

How does the holy month (Ramadan) pass for Palestinian prisoners inside the Israeli occupation prisons?



Despite the pain experienced by prisoners due to the cramped spaces and the injustice inflicted upon them by the guards, and the harsh feelings of sadness experienced by them and their family alike during the month of Ramadan, they try to alleviate their suffering by creating an atmosphere similar to what they had experienced outside.

The blessed month of Ramadan comes to the prisoners every year, ripping their wounds apart, and leaving a mark of pain in every corner, as the tables of suhoor (pre-dawn meal) and iftar (breaking the fast meal) are prepared, family gatherings; unfortunately such spirit in the holy month lack their smiles and presence.

Suhoor and Iftar:

Prisoners begin to monitor their needs for food and supplies to submit them to the prison administration and demand their provision. Usually, the prison administration delays their response in providing these needs and does not provide sufficient quantities (of food) needed by the prisoners.



As for the cooking process, it starts from late afternoon until sunset, using a small electric hot plate. This happens after splitting the prisoners within the room into groups; a team that cooks, another that sets the table, a third for cleaning, and another for dishwashing.

The holy month imposes on the prisoners to break their fast collectively, so that the meals are gathered on one table; "there is blessing in gathering" - a saying within the Islamic culture. The same applies to suhoor, which is usually a low-calorie (light) meal.

Desserts:

Prisoners try to prepare some types of desserts, with the main ingredient being leftover bread instead of flour or semolina. They crumble it and add water or milk until it reaches the desired consistency.



Worshipping:

Prisoners try to change up the routine in the prison throughout the year, they seek to reduce the number of inspections and searches of walls and floors, in an attempt to minimize the intrusions of the occupation during the blessed month and demand that the prison administration respect the sanctity of this month. However, as is customary with the occupation, they do not keep up to any agreements or promises.

The Prisoners' Media Office sheds light on the lives of prisoners during Ramadan, describing prisons as beehives. Ramadan is not considered a month of laziness or sleep for prisoners; rather, it is a month of work and worship. Prisoners try to make use of every minute of it to read the Quran, perform night prayers, supplicate to God for the alleviation of their distress, and engage in other acts of worship.



As the weather intensifies after Dhuhr (midday) prayer, calmness spreads throughout the place until their bodies get some rest. Some of them resort to sleeping until 'Asr prayer (which is about 3-4 hours away from Dhuhr), some watch television, and some read. Though, each prisoner or group has their own rituals.



As the time for Taraweeh prayers approaches (by 8 PM), prisoners prepare lessons and sermons, as well as meaningful religious competitions. After the prayers, they are free to engage in various acts of worship according to their abilities, whether it's praying at night, reading the Quran, or studying.

Competitors vie to draw closer to God through acts of worship; one reads the Quran four times (fully), another ten times, one prisoner prays a quarter of the night, another half, and yet another the entire night, all hoping for reward and blessings.

Occupation Harassment:



The administration deliberately conducts daily and unexpected searches, disperses prisoners while they engage in religious activities (i.e: praying .. etc), removes many food items from the prison canteen, and provides poor quality, and insufficient quantity of food to prisoners in interrogation and detention centers like "Ofar" and "Hawara" and others. They also often deliberately delay Iftar meals for detainees in these centers until midnight, which is a horrible thing for someone who hasn't had any food or water for more than 12 hours.

Fasting in Islam:

Muslims are accustomed to fasting throughout the year. Some of them fast, following Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, on Mondays and Thursdays of every week, while others adhere only to what is obligatory, such as fasting during the month of Ramadan.

The month of Ramadan is a month that comes every year - its beginning is established and verified by the sighting of its crescent moon, confirmed through scientific and religious evidence.

During this month, Muslims fast from dawn until sunset, which is approximately twelve hours of fasting, although this duration may vary depending on the length of that period.

Fasting in Islam includes abstaining from all prohibitions (which they do on

regularly basis regardless). Aswell as complete abstinence from eating and drinking. This month has several benefits, and Muslims highly respect it, wait for it and cherish.