

# The Nights and Days of the First Ten of Dhū al-Ḥijjah Are Superior to All Others in the Year

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## Ḥadīth of Ibn ‘Abbās (raḍiya Allāhu ‘anhumā)

The Messenger of Allāh (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam) said: “There are no days in which righteous deeds are more beloved to Allāh than these ten days.” They asked, “O Messenger of Allāh, not even jihād in the path of Allāh?” He replied, “Not even jihād in the path of Allāh—except for a man who goes out with his life and wealth and returns with neither.”

*Narrated by al-Bukhārī, Abū Dāwūd, and al-Tirmidhī (this wording is al-Tirmidhī’s).*

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## 1 ▪ Statement of Imām Ibn Taymiyyah

“To devote the ten days of Dhū al-Ḥijjah to worship, night and day, is better than a campaign in which one does not lose his life and wealth.”

*Al-Fatāwā al-Kubrā 5/342*

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## 2 ▪ “Days” Here Includes the Nights

Ibn Taymiyyah explains in *Mukhtaṣar al-Fatāwā al-Miṣriyyah*:

*The Companions (may Allāh be pleased with them) said:*

“O Messenger of Allāh, if a day is like a whole year, will the prayer of one day suffice for it?”

He answered, “**No; rather, estimate its measure,**” meaning both its day and its night.

Thus the word **day** may intend the night, just as the word **night** can intend the night together with its day—• as in His saying, “**Your sign is that you shall not speak to people for three days**” (3 : 41), and elsewhere “**for three nights, sound and whole**” (19 : 10);

• and as in his sayings “**the Day of ‘Arafah**” and “**If he misses standing on the Day of ‘Arafah,**” which mean the day and the night that follows;

• likewise his saying “**He observed retreat (i’tikāf) for the ten**” includes the nights;

• and His saying “**We appointed for Mūsā thirty nights**” (7 : 142) includes the days.

Ibn Rajab says in *Laṭā’if al-Ma’ārif*:

“When ‘days’ is left unrestricted, the nights that follow them are understood to be included.”

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## 3 ▪ The Oath «وَلَيَالٍ عَشْرٍ» – “By the Ten Nights” (89 : 2)

**Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī** writes:

“The correct view is that it refers to the ten of al-Adhā,” i.e., the first ten of Dhū al-Ḥijjah.” This was also chosen by Ibn Kathīr and is the view of Ibn ‘Abbās, ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Zubayr, and others.

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## 4 ▪ Detailed Comparison

Ibn Rajab said: “This includes giving preference to deeds performed in the ten of Dhū al-Ḥijjah over deeds performed in any ten of all the months—including the ten of Ramaḍān.

*However, the obligatory acts of the ten of Dhū al-Ḥijjah are better than the obligatory acts of any other ten, and its voluntary acts are better than their voluntary acts.*

A voluntary act in these ten is not better than an obligatory act outside them—exactly as has been established regarding ḥajj and jihād.

Consequently, fasting the obligatory fasts of Ramaḍān is better than fasting the voluntary fasts of the ten of Dhū al-Ḥijjah, for the obligatory is superior to the voluntary.

Conversely, the voluntary acts of the ten of Dhū al-Ḥijjah are superior to the voluntary acts of the ten of Ramaḍān, and the obligatory acts of the ten of Dhū al-Ḥijjah are multiplied more than obligatory acts elsewhere.” (Fath al-Bārī 6/118)

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## 5 ▪ Early Exegetes

- **Mujāhid:** “No deed done in any nights of the year is better than a deed done in the nights of these ten.”
  - **Masrūq** commenting on “By the ten nights”: “They are the best days of the year.” (Ṭabarī 24/396)
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## 6 ▪ Final Verdict

Ibn Rajab says: “**The ten of Dhū al-Ḥijjah are superior to all others without exception—this regarding their days. As for their nights, some later scholars claimed the nights of Ramaḍān are better because they contain Laylat al-Qadr; this is exceedingly far-fetched.**”

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He is supported by **seven** considerations:

1. **Generality of the Prophet’s words:** “There are no days in which righteous deeds are more beloved to Allāh than these ten days.”

2. **Prophetic speech is decisive revelation:** It is binding, whereas all else is *ijtihad*. “Nor does he speak from desire; it is but revelation revealed.” (53 : 3-4)
3. **Problem for those who say the nights of the last ten of Ramaḍān are superior:**

Abū Hurayrah (raḍiya Allāhu ‘anhu) said: “*I heard the Messenger of Allāh (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam) say: ‘Standing an hour in the path of Allāh is better than standing the Night of Power by the Black Stone.’*” Narrated by Ibn Ḥibbān and authenticated by al-Albānī.

– “An hour in the path of Allāh” means **jihād**, yet the Prophet ﷺ declared that righteous deeds in the ten of Dhū al-Ḥijjah are even better than jihād—except for the one who leaves with his life and wealth and returns with neither.

– Normally jihād outranks voluntary worship, but the merit of these ten encompasses even jihād.

4. **A weak narration in al-Tirmidhī states:**

“There are no days more beloved to Allāh for worship than the ten of Dhū al-Ḥijjah: fasting each day equals fasting a year, and standing each night equals standing on Laylat al-Qadr; *and no nights are better than their nights.*” Abū Mūsā al-Maḍīnī also transmitted it through Ibn Ḥibbān’s route with this additional wording.

5. **Mentioning the virtue without restrictive detail** is more motivating and lifts resolve for good deeds.
6. **Therefore, it is best to cite the ḥadīth on the virtues of the days *and* nights of the ten of Dhū al-Ḥijjah without qualification, just as the Prophet ﷺ conveyed it—unrestricted.**
7. **Because of the widespread fatwā that the last ten nights of Ramaḍān are superior, some people have misunderstood and thought the virtue of Dhū al-Ḥijjah applies only to its days, not its nights, thereby missing great benefit—a notion denied even by those who prefer Ramaḍān’s nights.**

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## Conclusion

Relate the ḥadīth about the virtues of the ten of Dhū al-Ḥijjah exactly as the Prophet ﷺ did—**without limiting it to the daytime.**

Allāh knows best; all knowledge belongs to Him.

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