading mischief and corruption is a legacy of the people of Pharaoh and pride, including arrogance and tyranny, is a legacy of the people of Hud. So the disobedient one is somehow a part of those nations who were the enemies of Allah.

Disobedience is a cause of the servant being held in contempt by his Lord: Al-Hasan Al-Basri said: "They became contemptible in (His sight) so they disobeyed Him. If they were honorable (in His sight) He would have protected them."

Effect of sins on others: The ill-effects of the sinner fall upon those around him as well as the animals as a result of which they are touched by harm.

Living in sin: The servant continues to commit sins until they become very easy for him and seem insignificant in his heart and this is a sure sign of destruction. Every time a sin becomes insignificant in the sight of the servant it becomes great in the sight of Allah.

Disobedience brings humiliation and lowliness: Every aspect of honor lies in the obedience of Allah. Ibn Al-Mubarak said: "I have seen sins kill the hearts. And humiliation is inherited by their continuity. The abandonment of sins gives life to the hearts. And the prevention of your soul is better for it."

Disobedience corrupts the intellect: The intellect has light and disobedience extinguishes this light. When the light of the intellect is extinguished it becomes weak and deficient.

Sealing of the heart: When disobedience increases, the servant's heart becomes sealed so that he becomes of those who are heedless. The Exalted said: [But no! A stain has been left on their hearts on account of what they used to earn (that is, their actions)] (Al-Mutaffifin 83: 14).

Sins cause various types of corruption to occur in the land: Corruption of the water, the air, the plants, the fruit, and the dwelling places. The Exalted said: [Mischief has appeared on the land and the sea on account of what the hands of men have earned; that He may give them a taste of some of (the actions) they have done, in order that they may return] (Ar-Rum 30: 41).

Disappearance of modesty: Modesty is the essence of the life of the heart and is the basis of every good. Its disappearance is the disappearance of all that is good. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Modesty is goodness, all of it."

Sins weaken and reduce the magnification of Allah the Almighty in the heart of the servant.

Sins are the cause of Allah forgetting His servant: Sinning also causes Allah to abandon him and leave him to fend for himself with his soul and his Satan and in this is destruction from which no deliverance can be hoped for.

Being removed from the realm of benevolence: When a person sins, benevolence is removed from his heart. When benevolence fills the heart it prevents it from disobedience.

Disobedience causes the favors (of Allah) to cease and makes His revenge lawful: No blessing ceases to reach a servant except because of a sin, and no retribution is made lawful upon him except because of a sin. Ali ibn Abi Talib (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "No trial has descended except due to a sin and it (the trial) is not repelled except by repentance."

Based on Al-Jawab Al-Kafi by Imam Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyah, www.al-manhaj.com

Article from islamonline.net


Advice to Muslims in Ramadhan

O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that ye may (learn) self-restraint,-

Al-Qur'an, Surah 2, Verse 183 (Surah Al-Baqara)

1. Fast Ramadhan with belief and truly seeking the reward of Allah the Most High so that He may forgive you your past sins.
2. Beware of breaking your fast during the days of Ramadhan without a valid Islamic excuse, for it is from the greatest of sins.
3. Pray Salat ut-Taraweeh and the night prayer during the nights of Ramadhan - especially on Layatul-Qadr - based on belief and truly seeking the reward of Allah, so that Allah may forgive you your past sins.
4. Make sure that your food, your drink and your clothing are from halal means, in order that your actions be accepted, and your supplications answered. Beware of refraining from the halal while fasting and breaking your fast with the haram.
5. Give food to some fasting people to gain a reward similar to theirs.
6. Perform your five prayers on time in congregation to gain the reward and Allah's protection.
7. Give a lot of charity for the best charity is that of Ramadhan.
8. Beware of spending your time without performing righteous deeds, for you will be responsible and reckoned for it and will be rewarded for all you do during your time.
9. Perform `umrah in Ramadhan for `Umrah in Ramadhan is equal to Hajj.
10. Seek help for fasting during the day by eating the sahoor meal in the last part of the night before the appearance of Fajr.
11. Hasten breaking your fast after the sun has truly set in order to gain the love of Allah.
12. Perform ghusl before Fajr if you need to purify yourself from the state of major impurity so that you are able to do acts of worship in a state of purity and cleanliness.
13. Cease the opportunity of being in Ramadhan and spend it with the good that has been revealed in it - by reciting the noble Qur'an and pondering and reflection of its meanings so that it be a proof for you with your Lord and an intercessor for you on the Day of Reckoning.
14. Preserve your tongue from lying, cursing, backbiting and slander for it decreases the reward of fasting.
15. Do not let fasting cause you cross your boundaries by getting upset due to the slightest of reasons. Rather, fasting should be a cause of peacefulness and tranquility of your soul.
16. Upon completion of fasting, be in a state of taqwa of Allah the Most High, being aware of Allah watching you in secret and in public, in thankfulness for His favors, and steadfastness upon obedience of Allah by doing all what He has ordered and shunning all that He has prohibited.
17. Increase in remembrance of Allah, seeking of forgiveness, asking for Paradise and protection against the Fire, especially when fasting, while breaking the fast and during suhoor, for these actions are among greatest causes of attaining Allah's forgiveness.
18. Increase in supplication for yourself, your parents, your children and Muslims, for Allah has ordered making of supplications and has guaranteed acceptance.
19. Repent to Allah with a sincere repentance in all times by leaving sins, regretting those that you have done before and firmly deciding not to return to them in the future, for Allah accepts repentance of those who repent.
20. Fast six days of Shawwal, for whoever fasts Ramadhan and then follows it with six days of Shawwal, it is as if he fasts all the time.
21. Fast on the Day of `Arafah, the 9th of Dhul Hijjah, to attain success by being forgiven your sins of the last year and the coming year.
22. Fast on the day of `Aashuraa', the 10th of Muharram, along with the 9th, to attain success by being forgiven your sins of the past year.
23. Continue being in a state of iman and taqwa and perform righteous actions after the month of Ramadhan, until you die. "And worship your Lord until there comes to you the certainty (i.e. death)". [Qur'an 15:99]
24. Ensure that you attain the positive effects of your acts of worship such as prayer, fasting, zakat and hajj, sincere repentance and leaving of customs that are in variance with the Sharee`ah.
25. Invoke a lot of salawat and salam upon the Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, his Companions and all those who follow them until the Day of Judgment.

From the book "Khulaasatul Kalaam" by Shaykh Jaarullah.

Article excerpted with modifications from islaam.com. 

Night of AL-QADR

Its virtue:

The night of Al-Qadr is the most virtuous night of the year. Allah says in the Qur'an: "We revealed it on the night of power [that is, Al-Qadr]. What will tell you what the night of power is? It is better than a thousand months." Any action therein, for example, reciting the Qur'an, making remembrance of Allah, and so on, is better than acting for one thousand months which do not contain the night of Al-Qadr.

It is preferred to seek this night:

It is preferred to seek this night during the last ten nights of Ramadan, as the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, strove his best in seeking it during that time. We have already mentioned that the Prophet would stay up during the last ten nights, would wake his wives, and then would remain apart from them to worship.

Which night is it?

Scholars hold different opinions as to the night, which is the night of Al-Qadr. Some are of the opinion that it is the 21st, some say the 23rd, others say the 25th and still others say it is the 29th. Some say that it varies from year to year but it is always among the last ten nights of Ramadan. Most scholars, though, vouch for the 27th.

Ahmad recorded, with a Authentic chain, from Ibn `Umar that the Prophet said: "He who likes to seek that night should do so on the 27th. 'Ubayy ibn K`ab said: By Allah, and there is no god but Him, it is during Ramadan-and He swore to that-and by Allah, I know what night it is. It is the night during which the Prophet ordered us to make prayers, the night of the 27th. Its sign is that the sun rises in the morning white and without any rays." (Related by Muslim, Abu Dawud, Ahmad, and by At-Tirmidhi who called it Authentic.)

Praying and making supplications during the night of Al-Qadr:

Al-Bukhari and Muslim record from Abu Hurairah that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said: "Whoever prays during the night of Al-Qadr with faith and hoping for its reward will have all of his previous sins forgiven."

As to the supplication during the night of Al-Qadr, `A'ishah said: "I asked the Messenger of Allah: 'O Messenger of Allah, if I know what night is the night of qadr, what should I say during it?' He said: 'Say: O Allah, You are pardoning and You love to pardon, so pardon me.'" (Related by Ahmad, Ibn Majah, and by At-Tirmidhi, who called it Authentic.)

Editors Note: It is preferable and better to seek this night during the odd nights of the last ten days of Ramadhan, i.e the 21st, 23rd, 25th, 27th and 29th nights. If one finds this too much they should try their best to at least seek it on the odd nights of the last 7 days, i.e 25th, 27th and 29th nights rather than just trying on the 27th night as the night of Qadr changes from year to year.

From www.islamonline.net **end**

CORRECTION

Correction to article on "The Grave" from Issue 7 of The Message.

In issue 7 of The Message in the article entitled "The Grave" one statement read as follows:

"A disbeliever's belief at the time of death is not acceptable."

Unfortunately the author of the article didn't fully explain this statement which lead to it being misunderstood by some people. Read one way this statement can give the impression that it is not acceptable for a non-Muslim to accept Islam at the time of death. However this statement needs to be expanded upon and explained in more detail. Below follow two questions answered on the topic of repentance before death from Islam Q & A (www.islamqa.com). Although the questions deal with the topic of repentance before death we hope the answers to both questions will clarify the meaning of the above statement for readers.

QUESTION:

A man committed many sins. He is suffering from a severe illness and has tried treatment to no avail. The doctors have told him that they have no cure for his problem. Now he regrets his past and wants to repent. Does his repentance count now that he is suffering from this terminal illness from which he has no hope of a cure?

ANSWER:

Praise be to Allah.

Yes, the repentance of a man who does not hope to live for long does count. This applies whether he has an incurable illness such as cancer; or he has been sentenced to death, such as a man who has been brought out for execution, even if the sword is being raised above his head. His repentance is valid, because Allah accepts the repentance of a man so long as the death rattle has not yet reached his throat. Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"Allah accepts only the repentance of those who do evil in ignorance and foolishness and repent soon afterwards; it is they to whom Allah will forgive, and Allah is Ever All-Knower, All-Wise." [al-Nisa' 4:17]

The meaning of the phrase "and repent soon afterwards" means that they repent before they die.

In the following aayah, Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"And of no effect is the repentance of those who continue to do evil deeds until death faces one of them and he says: 'Now I repent;...' [al-Nisa' 4:18]

There are five essential conditions for repentance: sincerity, regret for what one has done, giving it up immediately, determination not to repeat it in the future, and repenting during the time when repentance will be accepted, i.e., before one dies or before the sun rises in the west.

Editors Note: This above is not a licence to commit sin and then hope to repent before we die for two reasons. Firstly death could come unexpectedly at any moment...what chance would one have to repent then. Secondly to deliberately go ahead and sin with the attitude, "It's ok, I'll repent before I die" is in someways taking liberties with the laws of Allah. Basically you are saying you are going to try to fool Allah (your creator who knows what is in your heart) by deliberately disobeying him by sinning and then expect forgiveness.

QUESTION:

If a Muslim converts to another religion and later decides to come back to Islam, what is the process that he/she needs to go through in order to return to Islam? Is there a certain time period within which he/she can return to Islam?

ANSWER:

Praise be to Allah.

If a person leaves Islam then decides to come back to it, what he has to do is to bear witness that there is no god except Allah and that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger. If his apostasy was because he denied one of the basic principles of the religion, then his return to Islam cannot be complete until he affirms the principle that he had denied. There is no particular time period within which he can return to Islam; his repentance will be accepted until the point when the death-rattle sounds in his throat and his soul departs. If he is guided back to Islam within the time when it is possible (i.e., before death) and he performs as many of the Islamic duties as he can, then he is a Muslim.

From islamqa.com with minor omissions to reduce article length.



Those who believe, and do deeds of righteousness, and establish regular prayers and regular charity, will have their reward with their Lord: on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.

Al-Qur'an, Surah 2, Verse 277 (Surah Al-Baqara)

EASY GOOD Deeds

EASY GOOD Deeds

Ramadhan is the month when all of our good deeds if done sincerely for the sake of Allah alone and no-one else have their reward multiplied many times over. With this in mind presented below is a selection of easy to do good deeds whose rewards relative to the effort required to do them are huge. If the reward for performing them normally is so big then we only imagine how much more reward we will get from Allah for doing them during Ramadhan. Considering each of the deeds listed in the article only takes about two minutes maximum to complete then it is really is a loss for us to not to try and do these deeds outside of Ramadhan and a great mistake to not to attempt them during Ramadhan.

Saying Subhaan Allah 100 Times
 Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, "Is anyone of you incapable of earning one thousand Hasanah (rewards) in a day?". Someone from his gathering asked, "How can any one of us earn a thousand Hasanah?". He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, "Glorify Allah^[1] a hundred times and a thousand Hasanah will be written for you, or a thousand sins^[2] will be wiped away." (Sahih Muslim)

Notes:
^[1] To glorify Allah means to say SUBHAAN ALLAH.
^[2] Sins being wiped away refers to minor sins.
 - From Sahih Muslim

Reciting Ayat al-Kursi after every fardh(obligatory) prayer.
 Abu Umamah Al-Bahili, (may Allah be pleased with him) related of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), that he said: "He whosoever recites the verse (Surah 2: Ayah 255 [Aayat al-Kursi]) after every obligatory (fardh) prayer will not be forbidden to enter Jannah except due to death."
 (This Hadith was reported by Nasaiee, Ibn-ul-Sanee and others in The Sound Hadith Series, Hadith #972.)

Reciting Surah Al-Ikhlās (Surah 112).
 Narated By Abu Said Al-Khudri : The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said to his companions, "Is it difficult for any of

you to recite one third of the Qur'an in one night?"
 This suggestion was difficult for them so they said, "Who among us has the power to do so, O Allah's Apostle?" Allah's Apostle replied: " Allah (the) One, the Self-Sufficient Master Whom all creatures need.' (Surah Al-Ikhlās 112) is equal to one third of the Qur'an."
 - From Sahih Bukhari

i.e the reward for reciting Surah Al-Ikhlās (Surah number 112 of the Qur'an) once is equal to the reward of reciting a third of the Qur'an.

Sending Blessings upon the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)
 Abdullah bin Amr bin Al-'As reported that he heard the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), saying, "If anyone invokes blessings upon me once, Allah will bestow blessings upon him ten times over."
 - From Sahih Muslim

Some quick & easy recommended remembrance for after prayer.
 Abdullah bin Amr, (may Allah be pleased with him), related of the Prophet (peace & blessings of Allah be upon him) that he said: "Two qualities or characteristics that whosoever maintains them as a believing Muslim slave servant of Allah, the Almighty will definitely enter Jannah. They are very simple and easy to maintain.

Yet, only few are those who abide and fulfill (these two supplications).
 First: one should say after every obligatory prayer: "Subhan- Allah," ten times, "Alhamdu-lil-lah," ten times and "Allah-u-Akbar," ten times. This will make 150 phrases to be uttered, however on the scale of Allah, the Almighty, they are equivalent to 1500 times.
 Second: Say , when going to sleep for the night: "Allah-u-Akbar," 34 times, "Alhamdu-lil-lah," 33 times and "Subhan-Allah," 33 times. This will make 100 phrases to be uttered, but will be considered 1000 times on the scale of Allah, the Almighty."

The Prophet (peace & blessings of Allah be upon him) counted these supplications on the knuckles of his fingers. When he was asked: "O Prophet of Allah! You say that these items are simple to do, but only few people who maintain them how could that be?" He, (peace & blessings of Allah be upon him) replied: "Satan comes to a person before he sleeps and makes him so drowsy that he cannot say these few words of supplication. Moreover, Satan comes to man, while still in prayers and reminds him of other things that he must do after prayer, not allowing him to maintain these words of supplication right after one finishes his prayer."

(This Hadith is reported by Abu Dawoud, Tirmidhi, Nasaiee and Ibu Hibhan in the book entitled "Sahih-ul-Fargheeb," #603. **END**)

ISLAMIC TIMES
 IT's a sign of the times

COMING SOON TO A MASJID NEAR YOU
 Reflecting the Lifestyle, Culture and Success of Muslims in the UK

ISLAMIC TIMES
 IT's a sign of the times...

For advertising and subscription enquiries please call
 Tel: 0870 443 8005
 Web: www.islamictimes.co.uk