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The imminent Departure: Seizing the Fleeting Light of Ramadan's End

The air grows heavy with a bittersweet sentiment. Ramadan, the month of profound transformation, prepares to fold its luminous wings and vanish like a dream at dawn. We stand at the precipice of its departure, witnessing the swift passage of its hours, the fading echoes of its nights. Like a caravan hastening across the desert, it leaves behind a trail of memories, a testament to our striving, our shortcomings, and the profound grace bestowed upon us.

This fleeting nature of time, so acutely felt during Ramadan, reminds us of the ephemeral nature of our own existence. Each day that slips away is a silent witness, a record etched in the annals of our souls. We are reminded, as the Prophet's words echo, that on the Day of Judgment, our deeds will be presented, a meticulous account of our choices and actions. "Whoever finds good, let him praise God," and "whoever finds otherwise, let him blame none but himself."

Perhaps this Ramadan, for some, marks the final chapter, a poignant reminder of life's fragility. The reality that we may not witness another Ramadan should ignite a fire within us, a fervent desire to seize the remaining moments with unwavering dedication. For every soul that anticipated its arrival yet failed to complete it, for every heart that yearned for its return yet was denied, there lies a profound lesson: time is a precious, irreplaceable gift.

Yet, even as the majority of Ramadan's days have slipped through our fingers, a precious window of opportunity remains. The last ten nights, the Ashr al-Awakhir, beckon us with their unparalleled sanctity. These are the nights that the Prophet, peace be upon him, cherished with extraordinary devotion, nights he filled with intensified worship, nights he awakened his family to partake in their blessings.

The righteous predecessors, emulating the Prophet's example, understood the immense value of these final nights. They would prepare themselves with utmost care, bathing, perfuming, and donning their finest attire, ready to stand before their Lord in complete devotion. Their dedication serves as a powerful reminder of the transformative power of sincere striving.

The practice of i'tikaf, the seclusion in the mosque for worship, embodies the essence of these final nights. It is a retreat from the distractions of the world, a communion with the Divine. In the stillness of the mosque, the heart finds solace, the soul finds peace. The remembrance of God becomes our companion, the Quran our confidant, prayer our comfort.

Within these sacred nights lies the jewel of Ramadan, Laylat al-Qadr, the Night of Power. A single night that surpasses a thousand months, a night of forgiveness, mercy, and divine decree. It is a night to be sought with unwavering determination, particularly in the odd nights of the last ten.

Even if we feel burdened by our past shortcomings, even if we feel the weight of missed opportunities, we must not succumb to despair. The Prophet, peace be upon him, urged us to seek Laylat al-Qadr in the last seven nights, reminding us that even in our weakness, we should not be overcome.

Let us fill these remaining nights with prayer, supplication, and the recitation of the Quran. Let us seek forgiveness for our sins, and ask for the blessings of Laylat al-Qadr. Let us remember the Prophet's supplication, "O God, You are forgiving and generous, You love forgiveness, so forgive me."

As Ramadan prepares to depart, let us reflect on the legacy we leave behind. Will it be a testament to our striving, our dedication, our transformation? Or will it be a reflection of our neglect, our missed opportunities?

This is the final stretch, the last chance to seize the blessings of Ramadan. Let us rise to the challenge, let us strive with renewed vigour, and let us bid farewell to this blessed month with hearts filled with gratitude and hope. For in these final moments, we have the power to transform our lives, to draw closer to our Lord, and to secure His eternal pleasure.

The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said, "Whosoever performs Qiyam (night vigil prayer) during Lailat Al-Qadr (Night of Decree), with faith and being hopeful of Allah's reward, will have his former sins forgiven." (Bukhari and Muslim from Abu Hurairah)

"Whoever fasts Ramadan and spends its nights in prayer, out of faith and in hope of reward, his previous sins will be forgiven."

Aisha reported: When the last ten nights of Ramadan arrived, the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, would tighten his belt, spend the night in worship, and awaken his family. (Bukhari and Muslim)

A'ishah also reported: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) used to strive more in worship during Ramadan than he strove in any other time of the year; and he would devote himself more (in the worship of Allah) in the last ten nights of Ramadan than he strove in earlier part of the month. (Muslim).

The Prophet peace and blessings be upon him said "This month (of Ramadan) has begun and there is a night in it better than one thousand month. (So,) any one deprived of its (blessings) is actually deprived of all goodness. Indeed, He is truly deprived who is kept away from its good." (Ibn Majah, from Anas Ibn Malik)

A'ishah: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) said, "Seek Lailat Al-Qadr (Night of Decree) in the odd nights out of the last ten nights of Ramadan." (Al-Bukhari).

A'ishah reported: I asked: "O Messenger of Allah! If I realize Lailat Al-Qadr (The Night of Decree), what should I supplicate in it?" He (peace and blessings be upon him) replied, "You should supplicate: Allahumma innaka `afuwun, tuhibbul-`afwa, fa`fu`anni -O Allah, You are Most Forgiving, and You love forgiveness; so forgive me. (Tirmidhi)

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, "Seek it in the last ten days, on the odd nights," (Bukhari and Muslim from Abu Salamah)