266439 - Seeking Knowledge in Ramadan

the question

Which is better in Ramadan, focusing on worship or seeking knowledge?

Summary of answer

The best in the month of Ramadan is to focus on worship, especially reading and reciting Quran, but this should not prevent one from attending some circles of knowledge and reading some books

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Virtues of Ramadan

The month of Ramadan is a great and blessed month, which Allah has made a season for doing good deeds, increasing in piety and attaining blessings. In it, Allah, may He be exalted, sent down the Quran, as He says:

{The month of Ramadan [is that] in which was revealed the Quran, a guidance for the people and clear proofs of guidance and criterion. So whoever sights [the new moon of] the month, let him fast it.} [al-Baqarah 2:185]

It is a month of great gains, and the smart merchant makes the most of special seasons to increase his profits. Making the most of this month may be achieved by doing acts of worship, offering a lot of prayers, reading Quran, pardoning people , showing kindness to others, giving charity to the poor, and other righteous deeds.

The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) used to single out Ramadan for acts of worship that he did not do in other months.

Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) was the most generous of people, and he was at his most generous in Ramadan, when Jibril would meet him. He would meet him every night in Ramadan and review the Quran with him, and the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) would be more generous in doing good than the blowing wind. (Narrated by al-Bukhari (6) and Muslim (2308)

Ibn Rajab said: ash-Shafi'i (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

“I like for a man to be more generous in the month of Ramadan, following the example of the Messenger of Allah (blessings and Allah be upon him), and because the people need help during that month to meet their needs, because many of them are distracted by fasting and prayer from earning a living, so the one who is generous during Ramadan is truly generous and generosity is something that is required.” (*Lataif al-Ma‘arif,* p. 169)

‘Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: When the last ten days of Ramadan began, the Messenger of Allah (blessing and peace of Allah be upon him) would stay up at night, wake up his family, strive hard and tighten his waist-wrapper.” (Narrated by al-Bukhari (2024) and Muslim (1174)

When the month of Ramadan began, the early generations would leave everything and focus on worship, especially reading Quran.

In fact, it is narrated from some of them that they used to stop attending circles of knowledge in order to focus completely on worship and reading Quran.

Ibn Rajab said in *Lataif al-Ma‘arif* (p. 171):

“When Ramadan began, az-Zuhri said: This month is only for reciting Quran and feeding people.”

Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam said:

When Ramadan began, Malik would turn away from reading hadith and sitting with the scholars,

and would focus on reading Quran from the Mushaf.

‘Abd ar-Razzaq said: When Ramadan began, Sufyan ath-Thawri would leave all acts of worship and focus on reading Quran.”

One of the reports which indicate how the early generations would devote their time to worship and reading Quran in particular in Ramadan is the report which says that they completed the Quran often in Ramadan.

‘Abd ar-Rahman ibn ‘Abdillah from ‘Abdullah ibn Mas‘ud (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that he would complete the Quran in three days in Ramadan, and at times other than Ramadan he would complete it in a week. (Narrated by Sa‘id ibn Mansur in *at-Tafsir* (2/452) and by al-Bayhaqi in as-*Sunan al-Kubra* (2/555)

Ibrahim an-Nakha‘i said: “In Ramadan, al-Aswad would complete the Quran every two nights, and he would sleep between Maghrib and ‘Isha; at other times, he would complete it in six days. (Narrated by ‘Abd ar-Razzaq in *al-Musannaf* (1/565) and by Sa‘id ibn Mansur in *at-Tafsir* (2/449) Its isnad is sahih.

Abu Yusuf (may Allah have mercy on him) said: “Abu Hanifah would complete the Quran once in a day and once a night, and in Ramadan he would complete it, including the night and day of Eid al-Fitr, sixty-two times.” (*Akhbar Abi Hanifah wa Ashabihi,* p. 55)

Ar-Rabi‘ ibn Sulayman (may Allah have mercy on him) said: “Ash-Shafi'i would complete it once every day, and in the month of Ramadan he would complete once every night and once every day, so he would complete it sixty times.” (*Tarikh Baghdad wa Dhuyulihi*, 2/61)

On the first night of the month of Ramadan, Muhammad ibn Isma‘il al-Bukhari (may Allah have mercy on him) would gather his companions and lead them in prayer, reciting twenty verses in each rak‘ah, and he would continue to do that until he completed the Quran.

Similarly, in the time before dawn, he would recite between half and one third of the Quran, and he would complete the Quran before dawn every three nights. And he would complete it during

the day every day. (*Shu'ab al-Iman,* 3/524)

To sum up all of the above, the best in the month of Ramadan is to focus on worship, especially reading and reciting Quran, but this should not prevent one from attending some circles of knowledge and reading some books, by way of energizing oneself and spending some leisure time in doing something beneficial, if that is possible and will not distract one from the regular worship practices of Ramadan, paying attention to what is noted above, that his main focus should be on worship and doing a lot of voluntary acts of worship, reading Quran, doing acts of kindness and generosity, giving charity, and helping people; that should be what he does throughout the month.

Something that will also encourage him to focus on worship during Ramadan is knowing that the reward for good deeds in Ramadan is multiplied in terms of quality and quantity.

Ibn Baz (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

"When Ramadan comes, with this great virtue, any act of worship and obedience done in this month is of immense virtue and brings a greatly multiplied reward, and the burden of sin committed during this month is worse and greater than that of a sin committed at other times. So the Muslim should take advantage of this blessed month by doing acts of worship and righteous deeds, and giving up bad deeds, in the hope that Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, will bless him by accepting his good deeds and enabling him to adhere steadfastly to the truth. But bad deeds remain as they are, and are not multiplied in number during Ramadan or at other times. As for good deeds, they may be multiplied tenfold, up to many times more than that. (*Majmu' Fatawa Ibn Baz.* 15/447)

And Allah knows best.