

Arab Republic of Egypt

Ministry of Awqaf

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Ramadan...the Month of Piety, kinship Cordiality, and Receiving Blessing of Allah

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of all worlds, Who says in His Glorious Book, "Piety is not in turning your faces towards the east or the west. Rather, the pious are those who believe in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Books, and the prophets; who give charity out of their cherished wealth to relatives, orphans, the poor, 'needy' travellers, beggars, and for freeing captives; who establish prayer, pay alms-tax, and keep the pledges they make; and who are patient in times of suffering, adversity, and in 'the heat of' battle. It is they who are true 'in faith', and it is they who are mindful 'of Allah'." I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger; may Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him and upon those who follow him to the Day of Judgment.

Ramadan is a month of obedience and blessings. It is the month of observing fast, night prayers, kinship cordiality, and cooperation for righteousness and piety. It is a month in which a Muslim examines the truthfulness of his patience and fearing Allah, as he fasts, bears hunger and thirst, controls his whims, be patient to any harm, as well as approaches Allah through various acts of worship such as reciting the Qur'an, mentioning the name of Allah, performing night prayers, giving charity, making reconciliation between people, and doing all the best for the welfare of all people. These are the good deeds that bring the mercy of Allah, as Allah says, "Indeed, Allah's mercy is always close to the good-

doers” And the Prophet (PBUH) said, “This goodness contains many treasures, and for those there are keys. So glad tidings shall be to the one whom Allah makes a key to good and a lock for evil, and woe shall be to the one whom Allah makes a key to evil and a lock to good.”

Ramadan is a month of competition in the cause of goodness and righteousness, solely for the sake of pleasing the Almighty Allah. This was the conduct of the Prophet (PBUH) in Ramadan, as Ibn Abbas narrated that “the Prophet (PBUH) was the most generous of all the people, and he used to become more generous in Ramadan when Gabriel visited him every night and recited the Qur'an to him. During this period, the generosity of Messenger of Allah was faster than the rain-bearing wind.”

Ramadan is a vast field for righteousness, especially in terms of feeding the needy which is one of the characteristics of this holy month, and a characteristic of our religion. Abdullah Ibn Salam narrated that: “When the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) came to Al-Madinah, the people rushed towards him and it was said: ‘The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) has come!’ I came along with the people to see him, and when I looked at the face of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), I realized that his face was not the face of a liar. The first thing he said was: “O people, spread greetings, offer food to people, have good ties with your relatives and pray at night when people are sleeping, you will enter Paradise in peace.”. The Hadith included four qualities, three of which are regarding relations between the people: Feeding the needy, promotion of peace, having good ties with one’s kinship, while the fourth is relating to the relationship between a servant and the Almighty Allah, namely: Praying at night while people are asleep. Also, a Man asked the Prophet (PBUH): "Which Islamic traits are the best?" The Prophet said, "To feed (the poor) and greet those whom you know and those whom you don't know."

Man should not belittle any good deed, for he knows not which act shall be accepted by The Almighty Allah. The Prophet (PBUH) said, "Do not scorn any good act, even giving a lace of shoes in charity, pouring water from your bucket into the bucket of someone else who asks you for water, removing harms from the roads, meeting with your (Muslim) brother with a cheerful face, or greeting your brother when you meet him, or support the fearful man. If a man blames you for something he knows about you, do not blame him for anything you know of him. Leave him to his own evil. You will have your reward. If you heard something pleasant listen to it, if you heard something unpleasant do not listen to it." the Prophet also said, "Every Muslim has to give in charity." People asked, "O Allah's Prophet! If someone has nothing to give, what will he do?" He said, "He should work with his hands and benefit himself and also give in charity (from what he earns)." The people further asked, "If he cannot find even that?" He replied, "He should help the needy who appeal for help." Then the people asked, "If he cannot do that?" He replied, "Then he should perform good deeds and keep away from evil deeds and this will be regarded as charitable deeds.

We affirm, however, that piety is a comprehensive term that covers all traits of goodness, and all acts meant to please Allah and benefit people. Therefore, the Prophet (PBUH) said, "Piety is good manner." Also, faithfulness and the recognition of others' virtues are among the traits of noble people, as the poet said:

Faithfulness is a duty for the noble one
 While the inferior people are unfaithful,
 A noble man is fair with those he deals with,
 But the inferior person is always unfair

One of the greatest manifestations of piety is goodness to one's kinship and being dutiful to one's neighbours, and all people. This is the best way to foster harmony and solidarity, promote the values of compassion among all people. In Ramadan, there is no room for hatred or quarrels. If Ramadan is the month of good relations, then, this good relation is manifested in two acts: Having good ties with one's kinship as the Prophet (PBUH) in the Qudsi Hadith That the Almighty Allah says, "I am the Merciful (*ar-Rahman*). I have created ties of kinship (*rahim*) and derived a name for it from My Name. If anyone maintains ties of kinship, I maintain connection with him, and I shall cut off anyone who cuts them off.'" Then the Prophet said, "Read (in the Qur'an) if you wish, the Statement of Allah: Now if you 'hypocrites' turn away, perhaps you would then spread corruption throughout the land and sever your 'ties of' kinship!" Also, the Prophet said, "The works of the servants (of Allah) are presented (to Allah) on Monday and Thursday. On those two days Allah forgives every Muslim except two who have forsaken one another. He says: 'Leave these two until they reconcile.'"

The Prophet (PBUH) stated that strengthening the ties of kinship as one of the pillars of faith to which he called since the very inception of his mission. 'Amr Ibn 'Absah said: "I entered into the Prophet (PBUH) in the very beginning of his mission and I said to him, "Who are you?" He replied, "I am a Prophet of Allah." I said again, "I again said: Who is a Prophet? He said: (I am a Prophet in the sense that) I have been sent by Allah. I said: What is that which you have been sent with? He said: I have been sent to join ties of relationship (with kindness and affection), to break the Idols ..." He (PBUH) also made it as one of the signs of faith, saying: "He who believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him maintain good relations with kin," a fact which is proved by the

Muslim brothers,

The Wisdom of Allah decrees the last ten days of the holy month of Ramadan as an opportunity that should be seized by benevolent people who want to do more good days. It is also an opportunity that should be seized by those whose good deeds are not enough, because they are replete with Infinite Mercy of Allah; Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: "Your Lord has destined some days wherein His Infinite Mercy showers his slaves, so expose to them so that you may be showered with it, thus not be deprived forever." For this reason, he (PBUH) used to exert more acts of worship in these last ten days.

One of the things that we should be keen on in these last ten days is praying at night, which is from the Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH). It is authentically proved that he (PBUH) used to offer more acts of worship in these days. 'Aishah (Allah be pleased with her) narrated, "With the start of the last ten days of Ramadan, Messenger of Allah (PBUH) would pray all the night, and would keep his family awake for the prayers. He tied his lower garment (i.e., avoided sleeping with his wives) and devoted himself entirely to prayer and supplication." She also reported, "He (PBUH) used to sleep and offer prayer in the first twenty days of Ramadan, yet with the start of the last ten days, he tied his lower garment and offered more acts of worship."

Allah, Most High, has preferred these last ten days with the greatest night ever, which is the Night of Decree which is truly a sign of honor to the Ummah of the Prophet (PBUH). Mujahid (Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet (PBUH)

told the companions about a man from the Children of Israel who carried the weapon in the Sake of Allah for one thousand months, so the companions were astonished, which is why Allah sent down His Saying, " Surely We revealed it on the grand night. (١) And what will make you comprehend what the grand night (٢) The grand night is better than a thousand months. (٣) The angels and Jibreel descend in it by the permission of their Lord for every affair, (٤) Peace! It is till the break of the morning. (٥)" This means that offering acts of worship in this night is better than performing Jihad in the Cause of Allah for one thousand months.

In the same vein, Prophet Muhammad told that he who offers acts of worship during that night will have his sins forgiven for him "Whosoever performs Qiyam during Lailat-ul-Qadr (Night of Decree), with Faith and being hopeful of Allah's reward, will have his former sins forgiven." So, the Muslim should be keen on seizing this great night to get closer to Allah and to get His, Most High, Forgiveness. He (PBUH) urged us to seek the Night of Decree in the odd days in the last ten days of Ramadan due to the Infinite Divine Good in that night. He (PBUH) said: "Seek the Night of Decree in odd nights of the last ten days of Ramadan." In another narration, it reads, "Seek *lailat al-Qadr* in the last ten night of Ramadan. When nine (nights) remain (i.e. on the twenty first), when seven (night) remain (i.e. on the twenty third), and when five (nights) remain (i.e. on the twenty fifth)."

One of the best good deeds to be observed on these days is giving out *Sadaqat Al-Fitr*, which purifies the fasting of the person, and is some kind of provision given to the poor and the needy. Ibn

'Abbas (Allah be pleased with him) said: " The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) enjoined *Zakat-ul-fitr* on the one who fasts (i.e. fasted during the month of Ramadan) to purify him from any indecent act or speech and for the purpose of providing food for the needy. It is accepted as Zakah for the person who pays it before the Eid prayer and it is Sadaqah (i.e. voluntary charity) for the person who pays it after the Eid prayer.'

Furthermore, one of the best good deeds to be offered in these last days is supplication, since it is more desirable to be answered. The Mother of the Believers 'Aisha (Allah be pleased with her) said: " I asked: "O Messenger of Allah! If I realize Lailat-ul-Qadr (Night of Decree), what should I supplicate in it?" He (PBUH) replied, "You should supplicate: (O Allah, You are Most Forgiving, and You love forgiveness; so forgive me)."

So, we should be keen on seizing these good days and the Night of Decree in particular through offering more *Dhikr*, supplication and recitation of the Quran, as well as any other good deeds that make us get closer to Allah, so that we won't be from the deprived. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: "This month has come to you, and in it there is a night that is better than a thousand months. Whoever is deprived of it is deprived of all goodness, and no one is deprived of its goodness except one who is truly deprived.'"