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It was narrated that ‘Aa’ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) said: When the (last) ten (days of Ramadan) began, the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) would stay awake at night, wake his family, strive hard (in worship) and tie his izaar tight. Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 2024; Muslim, 1174.

This hadeeth indicates that the last ten nights of Ramadaan are different from the others because of more acts of worship such as prayer, dhikr, and reading Qur’aan. The Mother of the Believers ‘Aa’ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) described our Prophet and example Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) as follows:

1 - “He would stay up at night” means he would stay up doing acts of worship and would revitalize himself thereby, because sleep is akin to death. What is meant is that he would spend the whole night in praying qiyaam and worshipping the Lord of the Worlds. The last ten nights are few, and what is narrated about the prohibition on spending the entire night in prayer, as mentioned in the hadeeth of ‘Abd-Allaah ibn ‘Amr (may Allaah be pleased with him), is to be understood as referring to one who spends the whole night in prayer every night of the year.

2 - “... and wake his family...” i.e., his wives, the Mothers of the Believers, to join

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him in making the most of goodness, dhikr and worship during these blessed times.

3 - "... and strive hard..." means strive hard in worship. It was also said that it refers to keeping away from his wives, which is more likely given the context, and because of the hadeeth of Anas (may Allaah be pleased with him): "He rolled up his bed and kept away from his wives." He (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) used to observe i'tikaaf during the last ten days, and the person in i'tikaaf is forbidden to have relations with his wife.

You should be keen to acquire these characteristics and to pray tahajjud regularly with the imam in addition to Taraaweeh, so as to increase your efforts during these last ten days and do more than in the first twenty days, so that you may fill your nights with prayer.

You should adorn yourself with patience in obeying and worshipping Allaah, for tahajjud prayer is difficult, but its virtue is great. It is the opportunity of a lifetime and great good fortune for those whom Allaah enables to do it. You never know, perhaps you may attain one of the mercies of the Lord, so it will bring you happiness in this world and in the Hereafter.

The righteous early generations of this ummah used to pray at length during the night, following the example of their Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him). Al-Saa'ib ibn Yazeed said: 'Umar ibn al-Khattaab (may Allaah be pleased with him) told Ubayy ibn Ka'b and Tameem al-Daari (may Allaah be pleased with him) to lead the people in praying eleven rak'ahs. He said: And the reciter would recite the

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soorahs that contain one hundred or more verses, until we would lean on sticks because of standing for so long, and we would not leave until dawn had come.

'Abd-'Allaah ibn Abi Bakr said: I heard my father say: We used to leave Taraweeh in Ramadaan and we would make the servants hasten to bring food lest dawn came.

During Ramadaan, the believer engages in jihad al-nafs on two fronts: during the day by fasting and during the night by praying qiyaam. Whoever does both and does them right is one of the patient who will be given their reward without reckoning.

These ten nights comes at the end of the month, and actions are judged by how they end. Perhaps you will catch Laylat al-Qadr during these ten nights, when he is standing in prayer before his Lord, so He will forgive him his previous sins.

You should wake your family and encourage them to do acts of worship, especially during this blessed time which no one ignores except one who is deprived. The most serious example of that is when a person spends the time when people are praying tahajjud in haraam and sinful gatherings. This is an obvious loss. We ask Allaah to keep us safe and sound.

Hasten to make the most of what is left of the month, and perhaps you will make up for what you have wasted of your life. It is most regrettable that we see some people starting to do righteous deeds at the beginning of the month, such as praying and reading Qur'aan, then they seem to get bored and tired, especially when the last ten days begin, which are more special than the beginning of the

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month. We should continue our efforts and do more acts of worship and strive hard when the month starts to draw to a close. For actions are judged by how they end and acceptance of deeds is more likely when the conditions are met without any impediment.

“and for this let (all) those strive who want to strive (i.e. hasten earnestly to the obedience of Allaah)”

[al-Mutaffifeen 83:26 – interpretation of the meaning]

O Allaah, accept this (worship) from us, for You are the All-Hearing, All-Knowing, and accept our repentance, for You are the Acceptor of Repentance, the Most Merciful

Ahkaam al-Siyaam by al-Fawzaan.

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