



1. We must wake up for suḥūr as it is a sunnah of our Rasūl ﷺ. He has informed us that the food of suḥūr is full of barakah: *“Eat suḥūr, because in it lie great blessings.”* (Al-Bukhārī, Muslim)

We should arrange our time for suḥūr in such a way that we are also able to perform at least 4 to 8 raka'āt of tahajjud together with du'ā for about 15 minutes or more. Rasūlullāh ﷺ has said that the du'ā in the darkness of the night (after tahajjud) is readily accepted by Allāh. (At-Tirmidhī)

2. The ideal way to perform tahajjud with suḥūr is to wake up early and perform tahajjud and make du'ā before suḥūr. Everyone in the house should wake up and engage in 'ibādah in the darkness and isolation of their own rooms. Shed tears and ask Allāh ﷻ for your needs just as a small child cries and gets his needs fulfilled. Rasūlullāh ﷺ has encouraged his followers to cry when making du'ā.

Crying and weeping attracts mercy. Just as a mother who, upon seeing her child crying for a sweet, will succumb at the sight of the child's crying and treat it with mercy, similarly when one sheds tears whilst beseeching his Lord, the Mercy of the Lord will enshroud him.

3. After tahajjud and suḥūr, we must pray our Fajr Ṣalāh with congregation. Ladies should also perform their obligatory Ṣalāh.
4. After Fajr remain engaged in 'ibādah till 15-20 minutes after sunrise and perform 4 raka'āt ishrāq.
5. Before zawāl, perform Ṣalāt-uḍ-Ḍuḥā (chāsht). Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, *“There is charity due upon you in lieu of every joint that exists in your body.*

To say **sub'hānallāh** is a form of charity, to say **alḥamdulillāh** is also a charity, to say **lā ilāha illallāh** is also a charity, to command goodness and forbid evil is also a charity, and two raka'āt at the time of ḍuḥā (chāsht) is sufficient for all this charity (i.e. to compensate the favour of every joint that Allāh ﷻ has given you).” (Muslim)

6. Perform Zuhr with congregation. If possible, engage in 'ibādah for a while and have a short rest with the intention of qaylūlah – a Sunnah of our beloved Prophet ﷺ.
7. Perform 'Aṣr. The time between 'Aṣr and Maghrib is very valuable especially for du'ā. We must make the effort to perform our 'Aṣr with congregation and then remain in the masjid until Maghrib. Unfortunately, Shayṭān and nafs have deceived us so much that many of us cannot do without food in the masjid at the time of ifṭār. My friends, we should try to change our habits and keep the Ākhirah in our minds. Shayṭān and nafs will take us home for some food, which should only take a few minutes, and will not let us come to the masjid until just before Maghrib. This is the best part of the day, which we do not value, only because of our desire for food. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, *“There are three groups of people whose du'ā is not rejected; the fasting person until he breaks the fast.....”* (Aḥmad)

When Allāh ﷻ has made a promise through His Prophet ﷺ, there is no doubt in the acceptance of these supplications. In spite of this, we find some people whose prayers are not answered. This does not mean that their prayers have been rejected. It is Allāh ﷻ' s Favour upon us that should He find that granting us what we ask from Him is in our interest, He grants, otherwise not.

Another point to remember is that there are certain conditions in the absence of which they may be rejected. Among these is ḥalāl food and

making du'ā with attention and concentration. If our hearts and minds are not in our du'ās, then they may not be answered.

My friends, we must make the habit of bringing a few dates with us at the time of 'Aṣr, and after 'Aṣr we must engage in dhikr, tilāwah, tasbīḥ, etc. until just 10-15 minutes before Maghrib, when we should raise our hands in du'ā until Adhān. In this way, everyone will be engrossed in their own 'ibādah and we will find that if some of the individuals are crying, others will also get the inclination to do the same. Therefore value this time between 'Aṣr and Maghrib and do not waste it in worrying about food. The saintly people are such that not even gold and silver will distract them from the Worship of Allāh ﷻ, let alone food. Their concentration in their du'ā is not affected even if heaps of treasure were to be placed before them, whereas, we would not be able to concentrate if only a small morsel was to be put in front of us. I would request my sisters not to spend the time between 'Aṣr and Maghrib in the kitchen.

8. After performing Maghrib, we should perform 6 raka'āt of awwābīn after the two raka'āt sunnah and two raka'āt nafl of Maghrib. However; those who do not feel inclined to do this, some 'ulamā have said that two raka'āt sunnah and two raka'āt nafl of Maghrib can also become part of the 6 raka'āt awwābīn. Hence, performing only two raka'āt after the sunnah and nafl of Maghrib will suffice.
9. After food prepare for 'Ishā Ṣalāh and go to the masjid. Perform 'Ishā Ṣalāh and tarāwīḥ. The sisters should note that 20 raka'āt tarāwīḥ is sunnah mu'akkadah for them too. They must perform tarāwīḥ after 'Ishā.
10. After tarāwīḥ, go straight home. Do not loiter around outside the masjid wasting time. At

home, remain in 'ibādah until you go to sleep. Sleep with the intention of waking up for tahajjud and suḥūr.

11. Apart from the above, we know that in Ramaḍān there are always various programmes taking place in the masājid led by our 'ulamā. These are for our own benefit. There are many of us who are very sinful and during this month our hearts are softened and more receptive; by listening to the wise words of our 'ulamā the chances of bringing good deeds into practice are greater. Although the month of Ramaḍān is solely for 'ibādah, we should try and attend these programmes in the masājid because by listening to these discourses, inshā'allāh, changes will come into our lives for the better. Our hearts are blackened by and full of sins and by listening to these discourses and sitting in the company of the 'ulamā and the pious, change will definitely occur in our hearts, inshā'allāh.

NOTES:

- The household should sit together daily at a specified time and read from Virtues of Ramaḍān compiled by Shaykh-ul-Ḥadīth, Ḥaḍrat Mawlānā Muḥammad Zakariyyā ﷺ for at least 15 minutes. This will create a good atmosphere and environment in our homes and at the same time Ramaḍān will pass joyfully with an abundance of barakah in the home, inshā'allāh.
- Whilst in the masjid engage yourself in 'ibādah. Take great care not to get involved in any worldly talk. It is very upsetting and disheartening to see people wasting their time in futile talk in the masjid, even during the month of Ramaḍān. Try and restrain yourself and remain engaged in 'ibādah.

- Perform i'tikāf of the last ten days in the masjid. Sisters may perform i'tikāf in their homes. Rasūlullah ﷺ used to perform i'tikāf in the final ten days of Ramaḍān. (Al-Bukhārī, Muslim)
- Recite as much Qur'ān as possible during the month of Ramaḍān.
- Du'ā, istighfār and tawbah should be made in abundance throughout the blessed month.
- Intermingling with people should be decreased to a minimum.
- Everyone should try to take rest in order to conserve energy for the compulsory 'ibādah. There is no point in remaining in nafl 'ibādah and not getting rest, which will result in tiredness and laziness at the time of compulsory ṣalāh, etc.

Allāh ﷻs Mercy is in abundance throughout the year, but especially during this month. We should yearn in our hearts for this Mercy because we need mercy, blessing and forgiveness from Allāh ﷻ. We are sinful and in this month we want to win Allāh ﷻs Attention so that we can become His Beloved Slaves. If we are eager to perform good deeds then, inshā'allāh this month will become a month of great blessing for us.

May Allāh ﷻ accept our efforts and make every moment of this month a means of receiving His Mercy, Blessing and Forgiveness. May we all be granted a place in Jannah. Āmīn.

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13-2018/05

Guidelines for the Month of *Ramaḍān*

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