



Imagine if you were married overseas with no relatives around you. Moreover you haven't seen your parents and siblings for years. Your children don't even know what their Nani's face looks like. Out of the blue, your mother drops a surprise call that the entire family is coming over to visit for one full month.

Can words ever express the level of excitement at home??? You would be over the moon. You would turn the house upside down cleaning and scrubbing, perhaps even applying a new coat of paint. A special menu would be planned and your pantry would be stocked up. Your house and family would be shipshape and ready for the very special visitors.

Why is all this done? ... Because these guests are very important to you.

As the day draws closer, the anxiety increases and the wait becomes unbearable.

This is exactly the condition of the pious with regards to the month of Ramadhaan. Some of them begin preparing for it six months in advance. When the moon of Rajab would be sighted, Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) would beg Allah Ta'ala to allow him to witness the blessed month of Ramadhaan.

We also need to prepare for this great guest by 'spring cleaning' the thick layers of dust that have settled on our hearts through sins and disobedience, and by patching up with those whom we have cut off ties with. Let us draw up a spiritual 'menu' of the different acts of worship that we would complete in this month, laying greater emphasis on completing all our past qaza salaahs.

When the 'big day' finally comes, and our guests finally arrive, we will spend maximum time with them. Perhaps we would stay awake the whole night catching up on the years of stories and 'panchaat'. We would never 'dump' them in the lounge and continue with our daily routine, or leave them at home and go for a stroll in the mall, or a night out with the friends!!! We won't even dream of allowing our children to go on an excursion, or spend their entire weekend in sport practice and league matches!!! Never! That's unimaginable! Why? Because they mean too much to us. In fact some might even freeze food in advance to spend more time with them.

If this great guest of Allah Ta'ala, the blessed month of Ramadhaan, means as much to us as well, we won't allow it to merely pass whilst we continue with our normal lives. Rather we would definitely spend maximum time 'in its company' and stay awake during its nights.