

10505 - Advice after Ramadaan

the question

What advice can you give after Ramadaan?

Detailed answer

I wonder whether the fasting person continued after Ramadaan to be as he was during Ramadaan, or is he “like her who undoes the thread which she has spun, after it has become strong” [cf. al-Nahl 16:92]? I wonder whether the one who during Ramadaan was fasting, reciting and reading Qur’aan, giving and spending in charity, praying at night, making du’aa’, will he be like that after Ramadaan, or will he follow another path, I mean the path of the Shaytaan, so that he commits sin and does things that anger the Most Gracious, Most Merciful?

If a Muslim continues to have the patience to do righteous deeds after Ramadaan, this is a sign that his (fasting) has been accepted by his Lord, the Most Generous, the Bestower of blessings. If he fails to do righteous deeds after Ramadaan, and follows the ways of the Shaytaan, this is a sign of humiliation, meanness, lowly status and being deprived of the help of Allaah, as al-Hasan al-Basri said: “They were no longer of any significance to Allaah, so they committed sin. If they had mattered to Him, He would have protected them.” When a person becomes insignificant to Allaah, Allaah will no longer honour him. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And whomsoever Allaah disgraces, none can honour him” [al-Hajj 22:18]

What is amazing is that during Ramadaan, you see some people who fast and pray at night, who spend in charity and worship the Lord of the Worlds, then no sooner has the month come to an end, but their nature changes completely, and they begin to have a bad attitude towards their Lord. So you see them neglecting prayer and avoiding righteous deeds, committing sins and disobeying Allaah in many different ways, keeping away from obedience towards Allaah, the Sovereign, the Holy, the One Free from all defects.

How terrible it is, by Allaah, when people only acknowledge Allaah in Ramadaan.

The Muslim should make Ramadaan an opportunity to turn over a new leaf by repenting, turning to Allaah, persisting in worshipping Allaah, always being aware that Allaah is watching at every minute of every hour. So after Ramadaan the Muslim should continue to obey Allaah and should avoid sin and evil actions, as a continuation of the way he was during Ramadaan and the things that he did then to draw closer to the Lord of creation.

Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And perform As.Salaah (Iqaamat.as. Salaah), at the two ends of the day and in some hours of the night [i.e. the five compulsory Salaah (prayers)]. Verily, the good deeds remove the evil deeds (i.e. small sins). That is a reminder (an advice) for the mindful (those who accept advice)”[Hood 11:114]

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Follow a bad deed with a good deed, for it will wipe it out; and have a good attitude and good manners towards people.”

Undoubtedly the purpose for which Allaah created everyone was to worship Him Alone, with no partner or associate. This is the ultimate purpose and the highest aim, which is to attain ‘uboodiyyah (being a slave of Allaah in the truest and fullest sense). This was achieved in the most beautiful manner during Ramadaan, when we saw people going to the houses of Allaah in groups and individually, and we saw them striving to perform the obligatory prayers on time and to give in charity, competing with one another in doing good deeds. And for this let (all) those strive who want to strive (cf. al-Mutaffifeen 83:26), for they will be rewarded in sha Allaah. But there remains the case of those whom Allaah keeps firm with the word that stands firm in this world and in the Hereafter (cf. Ibraaheem 14:27). Whomever Allaah helps to be steadfast in doing righteous deeds after Ramadaan, Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“To Him ascend (all) the goodly words, and the righteous deeds exalt it (i.e. the goodly words are not accepted by Allaah unless and until they are followed by good deeds), but those who plot evils, theirs will be severe torment. And the plotting of such will perish”[Faatir 35:10]

Undoubtedly righteous deeds are among the acts which bring a person closer to Allaah at all times, and the Lord of Ramadaan is also the Lord of Jumaada and Sha’baan and Dhu’l-Hijjah and

Muharram and Safar and all the other months. That is because the worship that Allaah has enjoined upon us includes five pillars, one of which is fasting, which is for a set period which has come to an end. But there remain other pillars, Hajj, prayer and zakaah, for which we are answerable to Allaah. We must perform these duties in the manner which is pleasing to Allaah, and we must strive thereby to fulfil the purpose for which we were created. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And I (Allaah) created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone)”[al-Dhaariyaat 51:56]

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) taught his Companions to compete in doing good, and he said, “One dirham may weigh more with Allaah than a dinar, and the best of charity is that a man gives when he is rich.” He (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) explained that if the person gives charity when he is disinclined to do so and is in good health, but fears poverty, that charity will weigh heavily with Allaah in the balance of good deeds; whereas the one who delays it, then when he gets sick he starts to spend in charity here and there, fearing that his good deeds will be rejected, there is the danger that his (charity) will not be accepted – we seek refuge with Allaah. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Allaah accepts only the repentance of those who do evil in ignorance and foolishness and repent soon afterwards; it is they whom Allaah will forgive and Allaah is Ever All Knower, All-Wise.

And of no effect is the repentance of those who continue to do evil deeds until death faces one of them and he says: “Now I repent;” nor of those who die while they are disbelievers. For them We have prepared a painful torment”[al-Nisaa’ 4:17-18]

The pious and sincere believer should fear Allaah and strive to obey Allaah at all times, persisting in his taqwa and always striving to do good, call others to Allaah, enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil. For the believer, his days and nights in this world are storehouses, so let him see what he can deposit in them. If he deposits good things in them, it will testify in his

favour before his Lord on the Day of Resurrection; if it is the opposite, then it will be a disaster for him. We ask Allaah to save us and you from that loss.

The scholars (may Allaah have mercy on them) said:

Among the signs of acceptance (of good deeds) is that Allaah causes one hasanah (good deed) to be followed by another; for the hasanah says, “My sister, my sister!” And the sayi’ah (evil deed) also says, “My sister, my sister!” –we seek refuge with Allaah. If Allaah has accepted a person's Ramadaan, and he has benefited from this period of (spiritual) training and has remained steadfast in obeying Allaah, then he has joined the caravan of those who have remained steadfast and responded to Allaah. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Verily, those who say: ‘Our Lord is Allaah (Alone),’ and then they stand firm, on them the angels will descend (at the time of their death) (saying): ‘Fear not, nor grieve! But receive the glad tidings of Paradise which you have been promised!’

We have been your friends in the life of this world and are (so) in the Hereafter. Therein you shall have (all) that your inner selves desire, and therein you shall have (all) for which you ask”[Fussilat 41:30-31]

“And whosoever takes Allaah, His Messenger, and those who have believed, as Protectors, then the party of Allaah will be the victorious” [al-Maa’idah 5:56]

“Verily, those who say: “Our Lord is (only) Allaah,” and thereafter stand firm (on the Islamic Faith of Monotheism), on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve” [al-Ahqaaf 46:13]

This standing firm should continue from one Ramadaan to the next, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “From one prayer to the next, from one Ramadaan to the next, from one Hajj to the next, this expiates for whatever (sins) were committed from one to the next, so long as you avoid major sins.” And Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“If you avoid the great sins which you are forbidden to do, We shall expiate from you your (small) sins, and admit you to a Noble Entrance (i.e. Paradise)” [al-Nisaa’ 4:31]

The believer should join the caravan of those who stand firm and should board the ship of salvation from the time when he reaches the earliest age of discretion until he draws his last breath. He should remain in the shade of “Laa ilaaha ill-Allaah”, enjoying the blessings of Allaah. This religion is the truth and the way in which we steadfastly adhere to it in Ramadaan is that with which Allaah honours us by the bounty of His giving, His gracious blessing and His great favour, so that we might continue to pray qiyaam and to worship Him after the month of Ramadaan. Do not forget, my brother, that Allaah has blessed you with i’tikaaf, and Allaah has blessed you with giving charity, and Allaah has blessed you with fasting, and Allaah has blessed you with du’aa’ which has been accepted. Do not forget, my brother, to take care of these good deeds and this support from Allaah, and do not let them be wiped out by bad deeds. So strive to cultivate goodness and happiness on your way, and to keep company with those who remain steadfast (in Islam), and to seek Allaah and His Messenger and the Home of the Hereafter, where it will be said to you, Receive glad tidings of Paradise as wide as the heavens and the earth, prepared for the pious, for you responded to the call of Allaah; O seeker of good, continue, for Allaah has some people who will be freed from Hell, and O seeker of evil, desist. And you responded to the words of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), “Whoever prays at night during Ramadaan out of faith and hoping for reward, his previous sins will be forgiven. And whoever prays at night during Laylat al-Qadr out of faith and hoping for reward, his previous sins will be forgiven.”

I ask Allaah Who has blessed us and you with fasting, i’tikaaf, ‘umrah and charity to bless us with guidance, piety, and acceptance of our good deeds; may He help us to persist in doing good deeds and to remain steadfast, for persistence in doing good deeds is one of the greatest means of drawing closer to Allaah. Hence when a man came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and said, “Advise me,” he said, “Say, ‘I believe in Allaah,’ and remain steadfast.” (Agreed upon).

According to a report narrated by Ahmad, he said, “Say, I believe in Allaah,’ then remain steadfast.” [The man] said, “O Messenger of Allaah, all the people say that.” He said, “Some people who came before you said that, but they did not remain steadfast.” So the believers must continue to be steadfast in obeying Allaah:

“Allaah will keep firm those who believe, with the word that stands firm in this world (i.e. they will keep on worshipping Allaah Alone and none else), and in the Hereafter. And Allaah will cause to go astray those who are Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrongdoers), and Allaah does what He wills”[Ibraaheem 14:27 – interpretation of the meaning]

The one who is steadfast in obeying Allaah is the one whose du’aa’ will be answered, the du’aa’ which he repeats more than twenty-five times each day, “Guide us to the Straight Way” [al-Faatihah 1:6 – interpretation of the meaning], which we say in al-Faatihah. Why is it that we say and believe strongly that if we remain steadfast Allaah will forgive us, but we are too lazy to apply that in practical terms? We should fear Allaah and apply this in deed and thought and word. We should strive in the way of “ihdinaa al-siraat al-mustaqeem (Guide us to the Straight Way)”, and we should travel the route of “iyaaka na’budu wa iyyaaka nasta’een (You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything))” [al-Faatihah 1:5 – interpretation of the meaning], in the shade of “ihdinaa al-siraat al-mustaqeem (Guide us to the Straight Way)”, following the route that will lead us to Paradise the width of the heavens and the earth, whose key is Laa ilaaha ill-Allaah. I ask Allaah to grant us and you a good end.

After the end of Ramadaan, the people are divided into various types, two of the most prominent of which I will describe here. The first type are those whom you see in Ramadaan striving hard in worship. You never see them but they are prostrating or standing in prayer, or reading Qur’aan, or weeping, so much that they remind you of some of the worshippers among the salaf, and you even feel compassion for them because of the intensity of their efforts and striving. Yet hardly has the month ended, before they go back to negligence and committing sin, as if they were prisoners of that worship, so they turn their attention to their desires and become negligent and commit sins which they think will take away their distress and grief. But these poor people forget that sin is the cause of doom, because sins are like war wounds, one of which may turn out to be fatal. How often has sin prevented a person from saying Laa ilaaha ill-Allaah when in the throes of death.

After spending this entire month with faith, (reading) Qur’aan and other acts of worship, these people then backslide, Laa hawla wa laa quwwata illa Billaah (there is no power and no

strength except with Allaah). These are the occasional worshippers who only acknowledge Allaah on certain occasions or at times of calamity and distress, then after that there is no more obedience or worship. What a bad habit that is.

“The worshipper prayed for something that he wanted, and when the matter was done, he neither prayed nor fasted.” [Arabic poetry]

I wonder what is the point of worshipping for a whole month, if that is going to be followed by a return to dishonourable ways?

The second type are those who feel distressed at the departure of Ramadaan, because they have tasted the sweetness of being safe from sin, and the bitterness of patience became insignificant to them, because they came to realize the true nature of their weakness and need for their Master (Allaah) and their need to obey Him. They fasted in a true sense and stood in prayer at night out of love, so when they bade farewell to Ramadaan, their tears flowed and their hearts were broken. Those among them who were burdened with sin hoped to be freed from sin and ransomed from Hell, and to join the caravan of those who are accepted. Ask yourself, my brother, which of the two groups do you belong to?

By Allaah, are they the same? Praise be to Allaah, but most of them do not know. The mufasssireen said, commenting on the aayah (interpretation of the meaning):

“Say (O Muhammad to mankind): ‘Each one does according to Shakilatihi (i.e. his way or his religion or his intentions)...’”

[al-Israa’ 17:84] – every person acts according to his way or the character that he is used to. This is condemnation for the kaafir and praise for the believer.

You should know that the dearest of deeds to Allaah are those that are continuous, even if they are little. The Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “O people, you must do whatever you can of good deeds, for Allaah does not get tired until you get tired. The most beloved of deeds to Allaah are those which are continuous, even if they are little. The family of

Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), when they did something, they would persist in doing it.” Narrated by Muslim.

When the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) was asked about which deeds are most beloved to Allaah, he said, “Those which are continuous, even if they are little.”

‘Aa’ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) was asked about what the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) did and whether he used to do certain things on particular days. She said, “No, his good deeds were continuous. Who among you could do what the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) used to do?” The acts of worship prescribed in Islam are based on certain conditions which must be fulfilled, like remembrance of Allaah, Hajj and ‘Umrah and their naafil actions, enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil, seeking knowledge, jihaad, and other good deeds. So strive to worship continuously according to your capability.

May Allaah bless our Prophet Muhammad and his family and companions, and grant them peace.