



Life With Allah

Connecting to The Creator

Ramadan Series: 8



Post-Ramadan

The Journey Continues

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Post-Ramadan

The Journey Continues



Life With Allah

الحياة مع الله

Contents

Post-Ramadan: The Journey Continues	4
Evaluate Your Ramadan	5
Fasting in Shawwal	7
Stay Steadfast After Ramadan	9
Stay Away from Sins	10
The Journey Continues	11

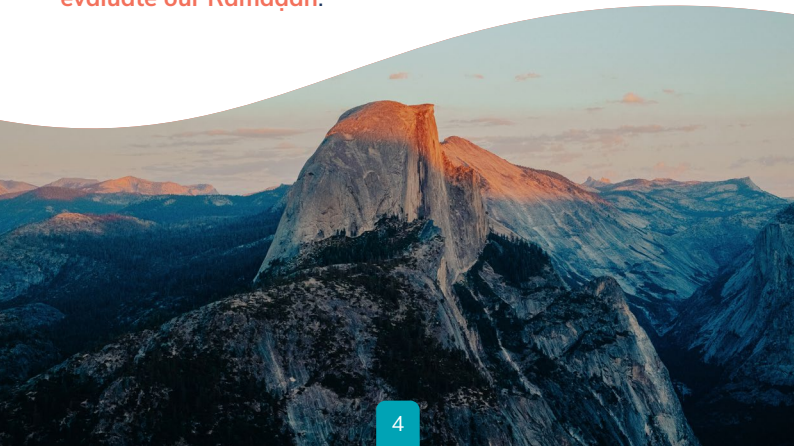
Post-Ramadan
The Journey Continues

Post-Ramadan: The Journey Continues

Throughout Ramaḍān, by Allah's favour, we tasted the sweetness of fasting and the night prayer. We revived our dead hearts with the recitation of the Qur'ān and the dhikr of Allah. We basked in the serenity of talking to Allah and felt the peace of seeking His forgiveness in the last parts of the night.

Now that Ramaḍān is over, let us ask ourselves: what next? What did we gain from Ramaḍān? How did it change us? Did it transform our lives? Will our life post-Ramaḍān look exactly the same as life pre-Ramaḍān?

Just a short while ago, we were planning for the 'dream project' of Ramaḍān. Now that Ramaḍān has ended, we should **spend time in Shawwāl to evaluate our Ramaḍān.**



Evaluate Your Ramadan

We can evaluate our Ramaḍān by asking ourselves the following questions:

- 1 Did my īmān in Allah increase? What do I know about Allah that I didn't prior to Ramaḍān? Do I feel closer to Him?
- 2 Did I go to Allah with a broken heart in utter desperation? Did I humble myself as a true servant of His?
- 3 Were there times in the month where my heart felt overwhelmed with love and gratitude for Allah?
- 4 Did my love for Allah's Messenger ﷺ increase? Which sunnah am I going to start implementing in my life that I previously didn't used to do?
- 5 Did my worship in Ramaḍān purify and soften my heart?
- 6 Did my fasting cause me to give up my bad habits?
- 7 Which sins of the eyes and the tongue did I give up? What steps am I going to take to maintain this?
- 8 Did I improve my akhlāq in this month?
- 9 Did I become a more gentle and loving family member?
- 10 Did I taste the sweetness of spending in the path of Allah? Did I give charity in secret?

- 11 Has Ramaḍān made me more determined to continue serving the dīn of Allah and the Ummah?
- 12 Did I taste the sweetness of solitude with Allah at night in qiyām? Has it made me determined to continue with this good deed?
- 13 Did I feel a difference in the quality of my ṣalāh?
- 14 Did I feel emotionally connected to the Qur'ān?
- 15 Did I feel the closeness of Allah when making du'ā' to Him?
- 16 Did I do dhikr with the presence of my heart?
- 17 Which one act of worship am I going to hold on to from Ramaḍān, something which I previously did not used to do?
- 18 What do I not want to lose of Ramaḍān?
- 19 Do I feel a greater level of self-control now that Ramaḍān is over?
- 20 If Allah gives me life, what two things will I do differently next Ramaḍān?

Fasting in Shawwal

One of the things we can do to keep our momentum going is fast six days of Shawwāl. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Fasting Ramaḍān is like fasting ten months, and fasting six days thereafter (in Shawwāl) is like fasting two months. That is like fasting a whole year” (Aḥmad).

Ibn Rajab رحمته explains the benefits of keeping the 6 Shawwāl fasts:

- 1 The reward of fasting the entire year. As Allah ﷻ rewards tenfold for a good deed, a servant will be rewarded for ten months of fasting due to fasting for the month of Ramaḍān; and the 6 days of fasting will be equivalent to fasting two further months, making it a total of a year.
- 2 Fasting in Sha‘bān and Shawwāl is like performing the sunan mu‘akkadah (rawātib) prayers before and after the farḍ ṣalāhs. They make up for and atone for the deficiencies of the farḍ acts.
- 3 Continuing to fast after Ramaḍān is a sign that one’s Ramaḍān was accepted. If Allah ﷻ accepts a good deed, he gives his servant the tawfiq to follow this up with another good deed, as a pious predecessor said: ‘The reward of a good deed is another good deed’.
- 4 Fasting in Ramaḍān leads to one’s sins being forgiven, and those who fasted in Ramaḍān are given their reward in full on the Day of Eid i.e. the Day of Prizes. Fasting after Eid is a means of thanking Allah ﷻ for this blessing.

Fasting is a blessing, which requires one to be grateful for it by fasting even more; for there is no blessing greater than the forgiveness of one's sins. Allah ﷻ has commanded His servants to thank Him for the blessing of fasting in Ramaḍān. This includes thanking Allah by fasting after Ramaḍān.

Some of the pious predecessors would fast the day in order to thank Allah for granting them tawfiq to stand the previous night in prayer.

- 5 The actions through which one seeks to attain Allah's closeness in Ramaḍān do not come to an end with the end of Ramaḍān. Rather one must continue with them throughout the year.

(Adapted from Laṭā'if al-Ma'ārif)



Stay Steadfast After Ramadan

After a month of intense worship, we may experience 'post-Ramaḍān blues' or a 'post- Ramaḍān dip'.

Naturally, we cannot do the same amount of worship in Shawwāl that we did in Ramaḍān. However, we should maintain a **strong desire to continue worshipping Allah and progressing in our journey to Him**. A sign of our Ramaḍān being accepted is that Allah ﷻ grants us tawfiq to continue worshipping Him. Thus, we should ensure that, even though Ramaḍān has ended, our daily Qur'ān recitation, dhikr, duā', fasting, and night prayer does not end, even if it is little. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ told us that the most beloved deeds to Allah are those which are constant, even if they are a few (Muslim).

We sometimes surprise ourselves how much self-restraint we are capable of in Ramaḍān (only by the grace of the Almighty). We should try to bring a percentage of this self-discipline over to post-Ramaḍān. Don't let a day go by without reciting Qur'ān. Add an additional sunnah/nafl prayer to your routine which you previously did not use to perform prior to Ramaḍān. Set yourself realistic expectations. There may be days or even some weeks where you experience a dip, but keep going. Don't give up and ask Allah to help you. Don't be paralysed by an 'all-or-nothing' attitude. Each time you do good, thank Him. **Realise that none of it is because of you. It is only because He allowed you to do it.**

Stay Away from Sins

One of the major goals of Ramaḍān was taqwā. Fasting should have trained us to control our nafs and stay away from sins. Yaḥyā b. Mu' ādh ؓ said, "Whoever seeks forgiveness with his tongue but his heart is still insistent upon sin, and his intention is to return back to the sin after Ramaḍān, then his fasting has been rejected and the door of acceptance has been closed in his face."

Even if our additional voluntary deeds sometimes slip, we should not compromise on two things: **(1)** the obligatory deeds **(2)** staying away from sins. And if we do commit sins, we should be quick to repent.

We should identify specific sins and beg Allah to protect us from them. E.g. O Allah, just as you protected my tongue from backbiting in Ramaḍān, protect me from it throughout the year. O Allah, just as you protected me from watching ḥarām in Ramaḍān, protect me from it throughout the year.

“ O the one who completed Ramaḍān in the best manner! Don't change thereafter in Shawwāl!” – Ibn al-Jawzī ؓ



The Journey Continues

Our journey to Allah does not end with Ramaḍān. Our journey of knowing Him, of tasting the sweetness of worshipping Him, of living a life of ‘ubūdiyyah (servitude) does not end with Ramaḍān. It was said to Bishr al-Ḥāfi ﷺ, “There are some people who strive hard in Ramaḍān but when it ends, they stop.” He replied, “How evil are these people! They only know the rights of Allah in Ramaḍān. Indeed, the pious person is the one who worships and strives hard throughout the entire year.”

As we journey on the Straight Path to Allah ﷻ, we should **always ask Him for istiḳāmah** (steadfastness and staying firm). The Prophet ﷺ was asked, “Advise me with something that I could hold on to”. He ﷺ replied, “Say, ‘My Lord is Allah’, then remain steadfast on it” (Tirmidhī). The Prophet ﷺ also said, “‘Abdullāh! Do not be like so-and-so! He used to pray at night, and he then stopped the night prayer” (Bukhārī).

To stay firm, we should **continuously seek knowledge** (even if it is one class a week), and **keep good company**. We should fill our schedules with various good deeds, so that Shayṭān does not lead us to veer off the Straight Path. Every minute in our journey to Allah is extremely precious.

“O son of Ādam! You are nothing but a number of days: and whenever a day passes, a part of you passes away.” – Ḥasan al-Baṣrī ﷺ

Istiqāmah on the journey to Allah is attained through rectifying and nourishing the heart. Ibn Rajab رحمه الله writes, “The foundation of istiqāmah is the istiqāmah of the heart upon tawhīd (the Oneness of Allah)... When the heart becomes steadfast on the ma’rifah (knowledge) of Allah, being in awe of Him, honouring Him, loving Him, seeking Him, hoping in Him, supplicating to Him, relying on Him and turning away from other than Him — then all the limbs and body parts will become steadfast on obeying Him. For the heart is the king of the limbs, and the limbs are its troops. When the king stands firm, his troops and subjects follow suit.”

May Allah al-Qawiyy (The Most Powerful) make us from the people of istiqāmah, about whom He says:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَمُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنْتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ مَحْنُ أَوْلِيَائِكُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِي أَنْفُسُكُمْ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَدْعُونَ ﴿٣١﴾ نَزْلًا مِّنْ عَفْوَِرٍ رَّحِيمٍ ﴿٣٢﴾

“Surely those who say, “Our Lord is Allah,” and then remain steadfast, the angels descend upon them, (saying,) “Do not fear, nor grieve. Rather, rejoice in the good news of Paradise, which you have been promised. We are your friends in this worldly life and in the hereafter. There you will have whatever your souls desire, and there you will have whatever you ask for: as a welcoming gift from the All-Forgiving, Most Merciful” (41:30-2).

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