

American Christians Keep the Fast of Ramadan

Ramadan 1428 / 2007

To our Muslim brothers and sisters everywhere:

All praise and thanks be to the one God whom we all worship, who has called you to worship Him after the manner of al-Islam, and us to worship Him according to the gospel of Jesus, whom both faith traditions hail as the Messiah: it is our deep wish that God strengthen you in your devotion to God, your love of God, and your trust in God during this month of Ramadan, and that everything that you do for His sake may be pleasing to Him.

We have joined you in keeping the fast of Ramadan this year, as a freewill offering to God accompanying our prayer for peace, justice, and a spirit of love to grow among the peoples of the Abrahamic religions. It is our desire that all over the world, if God so wills, Muslim, Jew and Christian can learn to stand together in brotherhood in the sight of their Creator, and encourage one another in faithfulness and good deeds. But we are mourning many of the deeds of our government and our people, as they continue to involve themselves in the affairs of Islamic peoples, and the lives of Muslim detainees held at United States facilities, without sufficiently caring or understanding what they are doing to the people whose lives they affect. To our sorrow, we see many American Christians trusting, supporting, and following policy-makers whose guiding principle seems to be "let us do evil, that good may come of it," as if they did not know that our own scripture explicitly condemns it (Romans 3:8). In repenting our own complicity in this, we hope to lead our brother and sister Christians into repentance.

Our power to make the world's leaders humble themselves, question their own behavior, and let their hearts be turned, seems very small. And yet we draw hope from our certainty that we are listened to by the true Ruler of this world, the Turner of Hearts, who sees everything and holds all power. This month we curb our natural appetites during daylight hours to be more mindful of the One to whom we must return, the Highest, our Helper. We perceive, sadly, that many American Christians lack understanding of what it means to be a Muslim. How better to change that than for some of us to join the Muslim world in its Ramadan fast? We also hope that such self-restraint as we gain from the fast might help restore a spirit of self-restraint to the worldly culture of the industrialized nations, in however small a way, for on our learning self-restraint now seems to depend the saving of the world from ruin.

Advised by Jesus himself to fast privately and without open display (Matthew 6:16-18), we make ourselves available for responses to this communication but without identifying ourselves individually by name. May God comfort you, sustain you in hope, and bestow on you every blessing.

Ramadan Fasters of Christ
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