



Life With Allah

Connecting to The Creator

Ramadan Series: 5



Ramadan:

The Month of

Qur'an & Qiyam

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Ramadan:

The Month of
Qur'an & Qiyam



Life With Allah

الحياة مع الله



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Ramadan: The Month of the Qur'an

Ramaḍān is the month of the Qur'ān. Allah ﷻ introduces Ramaḍān as:

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ
وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ

*“Ramaḍān is the month in which the **Qur'ān was revealed – a guidance for mankind, and clear proofs of the guidance, and the criterion** (between right and wrong)...” (2:185)*

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “The scriptures of Ibrāhīm were revealed on the first night of Ramaḍān. The Torah was revealed after six nights of Ramaḍān had passed. The Gospel was revealed after thirteen nights of Ramaḍān had passed. The Qur'ān was revealed after twenty-four nights of Ramaḍān had passed” (Aḥmad).

The Qur'ān is Allah's greatest gift to mankind. It is the eternal book of guidance. It is a cure for every disease, both spiritual or physical. It is a light which illuminates the path of truth amidst the darkness of falsehood. The Qur'ān contains legal rulings for humans to abide by on Allah's earth as His servants. It is a book of blessings and eternal wisdom, and a warner and a giver of glad tidings.

Our beloved Messenger ﷺ said, “The Qur’ān will meet its companion (i.e. the person of the Qur’ān) on the Day of Judgement when his grave is opened for him, in the form of a pale man. It will say to him, ‘Do you recognise me?’ He will say, ‘I do not recognise you.’ It will say, ‘I am your companion, the Qur’ān, who kept you thirsty on hot days and **kept you awake at night. Every merchant profits from his business, and today you will profit from your hard work.**’ He will be given ‘dominion’ in his right hand and ‘eternity’ in his left. A crown of dignity will be placed on his head, and his parents will be clothed with priceless garments the like of which have never been seen by the people of the world. They will ask, ‘Why have we been clothed with this?’ It will be said, ‘Because your son used to recite and adhere to the Qur’ān’. Then it will be said to him, **‘Recite and ascend up the levels and mansions of Paradise,’** and he will keep ascending as long as he recites, be it swiftly or slowly” (Aḥmad).



A Sacred Meeting

Imagine the scenario. It is the best month of the year: Ramaḍān. Every night, there is a magnificent union taking place. The best of mankind, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is meeting the best of angels, Jibrīl ؑ to review the best of words: the words of the Most Magnificent, Exalted is He.

‘Abdullāh b. ‘Abbās ؓ said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was the most generous of all people; and he was the most generous during the month of Ramaḍān when Jibrīl ؑ would meet him. **Jibrīl would meet him every night in Ramaḍān to study the Qur’ān with him** ﷺ. When Jibrīl would meet him, the Messenger of Allah would be more generous than strong winds (which cause rain and prosperity)” (Bukhārī).

Ibn Rajab ؓ writes, “This ḥadīth illustrates the desirability of studying the Qur’ān in Ramaḍān and gathering together for this sake; along with reviewing it with someone who is more well-versed in it. It also proves the desirability of reciting Qur’ān abundantly in the month of Ramaḍān. Similarly, the Prophet ﷺ studied with Jibrīl ؑ at night. This shows the desirability of reciting Qur’ān at night, **as distractions are cut off, one is able to focus solely on the Qur’ān; and the tongue can concur with the heart in reflecting upon the Qur’ān**, as Allah says, ‘Indeed, rising by night (for prayer) makes for a stronger impression (on the soul), and is best for the recitation (of Allah’s words).’ (73:6)”

Therefore, we should dedicate as much time as possible in Ramaḍān for reciting and learning the Qur’ān.

How Much Should You Recite?

The scholars of the past would stop their ḥadīth lessons in Ramaḍān to focus on reciting and completing the Qur'ān.

Name	Number of khatmahs
Ibrāhīm al-Nakha'ī 🕌	12
Aswad b. Yazīd 🕌	15
Qatādah 🕌	16
Ibn 'Asākir 🕌	30
Imām Bukhārī 🕌	40
Imām Abū Hanīfah & Shāfi'ī 🕌	60

For these special servants of Allah, it was possible to achieve these feats, as they were scholars who recited and reflected on the Qur'ān throughout the year, and due to Allah placing barakah in their time.

However, for the majority of us, it is not possible to recite such large quantities with reflection. Those of us who understand the meanings of the Qur'ān should continue reciting the Qur'an with tadabbur (reflection) in Ramadan. The goal should not merely be rushing through a large number of completions without tadabbur and without applying the rules of tajwid and tartīl.

Note: For Ramadan Qur’ān recitation, some scholars have suggested that a person should have separate sets of completions they read from on a daily basis. Whilst at least one or a few sets should be dedicated to be recited with tadabbur, other completions may be performed at a slightly faster pace with the purpose of completing as many khatmahs as possible to acquire the maximum reward of many recitations. However, the most perfect form is that which involves recitation with tadabbur and tartīl.

Those who are memorizing the Qur’ān or are reviewing their memorisation may recite at a slightly faster speed, keeping in mind that they do not contravene the rules of tajwīd. However, they too should allocate a portion of their time in Ramaḍān for recitation with reflection, especially during the qiyām prayers.

As for those who do not understand the Arabic language and the meanings of Qur’ān, it may be difficult to reflect simultaneously whilst reciting. However, they should still recite with tartīl (see below) and tajwīd, and they could also interact with some of the āyat e.g. if they come across an āyah about Paradise, then pause and ask Allah for Paradise. Furthermore, they should also allocate time to learn the meanings of the Qur’ān, read the translation and reflect within their limits.

““ I have not seen anything that nourishes the mind and soul, protects the body, and guarantees success more than constantly engaging with the Book of Allah.” – Ibn Taymiyyah ﷺ

Recite Slowly

We should recite the Qur'ān with tajwīd and tartīl. Tartīl refers to **reciting slowly and calmly**, making each word distinct, and not exceeding the limits. Reciting like this ensures that the tongue, heart and the rest of the body are in perfect harmony with each other.

Sometimes we recite very fast, just to get to the end of a sūrah or a juz. Similarly, we may witness 'super high speeds' in the tarāwīḥ prayers. However, this is contrary to the sunnah and does not help us attain the objectives of the Qur'ān. **Slow recitation is vital for absorbing the message of the Qur'ān** and for reflecting on what Allah ﷻ is saying. Repeating certain āyāt is critical if we want to strengthen our īmān through the Qur'ān. This, however, is impossible if our aim is just to reach the end of a sūrah, juz or even the whole of the Qur'ān.

A man came to 'Abdullāh b. Mas'ūd ﷺ and said, "I recite all the mufaṣṣal sūrahs in one rak'ah." Upon this 'Abdullāh ﷺ said, "(Do you recite it) hastily like the recitation of poetry? Indeed, there are people who recite the Qur'ān, but it does not go down beyond their collar bones. **However, it benefits when it enters the heart and becomes deeply-rooted in it.** The best of (the actions) in ṣalāh are bowing and prostration. I am quite aware of the similar sūrahs which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to combine together: two sūrahs in every rak'ah" (Muslim).

Cry Whilst Reciting

The purpose of melodious recitation is not merely to ensure that the recitation of the Qur'ān sounds good. Instead, it is to ensure that the recitation is beautiful, with complete focus and khushū'. Such a recitation would inevitably result in the heart being moved. It should increase our fear of Allah ﷻ and provide peace. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, **“Of those who recite the Qur'ān with the best voice is the one who, when you hear him recite, you think that he fears Allah”** (Ibn Mājah).

When reciting the Qur'ān, we should try to cry, as this was the practice of the pious people of the past. Allah ﷻ says, **“When the āyāt of the Most Merciful were recited before them, they used to fall down in prostration, weeping”** (19:58).

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Indeed, this Qur'ān has descended with sadness. So, when you recite it, cry. If you cannot cry, then try hard to do so. And recite it melodiously, for he who does not recite it melodiously is not one of us” (Ibn Mājah).

Imām al-Nawawī رحمه الله says that crying during the recitation of the Qur'ān is, “A quality of those who have a deep awareness of Allah (ma'rifah) and it is a distinguishing feature of the pious servants of Allah... It has been reported that 'Umar b al-Khaṭṭāb رحمه الله led the congregation in the Morning prayer, and recited Sūrah Yūsuf. He wept until his tears flowed over his collarbone. Another narration of the report mentions that this occurred during 'Ishā', indicating that this happened repeatedly. Another narration mentions that he cried until the

people in the rows behind him heard his weeping.”

Imām al-Ghazālī رحمته wrote, “It is *mustahabb* (recommended) to cry whilst reciting the Qur’ān, and when it is being recited. The way to achieve this is **to evoke sadness in the heart by reflecting on the severe threats, warnings and promises; and then reflecting on one’s shortcomings regarding them.** And if this does not evoke sadness and crying, as it does to the elite (worshippers), then he should cry over the lack of (being able to cry), as this is one of the greatest calamities.”

“ I said to my nafs: ‘O nafs, recite the Qur’ān as though you (personally) heard it from Allah when He uttered it.’ I then felt the sweetness (of reciting the Qur’ān).”
Sulaymān b. Maymūn رحمته



Allah's Special Chosen People

Ramaḍān is a bootcamp for the rest of the year. Let us make an intention and plan of continuing our relationship with the Qur'ān after Ramaḍān, so that we become the people of Allah. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah has His own people among mankind." The companions asked, "O Messenger of Allah, who are they?" He replied, **"They are the people of the Qur'ān: the people of Allah and His chosen people"** (Ibn Mājah)

Can the Angels Easily Identify Your House?

Make your house shine through reciting the Qur'ān.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "The house in which the Qur'ān is recited appears to the inhabitants of the heaven as the stars appear to the inhabitants of the earth." (Bayhaqī)



Ramadan and Qiyam

Allah ﷻ says in the Noble Qur'an:

أَمَّنْ هُوَ قُنِيتُ عِائِنَاءَ اللَّيْلِ سَاجِدًا وَقَائِمًا يَحْذَرُ الْآخِرَةَ
وَيَرْجُوا رَحْمَةَ رَبِّهِ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ
لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

“Is one who worships devoutly during the hours of the night, prostrating and standing, fearing the Hereafter and hoping for the mercy of his Lord, [like one who does not]? Say ‘Are those who know equal to those who do not know?’ Only those who are endowed with insight will take heed” (39:9).


Once, ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib ﷺ went out on the first night of Ramaḍān. The lamps were shining and the Book of Allah was being recited in the masājid, so he stated, “May Allah illuminate your grave O ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, just as you illuminated the masājid of Allah with the Qur’an.”

Qiyām, tahajjud and tarāwīḥ are terms used to describe the night prayer in Ramaḍān. In Ramaḍān, the night prayer is done communally and in private. Along with performing tarawīḥ in the masjid, we should perform qiyām at home, especially in the last third of the night, in solitude.

Qiyām at night is **one of the greatest acts of worship a slave can perform**. It brings with it a sweetness which is nearly impossible to experience otherwise. One of life’s greatest joys

is being able to cry out to one's Maker in the stillness of the night, in qiyam, **in sajdah, when one is closest to Him.**

By developing a habit of the night prayer in Ramaḍān, we should try to make it part of our everyday lives throughout the year.

“ The wife of Abū Muḥammad Ḥabīb  used to say to him at night, “The night has gone. Ahead of us lies a long journey, and the provisions are little. The caravans of the righteous have sped ahead of us, whilst we have remained behind.”



The Reward of Qiyam

Qiyām lead to one attaining the status of the martyrs and the ṣiddīqīn. A man once came to the Prophet ﷺ, and said, “O Messenger of Allah, do you think if I testify that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah, and that you are the Messenger of Allah; and I pray the five prayers, I give zakāh, and I fast and perform qiyām in Ramaḍān, then who am I from?” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “From the ṣiddīqīn and martyrs” (Ibn Ḥibbān).

Qiyām is the means to get all of our **previous sins forgiven**. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Whoever stands in prayer at night (qiyām) in the month of Ramaḍān **with firm belief and hoping for reward**, all his previous sins will be forgiven” (Bukhārī). The key therefore is to perform qiyām with imān and sincerity.

We often struggle to stand throughout the entire night, and feel sad at not being able to stand for long hours like our pious predecessors used to. There is, however, something we can do to mitigate this: remain in the masjid until the imām finishes. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “**Whoever performs qiyām (night prayer) with the imām until he finishes, Allah will record the qiyām of the (entire) night for him**” (Nasā’ī).

Qiyām will intercede for us on the Day of Judgement. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Fasting and the Qur’ān will intercede for the servant on the Day of Judgement. Fasting will say: ‘My Lord, I prevented him from eating and his desires during the day, so accept my intercession on his behalf.’

The Qur'ān will say: **'I prevented him from sleeping at night, so accept my intercession on his behalf.'** Then, both of their intercession will be accepted" (Aḥmad).

Will Allah Smile At You Tonight?

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "There are three people whom Allah loves, is **delighted with and smiles at**. [Of them is] a man who has a beautiful wife, and a comfortable bed. He then gets up to pray (at night), so Allah says to His Angels, "My Angels, look! **This is My servant**. He has a comfortable bed and a beautiful wife, but he left them both. He then stood to pray, humbly begging Me, and reciting My verses. And if he wished, he could have slept." (Hākim)



Allah Has A Surprise For You!

From His immense kindness, Allah al-Barr (The Kind), has concealed a magnificent everlasting reward for His slaves who hid away from His creation, pushed their cosy duvets away, and turned to Him in the depths of the night. He ﷻ says,

“Their sides shun their beds, praying to their Lord in fear and hope; and they spend (in charity) some of what We have given them. **Not a single soul is aware of the blissful delight that has been reserved for them in secret**, as a reward of what they used to do.” (32:17)

Al-Ḥasan al-Basrī ﷺ said, “The people concealed their deeds, so Allah reserved for them in secret what no eye has seen and what has not crossed the mind of any human being.”

“ I recite the Qur’ān, and I reflect on a verse, and it leaves me mind-boggled. **I am astonished at those who have memorised the Qur’ān, how do they enjoy sleep?** And how can they occupy themselves with a worldly thing whilst they are reciting the words of Allah? If they had understood what they were reciting, recognised its worth, derived pleasure through it and experienced the sweetness of intimately conversing with Him – then they would not wish to sleep out of happiness from what they have been given.”

– Aḥmad b. al-Ḥawārī ﷺ

Qur'an at Night

Our beloved Prophet ﷺ used to review the Qur'an with Jibrīl ﷺ every Ramaḍān. In the Ramaḍān before he passed away, he reviewed it with him twice. Another ḥadīth mentions that this took place at night. This indicates that it is highly recommended to recite Qur'an at night in Ramaḍān.

The night time is more conducive to reflecting upon and reciting the words of Allah. Allah ﷻ says, **“Indeed, worship in the night is more impactful and suitable for recitation”** (73:6). Night prayer leaves a deep impression on the soul. In the stillness of the night, the heart is able to steer itself away from the worries and distractions of the day; the tongue and heart can easily concur to absorb the weighty message of the Lord of the worlds. It also protects a slave from *riyā'* (showing off) and is an achievable **'secret' deed'** between him and Allah.

Imām al-Nawawī رحمه الله states that one should devote more time to reciting at night, as Allah says, “...There are some among the People of the Book who are upright, who recite Allah's revelations throughout the night, prostrating” (3:113).

Tahajjud was a norm in the earlier generations outside of Ramaḍān. Abū al-Aḥwaṣ al-Habashī رحمه الله said, “Indeed a person would go out in the districts at night, and would hear **a buzzing like the buzzing of bees from the residents** (i.e. everyone was reciting Qur'an). What is wrong with these people; they feel secure from what the (earlier ones) used to fear?”

Wuhayb b. al-Ward ﷺ said, “It was said to a man: do you not sleep? He replied: **Indeed, the marvels of the Qur’ān have made my sleep fly away.**” It has been said that a man accompanied another for two months, and did not see him sleeping. So he asked him, “Why is it that I do not see you sleeping?” He replied, “Indeed the marvels of the Qur’ān have made my sleep fly away. I do not leave one marvel, except that I fall into another!”

“ By Allah, if it wasn’t for the night prayer (qiyām al-layl), I would not have loved the world. By Allah, the people of the night (prayer) **experience more delight** in their night than the people of entertainment experience in their entertainment. Sometimes the hearts experience moments in which they **leap out of joy** due to the remembrance of Allah, to the extent that I say: ‘If the people of Paradise have anything like this, then **how blissful** must their lives be!’”
– Abū Sulaymān al-Dārānī ﷺ



A Family of the Night Prayer: A Blessed Family

The Prophet ﷺ would awaken his wives in the last ten nights of Ramaḍān to perform the night prayer. Similarly, throughout the year, he would finish praying tahajjud and wake ‘Ā’ishah ﷺ up to pray tahajjud. His concern was not restricted to his spouses. Rather, he was actively involved in the spiritual nourishment of his adult daughter and son-in law. One night, he ﷺ knocked on the door of Fāṭimah and ‘Alī ﷺ and said, “Will you not get up (and pray)?” (Bukhārī).

Likewise, we should be **eager for our spouses and children to not miss out** on any good. By becoming a family of the night prayer, we will inshallah witness the blessings and tranquillity in our marriages, families and homes.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “**May Allah have mercy upon a man** who gets up at night, prays, and wakes his wife up. If she refuses, he sprinkles water on her face. And **may Allah have mercy upon a woman** who gets up at night, prays, and wakes her husband up. If he refuses, she sprinkles water on his face” (Aḥmad).

“ ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb ﷺ used to pray for a large portion of the night, and when it would be the middle of the night, he would awaken his family for ṣalāh, saying to them, “Ṣalāh, ṣalāh!” and he would recite the verse, “Instruct your family to perform ṣalāh, and adhere to it yourself” (20:132).

Choose the Best Masjid for Qiyam

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, **“Of those who recite the Qur’ān with the best voice is the one who, when you hear him recite, you think that he fears Allah.”** (Ibn Mājah)

The purpose of melodious recitation is not just to sound good, but rather to recite beautifully with proper focus and *khushū‘* (humility), so that your heart is moved. It should help us fear Allah and find peace in the recitation.

We should go for **‘Ishā ṣalāh early**, and choose a masjid where the Imām **recites with khushū‘**; someone who, when we hear his recitation, we think that he fears Allah. We should choose a masjid where we can **sense the sakīnah** (tranquillity); somewhere where we are hopeful that mercy is descending, so we too can enjoy a share of this mercy.

Once, ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib ﷺ saw a man carrying his mother in ṭawāf, so he performed ṭawāf behind him. He said: “By Allah, I am doing ṭawāf, even though I had no intention of doing so. This is because when I saw this man carrying his mother, I realised that mercy will descend upon him, and I want some of that to reach me too.”

Don't Miss Out On The Best Time

The most virtuous part of the night is the last third of the night. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Our Lord – Glorified and Exalted is He – **descends every night to the lowest heaven when one-third of the night remains** and says: ‘Who will call upon Me, that I may answer Him? Who will ask of Me, that I may give him? Who will seek My forgiveness, that I may forgive him?’” (Bukhārī)

About this time, Allah says: “And those who **seek forgiveness before dawn,**” (3:17) and elsewhere: “And in the hours before dawn they would seek forgiveness.” (51:18)

Ibn Rajab رحمه الله writes, “The middle of the night is reserved for the **lovers** who wish to spend time in seclusion with their Beloved (Allah), and the end of the night is reserved for the **sinner**s to seek forgiveness for their sins. Whoever is unable to join the striving of the lovers in the depth of the night should at least join the sinners pleading forgiveness at the end of the night.”

““ I cannot imagine that someone would sleep during the last part of the night!” – Ṭāwūs رحمه الله

We should try to not miss out on this special time, even if it means praying two rak‘ah. Ibrāhīm al-Nakha‘ī رحمه الله used to say, “Pray at night, even if it is for the duration of milking a goat.”

One night, a short while before Fajr, ‘Abdullāh b. ‘Umar ﷺ said to Abū Ghālib ﷺ, “Abū Ghālib, will you not get up and pray, even if it is a third of the Qur’ān?” He replied, “It is nearly Fajr time. How can I recite a third of the Qur’ān?” ‘Abdullāh b. ‘Umar ﷺ said, “Indeed the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: Sūrah al-Ikhlāṣ – Qul Huwa Allāhu Aḥad- is equivalent to a third of the Qur’ān.”

“ Pray two rak’ah in the darkness of the night for the darkness of the grave. Fast on a very hot day for the heat of the Day of Resurrection, and give charity to ward off the perils of a very difficult Day.”
(Abū al-Dardā ﷺ)

May Allah the Lord of Majesty and Honour (Dhul Jalāl wal-Ikrām) honour us and make us from the people of the night prayer.



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