



# RAMADAN 101 FACTSHEET

## What is Ramadan?

Ramadan is an Islamic tradition celebrated on the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. Fasting for the month of Ramadan is one of the 5 pillars of the Islamic faith. Ramadan is regarded as a commemoration of the Prophet Mohammed's (peace be upon him) first revelation of the Qur'an. The Muslim calendar is a lunar calendar, which means that Ramadan shifts by about 10 days every year. During Ramadan, observing Muslims refrain from food, drink and intimate relations from dawn until dusk. During Ramadan, Muslims are recommended increase their worship and charity, and work to inwardly improve themselves and their spirituality.

## What happens during Ramadan?

The daily life of a Muslim in Ramadan generally looks something like: waking up before dusk to eat and prepare for the fast, also morning prayers take place before the sunrise. While the sun is up, Muslims refrain from eating, drinking, or satisfying any sexual desires. After sunset, the evening prayers are recited and the fast is broken, meaning food and drinks can now be consumed, and intimate relations are allowed. Throughout the day, Muslims continue to worship as much as possible while fulfilling their daily obligations like work. Reading the Qur'an everyday during Ramadan is a big part of worship for most Muslims.

At the end of the month of fasting is a celebration called "Eid al Fitr" (pronounced eed-al-fit-r). This means the celebration of breaking the fast. On Eid day, Muslims have early morning prayers and then engage in gift-giving and family time.

## What deeds are encouraged during Ramadan?

Worship, spirituality, volunteering, compassion, charity, and gift giving are all encouraged during Ramadan. Some examples of the deeds include:

- Charity: feeding the homeless or a family of high poverty
- Worship and Spirituality: praying and reading the Qur'an
- Compassion: loving one another, helping others, caring for greater causes and having ambition for a greater cause, such as one's faith.
- Volunteering: giving one's time to feed the homeless at a soup kitchen or in one's local mosque.
- Gift Giving: during Eid, at the end of Ramadan, generally people exchange gifts—often times geared towards children and the poor, but people of all ages participate.

### BREAKING FAST

**Traditionally, Muslims  
break their fast at sunset  
with dates & water.**

## Greetings of Ramadan

### Ramadan Kareem

*May Ramadan be  
generous to you*

- Ramadan is a time of generosity and charity for Muslims. Muslims hold charity in high regard as it is part of the five pillars of Islam.

### Ramadan Mubarak

*Ramadan is bountiful  
and full of blessings*

- This is said with excitement, as Ramadan is a time of blessings for Muslims.

### Eid Mubarak

*Eid is bountiful and full  
of blessings*

- Mostly used by Muslims as a congratulatory greeting on the day of Eid. A rough translation is "May your day of Eid be a blessed one." Similar to how Christians would say Merry Christmas on Christmas Day.