

# The Messenger's Ramadan

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The Month of Ramadan is a blessed month. It's one of the most important seasons in Islam and has a great value and many virtues. It also is one of the greatest opportunities for us to come closer to our Lord and to gain Allah's pleasure. The best way to gain His pleasure is to follow the Messenger Muhammad, hence it's very important for us to look to the guidance of the Messenger – his actions and habits in Ramadan.





As eating is a big part of the month, we will begin by looking at how the Messenger ate in Ramadan – when, what, and how much he ate. First, he made sure to eat when it was the time to eat. He was very quick to break his fast, which means he did not pray the post sunset prescribed ritual (Maghrib Salah) until he would break his fast. He did not eat much at this time, rather he kept it light. That was his tradition. He would also delay his pre-dawn meal (Suhoor), all the way until right before the time of dawn (Fajr) came in. He wouldn't eat it early on in the night.



What did the Messenger eat in Ramadan? At the time of breaking fast post sunset, he used to eat fresh dates that were not fully-ripe (Rutab). If he didn't find those, he would eat ripe dry dates (Tamr). If dates were not available, then he would have some sips of water. For the pre-dawn meal (Suhoor), he recommended eating dates (the dry, ripe kind). The food he ate was small in portion and humble in preparation.





The Messenger lived in the desert of Arabia and it was very hot. What he would do sometimes if it would get very hot, even if he was fasting, is pour water on his head. Some of his disciples said, "I saw him pour water on his head while he was fasting." The reason he was doing that was due to the extreme thirst and extreme heat. What does this tell us? It tells us to be easy on our bodies. Allah does not want us to suffer. If you can make it easier on yourself to be energized for the act of worship then you can. Take a cold shower or turn on the A/C if necessary.



What other regular actions did the Messenger Muhammad take part in during Ramadan?

He increased in giving charity, reciting and studying the Quran (with the Angel Gabriel), and took care of his oral hygiene using a toothstick (Miswak).





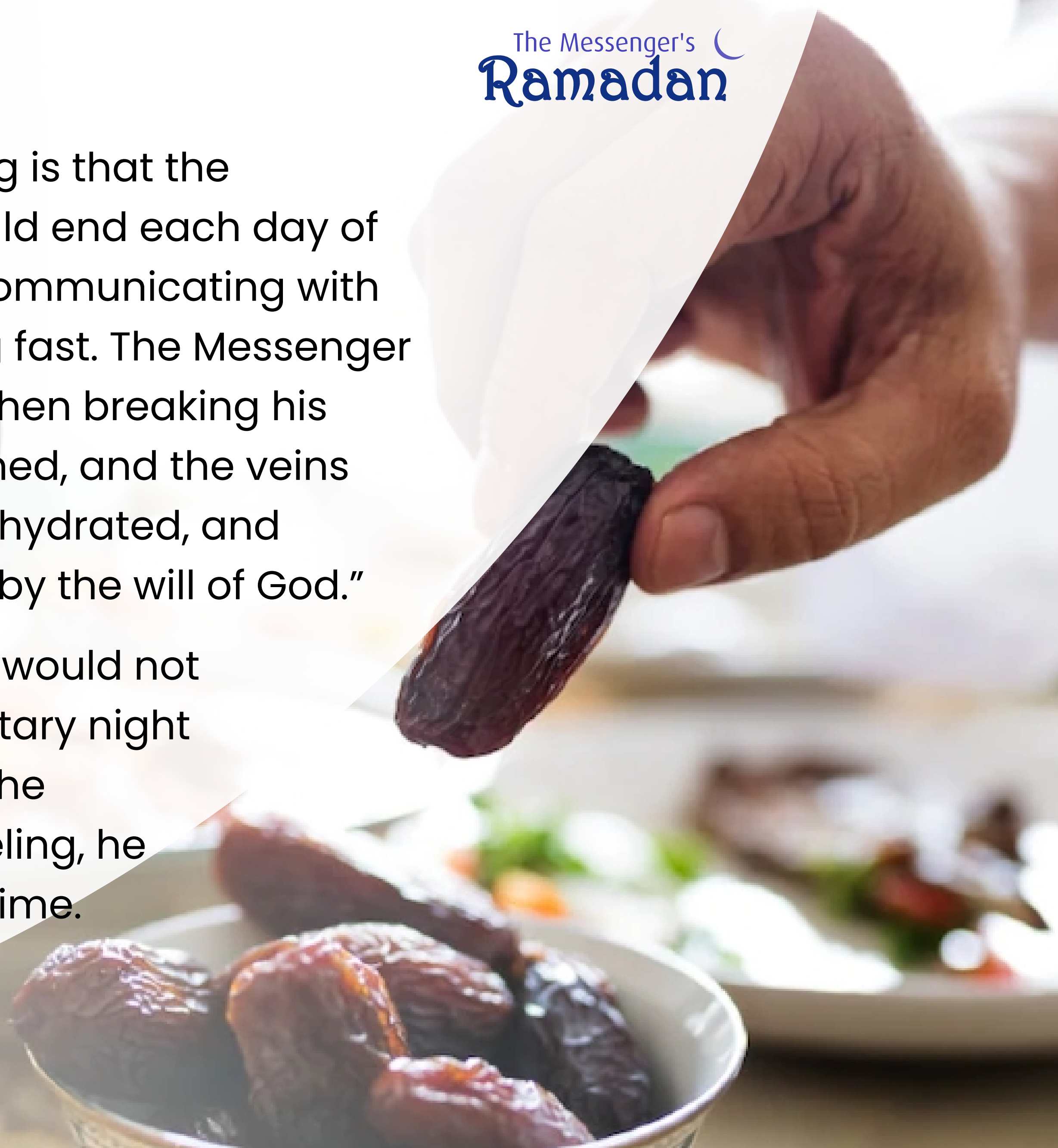
The Messenger Muhammad would travel during the month of Ramadan, at times. Sometimes he would fast, and sometimes he would break his fast while traveling, to showcase the concession and dispensation of ease. One of his disciples related, "The Messenger of Allah fasted while traveling and he also broke his fast while traveling." Whoever wants to follow his example can either break or not break the fast. Both are proper approaches based on one's condition.





Part of the devotion of fasting is that the Messenger Muhammad would end each day of fasting with supplication – communicating with Allah, at the time of breaking fast. The Messenger was reported to have said when breaking his fast, “Thirst has been quenched, and the veins have been made moist and hydrated, and reward has been confirmed by the will of God.”

The Messenger Muhammad would not leave off praying extra voluntary night vigil in or out of Ramadan. If he happened to be sick or traveling, he would make it up in the daytime. He would never leave it off.





During the Last 10 Nights, the Messenger Muhammad “tightened his belt,” and increased even more in worship, standing up in prayer for the whole night, going the extra mile struggling with himself and truly taking full advantage of this time. In humility and devotion, he combined all types of worship: Salah (the prescribed ritual devotion), Siyam (fasting), giving charity, reading Quran, remembering Allah, making supplications, reflecting and loving Allah, drawing nearer to Him, trusting in Him, fearing Him with reverence, hoping in His mercy and in His promises, reflecting and keeping himself into account,





repenting and eventually, all in all, combining all the attention of the heart, and focusing on Allah. It was his common practice to stay in isolation in the mosque in personal solitary retreat, and to keep a lookout for that special night, the Night of Special Virtue (Laylatul Qadr). Allah says in the Quran that this one night is better than a thousand months, meaning the reward of good deeds that you do in this one night is better than the reward of a thousand months in any other days of the year.





So these are the main aspects of the actions of the Messenger Muhammad, how he was in Ramadan. What we learn from all of these things is that he would use his time to get the most out of his fast. So he would do all the extra good deeds related to fasting itself. And he would follow the manners and recommended deeds as well and stay away from the forbidden things.

We ask Allah to guide us to follow and implement the example of the Messenger Muhammad, may Allah's blessings and protection be upon Him, during Ramadan, and always.