



Tarbiyah Extracts For Shahr Ramadhan

Juniors Manual



Name:

Class:



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, most Kind, most Merciful



Surat al-Baqarah, 2:183

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ
كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

O you who believe! Fasting is ordered for you, just as it was ordered for those before you, so that you may have *taqwa*.

Learning Objectives

- To define the importance and benefits of *sawm*
- To explain how the whole body fasts and not only the stomach
- To discuss how fasting can lead to *taqwa*

Key Words

صَوْم

Sawm
fasting



Sawm is the Arabic word for 'fasting'. Look up the meaning of 'fasting' in an English dictionary and write it below.

Fasting means _____

Why do we fast?

We fast because Allah has commanded us to do so. We learned in the previous lessons that Allah loves us so much and always commands us to do what is best for us. There are numerous benefits for fasting as listed below:

- 1 **Physical healing.**
Rasulullah (s) has said: 'Fast; you will be healthy.' Fasting helps to cleanse one's body and kills the cells and tissues that are damaged.
- 2 **Social healing.**
A man wrote a letter to Imam Hasan al-Askari (a) asking him why Allah made fasting *wajib*. Imam replied that one of the reasons why Allah has made fasting *wajib* is so that the rich can feel the pain of hunger of the poor and have mercy on them. When we fast we understand what it feels like to be hungry all day and this should help us understand what poor people are going through and make us want to help them.
- 3 **Spiritual healing.**
This is the most important benefit of fasting. Spiritual healing means to heal one's soul. Do you remember the lesson on what is good for your soul? Fasting is one of the actions that can purify the soul.
- 4 **Other benefits.**
In addition to the above benefits, when we fast we learn how to be patient, punctual, and content.

FIQH FACTS

The following fasts are *wajib*:

- 1 The fasts of the holy month of Ramadhan.
- 2 *Qadha* fasts for the month of Ramadhan.
- 3 A fast which becomes *wajib* on account of a *nadhr*.
- 4 *Qadha* fasts of a father which become *wajib* on his eldest son after his death.



ACTIVITY...

Here is a description of how two children observe the month of Ramadhan. Both girls are *balighah*. Which one of the girls do you think has attained the spiritual benefits of fasting?



Aliyah

Aliyah fasted all 30 days. She woke up without fail for *suhur* and had a heavy meal to ensure she would not feel hungry during the day. After *fajr salah* she would go to sleep and wake up at noon for *dhuhr salah*. *Alhamdulillah*, Ramadhan fell during the school holidays. She spent the afternoon watching TV and playing games on her tablet to pass the time. She was very patient and did not complain. In the evening, just an hour before *iftar*, she would help her mum prepare the yummy food. She had given her mum a list of all the food items that she wanted to eat for *iftar*.

Anisah

Anisah also fasted for 30 days. She woke up for *suhur* every morning. After a light and healthy meal, whilst waiting for *fajr*, she would recite a few lines of the Holy Qur'an. On one occasion she also performed *salat al-layl* with her mum. She would then go to sleep for a few hours. When she woke, after performing her *dhuhr salah*, she would spend her afternoons attending *du'a* sessions and Ramadhan programmes at the *masjid*. *Iftar* was always a simple meal at their house. After *iftar* she would attend more *du'a* and Qur'an recitation programmes. *Alhamdulillah* she managed to memorise the thirtieth *juz* of the Qur'an.



Fasting for the whole body

Rasulullah (s) has said: 'Many people gain nothing from their fasting except hunger and thirst.'

In a *hadith al-qudsi*, Allah says:

'I will reward all rituals of mankind from ten times to seven hundred times save patience, for it is for Me and I am its reward; and "patience" is fasting.'

This shows how special fasting is! Even if you are not *baligh*, be sure not to miss out on such a special reward.

When we fast, our mouth and stomach stay away from food and drink. Our *a'immah* (a) have taught us that when we fast, our whole body should fast. Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a) tells us that Rasulullah (s) said: 'When you fast, let your ears, your eyes, your hair, your skin, and all your body fast too. Do not let your fasting day be the same as non-fasting ones.'

When we fast, our whole body should keep away from all actions that would displease Allah. Of course it is essential to keep away from such actions at all times, but when we fast we have more focus and determination not to perform any action that will darken our soul. We must then aim to continue these good habits even outside of fasting.



Faith in Action

Complete the table below to show how all our body parts can fast. You may use the helping words below. You can add more than one action to each column.

Body part	Action to avoid	Action to perform instead
Ears	Listening to music	Listening to Qur'an or Islamic lectures or <i>qasidahs</i> in praise of the Ahlul Bayt (a)
Mouth		
Eyes		
Hands		
Feet / legs		

Helping words

lying *du'as* jealousy quarrelling mean poor backbiting
 movies Islamic books *masjid* foul language Qur'an memorisation rude parties

Highlight the actions that you already perform in the month of Ramadhan.

Tick the actions that you intend to perform next Ramadhan.

Taqwa and fasting

The term *taqwa* and its derivatives is used in the Qur'an 251 times! *Taqwa* comes from the Arabic word *waqayah* which means 'protection' or 'support'.

When a person fasts, they protect their whole body from actions that are *haram*; this will help achieve *taqwa*. A person who has *taqwa* keeps away from sins in order to come closer to Allah.

Can you think of any other ways in which you can achieve *taqwa*?

FIQH FACTS

There are certain rules regarding fasting to ensure that it is done properly. Here are a few of them:

- It is necessary for person fasting to make a *niyyah* just before the fast begins. It is not necessary to verbally say the *niyyah*, just having the intention in the mind is sufficient.
- Acts which can make a fast *batil* include eating, drinking, and swallowing thick dust.
- Those for whom fasting is harmful are exempted from it.
- If a person who is fasting eats or drinks something by mistake, his fast remains valid.
- Swallowing your saliva does not break your fast.

REMEMBER...

“ All the four holy books were revealed in the holy month of Ramadhan.

Tawrat was revealed to Nabi Musa. *Zabur* was revealed to Nabi Dawud. *Injil* was revealed to Nabi Isa. The Holy Qur'an was revealed on the night of *qadr* to Rasulullah (s).



HIGHER LEVEL



Surah no 97 which is *Surat al-Qadr* talks about *laylat al-qadr* which falls in the month of Ramadhan. This is the night in which the Qur'an was revealed to Rasulullah (s). Imam Ali (a) has said: 'For anyone who recites *Surat al-Qadr*, Allah writes down a good deed for every particle of dust where he sits while reciting it.'

Memorise *Surat al-Qadr* so that you can recite it at any time and get lots of *thawab*!

To make your recitation really powerful, learn the meanings of it. Analyse the meanings and answer the questions that follow.

Indeed We revealed it on the night of *qadr*.

And what will show you what is the night of *qadr*?

The night of *qadr* is better than a thousand months.

In it the angels and the *Ruh* come down [to earth],

with the permission of their Lord, with every command.

It is peaceful until the rising of the dawn.

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ
وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ
لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ
تَنْزَلُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا
بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ
سَلَامٌ هِيَ حَتَّىٰ مَطْلَعِ الْفَجْرِ

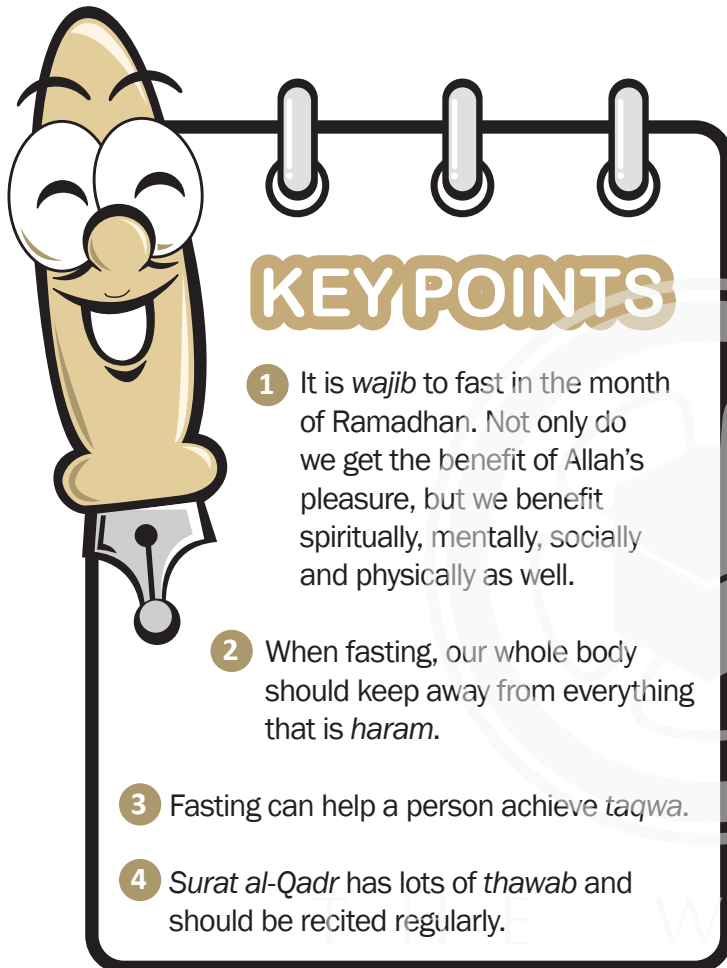
1 What is the Arabic word for 'night' as mentioned in *ayat* 1 and 2?

2 When is this night? State the month and possible dates.

3 In *Surat al-Qadr*, how is Allah emphasising the importance of this night?

4 What do you think you should be doing on this special night? Give three examples.





The 'M' twins!

It was the first of Ramadhan and Maryam and Miqdad were both fasting. They just came back from school and had the following conversation. Write beside each statement whether it is true or false.

- 1 **Maryam:** 'My friends were gossiping about another girl and I walked away from the conversation. I am fasting and it is important to ensure all body parts stay away from sins. I kept my ears away from the gossip.'

- 2 **Miqdad:** 'I think my fast is not valid because I did not verbally say my *niyyah* in the morning. I only had the *niyyah* in my mind that I was going to fast.'

- 3 **Maryam:** 'What a hot day it is! I think my fast is broken because I have been swallowing my saliva.'

- 4 **Miqdad:** 'The only benefit I get from fasting is losing weight.'

- 5 **Maryam:** 'Fasting can help us achieve *taqwa*. This means we refrain from actions that would displease Allah.'

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, most Kind, most Merciful



Surat al-Ankabut, 29:69

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا
وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

As for those who strive in Our [cause], We shall surely guide them to Our ways,
and Allah is indeed with the virtuous.

Learning Objectives

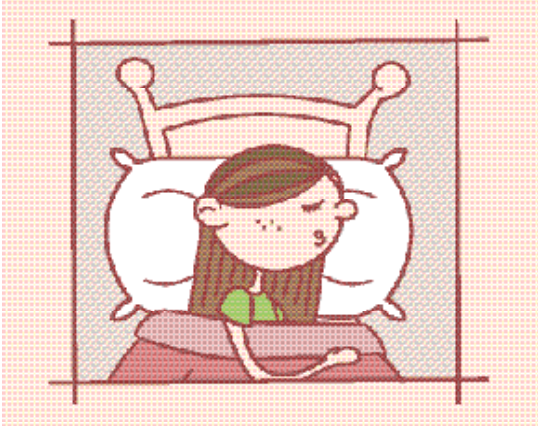
- To define the terms *niyyah* and *qurbatan ilallah*
- To explain the rulings related to things that break the fast and the timings of fasting
- To discuss rulings on fasting when travelling

THE WORLD
FEDERATION

OF KSIMC

Key Words

نِيَّة Niyah
intention



Whenever we perform any action, whether it is eating, sleeping, or homework, there is always a reason or an intention behind doing it. For example, we eat in order to get energy, or we sleep so our body can rest.

Similarly, whenever we perform any *ibadah*, we must make a *niyyah* so that we know why we are doing it. All *ibadah* must be performed for Allah, and any *ibadah* performed without a correct *niyyah* is not accepted. Therefore, for all actions such as *salah*, fasting, *hajj*, or *wudhu*, a *niyyah* must be performed.

It is not necessary to say the *niyyah* out loud as long as one knows it in his mind.



HIGHER LEVEL

Below are *ayat* from the Qur'an which talk about *salat al-layl*. Analyse the Arabic and the translation of each *ayah*.

Read the statements below and besides each statement write which *ayah* it is referring to (One *ayah* is used twice):

17:79, 32:16-17, 51:16-17, 52:49.

- 1 They sleep very little in the night and use the early hours of the morning for forgiveness.

- 2 In this *ayah*, *salat al-layl* is referred to as *tahajjud*.

- 3 No soul knows the reward for this prayer.

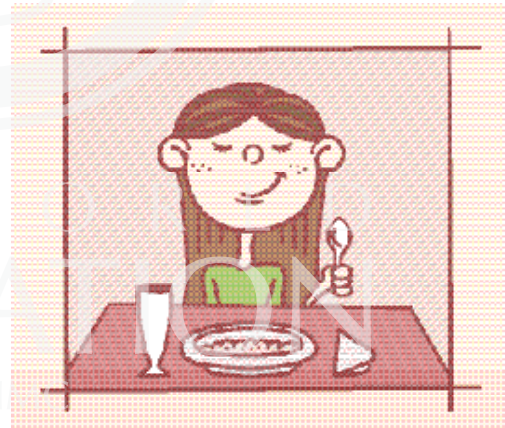
- 4 Those who pray *salat al-layl* will be raised to a praiseworthy position.

- 5 Allah tells us to glorify Him at night.

Niyyah for fasting

The *niyyah* for fasting could be: 'I am keeping a fast for the month of Ramadhan, *wajib qurbatan ilallah*.'

The *niyyah* must contain the idea of *qurbatan ilallah*, which means 'to get close to Allah' or 'in obedience to Allah'



Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a) states:

'Anyone who performs a small act for the sake of Allah, Allah will make it bigger than he wishes in the sight of others. And anyone who performs a great act for the sake of people, Allah will make it small in the sight of others.'

Make sure your *niyyah* is not something that is merely said. The action must be sincerely performed only to please Allah and not to show off to others.





ACTIVITY...

Solve the following riddles:

- 1 I am a very special month full of blessings. All four divine books were revealed during my month. Which month am I?

- 2 I am the first of the *usul ad-din*.

- 3 I am a *Surah* which talks about the night in which the Qur'an was revealed.

- 4 I am an action that will be rewarded especially by Allah as I require great patience.

- 5 I must be performed before every action. I can be said aloud or just be a thought in the mind.

Faith in Action

It can be difficult to wake up very early in the morning just before *fajr*. However, with practice it becomes easy. We can try it for the first time on the weekend! Ramadhan is the best time to ask for forgiveness in the early hours of the morning as we are usually awake for *suhur*!

Close your eyes and make a promise that you will try and experience the bliss of performing *salat al-layl* whenever you can! Remember: when this is done solely for the sake of Allah, the reward is immense!

Timings for fasting



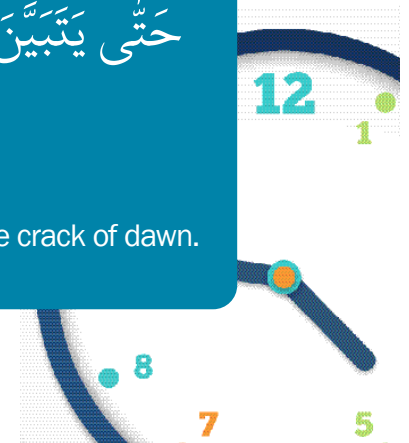
Surat al-Baqarah, 2:187

وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا
حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ
ثُمَّ أَتَمُّوا الصِّيَامَ إِلَى اللَّيْلِ

And eat and drink
until the white streak becomes manifest to you from the dark streak at the crack of dawn.
Then complete the fast until night.

This *ayah* tells us that a fast begins at *fajr* and ends at *maghrib*.

It is *mustahabb* to have a small meal before the start of the fast. In Arabic this is known as *suhur*. This small meal gives you energy to go about your activities during the day.



DID YOU KNOW?

There is *thawab* even in sleeping when you are fasting! Rasulullah (s) tells us: 'The sleep of a fasting person is worship and his breathing is *tasbih*.'



DID YOU KNOW?

One of the etiquettes of fasting is to have *iftar* after praying *maghrib salah*. Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (a) was asked the reason for this and he explained: '[At that time] the time for two obligations has arrived: breaking the fast and *salah*, and I would prefer to begin with the most virtuous of the two. Obviously *salah* is more virtuous. When you pray whilst you are still fasting, your *salah* will be written as the *salah* of a fasting person which is more desirable to me.'

Imam Ali (a) narrates that he heard Rasulullah (s) say: 'Allah, the praised and the exalted, and His angels send blessings to those who take their *suhur* meal and seek His forgiveness; so let each one of you observe *suhur* even if it is by drinking water.'

The fast ends with a meal known as *iftar*. However, before we indulge in our food, it is important to thank Allah, think about His blessings, and remember the poor. We should give some money and food to feed the poor, especially in the month of Ramadhan. There is great *thawab* in providing *iftar* to others.

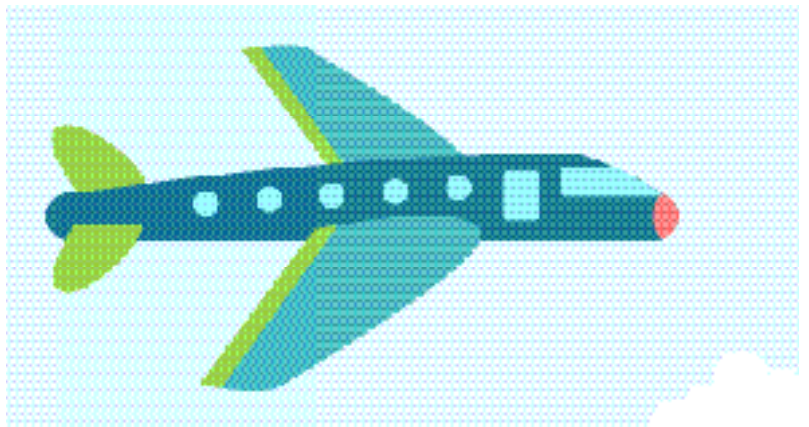
Things that break the fast

- 1 Eating or drinking intentionally. If a fasting person purposely swallows food items that have remained in between his teeth, his fast becomes invalid. We should therefore brush our teeth properly to get rid of all food particles after *suhur*.
- 2 Vomiting intentionally.
- 3 Smoking.

Fasting when travelling

A traveller who is offering *qasr salah* is exempted from fasting if he leaves his home town before *dhuhr*. He will leave his home whilst fasting and only break the fast once he has left his home town. He must then repay the fast at a later date. However, if a person who is fasting travels after *dhuhr*, he must fast on that day.

If a traveller returning home after a journey reaches his home town before *dhuhr*, he can fast on that day as long as he makes *niyyah* once he reaches his home town and has not done anything on the journey that would invalidate a fast.





HIGHER LEVEL

The time before *fajr* is a very special time for *salah* and *du'as*. It has been mentioned numerous times in the Qur'an. Here are two passages that will help us understand the importance of this time:

كَانُوا قَلِيلًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ مَا يَهْجَعُونَ
وَبِالْأَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ

They used to sleep a little during the night, and at dawn they would plead for forgiveness. (Surat adh-Dhariyat, 51:17-18)

الصَّابِرِينَ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالْقَانِتِينَ وَ
الْمُنْفِقِينَ وَالْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ بِالْأَسْحَارِ

[The people of *taqwa* are] patient and truthful, obedient and charitable, and pleading [Allah's] forgiveness at the times of dawn. (Surah Aal Imran, 3:17)

The first passage tells us that night time is for sleep and then the early hours of the morning is for *istighfar*. The second *ayah* then describes the status of those who perform *istighfar* in the early hours. This *istighfar* can be done as part of *salat al-layl* in which words of *istighfar* are usually recited 70 times.



Faith in Action

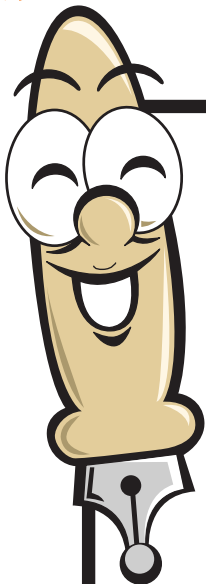
You have learned all about fasting, how special it is, and some of the rulings involving fasting. Write down a few tips and points of advice that you can give to your friends to ensure they have a rewarding and spiritual Ramadhan.

Here are a few helping words to get you started:

Helping the needy, reciting Qur'an, sharing *iftar*, reciting *salat al-layl*, eating *suhur*, whole body should fast, brushing teeth after *suhur*, breaking fast after *maghrib salah*.

KEYPOINTS

- 1 Niyah is a *wajib* part of fasting.
- 2 Niyah must be *qurbatan ilallah*.
- 3 A fast begins at *fajr* and ends at *maghrib*.
- 4 A traveller who is offering *qasr salah* cannot fast if he leaves his home town before *dhuhr*. He must however leave home whilst fasting and only break his fast once he has left his home town.



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah,
most Kind, most Merciful



Surat al-Ahzab, 33:41-42

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا
وَسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا

O you who have faith! Remember Allah with a lot of remembrance,
and glorify Him in the morning and evening.

Learning Objectives

- To identify the importance of taking care of our spiritual health
- To summarise the importance of the season of worship, which is during the three months of Rajab, Sha'ban and Ramadhan
- To discuss the concept of *munajat* [whispered prayers] and *i'tikaf* [spiritual retreat]

Key Words

ذِكْرٌ

Dhikr

to remember, often refers to the remembrance of Allah with presence of mind

مُنَاجَاةٌ

Munajat

whispered prayers to Allah

إِعْتِكَافٌ

I'tikaf

a spiritual retreat in a *masjid*

Why should we remember God?



Why should we remember God and connect to Him? Why such a great emphasis on remembrance of God? Imagine a power station which provides energy to many electrical utensils. The electrical machines would not work unless they are connected to the power station in one way or another. The lamps would not give light, the heaters would not give heat, the computers would not work unless they gain energy from the power station. In the same way, our souls would not grow and would not flourish unless they are connected to Allah. Remembering God would not add anything to Him, but would give us the necessary power we need to grow and move up.

Allah has created the world in two dimensions. There is the material and the spiritual, the physical and the metaphysical. We have our physical bodies, but we also have our metaphysical souls. Our bodies are what connects us to this world, and our immaterial souls are what connects us to Allah. Our connection to Allah is the most important part of our existence. However, our souls and bodies are connected, and as such, it is important for us to take care of both of them. We need to eat, drink, exercise, rest, and relax for our bodies to be healthy, and our bodies need to be healthy so that we can gain closeness to Allah. We also need to live in a way that keeps our souls constantly connected to Allah and to ensure that we are spiritually healthy. In fact, our spiritual health is the most important aspect of our lives and in this lesson, we're going to learn some of the ways to keep it healthy!

Why give special importance to the spiritual self?



Imagine that you have two exams at school, one tomorrow, and one at the end of the year. What would you study for today? Most probably, you would study for the one tomorrow because it's happening right away. However, what if you realised that it was only the exam at the end of the year that counted towards your final grades? Then, which would you study for?

This world is like that exam that you have immediately in front of you. Because the world we live in constantly demands immediate attention like food, drink, sleep, beauty, and fun, we may end up giving it a lot of attention. We cannot ignore it for long or easily forget it because the pangs of hunger, thirst, and sleep are always there to remind us that it exists. The exam at the end of the year is like our spiritual health. The Hereafter seems so far away, that we fail to give our spiritual selves the attention it deserves.

And really, the only thing that counts is our Hereafter, so that's what we should primarily be focusing on! Of course, there are some physical things that can also help us spiritually, but our spiritual selves are our focus. Studying for that exam tomorrow will also help us prepare for the exam at the end of the year, but our ultimate goal and attention is towards that exam at the end of the year! This is how our attitude should be towards the Hereafter. Sometimes, because we can't see the immediate effects of our actions on our spiritual health, we may ignore it or forget about it. When this happens, we feel disconnected to Allah, or unhappy and dissatisfied. We might think that this is because we don't have something we want, but in reality, it is because of our distance from Allah. This is why it is important to regularly set aside time to connect with Allah! Allah has given us lots of help and instructions and has told us the best ways to connect to Him.

Special times to connect to Allah

Every day, Allah has asked us to do *salat* so that we can remember Him and connect to Him. The word *salat* in Arabic literally means connection! When we pray, we are trying to connect to Allah! He has also encouraged us to do *mustahabb* actions like *du'as* and the *nawafil* recommended prayers. Further, Friday is a special day of the week, and Allah has told us to connect with Him then too. By connecting to Allah through the *wajib* and *mustahabb* actions, we are actually helping ourselves! Allah does not need any of our worship, and it doesn't affect His power or status in any way whether we do these actions or not. However, it does affect us and our well-being in the Hereafter!

A season of worship

There are also special times of the year that Allah has blessed and made a special opportunity for us to connect to Him. We should stay connected to Him every day of the year, but these months are an extra-special chance, and serve as an inspiration or rejuvenation for the rest of the year. These are the months of Rajab, Sha'ban, and Ramadhan. Ramadhan is the holiest month of the Islamic year. Together, these three months form a season of worship, and a season for spiritual revival and growth. In these months, we have the extra opportunity to become closer to Allah.

Faith in Action

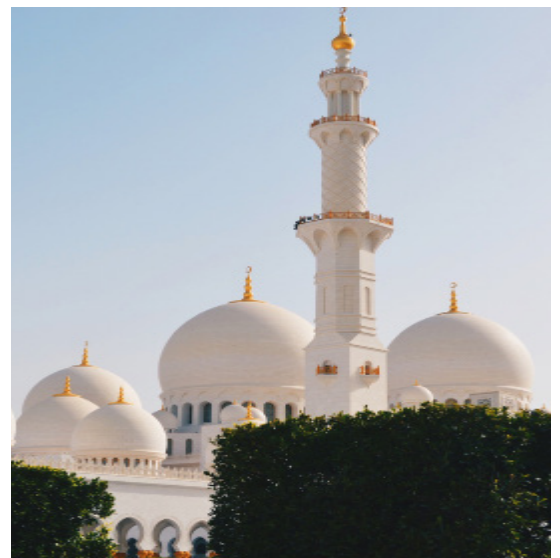
The verse at the beginning of this lesson tells the believers to do the *dhikr* of Allah and to do it a lot. Often we think that *dhikr* means to do *tasbeeh* or to say phrases with the name of Allah in it. However, *dhikr* means to remember and requires the presence of our minds. The Qur'an is referred to as *dhikr* because it reminds us of our purpose in creation. The essence of *dhikr* is to remember and feel the presence of Allah in every moment of our life. As such, we can always be in a state of *dhikr*, as long as we are remembering and feeling the presence of Allah in all that we do!

Discussion Box

It is reported that Imam Ali (a) said,

“ Allah has made the remembrance [of God] a polish for the heart. ”

Do you know what metaphor is used in this *hadith* and how?





So, what do we do during this spiritual season?

1 Prayers, *du'as*, fasting, and charity.

Allah multiplies the rewards of worship in the months of Rajab, Sha'ban and Ramadhan, so that we are encouraged to perform more of these deeds. However, we need to make sure that we do these things purely for Allah's sake. This is how it can help us get closer to Allah! Some of the examples of these multiplied rewards can be seen from the *ahadith* of the Ahlul Bayt (a):

- **Fasting:** Rasulullah (s) has said, 'Surely, whoever fasts a day in Rajab, they secure Allah's greatest pleasure. The fast of that day restrains the wrath of Allah, and one of the gates of hell is closed for them.'
- **Charity:** Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a) has said that whoever gives charity in the month of Sha'ban, even if it is as small as half a date, Allah will spare them from the hell-fire.
- **Reading the Qur'an:** The reward of whoever recites one verse of the Qur'an in the month of Ramadhan is like the reward of one who recites the whole Qur'an in another month.



2 Seeking forgiveness:

Although we may try our best to obey Allah and to stay away from sins, we all make mistakes. Lucky for us, Allah is the All-Forgiving! The months of Rajab, Sha'ban, and Ramadhan are a great opportunity for us to ask Allah for forgiveness. If we sincerely ask for forgiveness and promise not to repeat our errors, He will forgive us, and even erase these deeds from our record!

3 Connecting with Allah:

The season of worship is a good chance for us to spend time connecting with Allah and talking to Him. Reciting *du'as* and Qur'an are a way for us to communicate with Allah. We can always talk to Allah in our own words and in our own language, and whisper to Him our prayers. In Arabic, a whispered prayer is called a *munajat*. We can also talk to Allah using the *du'as* taught to us by the Ahlul Bayt (a). These are very beautiful and deep in their meaning.



One of these is called *Munajat ash-Sha'baniyyah*. Here are a few beautiful passages from the *du'a*:

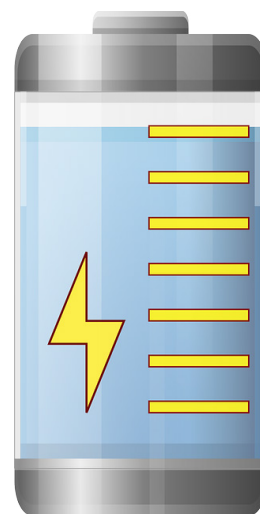
- a Allah knows us best:** 'You know what is in my heart and are aware of my needs.'
- b Allah is our only helper:** 'My God, if You keep something away from me, then who will provide for me? And if You humiliate me, then who will help me?'
- c Allah is good to us:** 'My God, You have been good to me continuously throughout the days of my life, so do not stop being good to me when I die.'

DID YOU KNOW?

Munajat ash-Sha'baniyyah is an extra special prayer because it is a prayer that all of our *a'imma* (a) used to recite during the month of Sha'ban!

4 Improving ourselves:

When our worship and connection to Allah in this spiritual season becomes powerful, we are recharging our spiritual power for the rest of the year! This results in one feeling more aware of Allah, and self-improvement that should carry on beyond these months. If we were doing something wrong and paused for these months, then this season helps us to reconsider our actions during the rest of the year. As our connection to Allah grows, so should our improvement in our characters, and we should try to cure the diseases of our soul, like anger, jealousy, greed, and arrogance.



ACTIVITY...

Read the following passage from *as-Sahifat as-Sajjadiyyah*; *du'a* no 11 – Supplication for good outcomes (<http://www.duas.org/sajjadiya/s11.htm>) and analyse its contents. Compare the consequences of *dhikr*, *shukr* and *ta'ah* (obedience) as explained in this passage.

يَا مَنْ ذِكْرُهُ شَرَفٌ لِلذَّاكِرِينَ، وَيَا مَنْ شُكْرُهُ فَوْزٌ لِلشَّاكِرِينَ، وَيَا
مَنْ طَاعَتُهُ نَجَاةٌ لِلْمُطِيعِينَ، صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ، وَاشْغَلْ قُلُوبَنَا
بِذِكْرِكَ عَنْ كُلِّ ذِكْرٍ

O He whose remembering brings honour to those who remember Him! O He whose thanking brings triumph to those who give thanks to Him! O He whose obedience brings deliverance to those who obey Him! Bless Muhammad and his Household, and divert our hearts from every remembrance to remembering You alone.

Rasulullah (s) has said:

“Whoever obeys God has remembered Him even if their [recommended] *salah* and fast and recitation of the Qur'an are not much.”

The Spiritual Retreat (*I'tikaf*)

Sometimes life is very busy with school, work, and family! Out of His Mercy, Allah has recommended that we do an *i'tikaf*, which is a spiritual retreat in the *masjid*. This means that we take a time-out from our lives to focus on Him alone. It requires staying in the *masjid* for a minimum of three days, and only leaving when absolutely necessary [like going to the bathroom!] A person doing *i'tikaf* must fast and they are supposed to stay away from worldly things like perfume, buying or selling anything, and discussing anything related to work and school. It is a spiritual retreat where the focus is on Allah alone, and it is a great opportunity to reflect on how to improve oneself and to become closer to Allah. It has been recommended highly, especially in the month of Ramadhan.



ACTIVITY...

Rasulullah (s) is reported to have said, "Rajab is the month of Allah, Sha'ban is my month and Ramadhan is the month of my *ummah*."

Discuss in pairs why each of these months is attributed to Allah, Rasulallah (s) and the *ummah*.

Share your conclusions with the class.

KEY POINTS

- 1 Our connection to Allah is the most important thing, and it is important for us to make sure that we are spiritually healthy and always connected to Allah.
- 2 The months of Rajab, Sha'ban and Ramadhan are wonderful opportunities to focus on the spiritual self and recharge for the rest of the year.
- 3 Deeds like fasting, *du'as*, and charity, if done for the sake of Allah alone, can help us become closer to Him.
- 4 *Munajat ash-Sha'baniyyah* is an excellent *du'a* that we can read to connect to Allah.
- 5 *I'tikaf* is a spiritual retreat when one lives in the *masjid* for three days or more.



FASTING - BENEFITS AND GUIDELINES

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah,
most Kind, most Merciful

Surat al-Baqarah, 2:183

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ
كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

O you who have faith! Prescribed for you is fasting
as it was prescribed for those who were before you, so that you may be Godfearing.

Learning Objectives

- To identify the reason behind fasting
- To highlight the benefits of fasting
- To elaborate on the rules of fasting, with regards to intention and timing

Key Words

صَوْم

Sawm
fasting

تَقْوَى

Taqwa
being wary of Allah and
God-conscious



Fasting is a core element of spiritual endeavour. As it is stated in the verse on the previous page, Allah had prescribed fasting for the people who were before us. We are required to fast in the month of Ramadhan, and it is one of our *furu' al-din* [branches of religion]. However, what are the *wajib* fasts? What are some of the rules and manners of fasting? In this lesson, we will learn more about fasting.

Fasting means to stay away from eating, drinking, and a few other things which are normally permissible. Allah does not ask us to go through any hardship unless it is beneficial for us. In His Wisdom, He has commanded us to fast because fasting is good for us for many reasons!

Taqwa: The purpose in fasting

The reason that we should fast is mentioned in the verse at the beginning of this lesson. It is to develop our consciousness or awareness of Allah, which is called *taqwa*. *Taqwa* comes from the Arabic word *wa-qa-ya* which means to protect. When we have *taqwa*, we are protecting our souls from anything that can harm it and especially from doing anything that might lead us to punishment, like hurting others, following wrong objectives in life, or like doing things and acts of worship for other than Allah.

Anything that distances us from Allah is harmful, and something that we need to protect our souls from. This means being aware of Allah as our Creator, and being careful to perform only those actions that please Him and to stay away from those deeds that He has forbidden. Allah says that fasting can help us achieve *taqwa*. How so? When we fast, we are staying away from things that we normally do without thinking about it. If we're hungry or thirsty, we eat or drink immediately. However, when we're fasting, even if we're really hungry, we stop ourselves from doing what we want in obedience to Allah. Doing this helps us become stronger to say 'no' to things that we might want. We can then apply this in other situations, and say no to other *haram* actions even though they may be very tempting. This will help us protect our souls, and it will help us become more willing to follow the commands of Allah. Fasting is an exercise in learning to control our desires, instead of letting our desires control us!



No

The true fast

Fasting does not just mean staying away from food and drink. In fact, Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a) has said, 'When you fast, let your ears, your eyes, your hair, your skin, and your entire body fast too. Do not let the days you fast be like the days you're not fasting.' When we fast, we are extra conscious of Allah. By taking special care to stay away from all sins while we're fasting, we will learn how to stay away from sins all the time, even when we're not fasting! If we can stay away from eating and drinking, which are our most basic needs, then don't you think we're capable of staying away from all sins?

Once Rasulullah (s) saw a lady who was fasting swear at her maid. He offered her some food to eat. She refused to eat it, and told Rasulullah (s) that she was fasting. Rasulullah (s) replied, 'How are you fasting while you swear at your maid? Fasting is not only from food and drink. Indeed, Allah made it so that food and drink are a cover against other sins, verbal and action. Only a few [people] are [truly] fasting and many are just hungry!' What this means is that fasting is supposed to help us stay away from all sins and to have the best of behaviour. It's not just about staying hungry for the whole day!

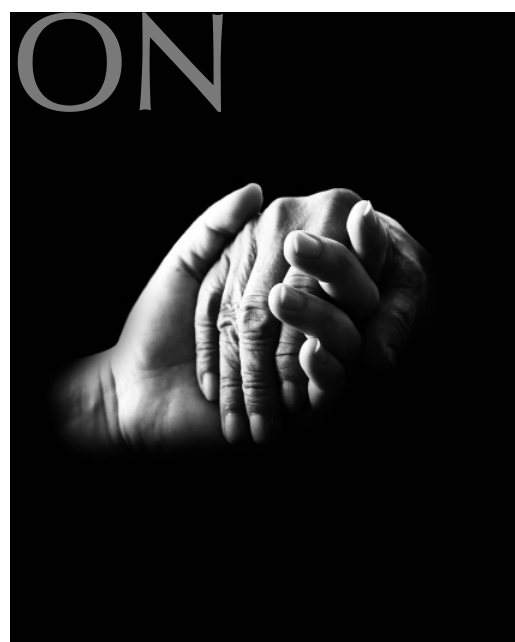
Faith in Action

A true fast is when we can protect our whole body from doing anything that Allah does not like. This can be difficult because when we're hungry and thirsty, it's easier for us to feel irritable, angry, or tired because our body is not receiving all the comforts that we are used to. However, this is great practice for us to control our negative emotions. We can rest, take it easy, and try not to say anything rather than becoming angry or irritable. Be aware of your state and try to find ways that can help keep you calm. Ask Allah for help and He will help you!

Benefits of fasting

The most important reason to fast is *taqwa*, and obeying Allah, which we discussed earlier. However, there are many other benefits to fasting. Even though these benefits are not the reason why we're fasting, they are benefits that we can discuss:

- 1 **Refocusing:** Since we live in a physical and material world, it is easy to remember to take care of our bodies, but ignore the soul. Fasting helps us refocus, and keeps us away from concentrating on our physical needs all the time. This frees us to focus on and give extra attention to our souls. Since our connection to Allah is a spiritual one, we will naturally feel closer and more aware of Allah's presence.
- 2 **Empathy:** Someone asked Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a) about the reasons why fasting has been made *wajib*. The Imam said: 'Allah made fasting *wajib* in order to equalise between the poor and the rich.'





Surely, rich people would not feel the pain of hunger otherwise in order to be kind to the poor... Allah willed... to give a taste of the pain of hunger to the rich so that they become more lenient to those who are weak, and so that they are more merciful towards the hungry ones.' In this *hadith*, Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a) points to something important. He says that when we feel empathy for our fellow brothers and sisters, we want to help them. Without fasting, some of us might never know what it's like to feel hungry and thirsty. There are millions of people in this world who sleep hungry, and children who die because of starvation. It is highly recommended to give charity in the month of Ramadhan and to feed the hungry throughout the year.



3 Building character: Fasting helps us build good characteristics. For example, by learning to wait until the time of breaking the fast, we learn how to be patient. We pay more attention to the timings that begin and end our fasts, and this helps us with our punctuality [and for *salah* time!] Being hungry and thirsty helps us appreciate the blessings that we have, but often forget about. This can help us become more content and grateful for what we have.

4 Health benefits: Rasulullah (s) has been narrated to have said, 'Fast, you'll be healthy'. Giving our body a break from constantly eating and drinking provides many health benefits. Research to learn more about these benefits! It is important to note that if fasting is harmful to us, it is *haram* to fast. If someone is old, pregnant, or sick, and fasting is harmful for them, they cannot be fasting.



ACTIVITY...

Rasulullah (s) has said, "For everything there is a *zakah* and *zakah* of the body is fasting."

Based on this *hadith* can you think what may be the *zakah* of the following?

Knowledge _____

Health _____

Wealth _____

Intelligence _____

Extra time _____



Islamic rulings regarding *sawm*

Obligatory fasts

Some obligatory fasts include:

- 1 Fasting every day in the month of Ramadhan.
- 2 Making up *qadha* [missed] fasts in case you missed a fast in Ramadhan.
- 3 Fasting that becomes obligatory if you promise Allah that you will fast if He grants you a certain wish or if you make a pledge with God.

It is also *haram* to fast on *Eid al-Fitr* (1 Shawwal) and *Eid al-Adha* (10 Dhu al-Hijjah) and it is *makruh* to fast on the Day of Ashura.

Niyah of fasting

- 1 Our intention when fasting should only be for Allah's obedience and pleasure. If we fast to impress others or lose weight, it is not valid.
- 2 We don't need to say our intention out loud. We just need to consciously know that we are fasting and that it is for the sake of Allah.
- 3 In the month of Ramadhan, you should make your intention every night to fast the following day.
- 4 If during the day when you're fasting a *wajib* time-specific fast (e.g. during the month of Ramadhan), you become undecided whether you will continue to fast or break it, your fast will become invalid whether you eat anything or not. Your *niyyah* must continue throughout the day. If this happens (becoming undecided), you will have to give *qadha* and you will still have to refrain from eating and drinking, etc during the fasting hours.

Timings

Fasting begins at the *adhan* of *fajr salah* and ends at the *adhan* of *maghrib salah*. To be sure that you have fasted this entire time, you should stop eating and drinking a few minutes before the *fajr adhan*, and break it a few minutes after the *maghrib adhan*.



ACTIVITY...

It is *makruh* to fast on the Day of Ashura. Discuss in pairs why this should be the case and share your views with the class.



DID YOU KNOW?

There is another place in the Qur'an where fasting (*sawm*) is mentioned. However, this is not the kind of fasting that we have been discussing. After the birth of Nabi Isa, Allah commanded Sayyidah Maryam to communicate [without talking] to others that she was taking a fast of silence, which means that she was fasting from talking:

فَإِمَّا تَرَىٰ مِنَ الْبَشَرِ أَحَدًا فَقُولِي
إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَنِ صَوْمًا
فَلَنْ أَكَلِمَ الْيَوْمَ أَنسِيًّا

'Then if you see any human, say,
"Indeed I have vowed a fast to the All-Beneficent,
so I will not speak to any human today."
(*Surah Maryam*, 19:26)

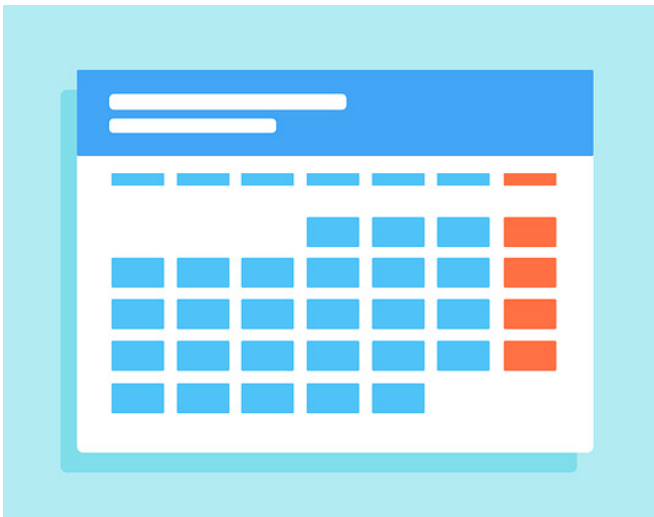
However, this type of fasting is no longer valid! So, if you want to fast, make sure to do the form of fasting that we have learned about.

Rasulullah (s) has said,

"Fasting in hot days is like *Jihad* [in the way of Allah]."

HIGHER LEVEL

Research *mustahabb* fasts and write down the days on which it has been recommended to fast.





1 Fasting builds our spirituality and *taqwa*. In point form, write five ways that fasting helps us achieve this.

2 List two benefits of fasting.

3 In your own words, explain the difference between someone who is truly fasting and someone who is just hungry.

4 For the following scenarios, put a **check mark** if the fast is correct and valid, or an **X** if it is incorrect and invalid.

- a. Zakira forgot to make an intention every night that she would be fasting, but had decided from the beginning that she will fast the whole month of Ramadhan.
- b. Yahya is fasting a *wajib* fast during the month of Ramadhan but at lunch-time, he becomes undecided whether he should continue fasting or not. However, he does not eat anything.
- c. Mahdi fasted but forgot to say his intention loudly.
- d. Asiya fasts because she wants to earn the gift her *madrasah* teacher gives out at the end of Ramadhan.
- e. Shabbir fasted his only *qadha* fast on the first day of Shawwal.

Fasting Benefits and Guidelines

6D10

Learning Objectives

- To identify the reason behind fasting?
- To highlight the benefits of fasting
- To elaborate on the rules of fasting, with regards to intention and timing

How relevant...



How
exciting!!
Right??

The holy month of Ramadhan is just a month away!!!
Allah has commanded us to fast in the Month of Ramadhan!

But.... Why?

Why fast????

I am sure you have
this verse
memorized by
now!!

Allah says, in Surah Baqarah ayah 183

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

Oh you who have faith, prescribed for you is **fasting** as it was prescribed for those who were before you, **so that you may be God wary.**

Fasting → Taqwa!!

Allah says in the Quran that he prescribed fasting so that we may attain Taqwa.

What is Taqwa?

What is the first thought that comes to your mind when hear the word Taqwa?

What came to your mind??

Did any of the following come to your mind?

- God Consciousness
- Avoiding Sins
- Obeying Allah
- God- fearing

Taqwa means to be **afraid** of **displeasing Allah!**

So how does Fasting lead to Taqwa?

When we fast we stay away from the things we like that are halaal such as food and drink. Even when no one is watching we don't eat because we know that Allah is watching.

Fasting builds self- control.

The month of Fasting teaches us to say no to things that displease Allah

Benefits of fasting

Below are some of the benefits of fasting:

- **Refocusing:** It helps us refocus and reminds us to look after our soul as well as our body and connects us back to Allah!
- **Empathy:** When we fast it makes us feel the pangs of hunger that the poor feel and makes us empathize with them.
- **Character building:** It teaches us patience, makes us grateful and content!
- **Health Benefits:** It gives our bodies a break from the constant munching!

Fun with Fiqh!!



When is it wajib to fast?

- **Everyday** in the month of **Ramadhan**
- **Qadhas** - the fasts you missed in the month of Ramadhan (this can happen due to illness, travel etc)
- It becomes wajib to fast if you promise Allah that you will fast (**Nadhr**)
- It is **haram** to fast on **Eid ul Adha**, **Eid ul Fitr** and **makrooh** to fast on **Ashura**.

Timings

- The fast begins at **fajr** and ends at **maghrib**.
- To ensure that you fasted the whole time **avoid eating** and **drinking** a few minutes **before fajr** this is called Imsaak. **Break** your **fast** a few minutes **after** the **adhan** of **maghrib**.

Niyyah of fasting

- We must **fast only** for the sake of **Allah!**
Fasting with the **intention of losing weight is invalid!**
- We don't need to **say** our intention **aloud!** We just need to know that we are fasting for Allah.
- **Make** your **intention** every **night before** you fast (or in the beginning of the month that you will fast the whole month of Ramadhan)

Niyyah of fasting

Your intention to fast must remain throughout the day!

If you break your intention even if you didn't eat anything your fast is invalid!

Scenario

It is the month of Ramadhan. Ahmad is Baligh. He is fasting. He woke up from his afternoon nap and saw that his mom just removed a fresh batch of pastries from the oven! Ahmad's mouth is watering!! He tells his mom he is going to eat the pastry as he cannot wait any longer! Ahmad reaches for the pastry nears it to his mouth. His mom takes the pastry from him. Ahmad didn't eat anything until after Maghrib.

Is his fast Valid? Yes or no?

NO!

His fast is invalid because he broke his intention of fasting!

Assignment – Due Sunday March 29

Below are some scenarios. State whether their fasts are valid or invalid (broken).

- 1) Zakira forgot to make her intention every night before fasting. But she made an intention in the beginning of the month that she would fast the whole month.

Are her fasts Valid or Invalid?

Continuation

2) *Asiya* fasts in the month of Ramadhan because she wants the gift that her teacher promised her at the end of the month of Ramadhan

Are her fasts Valid or Invalid?

Continuation

3) Shabir missed 1 fast in the month of Ramadhan as he was sick. He payed back is Qadha fast on the first of Shawaal.

Was his fast Valid or Invalid?

Continuation

4) How does fasting lead to Taqwa?

5) What is the difference between someone who is truly fasting and someone who is just hungry? (Refer to page 153)



Bonus:

**We are entering the month of
Shabaaan. Find out the reward of
fasting in the month of Shabaaan!**

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah,
most Kind, most Merciful



Surat al-Baqarah, 2:185

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ
هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَ الْفُرْقَانِ

The month of Ramadhan is one in which the Qur'an was sent down as guidance to mankind, with manifest proofs of guidance and the Criterion

Learning Objectives

- To identify what *Laylat al-Qadr* is and why it is important
- To break down *Surat al-Qadr* and understand some of the points that Allah tells us
- To discuss the recommended actions of *Laylat al-Qadr*

Key Words

لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ

Laylat al-Qadr
the night of ordainment/measure

بَيْتِ الْمَعْمُورِ

Bayt al-Ma'mur
the inhabited house



The month of Ramadhan is the most blessed month of the year. One of the reasons that it is so important is because the Qur'an was revealed in this holy month, on a very special night known as *Laylat al-Qadr*. In Arabic, *laylah* means night, and *qadr* means measure. On this night, Allah measures out our destiny for the whole year. There is an entire *Surah* in the Qur'an that talks about this night. To understand the importance of this night, we will look at this *Surah*, and each of the *ayat* in it.

Surat al-Qadr



Surat al-Qadr, 97:1

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ

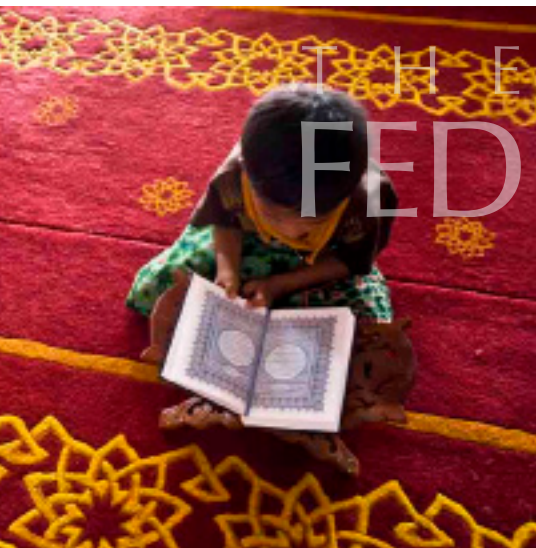
Indeed We sent it down on the Night of Ordainment.

The *Surah* begins by clearly stating that the Qur'an was revealed on *Laylat al-Qadr*, but there is a difference of opinion on the details as to what type of revelation this refers to. We know that the Qur'an was revealed for people gradually throughout the twenty-three years of Rasulullah's (s) mission. So what does this verse mean? There are a few different views as to what this means, let's look at some of them:

- 1 This is the night when the Qur'an was revealed to the heavenly abode [called *Bayt al-Ma'mur* or *Bayt al-'Izzah*, the Inhabited House or the House of Might], from which Angel Jibra'il then brought it down to the Rasulullah (s) in parts.
- 2 The entire Qur'an was revealed to the heart of Rasulullah (s), and he was then instructed throughout the last 23 years of his life when to recite certain verses. This would mean that there were two types of revelation.
- 3 The revelation of the Qur'an began on this night, so that's why it is said that it was revealed on this night.

Allamah Tabataba'i has beautifully explained the difference between *inzal* and *tanzil* -- the former means full revelation at once upon Rasulullah's (s) heart, while the latter means gradual revelation which occurred in 22 years and few months. The former was an honour to Rasulullah (s) and latter was for the mankind.

It follows that this night is very blessed and it marks the arrival of the final guidance for mankind. We should be happy and thankful that Allah has given us such a huge blessing in the Qur'an, and knowing how blessed this night is, we should do our best to seek closeness to Allah on this very special night.





Surat al-Qadr, 97:2

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ

And what will show you what is the Night of Ordainment?

In the second *ayah* of this *surah*, Allah asks a question to show how grand *Laylat al-Qadr* is. By asking this question, Allah shows us that it is so important that it will be challenging for us to truly understand its importance. Do we understand how important and magnificent this night is?



Surat al-Qadr, 97:3

لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ

The Night of Ordainment is better than a thousand months.

In the third *ayah*, Allah tries to show us how important the night is. He says that this one night is better than a thousand months. Do you know how many years a thousand months is? It is just over 83 years which is the average life-span of a human-being! The value of this night is better than the value of your **whole life**. This means that the good deeds you do on this night are better than those performed over a thousand months! It means that this night is life changing and by supplication and devotion we may be able to change the course of our lives. Allah has blessed us by telling us the importance of this night and giving us a chance to make the most of it.



Surat al-Qadr, 97:4

تَنْزِيلُ الْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالرُّوحِ فِيهَا
بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ

In it the angels and the Spirit descend,
with their Lord's permission, with every command.

In the fourth *ayah*, Allah tells us another fact about how important this night is, and that is that the angels come down on this night. They bring blessings and the fate of the believers for the coming year. On this night, many things are decided and measured out for us like our sustenance, life-span, and health. This is why we ask for so much on this night and spend the night making *du'a*.

DID YOU KNOW?

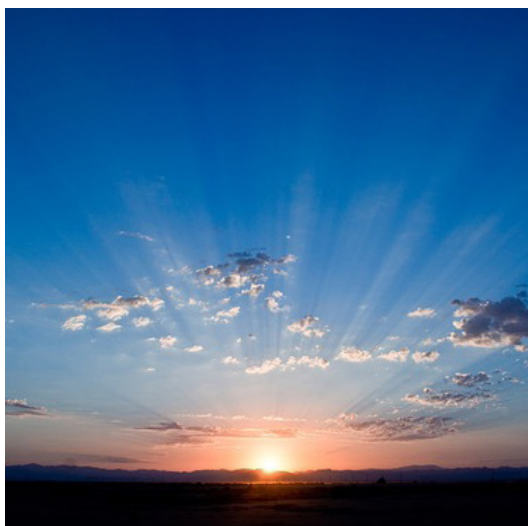
Did you know that in *Surat ad-Dukhan* Allah has described *Laylat al-Qadr* as a blessed night.

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةٍ مُّبَارَكَةٍ إِنَّا
كُنَّا مُنذِرِينَ

Indeed, We sent it down on a blessed night, and We have been warning (mankind). (*Surat ad-Dukhan*, 44: 3)

Why do you think Allah has called this night a blessed night?

Can you list some of the blessings of this night?



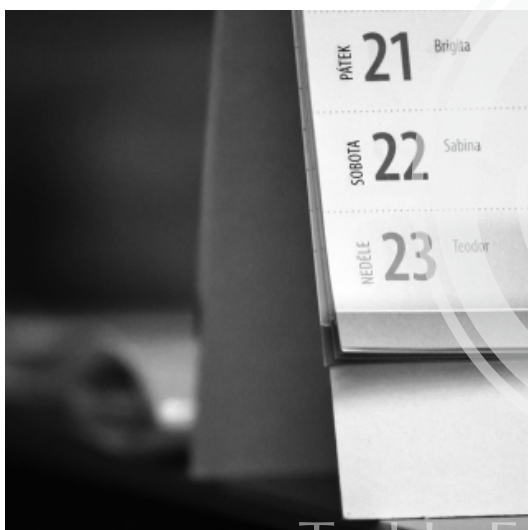
Surat al-Qadr, 97:5

سَلَامٌ هِيَ حَتَّىٰ مَطْلَعِ الْفَجْرِ

It is peaceful until the rising of the dawn.

In the fifth and last *ayah* of this *Surah*, Allah tells us that this whole night is blessed until *fajr*. On this night, it has been recommended to stay awake the whole night and to ask for blessings and forgiveness.

When is the night of Qadr?



According to our *ahadith*, *Laylat al-Qadr* is most likely on the 19th, 21st, or 23rd night of Ramadhan. However, more emphasis has been put on the 21st and the 23rd nights. Some of our *ahadith* seem to indicate that it is on the 23rd night. However, we're not 100% sure! It is a mystery to us, and Allah wanted it to be so. This was a question that people used to ask our *a'imma* (a) as well because they wanted to know when the greatest night of the year was so that they could focus on it. However, when people asked the *a'imma* (a) this question, they would say things like, 'Two nights [of devotions] are a simple matter when you consider what you are seeking,' or 'What do you lose by doing good on two nights?' Aren't they right?

Recommended actions on the night of Qadr

Many things have been recommended for this special night. Here are some of them:



- 1 To perform *ghusl*.
- 2 To recite a 2-*rak'ah* prayer, when in each *rak'ah*, *Surat al-Tawhid* is recited seven times after *Surat al-Fatihah* followed by seventy times "*astaghfirullah wa atubu ilayh*" after completion of the prayer.
- 3 To stay up the whole night and ask forgiveness.
- 4 To place the Qur'an on one's head and for its sake and the sake of Rasulullah (s) and the Ahlul Bayt (a), ask for blessings and forgiveness.
- 5 *Ziyarah* of Imam Husayn (a)
- 6 Giving *sadaqah*.
- 7 Doing *silat al-rahm*.

There are also some specific things that have been recommended on specific nights, like the twenty-third night:

- 1 To recite *Surat al-Ankabut*, *ar-Rum*, and *ad-Dukhan*.
- 2 To recite specific *dua's* like *Du'a Jawshan al-Kabir*, *Du'a at-Tawbah* and *Du'a Makarim al-Akhlaq*. These are recommended on other nights of *Qadr* as well.

There are many other *du'as* and prayers that have been recommended on this night. We should try our best to perform these, but more importantly to do things with sincerity, understanding, and meaning. For example, if we are asking forgiveness from Allah for our past mistakes, then we should be truly sorry for them, and genuinely ask Allah for forgiveness as we think about our past sins. It shouldn't become a ritual such that we are smiling while we repeat the phrase '*Astaghfirullah*' without thinking or without truly being sorry. And when we recite *du'as*, telling Allah that we want to become closer to Him, we should truly mean this and want to become closer to Him. We can't let our words be empty of action!

DID YOU KNOW?

It has been narrated that on *Laylat al-Qadr*, the angels and the greatest of angels come down to the earth and tell our twelfth Imam, Imam al-Mahdi (a) about what has been measured out and ordained for every person by Allah! Some scholars believe that this is what the fourth verse of *Surat al-Qadr* is referring to, when Allah says that the angels descend.

Faith in Action

We know when *Laylat al-Qadr* is approaching, and as such, we can prepare beforehand so that we can benefit the most from it. The month of Ramadhan is a very spiritual time for us, and we are building ourselves during the first few weeks of the month before *Laylat al-Qadr* arrives. Knowing that we are going to try to stay up the whole night, we can rest during the day, and not eat too much for *iftar* so that we do not become too sleepy! We can also prepare ourselves emotionally by making sure that we forgive our family and friends who may have hurt us. We want Allah to forgive us on this night, so we should also forgive others. Lastly, let's try not to focus on worldly things too much, like having fun or playing games, and try to focus on our spiritual selves and how close we can get to Allah!





HIGHER LEVEL

Do some research on one of the *du'as* that has been recommended to recite on *Laylat al-Qadr* and read the translation. Write out a few points or lines from the *du'a* that you think are beautiful and connect you to Allah. Then, explain why.

Handwriting practice area with multiple horizontal lines for writing.

THE WORLD
FEDERATION
OF KSMC



A conversation between Nabi Musa and Allah.

Nabi Musa said, "My Lord! I seek your closeness."

Allah Said, "My closeness is for those who keep awake on *Laylat al-Qadr*."

Nabi Musa said, "My Lord! I seek your mercy."

Allah Said, "My mercy is for those who have mercy on the poor on *Laylat al-Qadr*."

Nabi Musa said, "My Lord! I seek to pass successfully over the *sirat*."

Allah Said, "That is for those who give charity on *Laylat al-Qadr*."

Nabi Musa said, "My Lord! I seek the trees of *Jannah* and their fruits."

Allah Said, "That is for those who say *tasbih* on *Laylat al-Qadr*."

Nabi Musa said, "My Lord! I seek deliverance from fire."

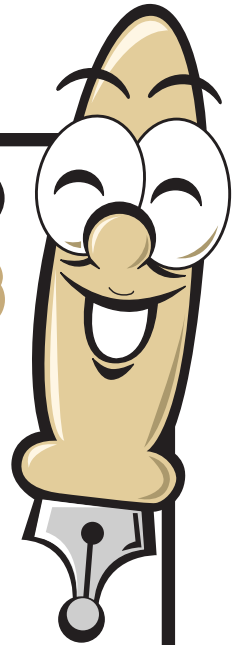
Allah Said, "That is for those who do *istighfar* on *Laylat al-Qadr*."

Nabi Musa said, "My Lord! I seek your pleasure."

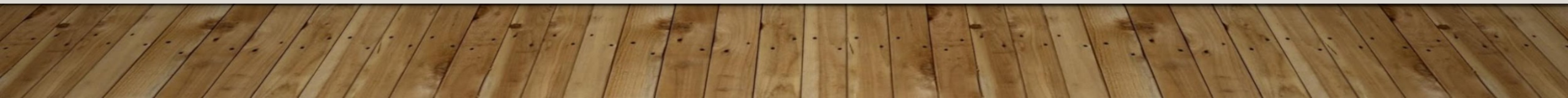
Allah Said, "My pleasure is for those who pray two *rak'ahs* on *Laylat al-Qadr*."

KEYPOINTS

- 1 *Laylat al-Qadr* is the most blessed night of the year, and it is when the Qur'an was revealed in the month of Ramadhan.
- 2 In *Surat al-Qadr*, Allah tells us about the importance of this night and that it is better than a thousand nights.
- 3 It has been narrated that *Laylat al-Qadr* is on the night of the 19th, 21st, or 23rd of Ramadhan, but we're not sure on which one.
- 4 There are many recommended actions to be performed on this night, including staying up the whole night.
- 5 On this night, Allah measures out and ordains the upcoming year, and higher angels descend to convey these decrees. Imam al-Mahdi (a) is made aware of those decrees too.



LAYLAT AL QADR



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1) To identify what Laylat al-Qadr is and why it is important.
- 2) To break down Surat al Qadr and understand some of the points that Allah tells us.
- 3) To discuss the recommended actions of laylat al-Qadr

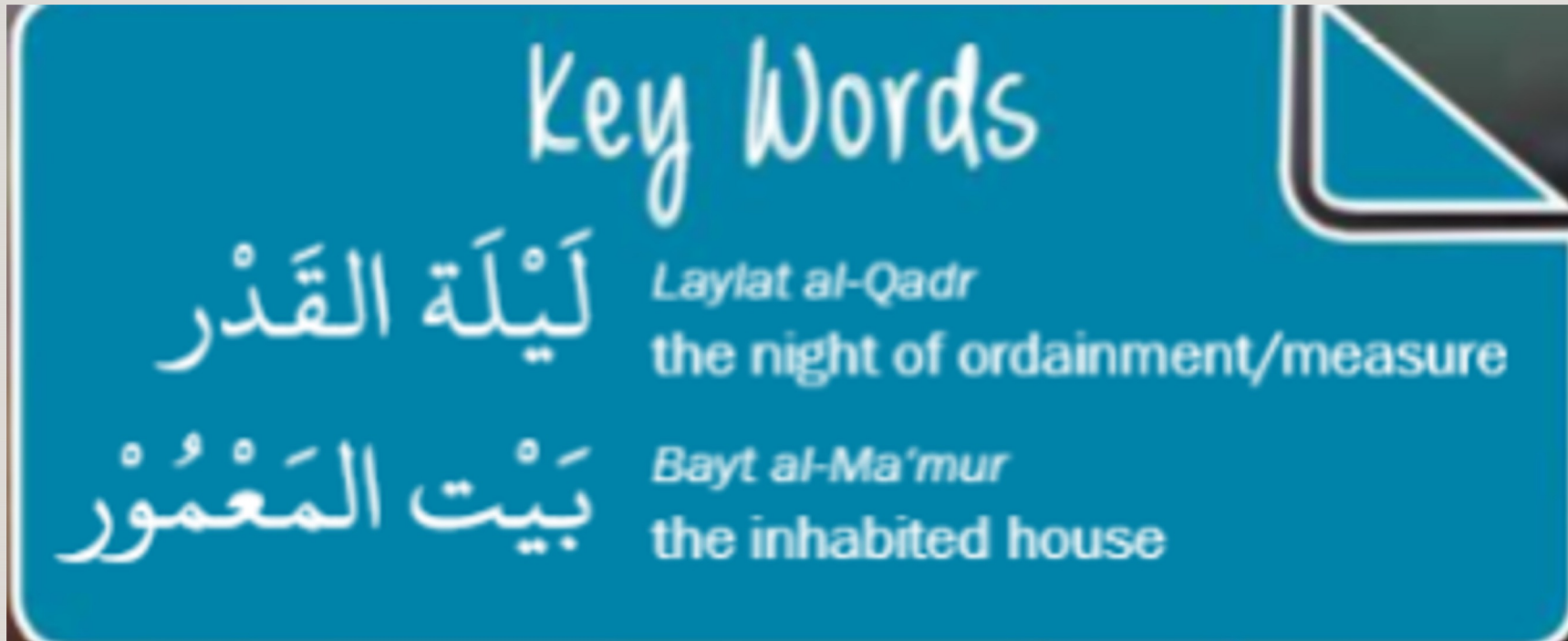
Quranic Verse for the day

Surat al-Baqarah, 2:185

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ
هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَ بَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَ الْفُرْقَانِ

The month of Ramadhan is one in which the Qur'an was sent down as guidance to mankind, with manifest proofs of guidance and the Criterion.

Key words for this lesson



Key Words

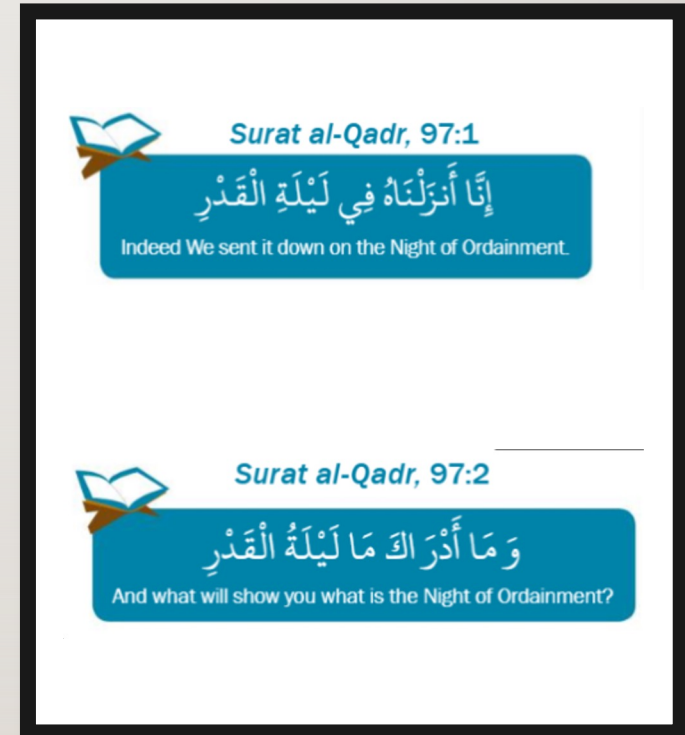
لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ
Laylat al-Qadr
the night of ordainment/measure

بَيْتُ الْمَعْمُورِ
Bayt al-Ma'mur
the inhabited house

WHAT IS LAYLAT AL-QADR?

A few of the different views on Laylat al Qadr are as follows:

- The night when the Quran was revealed to the heavenly abode (the inhabited house - Bayt al Mamoor)
- The night when the Quran was revealed to the heart of Rasulullah
- The night when the revelation of the Quran began.



A NIGHT BETTER THAN 1000 MONTHS

- Laylat al Qadr is better than 1000 months which is equivalent to approximately 83 years which is the average life span of a person.
- Thus, this night is better than one's whole life!
- Use it wisely
- This night is important because the angels descend on this night. Moreover, our sustenance, life-span, health etc. are all decided on this night. This is why we spend the night making du'a.



Surat al-Qadr, 97:3

لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ

The Night of Ordainment is better than a thousand months.



Surat al-Qadr, 97:4

تَنْزِيلُ الْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالرُّوحِ فِيهَا
بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ

In it the angels and the Spirit descend,
with their Lord's permission, with every command.

A BLESSED NIGHT!



The whole night is blessed till fajr. Thus it is recommended to stay awake and seek istighfar and blessings.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS ON THE NIGHT OF QADR

Below are some of the recommended actions for this night:

- 1) Perform ghusl
- 2) Recite a 2 rak'ah prayer, when in each rak'ah, Surah al-Tawhid is recited seven times after Surat al-Fatiha. After the prayer is completed, recite "astaghfirullah wa atubu ilayh" 70 times
- 3) Stay up the whole night and seek forgiveness
- 4) Place the Qur'an on one's head and for its sake and the sake of the ahlulbayt seek blessings and forgiveness.
- 5) Ziyarat of Imam Husain.
- 6) Giving Sadaqah
- 7) Doing Silat al-Rahm
- 8) Recite du'a Jawshne Kabeer, Makarimul Akhlaq, Tawbah.
- 9) Recite Surahs Room, Ankabut and Dukhan (specific for the 23rd night)

YOU SHOULD NOW KNOW

You should now know the following:

- What Laylat al Qadr is and why it is important.
- Some of the key points within Surah Al Qadr.
- Some of the recommended actions of this night.