

#PERSPECTIVE

FASTING, READING, AND FAMILY

My journey through Ramadan's sacred moments

As a lanky child who resisted eating, fasting was easy. Passing hours without food seemed like an idea not too different from the rest of the year.

For a ten-year-old, Ramadan was like any other month, until Nani, my grandmother, gave it some purpose — for every day that I fasted, she would buy me a new book!

While Nani kept herself busy in the kitchen, I would read. Without ever realising how it had happened, I was immersed and fascinated by the length and breadth of human imagination. From the world of mystery, I got a healthy dose of Feluda, Teen Goyenda, and Sherlock Holmes. For adventure and sci-fi magic, I was drawn to Jules Verne and H G Wells. For a dose of laughter, Tintin and Asterix became my constant companions.

Yes, delectable iftars, too, were served on the table — sweet jilapis as incentives. However, what I remember the most is the whiff of fried cheese, one of my favourite snacks, which Nani would make especially for me. But it was not just the food that made those evenings special — it was the quiet companionship of everyone in the family. My grandmother's gentle presence, her stories from another time, and the promise of a new book made every day of fasting feel like an achievement.

Gradually, I was introduced to the joy that was sehri! Waking up at the dead end



of the night suddenly started to feel like a great idea. Everyone else in the family was doing it, and I felt left out whenever I accidentally missed the pre-dawn meal. As this was gradually becoming a habit, there was a subtle nudge to make Taraweeh a regular affair. People seem to undermine the beauty and effect of voluntary prayers these days, but I for one, was drawn to obligatory prayers through 'nafl'.

Those were the good old days, but as Ramadan returns every year, I find myself drawn to the same habits, as those childhood lessons have stayed with me.

My mother now has become the family

head, and I look forward to spending time with her, just like I used to do with Nani. Mum too, has lived her life and has stories to share, and the sacred month simply comes as an excuse for us to spend more time together.

Food remains a big part of Ramadan and the familiar aroma of iftar preparations still fills our home. As much as I appreciate my wife's healthier food experiments — there is still a part of me that craves the traditional deep-fried crunch. This makes our Friday cheat meals even more delicious and pleasing to the palate.

Despite all this, it often feels like Ramadan's sacred moments are slipping away faster than I can hold onto them. However, amidst the digital distractions, I make it a point to unplug when necessary, and carve out moments.

I make a sincere effort to reconnect with friends and family who no longer live close by. Although it can never replace the physical closeness of shared meals and prayers, these virtual connections remind me of the warmth that I once experienced.

Ramadan happens to be the favourite time of the year for me. With certainty, I am not alone in this — people across the globe take these blessed hours as an opportunity to come closer to piety. In a world constantly on the move, it offers a welcome pause and appreciate what matters in life the most. I find myself more grateful for these quiet moments, reminding me that even in the midst of life's chaos, the sacred moments always provide a sense of peace and purpose.

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Photo: LS Archive/ Sazzad Ibne Sayed



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