

FOR MEMBERS OF
THE LAHORE
AHMADIYYA
JAMA'AT ONLY



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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

Hazrat Ameer's Ramadan Message

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

“The month of Ramadan is that in which the Qur'an was revealed, a guidance to men and clear proofs of the guidance and the Criterion. So whoever of you is present in the month, he shall fast therein, and whoever is sick or on a journey, (he shall fast) a (like) number of other days. Allah desires ease for you, and He desires not hardship for you, and (He desires) that you should complete the number and that you should exalt the greatness of Allah for having guided you and that you may give thanks.” (2:185)

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Ramadan is here with all its blessings and opportunities to pray and seek nearness to Allah. This nearness is attained through prayers and fasting; recitation, understanding, following the guidance in the Qur'an and seeking forgiveness for our sins and asking protection of Allah in all worldly and spiritual affairs.

While we focus on attaining the goal of our lives, that is, seeking Allah's nearness, we will have ample opportunity in this

Blessed month to develop a loving bond with the Holy Qur'an whose revelation commenced in Ramadan.

The stronger this bond becomes, closer will we find ourselves to Allah and the Prophet Muhammad, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.

As Ahmadis we have the example of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian before us. He expressed the depth of his love for the Qur'an and the Holy Prophet, may

through his writings including his poetry.

I am personally very moved by the love of the Qur'an which he has expressed through his poem *Jamalo husnay Qur'an nure jane hur Musliman haye* and have translated it into English (note. Hazrat Ameer's rendering of this poem into English verse is included on page 6). Please accept [this translation] as a gift of Ramadan from me. I am grateful to Allah for having helped me translate this poem and request you all to pray for me as I undertake the mammoth work of rendering all his Urdu poems into English verse.

Please pray for all the peoples of the

world and for peace on earth for all mankind. While praying remember that Allah is the Lord of the entire World (Rabul 'aalamin) and Prophet Muhammad, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him is a blessing to all mankind (Rahmat ul 'aalamin) and the Qur'an is a Guidance for all the peoples of the world (Hudal-linnaas). By being generous in our prayers we ensure that Allah will listen to them and answer them. Ameen.

Professor Dr. Abdul Karim Saeed

Ameer and President

Worldwide Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement

View Hazrat Ameer's Ramadan Messages from previous years at the following link:
<http://aaiil.org/text/ameers/6abdulkarimsaeed/messages/messages.shtml>

Editor's Message

Dear Readers, *Assalaam-o-Alaikum*,

This August issue of I'LAN is a special Ramadan issue and we have collected a number of articles for your reading pleasure on the topic of fasting and this holy month.

With fasting being one of the five obligatory pillars of Islam, this is an important topic about which a number of queries are often raised. We hope that the articles selected for you are useful in addressing these concerns.

On page 8 is an extract from Maulana Muhammad Ali Sahib's "The Religion of Islam" on the Social Value of Fasting. On the same page are also some selected Hadith on this topic.

On page 3 is a special Ramadan gift to all readers from Hazrat Ameer: the English translation of a beautiful poem by Hazrat

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

On page 11 is our regular Ask an Expert column, where readers are invited to send their questions for our knowledgeable members to answer. This month's question and answer relates to topic of fasting in extreme conditions.

As usual, we also have news to share with you, both from the Centre and other Jama'ats. Your comments and suggestions are always welcome.

Please accept heartfelt Ramadan Mubarak from myself and everyone involved in the production of I'LAN.

Seeker of your prayers,
Habiba Anwar Sadiq
(Editor)

Devotional Ode in Praise of the Holy Quran

By

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian

Rendered into English Verse by

Dr. Abdul Karim Saeed

(Ameer and President of the Worldwide Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement)

قرآن کریم کی مدح میں عاشقانہ ترانہ

جمال و حسن قرآن نور جان ہر مسلمان ہے

قمر ہے چاند اوروں کا ہمارا چاند قرآن ہے

The immense beauty of the Quran is for every Muslim's life a light,
Others look to the moon, while the Quran makes our souls bright.

نظیر اسکی نہیں جتنی نظر میں فکر کر دیکھا

بھلا کیونکر نہ ہو یکتا کلام پاک رحمن ہے

Nothing pleases our eyes, however deeply we reflect and compare,
And why should it not be, for nothing can with the Holy Rahman's words compare.

بہار جاوداں پیدا ہے اسکی ہر عبارت میں

نہ وہ خوبی چمن میں ہے نہ اُس سا کوئی بستان ہے

Every passage of it is fresh as an everlasting spring, for ever to abound,
Such beauty is neither in the garden beds nor in flower gardens found.

کلام پاک۔ زرداں کا کوئی ثانی نہیں ہرگز
اگر لولوئے عمان ہے وگر لعل بدخشاں ہے

There can be no match to the value of the pure words of the Yazdan,
Whether they be the pearls of Oman or the rubies of Badakhshan.

خدا کے قول سے قولِ بشر کیونکر برابر ہو
وہاں قدرت یہاں در ماندگی فرق نمایاں ہے

How can the words of God with those of human words compare,
One the Immensely Powerful, the other abject; the difference is clear.

ملائک جس کی حضرت میں کریں اقرارِ لامعی
سخن میں اُس کے ہمتائی کہاں مقدور انساں ہے

In Whose presence the angels ignorance plead,
How can words of humans His words exceed.

بنا سکتا نہیں اک پاؤں کیڑے کا بشر ہرگز
تو پھر کیونکر بنانا نورِ حق کا اُس پہ آساں ہے

A human who can not a leg of an insect make,
How can he the creation of Light of Truth undertake?

ارے لوگو! کرو کچھ پاسِ شانِ کبریائی کا
زباں کو تھام لو اب بھی اگر کچھ بوئے ایماں ہے

O people, to His Eminence give the respect with grace,
Hold your tongues in respect if you have of faith any trace,

خدا سے غیر کو ہمتا بنانا سخت کفر ہے

خدا سے کچھ ڈرو یا رویہ کیسا کذب و بہتیاں ہے

To associate others with God is a shameful deed,
As you lie and slander of God's wrath do heed.

اگر اقرار ہے تم کو خدا کی ذاتِ واحد کا

تو پھر کیوں اس قدر دل میں تمہارے شرک پہناں ہے

If by confessing 'there is no God but He' you abide,
Then how within your hearts you so many idols hide.

یہ کیسے پڑ گئے دل پر تمہارے جہل کے پردے

خطا کرتے ہو باز آؤ اگر کچھ خوفِ یزدان ہے

How in the veils of ignorance your hearts are concealed,
Refrain from your error if you have any fear of Yazdan, to Him yield.

ہمیں کچھ کیس نہیں بھائیو نصیحت ہے غریبانہ

کوئی جو پاک دل ہووے دل و جاں اُس پہ قربان ہے

I have no grudge against you, my brothers, I only humbly advise,
For those pure of heart; respectfully with heart and soul I rise.

View Hazrat Mirza Sahib's compilations of Urdu, Arabic and Persian poetic works together with English translation of selected poems at the following link:

<http://www.aail.org/text/poem/mainpoem.shtml>

Recitation of selected poems in MP3 audio format is available at:

<http://www.aail.org/text/snd/mainsnd.shtml>

New Articles Published by the Fiji Jama'at

Brother Jalal ud Dean of the Fiji Jama'at has recently submitted a number of articles for publication on our website, www.aaiil.org.

As well as being a valued member of the Fiji Jama'at, brother Jalal is also the current Chairperson of Interfaith Search Fiji, a body that looks for ways to build bridges of respect and understanding between people of different religious traditions for the sake of the wider community.

In his spare time, brother Jalal takes interest in researching different topics under Islam, and his articles include “Seven Reasons to Read the Holy Qur'an”, “The Marriages of the Holy Prophet Muhammad” and “Cultural Sensitivity in the Context of the Muslim Religion.”

On page 7, we have reproduced an extract from one of his articles on fasting as the response to this month's Ask and Expert question ❖

***To view brother Jalal ud Dean's articles online, please follow the link below:
<http://www.aaiil.org/fiji/articles/articlesfiji.shtml>***

Ramadan Activities of Ahmadi Ladies in Darus Salaam, Lahore, Pakistan

Report by

Mrs. Sabiha Saeed, Secretary Tanzeem-i-Khawateen

There is always a special feeling in the air when the month of Ramadan commences and the ladies of Darus Salaam suddenly become very active. A larger number of ladies joins in the congregational prayers and taraveeh.

Although, due to the intense heat in the month of August, we do not have our usual monthly meeting, but informally we do get together.

The Tanzeem-i-Khawateen has a tradition of presenting gifts of suits of clothing for Eid, to the needy Ahmadi families and workers of the Anjuman. This year too, the suits have been packed and are these days being delivered. There is a three-member committee that selects

and buys the clothes but all the ladies contribute towards the expense.

The ladies are very particular about completing the recitation of the Holy Qur'an at least once during this holy month. They also provide generous donations to the poor and needy. A number of poor women are seen these days receiving their share of food and clothing from the residents of Darus Salaam.

The children are encouraged to fast and come to the mosque regularly. Thus the ladies in Lahore and particularly in Darus Salaam, do their best to imbibe in themselves and their families the true spirit of this month of fasting and prayer.

Our Motto

“In-Allah-ha-Ma'anaa”

(Surely Allah is with us—The Holy Qur'an, 9:40)

Family Day Celebrations at the UK Jama'at's Centre

On 3 July 2011, the UK Jama'at held their annual Family Day celebrations, which involves the youth of the jama'at and every year, encourages them to write their own speeches, poems and presentations to share on Family Day.

This year, among the topics covered by the youth of the UK Jama'at were grandmothers; how Muslims abuse Ramadan; the meaning of family; and various recitations from the Holy Qur'an ❖

*To view videos from the Family Day proceedings, please visit the link below:
<http://www.virtualmosque.co.uk/>*

Interesting Iftar Traditions From Around the World

Below are just some of the interesting fast-breaking traditions that Muslims all over the world partake in during the holy month of Ramadan.

In Sri Lanka, fasts are traditionally broken with fruits, sherbet and kanji—a thick paste made from garlic-flavoured rice and coconut milk and tempered with mustard seeds, fenugreek seeds and curry leaves. Another typical Sri Lankan dish often made for Iftar is the adik roti. This consists of several layers of pancake and curry enclosed in a puff pastry shell and baked.



During iftars in the Maldives, numerous local dishes like fishballs and fishcake are prepared. A typical Ramadan beverage is a sweet, milky sharbat.

Most families in Egypt make special drinks from dry apricots that have been soaked all day—a delicious and healthy way to break the daylong fast. Another Ramadan speciality is the crescent shaped bread or “khaboos Ramadan.”

Yameesh is also a must during Ramadan in Egypt, which is the local name of a variety of nuts imported from Syria and other Levant countries and incorporated in Egyptian recipes during Ramadan.

In Iran, some people have sweet tea, Tabreezi cheese and walnut sandwiches after the call to prayer. Also popular is saffron-flavoured halwa, ash rashteh (a thick vegetable soup) and adas pola (a dish comprised of rice and lentils).

In Jordan, fasts are broken with diluted yoghurt, soup and juice. Other popular Ramadan dishes are mansaf and qatayif. Mansaf is the national dish of Jordan, which consists of lamb seasoned with aromatic herbs and mild spices and cooked in yoghurt. This is served on a bed of Arabic bread and rice and garnished with almonds, pine kernels and other nuts. Qatayif is a delicious cinnamon-flavoured pancake stuffed with walnuts and sugar and eaten with honey syrup ❖

The Social Value of Fasting

An Extract from The Religion of Islam by Maulana Muhammad Ali

In addition to its spiritual and moral values, fasting as prescribed in the Qur'an has also a social value, more effective than that which is realised through prayer.

Rich and poor, great and small, residents of the same vicinity are brought together five times daily in the mosque on terms of perfect equality, and thus healthy social relations are established through prayer. But the commencement of the month of Ramadan is a signal for a mass movement towards equality which is not limited to one vicinity or even one country, but affects the whole Muslim world. The rich and the poor may stand shoulder to shoulder in one row in the mosque, but in their homes they live in different environments. The rich sit down on tables laden with dainties and with these they load their stomachs four, even six, times daily; while the poor cannot find sufficient food with which to satisfy their hunger even twice a day.

The latter often feel the pangs of hunger to

which the former are utter strangers; how can the one feel for the other and sympathise with him?

A great social barrier thus exists between the two classes in their homes, and this barrier is removed only when the rich are made to feel the pangs of hunger like their poorer brethren and go without food throughout the day, and this experience has to be gone through, not for a day or two, but for a whole month. The rich and the poor are thus, throughout the Muslim world, brought on the same level in that they are both allowed only two meals a day, and though these meals may not be exactly the same, the rich have perforce to shorten their menu and to adopt a simpler fare and thus come closer to their poorer brethren.

This course undoubtedly awakens sympathy for the poor in the hearts of the rich, and it is for this reason that the helping of the poor is specially enjoined in the month of Ramadan ❖

Selected Hadith on Fasting

Ibn `Abbas said, The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, was the most generous of all people, and he was most generous in Ramadan, when Gabriel met him, and he met him in every night of Ramadan and read with him the Qur'an; so the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, was more generous in the doing of good than the wind which is sent forth (on everybody). (B. 1 : 1)

Anas reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, said: "Have the meal before dawn, for there is blessing in the meal before dawn." (B. 30 : 20)

Abu Hurairah reported that the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, said: "Fasting is an armour with which one protects oneself; so let not him (who fasts) utter immodest (or foul) speech, nor let him act in an ignorant manner; and if a man quarrels with him or abuses him, he should say twice, 'I am fasting.' And by Him in Whose hand is my soul, the odour of the mouth of one fasting is sweeter in the estimation of Allah than the odour of musk—he gives up his food and his drink and his (sexual) desire for My sake; fasting is for Me and I will grant its reward; and a virtue brings reward ten times like it." (B. 30 : 2) ❖

**Download "A Manual of Hadith" for free from the following link:
<http://aaiil.org/text/books/mali/manualhadith/manualhadith.pdf>**

Real-time Transmissions during Ramadan

During Ramadan Taravee prayer is offered in Jaamiah Darus Salaam every evening at 8:30 pm Pakistan Standard Time. For the benefit of members who are not able to attend, the proceedings are transmitted live via USTREAM to enable them to follow the recitation of the Holy Qur'an at home.

During the Holy month of Ramadan special daroos-i-Qur'an have been arranged in Jaamiah Darus Salaam on Sundays at 12:30 pm Pakistan Standard Time. Schedule of daroos is as follows:

Sunday 7 August 2011	Mrs. Sabiha Saeed
Sunday 14 August 2011	Qari Arshad Mahmood
Sunday 21 August 2011	Mr. Riaz Ahmad Chaudhry
Sunday 28 August 2011	Mr. Usman Ahmad

The daroos sessions will also be streamed live via USTREAM.

Friday sermons are streamed live every Friday at 1:30 pm. At least two Khutbahs during Ramadan will be delivered by Hazrat Ameer, Insha Allah.

You can follow these programmes live on USTREAM on our website www.aaiil.org

Successful Completion of The Annual Training Course (Salaanah Tarbiyatee Course)

Al Hamdolillah! The Annual Training Course for the youth of the Jama'at which commenced on Sunday 3 July was successfully completed on Sunday 19 July 2011 by the Grace of Allah Ta'ala. Over two hundred students from all over Pakistan and abroad attended the course. A major highlight of the course was the presence of four students from the Nederland.

Hazrat Ameer distributed the prizes and certificates to the successful students in a colourful ceremony held in Jaamiah Darus Salaam. Prizes were awarded to position holders in academics, speech contests, quiz competitions and sports.

The coveted Sahibzada Abdul Lateef Shaheed Shield and the Dr. Asif Hameed Gold Medal were won by Saeedulla (Daibbgran) for obtaining first position in academics in the Senior Group. Saleha Anwaar (Lahore) was adjudged second while Khudeja Ahmad (Lahore) and Saeeda Fata

Ullah (Daibgran) shared third position.

In the Middle Group Noor Ali (Lahore) was first and was awarded the Hamida Rahman Gold Medal. Fiza Aftab and Ramla Aftab from Kachchee Jama'at were second and third respectively in this group.

In Junior A Group, Abdul Razzaq and Misbah Sabir shared first position. Abdullah Usman and Arsalan Shakeel shared second position and Fazeelat Karamat was third. In the Junior B Group, Tooba Shakeel was first, Imrana Aftab second and Maria Munawwar third.

All position holders in academics were also awarded Saleha Zahoor Ahmad Cash Prizes for their outstanding performance.

We are including in this issue a collage of photographs of the Training Course for your viewing pleasure..

You can hear audio recording of some lectures from previous training courses at the following link:

<http://www.aaiil.org/text/snd/tarbiyyatecourse/tarbiyyatecourse.shtml>



Ask an Expert

Readers are encouraged to send in their own questions to put forward to the most knowledgeable members of our jama'at. We will try our best to publish all questions and answers, insha Allah. Please email us at ilan.newsletter@gmail.com.

Question:

What should Muslims living in places where daylight hours reach up to 22 hours? What does the Qur'an say about fasting in extreme conditions?

Reply:

The reply to this question has been provided by Brother Jalal ud Dean.

Islam is for the whole world and not just for peoples living in comfort zones between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn. Whatever applies in the extreme north (eg. Greenland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Northern Russia, Siberia, Alaska, Northern Canada) also applies to extreme south (Stewart Island, Cape Horn, Cape of Good Hope) and of course both the pole circle areas of the Arctic and the Antarctica. Muslims are not prohibited from living in those countries, and Islam most graciously put in provisions regarding their fasting practices. These are detailed below.

There is not a nation where prophets were not sent and that concludes that the spiritual laws of Allah were also released and practised in many other countries, not just the Middle East. However, we recognise and accept the Prophet Muhammad (may peace be upon him) as the last and final prophet, and the only person who completed the final scripture (ie. the Holy Qur'an) revealed directly from Allah; that scripture is final, and complete with the solutions, within its texts that we are looking for. There shall be no other scripture after the Holy Qur'an.

The Holy Qur'an sets the standard that fasting

is prescribed, but that prescription stretches over many thousands of years and there were some variations in fasting to suit the advancing levels of civilisation practised (of each era). The Holy Qur'an has its most famous verse at: 2:183—"O you who believe, fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may guard against evil." The purpose here is not starving ourselves from not eating and drinking food and water, but guarding against evil. Hence the purpose of fasting as given in 2:183 is an individual's gap-analysis and self-audit of our behaviours over a test-period of one month, and preventing us from falling into evil activities.

The second part in 2:184 introduces the validated flexibility of who may not fast, discretely governed by qualifying mitigations: "But whoever among you is sick or on a journey, (he shall fast) a (like) number of other days. And those who find it extremely hard may effect redemption by feeding a poor man. So whoever does good spontaneously, it is better for him; and that you fast is better for you if you know."

The first part of the clause sets the standard of 29-30 days as circumstantial to moon cycle. Sick ones and those who are crossing time-zones within a day, are taken care of in the second part of the clause: they catch up later for those like number of days they were compelled to miss out.

The second part of the clause is where the solution resides. To be able to understand this, people must not get narrow-minded and worry only about daylight hours, but take into consideration the other parts of the five obligations upon Muslims (ie. belief in One God, prayer, charity, fasting and pilgrimage).

So whilst there are periods of around 20-hours of seasonal daylight in the polar regions, on the contrary, there are also the opposite of around 20 hours of seasonal nights of darkness. That means that first and last prayer times (Fajr and Isha) will also have to be adjusted!

The Holy Qur'an is very accommodating and clarifies "And those who find it extremely hard may effect redemption by feeding a poor man." That becomes conclusive and requires no further deliberation. The feeding of the poor has to be done spontaneously (and not deferred) within Ramadan. This is clarified in Holy Qur'an at 2:184 as "So whoever does good spontaneously, it is better for him; and that you fast is better for you if you know."

There is further clarification in the Holy Qur'an at 2:185: "Allah desires ease for you, and He desires not hardship for you, and (He desires) that you should complete the number and that you should exalt the greatness of Allah for having guided you and that you may give thanks."

However, there is a need for religious and

community leaders to manage this issue by consensus. In some countries, the Ulema have set that people must not fast more than two-thirds of a day (ie. 16 hours), as generally eight hours is consumed in daily chores and survival affairs, including jobs.

There are two options. First: the Ulema, upon wide consensus, may set times to commence and break fasts, especially when daylight exceeds 16 hours, and this will differ geographically from one country to another. Allah has decreed that fasting is to "guard against evil" and Allah does not want His people to practise starvation torture; again, 2:185 states "Allah desires ease for you, and He desires not hardship for you, and (He desires) that you should complete the number and that you should exalt the greatness of Allah for having guided you and that you may give thanks."

Secondly, in the case of extremely long hours which become unbearable, those who cannot fast for so long may seek immediate redemption by feeding a poor man, as 2:184 states: "And those who find it extremely hard may effect redemption by feeding a poor man" ❖

