

Study of Qur'anic Verses • Analysis of Prophetic Wisdom • Practical Guidelines



Reaping
the benefits of
Ramadan

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OBJECTIVE

- ✘ To prepare for the blessed month of Ramadan
- ✘ To improve our understanding of and better appreciate *sawm* (fasting) and Ramadan
- ✘ To gain the pleasure and mercy of Allah

METHOD

- ✘ Study of *Surah Baqarah*, verses 183 to 187, based on major classical commentaries of the Qur'an
- ✘ Study of selection of Prophetic sayings on Ramadan and *sawm* from the collections of Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim
- ✘ Practical guidelines for spiritual and physical well-being

VERSE 183 - I

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

- × Meaning of *sawm*
- × Other mention of *sawm* in Qur'an
- × **O you who believe!**
- × History of *sawm* in Islam
- × ***Kutiba* upon you is fasting**
- × **As was prescribed on those before you**
- × Fasting as a crucial element
- × Coming from same Lord
- × Psychological strengthening
- × Method of *sawm* for other faiths
- × *Sawm* of `Ashuraa

VERSE 183 - II

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

- ✘ So that you may become those who attain *Taqwa*
- ✘ Fasting as a shield

VERSE 184

أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَّرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ
مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ وَعَلَىٰ الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ
فَمِنْ تَطَوُّعٍ خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَهُ وَأَن تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن
كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

- ✘ For a fixed or few number of days
- ✘ Whoever is sick or is upon a journey, then the prescribed number should be made up from other days
- ✘ Definition of sickness and journey
- ✘ And those who have strength, on them is a ransom, the feeding of a poor person. Then whoever does good voluntarily, that is better for him. And that you fast is better for you, if you know.
- ✘ One of the evolutions in fasting

VERSE 185

شَهْرَ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ
وَالْفِرْقَانِ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ
سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ
وَلِتَكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَاكُم وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

- × The month of Ramadan
- × Heat and purification
- × In which the Qur'an was revealed as guidance for mankind and with vivid features and the Criterion (for right and wrong)
- × Contradiction? Revealed over 23 years?
- × So those of you who witness the month must fast therein
- × And should anyone be sick, or on a journey, then a number from other days. Allah wants ease for you and does not want hardship for you. And all this because you may complete the number and proclaim the *Takbir* of Allah for having guided you and that you be grateful.
- × Reassurance to believers
- × Other purposes of Ramadan and *sawm*

VERSE 186

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ
الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ

- ✘ And when My servants ask you about Me, of course, I am near. I respond to the call of one who prays to Me so they should respond to Me, and have faith in me so that they may be on the right path.
- ✘ Reassurance again
- ✘ Encouragement to make supplication, especially in Ramadan

VERSE 187 - 1

أَجَلَ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفِثُ إِلَىٰ نِسَائِكُمْ هُنَّ لِبَاسٍ لِّكُمْ وَإِنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَهُنَّ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَخْتَانُونَ فَإِذَا بَشِرْتُمْ هُنَّ وَأَنْتُمْ مِمَّنْ وَكَلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ ثُمَّ أَتَمُوا الصِّيَامَ إِلَىٰ اللَّيْلِ أَنْفُسَكُمُ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا عَنْكُمْ

- ✘ It is made lawful for you, in the night of the fasts, to have intimate relations with your women. They are a cover for you and you are a cover for them. Allah knew you were betraying yourselves so He relented towards you and pardoned you.
- ✘ Imam Qurtubi: Implies forbiddance at one point
- ✘ Story of Qays ibn Sirmah (RA)
- ✘ So now you can have intimate relations with them and seek what Allah has destined for you and eat and drink until the white thread of the dawn becomes distinct from the black thread; then complete the fast upto the night.

VERSE 187 - II

وَلَا تُبَشِّرُوهُنَّ وَأَنْتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ
اللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرِبُوهَا كَذَلِكَ يَبِينُ اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ

- ✘ And do not have intimate relations with them while you are staying in masajid for *i`tikaf*
- ✘ Seclusion in masjid
- ✘ Sunnah of the Prophet (upon him be peace)
- ✘ These are the limits of Allah, so do not go near them. Thus, Allah manifests His signs to the people that they may be God-fearing.
- ✘ Warning about crossing limits

PROPHETIC SAYINGS - I

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ
أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ
وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ قَالَ الصَّيَّامُ جَنَّةٌ فَلَا يَرْفُثُ وَلَا يَجْهَلُ وَإِنْ أَمْرٌ
قَاتَلَهُ أَوْ شَاتَمَهُ فَلْيَقُلْ إِنِّي صَائِمٌ مَرَّتَيْنِ وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي
بِيَدِهِ لَخُلُوفٌ فَمِ الصَّائِمِ أَطْيَبُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى مِنْ رِيحِ
الْمَسِيكِ يَتْرَكَ طَعَامَهُ وَشِرَابَهُ وَشَهْوَتَهُ مِنْ أَجْلِ الصَّيَّامِ
لِي وَأَنَا أَجْزِي بِهِ وَالْحَسَنَةُ عَشْرُ أَمْثَالِهَا

- ✘ Code of Conduct
- ✘ Fasting described as shield
- ✘ Do not speak vulgar, obscene talk; do not commit actions of ignorant
- ✘ If a man fights or curses you, say “I am fasting” twice
- ✘ By Him in who’s hand is my soul, the smell emanating from mouth of fasting person is better in front of Allah than smell of musk
- ✘ He has left his food, his drink and his desires for me. Fasting is for me, and I shall reward for it.
- ✘ And for good deeds there is a tenfold reward

PROPHETIC SAYINGS - II

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ
عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ مَنْ صَامَ
رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ

- ✘ Whoever fasts in Ramadan with faith and expectation of reward
- ✘ His past sins will be forgiven
- ✘ Fasting not only for reward also for wiping out past sins
- ✘ Major sins?

PROPHETIC SAYINGS - III

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ يَقُولُ
قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا دَخَلَ
شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ فَتَحَّتْ أَبْوَابُ السَّمَاءِ وَغَلَقَتْ أَبْوَابُ
جَهَنَّمَ وَسُلْسِلَتِ الشَّيَاطِينُ

- ✘ When Ramadan enters, gates of heaven are opened
- ✘ Gates of Hell closed
- ✘ Devils are chained
- ✘ Points to increase in actions of obedience and decrease and lack of sins
- ✘ Chaining of devils: Termination of whisperings and temptations
- ✘ Presence of evil due to rotten souls and hearts

PROPHETIC SAYINGS - IV

عَنْ أَنَسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ
قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْحَرُوا
فَإِنَّ فِي السَّحْرِ بَرَكََةً

- ✘ Have *suhor* (pre-dawn meal)
- ✘ Verily, in *suhor* there is blessing
- ✘ Scholarly consensus: Recommended
- ✘ Special time

PRACTICAL GUIDELINES - SCHEDULE

- ✘ Recitation of Qur'an: time and place, goals
- ✘ Time and place for *dhikr*
- ✘ Plan for *suhoor*
- ✘ Salah in masjid

PRACTICAL GUIDELINES – FOOD - I

TO EAT

- ✘ Complex carbohydrates that release energy slowly during hour of fasting
- ✘ Found in grains and seeds, like barley, wheat, oats, millets, semolina, beans, lentils, wholemeal, flour, basmati rice
- ✘ Fibre-rich foods that digest slowly
- ✘ Such as bran, cereals, whole wheat, grains and seeds, potatoes with the skin, vegetables like green beans and almost all fruit, including apricots, prunes, figs, dates

PRACTICAL GUIDELINES – FOOD - II

TO AVOID

- ✘ Heavily-processed, fast-burning foods that contain refined carbohydrates
- ✘ Sugar, white flour
- ✘ Fatty foods like cakes, biscuits, chocolates and sweets
- ✘ Caffeine content in drinks such as tea, coffee and cola
- ✘ Feasting at Iftar, especially with rich foods

PRACTICAL GUIDELINES – BAD BREATH

- ✘ Clean mouth properly at *suhoor*
- ✘ Use floss
- ✘ Brush tongue
- ✘ Drink 2 to 3 glasses of water