

Fasting

Fasting during Ramadhan is one of the most important acts of worship for Muslims as it is the fourth pillar of Islam. It begins from the time of dawn to when the sun sets. Muslims all around the world refrain from eating and drinking. We however focus on Prayers (Salah) or reciting the Qur'an. We focus on becoming better people and giving back to others. Ramadhan is a lot more than just fasting, it is a month when people are devoted to purifying their souls and becoming closer to Allah (S.W.T).

Fasting during the month of Ramadhan is important because it is one of the five pillars of Islam. Children usually start fasting at the age of seven, and it becomes mandatory at the age of twelve. During this month Muslims become closer to Allah (S.W.T) by reciting the Qur'an, doing Taraweeh after Isha Salah, and remembering Allah (S.W.T) and Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) through Dhikr. During the month of Ramadhan, Muslims should avoid bad behaviour and try to be better people, such as being more respectful, kind, and helpful. By avoiding meals and drinks, Muslims learn to focus on their deen than on material matters. This allows people to feel grateful, humble, and connected to other Muslims around the world.

Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) taught Muslims about fasting when he was spreading Islam. Fasting has been made mandatory in the Qur'an which was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) on the night of Laylat al-Qadr, which is one of the last ten nights during Ramadhan. Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) and his Companions (R.A.A) were the first to fast throughout Ramadhan, which set an example for all Muslims to follow. Since then, Ramadhan has been an important part of our religion, making all Muslims unite with each other every year.

During Ramadhan, Muslims are encouraged to donate to charity, also known as Zakat and Sadaqah, to help the poor and those in need. When fasting, Muslims start to understand about those who are in need or struggling in life, and naturally expand their hearts to help the poor. Ramadhan also teaches patience; when fasting, Muslims need to be patient. Iftar, being the time when the fast is broken, brings families closer together to break their fast, which can improve the relationship in the family.

Apart from Ramadhan, there are many days in the year in which Muslims can fast to cleanse themselves from sins. Examples include Mondays and Thursdays, as per the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) and the 13th, 14th and 15th of every month, the Day of Ashura, along with the day of Nisf Shabaan.

Fasting in the month of Ramadhan is a good time to improve the character, heart and soul and to get rid of any bad habits. Because of these actions, fasting teaches Muslims to be responsible, kind, and caring towards others.

By: Junaid Khandwalla.