

# THE MILESTONE

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## MAKING RAMADHAN COUNT

*A Student's Guide*



Private Circulation

# EDITORIAL

## THE BLESSED MONTH OF RAMADAN IS DRAWING NEAR.

It is the month to reap the harvest of reward through the blossoms and fruits of good deeds—rather, one may say, the month of attaining recognition of the One Who grants reward through righteous actions; the month to fill one’s lap from the treasures of mercy and forgiveness and to obtain a decree of salvation from Hell; the month of mediation between humankind and the Noble Qur’an—which is the fountainhead of guidance, the Criterion, the Balance, the Straight Path, and likewise a vast treasure of wisdom; a month that is a means, a source of courage, and a month of hope for sinners; a month that bridges the gaps between rich and poor, fostering empathy, love, and closeness; a month that sets stagnant wealth of the affluent into circulation among orphans, the needy, and the poor, bringing consolation; a month that instills the sense of being one Ummah—a strong Ummah; a month that cultivates collective discipline, coordination, and unity; a month that develops military-like discipline, patience, and steadfastness; a month that carries within it the magnificent history of the decisive Day of Criterion (Yaum ul Furqan) between truth and falsehood; a month entrusted with the manifestation of Islam’s ascendancy and the lowering of the banner of disbelief, displaying the glory of Islam across Arabia; a month of blessings, virtues, and the abundant grace and favors of the Lord of the universe; a month that, through the Night of Decree (Laylat al-Qadr), grants the reward of a thousand nights.

### YES! THIS IS THE BLESSED RAMADAN WHOSE ARRIVAL IS NEAR.

Alas! How fortunate will be those people who will once again behold the precious moments of this blessed and auspicious month of obligatory fasting and the revelation of the Qur’an; and how many servants of Allah must have passed away who had adorned their eyes with the dream of welcoming this month, but divine decree did not grant them the opportunity, and carrying regret and despair in their hearts, they departed from this world.

Now the question is: if we are granted this

magnificent month, how will we welcome it? Have we arranged our daily routines to enter this blessed month—so that during it we make every possible effort to please Allah? Just as the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, before the arrival of Ramadan, would gird himself for remembrance and recitation, for obligatory and voluntary prayers, and for fasting; just as he ﷺ would be more open-handed in charity and almsgiving in Ramadan than in other months; just as standing in prayer at night would become more beloved to him ﷺ than other religious and worldly engagements—have we made similar preparations?

Or will this Ramadan, like many before it, be for us like rain that falls upon a rock and brings it no benefit? For the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

**“There are many who fast yet gain nothing from their fast except hunger and thirst, and many who stand in prayer at night yet gain nothing from their standing except wakefulness.”**

(Sunan Ibn Mājah, Hadith no. 1690)

Actions performed without awareness yield nothing but fatigue. Hence, another hadith states clearly:

**“Whoever does not give up false speech and acting upon it, Allah has no need of his giving up food and drink.”**

(Sahih al-Bukhari, Hadith no. 1903)

In other words, even if in Ramadan we carefully observe fasting, prayers, supererogatory acts, remembrance and recitation, charity and zakat—yet it turns out that all our deeds are thrown back in our faces by Allah—what misfortune could be greater than this? And what greater cause of our ruin in the Hereafter could there be? For in another hadith, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ also said that ruined is the person who found the month of Ramadan yet did not attain forgiveness.

So remember! On the one hand, we must prepare ourselves in Ramadan to please Allah—and prepare with full consciousness—so that we may attain the intended purpose of Ramadan: the noble qualities of piety and fear of Allah, self-restraint, patience, strength of will, and religious zeal are developed within

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us. Regarding Ramadan, we must also remember that it is the month of the Qur’an, and the Qur’an is the charter of life. Therefore, along with recitation, we should strive to understand its features and meanings well, and adopt this practice consistently, so that solutions to every problem across the spheres of life become visible to us in the light of the Qur’an.

As a final appeal, let it also be said that along with confronting the distressed conditions of the Muslim Ummah, we should make special efforts in supplication to set our own order right—particularly to pray for the honor and steadfastness of the brave people of Gaza and for mercy upon the Muslim Ummah of India. May Allah grant us entry into Ramadan and enable us to value it properly. Ameen.

**“O Allah, keep me safe until Ramadan, keep Ramadan safe for me, and accept it from me with acceptance.”**

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question to reflect upon:

**“If the existing system of the universe, with its present natural laws, is a possibility and a reality, why should another world with a different set of natural laws be regarded as an impossibility?”**

**Atheist:** (Remains pensive and in deep thought) You certainly have made very logical and rational points. I will think over them further and come back to you with further questions. Thank you for your time.

**Maulana:** (Speaks warmly while shaking hands of the young atheist) It’s been my pleasure. Will certainly look forward to having more questions from you once you have given a thought to today’s discussion objectively and without biases.

**Atheist:** Will certainly try to do so. Until we meet again. (Shakes hands with Maulana and leaves the room while the sunset is taking place. The Muazzin calls Allahu Akbar – and Maulana leaves for Maghrib prayers)

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# Creator's Call



قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهُ (9) وَ قَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهُ (10)

Successful indeed is the one who purifies his soul, and ruined indeed is the one who corrupts it. [Surah Ash-Shams, Verse 9-10]

## PURIFICATION OF THE SOUL (TAKZIYATUN-NAFS): THE DIVINE STANDARD OF SUCCESS AND FAILURE

These two short yet immensely powerful verses define the true criterion of success and failure in human life. Before declaring this principle, Allah takes a series of solemn oaths—by the sun and its brightness, the moon and its following, the day and its clarity, the night and its covering, the sky and its construction, the earth and its spreading, and finally the human soul itself.

After swearing by these eight magnificent creations, Allah emphasizes a single reality: the destiny of every human being is determined by the state of his or her soul.

This divine method of oath-taking highlights the extreme importance of the message. Allah is teaching humanity that outward achievements, social status, wealth, education, and appearance do not define success. Only the purification of the soul does.

## OUTWARD APPEARANCE VS INNER REALITY

Many people focus excessively on external matters—dress, reputation, titles, influence, and recognition—while neglecting the condition of their hearts. Islam, however, places the heart (qalb) at the center of human accountability.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ clearly stated: **“Indeed, Allah does not look at your bodies or your wealth, but He looks at your hearts and your deeds.”** (Sahih Muslim)

Thus, a person may appear religious outwardly, yet be spiritually bankrupt inwardly. Conversely, someone unknown or unnoticed by society may be highly honored in the sight of Allah due to a pure heart and sincere actions.

## WHAT IS TAKZIYAH? (PURIFICATION OF THE SOUL)

Tazkiyah linguistically means to purify, to cleanse, and to nurture growth. In Islamic terminology, it refers to:

Purifying the soul from shirk (associating partners with Allah), disbelief, hypocrisy, sins, and moral corruption—while nurturing it with faith, sincerity, obedience, and noble character.

Allah says:

“Successful indeed is the one who purifies himself.” (Surah Al-A'la 87:14)

Purification is not merely abstaining from sins; it also involves developing righteousness, humility, patience, gratitude, sincerity, and love for Allah.

## THE MISSION OF THE PROPHETS: SPIRITUAL PURIFICATION

The Qur'an makes it clear that the central mission of all Prophets was the purification of humanity. Allah says:

**“He is the One who sent among the unlettered people a Messenger from among themselves, reciting His verses to them, purifying them, and teaching them the Book and wisdom, although before that they were in clear misguidance.”** (Surah Al-Jumu'ah 62:2)

This verse establishes an important order:

- Recitation of the Qur'an
- Purification of the soul
- Teaching knowledge and wisdom

Knowledge without purification leads to arrogance, hypocrisy, and misguidance. Therefore, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was sent not only as a teacher, but as a spiritual reformer of hearts, for all generations until the Day of Judgment.

## THE PATH OF FAILURE: CORRUPTING THE SOUL

Allah warns:

“And ruined is the one who corrupts it.”

This corruption occurs when a person:

- Ignores divine guidance
- Follows desires instead of revelation
- Normalizes sin
- Justifies wrongdoing
- Seeks success outside the Qur'an and Sunnah

Qatadah (رحمه الله) explained:

**“Failed is the one who immerses his soul in sins.”**

Allah further warns:

**“Whoever commits evil and is surrounded by his sin—those are the inhabitants of Hell; they will abide therein forever.”** (Surah Al-Baqarah 2:81)

## PRACTICAL MEANS OF PURIFYING THE SOUL

### 1. Living with Conscious Fear of Allah (Taqwa)

Taqwa means to live with constant awareness that Allah sees, hears, and knows everything. It is to fear His punishment and hope for His mercy at the same time.

Allah says: **“For the one who fears standing before his Lord, there are two gardens.”**

(Surah Ar-Rahman 55:46)

True taqwa manifests through obedience, not slogans or emotional claims.

## 2. Total Submission to the Qur'an and Sunnah

Islam does not allow selective obedience. Allah commands:

**“Whatever the Messenger gives you, take it; and whatever he forbids you, refrain from it.”**

(Surah Al-Hashr 59:7)

The Prophet ﷺ said nothing from personal desire. Therefore, separating the Qur'an from authentic Sunnah leads to misguidance and spiritual corruption.

All acts of worship—prayer, fasting, zakah, hajj, charity, and moral conduct—are designed to purify the soul and discipline desires.

## 3. Awareness of Accountability and Punishment

Human beings are naturally inclined toward sin. When punishment is delayed in this world, people become bold in wrongdoing. Allah therefore reminds us of the Hereafter, where perfect justice will be established.

The Prophet ﷺ described horrifying scenes of punishment for:

- Lying
- Neglecting the Qur'an
- Adultery
- Usury
- Hypocrisy
- Oppression

These narrations teach us that religious knowledge without righteous action is a curse rather than a blessing.

## 4. Avoiding Minor Sins Before They Grow

Minor sins, when repeated, become major sins. The Prophet ﷺ warned against underestimating sins, as they accumulate and destroy a person just as small stones form a mountain.

True purification requires constant self-accountability and repentance.

## 5. Frequent Remembrance of Death, the Grave, and the Hereafter

The Prophet ﷺ advised:

**“Remember often the destroyer of pleasures—death.”**

The grave is the first stage of the Hereafter. Success there leads to ease afterward; failure there leads to greater hardship.

Allah says: “Every one of you will pass over Hell... then We will save those who feared Allah

In today's world, once a student enters high school, life quickly becomes a series of milestones to be achieved in order to stay on track in the career ladder—whether through competitive examinations, school/college projects, or the constant pressure of regular studies. At the same time, this stage of life represents the age of youth, a period in which ibādah is especially beloved to Allah SWT. When the month arrives in which worship is most beloved and most generously rewarded—Ramadan—it places an additional responsibility upon students of this generation to pause, reflect, and consciously plan how to make the most of it.

We should keep before us the powerful hadith in which Jibril (peace be upon him) came to the Prophet ﷺ and said: "Whoever reaches Ramadan and does not have his sins forgiven, and thus enters Hell—may Allah distance him from his Mercy!" The Prophet ﷺ then said, Ameen. Is this not a strong and urgent message? It calls upon us to plan ahead, to reassess and reset our priorities, and to strive to maximize Ramadan—when it is the most beloved age, the most beloved month, and a clear warning for those who fail to attain forgiveness.

Planning to maximize the rewards of Ramadan does not mean abandoning daily responsibilities or neglecting studies. Rather, it requires adopting practical habits that help us benefit fully from this blessed month.

#### CUTTING OFF LAGHW (TIME-WASTING ACTIVITIES)

For a student of knowledge, time is extremely precious—especially in Ramadan, when ibādah takes priority and time already feels limited. It is therefore important to consciously cut off laghw, such as mindless scrolling on social media (particularly platforms like Instagram), unnecessary or un-Islamic gatherings, and activities that offer no real benefit and can be postponed.

Reducing such distractions helps free up time, making it easier to balance studies, essential tasks, and ibādah. This intentional use of time allows students to experience Ramadan as a month of both spiritual growth and responsible productivity.

#### PUTTING IBADAH FIRST: MANAGING WORLDLY COMMITMENTS

One important way to maximize the benefits of Ramadan is by re-prioritizing worldly commitments to create more time for ibādah. This may require saying no to non-urgent matters, avoiding new projects or responsibilities that could affect one's worship, and—where permissible—skipping unimportant lectures (while ensuring attendance requirements are met).

We can take guidance from the Salaf, who would even pause their circles of Hadith and fiqh during

Ramadan to devote themselves fully to worship. Many of them also reduced their business and worldly engagements in order to free time for prayer. This reminds us that while worldly matters can always be taken up later, they should never be allowed to take precedence in a way that diminishes the virtue and rewards of Ramadan.

#### DAILY PLANNING FOR A PRODUCTIVE RAMADAN

Once we have cut off laghw and limited ourselves to prioritized academic activities, the next important step is to plan the day in a way that allows dedicated time for ibādah while also covering essential tasks. One effective way to do this is to structure the day around the five daily salāh. Assigning tasks between each prayer creates natural checkpoints and helps maintain focus and balance throughout the day.

Since nights in Ramadan are shorter, they can be used wisely—allocating part of the night to complete important tasks and reserving the later portion for ibādah. This approach allows students to maximize productivity on both fronts. Ultimately, daily planning is essential in Ramadan; without it, the month passes quickly, and valuable time is lost before we realize it. Preparing a clear plan in advance is the best way to protect both our responsibilities and our worship.

#### BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE QUR'AN

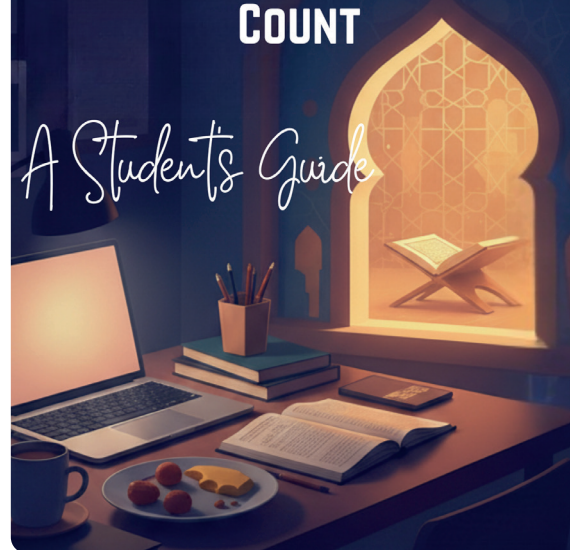
Ramadan is the blessed month in which the Qur'an was revealed, and if we look at the lives of the Sahabah and the Salaf, we see that Ramadan was a time when they immersed themselves in recitation and tadabbur of the Qur'an. For today's youth—who invest so much time and energy into exams, degrees, and career goals—it becomes even more important to reconnect with the Qur'an, the ultimate guide for success in both this world and the Hereafter.

What better time to start than Ramadan? Daily recitation should be the minimum, but our Ramadan goals should go beyond just reading. This month is a perfect opportunity to build a habit of understanding the Qur'an—through tafsir, online lectures, or even beginning to learn Qur'anic Arabic. Small, consistent efforts in Ramadan can lay the foundation for a lifelong relationship with the Qur'an.

The age of youth is a time of energy and potential, making it the best stage of life to maximize the benefits and rewards of Ramadan. While academic responsibilities are important, it is thoughtful planning and clear prioritization that allow us to make the most of this blessed month. May Allah ﷻ make this Ramadan the best one we have experienced so far, and may He not include us among those who reach Ramadan yet fail to attain His forgiveness. Aameen

# MAKING RAMADHAN COUNT

## A Student's Guide



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Survey (April–June 2024), average monthly earnings in urban areas are 26,105INR for men compared to 19,879INR for women, while in rural areas, men earn 18,200INR versus 12,396INR for women. This significant gap makes women's economic independence more challenging and increases their dependence on family.

On the other hand, incidents of sexual harassment and rape in workplaces are increasing. According to National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data, an average of 445 cases of workplace sexual harassment were reported annually from 2018 to 2022, with 419 cases in 2022 alone. In major companies (India Inc.), reported cases reached 1,160 in FY23—the highest in the past decade—with a 79% increase in sexual harassment complaints over the last five years in top firms. While specific workplace rape cases are fewer and often categorised broadly, they remain a significant risk, underscoring that workplaces are not always safe for women and add further hardship to their professional lives.

In Islam, a woman is the queen of her home. No queen travels alone wherever she wishes; for her dignity and safety, she is always accompanied. Similarly, Muslim women are prohibited from travelling long distances without a mahram or without proper hijab. There is no scope to reinterpret these fundamental Islamic injunctions.

# Is Earth Flat?

As we know, Islam is the only religion which guides the entire humanity both emotionally & logically at the same time by Quran and Hadith.

Indeed, we all have faith that the Holy Quran is a miracle that is a sign for every era. From the fundamental unit of life to the massive celestial bodies Quran Majeed mentioned everything 1400 years ago and still human's mind is unable to understand so many things because we are still working on it. Whenever there's new research, it's astonishing to discover that it was already mentioned in the Quran and Hadith, we were just unable to understand. Also, there are so many people who misunderstand the verses of Quran due to lack of knowledge or less understanding of Arabic language.

Similarly, a very common misunderstanding about Islam is that the Islam supports the idea of flat Earth.

Let's have a quick look at it from the beginning. There is a small group of people on the planet who think that the Earth is flat but elites project it as sphere/geoid to mislead the masses and to control humanity.

But a larger group supports the discovery that represents Earth as a geoid shaped planet.

Quranic interpretation concerning the Earth involves distinguishing between the Earth as a planet and the observable surface of the Earth, leading to different interpretations of specific verses.

## INTERPRETATION OF THE EARTH AS "FLATTENED"

و إلى الأرض كيف سطحت ﴿٢٠﴾

**And the earth: how it was spread out?**

(Surah 88 & Ayat No 20)

This specific Ayah (verse) is often cited as the most important evidence by those who believe the Quran describes the Earth as flat, noting that the Arabic word shares the root for "flat" or "flattened," and translations clearly state that it is "spread out".

However, scholars of Tafsir (e.g Tafsir Ibn Ashur) address this by explaining that the word used for Earth (الأرض) has two primary meanings in the Quran:

1. General meaning: The Earth as a whole planet created by Allah.
2. Specific meaning: The observable

Earth, land, or surface on which people stand.

Scholars conclude that in the context of this specific Ayah, the meaning is the surface, not the planet. This interpretation is supported by the surrounding verses which appeal to the sense of sight (rhetorical question: "do they not look?") and mention other observable things like camels, the sky, and mountains.

أَفَلَا يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَى الْإِبِلِ كَيْفَ خُلِقَتْ ﴿١٧﴾

**Do the (unbelievers) not look (observe) the camels: how they were created?**

و إلى السماء كيف رُفِعَتْ ﴿١٨﴾

**And the sky: how it was raised high?**

و إلى الجبال كيف نصبت ﴿١٩﴾

**And the mountains: how they were fixed?**

**And then comes this Ayah,**

و إلى الأرض كيف سطحت ﴿٢٠﴾

**And the earth: how it was spread out?**

(Surat 88 – Ayat No 17-20)

## INTERPRETATION OF THE EARTH AS "SPHERICAL"

خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ يَكُونُ اللَّيْلُ عَلَى النَّهَارِ وَيَكُونُ النَّهَارُ عَلَى اللَّيْلِ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ يَجْرِي لِأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۗ أَلَا بُرُوءَ الْعَاقِبِينَ ﴿٥﴾

**He created the heavens and the earth with Truth and He folds up the day over the night and folds up the night over the day. He has subjected the sun and the moon each is running its course until an appointed time. Lo He is the Most Mighty the Most Forgiving.** (Surat 39 - Ayat No 5)

This Quranic verse discusses creation as a whole, establishing the general meaning of Earth as a planet. One such verse uses an expression that originally comes from a word meaning (كُرَّة) "ball".

Scholars of Tafsir explained the word Yukawwir (often related to wrapping around day and night) to mean wrapping in the sense of wrapping something like a turban. Since day and night are being wrapped, this process necessarily implies that the Earth is round or spherical, as Yukawwir involves wrapping in a ball-like shape.

Furthermore, linguistic evidence shows that Arabs historically referred to celestial bodies using the word Aflak (أفلاك), which is the plural of Falak (فلك). Falak means "orbit," but also means a "sphere," and Arabs used it in various contexts when discussing something round.

## SCHOLARLY CONSENSUS AND HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

The understanding that the Earth is spherical is not new; it is what Muslim scholars have

always known.

1. Early Muslim scholars, dating back as far as the 2nd century (during the time of Caliph Al-Ma'mun), produced the Ma'munic map, which shows without a doubt that they knew the Earth was a sphere.

2. In the 4th century, the Muslim scholar Al-Bairuni was able to accurately calculate the diameter of the entire globe mathematically.

3. There is a unanimous agreement (Ijmaa) among the scholars of Islam that Earth is a sphere, citing examples such as Ibn Hazm and Ibn Taymiyyah.

It is important to note that interpreting the Quran without knowledge can lead to misunderstanding and sometimes misguidance. However, the exact shape of the Earth is considered knowledge that does not affect fundamental aspects of faith, such as prayer or worship, and should not be a cause of difference among Muslims.

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and leave wrongdoers therein, kneeling." (Surah Maryam 19:71-72)

True Intelligence and Real Success

When asked who is the most intelligent believer, the Prophet ﷺ replied:

"The one who remembers death the most and prepares best for what comes after it."

Thus, true intelligence is not worldly cleverness, but spiritual foresight.

## CONCLUSION

Purification of the soul is not optional—it is the very purpose of human existence. Without tazkiyah, knowledge becomes arrogance, worship becomes ritual, and life becomes empty. With tazkiyah, even small deeds become weighty, hearts become alive, and lives become meaningful.

May Allah purify our hearts, protect us from spiritual corruption, grant us sincere repentance, and make us among the truly successful—those who return to Him with a sound heart. **Āmīn**

LIFE AFTER

# Death

*(Room is lined up with books and sunlight is entering the room through window. Maulana Maududi is deep in his thoughts with a book in his hand. A young man, knocks on the door.)*

**Young Man:** Hello sir, I have heard your name. I want to ask a few questions to you on the topic of life after death as I am an atheist. Would you have time to address my questions?

**Maulana:** (Invitingly) Yes please come, have a seat.

**Atheist:** (After a brief pause, speaking respectfully but with confusion) Maulana, you speak so much about life after death in your books and lectures, but there is no scientific proof for life after death.

**Maulana:** (Smiling gently, in a composed and instructive tone) Young man! You ask whether there is life after death? Let me be clear on this: with our eyes, ears, and scientific tools, we cannot see or measure what lies beyond death. Science deals only with observable phenomena, so science can neither confirm nor deny life after death. Hence, to say “there is no life after death” in the name of science is, in itself, unscientific.

**Atheist:** (Leaning slightly forward, and furiously asking) Shouldn't we remain neutral? Why can't I simply say, “I don't know,” and live life without worrying about it?

**Maulana:** (Compassionately) My son, in theory you may easily say yes—but in real life, it is a clear no!

If a matter has no effect on your daily life, you may remain undecided. But what if the matter shapes how you live, what you fear, what you value, and how you behave? Such questions demand a clear position.

*(Maulana leaning forward and making eye contact with young atheist)*

Consider a man you must deal with daily. You cannot act without deciding whether to trust him or not. Even treating him as “doubtful” is, in practice, the same as mistrusting him. Likewise, neutrality about the Hereafter exists only in words. In real life, every person lives either as if there is accountability after death, leading to responsibility and restraint, or as if there is none, leading mainly to worldly gain.

So remember—neutrality is not truly neutral; it tilts toward denial.

**Atheist:** (Nods slowly, then asks thoughtfully) Even if I accept that neutrality is impractical, why should belief in life after death matter so much for morality? People can still do good and avoid evil without believing in any Hereafter. Why bring another life into it at all?

**Maulana:** (Calmly, as if guiding a student) My son, reflect on this simple example. Two people travel on the same train from A to B. One believes B is the final stop. He thinks that once he arrives, no authority will ever question him about what he did during the journey. Naturally, he cares only about immediate gain or loss in the journey.

The other traveler knows something more. He knows B is not the end, that the journey continues further under the same authority, and that a complete record of his conduct will be examined later.

*(Maulana removing his glasses)*

Will their behavior during the journey be the same, Son?

*(Tapping the back of young atheist)*  
Certainly not!

Both sit on the same train, yet their conduct differs. Why, my son? For one reason alone—accountability.

In the same way, belief or disbelief in the Hereafter determines the direction of every step in life. We are, therefore, obliged to decide whether life ends here or continues beyond death. If science cannot help us, we must turn to reason and rational reflection.

*(Maulana rests back on chair while looking at the young atheist)*

**Atheist:** (After a short silence, probing deeper) Alright—but even if belief in the Hereafter shapes moral behavior, why is another world necessary? Can't reward and punishment be fully achieved within this world itself?

**Maulana:** (With thoughtful seriousness looking outside the window) My son, reflect a little deeper. The laws that govern this universe ensure physical results, but they do not allow the full moral consequences of human actions to unfold.

A man may burn his enemy's house and escape punishment. A tyrant may ruin nations and die peacefully. At the same time, righteous men may suffer their entire lives without proper reward.

This world may be sufficient for man's body and animal needs, but it is utterly inadequate for the moral element within him.

That moral nature demands another world—a world where life is not limited, where ethical law is supreme, and where every action receives its complete and proper consequence. A world where truth and righteousness carry weight, not wealth and power. Both human nature and sound reason demand such an order.

**Atheist:** (Carefully choosing his words) But reason alone cannot prove that such a world actually exists.

**Maulana:** (Nods in agreement, keeping his hand on young atheist's shoulder) You are right, my son. Reason alone cannot prove that such a world exists; it can only show that such a world ought to exist. Reason reaches its limit there.

It tells us that this universe cannot fulfill the moral demands placed within human nature—but it cannot go beyond that point. It is precisely here that revelation guides us further. The Qur'an assures us that the world which reason and conscience demand will indeed come into existence.

The Qur'an declares that this present universe, governed by physical laws, will be destroyed and replaced by a completely new world with different laws. All human beings—from the beginning of creation to its end—will be resurrected. Perfect records of every deed and its consequences will be presented. Even human limbs and all affected elements will testify.

Allah, the Supreme Judge, will then decide every case with absolute justice. Rewards and punishments will be beyond worldly limits, as time, space, and natural laws will be entirely different. Good deeds whose benefits lasted for generations will be fully and eternally rewarded, while evil deeds that caused widespread and lasting harm will be fully punished, without escape or relief.

**Atheist:** (With eyes numb) So, Maulana, if I'm understanding you correctly, you're saying that science cannot give a final answer on this issue, staying neutral is not really possible in real life, human beings naturally long for justice, and this world often fails to deliver it. Because of that, another world becomes necessary—and the Qur'an assures us that such a world will indeed exist.

**Maulana:** (With calm certainty and assertiveness) Exactly. Reason points to it. Conscience demands it. Revelation confirms it. Belief in life after death is not an abstract idea—it is the key to a moral and meaningful life.  
(Pausing, then concluding gently)

My dear young man, I leave you with this

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# RELIGION

## THROUGH THE LENS OF CELEBRATIONS

Zameer Yameen

**F**estivals are special occasions celebrated by communities to mark religious, cultural, or historical events. They involve rituals, traditions, and collective participation that express shared beliefs, values, and joy. Festivals often symbolize gratitude, renewal, victory of good over evil, or remembrance of sacred events.

**Recently, we witnessed a series of festivities ranging from Eid, Holi, and Ganesh Chaturthi to Dussehra, Diwali, etc. Each celebrated in its unique cultural and religious manner.**

**Diwali, or Deepavali, literally means “a row of lamps.”** It is one of the most significant Hindu festivals. The festival symbolizes the victory of light over darkness and good over evil. Homes are illuminated with oil lamps (diyas), symbolizing inner awakening and the removal of ignorance.

In addition to its Hindu origins, Diwali holds meaning across faiths. **For Jains, it commemorates Lord Mahavira’s attainment of Nirvana, while for Sikhs, it marks Guru Hargobind Sahib’s release from Mughal captivity.**

**Ganesh Chaturthi, or Vinayaka Chaturthi, celebrates the birth of Lord Ganesha, the elephant-headed deity revered as the remover of obstacles and embodiment of wisdom.** Mythology describes how Goddess Parvati created Ganesha from sandalwood paste, and when Lord Shiva accidentally beheaded him, he replaced the head with that of an elephant, granting him divine life.

**Dussehra, or Vijayadashami, celebrates Lord Rama’s victory over Ravana, representing the defeat of evil and the restoration of dharma (righteousness).** Across India, communities stage dramatic enactments of the Ramayana, culminating in the burning of Ravana’s effigy. In eastern India, Dussehra coincides with Durga Puja, which celebrates Goddess Durga’s triumph over the demon Mahishasura — another allegory of virtue conquering vice.

### RELIGIOUS ETHICS AND ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Ironically, Hindu philosophy inherently promotes environmental reverence. **Ancient scriptures like the Atharva Veda personify the Earth as Prithvi Mata — the mother of all beings — while the Bhagavad Gita emphasizes balance and self-restraint. However, the pollution caused by these festival practices,**

**thus represents a departure from, not an expression of, respect for Prithvi Mata.**

### WHEN LIGHT BECOMES SMOG

The celebration of Diwali has become synonymous with fireworks. Firecrackers release high concentrations of Sulfur Dioxide, Nitrogen Oxides, and fine particulate matter (PM2.5), contributing to severe air pollution. Studies by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) show that PM2.5 levels in cities like Delhi often exceed 700 µg/m<sup>3</sup> during Diwali, far surpassing the WHO limit of 15 µg/m<sup>3</sup>. This leads to respiratory illnesses, eye irritation, and a temporary rise in hospital admissions for asthma and heart ailments.

**Ironically, a festival marketed to celebrate light and purity results in dense smog and toxic air — a striking contradiction between religious claims and environmental realities.**

### THE IDOL IMMERSION CRISIS

The visarjan ritual during Ganesh Chaturthi and Durga Puja causes severe water pollution. The widespread use of Plaster of Paris (PoP) and synthetic paints containing lead, mercury, and cadmium has led to contamination of lakes, rivers, and coastal waters.

**Post-festival studies have shown spikes in Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) and Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD) in water bodies, indicating reduced oxygen levels and harm to aquatic life. Municipal corporations often recover hundreds to thousands of tonnes of debris after immersion events — debris that includes non-biodegradable plastics, flowers, and metals.**

### SOLID WASTE AND RESOURCE STRAIN

These festivals generate enormous quantities of solid waste — from packaging materials and decorations to food leftovers. Single-use plastics dominate the markets during festive seasons, while electricity and water consumption soar. The result is an unsustainable strain on urban infrastructure, especially in densely populated cities. Clean-up operations cost municipalities crores of rupees, diverting funds from essential civic services.

### CAPITALISM AND THE COMMERCIALIZATION OF FAITH

These festivals have become economic engines for India’s consumer market. The religious calendar now doubles as a marketing calendar, with corporations launching massive sales campaigns during Diwali,

Ganesh Chaturthi, and Dussehra. Capitalism thrives on aspiration — convincing people that happiness and faith require material expression. E-commerce platforms like Amazon and Flipkart report billions in sales during “festive seasons,” with Diwali 2024 alone generating over 90,000 crore in online transactions. Automakers, jewellers, and real estate developers exploit the cultural notion of shubh muhurat (auspicious time) to drive purchases.

Television, digital platforms, and influencers flood audiences with advertisements linking spirituality to consumption — equating devotion with spending. This commodification of faith has created a cycle where identity and piety are expressed through material display. Capitalist exploitation operates subtly through emotional manipulation. Religious obligation is reframed as consumer duty — buying gifts, new clothes, or expensive idols becomes a marker of devotion. Even the poorest families often incur debt to keep up with social expectations. Political and corporate sponsorship of giant public pandals further commercializes what was once a communal act of devotion.

### FESTIVALS IN ISLAM

Eid celebrations, including Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha, hold deep religious and social significance for Muslims worldwide. Eid-ul-Fitr marks the end of Ramadan, a month of fasting, prayer, devotion and self-discipline, and is celebrated with special prayers, gratitude, charity (Sadqa-E-Fitr), family gatherings, and festive meals. Eid-ul-Adha, the Festival of Sacrifice, preceded by the purity of Hajj, commemorates Prophet Ibrahim’s devotion to God and emphasizes sacrifice, sharing, and compassion.

Beyond spirituality, Eid generates substantial economic activity. The circulation of zakat and charitable donations further supports vulnerable communities. Thus, Eid celebrations not only reinforce faith and social unity but also act as an important driver of local and national economic activity. These festivals not merely bring celebrations, fun, enjoyment but reinstates the essence of purity, sacrifice; breaks the chain of social and racial divisions; enhances the spirits of devotion, gratitude and patience. Hence these festivals reform the society.

### CONCLUSION

Festivals are more than just celebrations — they are the mirrors reflecting ideals and morals of religions. The careless and selfish celebrations reflects the vices of human spirit, however the responsible and inclusive attitude of celebrations backed by devotion, purity and gratitude reflects the virtues of the creator — The All mighty, Allah SWT.

# IS A *Professional* CAREER TRULY PLEASANT FOR WOMEN?



Islam is not merely a religion; it is a complete and practical way of life (Deen). This means that for every sphere of human life—personal, familial, social, economic, political, legal, and spiritual—Islam provides clear guidance and solutions. **The Qur’an and the Sunnah are the primary sources of this way of life.**

Today’s discussion revolves around an economic issue: **“Is a professional career truly pleasant for women?”** In this article, we shall attempt, *InshaAllah*, to analyse this question constructively.

Life cannot be sustained without money. The importance of economics in human life is immense. Food, clothing, shelter, education, and healthcare are fundamental human rights. To fulfil these, people must adopt means of earning. Generally, people pursue two types of legitimate occupations for livelihood—employment or business—and both must be lawful (halal). Without lawful earning, no one can secure these basic rights. Economics is one of the primary driving forces of human sustenance. That is why, after the obligatory Friday prayer, Allah has commanded people to disperse across the earth in search of livelihood and His bounty. He says:

**“Then when the [Jumu’ah] prayer is concluded, disperse within the land and seek from the bounty of Allah, and remember Allah often that you may succeed.”** (Surah Al-Jumu’ah: 10)

On the other hand, Islam always emphasises that women should acquire education, work, and move about in a modest and protected environment. Within the boundaries set by Shariah, women may certainly participate in education, economic activities, and social work. Islam has never advocated confining women to the house. Just as Islam stresses women’s education, it also grants them the right to become financially independent through work and trade. In Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 275, Allah declares:

“...Allah has permitted trade and has forbidden interest...”

This verse applies equally to men and women. Whatever lawful business a man may undertake, a woman may do the same—whether she is married or unmarried. She has full ownership and control over her earned wealth and can make any decision regarding her property without restriction, just as a man can. Nowhere in the Qur’an or Hadith is there any blanket prohibition on women working. Only two reasonable conditions have been imposed:

1. *The work or business must be lawful and within the limits prescribed by Shariah.*
2. *Modesty (hijab/purdah) must be observed.*

**Moreover, Islam prohibits women from engaging in professions that require displaying their beauty.**

We live in an economic age. The need for money today has increased manifold compared to the past. It feels as though without money, not only is dignified living impossible—even breathing seems difficult. In such a situation, depending solely on one family member’s income to meet all household needs has become almost unimaginable for many. The modern mindset believes life is extremely tough and crisis-ridden; therefore, instead of relying solely on the husband’s income, wives should also go out to work. This would help the husband financially, raise the family’s standard of living, and allow women to realise their professional potential. This narrative is undoubtedly attractive and difficult to reject. Consequently, we now see women leaving their homes in large numbers and crowding offices, markets, hospitals, airlines, radio and television channels—virtually everywhere.

Two fundamental questions arise here—one concerning family, society, and morality; the other purely economic. We must deeply reflect on the real consequences of women leaving

home en masse for workplaces.

When mothers leave infants and young children at home (or with domestic helpers) to go to offices or shops, those children are deprived of maternal love and care for most of the day and night. They end up being raised primarily by maids or nannies. It requires no argument to prove that a maid can never fulfil a mother’s role. Yet the most crucial need for the healthy development of young children is precisely their mother’s affection, tenderness, and nurturing lap.

**Meanwhile, the husband leaves for his job, and the wife leaves for hers—different offices, factories, or shops. The husband works alongside unrelated women; the wife works alongside unrelated men.** A major part of their lives is spent apart. It is only natural that cracks appear in the marital bond. Neither the husband’s authority nor the wife’s fidelity remains intact. Both become financially independent and absorbed in their own careers, status, and benefits. Their mindsets naturally diverge. In the end, the only remaining connection is often physical intimacy. But once financial independence is achieved and external opportunities abound, even that dependence diminishes. Mutual attraction inevitably weakens. Eventually, though legally husband and wife, they become little more than two individuals sharing a roof for the night. Divorce or complete estrangement becomes hardly surprising. Family peace, harmony, love, and emotional depth disappear, and the home is reduced to a machine for earning money. This is the natural outcome of such a lifestyle.

Furthermore, countless instances of sexual harassment and molestation in workplaces are before us today. Cases of illicit relationships, abandoning one’s family, and eloping with someone else have become everyday occurrences.

In addition, in India, women in workplaces are often paid less than men for similar work. According to the Periodic Labour Force

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