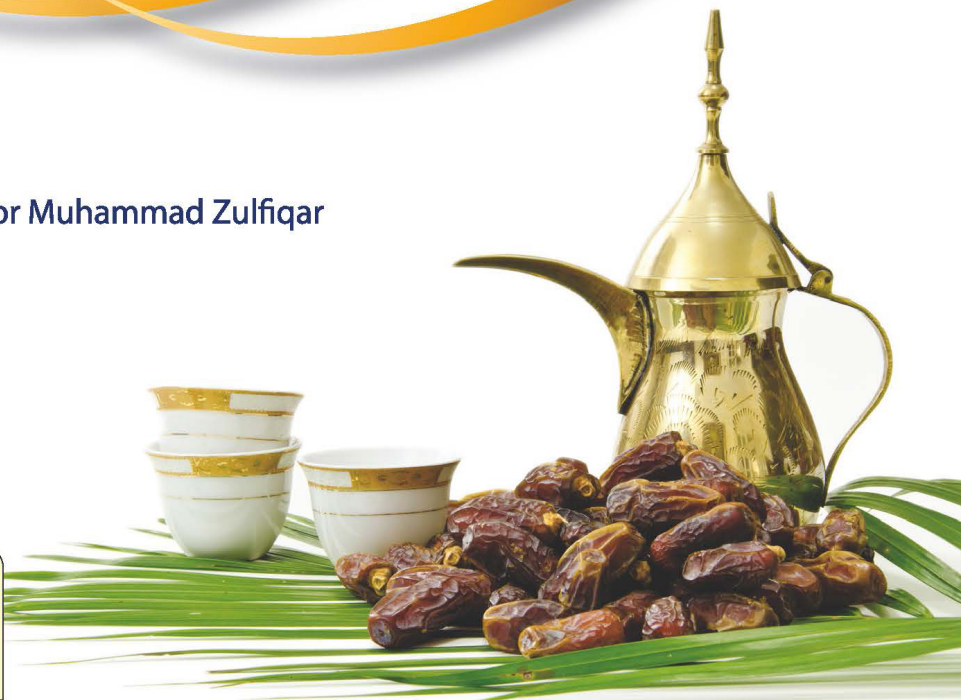


FAST

According to the
Quran & Sunnah



By
Professor Muhammad Zulfiqar



Fast According To Quran & Sunnah

By: Prof. Muhammad Zulfiqar

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Saum – Fast

The linguistic meaning of Saum

The word siyam (sing. saum) is derived from sama, which means to restrain from eating, drinking, talking, etc. If an individual refrains from these things, he is a saim. The Noble Qur'an uses the word in the general sense when it revealed the conversation between the angel and Mary, the mother of Jesus. The angel instructed her:

فَكُلِي وَاشْرَبِي وَقَرِّي عَيْنًا فَإِمَّا تَرَيَنَّ مِنَ الْبَشَرِ أَحَدًا فَقُولِي إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ
لِلرَّحْمَنِ صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أُكَلِّمَ الْيَوْمَ إِنْسِيًّا ﴿١٩﴾

“So eat and drink and be glad. And if you see any human being say: Verily, I have vowed a fast unto the most Gracious (Allah) so I shall not speak to any human being this day”. (Maryam 19:26)

The phrase, “I shall not speak” is the interpretation of the Arabic word saum. The reason for this interpretation is that saum cannot mean fast, i.e., to restraint from food, because Mary had just been told to eat from the fruits of the palm tree. This general meaning is common to the Arabic language.

The juristic meaning of Saum

In the terminology of the Shari'ah, the word saum means to abstain from food, drink and sexual activity from dawn to sunset, with the intention of doing so sincerely and solely for Allah, the Exalted. This is because fasting purifies the soul and cleanses it from the evil that might cause it to become a miser and their ill behavior.

The linguistic and juristic meaning of Ramadan

The word Ramadan is called as such to indicate the heating sensation (of the stomach as a result of thirst). Others have said that it is called as such because Ramadan scorches out the sins with good deeds, as the sun burns the ground; others have said that it is called as such because the hearts and souls are more readily receptive to the admonition and remembrance of Allah during Ramadan, as the sand and stones are receptive to the sun's heat. The framers of this beautiful language may have been inspired in naming this month Ramadan. Otherwise, the relation between the heat and its properties is miraculously similar to that of Ramadan. While the heat represents the matter that helps shape, form, and mold virtually every matter – from metal and plastics, to plants and living cells – Ramadan undoubtedly helps a serious believer remold, reshape, reform, and renew his physical and spiritual disposition and behavior.

Legal status of Ramadan

According to Qur'an it is an obligatory action. Allah (SWT) says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ
مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨٣﴾

“O you who believe! Observing As-Saum (the fasting) is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become Al-Muttaqun (the pious).” (Al-Baqarah 2:183)

Shortly afterwards, Allah (SWT) also says:

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ
مِّنَ الْهُدَى وَالْفُرْقَانِ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ

“The month of Ramadan in which was revealed the Qur’an, a guidance for mankind and clear proofs for the guidance and the criterion (between right and wrong). So whoever of you is resident during the month must observe fast...” (Al-Baqarah 2:185)

The entire Muslim Nation has agreed that it is obligatory to fast during the month of Ramadan, and it being one of the pillars of Islam. It is something that is known about the religion. The one who rejects it as a practice is a disbelieving apostate who has left the fold of Islam.

The Divine wisdom behind the decree of fasting is that it involves purification of the human soul from immoralities and vices; for fasting blocks the evil ways of Satan, as Satan circulates in the body of a person just like the circulation of blood. Whenever a person eats or drinks, his soul becomes vulnerable to his desires, his will weakens, and he becomes reluctant toward worship. This is contrary to the case of a person who is fasting. Moreover, fasting induces the renunciation of worldly pleasure and personal desires and draws a Muslim’s attention to the Hereafter. Fasting also makes one sympathize with the poor and needy by gaining a sense of their sufferings from the hardships of hunger and thirst.

The reference to the earlier Ummahs in the verse shows the importance on the one hand, and gives an encouragement to the Muslims on the other. It indicates that although there may be inconvenience in fasting but the same inconvenience was also faced by the earlier communities. This brings a psychological comfort to the Muslims, because if an inconvenience is faced by a large number of people, it becomes easier to bear.

The verse simply says that fasting has been enjoined on Muslims as it was enjoined on past communities. From this it does not necessarily follow that the fasts which were enjoined upon the earlier communities are identical in all respects with the fasts enjoined upon this ummah. There may have been differences in the number and the timings of the fasts, etc. Actually there is a big difference between the fasts as later generations completely altered it.

Fasting was only for special classes of people in the previous religions. In the Hindu religion, fasting is mandatory only for the high priests in the Brahmin class. In some Latin religions, it is only women who must fast without exception. In Judaism, the faster eats only after the break and there is no more food. The Arabs, before Islam, would not eat after sleeping.

The subject of fasting in Christianity is very difficult to discuss, simply because Christianity as a whole is very short on religious laws. Besides, there is fundamental disagreement among the scholars to whether Jesus commanded fasting. Fasting in Christianity seems to have evolved with time and is effected by social, political, and economic factors.

Jesus fasted 40 days before starting his mission. It is possible that he fasted on the Day of Atonement, which was an established tradition in Judaism. By the 4th century, there was no sign of 40 days fasting in Christianity. There are traditions which Christians live. The fast in Rome was different from the fast in Alexandria. Some abstain from meat, while others from fish and birds. Some will not eat fruits and eggs; some just fast on white bread. Some will abstain from all the above. Certain days had been made for fasting in later centuries to commemorate some events, such as the life of Jesus. There was a fast for three days in English law. During the time of Edward VI, James I and the Elizabeth, meat was prohibited during the fast, and James justified that saying: “The fishing industry and maritime commerce must become encouraged and it must be profitable.”

Obligation of Ramadan from the sayings of Allah's Messenger (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him)

Ibn Umar (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated, Allah's Messenger (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

بُيِّنَ الْإِسْلَامُ عَلَى خَمْسٍ شَهَادَةِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ وَالْحَجِّ وَصَوْمِ رَمَضَانَ

Islam is based on (the following) five principles:

- 1- To testify that La illaha illallah wa anna Muhammad-ur-Rasul Allah (none has the right to be worshiped but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah)
- 2- Iqamat-as-Salat (to perform the compulsory congregational) prayers.
- 3- To pay Zakah
- 4- To perform Hajj (i.e. pilgrimage to Makkah)
- 5- To observe Saum (fasts) during the month of Ramadan.

Talhah bin 'Ubaid-Ullah (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated that a Bedouin with unkempt hair came to Allah's Messenger (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) and said, "O Allah's Messenger! Inform me what Allah has made compulsory for me as regards to the prayer." He replied: "You have to perform the five compulsory salat in a day and night (24 hours), unless you want to offer nawafil." The Bedouin further asked, "Inform me what Allah has made compulsory for me as regard fasting." He replied, "You have to observe Saum (fast) during the whole month of Ramadan, unless you want to fast more as nawafil" The bedouin further asked, "Tell me how much zakah Allah has enjoined on me." Thus, Allah's Messenger informed him about all the laws (i.e, fundamentals) of Islam. The Bedouin then said, "By Him who has honored you, I will neither perform any nawafil nor will I decrease what Allah has enjoined on me." Allah's Messenger (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

أَفْلَحَ إِنْ صَدَقَ أَوْ دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ إِنْ صَدَقَ

"If he is saying the truth he will succeed or said he will be granted paradise"

'Aishah (May Allah be pleased with her) narrated that the Quraish used to observe fast on the day of Ashura during the pre-Islamic period, and then Allah's Messenger (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) ordered (Muslims) to observe the fast on it until fasting during the month of Ramadan was obligated. The Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

مَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُصُمْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ أَفْطَرْ

"He who wants to fast (on Ashura) may fast and he who does not want to observe fast [during it] does not have to fast."

Ad-Dhahabi says: "According to the believers anyone who leaves the fast of Ramadan without being sick is worse than a fornicator or an alcoholic. They doubt his Islam and they suspect he might be a zindeeq (disbeliever) and one of those who destroy Islam."

Shaykhul Islam Ibn Taymiyyah said: “If a person does not fast in Ramadan knowing that it is haram [to leave it] but makes it halal (permissible) for himself to abandon it, he must be executed; if he does it because he is immoral [but believes it is haram (impermissible)], then he must be punished for not fasting.”

The obligation of fasting is directed to both the resident and the traveler, the healthy and sick, ritually pure or impure (such as menstruating women and women in postnatal bleeding period), and those in a state of unconsciousness; all of them are accountable for the obligation of fasting. They are commanded to observe it so as to be aware that it is obligatory upon them and that it has to be observed whether at its due time or later in the case of legal excuse. It is obligatory upon some of them to perform it at its prescribed time, namely the healthy and the resident people, excluding menstruating women and women in a state of postnatal bleeding. Others are only obliged to make up for it later, namely the menstruating women and women in a state of postnatal bleeding, and those who are too ill to observe it at its due time and can observe it later. However, there are some who may choose either, whether to observe it at its prescribed time or later, such as the travellers and ill people who can observe fasting with difficulty but without causing them harm.

As for one who breaks his fast during Ramadan due to legal excuse and then the excuse ends – such as a traveller returning from his travel, a menstruating woman or woman in a state of postnatal bleeding who becomes ritually pure, a disbeliever who converts to Islam, an insane person who regains sanity, and a child who reaches puberty – they are to observe the fasts for the rest of the day (if the excuse is over in the day time) and to make up for that day afterwards. Similarly, if people are informed in the daytime (or after daybreak) that the month of Ramadan has already begun, they are to observe fasting for the rest of the day and then to make up for that day later after Ramadan.

We will discuss all these points in detail.

Merits and Virtues of Saum

Forgiveness and great reward for the men and women who observe Saum

Allah (SWT) says:

إِنَّ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْقَانِئِينَ
وَالْقَانِئَاتِ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّابِرِينَ وَالصَّابِرَاتِ وَالْخَاشِعِينَ
وَالْخَاشِعَاتِ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقَاتِ وَالصَّائِمِينَ وَالصَّائِمَاتِ
وَالْحَافِظِينَ فُرُوجَهُمْ وَالْحَافِظَاتِ وَالذَّاكِرِينَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا
وَالذَّاكِرَاتِ أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٣٥﴾

Verily the Muslims men and women, the believers men and women, the men and the women who are obedient (to Allah), the men and women who are truthful, the men and women who are humble, the men and women who give sadaqat (i.e. zakah and alms etc) the men and women who observe saum, the men and women who guard their chastity (from illegal sexual acts) and men and women who remember Allah much (with their hearts and tongues) Allah has prepared for them forgiveness and a great reward (i.e. Paradise). (Al-Ahzab 33:35)

Ar-Raiyan is one of the gates of Paradise

Shal (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

إِنَّ فِي الْجَنَّةِ بَابًا يُقَالُ لَهُ الرِّيَّانُ يَدْخُلُ مِنْهُ الصَّائِمُونَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
لَا يَدْخُلُ مِنْهُ أَحَدٌ غَيْرُهُمْ

“There is a gate in Paradise called ar-Raiyan, and those who observe the fast will enter through it on the Day of Resurrection and none except them will enter through it. It will be said, ‘Where are those who used to observe fast?’ They will get up, and none except them will enter through it. After this entry the gate will be closed and no body will enter through it.”

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated that Allah’s Messenger (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said, “Whoever gives two kinds (of things or property), in charity for Allah’s cause, will be called from the gates of Paradise and will be addressed, ‘O slaves of Allah! Here is prosperity, so, whoever was amongst the people who used to offer their prayers will be called from the gates of the salat; and whoever was amongst the people who used to participate in jihad will be called from the gate of jihad; and whoever was amongst those who used to observe the fast will be called from the gate of ar-Raiyan; whoever was amongst those who used to give charity, will be called from the gate of as-Sadaqah.” Abu Bakr (May Allah be pleased with him) said, “Let my parents be sacrificed for you, O Allah’s Messenger! No distress or need will befall him who will be called from those gates. Will there be anyone who will be called from all these gates?” The Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) replied:

نَعَمْ وَأَزْجُو أَنْ تَكُونَ مِنْهُمْ

“Yes, and I hope you will be one of them.”

All Previous Sins will be forgiven

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said, “whoever established prayer on the night of Qadr with sincere faith and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his previous sins will be forgiven.” (He added:)

مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ

“Whoever observes fasts in the month of Ramadan with sincere faith and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his previous sins will be forgiven.”

In another narration:

إِنَّ فِي الْجَنَّةِ لَبَابًا يُدْعَى الرَّيَّانَ يُدْعَى لَهُ الصَّائِمُونَ فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنَ الصَّائِمِينَ دَخَلَهُ وَمَنْ دَخَلَهُ لَمْ يَظْمَأْ أَبَدًا

“There is a gate in Paradise called ar-Raiyyan, and those who fast shall be invited into it; whoever was among those who fasted, then he will enter it, and whoever enters it, he will never thirst again.”

Explanation

Rayyan is a door of Paradise which means “Full with water.’ A fasting person bears the pang of hunger and thirst, and bearing thirst is harder than hunger, therefore, the door appointed for the fasting people is called” the door full with water, or the well-watered door.

Gates of Paradise are Opened

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

إِذَا جَاءَ رَمَضَانُ فَتُحْتَفَتُ أَبْوَابُ الْجَنَّةِ وَغُلِقَتْ أَبْوَابُ النَّارِ وَصُفِّدَتِ الشَّيَاطِينُ

“When Ramadan comes, the gates of Paradise are opened and the gates of fire are closed, and the Devils are fettered.”

Explanation

The doors of paradise are opened and the doors of Hell are closed means their literal opening and closing. Another possible meaning is that the month of Ramadan is given special importance in Muslim society, and the good deeds become more attractive so that the Muslims are inspired to perform a variety of good deeds. They make a determined struggle to avoid sins; therefore these good deeds are doors to Paradise and the sins are doors to Hell.

Saum is for Me and I shall Reward for it

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated: “I heard Allah’s Messenger (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) say:

قَالَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ كُلُّ عَمَلٍ ابْنِ آدَمَ لَهُ إِلَّا الصِّيَامَ هُوَ لِي وَأَنَا
أَجْزِي بِهِ فَوَالَّذِي نَفْسُ مُحَمَّدٍ بِيَدِهِ لَخِلْفَةٌ فَمِ الصَّائِمِ أَطْيَبُ عِنْدَ
اللَّهِ مِنْ رِيحِ الْمِسْكِ

'Every deed of the son of Adam is for him, except fasting. It is for Me and I shall reward for it. By the one in whose Hand is the soul of Muhammad, the smell of the mouth of the fasting person is better to Allah than the fragrance of musk.'

The change in the order of the mouth is a vivid physical testimony of this discipline. As much as we hate bad breath in fasting, it is a good thing, for it is caused by the coating which appears on the upper surface of the tongue soon after the commencement of the fast. After desiring food, the body begins to digest such waste material and deposits of fat as are available in it. This coating on the tongue is an outward proof that inner elimination is in progress. As soon as the digestive organs have been purified, the mouth returns to normal.

The Fasting Person has two Moments of Joy

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) said that the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Allah the Most High, said:

كُلُّ عَمَلٍ ابْنِ آدَمَ لَهُ إِلَّا الصِّيَامَ فَإِنَّهُ لِي وَأَنَا أَجْزِي بِهِ وَالصِّيَامُ
جُنَّةٌ فَإِذَا كَانَ يَوْمٌ صَوْمٍ أَحَدِكُمْ فَلَا يَزُفْتُ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَلَا يَسْخَبُ فَإِنْ
سَابَهُ أَحَدٌ أَوْ قَاتَلَهُ فَلْيَقُلْ إِنِّي أَمْرُؤٌ صَائِمٌ. وَالَّذِي نَفْسُ مُحَمَّدٍ بِيَدِهِ
لَخُلُوفٌ فَمِ الصَّائِمِ أَطْيَبُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مِنْ رِيحِ الْمِسْكِ
وَلِلصَّائِمِ فَرْحَتَانِ يَفْرَحُهُمَا إِذَا أَفْطَرَ فَرِحَ بِفِطْرِهِ وَإِذَا لَقِيَ رَبَّهُ
فَرِحَ بِصَوْمِهِ

'Every deed of the son of Adam is for him, except fasting. It is for Me, and I shall reward for it.'
Fasting is a shield, so if it is a day when one of you is fasting, let him not utter any obscene speech that day nor raise his voice. If anyone reviles him, or argues with him, let him say: 'I am a man who is fasting.' By the one in whose hand is the soul of Mohammad! The smell of the mouth of the fasting person will be better to Allah on the day of resurrection than the fragrance of musk. The fasting person has two moments of joy that he rejoices in: When he breaks his fast he rejoices at breaking his fast, and when he meets his Lord he will rejoice in his fasting."

Explanation

"Fasting is for Me and I shall reward for it." Allah has specially mentioned fasting and His bestowing the reward for it Himself. This is in spite of the fact that all acts of worship are for Him and the reward for them is from Him, is because all acts of worship through which the slaves seek to draw nearer to Allah, the Al-Mighty, the All-powerful – such as prayer, Hajj, charity, asceticism, i'tikaf, supplication, slaughtering sacrificial animals and other acts of worship have all been performed by the pagans as acts of worship to their gods and things that they set up as partners with Allah. But no one has heard that any group from among these ancient pagans worshiped their idols through fasting, nor they attempted to draw nearer to them through it, or offered thanks to them through it. Fasting is not

known as an act of worship except in the Divinely revealed Laws. This is why Allah, the Almighty, the All-powerful said: ‘Fasting in for Me.’ That is, no one shares in it with Me, and none beside Me has been worshiped through it, so I will give the reward for it, because it was performed for Me alone. And I will be responsible for giving the rewards for, I will not appoint another to do it, whether it be one of the angels who is allowed to come near (to Me) or anyone else.”

Allah will Remove his Face Seventy Autumns from the Fire

In another narration Allah’s Messenger Peace be upon him said:

مَنْ صَامَ يَوْمًا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ بَاعَدَ اللَّهُ مِنْهُ جَهَنَّمَ مَسِيرَةَ مِائَةِ عَامٍ

“Whoever fasts one day in the cause of Allah, the Mighty and Sublime, Allah will separate him the distance of one hundred years from the Fire.”

Abu Sa’eed Al-Khudri (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

مَا مِنْ عَبْدٍ يَصُومُ يَوْمًا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا بَاعَدَ اللَّهُ بِذَلِكَ الْيَوْمِ وَجْهَهُ عَنِ النَّارِ سَبْعِينَ خَرِيفًا

“There is no one who fasts one day in the cause of Allah, but Allah will remove his face (the distance of) seventy autumns from the fire in return for that day.”

O Seekers of the Good Come Near

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

إِذَا كَانَ أَوَّلُ لَيْلَةٍ مِنْ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ صُفِّدَتِ الشَّيَاطِينُ وَمَرَدَّةُ الْجِنِّ وَغُلِّقَتْ أَبْوَابُ النَّارِ فَلَمْ يُفْتَحْ مِنْهَا بَابٌ وَفُتِّحَتْ أَبْوَابُ الْجَنَّةِ فَلَمْ يُغْلَقْ مِنْهَا بَابٌ وَيُنَادِي مُنَادٍ يَا بَاغِيَ الْخَيْرِ أَقْبِلْ وَيَا بَاغِيَ الشَّرِّ أَقْصِرْ وَلِلَّهِ عُتَقَاءُ مِنَ النَّارِ وَذَلِكَ كُلُّ لَيْلَةٍ

“On the first night of the month of Ramadan, the shayatin are shackled, the jinns are restrained, the gates of the fires are shut such that no gate among them would be opened. The gates of Paradise are opened such that no gate among them would be closed, and a caller calls: ‘O seeker of the good, come near!’ and ‘O seeker of evil, stop!’ There are those whom Allah frees from the Fire. And that is every night.”

A Shield against the Fire

Uthman bin Abul-‘As Ath-Thaqafi narrated that Allah’s Messenger (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

الصَّيَامُ جُنَّةٌ مِنَ النَّارِ كَجُنَّةٍ أَحَدِكُمْ مِنَ الْقِتَالِ

“Fasting is a shield against the fire just like the shield of anyone of you while fighting.”

In another narration:

الصَّوْمُ جُنَّةٌ مَا لَمْ يَخْرِقْهَا

“Fasting is a shield, as long as he does not pierce it.”

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

الصَّيَّامُ جُنَّتُهُ وَحِصْنٌ حَصِينٌ مِنَ النَّارِ

“Fasting is a protection and a strong fortress that keeps [a person] safe from the Fire.”

Fasting and the Qur'an's Intercession

‘Abdullah bin Amr bin ‘Al-As (May Allah be pleased with her) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

الصَّيَّامُ وَالْقُرْآنُ يَشْفَعَانِ لِلْعَبْدِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، يَقُولُ الصَّيَّامُ: أَيْ رَبِّ مَنَعْتُهُ الطَّعَامَ وَالشَّهَوَاتِ بِالنَّهَارِ فَشَفِّعْنِي فِيهِ، وَيَقُولُ الْقُرْآنُ، مَنَعْتُهُ النَّوْمَ بِاللَّيْلِ فَشَفِّعْنِي فِيهِ، قَالَ: فَيُشَفَّعَانِ

“Fasting and the Qur'an intercede (with Allah) for the slave on the day of Resurrection, saying: ‘O Lord! I prevented him from (eating) food and from (giving into his) desires during the day, so make me intercessor for him.’ The Qur'an will say: ‘I prevented him sleeping at night, so make me an intercessor for him.’” He (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) added: “Then Allah will grant them intercession.”

A Trench between him and the Fire

Abu Umamah Al-Bahili (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

مَنْ صَامَ يَوْمًا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ النَّارِ خَنْدَقًا كَمَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ

“Whoever fasted for a day in Allah's Cause, Allah will place a trench between him and the Fire as wide as the distance between the heaven and the earth.”

In another narration Allah's Messenger (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

وَمَنْ صَامَ يَوْمًا ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ اللَّهِ خُتِمَ لَهُ بِهِ دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةِ

“Whoever fasts one day seeking the pleasure of Allah, if that is the last day of his life, he will enter Paradise.”