

RAMADAN 101 FOR BUSY MUSLIMS



by Naseeb Khan

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DEDICATION:

I want to dedicate this work to my late brother Haseeb Khan and my late grandson Yusuf Baasim Umarally. You both continue to inspire us each day to care. May Allah bless you both with the highest place in Jannah.

INTRODUCTION



Fasting in Ramadan is one of the pillars of Islam. It comes once a year and, thus, can be difficult for the average Muslim to remember all the rituals and rules required to successfully complete the month. Many years ago, I wrote a small booklet called Ramadan Survival Guide which was reproduced and reprinted by many groups each year. This booklet was designed for those Muslims who wanted a quick reference guide to help them successfully navigate Ramadan. The detailed references of Qur'an and Ahadith (prophetic narrations) were deliberately omitted to make the reading of the booklet simpler and more accessible to everyone. This year we are making this into an eBook rather than in print form. I hope this small effort will serve to make your Ramadan more beneficial and successful. All mistakes are mine and any goodness is from Allah.

Respectfully Yours,

Naseeb Khan

2017

BENEFITS OF RAMADAN & FASTING

- ◉ Allah forgives past sins of the one who fasts with sincerity
- ◉ Devils will be chained down
- ◉ The gates of heaven are open
- ◉ The gates of hell are closed
- ◉ Allah frees (from punishment) some of His servants each night of Ramadan
- ◉ Allah answers the du'a (supplications) of the fasting person when he is about to break his fast at its completion
- ◉ Allah multiplies the rewards of fasting beyond limit
- ◉ The fasting person will be joyous when he meets Allah
- ◉ There is a special night (Laylatul Qadr) that is better than a thousand months
- ◉ Able to renew our connection with Allah
- ◉ A chance to settle our affairs with Allah
- ◉ An opportunity to get paradise
- ◉ A way to be saved from the hell fire
- ◉ A gift to become attached to the Qur'an

WHAT TO DO BEFORE RAMADAN ARRIVES

EXTRA IBADAH (WORSHIP)

- ◉ Begin to fast some Mondays and Thursdays
- ◉ Pray extra Salah (prayers) on some nights
- ◉ Start to recite the Qur'an more
- ◉ Make some extra dhikr (remembrance) after regular Salah
- ◉ Increase your du'a (supplication)
- ◉ Increase in asking for Allah to forgive you

WORK ARRANGEMENTS

- ◉ Consider working through lunch and leaving early
- ◉ Request for time off to pray the Friday prayers (Salatul Jumu'ah)
- ◉ Schedule vacation days for last ten days of Ramadan

MEDICAL CHECKUP

- ◉ Get a medical checkup
- ◉ Ask your doctor if you can fast
- ◉ Check with doctor to see if you need to take any precautions

FORGIVENESS\CONFLICT

- ◉ Forgive and seek forgiveness from those who you have issues with

HOME ARRANGEMENTS

- ◉ Clean and take care of all major projects
- ◉ Collect extra toys, clothes, etc. to give away to charity
- ◉ Make an area in your home a Ramadan center with books, copies of Qur'an, prayer area, comfortable pillows, calming scents, decorations, etc.
- ◉ Ensure your car is up to date on maintenance
- ◉ Do all major shopping and stock up on essentials
- ◉ Precook as much food as possible
- ◉ Buy your Eid gifts and cards upfront
- ◉ If sponsoring Iftar dinner, make preparations early
- ◉ Calculate Zakah and Sadaqatul Fitr and be ready to distribute them in Ramadan
- ◉ Sit with family and discuss Ramadan plans and expectations
- ◉ Divide your Ramadan goals into four parts i.e. week by week
- ◉ Set up limitations to television, social media, video games, etc. and try to stick to it

WHAT TO DO DURING RAMADAN

KHIDMAH (SERVING OTHERS)

Have your family agree to participate in a service project to others such as cleaning the mosque, feeding the poor, visiting the sick, etc..

QUR'AN

Set goals of your interaction with the Qur'an. This can be to read the whole of it, or to read a set amount each day. You can also seek to read the meaning or memorize some of it as well.

ATTITUDE

Make a decision to be pleasant, smiling and helpful during the month. Put others before your own needs.

SALAH (PRAYERS)

Try to catch each night of prayers at the masjid. If you can't, you can still pray it at home.

FRIENDS

Make a decision to make two new friends each week of Ramadan. This can be done if you have the Iftar meal at the masjid. Keep company with the pious and the learned.

WEAKNESSES

Identify and work on two of your weaknesses during Ramadan. Try to keep away from them.

DU'A (SUPPLICATIONS)\DHIKR (REMEMBRANCE)

Make a lot of Du'a and dhikr. Make a goal to learn new supplications such as the morning or evening dhikr.

I'TIKAAF

Men and women should try to participate in making the I'tikaaf as much as possible in the last days of the month. Men should spend their time in the mosque and women at home or in the mosque.

LAYLATUL QADR (NIGHT OF POWER)

Actively seek this night during the last ten nights of Ramadan.

ISLAMIC BOOK

Try to read one Islamic book during the month such as a biography of the Prophet Muhammad (S), a hadith collection or the Quran in English.

DAILY JOURNAL

Keep a daily journal for the month.

Create your own or purchase an official Ramadan Tracker

(www.theramadantracker.com).

RULES AND RITUALS OF FASTING AND RAMADAN



WHAT IS FASTING?

Fasting is the willful abstention from food, drinks and sexual intercourse during daylight hours with the sole intention of pleasing Allah.

HOW TO FAST

1. Make intention each night for the fast of the next day.
2. Wake up before dawn and eat a pre-dawn meal (Suhoor). There is no sin for not eating this meal, but there is great blessing. One must finish eating before dawn arrives.
3. If one wakes up after the dawn has arrived, one should not eat Suhoor but continue to fast for the day.
4. Do not eat, drink or have sexual relations until after the sun sets.
5. When the sun has set, hasten to break the fast by eating or drinking something. This meal is known as the Iftaar.

INTENTION OF FASTING

It is necessary to make intention for each day of fasting and not one intention for the whole month. The intention does not need to be expressed verbally and it may be made in any language. Here are some important points to keep in mind:

- ◉ A traveler may not make intention to observe some other fast during Ramadan
- ◉ The intention for a fast should be made between the prior sunset to dawn
- ◉ If one forgets to make intention for a fast and remembers it later, he/she should still make it

One example of the intention to fast the next day is as follows:

بِصَوْمِ غَدٍ نَّوَيْتُ مِنْ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ

"Bi-Saumin ghadin nawaitu min shah-ri Ramadan"

"I intend to fast tomorrow in the month of Ramadan"

One example of the intention to fast expressed at dawn or later in the day is as follows:

نَوَيْتُ بِصَوْمِ الْيَوْمِ مِنْ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ

"Nawaitu bi-saumin-il-yowma min shah-ri Ramadan"

"I intend to fast today in the month of Ramadan"

WHO MUST FAST?

Fasting is obligatory anyone who has the fulfills the following criteria:

- ◉ Sane
- ◉ Adult
- ◉ Healthy
- ◉ Muslim
- ◉ Not traveling
- ◉ Not menstruating
- ◉ Not having post childbirth bleeding

VALID REASONS FOR NOT OBSERVING THE FAST

If, while fasting, any of these things occur, one may break the fast.

1. Being on a journey: Opinions vary regarding what constitutes a journey. It is an option for them to either fast or to break the fast.
2. Pregnancy: a pregnant woman should assess if fasting will cause injury to her own well being or her unborn child before deciding to fast.



3. Sickness: A sick believer is not required to fast. Others are not allowed to make cynical remarks about the sickness of a person or to question their claim to be sick. The sick person must ensure that fasting will pose undue hardship for them and be aware that Allah knows what is in their heart.
4. Breastfeeding: A mother who feels that fasting may cause harm or hardship to them or to their baby may elect not to fast.
5. Severe hunger or thirst: If one experiences extreme hunger or thirst while fasting, they are allowed to break the fast.
6. Weakness and old age: If one becomes old and cannot fast, they are allowed to abandon fasting, while making up for it by feeding the poor.
7. Risk of life: If one's job is labor intensive and may cause harm if one fasts, they are allowed to take a concession.
8. Unconsciousness: An unconscious person who remains so for a number of days is not expected to fast in this condition until they regain consciousness.
9. Insanity: Fasting is not compulsory on the insane.

WHO IS EXEMPTED FROM FASTING

The following individuals are excused from fasting; however, they must make up each day of fast they missed by fasting outside Ramadan or in some cases, feeding a poor person for each day missed (fidyah).

1. The elderly who may become ill due to fasting
2. The terminally ill
3. The breastfeeding woman
4. The pregnant woman
5. Those forced to work under harsh circumstances and cannot endure the fast
6. The traveling person
7. The sick person

KINDS OF FASTS

1. Fard (Imperative)
 - a. Fasts of Ramadan
2. Waajib (Obligatory)
 - a. If one vows to fast, or fasts to atone for sins
3. Sunnah (Recommended)
 - a. 9th and 10th of Muharram
 - b. 9th of Dhul Hijjah
 - c. 13th, 14th, 15th of every lunar month
4. Nafil (Voluntary)
 - a. All fast other than the above. These include:
 - i. Monday and Thursday
 - ii. Six fasts of Shawwal
 - iii. 15th of Sha'baan
 - iv. 8 fasts of Dhul Hijjah's first days

5. Makruh (Undesirable)
 - a. Fast only on Saturday or Sunday
 - b. Fast only on 10th of Muharram
 - c. The fast of a woman without her husband's permission
 - d. Continuous fasting without any break

6. Haraam (Unlawful)
 - a. On the days of 'Eid
 - b. 11th - 13th of Dhul-Hijjah

CONDITIONS FOR FAST TO BE VALID

1. Must be a Muslim
2. Must be free from menses or post childbirth bleeding
3. Must have intention

CONDITIONS FOR FAST TO BE COMPULSORY

1. Must be a Muslim
2. Must be mature
3. Must be sane
4. Must be healthy

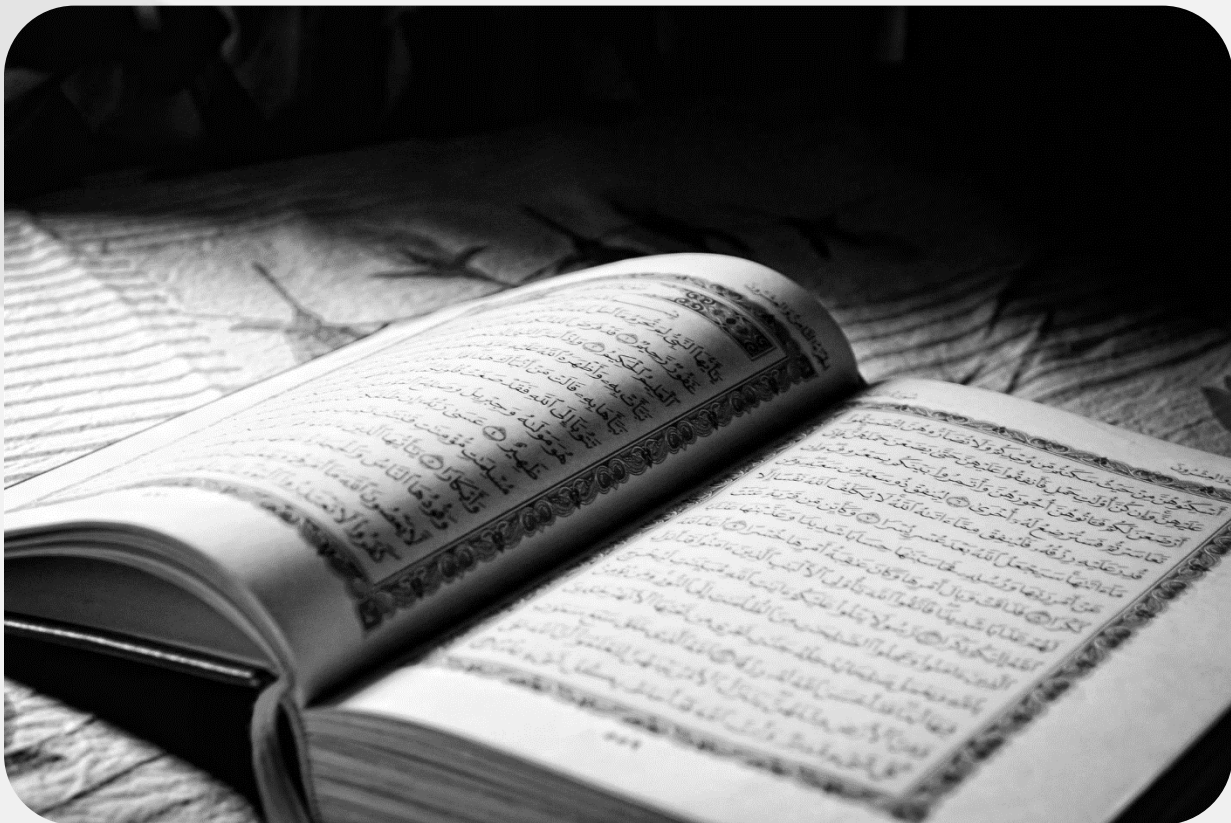
FARD (COMPULSORY) PARTS IN THE FAST

To abstain from the following, from dawn to sunset:

1. All kinds of food
2. All kinds of drinks
3. Sexual Intercourse

SUNNAH / MUSTAHAB (RECOMMENDED) PARTS IN THE FAST

1. To eat and/or drink something before dawn (Suhoor)
2. To break the fast as early as possible after sunset
3. To break the fast with water or dates
4. Recite Qur'an
5. Avoid foul behavior like lying, backbiting, or cursing
6. Avoid fighting
7. Make extra du'a
8. Perform extra acts of 'Ibaadah (worship) such as prayers and other good deeds
9. Actively seek forgiveness from Allah
10. Make efforts to be involved in Islamic collective work i.e. community service



WHAT BREAKS THE FAST

1. Intentional eating and drinking during the fasting period
2. Intentional vomiting
3. Menses and post childbirth bleeding
4. Intentional ejaculation of sperm

THINGS THAT DO NOT BREAK THE FAST

1. To take a bath (ghusl)
2. To apply oil to hair or kohl to eye or to put on other bodily decorations
3. To smell any scent such as perfume or food
4. To embrace one's wife
5. To swallow saliva or phlegm
6. To inhale dust
7. To put water in the ear
8. To vomit unintentionally
9. To brush the teeth
10. To clean one's mouth, nose
11. To bleed
12. Pouring water over oneself or to submerge oneself in water
13. Kissing without losing control of one's desires
14. Any type of injection that does not provide nourishment
15. Giving blood

THINGS THAT DO NOT BREAK FAST BUT ARE DISLIKED

1. To taste while cooking
2. To bite something in order to soften it for a baby
3. To put water again and again in the mouth and nose
4. To constantly collect saliva and swallow it

MAKING UP MISSED DAYS OF RAMADAN

1. Missed days are made up as soon as possible
2. One missed Ramadan fast is made up with one day of fasting outside of Ramadan
3. Fasts should be made up before the next Ramadan if one is able. If not, seek forgiveness and still make up the fast.

MISSED FASTS

1. All fasts missed for whatever reason during Ramadan must be made up as soon as possible.
2. It is not necessary for missed fasts to be made up consecutively or immediately after Ramadan.
3. It is not necessary to pre-fix dates for fasting.
4. One should make up missed fasts at least before the next Ramadan.
5. One may not observe missed fasts during Ramadan.

SUPPLICATION AFTER BREAKING THE FAST

اَللّٰهُمَّ لَكَ صُمْتُ وَعَلَىٰ رِزْقِكَ افْطَرْتُ

"Allahumma laka sumtu wa 'alaa rizqika aftartu"

"O Allah, for You I have fasted and with Your provisions I break the fast."

ISLAMIC OCCASIONS DURING RAMADAN

BATTLE OF BADR

1. This was the first battle in which the Prophet Muhammed (S) fought.
2. The Muslims were outnumbered at least three to one.
3. The Muslims were victorious in this battle.
4. The battle occurred during the month of Ramadan.

FATHU MAKKAH (CONQUEST OF MAKKAH)

1. The Muslims were forced to migrate to Madinah.
2. They returned with a huge army to regain Makkah.
3. The Quraysh tribe surrendered without any fight.
4. The Prophet Muhammad (S) forgave them for the errors.
5. He (S) retook Makkah and cleaned the Ka'bah of all the idols.

LAYLATUL QADR (NIGHT OF POWER)

1. This is in one of the last ten nights of Ramadan.
2. It is better than one thousand months in merit.
3. The exact night is unknown but some narrations mention it as being in the last ten odd nights of Ramadan.
4. One du'a that is said during these last ten nights is:
 - a. اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنَّكَ عَفُوٌّ تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّيْ
 - b. "Allahumma innaka 'afuwwun tuhib-bul'afwa fa' fu 'annee"
 - c. "O Allah, You are most forgiving! You love to pardon, so pardon my errors and sins"
5. The remembrance of Allah during the last ten nights may take the form of Qur'anic recitations, extra prayers, pondering on Allah's universe, seeking forgiveness, etc.

TARAWEEH / WITR PRAYER



TARAWEEH PRAYERS

1. This prayer is Sunnah in status
2. It is prayed after the 'Isha Salah during the month of Ramadan
3. It consists of eight or twenty raka'ah (units) total prayed in congregation in units of 2 raka'ah at a time.
4. After each four raka'ah, a rest is taken.

SALATUL WITR

1. This salah is delayed and prayed after taraweeh in Ramadan.
2. It can be prayed in congregation.
3. Witr is the last prayer for the night.

ETIQUETTES OF RECITING QUR'AN

The Qur'an is the Word of Allah and must be treated with respect.

1. Purification: One should have wudu and ghushl.
2. Sincerity of Intention: One's intention should be to please Allah alone. The believer should not recite Qur'an for show or to attract human praise.
3. Regularity: The Qur'an should be recited daily.
4. Accuracy in Pronunciation and Eloquence: Each believer should strive to reach the level of being able to recite Allah's book with accuracy and eloquence.
5. Listening to the Qur'an: When the Qur'an is being recited, one should listen to it with due respect and attention.
6. Understanding and Reflecting on Meaning: The best advice is from the Qur'an. One should try to ponder on its meanings and try to understand the message.
7. Concentration and Humility: When reciting the Qur'an, the believer should concentrate and be humble.
8. Ta'aawwuz and Tasmeeyah: Before starting to recite, the believer should seek refuge and start the recitation with "A'oodhoo billahi minashaytaanir rajeem" and begin a new surah with "Bismillahir rahmanir raheem."
9. Receptiveness: One should recite the Qur'an with a receptive attitude in order to receive the gifts of the Qur'an.
10. Moderate Intonation: Moderation is an important habit. We should recite not too fast or slow, nor too loud or low. We should be moderate.
11. Recital in Tahajjud: The Prophet (S) recited the longest surahs during the Tahajjud Salah as it is a blessed time.
12. Regard for Sequence: One should recite the Qur'an in sequence as often as possible.

WHAT IS I'TIKAAF?



It literally means “to stick to something” by blocking out everything else. In Islam, it refers to the act of spending the last ten days and nights during Ramadan in confinement, usually in a mosque.

THE IMPORTANCE OF I'TIKAAF

Its importance lies in the fact that the Prophet Muhammad (S) did it every Ramadan.

HOW TO PERFORM I'TIKAAF DURING RAMADAN

- One enters the Masjid before sunset on the 20th night of Ramadan
- One leaves after sunset at the end of the month. Some scholars suggest that one may stay over for the Eid
- During this time one is expected to perform extra acts of ibadah (worship), salah, supplications and seeking forgiveness from Allah and trying to get to understand Allah and get closer to Him.

PERMISSIBLE ACTS DURING I'TIKAAF

- One may leave to bid farewell to his wife
- Combing and cutting hair, clipping one's nails, cleaning one's body, using perfume and wearing nice clothes
- Eat, drink and sleep in the mosque
- Go out for a need that cannot be fulfilled in the mosque such as a call of nature or food which cannot be acquired otherwise

ACTS THAT VOID THE I'TIKAAF

- Becoming non believer
- Become drunk or losing sanity
- Have sexual intercourse
- Intentionally leaving the Masjid without valid reason

EID-UL-FITR

EID-UL-FITR DAY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Rise early in the morning
2. Take a bath (ghusl)
3. Clean teeth with miswak
4. Wear the best clothes
5. Use perfume
6. Go to the prayer early
7. Eat some dates or any sweet food before going out
8. Go and return by different routes to and from the prayer
9. Recite the following on the way to the prayer: "Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar, La ilaaha illallahu wallaahu akbar, Allahu Akbar, Wa lillaahil hamd"

EID PRAYER

The prayer consists of two raka'ah (units) with three extra takbeers (saying Allaahu Akbar) for each raka'ah.

The following is the procedure:

1. Make intention to pray two raka'ah Eid Salaah. This does not have to be necessarily uttered.
2. On the first takbeer, fold hands and recite the usual dua: "Subhanaka Allaahumma wa bihamdika wa tabaarakasmuka wa ta'aala jadduka wa laa ilaaha ghayruk."
3. The Imam (leader) will then give three takbeers. Raise hands and then put them to the side for the first two takbeers. For the third takbeer, raise hands and then fold them in front of you in the usual manner.
4. The Imam will recite Surah Fatiha and continue first raka'aah as normal.
5. In the second raka'ah, the Imam will recite Surah Fatiha and a Surah as usual, but will then give four takbeers before going down for ruku' (bowing position). For the first three takbeers, raise hands and then drop them to the side. On the fourth takbeer, make the ruku.'
6. The rest of the salaah is continued as usual.
7. After the salaah the Imam will deliver a sermon.

SADAQATUL FITR

- ◉ This is a charity given away at the end of Ramadan
- ◉ It is obligatory on all those who can afford it
- ◉ It becomes obligatory at the dawn of Eid day
- ◉ It should be given a few days before Eid so that its recipients can benefit from it
- ◉ If one forgets to pay the Sadaqah by Eid day, it is still due from him
- ◉ A father has to pay for himself and each of his children or servants under his care
- ◉ It is not compulsory for a husband to pay for his wife
- ◉ If one did not fast for Ramadan, sadaqutul fitr is still obligatory on them

QUANTITY DUE PER HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD

The amount is equal to 110 grams or 1 kilo of wheat. This is usually about \$8.00 per person. Check your local mosque for more details.

WHAT IS ZAKAH?



This is the third pillar of Islam and has nothing to do with Ramadan. However, since most Muslims prefer to give their Zakah in Ramadan, it has become a relevant and important topic.

Zakah means literally “to purify, to develop and cause to grow.” In Islam, it is defined as an annual payment made by well-to-do Muslims who possess property equal to or exceeding a required minimum amount called the nisaab.

CONDITIONS THAT MAKE ZAKAH COMPULSORY

1. Being a Muslim
2. Being sane
3. Reaching the age of maturity
4. Being free from debt but there are some exceptions
5. Being in possession of the nisaab (3 oz of gold or 21 oz of silver)
6. The nisaab must be in excess of one's legitimate needs and requirements
7. Possessing the nisaab for a complete year

CONDITIONS THAT MAKE THE PAYMENT OF ZAKAH VALID

1. To be a Muslim
2. To have the intention of paying Zakah
3. To give Zakah money in the ownership of the recipient
4. To expend Zakah on the prescribed heads of expenditure
5. To be sane
6. To reach the age of maturity

THE PEOPLE WHO CAN RECEIVE ZAKAH

1. The poor
2. The indigent/needful
3. The collectors of Zakah
4. To encourage new Muslims to Islam
5. To free slaves
6. To help those in debt
7. To use for the cause of Allah
8. To help wayfarers

THOSE NOT ALLOWED TO RECEIVE ZAKAH

1. One's parents, grandparents and others in the same line of ascent
2. One's children, grand-children and others in their line of descent
3. A woman's own husband
4. A man's own wife

AFTER RAMADAN EVALUATION

1. Did you achieve your goals for Ramadan?
2. Did you enjoy Ramadan?
3. Did your Iman increase during the month of Ramadan?
4. Did you gain any new Islamic knowledge during Ramadan?
5. Did you recite Qur'an frequently during Ramadan?
6. Did you try to make amends with all those who you had a dispute or problem with?
7. Did you forgive all those who may have hurt you?
8. Did you spend some of your wealth in the cause of Allah?
9. Did you pray extra Salah?
10. Did you pray most of the Taraweeh prayers?
11. Did you intend to become closer to Allah in the coming year?
12. Did you participate in the Islamic Collective and community activities?
13. Did you become a better Muslim and person?
14. Did you tell any non-Muslim about Islam?
15. Did you encourage any Muslim to become more Islamic?

Score	
<i>Excellent</i>	12 -15
<i>Good</i>	09 - 11
<i>Fair</i>	07 - 08

Narrated Abu Huraira:

The Prophet (S) said, "Whoever established prayers on the night of Qadr out of sincere faith and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his previous sins will be forgiven; and whoever fasts in the month of Ramadan out of sincere faith, and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his previous sins will be forgiven." (Bukhari)

FINAL WORD



If you are reading this, I hope it means that you have completed the reading of this short ebook. I also sincerely hope that it was, in some way, helpful for the busy Muslim who may not have the time to read detailed books on fasting and Ramadan. I feel that this simple primer is enough to help anyone to experience Ramadan with insight, knowledge and perspective. Understanding how, what and why we perform the rituals in Islam empowers us to do them well and often. It is my hope that this little book will inspire you to develop a curiosity and desire to delve into the more detailed books on the topic of fasting and Ramadan.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Naseeb Khan has been actively involved in Islamic Da'wah for the past forty years, both in the Caribbean and in North America. He is a graduate of the Guyana Islamic Trust and is recognized as a leader in youth work and programs. Over the years he has conducted hundreds of youth seminars, classes, workshops and camps, delivered hundreds of lectures and written many articles and a few books on the subject of youth and leadership development. He has a special gift of making the complicated understandable. His pleasant personality makes it easy for the youth to relate to him. He has a degree in Technology Management and worked as an IT manager and programmer for over 19 years. He is presently serving as the Imam of the Nur-ul-Islam Masjid in Cooper City, Florida USA.

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