



## Thirty Days of Ramadan

### Requirements for a Fast Day

The intention (*niyyat*) to fast must be made, aloud or silently.

The period of the fast extends from the time just before sunrise (*fajr*) until after sunset (*maghrib*). During the period of the fast, total abstinence from the following is required: food, drink (including water), smoking or consumption of tobacco, sexual intercourse, and any form of negativity—backbiting, fighting, cursing, arguing and similar behaviors.

Semen may not be deliberately emitted, nor may one deliberately vomit.

Pregnant or lactating women, the seriously ill, the aged, and the insane are exempted from fasting.

A woman does not fast on days when she is menstruating.

Children under the age of twelve generally are excluded from the fast but may fast part of the day or for some days.

The fast is broken after sunset with an odd number of dates or a glass of water, followed by a modest meal.

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It is up to each individual person to let these words impress themselves on their heart and mind, through repeated readings and deep reflection.

### Day 1

It (Ramadan) is the month, whose beginning is mercy, its middle, forgiveness, and its end, emancipation from the fire.

~Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him)

### Day 2

For to fast is to do good unto your selves—if you but knew it. It was the month of Ramadan in which the Qur'an was first bestowed from on High as a guidance unto humankind and a self-evident proof of that guidance, and as a standard by which to discern the true from the false. Hence, whoever of you lives to see this month shall fast throughout it; but he that is ill, or on a journey [shall fast instead for the same] number of other days. God wills that you shall have ease and does not will you to suffer hardship; but [God desires] that you complete the number [of days required], and that you extol God for his having guided you, and that you render your thanks.

~Qur'an 2:184-185

### **Day 3**

As for the men of knowledge of the hereafter, what they mean by the correctness of fasting is its acceptability; and the acceptability of the fast is whether or not it has enabled one to reach one's objective. They understand the objective of fasting to be the taking on, as much as possible, of a character which contains one of the characteristics of Allah—the Self-Sustainer—and which resembles the angels in their having no desires.

~Muhsin Fayd al-Kashani

### **Day 4**

Fasting in Ramadan develops conscience because we fast in secret as well as in public.

### **Day 5**

Fasting is meditation of the body. Meditation of the mind is presence without thought. Meditation of the body is presence without food.

### **Day 6**

Fasting in Ramadan for the pleasure of God means increasing our sincere love of God. This is the essence of sacrifice: to give up, to put out of the present moment, something in itself good, to energize your love of God, your devotion and dedication.

### **Day 7**

Fasting in Ramadan teaches us discipline and order by connecting us to the observance of certain acts at specific times.

### **Day 8**

Know that, in the view of the verifiers, fasting has three degrees. The common people fast by refraining from food, drink, and sexual intercourse from morning to sunset prayer. The elect fast by preserving the seven bodily members from sins and acts of disobedience. They prevent the tongue from lying, obscenity and backbiting; the eye from looking with caprice and appetite; the ear from listening to nonsense, obscenity, idle talk and the like; and the hand, foot and other members from unlawful acts. The divine revelation gives news of this meaning. *The hearing, the sight, the heart—all these shall be questioned* [17:36]. Mustafa—God bless him—said, “Five things break the fast—lying, backbiting, slander, ungodly oaths, and looking with appetite.”

~“The Easy Roads of Sayf al-Din”

### **Day 9**

Fasting in Ramadan relaxes the digestive systems and insures against the many harms that develop from an over-stressed digestive system.

### **Day 10**

The elect of the elect fast by examining their thoughts and preventing their innermost consciousness from paying attention to anything other than God. These are the people of poverty, and their capital and provisions for wayfaring on the path to God are nothingness.

~“The Easy Roads of Sayf al-Din”

### **Day 11**

Fasting in Ramadan encourages the spirit of social belonging, brotherhood, and equality. We join ourselves to a world-wide community.

### **Day 12**

When it comes to material food, if you eat too little, you will remain hungry like the crow and suffer ill-temper and anemia; if you eat your fill, your body will incur the penalty of indigestion. Partake of God’s food, that easily digested nutriment, and ride like a ship on the spiritual ocean.

~Mevlana Rumi

### **Day 13**

Fasting in Ramadan teaches adaptability because during Ramadan our normal habits are turned upside down. And so we may discover strength and guidance in the face of unexpected hardships.

### **Day 14**

Be patient and persistent in fasting: be always expecting the Food of God. For God, who acts with goodness and is long-suffering, bestows His gifts on those who are expectant. The full-fed man doesn’t wait expectantly for bread, wondering whether his allowance will come soon or later; but the foodless man is always asking, “Where is it?” and expecting it hungrily and seeking and searching for it. Unless you are expectant, that bounty of manifold felicity will not come to you.

~Mevlana Rumi

### **Day 15**

Fasting leads to non-existence, for, truly, all joys are there. *God is with those who patiently persevere* [2:249].

~Mevlana Rumi

### **Day 16**

Know that the goal in fasting is for the veil of appetite and anger to be lifted from the heart’s eye so that the heart may see the mystery of the dominion of heaven and earth.

~“The Easy Roads of Sayf al-Din”

### **Day 17**

He who has fasted for Allah, the Glorious and Sublime, and is in the discomfort of heat and struck by thirst, will have his face wiped and be given the good news by a thousand angels whom Allah has entrusted to him until he breaks his fast; at that point Allah will say: “How sweet is your fragrance and your soul. Oh angels, witness that I have forgiven him.”

~Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq

### Day 18

Fasting in Ramadan establishes an aware soul, able to accept and transcend the limitations of life, a clear mind to think, and a lightened body to move and act.

### Day 19

I pass the night with my Lord: He giveth me food and drink. Hunger is God's food whereby He revives the bodies of the *siddiqs*, in hunger God's food reaches them.

~ Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him)

### Day 20

The prophetic customs of fasting are also six—delaying the morning meal [until the last moment], hurrying to break the fast [at sunset] with a date or water before the ritual prayer, refraining from brushing the teeth after the sun passes the meridian, being generous by giving alms and food, reciting the Quran a great deal, and secluding oneself in the mosque, especially during the last ten days, during which is the Night of Power. Mustafa used to fold up his sleeping clothes during these ten days, and he and his family did not rest from worship, because of watching out for the Night of Power.

~“The Easy Roads of Sayf al-Din”

### Day 21

Fasting in Ramadan teaches patience and unselfishness. In patiently enduring a deprivation, we become sensitized to the suffering of others and are therefore able to respond to their need.

### Day 22

Fasting is the magical seal of Solomon.

Don't give that seal to a devil, don't destroy your homeland.

But if you seem to have lost the battle and your army has fled,  
an army will regroup around the flag of Ramadan.

A holy feast descends from the sky for the people of fasting,  
like a sacrament at the table of Jesus, son of Mary.

In fasting, take a seat at the Table of Generosity—  
that plentiful table, better than the broth of cabbages.

~Mevlana Rumi

### Day 23

Fasting in Ramadan restores dignity and integrity by putting people in touch with their inner governing power, the source of inner peace.

### Day 24

Fasting in Ramadan teaches economy by reducing our sense of physical need.

### Day 25

There's sweetness secluded in this empty belly.  
The human is like a musical instrument, no more no less.  
If the belly of a lute were stuffed with food  
Would any melodies, either high or low, be possible?  
~Mevlana Rumi

### Day 26

When your belly and brain are burning in Ramadan,  
with every breath a song arises in your chest.  
A thousand veils are burned away with every breath  
And you race up the stairs in front of you effortlessly.  
~Mevlana Rumi

### Day 27

Empty your stomach and in your need cry like the ney.  
Empty your stomach and secrets will flow from your pen.  
If you're constantly filling your stomach, come the Resurrection  
an idol occupies your Kaaba, a demon in place of a mind.  
~Mevlana Rumi

### Day 28

But from fasting, good qualities rush to support you,  
helpers of all kinds, nourishers, dependable friends.  
~Mevlana Rumi

### Day 29

Fasting is Mine and it is I who give reward for it. A man gives up his sexual passion, his food and his drink for my sake. Fasting is like a shield, and he who fasts has two joys: a joy when he breaks his fast and a joy when he meets his Lord. The change in the breath of the mouth of him who fasts is better in Allah's estimation than the smell of musk.  
~Hadith Qudsi, Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him)

### Day 30

The Seeker's wealth is in emptiness (*faqr*; spiritual poverty).

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We have hoped to present the sacred wisdom concerning the beauty and benefits of fasting, from the trusted sources of our tradition and from personal experience. We strive for the highest truth, but Allahu Alim, God alone knows.

“The Easy Roads of Sayf al-Din,” quoted in *Faith and Practice of Islam*, William Chittick.