

The Spring of Our Hearts: The Second Ten Days of Ramadan February 28, 2026

**faqul`tu s`tagfirū rabbekum innahu kāna ghaffera- yur`sili-samāa `alaykum
mid`rāra wayum`did`kum bi-amwālin wabanīna wayaj`al lakum jannātin wayaj`al
lakum anhāra (sadaqallah) Surah Nuh 71:10**

“Ask forgiveness from your Lord; surely He is Most Forgiving, He will send rain to you in abundance, increase in wealth and children; and bestow on you gardens as well as rivers”

Through the mercy of Allah-u Ta’ala, We have completed the first ten days of Ramadan. For our inherently rebellious self, fasting is a challenging form of worship. Yet, we have been able to maintain it through the physical and spiritual support we received from Allah-u Ta’ala. Without His grace, without His Mercy, this would not have been possible. During the first ten days, fasting softened our hearts, and we became the receiver of His Rahma, His mercy, and compassion.

Hd. Mevlana (ks) likens the softened heart to the earth that becomes alive when rain and sunlight fall on it during spring months. He said, “When the sunlight falls on the earth, vibrant flowers bloom; yet, no matter how bright the sun, nothing grows upon a rock.” Our hearts follow the same law. When a heart is hardened like stone, it does not change or become alive, no matter how much grace it receives. A hardened heart is defined by its emotional detachment; it is a landscape where compassion and empathy cannot take root. It manifests as stubbornness, pride, a refusal to admit fault or to yield to divine wisdom. Such a heart instinctively assumes the worst in others, effectively insulating itself against hope, and the possibility of a spiritual awakening. Our hearts that are hardened by worldliness are softened by fasting. Only then may the divine light of Allah-u Ta’ala penetrate deep within, allowing divine inspirations to take root and blossom within our souls.

Spring is coming in a few months; soon the long winter months will be gone. A miraculous change will transform everything around us. Dormant trees and plants will begin to bloom. From the seed hidden under the ground, beautiful flowers will begin flourishing. Just as spring replaces the winter, Ramadan performs a miracle within us.

Ramadan is the month of spring for the hearts waiting to receive the mercy of Allah-u Ta’ala, just as the hardened soil waits for the rain and the sunshine to activate what is hidden inside in spring.

We are entering the second ten days of Ramadan. It is said that during the next ten days, Allah-u Ta’ala’s maghfirat manifests most intensely. Just as the darkness of

the harsh winter months disappears in spring to reveal the hidden beauty under the ground, our softened hearts will be opened to receive what is beautiful, and they will be closed to ugliness with the power of Maghfirat. What is the secret of Maghfirat? Maghfirat is a power that covers, shielding us from the consequences of our sins. Maghfirat, which is translated as forgiveness, is a quality that has been attributed to Allah-u Ta'ala in over 100 Surahs. The word Maghfirat is derived from the word ghufran, and it means to hide mistakes and shortcomings, not to expose them. And finally, this power erases and even forgives these errors.

Within this beautiful quality, another beautiful name, al-Ghaffar, is hidden. The light of Ghaffar makes what is beautiful visible, and covers what seems to be ugly, just as the spring covers the mud and grime of winter. In addition, His Maghfirat manifests together with his beautiful name Al-Ghafur, the Most-Forgiving One. Al-Ghafur hides faults and treats them as if they never existed, so that we will not feel shame in the hereafter. Thus Maghfirat is the manifestation of many divine attributes.

Seeing beauty and closing the senses to ugliness is the quality of those who love. So, Maghfirat must be the manifestation of another beautiful name of Allah: Al Wadud. He is the one who loves His servants. He is the one who covers the mistakes of the beloved, who erases and forgives. Maghfirat is a quality of Allah-u Ta'ala He loves to exercise most. He loves to see His servant coming closer to him with sincere repentance, seeking forgiveness so that He would pardon him. Another term that is derived from the same root is istighfar. It means to ask forgiveness. Many scholars believe that istighfar is a condition to forgiveness. That is, the servant first must want to be forgiven and act upon it with repentance. Istighfar is verbally seeking forgiveness.

Consider the most forgiving person you have ever known in your life, and how they forgive you the moment you apologize, effortlessly dropping any grudge the instant you express regret. Yet, compared to Al-Ghafur, the All-Forgiving, such forgivingness is not even worth mentioning. Simply saying "I'm sorry" and acknowledging that Allah is always ready to accept your apology can be deeply comforting. However, seeking forgiveness, known as istighfar, is an important aspect of a broader practice of turning back to Allah. It is an acknowledgment of one's shortcomings expressed verbally. Istighfar is specific to the tongue. Maghfirat is the divine response we receive from Allah for the istighfar as we implore and request.

Istighfar is a form of dhikr, of remembrance. It is turning to Allah-u Ta'ala through humble acknowledgment of our shortcomings. This is the beginning of Maghfirat. In comparison to the other forms of dhikr, istighfar holds a unique priority in one's spiritual practice. Before the heart can be adorned with the beauty of praise, it must first be purified through the grace of seeking forgiveness.

Imagine that you have a long white robe that you want to embellish, but you realize that it has a coffee stain. Do you embellish the robe with the stain? What do you

do first? Remove the stain or embellish? We wash out the stain first. Istighfar is an attempt to remove the stain. Saying Astagfirullah, feeling regret and repentance, is like removing the stain. All the other forms of dhikr are like beautiful adornments that will embellish the garment.

As we approach the second ten days of Ramadan, May Allah remove the stains in our hearts as we ask forgiveness with istighfar, with sincerity. May He embellish our hearts with His beautiful attributes. May He enable us to conduct ourselves with His beautiful attribute of Maghfirat by covering each other's faults, forgiving each other's mistakes, allowing us to have mercy and overlook each other's missteps. May Allah protect all our brothers and sisters all around the world who are suffering. May He unite us as we are united around the iftar tables.

Yurdaer Al Latif Al Jerrahi