

May 24, 2020 - Ramadan 2021 (April 14, 2021? Depends on lunar sightings)

Eid al-Fitr is the celebration after the last day of fasting. The day of Eid is determined by the sighting of the crescent moon. It's always under lots of debate. This year its either Saturday May 23 or Sunday May 24.

Usually for celebration, people give zakat (charity) to anyone in need. Kids receive money, families donate money to each other, more donations to anyone and everyone. If you can't give money, you give back in other ways through volunteering and helping others.

The reason for celebration and what makes Ramadan special is that it was the month the Quran, the holy book of Islam, was first revealed.

The celebration of Eid al-Fitr is to remember the loyalty of Ibrahim (Abraham) when God asked Ibrahim to sacrifice his son. The entire month of Ramadan, all Muslims obeyed God and refrained from food, water, and other worldly pleasures.

This Eid was interesting. Typically, everyone goes to a mosque to pray the final prayer that marks the end of Ramadan and lots of hugs and handshakes follow. That didn't happen. People prayed at home with their families, and my family went about the day as usual.

The day didn't change. But people have.

People change after Ramadan and hope to keep up the good habits. It's like making a New Year's resolution but Ramadan forces you to try it for 1 month to prove to yourself that it can be done. People change and hope to be better than they were before Ramadan.

Patience is a lacking virtue in today's instant oatmeal world. It's hard to be patient when you're used to 100 mbps internet and prime shipping. Or even watching shows and movies on demand.

Ramadan teaches us patience. It forces us to be patient. Forces us to slow down. Slow down and think about what you've lost and what you can easily lose.

How you do something is how you do everything. One of the ways to build patience is to do things more slowly. Speaking slowly forces you to focus on word choice. Driving 5 mph below the speed limit protects you and others, and gives you a chance to look at the world around you.

The pandemic forced everyone to slow down, and everyone has felt it, but it's most noticeable in the U.S.

The U.S is a nation with the go-getter attitude engrained from our school-years. We feel if we're not doing anything, we're lazy or unproductive. But many don't realize or internalize that busy does not equal productive. Plenty of people work less than 8 hours a day, but are extremely productive. Now, it's not entirely do to having patience, but patience does play a role.

Patience plays a role in change. Growing as person requires patience. Breaking a bad habit requires patience. Building a good habit requires patience. Growing a career requires patience. Self-control requires patience.

Ramadan is a good experience in patience. For those trying to break/build habits in Ramadan, they learn the patience.

The world may be going to crap, but you're still here. Which means you can still make a difference.

Change occurs in **excruciating** small steps, but it will still occur. This requires patience.

Voting in November may or may not will fix everything. When they vote in a new president and don't see any change within a few months, they'll lose hope.

We cannot fall into this trap. We might not see the change instantly, but we've stepped in the right direction.

For Gen Z, this pandemic has been our traumatic event. From this event, we will move forward with renewed vigor to right the inequalities. This is our make or break moment. Either we'll be last generation of humans to live in a normal world or we'll be the generation to create the most revolutionary shift in the status quo since the Magna Carta.

I reminded of a quote from *The West Wing*, a show that easily creates a hopeful sense in the viewer regardless of political affiliation.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful and committed citizens can change the world.

Do you know why? It's the only thing that ever has.”

- The West Wing