

Real Success: A Journey That Begins in Ramadan

As Ramadan enters our lives each year, it brings with it a shift—a moment of clarity where we step back from our daily routines and ask ourselves deeper questions. It is a month where we naturally reevaluate our relationship with Allah (swt), our priorities, and the direction of our lives. In this sacred time, we begin to ponder: **What does success truly mean?**

For a short while, the distractions of the dunya seem to fade. We fast, we increase in worship, we give in charity, we seek forgiveness. Suddenly, things that once consumed our time—social status, career ambitions, material possessions—feel less significant. Instead, we feel a deep sense of fulfillment in our ibadah, in our connection with the Qur'an, and in our moments of sincerity with Allah (swt).

But as soon as Ramadan ends, the test begins. The structure and discipline we built start to loosen, and the dunya quickly reclaims its hold on us. The real question then becomes: **How do we hold onto the mindset that Ramadan instills in us? How do we maintain a focus on true success—success as defined by Islam—not just during Ramadan, but throughout our lives?**

What is Real Success?

The world around us teaches that success is measured by what we own, how much we earn, the titles we achieve, or the validation we receive from others. But Allah (swt) defines success very differently: ﴿فَمَنْ زُحِرَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ﴾ **“And whoever is removed from the Fire and admitted to Paradise, he indeed is successful. And the life of this world is nothing but the enjoyment of deception.”** [Qur'an 3:185].

This verse forces us to reconsider everything we have been conditioned to believe about success. If all our efforts are centered on dunya—our careers, our wealth, our reputations—but they do not bring us closer to **Jannah**, then they are ultimately meaningless. The **real victory** is being saved from the Hellfire and granted entry into Paradise.

During Ramadan, this truth becomes clearer. We experience firsthand that contentment does not come from accumulating wealth or social status, but from drawing closer to Allah. The real test is **whether we allow this realization to reshape our entire approach to life after Ramadan ends.**

How Do We Achieve Success as Muslims?

If real success is **attaining the pleasure of Allah (swt)**, then it cannot be a concept we define on our own terms. It must be rooted in **obedience to Allah in every aspect of life**—our worship, family life, financial dealings, social conduct, and our role in the Ummah.

Many people restrict the idea of worship to just acts of personal devotion—prayer, fasting, dhikr—forgetting that **true servitude to Allah is much broader**. Success is found in **living by what Allah has commanded**, not just in personal rituals, but in how we engage with the world around us. ﴿فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا﴾ **“So whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord – let him do righteous work and not associate in the worship of his Lord anyone.”** [Qur'an 18:110].

This verse reminds us that **success is not just belief—it is action**. It is about living our entire lives in accordance with the laws of Allah, fulfilling His commands in our relationships, our work, our financial dealings, and in our responsibilities to society.

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) said: «إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ إِذَا عَمِلَ أَحَدُكُمْ عَمَلًا أَنْ يُنْفِقَهُ» **“Indeed, Allah loves that when one of you performs a deed, he does it with excellence.”** (Bayhaqi)

This hadith highlights that worship is not just about praying and fasting, but about performing **all duties in life—work, family, service to the Ummah—with sincerity and**

excellence. Success is in aligning every decision with **what pleases Allah**, whether it is in marriage, raising children, earning wealth, or enjoining justice in society.

True success is not found in a temporary state of heightened spirituality—it is found in **submission to Allah’s commands in every part of life, every day of the year.**

Ramadan often strengthens family bonds—we break our fasts together, we pray together, we encourage one another in good deeds. But as soon as the month ends, we return to our usual routines, and these moments become rare.

Success is not just about securing our own Akhirah (Hereafter); it includes guiding our families toward righteousness. ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ﴾ **“O you who have believed, protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones...”** [Qur’an 66:6].

True success is found in raising families who prioritize Islam, who center their lives around seeking the pleasure of Allah, and who recognize that this dunya is temporary.

Many people spend their lives chasing careers, believing that financial stability equals success. But Ramadan reminds us of something deeper—wealth is **only valuable if it is used in service of Allah.**

The Prophet (saw) said: «لَا يَحِلُّ لِعَبْدٍ أَنْ يَأْخُذَ مَالَ أَخِيهِ إِلَّا بِطَيْبِ نَفْسٍ مِنْهُ» **“It is not lawful for a person to take the wealth of his brother except with his happy consent.”** (Ahmad, Ibn Majah)

Success is not found in accumulating money, but in earning and spending it in a way that pleases Allah. If our financial success comes at the cost of **compromising our values, neglecting our ibadah, or harming others**, then it is not success—it is a distraction.

Islam does not promote an individualistic definition of success. The success of a believer is tied to the success of the Ummah. ﴿كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ﴾ **“You are the best nation produced for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah.”** [Qur’an 3:110].

A person who is only concerned with their **own** success while ignoring the condition of the Ummah has **misunderstood Islam.** Real success means standing for justice, reviving the Deen, and working toward the return of Islam as a way of life.

The real test of success is **not Ramadan itself—it is what happens after it.** Many of us fall back into old routines, losing the focus and clarity that Ramadan brought us. But if we truly understood success as **seeking the pleasure of Allah**, then Ramadan would be the starting point, not the peak.

The Prophet (saw) said: «أَوَّلُ مَا يُحَاسَبُ بِهِ الْعَبْدُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ صَلَاتُهُ» **“The first thing for which a person will be brought to account on the Day of Resurrection will be his prayer.”** (Nasa’i)

Success is not found in **moments of spiritual highs**, but in **lifelong commitment to Islam.**

May Allah (swt) grant us **true success**—not just in Ramadan, but in every moment that follows. «اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْفِرْدَاوسَ الْأَعْلَى» **“O Allah, I ask You for Al-Firdaws Al-A’la (the highest level of Jannah).”** Ameen.

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