SOME RAMADAN GREETINGS

You might see or hear the following phrases during Ramadan:

- Assalamu alaikum (peace be upon you)
- Ramadan Mubarak/Ramadan Kareem (Happy Ramadan)
- Eid Mubarak (Happy Eid)

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Infinite Benefits of Fasting





In the Name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

FASTING IN ISLAM

Fasting is one of the 5 fundamental acts of worship in Islam, known as the ‘5 Pillars’.

Muslims fast the duration of the Islamic month of Ramadan each year. God says in the Qur'an that fasting is an act of worship prescribed to nations before Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). This tradition dates back to people such as Abraham, David, Moses, and Jesus (peace be upon them all).

Fasting also improves how people interact with each other, promoting respect, kindness, and forgiveness. It also fosters compassion for those in need, as many choose to donate to charity and share meals when breaking their fast. This practice strengthens bonds between people.

> *“O You who believe! Fasting has been prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those (nations) before you so that you may attain God-consciousness” Qur’an (2:183)*

THE BASICS OF RAMADAN

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar and begins roughly 10 or 11 days earlier each year in the Gregorian calendar. This means it shifts through the seasons over time.

Fasting means abstaining from food, drink, smoking, and sexual relations from dawn until sunset. Muslims also strive to avoid bad behaviour and increase good deeds, such as reading the Qur'an, praying more often, giving to charity, and being as kind and helpful as possible to all those around them, as the rewards for good deeds during this month are greater.

Fasting in Ramadan is required for all Muslims once they reach puberty. However, those who are ill, travelling, pregnant, breastfeeding, or menstruating may be excused, though they should make up missed fasts later if possible. If not, they can give charity to feed the poor for those days.

The last ten nights of Ramadan are especially revered, and many Muslims use this time to increase their acts of worship and reduce distractions, sometimes spending time in seclusion for reflection and prayer.

THE FASTING OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD (PBUH)

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) fasted more than the month of Ramadan. In Islam, one has the choice of performing additional acts of worship in order to draw closer to God and earn more reward. Whilst fasting in Ramadan is obligatory upon Muslims, any fasts done outside of this month are optional but greatly rewarded.

Prophet Muhammad’s (pbuh) routine included fasting twice a week on Mondays and Thursdays. He said that he chose to fast these days in order to show his gratitude to God.

EID: THE CELEBRATION AFTER RAMADAN

There are two days of celebration (Eid) in Islam each year. Eid ul Adha is celebrated after the pilgrimage of Hajj, and Eid ul Fitr is celebrated after the month of Ramadan. Ramadan can last either 29 or 30 days, and the date for Eid is determined by the sighting of the new moon, which can vary by location.

Muslims celebrate Eid in gratitude to God for giving them the opportunity to worship Him during the blessed month of Ramadan, where good deeds are worth more than any other month of the year. It is a time to enjoy food and drink in gratitude to God after a whole month of fasting.

On Eid day, a special prayer takes place after sunrise at mosques, parks, and open areas. Muslims are not allowed to fast on this day and instead celebrate by wearing their best clothes, giving gifts, enjoying their food and drink and visiting friends and family.

WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU ARE NOT A MUSLIM?

You can join your Muslim friends, colleagues, or neighbours, when they break their fasts together and also learn about their experience of fasting.

Try fasting yourself! It can be an extremely rewarding experience. One learns self discipline as well as purifying the body. Recent scientific studies suggest that fasting can be really beneficial for detoxing the body and might even encourage cell regeneration.