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Shabaan

Enter the Training
Ground for Ramadan

Revive Pack

TIPS | RESOURCES | DISCUSSION GUIDE | FIQH
RAMADAN 101 | ACTIVITIES & MORE

Feb/Mar 2023



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Preparation is the First Step to Success

Planning ahead means giving yourself the tools you need to achieve your goals. But first, you must evaluate where you currently stand.

Assess yourself by answering the following questions:

- What's my current baseline of worship?
- What was I able to do last Ramadan?
- Where did I fall short?
- What are my worship goals for this Ramadan?
- What worked well last year that I can replicate this year?
- What can I do to lessen the chances of falling short of my goals this year?
- What can I start practicing now to have a handle on in time for Ramadan?



Imam Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali says the companions of the Prophet (s) would supplicate to Allah for six months to allow them to reach Ramadan. Then, they would supplicate to Him for another six months to accept their efforts from them. Yahya bin Abi Kathir says the dua they would make was:

اللهم سلِّمني إلى رمضان، اللهم سلم لي رمضان، وتسلِّمه منِّي متقبَّلاً

“O Allah, commit me to Ramadan. Oh Allah, commit Ramadan for me. And receive it from me with acceptance.”

Starting Activity

CONSTRUCTING POPSICLE STICK TOWERS

Objective

To understand the significant difference it makes to prepare for Ramadan compared to entering the month without any practice.

Age Group

Adaptable to each age group

Materials Needed

Popsicle sticks, glue, tape, pen, paper

Preparation

- Half of the individuals present are to build towers with popsicle sticks within 5 minutes without taking much time to plan the construction.
- The other half each gets two attempts at assembling their towers. First, they get a practice attempt lasting 5 minutes, and then they are given another 5 minutes to construct their final version.
- All individuals then come together to talk about their experiences.

Discussion

- Which individuals were able to build the sturdier and taller towers, and why?
- Those of you who had only one chance to build your tower, what was your experience?
- Did you feel stressed or unsure of yourself?
- Those of you who had two shots to get it right, what was your experience like?
- Was it easier the second time?
- Do you feel ready for Ramadan right now, or would it be easier if you also had a practice session?



Prioritizing Makes All the Difference

Whether it's work, school, caring for others, or religious obligations, we all have a busy lifestyle and juggle many competing responsibilities. **It may seem like we don't have enough time in the day, but remember, we make time for what we prioritize, whether consciously or subconsciously.**

Assess How You Spend Your Day

- What aspects of your day make it difficult to establish habits?
- What aspects make it easy?
- What are some things that you can leverage in building habits? (Learn about your habit blocks and habit triggers.)

The next time you find it difficult to carve time out for worship, assess how you spend your time throughout the day. Maybe the 15-minute bus ride during which you find it hard to concentrate on your class notes is the perfect time for Quran? Or perhaps the two minutes while you wait for the Zoom meeting to start is enough to get some dhikr in? Consider placing a sticky note that says "Make Dua in Bed" on your bedside table so that one of your last actions before sleeping is talking to Allah instead of looking at Instagram.

The book *Atomic Habits* by James Clear is an excellent resource to consult ahead of Ramadan to start creating sustainable worship habits now.

Here's some advice to get you started:

Make An Appointment with Allah

Treat your worship as an appointment with Allah. If we can make an effort to meet our professor during their office hours with five midterms coming up, visit a doctor in the thick of work, or spend time texting a friend we haven't spoken to in a while, it's all because we have prioritized these activities.



PRIORITIZATION CONT'D

Your worship should be your personal meeting with Allah. Put it in your calendar, set an alarm, or place sticky notes around your house.

Keep All Kinds of Reminders

Create a Whatsapp group or start a Snapchat streak with Usra, halaqah, family members or friends to help each other reach your worship goals. You don't even have to use words. Use emojis for dhikr, Quran, salah etc. to let your group know you've fulfilled your commitment for the day and it'll serve as a reminder for others to do so as well.

Sometimes, however, phone notifications don't work, so go old-school. Whether it's a family member, friend, or colleague, request someone to remind you to fulfill your appointment with Allah in-person. This reminder could be verbal, or you can also ask them to escort you to a quiet place where you can worship with the least amount of distractions.

Make Dua to Be Able to Worship Him Better

Never discount asking Allah Himself to make it easier to worship Him. Allah knows our hearts and our sincerity. He answers every dua with what is best for you, so why not one where you ask to be closer to Him?

Abu Dharr (ra) reported: The Messenger of Allah (s) said, "Allah Almighty says: Whoever comes with a good deed will have the reward of ten like it and even

more. Whoever comes with an evil deed will be recompensed for one evil deed like it or he will be forgiven. **Whoever draws close to Me by the length of a hand, I will draw close to him by the length of an arm. Whoever draws close to Me the by length of an arm, I will draw close to him by the length of a fathom. Whoever comes to Me walking, I will come to him running.** Whoever meets Me with enough sins to fill the earth, not associating any partners with Me, I will meet him with as much forgiveness." (Muslim)



Practice in Shabaan Makes Perfect in Ramadan (inshaAllah!)

The Prophet Muhammad (s) taught us that the best practice for Ramadan was to start fasting in Shabaan, a month that most people mostly overlooked.

Usamah ibn Zayd (ra) reported:

“ I said, ‘O Messenger of Allah, I do not see you fasting any month as much as you fast during Sha’ban.’ The Prophet (s) said, ‘It is a month people neglect between the months of Rajab and Ramadan. It is a month in which the deeds are raised to the Lord of the worlds and I like for my deeds to be raised while I am fasting.’ ”
(Sunan Al-Nasa’i)

Aisha (ra) said: “...I did not see the Prophet complete an entire month of fasting except for Ramadan, and I did not see him complete more voluntary fasts than in the month of Shabaan.”
(Bukhari)

In another narration, she said: “The Prophet would fast Shabaan and then connect it to Ramadan.” (Muslim)

From these reports, we have enough evidence to get a move on to start our Ramadan training now since the month of Shabaan has begun. *Let's get to it!*

Treat your worship as an appointment with Allah. Put it in your calendar, set an alarm, or place sticky notes around your house.




UNLOCK
YOUR HEART FOR
RAMADAN
2-Day Virtual Intensive Cohort

March 18-19 2023
Register Today!
MASNational.org/RP100

UNLOCK YOUR HEART FOR RAMADAN

Join us for a 2-day intensive, one-of-a-kind Ramadan prep weekend from March 18 – 19.

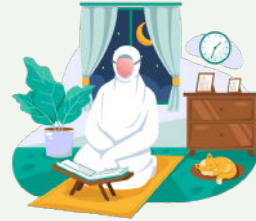
Register: masnational.org/RP100

Topics Include:

- Being Mentally Healthy in Ramadan
- Developing Good Habits
- Ramadan Action Plan
- What Other Prophets Did in Ramadan
- Ramadan Under the Lens of Islam & Modernity and more!
- And much more!

TIPS TO UP YOUR WORSHIP GAME NOW

Here are some tips on getting some solid preparation done for Ramadan by getting into the habit in Shabaan. Check off each action as you perform it.



- Make up any fasts you must, or start fasting Mondays and Thursdays in Shabaan.
- You can also fast the three white days of the month: the 13th, 14th, and 15th of Shabaan.
- Wake up for tahajjud on the days you are fasting to pray at least two rakahs before the Fajr adhan.
- Don't skip suhoor! Practice making and eating nourishing meals at this time.
- Increase your Quran recitation. E.g., if you currently recite one page daily, start reading two.
- Get in the habit of asking Allah's forgiveness: do istaghfaar 100 times a day.
- Write out all the duas you want to make in Ramadan and start making them daily in Shabaan
- Find out when the times of acceptance are and make dua during those times.



KEEP A RAMADAN JOURNAL

There are numerous benefits to keeping a journal. Use it to:

- write down goals
- track your progress
- compose your dua list
- remember important reflections
- debrief and evaluate your performance post- Ramadan

DISCOVER THE POWER OF JOURNALING

A MAS MEMBER
SHARES HER EXPERI-
ENCE KEEPING A RA-
MADAN JOURNAL FOR
OVER 10 YEARS

“A dedicated Ramadan journal can be an amazing self-development tool. It is a way to build up specialized knowledge and experience around changing yourself, year after year. It can also serve as snapshots of your journey through life’s phases and remind you of the struggles you were guided to overcome and the duas that were answered.

When I was 31, members of my youth usra gave me a leatherbound notebook as a going-away gift. The notebook was so beautiful that I decided it had to serve a special purpose. When Ramadan rolled

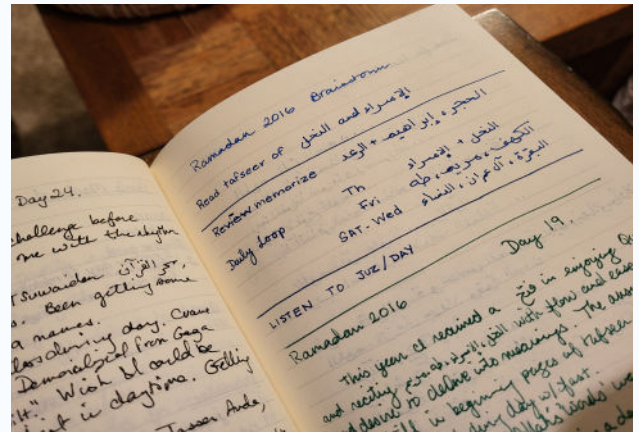
in a few weeks later, I wrote my intentions, goals and duas in its first pages. Every few days throughout the month, I would add a halftime report, adjusting goals as needed. At the end of the month, I wrote again and reflected on successes, failures, and how to do better next year.

I’ve been doing the same for the last 11 years, and that notebook has become my most valuable possession. I reread the notebook as I prepare for every Ramadan, to remind myself of long-forgotten goals and answered prayers. Then, in the week leading up to Ramadan, I begin a new entry for that year. ”

NOW, IT’S YOUR TURN...



As a precursor to your starting your own journal, use the following pages of worksheets to compose your Ramadan goals and dua list. Print out following two pages and fill them in before Ramadan begins. Take your time to think about what is it that you really need to work on. Once you’re done, you can paste these pages into a journal and document the progress of your goals and dua acceptance. Also share these worksheets with family and friends so you can remind and motivate each other to keep working towards self-improvement for the sake of Allah.





Shabaan *Revive Pack*

Feb-Mar 2023

My Ramadan Intentions

Use this worksheet to document your sincere intentions for the month of Ramadan



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To download the entire packet, visit MuslimAmericanSociety.org/revive-packet or scan the QR code above

Insha'Allah, this Ramadan i intend to:

Read this much Quran on a daily basis:

Improve my Salah by doing the following:

Spend this much time learning about, and reflecting upon, the Quran:

Listen to the following lecture series and/or read the following books/articles:

Contact the following relatives and reach out to the following people to make sure don't feel lonely (eg. new Muslims):

Go to the Masjid this often:

Feed this many people iftar (physically or through donations):

Do this much dhikr on a daily basis:

Get rid of these bad habits:

Develop these new habits:

Encourage others to do good, serve others, and contribute to Islamic work by doing the following:

Invite to Islam and share knowledge with others by doing the following:





My Ramadan Duas

Use this worksheet to document the personal duas you would like make this Ramadan for the following areas of your life:



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To download the entire packet, visit MuslimAmericanSociety.org/revive-packet or scan the QR code above

Islam: How I want to improve as a Muslim and improve my relationship with Allah:

Health

Success: Worldly and afterlife

People: Family, friends, and communities I want to make dua for

Forgiveness: areas of my life I would like to ask Allah for forgiveness

Activism: How I want to make a positive impact and duas related to these goals

Additional (eg. specific things you need help with)



RAMADAN 101

5 Virtues of Ramadan



The month the Quran was revealed

“Ramadan is the month in which the Quran was revealed as a guide for humanity with clear proofs of guidance and the standard (to distinguish between right and wrong). So whoever is present this month, let them fast...” (Quran, 2:185)



Laylatul Qadr and forgiveness of sins

“The Night of Glory is better than a thousand months. That night the angels and the (holy) spirit descend, by the permission of their Lord, for every (decreed) matter. It is all peace until the break of dawn.” (Quran, 97:3-5)

Abu Huraira related that the Prophet (s) said: “Whoever fasts during Ramadan with faith and seeking his reward from Allah will have his past sins forgiven. Whoever prays during the nights in Ramadan with faith and seeking his reward from Allah will have his past sins forgiven. And he who passes Lailat Al-Qadr in prayer with faith and seeking his reward from Allah will have his past sins forgiven.” (Bukhari, Muslim)



WHAT DOES RAMADAN MEAN?

Ramadan comes from the Arabic word “ramida,” which means intense scorching heat. Imam Al-Zamarkhshari wrote, “When they [the ancient Arabs] changed the names of the months from the ancient language, they named them according to the seasons in which they fell, and this month fell in the days of intense heat, that is why it was named Ramadan.”

Metaphorically speaking, Ramadan is also a time when sins are erased or eliminated. Thus Imam Qurtubi said that “[this month] was named Ramadan because it purges the sins of people with righteous deeds.”

The spiritual workout of this month burns away our sins and shapes us into more God-conscious people.

VIRTUES CONT'D



The reward of fasting is something special only known to Allah

Abu Huraira related that the Prophet (s) said: "Allah the Majestic and Exalted said: 'Every deed of man will receive ten to 700 times reward, except fasting, for it is for Me, and I shall reward it (as I like). There are two occasions of joy for one who fasts: one when he breaks the fast and the other when he will meet his Lord.'" (Muslim)



Archangel Jibreel reviewed the entire Quran with Prophet (s) every Ramadan

Ibn Abbas narrated that: "The Prophet was the most generous of all the people, and he used to become more generous in Ramadan when Archangel Jibreel met him. Jibreel used to meet him every

night during Ramadan to revise the Quran with him. Allah's Messenger then used to be more generous than the fast wind." (Al-Bukhari)



The gates of heaven are open, and the devils are chained

The Prophet (s) said: "There has come to you Ramadan, a blessed month, in which Allah, the Mighty, and Sublime, has enjoined you to fast. During it, the gates of heavens are opened, and the gates of Hell are closed, and every devil is chained up. In it, Allah has a night which is better than a thousand months; whoever is deprived of its goodness is indeed deprived." (Sunan Al-Nisa'i)

The Commandment to Fast

Fasting became obligatory on the Muslims in the second year of the hijra when many Muslims had successfully migrated to Madina.

Allah says in the Quran,

“O believers! Fasting is prescribed for you—as it was for those before you—so perhaps you will become mindful (of Allah).” (Quran 2:183)

Before this command, Muslims were mandated to fast on Ashura, the 10th of Muharram. However, after this ayah was revealed, the latter fast became optional, while fasting the full month of Ramadan was made obligatory.

Muslims fast because it is an exercise in self-control. When we curb our lawful desires, i.e., eating and drinking in favor of worshiping Allah, it is good practice to help us stave off unlawful desires that prevent us from getting nearer to Allah.



BASIC FIQH OF FASTING

Everyone above the age of puberty is mandated to fast except:

- the sick who would be harmed by abstaining from food, drink, or necessary medications
- pregnant or nursing women if fasting would harm them or their babies
- travelers who will be going outside their city limits (most scholars say around 50 miles) or going on a trip that is considered

The following actions break the fast:

- Intentionally eating or drinking
- Intentionally vomiting
- Menstruation or post-natal bleeding
- Sexual intercourse or masturbation
- Ingesting medicine



DISCUSSION GUIDE

Make a list of some of the events in seerah and in early Islamic history.

Why do you think they happened in Ramadan? Why did Allah choose that time? Discuss with others.

For e.g. The Battle of Badr was fought during the Muslims' first Ramadan (2 AH), and it had only been decreed a short time beforehand.



More Resources for Ramadan Readiness

Ramadan Preparation & Habits

- Book: **Atomic Habits** by James Clear
- [Article: Ramadan Prep: 10 Essential Tips](#)
- [Article: Ramadan Resources](#)
- [Article: The Productive Muslim's Ramadan Productivity resources](#)

Connecting Better with the Quran

- [YouTube series: How to Ponder the Quran even if you don't know Arabic](#)
- [YouTube series: In The Shade of Ramadan Season 10](#)
- Book: Way to the Quran by Khurram Murad
- Book: Faith First by Magdy Al-Hilali (Quran chptr)
- [Quran 30 for 30 - Yaqeen Institute](#)
- [QuranReflect.com](#)

Worship & Renewing Faith

- [YouTube series: Judgment Day, Deeds that Light the Way - Yaqeen Institute](#)
- [Video series: Road to Return, Returning from Sin - Yaqeen Institute](#)
- [YouTube series: Tahajjud Waking Soul & Society by Tamara Gray](#)
- [Video series: Angels in Your Presence - Yaqeen Institute](#)
- Book: Prayers of the Pious, by Omar Suleiman

- [PDF: Names of Allah by Jinan Yousef](#)
- [Video series: Faith Revival - Yaqeen Institute](#)
- Book: In the Early Hours by Khurram Murad
- Book: Faith First by Magdy Al-Hilali
- Book: Transformed by Worship by Salah Soltan
- Book: Sincerity by Yusuf Al-Qaradawi
- [Book: Purification of the Soul](#)
- [Book: Journey to God Jasser Auda and accompanying video explanations](#)