

Simple Resolutions for Ramadhan

(Based on a talk given in “Islam in Focus” TV program Ramadhan 1420/Dec 1999)

As Muslims living in the West, we follow two calendars: hijri calendar for our religious activities, and the common calendar for business and vacation.

But we do not always fix the first month of the year (January or Muharram) as the beginning of all our activities. We divide our lives in different ways: For example, our academic year starts with September and ends in June. Similarly, in the Islamic calendar, our spiritual year starts with the month of Rajab and reached to its peak during the month of Ramadhan.

Ramadhan is the month of fasting; and so our emotions are calm, hearts are open, and there is a kind of tranquility in minds. And, therefore, this is the appropriate time to evaluate ourselves spiritually and make some resolutions for the following spiritual year.

1. The first resolution should be to see the **level of consciousness of God** in your life. How important is Prophet Muhammad (a.s.) in your life? How much importance you give to the Ahlul Bayt of the Prophet and his sincere and devoted companions?

“Once the prayer has ended, then spread out in the earth and seek the blessings of Allah, and remember Allah often so that you may gain salvation.” (62: 10)

Once you have evaluated yourself in this way, then make the resolution to increase the level of consciousness of God’s presence in your life, and consider the Prophet and his Ahlul Bayt as the first role-models for yourself.

2. The second resolution should be to evaluate **your life with your family**. At times, people take their near ones for granted, and unknowingly tend to ignore their rights. Islam gives great importance to silatu ’r-rahm (maintaining ties with the relatives): your wife and children, your parents, your brothers and sisters, and other relatives. Strengthen the ties with them and be concern for their spiritual as well as material well-being.

See how you can improve your attitude towards your wife or husband: as a husband, are you appreciate of what your wife does for you at home? Have you ever thanked her for doing the small things that you take for granted? Have you expressed your love and appreciation for her? As a wife, are you supportive of your husband in the struggles of life? After all, you are his partner of life.

Moving to your other relations, see if there is someone with whom you have not talked for a long time? Is there a relative of yours who is upset with you? Then this is the appropriate time for you to take the first and courageous step to mend that relationship.

3. Look at your children and see how you can increase the **spirituality in your home** environment? Is the holy Qur'an being recited on a daily or, at least, a weekly basis? Have you provided them with the means of studying the Qur'an and getting in touch the Holy Scripture? The Qur'an is now available in all medias: print, audio cassette, CD, ipod—your child's electronic gadget have the Qur'an in it?

What about the sayings of the Prophet and the Ahlul Bayt? Is it possible to discuss one hadith of the Prophet on a monthly basis, and ask them to memorize it?

Have you encouraged your children to give charity? Do them participate in the local food banks, especially the Muslim Food Bank? Have you discussed with them how they can volunteer in their Islamic centers?

Ramadhan is indeed the time of searching yourself and reforming your life to become a better Muslim. May Allah bless you in this holy month and grant you success. Amin.

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