

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ

الهُدَى وَالْفُرْقَانِ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ...

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ.

RAMADAN: THE MONTH OF MERCY AND FORGIVENESS

Dear Muslims,

In the verse I have recited, Allah the Almighty states, “**Ramadan is the month in which the Qur’an was revealed as a guide for humanity with clear proofs of guidance and the standard to distinguish between right and wrong**”. So whoever is present this month, let them fast.”¹

In the hadith I have read, the Beloved Prophet (saw) says, “**Whoever observes fasts during the month of Ramadan out of sincere faith and hoping to attain Allah’s rewards, all his past sins will be forgiven.**”²

Esteemed believers,

We are on the threshold of the spiritual climate of Ramadan, which is the herald of peace and abundance of divine blessings as well as of endless grace. We will be performing the first tarawih prayer of the month on the night that connects Wednesday to Thursday, insha Allah. After that, we will wake up for suhoor and make our intentions for the first day’s fast insha Allah. May endless praise be to Allah, who allowed us to experience this exceptional month once again, and may peace and blessings be upon the Prophet Muhammad Mustafa (saw).

Dear Muslims,

Our hearts, which were in sorrow due to the disaster we experienced, will find peace thanks to the blessings of Ramadan. Its reviving breath will grant us the coolness of the spring. The glad tidings of the Prophet (saw) about being forgiven will let our hopes for the future blossom. With this belief and awareness, we say: “Welcome, o month of the Qur’an! Welcome, o month of fasting! Welcome, o mercy and forgiveness! Welcome o month of Ramadan!”

Dear brothers and sisters,

Ramadan, the sultan of the months, is the one in which the Holy Qur’an was revealed. Insha Allah, we will be closer with the Qur’an that is the greatest mercy of our Exalted Lord to us. Our love and awareness will be strengthened with the muqabala. We will rebuild our

lives with the meaning of the Qur’an. We will enrich our hearts and minds with it insha Allah.

Honorable Muslims,

Ramadan is the month that brings us closer to piety. The worship of fasting bears deep meanings and many wisdoms. Staying away from eating and other worldly desires is the visible aspect of fasting. With a properly performed fast, we train our nafs and purify our soul. With consciously performed fasting, we equip ourselves with patience and train our will. We show our determination to keep our hands, tongue, eyes, heart, mind, in short, all of our existence, away from the sins and all that is forbidden.

Dear believers,

Ramadan is the month of unity, togetherness, sharing, and solidarity. Our souls attain relief with the prayers we will perform shoulder to shoulder. Our hearts find peace with the takbirs and salawat we utter and that echo on the domes of our mosques. The bridges of brotherhood are built with the zakat, fitrah, and all donations we make. A smile is put on the faces of the poor, the needy, and the lonely.

Respected brothers and sisters,

We should consider Ramadan as a unique blessing and opportunity for reviewing our lives, pondering over the past, and remembering our responsibilities towards our Lord and our environment. We should open our doors to the season of mercy, blessing, and forgiveness. We should open our hearts wide to the invitation of our Lord (swt) so that we can be purified. We should welcome the blessed guest in a way worthy of it. We should make the month of Ramadan pleased with ourselves so that we may attain the pleasure of Allah the Almighty. And in the end, we may achieve the eternal joy of ‘eid in the gardens of paradise promised by our Lord (swt).

Dear brothers and sisters,

Tomorrow is the 108th anniversary of the Çanakkale victory. A century ago, our heroic ancestors shouted out to the whole world as “Çanakkale is impassable!” They defended the exaltedness of Islam as well as the dignity and honor of Muslims. They did not let any infidel’s hands touch our temples. They did not allow the sounds of our adhan, the shahadah of which is the base of religion, to be silenced. They won a great victory with their faith, courage, and sacrifice, as well as the help and grace of Allah. Today, what falls upon us to always keep the Çanakkale spirit alive and pass it on to the future generations. On this occasion, I would like to pray that Allah have mercy on all of our martyrs, particularly Çanakkale martyrs, as well as the veterans who passed away. I also would like to wish Allah the Almighty’s mercy upon all brothers and sisters who died in disasters, as well as all our ancestors.

¹ Baqarah, 2/185.

² Bukhari, Iman, 28.