



## **A Ramadhaan Journal**

**Rozina Rajwadkar**

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### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The author gives a personal account of what motivates and sustains a Muslim during the Fast.

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**Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> September 2008**

**Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> Shaban 1429**

### **Sighting of the new moon**

'Ramzaan Mubarak, they've sighted the new moon', my husband announces to us all. The confirmation is always the beginning of the month then I think, 'Have I stocked enough toast in the fridge and cereal in the cupboard?' My husband has started on his ablution and ready for his 'taraweeh' prayers at the 'masjid'. The 'tarawaah' prayers are special in the sense that they can only be observed in Ramadhaan and done during the 'Esha' prayers with the congregation. My husband thoroughly favours the benefits of these prayers and rushes out of the door with the excitement of a little boy when he gets his Eid gift. I in turn have a quick shower and prepare for my taraweeh prayers at home, which is most favoured for women although the option of prayer in the masjid has never been closed. Whilst standing, I am transformed into another world where all I feel is the Qur'anic verses flowing through my head. Even though I pray five times a day, the zeal of these prayers is different to any other. I know that the rewards of these prayers are multiplied and Ramadhaan consists of doing extra good deeds that please Allah. I go to bed with the intention of waking up for my breakfast ('sehri'), just before dawn but there is a daunting thought in the back of my head. Will I wake up tomorrow in time for 'sehri'?

**Monday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2008**

**Monday 1<sup>st</sup> Ramadhaan 1429**

### **The first morning of Ramadhaan**

My morning begins with my husband giving me a gentle call and shake, reminding me to eat my sehri, the meal that should prepare me for the long fast ahead of me. I'm overcome with a strong sense of sleep and drift back to my previous state and subsequently, my husband gives me that loving stroke over my head and tells me to wake up. This is how each and every morning of Ramadhaan begins for me, from my Mum and Dad while growing up or now from my husband. The alarm clock shrills never quite gave me that warming feel as the call of my name from my loved ones does. I rise from my bed and made my way to the bathroom and from there the kitchen. I eat my two chapattis with some double cream, a bowl of mixed fruit



and my warming cup of tea. This is a sure-fire breakfast that is going to have to last until sunset; after all I have been fasting from a young age and know by now which foods will help last through the day. I also know that in the morning it is hard to stomach anything, so to eat at 4am in the morning is a test in itself! The time for sehri is over as we hear the 'adhaan' (the call to prayer) and do our ablution to pray for 'fajr', the morning prayer. This 'salaah' has many benefits to it, as it is believed that the angels of heaven are waiting for the believers to remember their Lord at the time when the world is asleep. Those who pray five times a day are promised 'Jannah' (heaven) and this reason in itself is motivating for a believer. The same can be said for fasting: the action itself pleases Allah immensely but it is an action that only Allah can see. Fasting is to attain piety, and piety cannot be obtained by a show.

### **Fresh temptation in the form of bread...**

I've felt the pangs of hunger many times whilst fasting, especially when I am able to smell the aroma of freshly made bread. But rather than eating the bread and thus breaking the fast that I so passionately woke up to keep, I go into the bakery, order a fresh loaf and take it home for 'iftari', the meal which I eat to break my fast. I know that when I break my fast tonight, I will have food ready on the table. Fasting is to attain piety, yes, but it is also to remember those more unfortunate than ourselves. That is why giving charity in this month is encouraged, so not only can we gain some rewards in the Hereafter but also help those who need the basic necessities we take for granted: clothes, food and water.

I fast because it is my duty as a Muslim to obey my Lord, but through fasting I achieve much more than an empty stomach. I gain the sense of control over temptations; I appreciate what I have been blessed with; and above all I cherish the unity I feel with the other Muslim brothers and sisters who feel closer to Allah by fasting.