92748 - How to Prepare for Ramadan

the question

How can we prepare for Ramadan? What are the best deeds in this blessed month?

Summary of answer

How to Prepare for Ramadan:

1. Sincere repentance
2. Du’a (supplication)
3. Rejoicing at the approach of the blessed month
4. Discharging the duty of any outstanding obligatory fasts
5. Seeking knowledge
6. Hastening to complete any tasks that may distract you from doing acts of worship.
7. Sitting with one’s family members to tell them of the rulings on fasting.
8. Preparing some books to read
9. Fasting some of the month of Sha’ban
10. Reading Quran

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The real nature of fasting in Ramadan

You have done well to ask this question, because you have asked how to prepare for the month of Ramadan . Many people misunderstand the true nature of fasting, and they make it an occasion for eating and drinking, making special sweets and staying up late at night and watching shows on satellite TV.

They make preparations for that long before Ramadan, lest they miss out on some food or prices go up. They prepare by buying food, preparing drinks and looking at the satellite TV guide so they can choose which shows to follow and which to ignore. They are truly unaware of the real nature of fasting in Ramadan ; they take worship and piety out of the month and make it just for their bellies and their eyes.

10 Tips on preparing for Ramadan

Others are aware of the real nature of fasting in the month of Ramadan, so they start to prepare from Sha'ban, and some of them even start before that. Among the best ways of preparing for the month of Ramadan are:

1- Sincere repentance

This is obligatory at all times, but because of the approach of a great and blessed month, it is even more important to hasten to repent from sins between you and your Lord, and between you and other people by giving them their rights, so that when the blessed month begins you may busy yourself with acts of worship with a clean heart and peace of mind. Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"And all of you beg Allah to forgive you all, O believers, that you may be successful." [al-Nur 24:31]

Al-Agharr ibn Yasar (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "O people, repent to Allah for I repent to Him one hundred times each day." Narrated by Muslim (2702)

2- Du'a (supplication)

Some of the salaf used to pray to Allah for six months that they would live until Ramadan, then they would pray for five months afterwards that He would accept it from them.

The Muslim should ask his Lord to let him live until Ramadan with a strong religious commitment

and good physical health, and he should ask Him to help him obey Him during the month, and ask Him to accept his good deeds from him.

3- Rejoicing at the approach of the blessed month

The arrival of Ramadan is one of the great blessings that Allah bestows upon His Muslim slave, because Ramadan is one of the occasions of good in which the gates of Paradise are opened and the gates of Hell are closed . It is the month of the Quran and of decisive battles in the history of our religion.

Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Say: ‘In the Bounty of Allah, and in His Mercy (i.e. Islam and the Quran); —therein let them rejoice.’ That is better than what (the wealth) they amass.” [Yunus 10:58]

4- Discharging the duty of any outstanding obligatory fasts

Abu Salamah said: I heard ‘Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) say: I would owe fasts from the previous Ramadan and I would not be able to make them up except in Sha’ban. Narrated by al-Bukhari (1849) and Muslim (1146).

Al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“From her keenness to do that in Sha’ban it may be understood that it is not permissible to delay making them up until another Ramadan begins.” Fath al-Bari (4/191)

5- Seeking knowledge in order to be able to follow the rulings on fasting and to understand the virtues of Ramadan.

6- Hastening to complete any tasks that may distract the Muslim from doing acts of worship.

7- Sitting with one’s family members – wife and children – to tell them of the rulings on fasting and encourage the young ones to fast.

8- Preparing some books which can be read at home or given to the imam of the mosque to read to the people during Ramadan.

9- Fasting some of the month of Sha'ban in preparation for fasting Ramadan.

'Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to fast until we said: He will not break his fast, and he used not to fast until we said: He will not fast. And I never saw the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) complete a month of fasting except Ramadan, and I never saw him fast more in any month than in Sha'ban. Narrated by al-Bukhari (1868) and Muslim (1156).

Usamah ibn Zayd said: I said: O Messenger of Allah, I do not see you fasting in any month as you fast in Sha'ban? He said: "That is a month that people neglect between Rajab and Ramadan, but it is a month in which people's deeds are taken up to the Lord of the Worlds and I would like my deeds to be taken up when I am fasting." Narrated by al-Nasai (2357); classed as hasan by al-Albani in Sahih al-Nasai.

This hadith explains the wisdom behind fasting in Sha'ban, which is that it is a month in which deeds are taken up (to Allah). Some of the scholars mentioned another reason, which is that this fasting is like Sunnah prayers offered beforehand in relation to the obligatory prayer; they prepare the soul for performing the obligatory action, and the same may be said of fasting Sha'ban before Ramadan.

10- Reading Quran

Salamah ibn Kuhayl said: "It was said that Sha'ban was the month of the Quran readers."

When Sha'ban began, 'Amr ibn Qays would close his shop and free his time for reading Quran.

Abu Bakr al-Balkhi said: "The month of Rajab is the month for planting, the month of Sha'ban is the month of irrigating the crops, and the month of Ramadan is the month of harvesting the crops."

He also said: “The likeness of the month of Rajab is that of the wind, the likeness of Sha’ban is that of the clouds and the likeness of Ramadan is that of the rain; whoever does not plant and sow in Rajab, and does not irrigate in Sha’ban, how can he reap in Ramadan? Now Rajab has passed, so what will you do in Sha’ban if you are seeking Ramadan? This is how your Prophet and the early generations of the ummah were in this blessed month, so what will you do?”

Best deeds in Ramadan

For more information on the deeds that the Muslim should do in Ramadan, please see these answers: 26869 and 12468 .

And Allah is the Source of strength.