

Arab Republic of Egypt

Ministry of Awqaf

Ramadan ٥, ١٤٤٠ A.H./May ١٠, ٢٠١٩ C.E.

Ramadan: A Month of Salvation from the Hellfire

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of all worlds, Who says in His Glorious Book, “O believers! Fasting is prescribed for you—as it was for those before you—so perhaps you will become mindful ‘of Allah’.” I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and that our Master Muhammad is His votary and Messenger, who says, “He who observes fasting during the month of Ramadan out of faith and in the hope of reward from Allah, will have his past sins forgiven.” May Allah’s Peace and Blessings be upon Prophet Muhammad, his Household, Companions and upon those who follow him till the Day of Judgment.

The Almighty Allah has blessed the month of Ramadan with unique features that are not given to other months. One of these features is that Ramadan is the month of guidance, in which Allah revealed the Holy Scriptures as Allah says, “Ramadan is the month in which the Quran was revealed as a guide for humanity with clear proofs of guidance and the standard ‘to distinguish between right and wrong’.” The Prophet (PBUH) said, “The Scriptures of Ibrahim (peace be upon him) were revealed on the first night of Ramadan, the Torah was revealed on the sixth of Ramadan, the Gospel was revealed on the ١٣th of Ramadan, the Psalms was revealed on the ١٨th of Ramadan, and the Quran was revealed on the ٢٤th of Ramadan.”

Ramadan is also the month of making supplication, which is one of the greatest acts of worship and the most sublime rituals through which a human gets closer to Allah. Observing the Qur’an, we will find that the Verse on making supplication comes in the context of the verses of

Fasting, where Allah says, “[Prophet], if My servants ask you about Me, I am near. I respond to those who call Me, so let them respond to Me, and believe in Me, so that they may be guided.” This indicates that the supplication from a fasting person is more expected to be answered by Allah. The Prophet (PBUH) said, “The supplication of a fasting person shall not be rejected,” and says also, “There are three whose supplication is not rejected: The fasting person when he breaks his fast, the just ruler, and the supplication of the oppressed person; Allah raises it up above the clouds and opens the gates of heaven to it. And the Lord says: ‘By My might, I shall surely aid you, even if it should be after a while.’”

At the tops of the features of Ramadan is that it the month of freedom from the Hellfire. The Prophet (PBUH) said, “When the first night of Ramadan comes, Satans and mischievous Jinns are chained up, and the gates of the Fire are closed, and none of which are opened. The gates of Paradise are opened and none of which are closed. And a caller cried out: ‘O seeker of good, proceed, O seeker of evil, stop.’ Allah has people whom He frees (from the Fire).” The Prophet (PBUH) also said, “At every breaking of the fast, Allah has people whom He frees (from the Fire), and that happens every night.” This freedom means that the person who is granted freedom will not enter the Hellfire ever.

Fasting is an act of goodness that protects a person from the torture in the Hellfire. The Prophet (PBUH) said, “Fasting is like a shield from the Hellfire”. He also said, “No servant (of Allah) fasts on a day (merely) for the sake of Allah except that Allah pushes the Hellfire seventy years further away from his face.”

Mu’adh Ibn Jabal narrated: I accompanied the Prophet (PBUH) on a journey. One day I was near him while we were moving so I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! Inform me about an action by which I will be admitted into Paradise, and which will keep me far from the Fire.’ He said: ‘You

have asked me about something great, but it is easy for whomever Allah makes it easy: Worship Allah and do not associate any partners with Him, establish the Prayer, give Zakat, fast during Ramadan and perform Hajj to the Holy Mosque.' Then he said: 'Shall I not guide you to the doors of good? Fasting is a shield, and charity extinguishes sins like water extinguishes fire...'"

Also, Fasting is a means of intercession accepted by the Almighty Allah on the Day of Judgment. The Prophet (PBUH) said, "Fasting and Qur'an will intercede for a servant on the Day of Judgment. Fasting will say, 'O Allah, I had prevented him from eating and enjoying lusts during the daytime, so accept my intercession for him. The Qur'an will say, 'I had prevented him from sleeping at night, so accept my intercession for him.' The Prophet said, 'their intercession will be accepted.'"

Also fasting is a cause of forgiveness and a way to Paradise, as Allah says, "Surely 'for' Muslim men and women, believing men and women, devout men and women, truthful men and women, patient men and women, humble men and women, charitable men and women, fasting men and women, men and women who guard their chastity, and men and women who remember Allah often—for 'all of' them Allah has prepared forgiveness and a great reward." The Prophet (PBUH) also says, "He who observes fasting during the month of Ramadan out of faith and in the hope of reward from Allah, will have his past sins forgiven." And said, "Whoever spends the nights of Ramadan in prayer out of faith and in the hope of reward, will have his past sins forgiven." Even there is one night which if a person was blessed to spend in praying, reciting the Qur'an and invoking Allah, he will have his past sins forgiven; it is *Laylat Al-Qadr*. The Prophet said, "Whoever spends the night of *Laylat Al-Qadr* in prayer out of faith and in the hope of reward, will have his past sins forgiven."

To stress that fasting is a way into paradise, the Prophet (PBUH) said, “In the Paradise there is a room that its inner structure can be seen from outside, and its outer structure can be seen from inside. This room is prepared for the one who feeds the needy, speaks gently, keeps fasting or prays at night while people should be sleeping.” Abu Huraira reported that one day Allah’s Messenger (PBUH) said: Who amongst you is fasting today? Abu Bakr said: I am. The, he (PBUH) said: Who amongst you followed a funeral procession today? Abu Bakr said: I did. He (the Prophet) again said: Who amongst you served food to the needy? Abu Bakr said: I did. He (again) said: Who amongst you has today visited the sick? Abu Bakr said: I did. Thereupon Allah’s Messenger (PBUH) said: Anyone in whom (these good deeds) are combined will certainly enter paradise.

When Abu Umamah Al-Baheli (Allah be pleased with him) came to the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), he asked him: “Tell me of something that I may learn from you.” He (PBUH) replied: “Take to fasting for there is nothing like it.”

Fasting is a secret between the man and his Lord; that is to say that none knows about its reality but Allah, for even though a person may be alone and is even able to do all what Allah, Most High, has declared prohibited for a fasting person, he does not do so, for he knows for certain that Allah is watching him in all his affairs, thus keeps away from these prohibited acts for fear of His, Glorified is He, Punishment, and wishing for His, Most High, Reward. Allah, the Almighty, says: “Have you not considered that Allah knows what is in the heavens and what is on the earth? There is in no private conversation three but that He is the fourth of them, nor are there five but that He is the sixth of them - and no less than that and no more except that He is with them [in knowledge] wherever they are. Then

He will inform them of what they did, on the Day of Resurrection. Indeed Allah is, of all things, Knowing.”

In truth, fasting is an act of worship gained prominent position in Islam by being attributed to Allah, Most High, to the extent that He, the Exalted, declared that He Himself is the One Who will give reward for fasting. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: “Every act of the son of Adam is for him except fasting. It is done for My Sake, and I will give a reward for it.” In another narration, it is reported, “Every deed of the son of Adam will be multiplied for him, between ten and seven hundred times for each merit. Allah said: 'Except for fasting, for it is for Me and I shall reward for it.’” For this reason, scholars believe that the Saying of Allah “Fasting is for My Sake” is enough to show its superiority over all other acts of worship. It is said that the reason behind that superiority is that fasting is the only act of worship that people had observed for anyone but Allah, Most High; that is to say that it is totally observed for the Sake of Allah, away from showing off. It is even said that it is the most beloved act of worship to Allah, the Almighty.

A fasting person thus never forgets Allah, and is keen on seizing this blessed month, so that he would be showered with the Infinite Mercy of Allah, hoping that he would be saved from the Fire.

This is my speech to you and I ask Allah to forgive me and you.

All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the Worlds; may Allah’s Peace and Blessings be upon the last and seal of all the Prophets and Messengers, our master Muhammad (PBUH), his family and companions.

Muslim brothers,

Fasting that saves from the Fire is that one which keeps away from every bad behavior, and that enables him to attain to piety, which is the ultimate objective of fasting; that is to say that he should not consume unlawful provision, backbite people, spread falsehood among people, or testify to falsehood. In addition, he should not say but what makes Allah satisfied with him. He furthermore should not meet a bad deed with a bad deed; rather, he should repel the bad by what is best, since these are the manners of the fasting people. Allah, Most High, says: “And when they hear ill speech, they turn away from it ...”; “And they who turn away from ill speech”; and “Repel, by [means of] what is best, [their] evil. We are most knowing of what they describe.” Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: “Fasting is a shield. When any one of you is fasting on a day, he should neither indulge in obscene language, nor raise the voice; or if anyone reviles him or tries to quarrel with him he should say: I am a person fasting.” He (PBUH) also said: “Fasting is not only from food and drink, but also from ill speech.” Indeed, one of the reasons that save people from fire is defending the honor of his Muslim brother while absent; Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: “If a Muslim defends his brother’s honor in his absence, Allah will protect his face from the fire of Hell on the Day of Resurrection.”

A truly fasting person who benefits from the reward of his fasting is the one whose fasting is reflected in his behavior and treatment with people. That is because fasting makes its doer accustomed to curbing the reins of himself and having control over it in a way that makes him achieves happiness in this world and the life to come. Indeed, the soul is a persistent enjoiner of evil, except those upon which my Lord has mercy, so if man does not control it, it will lead him to destruction; otherwise he will attain to the highest positions and ranks, which is achieved only by those who properly observe fasting and who realize the Majesty of their Lord- those

whose abdomens, private parts, tongues and all other organs are abstained from all what is prohibited by Allah.

As well, a fasting person perfects his work, does it for the Sake of Allah, and is busy with its acceptance, a point which is clear in what Prophet Abraham (PBUH) said while doing a very honorable act, i.e. building the Ka'abah; Allah, Most High, says: "And [mention] when Abraham was raising the foundations of the House and [with him] Ishmael, [saying], "Our Lord, accept [this] from us. Indeed You are the Hearing, the Knowing."

Also, our master 'Ali (Allah be pleased with him) said: "Pay greater attention to the acceptance of your deeds than observing them; haven't you heard the Saying of Allah, "Indeed, Allah accepts only from the righteous."

O Allah! Make us from those who are saved from the Fire and whose deeds are accepted