



Ramadan: A Time for Moms & Their Families

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This presentation is about Ramaḍān and how Ramaḍān is a special time for mothers, their children and their families. This is a mother's guide to a successful journey through Ramaḍān. First of all, I would like to begin by praising Allāh (*subḥānahu wa ta'āla*) that the month of Ramaḍān is about to dawn upon us, and it brings with it many, many opportunities. Allāh has given us this chance that we can reap the lasting benefits out of this month. The month of Ramaḍān is the month of Qur'ān, mercy, *taqwa*, patience, opportunity. *Alḥamdulillāh* all of us have an opportunity and chance to prepare beforehand for the month of Ramaḍān.

While we are going through this month, it is very important that we set goals for ourselves. One of the goals we should set for ourselves is that we should strive to strengthen our bond with our Creator, Allāh (*subḥānahu wa ta'āla*). At the same time, we should work towards strengthening our bonds with our families and children. It is not a personal development program, but rather it is a family development program. The entire family is journeying through the month of Ramaḍān together.

Intention

How do we go about achieving this purpose and setting these goals? We set a firm intention. Step back and check our intentions. What do you want to gain out of the month of Ramaḍān? What is your goal and purpose? What is your role as a wife and mother? What do you want to achieve? Once we define our intentions, then our goals and responsibilities will also become very clear. Unfortunately, what has happened over time is that the role of the mother has been reduced to only preparing *suhūr*, *iftār*, and other household chores during the blessed month of Ramaḍān. This is not our purpose and goal.

Allāh (*subḥānahu wa ta'āla*) has prescribed fasting upon us for what reason? We are abstaining from food and drink so that perhaps we will attain righteousness. During this month, the purpose is not to spend the entire day in the kitchen preparing food for *suhūr* and *iftār*, but the purpose is something different. Yes, food is essential, no doubt. It is very important, but we should not spend the entire day in the kitchen preparing food. Allāh is telling us to abstain from food for a specific reason. Allāh has defined this reason.

In *Sūrat'l-Baqarah* v. 183, Allāh says, "O you who believe..." Here the believers are addressed and those who have the attribute of *īmān*. Ibn 'Abbās (*raḍyAllāhu 'anhu*) said that whenever the believers are addressed in such a manner, it means that whatever command is to come ahead,

they should act upon it and if it is a prohibition, they should stay away from it. The believers should become alert when Allāh addresses them in such a manner.

“O you who believe, prescribed upon you is fasting just as He had decreed fasting upon people before you.” Fasting is not something new in our *Shari‘ah* and was prescribed to the nations before us and has been prescribed to us as the Muslim *ummah*.

How does Allāh define the purpose of fasting? It is *‘ibādah* in the month of Ramaḍān. The verse concludes: “So that you may become righteous; so that you may obtain *taqwa*.” Your number one goal in the month of Ramaḍān should be to attain *taqwa* and instill this quality within ourselves. Yes, there are many other goals, and our ultimate goal is to attain Allāh’s Pleasure and our ultimate goal is to attain Jannah, but we need to set other goals as well. Allāh describes the purpose of fasting is that you instill the quality of *taqwa* within yourself. *Taqwa* is that state of mind and fear of Allāh in your heart that enables you to do what you need for Allāh’s pleasure and stay away from those things that would lead to His displeasure.

Our goal in this month when we are fasting and in our acts of worship should be that by the end of the month, I have a level of *taqwa* within myself. It is only when a person has *taqwa* within himself that he will be able to give other people their rights and he will be able to give Allāh His Rights and then after Him the rights of mankind.

This should be our goal not only for ourselves in this month but for our children. Remember that we are going to tread this journey with our children and families. It is a special opportunity that Allāh has given to us. The goal is to instill *taqwa* within myself, my children, and my family.

A question arises. Whenever you set goals, there is a next step that is required to it. You can’t just set a goal and say that *inshā’Allāh* it will happen as you set it. You have to plan. There is a saying in English: he who fails to plan, plans to fail. Planning is very essential and necessary. Once you set your goal, you need to plan how to achieve your goal. In this presentation, we have divided Ramaḍān into three parts: before, during and after. We will go through some of the specifics of what you should do in the month of Ramaḍān because this is a very specific presentation made for mothers on how they can enhance their experience in this month.

Before Ramaḍān

Before the month of Ramaḍān, we have set our target to attain *taqwa* and strengthen our bonds with our Creator while at the same time, working towards strengthening our connection to our families. How should we go about that?

First, we need to plan before the month of Ramaḍān begins. Prepare everything before you enter this month. *Alḥamdulillāh* we do have a few days. We praise Allāh that He has given us this opportunity. How should we plan?

As we said, food is essential but is not the purpose. A mother should not spend her entire time in the kitchen preparing. She should use that time for something else. In terms of food, what should she do? Make a list of all of the foods you want to cook in the month of Ramaḍān



beforehand. Do the groceries for the entire month before it begins. Basically you should free as much time as possible in the month of Ramaḍān so that you can focus on your worship and personal development and *tarbiyah* of your children and family. The primary role of a mother is the proper upbringing of her children and the spiritual and physical care of her family and herself.

We tend to spend a lot of time cleaning during Ramaḍān. Do this before the month so that you free as much time as possible in the month so that you can focus on your worship. There is a very beautiful analogy that someone presented, and that was the month of Ramaḍān is like a guest that comes only once a year, so you need to make the preparations beforehand. When guests come to your house and inform you ahead of time that they are coming in three hours, what do you do? You start cleaning and making preparations. It rarely happens that your guest comes and you go clean the house. When the guest comes, you pay full attention to them. Similarly, the month of Ramaḍān is a guest. Make all of the necessary preparations beforehand, which includes food and cleaning. Do a thorough cleaning before the month of Ramaḍān so that you are not doing too much.

Make a list of the gifts you want to give to people and buy the gifts beforehand. Do this so that you are not spending the last ten nights and days of the month of Ramaḍān shopping. Once you start shopping, you are losing out on a big opportunity Allāh has given you, and this opportunity only comes once a year.

Summary:

- Food
- Cleaning
- Make your *du‘ā’* list
- Prepare for Eid
- Set goals for yourself and/or for your child(ren)

You must realize that this is the time that Allāh has given to you, and you need to use it to your maximum benefit. How can you do this? Planning very carefully. Make *du ‘ā’* to Allāh to make it easy for you, and *inshā’Allāh* you will notice that Allāh puts *barakah* in your time and you will be able to plan productively and effectively. Going back to the same point – it is an opportunity and you don’t want it to slip out of your hands.

Taqwa is a goal we set for Ramaḍān. How do we achieve this goal? We plan properly. Once you make all the preparations beforehand, you are freeing up time in the month of Ramaḍān. What should you replace that time with? In the previous Ramaḍān, it may be that we were cooking or cleaning or sleeping for extensive hours during the day. Now that we’re removing this from our schedule and preparing from beforehand or reducing the time of these activities, what should we replace them with? What is our goal? *Taqwa*. How do we attain *taqwa*? The answer is very simple.



Relationship with the Qur' ān

The answer is to establish a strong connection with the Qur' ān. The Qur' ān was revealed for the guidance of mankind. "It is a Book about which there is no doubt, which is guidance for those who have *taqwa*." Again, go back to the goal of attaining *taqwa*. The month of Ramaḍān is the month of the Qur' ān. Establish a strong bond with this Book because one part of this Book is in the Hands of Allāh, and the other part is in the hands of the servant. This Qur' ān is a rope and our connection with Allāh (*subḥānahu wa ta'āla*), and if you hold onto it, it is very similar to what the Prophet (*ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said: "I have left behind me two things, and if you hold onto them you will never go astray – the Book of Allāh and my *Sunnah*." Once you hold onto the Qur' ān and establish a connection with it in the month of Ramaḍān, *inshā'Allāh* even after the month of Ramaḍān this book will be a light and guide for you and show you the way in difficult situations.

Sometimes as a mother you face the most difficulties or hardships from your children. Allāh says in the Qur' ān, "Indeed your wealth and your children are a trial for you." This tells us that we receive many tests and trials from our children. The love for our children is a test for us.

You establish a relationship with the Qur' ān in the month of Ramaḍān by reading it every single day. Don't just recite the Qur' ān but make it a point to read it with understanding so that you understand the meaning of what Allāh is saying to you in His Book. Once you have this strong connection, you will see that even after the month of Ramaḍān, the Qur' ān with its blessings will help you in day to day life and how to deal with difficult situations that sometimes come to you from your own family.

We find a beautiful example in the Qur' ān. Allāh mentions many examples of mothers and their relationship with their children. This is the example of Umm Mūsa. When Allāh had told her to put Mūsa (*'alayhi'l-salām*) in a basket and in the river, she submitted right away. She did not say why or that it was too difficult or that she could not part with him. She trusted Allāh. She left Mūsa (*'alayhi'l-salām*) in a basket and let it go across the river. What made her make this sacrifice? The strong connection that she had with Allāh (*subḥānahu wa ta'āla*).

Allāh has revealed the Qur' ān for us to establish a connection between us and our Creator. Not only this, but the Qur' ān teaches us great words of wisdom, especially when it comes to a mother with her children. The Qur' ān teaches us how you should deal with your children and how you should talk to your children. The month of Ramaḍān is coming up, and we live in a society in North America where children will be going to school and exposed to different people around them. There is peer pressure while they are fasting. The Qur' ān teaches us how to respond to their questions and how to properly bring up their children.

The best example of this is Luqmān and his advice to his son. I will briefly go over some of the things he said to his son, and from this, we can relate it to the month of Ramaḍān and how we can apply it to our lives and our children. Allāh mentions in *Sūrah* Luqmān: "And when



Luqmān said to his son while he was advising him, ‘O my little son...’ He addresses his son with a lot of love, compassion and well wishes. Similarly, when we address our children, it should be with a lot of love and compassion.

“Do not associate partners with Allāh. Indeed *shirk* is the greatest injustice.” There is a great deal of benefit we can extract from this with respect to the month of Ramaḍān. Luqmān is telling his child not to commit *shirk* and not to associate partners because it is the greatest injustice.

The advice of Luqmān to his son: “O my son, establish *ṣalāh*.” When we go through the advice of Luqmān, we see a number of points related to the *tarbiyah* and upbringing of children.

1. He addresses his child with a lot of love.
2. He gives the reasons behind what the child should do and what he should not do. He mentions ‘do this’ or ‘do not do this’ and what the reason behind it is.
3. He mentions Allāh’s Knowledge to his child so that his child instills *taqwa* and the fear of Allāh and not the fear of people.
4. Luqmān tells his child to establish prayer and enjoin good and forbid evil. When you tell children in the month of Ramaḍān to fast, also encourage them to enjoin good and forbid evil. Encourage their Muslim friends to fast as well. When you have good company around you and people around you who are fasting, it makes it easier upon yourself to act upon the Command of Allāh. When you enjoin good and forbid evil, you might get opposition or people not listening to you, so be patient upon that. In order to establish the command of Allāh, be patient, and it requires determination and firm resolve on your part.
5. He advises his son with some moral behavior. “Do not turn away with contempt from the people, and do not walk upon the earth exultantly. Indeed Allāh does not love the arrogant, boastful.” Again, he mentions what not to do and why he shouldn’t do them. Similarly, in the month of Ramaḍān, when you tell your child to fast, also instill in them good, moral behavior. For example, while fasting, do not use foul language and do not swear. There should be a difference in character. As we learn from the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam), Allāh is not in need of a fast in which a person does not give up lying, backbiting, and foul language.

Keep in mind that in order to instill these good qualities and *taqwa* within your children, we need to have these qualities in ourselves first. Have this as a goal for yourself and for your family. Plan together. You and your family journey to the month Ramaḍān together and not alone.

Family Day Plan

One of the things that you can do is a family day plan before the month of Ramaḍān. Plan out each and every day of yours and the days of your children. In this Ramaḍān, children will be off from school, and you need to keep them busy with activities. One thing that you can do for



a change is have no television. Try to incorporate this in the month of Ramaḍān. When you cut down on the TV aspect, your children will probably come to you and ask you for the alternative and say, “If we are not watching TV, what can we do?” For this, you need to sit down with your children and consult with them. Also include your husband in your family day plan. It is very important. Plan together. Ask your children what they want to do.

Some of the things that you can do, for example, is select a nice book and assign one page to one child per day, and you do it yourself as well. At the time of *iftār*, which is the best time to bond with your family, discuss what you have prepared. In this way, there is family bonding in the month of Ramaḍān as well.

Spend more time with your children because sometimes your children just want to spend more time with you and talk to you and have someone listen to them. You can also engage your children in other activities such as taking them outdoors to pause and reflect over the creation of Allāh. Once you ponder over Allāh’s creation, it will bring you closer to Allāh and instill *taqwa* within you. When do you fear Allāh? When you know about Him. How do you know about Allāh? Through the Qur’ ān and pondering over what Allāh has created.

Also have incentives for your children. For example, make a Ramaḍān chart. If you have more than one child, have a healthy competition between them to get prizes at the end of the month of Ramaḍān. Learn a new *du ‘ā’* a day. This basically depends on how you want to schedule your Family Day Plan. Every family’s schedule will be different according to what their children’s needs are. The important point is that you take your family together. It is not a personal development program, but it is a family development program.

Summary of Ideas:

- Qur’ ān recitation and *du ‘ā’* -a-day
- Complete reading/projects on an Islamic book
- Spend quality time with the children. No television.
- Perform *ṣalāh* in the *maṣjid*.
- Take them outdoors: have them reflect over Allāh’s creation.

During Ramaḍān

This is all that you do before Ramaḍān – the planning and setting goals. What about during the month of Ramaḍān? We will quickly go over what a day should be like, and every day would be different depending on the person and circumstances. You have set your goals and planned your days, which will *inshā’Allāh* enable you to be more productive and efficient during the month. We will start with *tarawīḥ* prayers, because the day begins with *maghrib*.

Tarawīḥ

This is an encouragement for all mothers that they should attend the prayers with their children, provided the *maṣjid* has arrangements for children. If there are no arrangements for children and you are taking your children with you, then make sure they are with you, literally speaking, and not disturbing other people in the *ṣalāh*. Go to the *tarawīḥ* prayers as a family.



Listen to the recitation even if you are not praying. Women who are not praying because of menstruation should still go to *tarawīḥ* prayers to listen to the recitation of the Qur' ān. One of our goals is to establish a strong connection with the Book of Allāh. Some advice for expecting mothers and how to enhance their experience in the month of Ramaḍān is that they too, regardless of whatever month they are in, should go to the *masjid* for *tarawīḥ* prayers and listen to the recitation of the Qur' ān because they are exposing themselves and their baby to the recitation of the Qur' ān.

Also, make a lot of *du 'ā'* during the month of Ramaḍān because this is a golden opportunity. *Du 'ā'* is your connection with the Creator. Allāh says in the Qur' ān, “And your Lord has said, ‘Call upon Me, and I will respond to you.’” Make a *du 'ā'* list for yourself and call out to Allāh. You can never have enough making *du 'ā'*. Make *du 'ā'* in the morning, evening, night, and any opportunity that you get. Allāh will respond to you if you are sincere in supplicating to Him. In *tarawīḥ* prayers while you are praying, make *du 'ā'* and call out to Allāh.

Summary:

- Take your family for *ṣalāh*
- Listen to Qur' ān recitation even if you are not praying
- Make *du 'ā'* s
- Expecting mothers and how to enhance experience in the month of Ramaḍān?

When you come home from *tarawīḥ* prayers, make sure you do not do anything extra. Go to sleep so that you wake up on time for *suhūr*. Wake up 15 minutes earlier, and in those few minutes, pray two *nafl* for *tahajjud*. Make *du 'ā'* to Allāh, and then prepare the *suhūr* for the family. Eat together as a family. The family that eats together stays together. Make it a point that in the month of Ramaḍān you are having all of the meals together whenever possible.

Eat healthy meals. If you are making oily foods for *suhūr* or *iftār*. It will have a great toll on your energy, which will have an effect on your acts of worship. If you eat very heavy in the morning, then you end up sleeping throughout the day and are missing out on an opportunity. Similarly, if you have oily foods for *iftār*, it will have an effect on your worship in *tarawīḥ* prayers at night. Eat healthy and good foods so that you have the energy to worship Allāh because that is the purpose of our life. Allāh says, “And I have not created *jinn* and mankind except that they should worship me.” This worship in the month of Ramaḍān should be in the most excellent of manners.

After you have prayed *fajr*, recite the Qur' ān. If you want to finish the Qur' ān at least once in the month, recite four pages of the Uthmanic mus-haf after each *ṣalāh* and you will finish one *juz* per day. It will take you 10-15 minutes after each *ṣalāh* during the day. Make *du 'ā'* throughout the day. *Du 'ā'* is a component throughout the day.



Iftār – A Golden Opportunity

Iftār is a golden opportunity to bond with your children. As we mentioned earlier with the book activity, have one person discuss a page a day, and you are listening and bonding with your children. Make it a point that your family comes together for *iftār* 15 minutes before the *adhān* of *maghrib* so that they can sit down and make *du ‘ā’* to Allāh. Sit before and bond and make *du ‘ā’* to Allāh and establish the connection with Allāh, which goes back to the goal of *taqwa*.

Summary:

- Ask children to set the table (share responsibility)
- Family should sit at table 15 minutes before to make *du ‘ā’*
- Make the *du ‘ā’* for opening fast
- Eat healthy
- Go to the mosque for *maghrib ṣalāh* and make *du ‘ā’* s

For those who are young and don't have children, take these points and generally apply them to yourself about how you can enhance your Ramaḍān experience. For example, I am really excited that Ramaḍān is coming up, and one of the greatest reasons why I'm so excited is because of the aspect of *du ‘ā’*. I firmly believe with 100% conviction that *du ‘ā’* is the weapon of the believer. *Du ‘ā’* has powers that you cannot imagine. It is your connection with your Creator. You call upon Him, and He will definitely respond to you if you are truly sincere in your supplication. If you truly want something, call upon Allāh. Make *du ‘ā’*, especially in the month of Ramaḍān, for salvation in the Hereafter. *Rabbana āthina fi'l-dunya hasanatan wa fi'l-ākhirati hasanatan wa qina adhāb al-nār*. Once the *dunya* is mentioned and twice the *ākhirah* is mentioned, so make your priority the *ākhirah*. The *dunya* is the means, but the means should take you towards your ultimate goal.

Post Ramaḍān

These are some of the things that you can do during the month of Ramaḍān. After the month of Ramaḍān is a special day known as Eid. It is a special time for the entire family. Make that day truly special so that children remember that day and say that there is a celebration for us that Allāh has ordained.

When do we prepare for Eid? Not in the last 10 nights of Ramaḍān. If you do that, then you are missing out on an opportunity of worshipping Allāh and a lot of reward for yourself. Make preparations before the month begins. Make that day a special day.

More importantly, maintain the habits you have developed in the month of Ramaḍān even after the month of Ramaḍān has passed by and gone. What benefit is it to you that you worship all month and then go back to your old routine and let *dunya* distract you? Your aim was to adopt *taqwa*, and if you have done so in the month of Ramaḍān, *alḥamdulillāh*, and if you have not, then continue striving to reach that goal. Keep striving to establish a connection with your Lord. Keep striving to remember the Hereafter. Take your family with you.



Once you have established the connection with the Qur' ān in this month, do not let go of this connection, and do not close the Book and do not put it up on a shelf until next Ramaḍān. This Book should be with you until the next Ramaḍān and until you die. It should be a companion in your grave, and that can only happen if you take this Book as a companion and hold onto it. Try to maintain as many of the habits that you have developed even after Ramaḍān. The goals that you have set should be built upon throughout the next year. Make du 'ā ' to Allāh that He truly enables us to benefit from this month and attain His Pleasure and attain *taqwa* in this month and that we have *taqwa* throughout our lives.

Summary:

- Make Eid a special event
- Maintain habits developed in Ramaḍān
- Goals set in Ramaḍān should be built on throughout the year

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