

THE PROPHETIC SERMON  
*For Ramaḍān*



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## *In the Name of Allah— the Most Compassionate, Most Merciful.*

The following is the sermon delivered by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ on the last day or the final Friday before the month of Ramadan. The hadith can be found in *Mishkāt al-Maṣābiḥ* (*kitāb al-ṣawm*) and it is reported by Salmān al-Fārisī - may Allah be pleased with him.

Salmān al-Fārisī said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ delivered a sermon to us on the last day of Sha'bān and he said:

وعن سلمان الفارسي قال حَظَبْنَا رَسُولَ  
الله صلي الله عليه و سلم في آخر يوم  
من شعبانَ فقال:

“Dear people! A great month, a blessed month, a month containing a night superior to a thousand months, is now upon you. Allah has made fasting during this month an obligation and the spending of its night in prayer a voluntary practice.”

يا أيها الناس! قد أظلكم شهرٌ عظيم شهرٌ  
مباركٌ شهر فيه ليلة خير من ألف شهر  
جعل الله صيامه فريضةً و قيامَ ليله  
تطوعاً

The Prophet ﷺ began by reminding his Companions that an exceptionally special and blessed month was approaching. This month contains a night better than a thousand months. During this time, fasting is obligatory and spending the night in prayer in the form of *ṣalāh al-tarawīḥ* is an emphasised Sunnah. Mullā ‘Alī al-Qārī (d. 1606/1014 AH) further added that this month is only deemed blessed for those who understand its true value.<sup>1</sup>

1 *Mirqāt al-Mafātīḥ* (4:397).

Whoever performs a single virtuous act during this time is like one who has carried out an obligatory deed in other months, and he who fulfills an obligatory duty in it will be like one who fulfills seventy obligatory duties in another month.

من تقرب فيه بخصلة من الخير كان  
كمن أدّى فريضةً فيما سواه و من  
أدّى فريضةً فيه كان كمن أدّى سبعين  
فريضةً فيما سواه

He ﷺ then went on to explain a very unique feature of this month. When a Muslim performs an optional act (*nafl*) during Ramadan, Allah the Most High will reward him as if he performed an obligatory act (*farḍ*). And when a person performs an obligatory act, Allah multiplies the reward seventy times over. This is one of the primary reasons why Muslims tend to give their obligatory zakah during Ramadan too; as they hope to receive seventy times the reward for their worship.

It is the month of patience, and the reward for patience is Paradise.

وهو شهرُ الصبرِ والصبرُ ثوابُهُ الجنة

The Prophet ﷺ identified perhaps the key attribute of this month, *ṣabr* (patience), whose reward is nothing but Paradise. There is a sweetness of *ṣabr*. Mullā ‘Alī al-Qārī points out that even in the Qur’an, fasting (*ṣawm*) is referred to as *ṣabr* in the verse from *Sūrah al-Baqarah*: واستعينوا بالصبر والصلاة. He further explains that faith (*īmān*) consists of two halves; one is *ṣabr* and the other is *shukr* (gratitude).

It is a month of sharing with others, and a month in which the believer’s provision is increased.

و شهرُ المواساةِ و شهرُ يزداد فيه رزقُ  
المؤمن

In terms of conduct, the Prophet ﷺ said this time was a time for gentleness, kindness, and mutual aid. He used the word *murwāsāh*,

which suggests sharing food and provisions with others and forgiving their shortcomings.<sup>2</sup>

He also said that this is a time when a believer's sustenance (*rizq*) increases rather than decreases.

“If someone gives one who has been fasting something with which to break his fast it will provide forgiveness of his sins and save him from Hell, and he will have a reward equal to his without his reward being diminished in any respect.” We said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! Not all of us have the means to give one who has been fasting something with which to break his fast.’ He ﷺ replied, “Allah gives this reward to him who gives one who has been fasting some milk mixed with water, or a date, or a drink of water with which to break his fast, and anyone who gives a full meal to one who has been fasting will be given a drink from my Fountain by Allah, and will not thirst till he enters Paradise.”

من فطّر فيه صائماً كان له مغفرة لذنوبه و  
عِتَقَ رِقْبَتَهُ مِنَ النَّارِ وَكَانَ لَهُ مِثْلُ أَجْرِهِ مِنْ  
غَيْرِ أَنْ يَنْتَقِصَ مِنْ أَجْرِهِ شَيْءٌ قُلْنَا يَا رَسُولَ  
اللَّهِ! لَيْسَ كُلُّنَا نَجِدُ مَا نَفْطُرُ بِهِ الصَّائِمَ فَقَالَ  
رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يُعْطِي اللَّهُ  
هَذَا الثَّوَابَ مَنْ فَطَّرَ صَائِماً عَلَيَّ مَذْقَةَ لَبَنٍ  
أَوْ تَمْرَةً أَوْ شَرِبَةً مِنْ مَاءٍ وَمَنْ أَشْبَعَ صَائِماً  
سَقَاهُ اللَّهُ مِنْ حَوْضِي شَرِبَةً لَا يَظْمَأُ حَتَّى  
يَدْخُلَ الْجَنَّةَ

He ﷺ then proceeded to inform the Companions the great reward associated with feeding people at the time of *iftār* during the month of Ramaḍān. When a person provides *iftār*, then he wins the forgiveness

2 *Mirqāt al-Mafātīḥ* (4:397).

(*maghfira*) of Allah, he is protected from Hellfire and he will get the reward of the person's fast too.

One of the Companions asked what a person should do if they cannot provide a big *iftār*. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said that even providing milk [even if it is mixed with water], dates and water would still be rewarded. He said such a person would be permitted to drink from his *hawḍ* on the Day of Judgement.

It is a month whose beginning is mercy, whose middle is forgiveness, and whose end is freedom from Hell. و هو شهر أوله رحمة و أوسطه مغفرة و آخره عتق من النار

In the penultimate part of the hadith, the Prophet ﷺ described the nature of Ramaḍān and said the first third is *rahma* (mercy), the middle is *maghfira* (forgiveness) and the final third is freedom from the Fire.

The *rahma* of Allah always comes first. Mullā ‘Alī al-Qārī writes that the blessed month commences with *rahma* because without it, no Muslims would be able to fast or engage in lengthy worships.<sup>3</sup>

If anyone makes things easy for his servant during it, Allah will forgive him and free him from Hell. و من خفف عن مملوكه فيه غفر الله له وأعتقه من النار

To conclude, the Prophet ﷺ reminded Muslims that Ramaḍān is for everyone, not just the rich or blessed. He asked Muslims who owned slaves to show ease and mercy upon them in this month.



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3 *Mirqāt al-Mafātih* (4:398).