

Hossam Roushdi khutbah transcript 1.

PREPARING FOR RAMADAN

In three weeks' time it's going to be Ramadan again. To me it seems like Ramadan was just last month, but another year has passed. Not everyone who was here last year is still with us: a reminder that this is a very important month that is going to befall us in three weeks, and it is important that we prepare properly for it and not let this opportunity pass us by.

Fasting for Ramadan was ordained in the second year of hijra, which, interestingly was the same year that *jihad* was ordained. The significance of that is quite clear: because fasting for Ramadan and reading the Quran is a form of jihad as well.

Ramadan throughout the years has seen a lot of prosperous things happen in Islam: the Battle of Badr was in Ramadan; the opening of Mecca was in Ramadan; a lot of the other battles were in Ramadan; the opening of Andalusia in Spain was in Ramadan; and many important events in the Islamic calendar have occurred in Ramadan because this is a very special month.

Fasting in Ramadan is obligatory, it is not voluntary. Initially it was voluntary but then it became obligatory. I say this to avoid any misunderstandings, because sometimes, when days are long and fasting for this long number of hours might be quite tough, people might be tempted to make excuses: "it might affect my work, it will be hard, it's going to be hot..."

It is important to remember, however, that we all have a choice: whoever wants to be a believer has a choice to do that, and whoever does not want to believe, has a choice to do that. There is no obligation to become a believer or a non-believer, but those who chose to believe (ie. You want to belong to the *al mo'minoon*, (the believers) then we need to read the Quran and see what it tells us. The Quran says: "*Oh you who believe, fasting has been ordained upon you.*" (Sura Al Baqara 2:183)

So there is no choice for a believer as regards fasting. It's not a question of "it's going to be too tough for me"; it's not a question of "it's going to affect my work", or "it's going to be too hot". You've made the choice: if you want to join the believers, then you must follow the orders. It's as simple as that.

Of course, there are exceptions, which are specified in the Quran as well: such as is if someone is travelling or somebody is ill and so on. We all know the *ahkam* of fasting.¹ but for those who are healthy and able, fasting is not an option. It is a must, and we will discuss later on why this is so and the impact of fasting.

Returning to the month of Ramadan, I want to share a hadith of the Prophet Mohamed SWS, which explains the importance of this month. The prophet says:

*"This month is a great, blessed month. This month has one night that is better than a thousand nights (lailat al qadr). Allah has ordained that fasting during the day is obligatory, and getting up to pray at night is voluntary"*², but it's got a lot of good points about it which we will discuss.

¹ The legal rules

² Ibn Khuzaimah (rh) reported on the authority of Salman al-Farsi (ra), 'The Messenger of Allah (saw) addressed us on the last day of Sha'ban and said: "O people, there comes over you now a great month, a blessed month, a month in which there is a night which is better than a thousand months [this night refers to Layla-tul-Qadr, the Night of Power]. Allah has made fasting in it compulsory, and standing (in prayer) at night voluntary [i.e. Salat-ul-Taraweeh is not compulsory but it is Sunnah]."

“Whoever does a good deed during this month will be rewarded as if he is doing the obligatory acts in other days”. So any good deeds that you do during this month carry a very high reward. And if you do one of the obligatory forms of worship (such as prayer), then the reward is seventy times the normal reward.³ So whatever is done during this month is multiplied by seventy, *and Allah can increase that whichever way Allah wishes.*

“This is the month of patience, and patience is rewarded by Al Jannah (Paradise). And this is a month of compassion, and during this month your rizq (your provision) is increased.”

“Whoever feeds a fasting person, then your sins will be forgiven and you will be pardoned from hellfire. And you will take the same thawab (reward) as the fasting person.” So if you invite somebody to *iftar*, you will get the same *thawab* as if you are fasting as well, and this does not decrease the *thawab* of the person in any means...

Some of the *Sahhaba* asked the Prophet: “Not all of us are rich enough to be able to invite people for *iftar*.” So the Prophet said, it doesn’t have to be a fancy *iftar*, just a date, or a drink of water, or a drink of milk, you get the same *thawab*. And it’s a month that begins with mercy, and in the middle of it is forgiveness, and the end of it is freedom from hellfire.⁴

So this is how important this month is. It’s a great month. It is an opportunity for all of us, we must all grab it while we can. No one knows if we will have another opportunity for another Ramadan. Who knows if there’s going to be a next year?

Another hadith of the Prophet Mohammed SWS emphasises the importance of Ramadan, where he says: *“Ramadan is coming (again). It’s a blessed month. Allah oversees you and he showers you with mercy. And He will forgive all sins, and he listens to prayers”.* So it’s a month when you should be doing all your prayers and asking for whatever you want! *“Allah looks at you and sees that you are all competing to do good deeds”.*

So during this month, try your best. Show Allah what you’re really made of and show Allah what you can do.

So this is yet another example of the Prophet emphasising the importance of this month. It’s not only about the fasting, it’s about the month of the year. Allah has created time, time is His. And He has the choice to have preferential times. And the most preferred month of the year is the month of Ramadan. So this is a very blessed month, a very special month that we need to prepare for. And we will talk about preparation in the second part of the khutbah insha-Allah.

However, let’s carry on with the hadith of the Prophet sws telling us about the importance of this month. He tells us that: “There is a door in heaven called *ar-raiyan*, and this door is only for those who fast during Ramadan. Nobody else is allowed through this door, only the fasting. They call forward the people who are fasting, “where are they?”. So all the people who are fasting go through this door into heaven.”⁵ And after the last one goes through, it’s

³ “Whoever draws near to Allah by performing any virtuous deed [i.e. even a small good action] shall be like the one who had performed an obligatory act (Fard) in any other time, and whoever performs an obligatory act (Fard), shall be like the one who performed seventy obligatory acts in any other time. See [Ramadan Khutbah of the Prophet Muhammad \(saw\) | Muslim Hands UK](#)

⁴ “Some of the Companions of the Prophet said: Not all of us may find food to share with one so that he could break his fast. The Prophet said: Allah will reward you even if you help the fasting Muslim to break his fast with a date, a sip of water, or a drink of milk. It is a month whose beginning is Mercy (Rahmah), and its middle part is Forgiveness (Maghfirah) and its last part is freedom from hellfire From [Salman's Hadith on the excellence of Ramadan-The merit of Sawm \(al-feqh.com\)](#)

⁵ “There is a gate in Paradise called Ar-Raiyan, and those who observe fasts will enter through it on the Day of Resurrection and none except them will enter through it.”

closed. So nobody else can go through this door.” So imagine you have a VIP door, a special door- special entrance just by fasting Ramadan.

So there are endless *ahadith*, and endless *ayat* emphasising the importance of Ramadan, and it can take hours to discuss it. However, the essence of fasting is explained in the Quran.

Why do we fast? This is explained in the verse that says: “*kutiba alaykum al siyam, kama kutiba alal latheena min qablikum la’al lakum tat-taqoon*” ... “Oh you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may learn *taqwa* (cautious Allah-awareness). (Sura Al Baqara 2:183)

So the purpose of fasting is to achieve *taqwa* (Allah awareness). There is not actual translation of *taqwa*, there is no word that translates it fully. But when the scholars were asked, they said that *taqwa* is when Allah finds you where he likes to find you, and he will never find you anywhere where he would not like to find you- so [*taqwa* is] to be fully aware of Allah. Now, to be able to achieve this is a gift from Allah, and he will give it to those who will fast Ramadan for the sake of Allah- so this is a way of achieving *taqwa*.

Now, finally, there’s two hadith that talk about Ramadan:

1. (Bukhari). Whoever fasts Ramadan for the sake of Allah, all his previous sins will be forgiven. So Ramadan is a great opportunity to wipe out all our sins.

Another hadith says:

2. Whoever prays the night prayer during Ramadan for the sake of Allah, (again) will be forgiven/ all sins will be forgiven. So this is a golden opportunity to have all previous sins forgiven, a golden opportunity to become reborn again, so that if you prepare properly for Ramadan, and if we inshaAllah fast properly, and do all the right things, hopefully, by the end of Ramadan, all our sins will be wiped out. And Hopefully we will have this pass that allows us to go through this VIP door, bab al rayan in heaven insha Allah. May Allah give us all this and accept our fasting this Ramadan.

Second half.

Arabic intro:

So, dear brothers and sisters, we can talk for hours about the value of Ramadan and about the importance about fasting, but Ramadan is not only about fasting, it is an opportunity. It comes once a year where you can have all your good actions multiplied by seventy. And you can end up, as I said, totally forgiven from all your previous sins. But it’s also an opportunity because we know that there is a hadith of the Prophet SWS, where he said: “Nobody can do enough deeds to enter into paradise, Not even me. We all go to paradise inshaAllah with the mercy of Allah, and then He will divide it amongst you with your deeds.” So inshaAllah, firstly, we are forgiven, then inshaAllah, we are guaranteed a place in heaven. But, this is where the crunch comes: heaven has got several layers/ several levels in it. Now this is the time to invest to try and achieve one of the higher levels in Al Jannah, because good deeds are what allows us to go into the higher places in paradise inshaAllah.

So let’s have an arrangement. Let each and everyone of us sit down with a piece of paper and make a plan for Ramadan, because Ramadan comes and goes very quickly. I’m sure you’ve all experienced that by the end of Ramadan, we feel hang on, Ramadan is over. We hardly felt it. When did it come, and when did it go? It passes very quickly. So you need to have a plan, otherwise it will pass you by. So my advice to my myself and to you all is let’s

have a piece of paper and sit down and write: what is your plan for Ramadan? How are we going to achieve the maximum benefit?

I'm just going to go through some points about things you can do in Ramadan:

Some suggestions:

1. Why don't you make an arrangement about your prayer. If you don't usually pray on time, why don't you make an arrangement to be able to pray your five prayers on time every day- and preferably if you can, of course, in congregation, in *jamma'a*, or in a mosque if you can? Why don't you make arrangements for that? Why don't you make arrangements for your night prayers, the *taraweeh* prayers. How are you going to do it? Where are you going to do it? Who's going to pray with you? So why don't you start making arrangements from now about your prayers in Ramadan, which is very important.
2. Another thing that we can make arrangements for is the Quran. Ramadan is the month of Quran, it's the month where we should be reading Quran a lot. So why don't we calculate how are we going to read Quran so that hopefully we can read the whole of the Quran through Ramadan, and maybe even more than once? There are many ways. People have many ideas, some of which if you read so many pages [a day] you can find that you can finish the whole Quran. Or if you want to read with your *nawafil*, with extra prayers, so many *ayas*, then you can finish the whole Quran in so many days. So if you work for it, you'll be able to do it. If you just leave it, you might find that Ramadan has come and gone and you haven't read your Quran. So why don't you sit now, or before Ramadan and make a plan. Have a plan: How many pages am I going to read every day, or how many *juz'* am I going to read every day so that I can finish the whole Quran at least once during Ramadan? Or Maybe have a group, and make sure that during *taraweeh* prayers, a whole *juz* is read every night so that you can finish the whole Quran during Ramadan inshaAllah during the *taraweeh* prayer as we usually do.
3. The third point you might want to think about is charity. What can you donate during Ramadan? A lot of people make a point of paying their Zakat during Ramadan to get the extra *thawab* inshaAllah. So remember that zakat is the minimum amount that you have to pay/the compulsory amount. But look out for extra charity. Why don't you make a point of paying out every single day a small amount, even if it's just a few pence or even a pound. But at least don't let one day pass you without doing some charity – either money or some other charitable work. So again, everybody can have their own plan.
4. Another point is as I said *taraweeh* prayer, the night prayers; usually it's very hard when you pray alone at home. You don't have to pray in the mosque, you don't have to pray it *jamaa*- it is not obligatory. But usually it's quite hard, especially now when *maghrib* is quite late and *isha* is very late, it can be quite hard on your own. So why don't you make arrangements from now to find out where are you going to be praying and who are you going to be praying with. So all these are just plans to make.

Other important things:

- Keeping the family ties. Why don't you look around and see who are your relatives that you haven't been in touch with in a long time. Make a list of them and make a

point of either calling or visiting. So every week in Ramadan I'm going to be calling my cousin, my uncle, my aunt, whoever, so that by the end of Ramadan I would have called or visited all of my relatives. This is silat rahem, which is a great thing to do, especially in Ramadan.

- Another thing is *dawa*, to invite people to the way of Allah, because it's a very good opportunity in Ramadan. I'm sure we all have been through this: people will ask you to have a cup of coffee. No thanks. I'm not having coffee! Why aren't you having coffee? Because I'm fasting. Why are you fasting? [This is] a very good opportunity to start a conversation. But, just a word of warning, please do your homework and do a bit of reading first so that if you're going to do *dawa* it's not counterproductive. Make sure that you can invite people in the right way. And if you feel that you're not up to it, maybe that's not something for you. But a bit of homework and a bit of reading is a very good chance because we all get asked about it in Ramadan: why don't you have coffee, why are you fasting, isn't it too hard?
- The other thing is make a list of dua: what are the things you really want in the world of the hereafter. This is the month where Allah will accept your dua. So why don't you make a list, a shopping list. It's a very good chance for a shopping list, make a shopping list and just repeat it every day: Allah, I want, a,b,c,d,e, I want this, this, this and this. Please grant me this, this and that. And keep repeating it every day. Have a whole shopping list because you know Allah promised he will answer your dua in Ramadan. So it's a great opportunity. Let's not miss it.
- [Another] very important point in Ramadan is time management, because Ramadan is a limited period of time. It's so easy to waste time, especially in Ramadan. So make sure that you think properly about your schedule, especially if you're working. so that the days are not wasted, and the nights are not wasted. Make sure that you make use of every minute in Ramadan. So sit down and work out a schedule so that you know exactly when is the time you're going to go to work, when is the time you're going to be doing your dua, when is the time when you're going to be reading your Quran, when is the time when you're going to be praying. So we need good time keeping. Otherwise, it becomes a waste of time.
- Now, for students in particular, it's a month of *jihad*, it's a month of strenuous effort. I know that it's tough if you're studying, or if you've got exams and you have to be fasting. Remember to keep reminding yourself and keep having the *niyyah*, the firm intention: What am I doing this for? I'm doing this for the sake of Allah. So you will be rewarded and Allah will help you insha Allah.

So there are a lot of things that need to be done, but the most important thing is to remember if you put too much on your plate, you might end up doing none of it. So it's important to pace yourself. So, pace yourself. Plan a schedule for yourself. Find out which are the best things that suit you. You don't have to do all of these things that we listed. You will probably find other things as well. But pace yourself and have a plan. If we have a plan than *insha Allah* we can all make use of this Ramadan and *insha Allah* we will be rewarded, and *insha Allah* by the end of Ramadan we will be amongst those who will be forgiven and among those who will never see hellfire.

Arabic dua.