

Ramadan Daily Quran Studies, compiled by Dr Zahid Aziz, 2026

Derived largely from the writings of Maulana Muhammad Ali

Produced by:

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Study 17: Fasting in Islam —

Developing good qualities

- ***Patience***: This is a quality which is developed and strengthened through fasting. We **must wait** till a certain time to satisfy our most essential physical needs and desires. *Patience* means to persevere in a difficult condition voluntarily, even though you could adopt unlawful, unethical and immoral means of getting out of it, but you restrict yourself to lawful and moral means only.
- The Quran, according to some interpreters, uses the word “patience” in the following passage to mean “fasting”:

وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ ۗ وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخَاشِعِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾

الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلْقَوْنَ رَبِّهِمْ ۗ وَانَّهُمْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ رَاجِعُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

“And seek assistance through **patience** and prayer, and this is hard except for the humble ones, who know that they will meet their Lord and that to Him they will return.” —ch. 2, v. 45–46

- **Thankfulness:** It is only **deprivation** that can make us realize and value the blessings which we usually take for granted. Thankfulness for what we have got, for what someone has given us, is a quality which is not only commended and stressed by Islam, and other religions, but all human beings recognize its importance.

- ***Charity and generosity:*** The thankfulness mentioned above should not be merely confined to our feelings or our words. It must be manifested practically.
- The deprivation of fasting should make us sympathise with the suffering of others, and want to alleviate it.
- The following report is recorded at the beginning of Sahih Bukhari:

- “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was the most generous of all people, and he was most generous in Ramadan, when (the angel) Jibreel met him, and he met him in every night of Ramadan and read with him (i.e., with the Prophet) the Quran; so the Messenger of Allah was more generous in the doing of good than the wind which is sent forth (on everybody).” (hadith 6)
- This hadith shows that the quality of generosity was found in its utmost perfection in the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and his generosity extended to all, without distinction, just like the air. He never turned away anyone who asked him for something.

- We note incidentally that here, the reading of the Quran by the Holy Prophet with Jibreel during every night of the month of Ramadan, means the repeating of the whole of the Quran that had been revealed up to that time over the course of the month.
- It appears from other versions of this hadith that the Holy Prophet ﷺ and Jibreel read the Quran *to one another* (Bukhari, hadith 4997).

- It is stated in a similar hadith:
 - “Jibreel used to repeat the recitation of the Quran with the Prophet ﷺ once a year (i.e., during Ramadan), but he repeated it twice with him in the year he died. The Prophet ﷺ used to stay in *I`tikaf* for ten days every year (i.e., in the month of Ramadan), but in the year of his death, he stayed in *I`tikāf* for twenty days.”

(Bukhari, hadith 4998)

- It is because being charitable is one of the objects of fasting that those who are unable to fast during Ramadan, and unable to make up for missed fasts after Ramadan, are required by the Quran to feed needy people in place of fasting. The Quran says:

... وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ...

“...And those who find it extremely hard may effect redemption by feeding a poor one. ...” —2:184

- Another object of fasting stressed in the Quran is to learn to refrain from usurping other’s rights and belongings.

- In fasting we voluntarily give up even what is rightfully ours; how can then we think of taking what is not ours but belongs to someone else? The last verse in the section on fasting in the Quran says:

وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتُدْلُوا بِهَا إِلَى الْحُكَّامِ
لِتَأْكُلُوا فَرِيقًا مِّنْ أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ بِالْإِثْمِ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٨٨﴾

“And do not swallow up your property among yourselves by false means, nor seek to gain access thereby to the judges, so that you may swallow up a part of the property of (other) people wrongfully while you know.” —2:188

- Swallowing up “your property” may mean the property placed in your charge, meant to be used for the benefit of others, such as government or community funds. The words “among yourselves” indicate people colluding with each other to usurp community or national property which is not rightfully theirs but can still be called “your property”.
- This verse also prohibits people from bribing the authorities in order to take what rightfully belongs to others.

- We note with deep regret that in Muslim countries this particular command is violated so blatantly and widely that the outside world, especially the Western world, has come to think that bribery and corruption are a part of Muslim culture, and that Islam has nothing to say about these malpractices.
- The above verse makes the teachings of Islam on this point very clear. Honesty and probity are also human values and whoever adheres to them will benefit and will be held in high regard, whether they are Muslims or non-Muslims.

- In fasting we give up, for a while, the use of things which are ours and which we are fully entitled to use. This abstaining teaches us that sometimes in this life, **for a higher purpose**, it is better to give up something that we are entitled to, instead of insisting on having it. This can help to establish peace between people and peace between nations.
- Often in life, in order to get only what we are entitled to, we have to claim **more than what we are entitled to**, and this requires the use of falsehood. Fasting teaches us only to demand what is rightfully ours, even if it means having to settle for a little less.

END OF STUDY 17