

Ramadan:

Reconditioning our souls

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Each one of us is made up of not only the human body, but also the Rooh (soul). In our pre-Ramadan preparation, we begin stocking our homes with savouries, drinks, etc, but what we forget many a times is reforming and reconditioning our souls. See, we can't expect to just start fasting and reciting Quran all of a sudden in the month of Ramadan. And yes, this is the very reason we are recommended to prepare from before.

We cannot expect our spiritual level to increase in an instant if we have not prepared for it from before. We must prepare ourselves spiritually, not only by abstaining from food, but also making pre-Ramadan acts of worship.

قال رسول الله ﷺ :

" مَنْ لَمْ يَدَعْ قَوْلَ الزُّورِ وَالْعَمَلَ بِهِ فَلَيْسَ لِلَّهِ حَاجَةٌ فِي أَنْ يَدَعَ طَعَامَهُ وَشَرَابَهُ " .

The Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever does not give up **forged** speech and **evil** actions, Allah is **not** in need of his leaving his food and drink."

[Sahih al-Bukhari ,1903]

We really have to put in an effort to draw our soul closer to Allah ﷻ, and this cannot be achieved if we just decide to *change* during Ramadan. This involves a gradual process that consists of making preparations before Ramadan. Just the way we don't start making our savouries the day the moon is sighted, let us endeavour to utilise the month of Shabaan to wholly prepare both our body and soul for Ramadan.

The best way to remain productive throughout Ramadan is to make a Rajab and Shaban into Ramadan planner. What is meant by this is when making the planner, we can plan in advance and start preparing from before.

Take the example of training. Before our training session, we first warm-up, then slowly and gradually increase the intensity. In the same manner we must begin our *warm-up* in the month of Rajab, Increase in the month of Shaban, and take our *full swing* in Ramadan.

Here are some tips to get kicked off.

We can:

- Set realistic goals. Many times we tend to set extreme goals. This is very dangerous as once it becomes tough to cope, we will become demotivated and completely lose the target.
- Learn how to be more productive. We could take part in an online course or watch some lectures on productivity in Ramadan
- List and plan all groceries, food menus, etc. that need to be done before and during Ramadan
- Practice Adhkaar from before, as we already said we can't just jump into it without practice.
- Set scheduled, little, periods for checking the phone or alternatively temporarily disable social media.
- Make it our objective to have a productive and spiritual Ramadan.
- Take care of long standing commitments and plan to fulfil them.
- Increase in our patience level, as many people apt to get angry during the fast, due to hunger
- Refrain from backbiting and engaging in futile talk
- Do all necessary Ramadan and Eid shopping from before, because shopping is very distracting
- Increase on Nawafil and try to pray Tahajjud
- Try to eat healthier, as this will increase our overall mental and physical well-being.
- Do some physical exercise, as this will also increase our well-being, thus helping us concentrate.

To sum up, we have to make sure we prepare for Ramadan in advance and not expect our *spiritual modes* to activate all of a sudden. We must all make an effort to prepare for Ramadan before it comes.

Have a happy, spiritually uplifting Ramadan and enjoyable Siyaam!