

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

We are fast reaching the end of Ramadan and we are about to enter the last ten blessed days. Scholars of the past have much advice for us midway through Ramadan.

Ibn al-Jawzi (RA) said:

"When the race horse knows that it is nearing the end of the track it exerts all of its effort to win the race. Do not allow the race horse to be more clever than you. For verily, deeds are judged by their conclusions. So if you didn't do well with welcoming Ramadan then perhaps you will do better bidding it farewell."

Ibn Taymiyyah (RA) said:

"The lesson lies in perfection of the conclusion of a thing, not in the shortcomings of the beginning of it."

Hasan al-Basri (RA) said:

"Improve your performance in what is left (of time) and you will be forgiven for that which has already passed. So take special care of the time you have left because you do not know when your soul will be turned over to Allah's Mercy."

So with these words of advice, let us embrace the ash'r al-awakhir the last ten days.

Living in this materialistic world, we tend to be bound by the clock. Ramadan demands change in our schedules. Ramadan impresses the importance of governing one's day according to the cycles of nature, as opposed to those of an industrial clock or 9 to 5 existence. Ramadan begins with the visual sighting of the new moon, and our daily fasts commence and conclude with dawn and sunset, respectively. Submission to the cycles of the sun and the moon affirms not merely living in harmony with nature, but submitting to Allah as Creator and Master of all things. The

modern world has parted with millennia of human experience, as it attempts to bend our will in submission to a full day of labor marked by the hour hand. With emphasis on spending time in worship and contemplation, we further change our schedules during the last ten days. Some people will take time off from work, some will sit in i'tikaf in masjid and homes for sisters. This emphasizes, that our existence was not destined for capitulation to fleeting materialism and Ramadan reminds us of our grander purpose.

Ramadan, especially in last ten days, is a rejection of what the modern world forces us into: the constant exercise of yo-yo dieting, consumerism, the mechanization of time, and the obsession to control over our lives. Both Muslims and non-Muslims are increasingly looking for peace in modern life and seek purpose and meaning to replace the superficial accumulation of possessions. The last ten days is a time for us to reorient ourselves towards Allah, redefining our relationship with time, community, and the natural world. Allah-consciousness, or taqwa, is achieved not through sound bites, but as a lived reality of intentional living, transcending the impulses and needs of the body and ultimately, aspiring to a higher state of being.

In regards to lailatul Qadr, We celebrate many occasions. Birthdays, National Days, Mother's Days and so on.

Ramadan is the celebration of Quran and the night of power is the celebration of revelation.

Why do I say that, because

- Jibreel was khairul Malaikah
- Prophet was Khair ul Mursaleen
- Ramadan is Khair ul Ash-hur
- Qadar is Khair ul layali
- Ummah is Khair -ul- Ummah

The common thread among all of these, is the Quran.

Quran was such a blessing that an entire surah was dedicated for announcing the revelation. I am talking about Surah Al-Qadr. Allah SWT's infinite wisdom, gave us many rewards for this night.

The month of Ramadan is the month of the Quran; The Glorious Quran is to man as the soul is to the body; it is a light for guidance.

What's left of Ramadan:

- Develop a deep relation
- Fall in love with Quran
- Be addicted to Quran

Many ayahs seem like you heard them for the first time. Used to happen to sahabah. Omar RA at the time of Prophet's (PBUH) death.

Al-Imran (The Family of Imran) - 3:144

وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ أَفَإِنْ مَاتَ أَوْ قُتِلَ
انْقَلَبْتُمْ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِكُمْ وَمَنْ يَنْقَلِبْ عَلَىٰ عَقْبَيْهِ فَلَنْ يَضُرَّ اللَّهَ شَيْئًا
وَسَيَجْزِي اللَّهُ الشَّاكِرِينَ

3:144 AND MUHAMMAD is only a messenger; all the [other] messengers have passed away before him: **if, then, he dies or is slain, will you turn about on your heels?** But he that turns about on his heels can in no way harm Allah - whereas Allah will reward all who are grateful [to Him].

Yousuf's story -

قَالُوا إِنَّكَ لَأَنْتَ يُوسُفُ قَالَ أَنَا يُوسُفُ وَهَذَا أَخِي قَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ
علينا إنه من يتق ويصبر فإن الله لا يضيع أجر المحسنين
(12:90)

90. They said, "Is that you, Joseph?" He said, "I am Joseph, and this is my brother. Allah has been gracious to us. He who practices piety and patience—Allah never fails to reward the righteous."

Quran was such a miracle, it resolved many issues.

For example. It explained the issues regarding Esa AS about who he was and how he was raised. Christianity debated for Jesus for 300 years until coming up with a doctrine of trinity etc. and even that is constantly revised by different sects. If they refer to the Quran it explains everything about Jesus. May Allah guide them.

Surah Ikhlas - resolved so many issues in very brief ayahs. Any new Muslim can comprehend Islam if he just knows this surah.

1. Say, "He is Allah, the One. 2. Allah, the Absolute. 3. He begets not, nor was He begotten. 4. And there is none comparable to Him."

Ken's story

So let's take advantage of that especially in the last ten days.

Ibn Jareer narrates on the authority of Mujaahid, that there was a man from Bani Israeel who used to spend the night in prayer. Then during the day he would fight the enemy in the way of Allah until the evening and he did this for a thousand months. And so Allah revealed:

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ (97:1) وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ (97:2) لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ
 خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ (97:3) تَنْزِيلَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالرُّوحِ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِنْ
 كُلِّ أَمْرٍ (97:4) سَلَامٌ هِيَ حَتَّىٰ مَطَلَعِ الْفَجْرِ (97:5)

1. We sent it down on the Night of Decree. 2. But what will convey to you what the Night of Decree is? 3. The Night of Decree is better than a thousand months. 4. In it descend the angels and the Spirit, by the leave of their Lord, with every command. 5. Peace it is; until the rise of dawn.

Allah سبحانه وتعالى said in Surah Ad-Dukhan:

حَمْدٌ وَالْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ مُبَارَكَةٍ إِنَّا كُنَّا مُنذِرِينَ فِيهَا
 يَفْرَقُ كُلُّ أَمْرٍ حَكِيمٍ أَمْرًا مِنْ عِنْدِنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا مُرْسِلِينَ رَحْمَةً مِنْ
 رَبِّكَ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

“Hâ-Mîm By the manifest Book (this Qur’ân) that makes things clear, We sent it (this Qur’ân) down on a blessed night in the month of Ramadân Verily, We are ever warning Therein (that night) is decreed every matter of ordainments. As a Command (or this Qur’an or the Decree of every matter) from Us. Verily, We are ever sending (the Messengers), (As) a Mercy from your Lord. Verily! He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower. “

As for Soorat-ul-Qadr then the merit of this night stands out clearly with complete clarity in every Ayah of it.

In the first Ayah is the explanation the Quran was revealed in this night,

the second Ayah brings attention to its greatness and merits,

the third Ayah says that it is better than a thousand months, where a month consists of thirty days meaning that this night is better than thirty thousand days.

The fourth Ayah describes how the Angels (Mala'ikah) descend with Jibreel (as) on this night with every ordinance and decree from Allah سبحانه وتعالى

and in the final Ayah is the description that this night is peace, i.e. peace from evil until the dawn of the morning.

Al-Qadr is special and unique night during Ramadan. The meaning of the Arabic word "al-Qadr" is very mysterious.

It's a name for all powerful Allah SWT himself, a reference to the unknown destiny of oneself, an indication to the predestined or decreed fate of a believer. This uncertainty of meaning, adds to the mystery and sacredness of the night.

Another meaning - Rank stature. Night of stature.

One of the six parts of belief. Fate is part of it. Determinism vs free will. We believe in free will. This is a secret of Allah. Allah has decreed yet we will have to account for it. - Quantum vs Newtonian physics

Quran was brought down in two stages. The first one is from لوح محفوظ preserved tablet to the lowest heaven. انزل refers to the first stage.

During this extraordinary and exceptional night, we believe the gates of paradise are open and all one's sins can be forgiven. Thus this night provides a golden chance for us to receive Allah's favor and forgiveness of sins.

Why 1000 months? because old people had more barakah in their time. We are too busy so we are given a short version.

In the fourth Ayah of Surah Ad-Dukhaan it is said: "Therein (that night) is decreed every matter of ordainments" meaning that every great affair is decided and established on Laylatul-Qadr for the year that follows it. So it is the night where affairs are decreed with Allah Azza wa Jalla and there is no doubt concerning the lofty standing and high station of Laylatul-Qadr.

يُفْرَقُ All matters are specified. measure out things are done.

Quran distinguishes between right and wrong. This night reminds us to develop that relationship with the Quran.

All evils are due to abandoning the quran. Many practices have entered because we don't focus in quran. Need to reflect and study. Need for scholars is there for deeper study but we should not be only relying on them. Should be lifelong students of knowledge. Any learned person can teach others.

When to find it - Look for it in all nights

1) Abu Hurairah (ra) said that the Prophet ﷺ said: "Whoever fasts Ramadan with Imaan and anticipation (of reward) then his past sins have been forgiven and whoever does Qiyaam on Laylat-ul-Qadr with Imaan and anticipation his past sins will be forgiven."

Narrated by Al-Bukhaari (2014), Muslim, Abu Daawood, An-Nasaa'i.

2) Anas Bin Maalik (ra) said: “Ramadan began so the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: Verily this month has arrived upon you and in it is a night that is better than 1000 months. The one who is deprived of it has been deprived of all Goodness and only the deprived person is deprived of it.”

Narrated by Ibn Maajah (1644). Also narrated by Ahmad and An-Nasaa'i

In the month of Ramadan Allah سبحانه وتعالى has made Laylat-ul-Qadr (The night of power) particularly special and the fact that it has been singled out within this great month and its nights is a great reflection of its favour and high merit. There are many Ahaadeeth that mention Qadr and two above illustrate the merits of performing Qiyaam in it as well as the Khair that exists in it. This is so the Muslims increase in it their prayers, Du'a, Sadaqah etc... and the doors to goodness are various.

An-Nasaa'i, At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Maajah narrated from 'Aa'isha (ra) that she said: “O Prophet of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم if I make contact with Laylat-ul-Qadr what should I say? He صلى الله عليه وسلم said: You say:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوفٌ ، تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّي

(O Allah you are the pardoner, you love to pardon, so pardon me)”.

Extra Material - Quran

Al-Hashr (The Gathering) - 59:21

لَوْ أَنزَلْنَا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَى جَبَلٍ لَّرَأَيْتَهُ خَاشِعًا مُّتَصَدِّعًا مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَالُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

■ HAD WE bestowed this Qur'an from on high upon a mountain, you would indeed see it humbling itself, **breaking asunder for awe of Allah**, And [all] such parables We propound unto men, so that they might [learn to] think. - 59:21

Al-Hadid (Iron) - 57:16

أَلَمْ يَأْنِ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْ تَخْشَعَ قُلُوبُهُمْ لِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَا نَزَلَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ وَلَا يَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِن قَبْلُ فَطَالَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَمَدُ فَقَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَكَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ

■ 57:16 IS IT NOT time that the hearts of all who have attained to faith should feel humble at the remembrance of Allah and of all the truth that has been bestowed [on them] from on high, lest they become like those who were granted revelation before, and whose hearts have hardened with the passing of time so that many of them are [now] depraved?

An-Nisa (The Women) - 4:82

أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا

■ 4:82 Will they not, then, try to understand this Qur'an? Had it issued from any but Allah, they would surely have found in it many contradictions!

We have the right to be happy on this night don't waste too much time in eating, drinking, chit chatting, even fund raising (a tradition). It is a night of reflection, being close to Allah SWT, asking for forgiveness and making duas for ourselves and the Ummah.