

Ramadan – spirituality and self-discipline

The holy month of Ramadan, one of the most sacred periods in the Islamic calendar, commemorates the time when the Koran was first revealed to the Prophet Muhammad in Mecca around 1,400 years ago. Fasting during Ramadan is one of the five tenets of Islam

Devout Muslims attempt to recite Koran as much as possible during Ramadan. Most mosques recite one thirtieth of book each night during **Taraweeh prayers**

Ramadan aims to increase self-control in all areas, including food, sleep, sex and use of time

Fasting is intended to teach self-discipline, self-restraint and compassion for less fortunate

Islam uses lunar calendar, which means that each month begins with sighting of new moon. Because lunar months are shorter than solar months, Ramadan starts around 11 days earlier each year, in relation to Gregorian calendar used in most western countries



"Oh you who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that you may learn righteousness"
(Koran, al-Baqarah, 2:183)

Families and friends gather together to break fast at sunset meal of **iftar**. Only other meal – **sohour** – taken just before dawn

End of Ramadan marked by Eid al-Fitr – major celebration to end fast and thank Allah for giving help and strength to practise self-control during past month

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