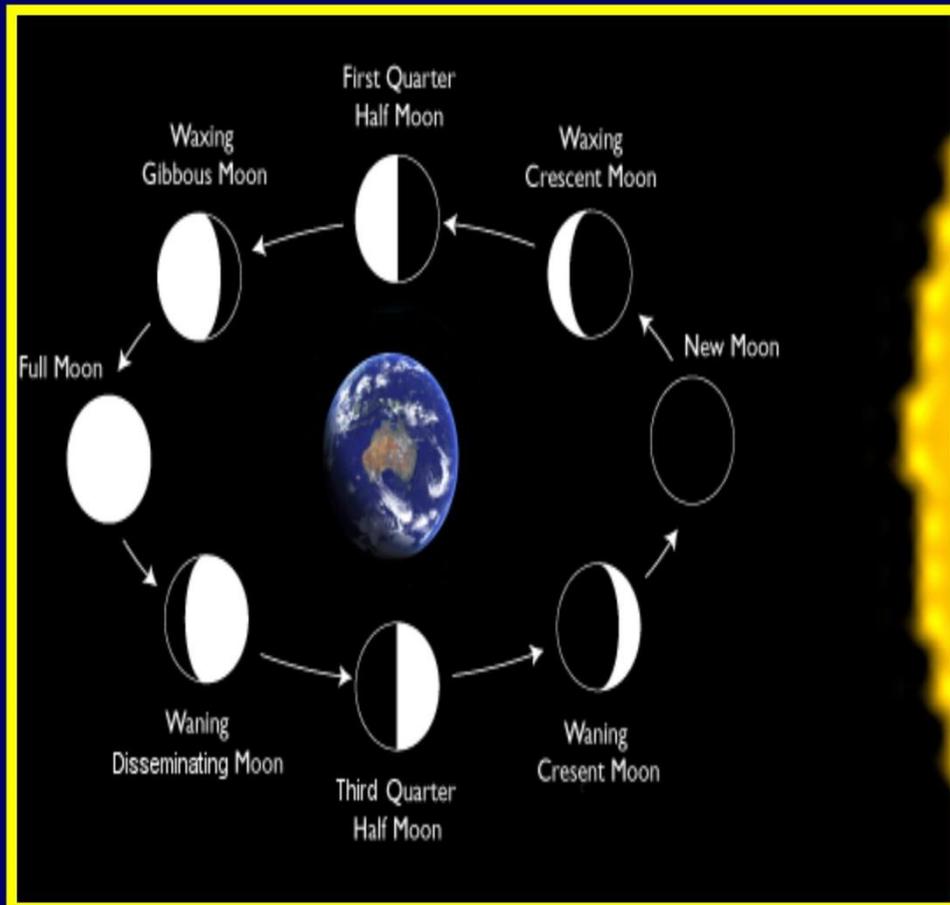


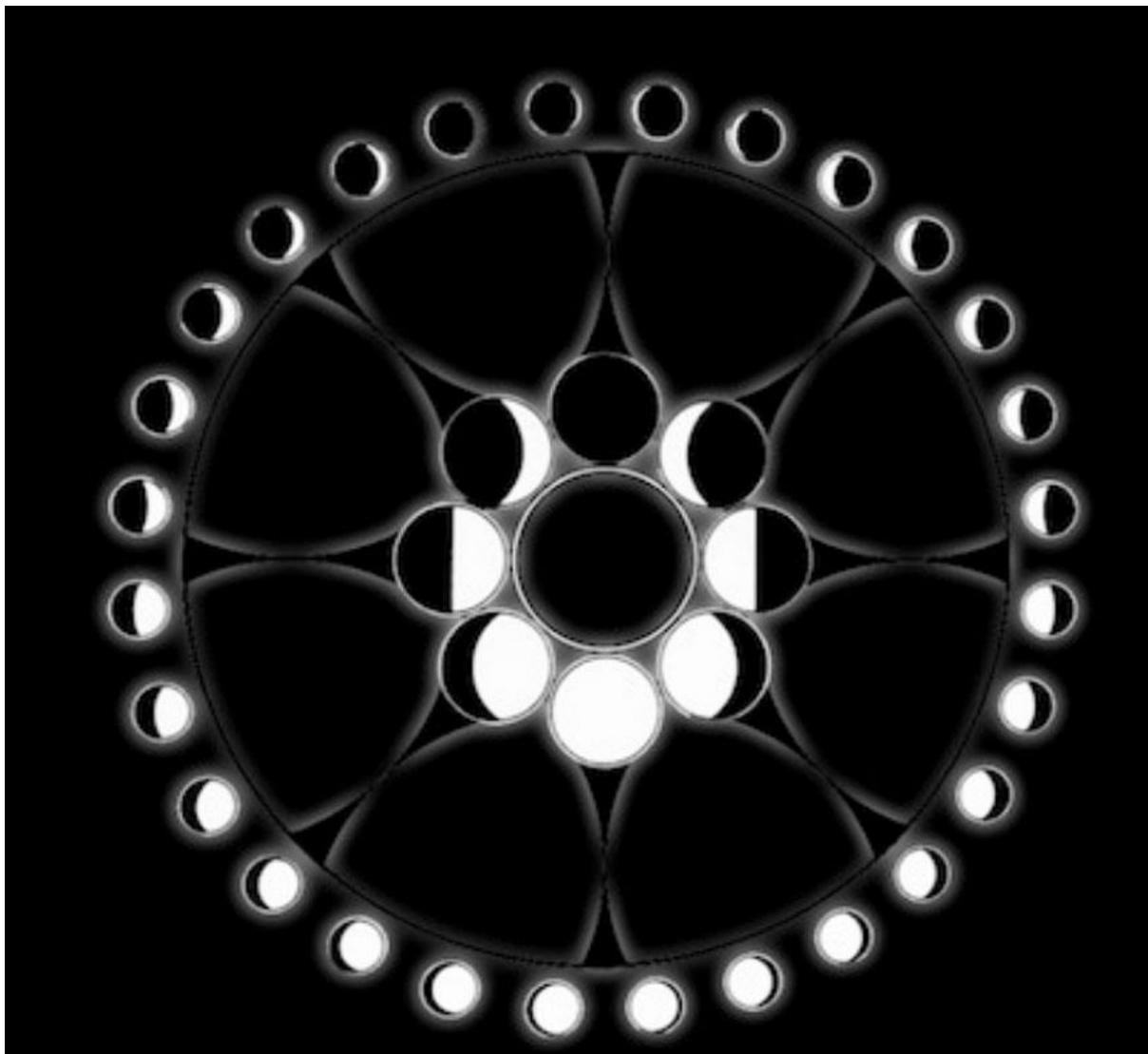
# RAMADAN REMINDERS



**MOHAMMED LAMINU DANGATA**

**TOWARDS INTELLECTUAL, SPIRITUAL, MORAL, MATERIAL AWAKENING!**

# RAMADAN REMINDERS



MOHAMMED LAMINU DANGATA

TOWARDS INTELLECTUAL, SPIRITUAL, MORAL, MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT!

# CONTENTS

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

DEDICATION

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

INTRODUCTION

## CHAPTER 1

**SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MONTH OF RAMADAN**

## CHAPTER 2

**DETERMINING THE BEGINNING OF RAMADAN**

## CHAPTER 3

**THE RAMADAN FAST**

## CHAPTER 4

**THE BONE OF CONTENTION**

## CHAPTER 5

**RULINGS ON FASTING**

## CHAPTER 6

**FURTHER DIMENSIONS OF FASTING**

## CHAPTER 7

**THE TARAWEEH PRAYER**

## **C**HAPTER 8

**ITIKAF (SECLUSION)**

## **C**HAPTER 1

**EID UL-FITR AND ZAKAT UL-FITR**

**CONCLUSION**

**GLOSSARY**

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

**M**ohammed Laminu Dangata is a Ghanaian and Salaga born and bred. He is a servant of Allah(swt), whose preoccupation is pursuing research into problems and challenges in Islam, with emphasis on Religious Sectarianism and Secularism.

## DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to Muslim students of University of Professional Studies, Accra (UPSA), for their assistance and encouragement.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Every write-up, of course, reflects the work of a team that includes the author, other writers, interviewee(s), proofreader(s), typist(s), editor(s), printer(s), publisher(s), distributor(s), and other contributors.

I therefore express my heart-felt gratitude to all those who have contributed immensely towards the completion of this book. Especially, my appreciation goes to all those who have taken my words and given them shape. My thankfulness is due to all, for they have really done a good job and in fact worked miracles seeing to the completion of this write-up.

Thoughtfully, as a token of my everlasting gratitude, the following Branches of the Ghana Muslim Students Association (GMSA) with their respective institutions do indeed deserve a special mention for their co-operation: GMSA, U.P.S Branch; GMSA, ACCE Branch; and GMSA, UG, Legon Branch; as well as the College of The Holy Qur-an, Madina, Accra.

Finally, I would appreciate further contributions in respect of this project, so I am contactable at the following: [ibomld2000@gmail.com](mailto:ibomld2000@gmail.com).

## INTRODUCTION

**In The Name of Allah, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful!**

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ  
مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

“O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may guard (against evil).” Qur-an 2:183

“Ramadan Reminders” covers issues pertaining to Ramadan Fasting and other things related to it, casting light on the following subjects: SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MONTH OF RAMADAN, DETERMINING THE BEGINNING OF RAMADAN, THE RAMADAN FAST, THE BONE OF CONTENTION, RULINGS ON FASTING, FURTHER DIMENSIONS OF FASTING, THE TARAWEEH PRAYER, ITIKAF (SECLUSION), and EID UL-FITR AND ZAKAT UL-FITR.

It therefore reminds us of the need to get intellectually, spiritually, morally, and materially prepared to welcome the Month of Ramadan by knowing and understanding what it takes to enter into that Month and to embark on Fasting in it.

**RAMADAN MUBARAK! RAMADAN MUBARAK!! RAMADAN MUBARAK!!!**

# CHAPTER 1

## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MONTH OF RAMADAN

**Allah's chosen month:** The Holy Prophet (pbuh) said, "The month of Ramadan comes to you. This is a blessed month." (kitab-ul-Saum). He declared this month as the "Month of Allah" because one abandons all otherwise "lawful" things in the Way of Allah. And it is the "Chief of the Months," according to him.

Worship in this month is more rewarding than in any other month, so we need to avail ourselves of such matchless Favour by seeking Allah's Pleasure, needn't we?

It is worth welcoming, isn't it?

**Ramadan-- Anniversary of Holy Qur-an:** Ramadan is that blessed month in which the Holy Qur-an was first revealed to the Holy Prophet (pbuh). During this month, at night, the Holy Prophet (pbuh) used to recite the Holy Qur-an in its entirety with angel Gabriel (Jibreel). In the light of this, the fasting Muslim is obliged to recite the Holy Qur-an as much as possible.

The very "kitabullah," the Book of Allah, has thrown light on this: "The month of Ramadan is that in which the Quran was revealed, a guidance to men and clear proofs of the guidance and the distinction; therefore whoever of you is present in the month, he shall fast therein, and whoever is sick or upon a journey, then (he shall fast) a (like) number of other days; Allah desires ease for you, and He does not desire for you difficulty, and (He desires) that you should complete the number and that you should exalt the greatness of Allah for His having guided you and that you may give thanks." Qur-an 2.185

**Opening The Doors to Heaven:** Hazrat Abu Hurairah (R.A) has narrated that the Holy Prophet (pbuh) said: "When the month of Ramadan starts, the doors of heaven are opened, the doors of hell are closed, and Satan is put into chains." (Sahih Muslim Kitab-ul Saum)

**Question:** Since the devils, the cause of human sins, are chained during Ramadan, why do some fasting Muslims still commit sins?

### ANSWER:

Not only the devils but also our *nafs* cause us to commit sins. The harm of the *nafs* is much more than that of the devil. Every desire of the *nafs* is to its own loss. What drives us into sins in Ramadan is our *nafs*. The devils cannot insinuate evil suggestions (*waswasa*) as they are tied. In Ramadan, yawning is not from the devil. Stress-related yawns happen for such reasons as fatigue or lack of sleep. **(Maktubat-i Rabbani)**

**Ramadan's Special Relationship With Tahajjud Prayers:** Hazrat Abu Harairah, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "A person who gets up at night for Prayer and fulfills all requirements of his faith with an intention of receiving blessings during the month of Ramadan is forgiven all his past sins."

**The Blessed Night (Lailatul\_Qadr):** "Verily, We sent it (the Qur'an) down in the night of al-Qadr (Decree)... the night of al-Qadr (Decree) is better than a thousand months, i.e. 83 years four months. Therein descend the angels and the Ruh [Jibril (Gabriel)] by Allah's Permission with all Decrees. All the night, there is peace (and Goodness from Allah to his believing slaves) until the appearance of dawn." Qur-an 97: 1-5

Attainment of Blessings of this Blessed Night through that very night's Worship is without doubt better in terms of rewards than a thousand months accepted Worship in other months, days, or nights. So let's always remember and consider that.

Indeed, it is in this very month and this very night that all matters of ordainments are decreed by Allah; that is, matters of deaths, of births, of provisions, calamities for the coming year, etc.

**Unparallel Rewards:** The rewards given for the voluntary Prayer, Remembrance of Allah, Alms, and all other acts of Worship done in this month are like those given for the obligatory ones done in other months. One obligatory act of Worship done in this month is like seventy obligatory acts of Worship done in other months.

If a person gives Iftar to a fasting person in this month, his or her sins will be forgiven. He or she will be emancipated from Hell. In addition, he or she will be given as many rewards as those which the fasting person receives, and the rewards of that fasting person will not decrease in the slightest degree.

**Month of Bounteous Mercy:** In this month, thousands of those Muslims who are to go to Hell are forgiven and emancipated every night.

An obligatory *namaz* becomes atonement for the sins committed up to the next *namaz*. A Friday becomes atonement for the sins committed up to the next Friday. **The month of Ramadan becomes atonement for the sins committed up to the next Ramadan. [Tabarani]**

The beginning of Ramadan is mercy. Its middle is forgiveness, and its end is emancipation from Hell. **[Ibn Abi ad-Dunya]**

## CHAPTER 2

### DETERMINING THE BEGINNING OF RAMADAN

The onset of Ramadan is confirmed by sighting the new moon or by completing thirty days of Shaban, the preceding month. That is to say, the beginning of Ramadan is determined either by sighting its crescent after the sunset of the 29th day of Shaban or, if the crescent is not seen, by completing 30 days of Shaban.

This means that on the 29th day of Shaban, directly after the sun sets, Muslims look towards the western horizon, and if the crescent (of the new moon) is seen, the following day will be the first day of Ramadan. If it is not seen, because of cloud cover or another reason, then the next day will complete 30 days of Shaban, and the day after that is the first day of Ramadan.

This is supported by the following Hadith of the Prophet related by al-Bukhari and Muslim: “Do not fast one or two days before Ramadan. Start the month when you see the crescent and end the month when you see the crescent. If you are blocked from seeing it, complete Shaban 30 days.”

The following conditions ought to be met in order for someone’s testimony to be acceptable to the duly constituted council of Ulema, the Muslim Authority: he must be Muslim, male, adolescent, free (not a slave), clear of enormous sins, clear of having his small sins outweighed his acts of obedience, and one who abides by the ethics and manners of the people of one’s class.

The Ulema (Islamic Scholars) confirm the beginning of Ramadan if one upright Muslim, whose testimony is acceptable to them, bears witness that he saw the crescent. This fact is supported by the Hadith related by Abu Dawud from Abdullah Ibn Umar who said something to the effect that he told The Prophet (pbuh) that he had sighted the crescent and, consequently, The Prophet (pbuh) fasted the next day and ordered others to do same.

For some, using calculations to determine the commencement of Ramadan is bid’ah, for the prophet (pbuh) clearly states: “Fast when you see it (the new moon) and break your fast when you see it.”

But let’s not dispute reasonable argument; technological advances in astronomy in respect of weather satellites and telecommunications have made it unnecessary for Muslims to worry about the then weather and communication problem connected with sighting the crescent moon and disseminating information about it.

The then limited knowledge about the weather and the moon?--- “Narrated by ibn Umar: The Prophet (pbuh) said, “We are an illiterate nation; we neither write, nor

know accounts. The month is like this and this, i.e. sometimes of 29 days and sometimes of 30 days.' "Moreover, it is narrated by abu Huraira: The Prophet or Abu-I-Qasim said, "Start fasting on seeing the crescent (of Ramadan), and give up fasting on seeing the crescent (of shawwal), and if the sky is overcast (and you cannot see it), complete thirty days of shaban.

The end of Ramadan, like its beginning, is determined by sighting the crescent of Shawwal if Ramadan is 29 days, or by completing Ramadan with 30 days, just as in determining the other months of the lunar calendar.

# CHAPTER 3

## THE RAMADAN FAST

Fasting is the fourth pillar of Islam. It is an act of worship which is carried out by a Muslim who intends to abstain from eating, drinking, and performing other acts, which are otherwise allowed, such as marital sex from dawn to sunset, as well as from the unlawful, from dawn to sunset for 29 or 30 days in the month of Ramadan, as a way of improving their moral and spiritual conditions, among others.

### **A fasting Muslim must abstain from the following:**

- Food and drink
- Sexual intercourse
- Masturbation
- Self-induced vomiting

If the fasting person has got caught up in any of the preceding acts deliberately, then their fasting is null and void.

### **Who is Obligated to Fast?**

Fasting is an obligation on every adult, sane, settled [i.e., not travelling] Muslim who is able to fast and has nothing that can prevent him or her from doing so, such as hayd [menstruation] or nifaas [post-natal bleeding].

A person is deemed to have reached adulthood when anyone of the following three things occurs: emission of semen, whether in wet dream or otherwise; growth of coarse pubic hair around the private parts; attainment of fifteen years of age.

In the case of females, there is a fourth, namely menstruation; when a girl reaches menarche (starts her periods), she is obliged to fast even if she has not yet reached the age of ten.

Children should be instructed to fast at the age of seven, if they are able to, and some scholars said that a child may be smacked at the age of ten if he or she does not fast, just as in the case of Salat (Prayer). The child will be rewarded for fasting, and the parents will be rewarded for bringing him or her up properly and for guiding him to do good.

Of course, the child might be enthusiastic about fasting and is capable of doing it, but their parent(s) may prevent them from doing so, out of alleged pity for them, forgetting that they need to be indoctrinated in such religious values.

In the case of the Muslim girl, extra attention must be paid to her fasting, especially when she attains maturity. This is for the obvious reason that, out of shyness, she may fast when she is in her period and may not make up the fast later.

If someone embraces Islam or a Muslim child reaches puberty or an insane Muslim comes to their senses during the day (fasting period), they should refrain from eating for the rest of the day, since they are now among those who are obliged to fast. However, they do not have to make up for the days of Ramadan that they have missed, for they were not under the category of those who are supposed to be faithful to their religious obligation of fasting at that moment.

The insane are not responsible for their deeds because their deeds are not being recorded by the recording angels. But if they are insane at times and sane at other times, they must fast during their periods of sanity. Thus they are excused during their periods of insanity. If they become insane in some part of the day, their fasting is still valid, just as in the case of a sleeping person or of unconsciousness resulting from illness or some other reasons. This is so because they had the intention of fasting when they were sane. A similar case is the ruling governing epileptics.

If someone does not know that it is fard (obligatory) to fast in the month of Ramadan, or that it is haram or forgets to eat or have sexual intercourse during the day in this month, then according to the majority of Ulema (Islamic scholars), such excuse is acceptable.

## **Who is Exempted From Fasting?**

Any person who falls under these categories is **permanently** exempted from fasting:

- The insane or mentally handicapped
- The elderly and permanently ill, whom fasting may pose a danger to their health. E.g. kidney disease, certain diabetes, etc.
- Persons who are in need of taking regular oral medication to maintain their health.

Any person who falls under these categories is **temporarily** exempted from fasting and should make up the missed days once they fall out of the category:

- The person who is sick and whose sickness may be prolonged or become worse due to fasting
- Women who are pregnant or are nursing

- Women who are having menstrual period or who are experiencing post-partum bleeding (the combination of blood loss and fasting could damage their health)
- People who are travelling may also break their fast if they feel that keeping it will harm them.

## **THE INTENTION TO FAST**

It is obligatory for the fasting person to make their intention before the appearance of dawn, for the prophet (pbuh) said: “Whoever does not intend to fast before dawn, there is no fast for him.” (al-tirmidhi)

Remember, good intention is sincerity, so after having believed, one ought to intend to please Allah and Allah alone by acting according to the prescribed rules of fasting, devoid of any show of piety and of righteousness.

And remember, intention is made within the heart, thus uttering it verbally is against the established tradition of The Prophet (pbuh) or of his companions (may Allah be pleased with them).

Generally, the intention is declared at the beginning of Ramadan by resolving within the heart to fast for either 29 or 30 days. If the intention is interrupted by breaking the fast due to travel or sickness, they have to renew the intention to fast when the reason for breaking the fast is no longer present.

Specifically, however, the following daily Supplication/Intention should be made at the time of the dawn meal (Suhoor): Wa Bisawmi Ghadinn Nawaitu Min Shahri Ramadan. (I intend to keep the fast for tomorrow in the month of Ramadan.) [abu Dawud]

If a Muslim does not know that Ramadan has started until after dawn, they have to stop eating and drinking for the rest of the day and have to make that day’s fast up later on, according to majority of scholars, because the prophet (pbuh) said: “There is no fasting for the one who does not have the intention to fast from the night before.” (Reported by Abu Dawood, 2454)

## **THE TIME FOR BEGINNING THE FAST**

There are two types of Fajr: (False and True Fajr)

- a) False Fajr- at this time, it is unlawful to pray Fajr (dawn) Prayer but it is permissible to eat suhoor (predawn meal). This is distinguished by rising vertical white line which appears like the tail of wolf.

- b) True Fajr- at this time, it is lawful to pray the Fajr Prayer, but is it unlawful to eat Suhoor (predawn meal). It is distinguished by a white light coming across the horizon in the east. Thus one should stop eating and drinking before the True Fajr.

The prophet (pbuh) said, "The Suhoor is a meal of blessings, so do not leave it, even if one of you takes just a sip of water, since Allah sends Mercy and His angels seek forgiveness for those who take Suhoor." (Ahmad)

## **ACTIONS WHICH NULLIFY THE FAST**

- . Kufr (disbelief)
- . Poor intentions
- . Intentional eating and drinking
- . Menstruation (hayd) and post natal bleeding (nifaas)
- . Deliberate vomiting
- . Taking medications via the mouth
- . Taking injections or having blood transfusions

## **THINGS THAT DO NOT BREAK THE FAST**

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Prophet (pbuh) said: "Whoever forgets he is fasting and eats or drinks, let him complete his fast for it is Allah who has fed him and given him to drink." (Bukhari and Muslim)

- Cleaning teeth with siwaak (chewing stick)
- Having ears syringed (their inside cleaned) or applying ear drops
- Having a shower, bath, or immersing the body in water
- Involuntary vomiting
- Rinsing the mouth and nose
- Sexual intercourse after breaking the fast and before Fajr
- Being in a state of junub (sexually defiled by having intercourse or a wet dream) at the time of Fajr (i.e. a person is not required to perform ghusl...ritual bath...before Fajr).
- Delaying purification -- ghusl (bath) from menstruation till after Fajr (dawn) time.
- Nose bleeding

- Wet dream
- Emission of prostatic fluid.

## **THE MANNERS OF FASTING**

Eating the Suhoor (the predawn meal)

Hastening in breaking the Fast

Supplications while breaking the Fast

Refraining from performing any actions that do not befit the Fast

Using the Siwaak (tooth stick or brush)

Being generous and studying the Qur-an

Praying in the nights of Ramadan

“If you can’t say something nice, then don’t say anything at all,” according to the Prophet (pbuh).

## **VIRTUES OF FASTING IN GENERAL AND WITHIN RAMADAN IN PARTICULAR**

- A means of attaining Taqwa (Piety and Righteousness)
- A merciful Recommendation from Allah
- The practice of the Prophets (pbuh)
- It is rewarding
- A means of cutting sexual desires
- The supplications of the fasting person is granted
- A means of intercession on the Day of Judgment
- Umrah (the lesser Pilgrimage) during the Ramadan fast is equivalent to Hajj
- A means of Forgiveness
- A means of expiations for various sins, including hunting while in a state of Ihraam during Hajj, accidental killing of a person from a people with whom you have a treaty, and violating an oath.
- Fasting in Ramadan: A way to Paradise

## **DAYS ON WHICH FASTING IS PROHIBITED**

It is against the Shari’a to fast on the day of the Feast of Fitr (Id-ul-Fitr) and of the Feast of Adha (Id-ul-’Adha), as well as on the three days after the day of Adha, which are referred to as Tashriq. It is also forbidden to fast one or two days before

Ramadan, and the day of doubt, the first day of sighting the crescent; i.e. 29<sup>th</sup> of Shaban, when there is no evidence of the crescent being sighted.

## **QADA, KAFFARAH, AND FIDYAH**

### **Things That Require Qada (making up the missed days of fasting) Only:**

This Arabic word literally means “carrying out or fulfilling”. In Islamic jurisprudence, it refers to fulfilling or completing those duties that one may have missed due to one reason or others.

1. Eating or drinking intentionally. This includes non nourishing items taken through the mouth.
2. The beginning of menstruation or post-childbirth bleeding even in the last moment before sunset.
3. Ejaculation (pushing out sperm) for reasons other than sexual intercourse.
4. Intending to break the fast before sunset even if one changes one’s mind, since intention is one of the pre-requisites of the validity of fasting.
5. Eating, drinking, or having intercourse after dawn with the mistaken assumption that it is not dawn yet. Similarly, engaging in these acts before Maghrib with the mistaken notion that it is already sunset.

### **Things that require not only Qada, but also Kaffarah (penalty):**

Kaffarah is the expiation that must be offered if one deliberately does not fast or breaks a fast in the month of Ramadan without a valid reason. In such a case, one is liable to fast for two uninterrupted months, other than for making up the day’s fast which was invalidated by that act. A typical example of acts that require Kaffarah is sexual intercourse between dawn and dusk.

However, if one cannot fast as a result of some acceptable excuses, then one must feed the equivalent of 60 poor persons at least two meals on a single day, or each poor person two meals for 60 days.

Alternatively, one can make Kaffarah payment to any legitimate Muslim Authority.

Before the days of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), slavery was a common practice in the Arab world. With the advent of Islam, slavery was eliminated from the Arabian peninsula in a very short period of time. A useful approach was to allow people free a slave as a charity or as a penalty for a sin. Thus during the time of the

Prophet (S.A.W.), setting a slave free was the penalty one must pay as a kaffarah, if one had a slave.

## Things That Require Fidyah

Fidyah is a way for those who are not able to fast due to age, long term illness, etc., to share in the reward of fasting, and it is obligatory upon them if they can afford it. The Fidyah is to feed a poor person with two or three square meals for each day of fasting missed, or to feed lots of people on a single day.

## RAMADAN DU'AS (SUPPLICATIONS)

### 1. Dua For Sighting The Crescent Moon.

Turning towards the Qiblah and raising your hands towards the sky, recite the Dua given below:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شَرِّ هَذَا

اللَّهُمَّ أَهْلُهُ عَلَيْنَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَالْإِسْلَامِ وَالتَّوْفِيقِ لِمَا تُحِبُّ وَتَرْضَى رَبِّي وَرَبِّكَ اللَّهُ

A'udhu Billahi Min Sharri Hazaa, Allahumma ahillahu 'alayna bil-yumni wal-imaani, was-salaamati, wal-Islami, wat-tawfeeqi lima tuhibbu wa tardha. Rabbii wa RabbukAllahu

("I seek refuge in Allah from this.")

"O Allah, let this moon (month) pass over us with blessings, Iman, safety, and in the belief of Islam. Grant us the ability to act on the actions that You love and please You. (O moon) My Lord and Your Lord is Allah." (Hisnul Hasin from Ibn Habban)

### 2. Dua For Every Suhoor (Dawn Meal)

وَبِصَوْمٍ عَدِ تَوَيْتَ مِنْ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ

Wa bisawmi ghadinn nawaiytu min shahri Ramadan.

(I intend to keep the fast for tomorrow in the month of Ramadan.) [abu Dawud]

### 3. Dua For Every Iftar (Sunset Meal)

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي لَكَ صُومْتُ وَبِكَ امْنْتُ وَ عَلَى رِزْقِكَ أَفْطَرْتُ

Allahumma inni laka sumtu wa bika aamantu wa 'ala rizq-ika aftarthu

O Allah! I fasted for You and I believe in You and I break my fast with Your sustenance. [abu Dawud]

### 3. Dua For The Last Ten Days/ Lailatul Qadr, The night of power:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُورٌ تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّي

Allahumma innaka 'affuwwun tuhibbul 'afwa fa'fu 'anni' "

Allah You are The One Who pardons greatly, and loves to pardon, so pardon me. [at Tirmidhi]

## SIGNIFICANCE OF FASTING

Fasting was enjoined on Muslims in the second year after the emigration (Hijra). The Prophet (pbuh) fasted nine years of Ramadan before he passed away. It is a religious obligation, for Allah the Almighty states, "O believers, Fasting is an obligation upon you as it was obligated upon the [Muslims] before you so it would help you to reach piety." Qur-an 2:183

Imam al-Bukhari **related the Hadith-i Qudsi that the Prophet (pbuh) said that Allah said:** (The reward of every good deed is multiplied from ten up to seven-hundred times—except that of the Fasting—which is usually done in sincerity, will be multiplied by as many times as Allah wills.)

One of the doors of Paradise, named **ar-Rayyan**, is specified for those Muslims who used to fast in this world. On the Day of Judgment, it will be opened, and those who used to fast in obedience to Allah will be called to enter through that door. Then ar-Rayyan will be closed, and no others will enter through it.

The Prophet (pbuh) said: "I saw astonishing things in my dream. [In my dream] the Angels of Torment grabbed someone from my *Ummah*. Ablutions he had performed came and saved him from the difficult situation he was in. I saw someone being squeezed in his grave. The *namâzes* he had offered came and saved him from the torment of the grave. The devils were pestering someone. The remembrances [*dhikr*] he had made came and saved him from the devils. **One's tongue stuck out as a result of a raging thirst. The fasts he had observed in Ramadan came and quenched his thirst.**

Someone was encircled by darkness. The pilgrimage he had made came and delivered him from darkness. The Angel of Death came to someone. The kindnesses he had done to his parents came. They averted death and delayed it. Someone was not allowed to talk to Muslims. Then *sila-i rahm* [visiting relatives, good treatment towards them, maintaining good ties with them] came and made intercession for him, so he could talk to them. Someone who wanted to go near his Prophet was being prevented from going. The *ghusls* he had taken brought him

near me. Someone desired protection from the Fire. His voluntary charities came and became a veil against the Fire. When the Angels of Hell were taking someone to Hell, his enjoining the doing of what was good and forbidding the doing of what was evil came and saved him. Someone was thrown into Hellfire. The tears he had shed out of fear of Allah came and saved him.

When the deed-book of a person was being given to him from his left, his fear of Allah came and carried it to his right. Someone's *thawab* weighed light. His children who had died before himself came and made it heavy. Someone was quaking with fear by Hell. When his *husn-i zann* [having a good opinion of] about Allahu ta'ala came, his quaking ceased. Someone who crossed the *Sirat* with difficulty came to Paradise, but the gates were closed. His *Kalima-i shahadah* came and put him into Paradise." [Tabarani, Hakim-i Tirmidhi]

"If a person dies while being in a state of fasting, *thawab* is recorded for him as if he fasted until Doomsday." **[Daylami]**

"He who dies while fasting enters Paradise." **[Bazzar]**

"Whoever observes fast for a day in the way of Allah, Allahu ta'ala keeps him seventy years' distance away from Hell." **[Bukhari]**

## CHAPTER 4

### THE BONE OF CONTENTION

#### (The Night of Bara'ah / THE NIGHT OF THE FIFTEENTH OF SHA'BAN)

**Is it permissible to celebrate the night of the fifteenth of Sha'ban and to distribute sweets to children to let people know that Ramadan is approaching?**

Praise be to Allah.

The scholars of the Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas said:

It is not permissible to celebrate the occasion of Laylat al-Qadr or any other night, or to hold celebrations on other occasions such as the night of the fifteenth of Sha'baan, the night of the Mi'raaj, or the Prophet's birthday (Mawlid) and so on, because these are innovations that have been introduced into the religion and were not narrated from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) or any of his Companions. And he (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "Whoever does an action that is not part of this matter of ours (i.e., Islam) will have it rejected." And it is not permissible to help others to hold these celebrations by giving money or gifts or distributing cups of tea, and it is not permissible to give speeches and lectures on these occasions, because that comes under the heading of approving of them and encouraging them. Rather it is obligatory to denounce them and not to attend them. End quote.

Fataawa al-Lajnah ad-Daa'imah, 2/257-258

Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked:

We have some customs that we grew up with and that have been passed down to us, on some occasions, such as making cakes and cookies on Eid al-Fitr, and preparing platters of meat and fruit on the night of the twenty-seventh of Rajab and the fifteenth of Sha'baan, and different kinds of sweets that must be prepared on the day of 'Ashoora'. What is the Islamic ruling on that?

He replied:

As for expressing joy and happiness of the days of Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha, there is nothing wrong with that if it is within the limits prescribed in Islam, such as preparing food and drink and the like. It is proven that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "The days of at-Tashreeq are days of eating and drinking and remembering Allah, may He be glorified and exalted." This refers to the three days following Eid al-Adha, when the people offer their sacrifices and eat from the meat and enjoy the blessings that Allah has bestowed upon them. Similarly, on

Eid al-Fitr there is nothing wrong with expressing joy and happiness so long as it does not overstep the limits set by Islam.

As for expressing joy on the night of the twenty-seventh of Rajab or the fifteenth of Sha'baan or the day of 'Ashoora', this is something for which there is no basis. Rather it is forbidden and the Muslim should not attend if he is invited to such celebrations. The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "Beware of newly invented matters, for every newly invented matter is an innovation (bid'ah), and every innovation is a going astray."

The night of the twenty-seventh of Rajab is what some people claim is the night of the Mi'raaj during which the Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) was taken up to Allah, may He be glorified and exalted. There is no proof of this date from a historical point of view, and everything for which there is no proof is false, and that which is built on falsehood is also false. Even if we assume that this event took place on that night, it is not permissible for us to introduce on that date any of the symbols of festivals or acts of worship, because no such thing is proven from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) or from his Companions who were the closest of people to him and the keenest of people to adhere to his Sunnah and follow his path. So how could it be permissible for us to introduce something that did not happen at the time of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) or at the time of his Companions?

Even with regard to the night of the fifteenth of Sha'baan, there is no proof that the Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) ever venerated it or spent that night in prayer. Rather some of the **Taabi'een** spent that night in **prayer and dhikr, not in eating and celebrating as if it were a festival**. End quote.

Fataawa Islamiyyah, 4/693

The Truth is, **it is celebrating the night of the 15<sup>th</sup> of Shaban as a festival**, but not performing acts of devotion such as Prayer, Tilawa, and Zikr in seclusion, that is beyond all reason, let's bear it in mind.

## **Sunni View**

Sunni scholars including Imam Shafii, Imam Nawawi, Imam Ghazzali and Imam Suyuti have declared praying on the night of mid shaban acceptable.

The following narrations have left nothing to the imagination:

Anas (RA), reports that Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was asked, "Which fast is the most meritorious after the fasts of Ramadan?" He replied, "**Fasts of Shaban in honor of Ramadan.**"

Usama ibn Zaid (RA), reports that he asked Prophet Muhammad (SAW):

"Messenger of Allah, I have seen you fasting in the month of Sha'ban so frequently that I have never seen you fasting in any other month. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) replied: 'That (Sha'ban) is a month between Rajab and Ramadan which is neglected by many people. **And it is a month in which an account of the deeds (of human beings) is presented before the Lord of the universe**, so, I wish that my deeds be presented at a time when I am in a state of fasting.'"

In another report she says, "I never saw the Messenger of Allah, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, fasting in a month so profusely as he did in the month of Sha'ban. He used to fast in that month leaving only a few days, rather, he used to fast almost the whole of the month."

The hadith by Imam Ibn Hajr Haythmi, states: Narrated by Muadh bin Jabal (RA) from Prophet (salallahu alaihi wasalam) who said: Allah turns towards his creation in the Night of "MID-SHABAN" and He forgives all of them except for a Mushrik and one who hates other people [Az Zawaid #12860]. Classified as sahih by salafi scholar Nasiruddin Albani in his silsilah Al-Sahihah.

It is reported from Sayyiduna Ali that The Prophet (pbuh) said: "Let all of you spend the night of mid-Sha`ban in **worship** (i.e. partly) and its day in **fasting**. Allah descends to the nearest heaven during this night, beginning with sunset, and says: Is there no one asking forgiveness that I may forgive them? Is there no one asking sustenance that I may grant them sustenance? Is there no one under trial that I may relieve them? Is there not such-and-such, is there not such-and-such, and so forth until dawn rises."

The most important thing to remember is that The Prophet (SAW) forbade fasting after Mid-Shaban, particularly one or two days immediately before the commencement of Ramadan, to his followers. It is connected: Abu Hurairah, Radi-Allahu anhu, reported that The Prophet (SAW) said, "Do not fast after the first half of the month of Sha'ban is gone."

'Aishah, Radi-Allahu anha, is reported to have said, "Once Prophet Muhammad, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, performed the Salah of the night (Tahajjud) and made a very long Sajdah until I feared that he had passed away. When I saw this, I rose (from my bed) and moved his thumb (to ascertain whether he is alive). The thumb moved, and I returned (to my place). Then I heard him saying in Sajdah: 'I seek refuge of Your forgiveness from Your punishment, and I seek refuge of Your pleasure from Your annoyance, and I seek Your refuge from Yourself. I cannot praise You as fully as You deserve. You are exactly as You have defined Yourself.' Thereafter, when he raised his head from *Sajdah* and finished his *salah*, he said to me: 'Aishah, did you think that the Prophet has betrayed you?' I said, 'No, O Prophet of Allah, but I was afraid that your soul has been taken away because your *Sajdah* was very long.' He asked me, 'Do you know which night is this?' I said, 'Allah and His Messenger know best.' He said, 'This is the night of the half of Sha'ban. Allah Almighty looks upon His slaves in this night and forgives those who seek forgiveness and bestows His mercy upon those who pray for mercy but keeps those who have malice (against a Muslim) as they were before, (and does not forgive

them unless they relieve themselves from malice)."

In another Tradition Sayyidah' Aishah, Radi-Allahu anha, has reported that Prophet Muhammad (SAW) has said, "Allah Almighty descends (in a manner He best knows it) in the night occurring in the middle of Sha'ban and forgives a large number of people more than the number of the fibers on the sheep of the tribe, Kalb."

Kalb was a big tribe the members of which had a very large number of sheep. Therefore, the last sentence of the *hadith* indicates the big number of the people who are forgiven in this night by Allah Almighty.

In yet another Tradition, she reported that Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said, "This is the middle Night of Sha'ban. Allah frees in it a large number of the people from Fire, more than the number of the hair growing on the sheep of the tribe, Kalb. But He does not even look at a person who associates partners with Allah, or at a person who nourishes malice in his heart (against someone), or at a person who cuts off the ties of kinship, or at a man who leaves his clothes extending beyond his ankles (as a sign of pride), or at a person who disobeys his parents, or at a person who has a habit of drinking wine."

The bottomline is that whether there is oversight in transmitting the message or not, the fact still remains that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) did carry out acts of devotion, but not celebrate Mid Shaban as a festive occasion. Let's always remember and consider this.

In a nutshell, I must say, we need to put aside our sentiments and accept reasonable arguments; that is, Hadrat Ali (RA), Muaz, bin Jabal (RA), Anas (RA), and Aisha (RA'A), among other trustworthy companions of The Prophet (pbuh), have all said something to the effect that the Messenger of Allah, Muhammad bin Abdallah, did in fact pray exceptionally during the night of Mid Shaban and fast during the day.

And so, if there is no basis for denial of or doubt about such Narrations, then we don't have to be prejudiced against these factual accounts, do we?

# CHAPTER 5

## RULINGS ON FASTING

### **Ruling on One Who Forgets to Make up Missed Fasts Before The Next Ramadan Comes**

Praise be to Allah.

The fuqaha, the Islamic professional counselors/jurists, have unanimously agreed that forgetfulness is an excuse which means that there is no sin or accountability in all matters.

Even though forgetfulness is an excuse, the missed fasts must still be made up after the second Ramadan, according to their collective agreement; such missed fasts are not waived as a result of forgetfulness.

But they have differed as to whether the fidyah (which is feeding a poor person) is required when making up the missed fasts (after the second Ramadan has come and gone) or not. There are two points of view:

1 – That the fidyah is not required because forgetfulness is a tangible excuse, thus the fidyah is waived.

This is the view of most of the Shafis and some of the Malikis.

See: Tuhfat al-Muhtaj by Ibn Hajar al-Haytami (3/445); Nihaayat al-Muhtaj (3/196); Minah al-Jaleel (2/154); Sharh Mukhtasar Khaleel (2/263).

2 – That the fidyah is required, and forgetting is an excuse, which means there is no sin only.

This is the view of al-Khateeb al-Sharbeenii among the Shaf'is, who said in Mughni al-Muhtaj (2/176): "It seems that it means there is no sin only, and that the fidyah is not waived."

This view is also stated by some of the Malikis. See: Mawaahib al-Jaleel Sharh Mukhtasar Khaleel (2/450).

But the preferred view is the former, Insha Allah, for the following reason:

1 – The general meaning of the Verses and Hadith which say that people are not held accountable for forgetting, such as the verse in which Allah says (interpretation of the meaning): "Our Lord! Punish us not if we forget or fall into error" [al-Baqarah 2:286]

In essence, one has to make up the missed fasts after Ramadan, but one does not have to feed the poor in addition.

And Allah knows best.

### **Ruling on Observing a Nafil Fast With The Intention of Making up a Missed Fast**

If one is fasting on Mondays and Thursdays, is it okay to use these fasts to make up missed Ramadan fasts? Or do the intentions have to be separate?

Praise be to Allah.

There is nothing wrong with fasting on Mondays and Thursdays in order to make up fasts that you missed in Ramadan, on condition that the fast be done with the intention of making up the missed days... Perhaps you will get two rewards together, the reward for making up the fast and the reward for observing a nafil fast, for the bounty of Allah is immense. Even if you only get the reward for making up the missed fast, that is fine, because making up the missed fast is more important than observing a nafil fast. But if you intend to observe it as a voluntary fast and you do not intend to make up a missed fast, then you have not fulfilled the duty and you still have to fast the days that you missed in Ramadan. And Allah knows best. May Allah bless our Prophet Muhammad and his family and companions.

Fataawa Islamiyyah, vol. 2, p. 149-150' Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa'imah, vol. 10, p. 383.

### **She Did Not Make up Her Missed Fasts For Many Years**

There is a woman who has reached the age of fifty. When she got her period in Ramadan, she did not fast those days, but then, she did not make them up because she was unaware that it is obligatory to make up missed fasts. Now she has come to know that it is obligatory to make up missed fasts. What should she do?

Praise be to Allah.

She has to make up those days, and to be on the safer side she should feed one poor person for each day.

Shaykh Ibn Baaz (15/184) was asked: I have a sister who for several years did not make up the fasts that she missed because of her period, because she was unaware of the ruling, especially since some of the common folk told her that she did not have to make up the fasts that she missed. What should she do?

He replied:

She has to ask Allah for forgiveness and repent to Him, and she has to fast the days that she missed and feed one poor person for each day, as was stated by a number of the companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). This means giving half a saa', which is equivalent to one and a half kilograms. What some ignorant women told her about her not having to do anything does not mean that this obligation is waived. 'A'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: "We were commanded to make up the missed fasts but we were not told to make up the prayers." Agreed upon.

If another Ramadaan comes before she makes up the missed fasts, then she is sinning and she has to make up the missed fasts and repent, and also feed one poor person for each day if she is able to. If she is poor and cannot feed others then fasting and repentance is sufficient, and she does not have to feed others. If she cannot remember how many days she has to fast, she should proceed on the basis of what she thinks is most likely, and fast the days that she thinks she missed during Ramadan, and that will be sufficient, because Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"So keep your duty to Allah and fear Him as much as you can." [al-Taghaabun 64:16]

The Standing Committee (10/151) was asked about an elderly woman who had reached the age of sixty, and she was unaware of the ruling on menstruation for all the years during which she used to menstruate, so she did not make up any missed Ramadan fasts because she thought that she did not have to make them up, based on what she had heard from the common folk. The committee replied:

She has to repent to Allah from that, because she did not ask the people of knowledge. As well, she has to make up the days that she did not fast, according to what she thinks is most likely to be the number of days that she missed, and she should offer expiation for each day by feeding one poor person half a saa' of wheat, dates, rice or whatever is the staple food of the country, if she is able to do so. If she cannot feed others then she does not have to do that, and it is sufficient for her to make up the fasts.

### **Does Expiation Have to be Offered For Having Intercourse When Making up a Missed Ramadan Fast?**

My husband had intercourse with me one day when I was making up a missed fast. Do I have to do anything?

Praise be to Allah.

Making up missed Ramadan fasts is obligatory, and it is not permissible to break such a fast except in case of necessity. Once a person starts to observe a fast to make up a fast he missed, he is obliged to complete it, and it is not permissible for him to break it except for a legitimate shar'i excuse.

It was narrated that Umm Haani' (may Allah be pleased with her) said: "O Messenger of Allah, I broke my fast when I was fasting." He said to her: "Were you making up a missed fast?" She said: "No." He said: "Then it does not matter if it was a voluntary fast." Narrated by Abu Dawood, no. 2456; classed as saheeh by al-Albaani. This indicates that it would matter if she broke her fast when observing an obligatory fast. What is meant by "it would matter" is that it would be a sin.

With regard to what happened in your case, the expiation of intercourse is only required if what is broken is a fast in Ramadan itself. Based on this, you do not have to do anything except make that day up again, as well as repent to Allah and resolve not to do such a thing again.

Ibn Rushd said: Majority have agreed that no expiation is required for deliberately breaking a fast observed to make up a missed Ramadan fast, because it does not come under the same category with regard to sanctity of time, i.e., Ramadan.

Bidaayah al-Mujtahid, 2/80.

Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked about a woman who broke a fast she was observing to make up for a missed Ramadan fast, to make her guests feel comfortable. He replied: If she was making up a missed obligatory fast, such as making up a day of Ramadan, then it is not permissible for anyone to break such a fast except in cases of necessity. With regard to breaking the fast because of the arrival of guests, this is haraam and is not permitted, because the basic principle in sharee'ah is that "Everyone who starts an obligatory duty is required to complete it, unless he has a legitimate shar'i excuse." But if he is making up a voluntary fast then he does not have to complete it, because it is not obligatory.

Based on this, if a person is observing a naafil (supererogatory) fast and something happens that means he has to break his fast, he may do so. This is what was narrated from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), that he came to the Mother of the Believers 'A'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) and said: "Do you have anything (to eat)?" She said: "We have been given some hays (a kind of meal)." He said: "Show it to me, for I started fasting this morning." And he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) ate some of it. This has to do with a naafil fast, not one which is obligatory.

Majmoo' al-Fataawa, 20.

## CHAPTER 6

### FURTHER DIMENSIONS OF FASTING

Because of the position occupied by fasting in Islam, we ought to add further dimensions to the proverbial Material Fasting of abstinence from eating, drinking, and sexual intercourse from dawn to dusk by specifically dealing with the following categories of Fasting, namely: Intellectual, Spiritual, and Moral Fasting.

**INTELLECTUAL FASTING** is the fasting of the mind, which is abstinence from negative thoughts and such impediments to clear conscience as wine, alcohol, and cocaine, not only during the daylight, but also after breaking the fast. This is for the obvious reason that if the fasting person is not guided by clear conscience, they may well not feel a pang of remorse for committing sins even when fasting, with their conscience allowing them to persist in such deviant practices as watching movies, exchanging handshakes with people of the opposite sex, and listening to sexually offensive music, without feeling guilty.

Let's not allow our logic to be muddled by our unreasonable desires or the Devil's evil suggestions or promptings; rather, we should always confront our thoughts with Guidance, but not with intellectual freedom, the bane of our life.

Indeed, sound mind in respect of fasting is of the essence.

**SPIRITUAL FASTING** is the fasting of the heart with respect to Faith, the self-denial of all forms of kufr (disbelief) including Shirk (i.e. invocation of spirit, be it angel, jinn, or soul of deceased human; demonic protection; ancestral sacrifice; soothsaying; tying magic string/akadi/kobri; flying on magic carpet or animal skin; producing events during sleep, nightmare; applying magic pomade on the skin; drinking magic potion; viewing magic mirror; applying traditional, magic eyeliner/witches' eyeliner; disappearing magically or mysteriously; and metamorphosing/turning into tabby cat, dog, vulture, or eagle), hypocrisy (i.e. pretense of piety and righteousness), arrogance (refusal to submit to the Divine Command after knowing its Truth, intentionally showing no respect, looking down on others), and envy, among others.

No wonder, the fasting person needs to be guided by Faith, the necessary precondition for acceptance of not only fasting, but also of other deeds of piety such as Prayer, Sacrifice, and Zikr, not forgetting such righteous deeds as justice, generosity, and compassion.

**MORAL FASTING** is the behavioural fasting, the self-restraint of words, emotions, and actions. The heart is the centre of not only Faith, but also of emotions; and there are connections between the mind and the heart, or better still between thoughts and emotions such as anger and lust. These are in turn connected to the human senses. Therefore, the fasting person needs to be guided by a sense of morality by strictly avoiding the following:

**Lustful Glances.** The Prophet (pbuh), said: "The furtive (secret) glance is one of the poisoned arrows of Satan, on him be God's curse. Whoever forsakes it for fear of God, will receive from Him, Great and Gracious is He, a faith the sweetness of which he will find within his heart."

Jabir relates from Anas that Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said: "Five things break a man's fast: lying, backbiting, scandal mongering, perjury and a lustful gaze."

**Indecent Utterances.** Jabir relates from Anas that Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said: "Five things break a man's fast: lying, backbiting, scandal mongering, perjury..."

Guard your tongue from nonsense, lying, backbiting, scandal mongering, obscenity, impoliteness, futile argument, etc., making it observe silence and occupying it with remembrance of Allah and with recitation of the Quran. This is the fasting of the tongue.

The Prophet ﷺ said: "Fasting is a shield; so when one of you is fasting he should not use foul or foolish talk. If someone attacks him or insults him, let him say: 'I am fasting, I am fasting!'"

### Remember,

"A fasting Believer's silence is regarded as *tasbih* [glorification of Allahu ta'ala], and his sleep is regarded as an act of worship. His prayer is accepted, and the reward for his good deeds is multiplied." [Daylami]

"The true fast is the one observed not only by leaving eating and drinking but also by leaving vain speech and foul language." [Hakim]

"Do not utter obscene speech especially when you are fasting. If anyone aggresses against you, say to him, "I am fasting." [Bukhari]

"Cleanliness is half of faith, and fasting is half of patience." [Muslim]

**Evil Audience (listening).** Close your ears to blameworthy utterances such as sexually offensive music, backbiting, gossip, and rumour; for everything unlawful to utter is equally unlawful to listen to. That is why Allah equated the eavesdropper with the profiteer in the following Verses:

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ لَا يَحْزُنْكَ الَّذِينَ يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْكُفْرِ مِنَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَلَمْ تُؤْمِنْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا سَمَّاعُونَ لِلْكَذِبِ سَمَّاعُونَ لِقَوْمٍ آخِرِينَ لَمْ يَأْتُوكَ يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَوَاضِعِهِ يَقُولُونَ إِنْ أُوتِينَاهُمْ هَذَا فَخَدُّوهُ وَإِنْ لَمْ تُؤْتُوهُ فَاخْتَدَرُوا وَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ فِتْنَتَهُ فَلَنْ تَمْلِكَ لَهُ مِنْ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُطَهِّرْ قُلُوبَهُمْ لَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ وَلَهُمْ فِي الْأَخْرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ

"O Messenger! let not those grieve you who strive together in hastening to unbelief from among those who say with their mouths: We believe, and their hearts do not

believe, and from among those who are Jews; they are listeners for the sake of a lie, listeners for another people who have not come to you; they alter the words from their places, saying: If you are given this, take it, and if you are not given this, be cautious; and as for him whose temptation Allah desires, you cannot control anything for him with Allah. Those are they for whom Allah does not desire that He should purify their hearts; they shall have disgrace in this world, and they shall have a grievous chastisement in the hereafter.” Q. 5:41

سَمَاعُونَ لِلْكَذِبِ أَكَّالُونَ لِلسُّخْتِ فَإِنْ جَاءُوكَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ أَوْ أَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَإِنْ تُعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ فَلَنْ يَضُرُّوكَ شَيْئًا وَإِنْ حَكَمْتَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْقِسْطِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ

“(They are) listeners of a lie, devourers of what is forbidden; therefore if they come to you, judge between them or turn aside from them, and if you turn aside from them, they shall not harm you in any way; and if you judge, judge between them with equity; surely Allah loves those who judge equitably.” Q. 5:42

**Over-eating.** Over-indulgence in lawful food at the time of taking the dawn meal and of breaking the Fast, to the point of filling one's stomach is indeed a bad thing. In order not to defeat the purpose for which we fast -- that is to experience hunger and to check desire, we should necessarily cut down our intake of food and drink to a reasonable level. In fact, to derive maximum benefit from the Fast, we must not consume as much as we would usually take during the day and night combined.

The point here is that the fasting person should not in any way take a combined meal comprising breakfast and lunch at dawn or the missed lunch and supper during Iftar and immediately after Magrib or Isha or Taraweeh. Let's not make up our missed lunch after breaking the fast; and of course, we don't have to take our lunch in advance at dawn.

It is worthless to abstain from lawful food only to break our Fast with the unlawful. Remember, even lawful food can be injurious in terms of quantity, but not of quality. And since the purpose of Fasting is to reduce the former (the quantity), it goes without saying that the fasting person might well give up excessive use of the lawful, which, like a medicine, is beneficial in small doses but harmful in excess. Indeed, moderation is the best option, let's bear it in mind.

In conclusion, the possibility of fasting without gaining any reward should be a wake-up call to all those who make efforts to observe the fast and at the same time go against the necessary conditions for its acceptance, thereby undermining the very efforts they are making, for The Prophet (pbuh) said, “How many of those who Fast get nothing from it but hunger and thirst!”

# CHAPTER 7

## THE TARAWEEH PRAYER

The Taraweeh Prayer is an emphatic Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) during the month of Ramadan. The word *Taraweeh* comes from an Arabic word which means to rest and relax. The Prayer can be very long (well over an hour), during which one stands upright to read from the Qur'an and performs many rounds of movement (standing, bowing, prostrating, and sitting). After every four rakahs, one sits for a brief period of rest before continuing – hence the name *Taraweeh* (Rest Prayer).

It is recommended that Muslims attend the Taraweeh Prayer in the Mosque (after Isha, the last evening prayer), praying in congregation. This is true for both men and women. However, one may also perform this Prayer individually at home. This prayer is voluntary, but it is strongly recommended and widely practised.

### **Taraweeh Prayer, Congregational or Not**

Both al-Bukhaari (1129) and Muslim (761) narrated from Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) prayed one night in the mosque, and the people followed him in prayer. Then he prayed the next night, and many people came. Then they gathered on the third or fourth night, and the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not come out to them. The next morning he said: "I saw what you did, and nothing kept me from coming out to you except the fact that I feared that it would be made obligatory for you." And that was in Ramadan

Bukhari (2010) narrated that Abd al-Rahmaan ibn Abd al-Qaari said: "I went out with Umar ibn al-Khattaab (may Allah be pleased with him) to the mosque one night in Ramadan, and the people were scattered, each man praying by himself. Some men would pray and have groups of people behind them following them. 'Umar said: "I think that if I unite all these people with one reader, it will be better. Then he resolved to gather them behind Ubayy ibn Ka'b."

Haafiz said: "Ibn al-Teen and others said that 'Umar based this decision on the Prophet's approval of those who prayed with him on those nights. Although he disliked that for them, that was based on the fear that it might be made obligatory for them. When the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) died, there was no longer any fear of that happening, because of the potential division that might arise from people praying separately, and because uniting them behind one reader is more motivating for many people. The majority agreed with Umar's decision." End quote from Fath al-Baari.

## THE NUMBER OF RAK'AHS (8, 20, OR 36)

### THE PROPONENTS OF 8 RAK'AHS

Protagonists of eight rak'ahs of Taraweeh often quote the following Hadith narrated by Jabir ibn Abdullah (Allah be pleased with him): "The Prophet (Peace be upon him) led the people in prayer during Ramadan with 8 rak'ahs and the witr. We gathered in the Mosque the following night hoping that he would come again. We remained waiting till the next morning (until he came out). The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said, 'I feared that the witr may become incumbent on you.'" (related by Ibn Nasr al-Marwazi in Qiyamul-Layl, pg. 90, al-Tabarani and Ibn Hibban)

### THE PROPONENTS OF 20 RAK'AHS

"It has been proven without doubt that Ubayy ibn Ka'b (Allah be pleased with him) used to lead the Companions, during Ramadan, for 20 *rak'ahs* and 3 *rak'ahs* of *witr*. Hence it is the principle (*maslak*) of most of the Ulama that this is the Sunnah, because Ubayy ibn Ka'b led 20 *rak'ahs* of prayer in the presence of the Muhajirin (the emigrants) and the Ansars (the helpers) and not a single Companion repudiated it!" Fatawa Ibn Taymiyya (vol.1, pg. 191)

### THE PROPONENTS OF 36 RAK'AHS

It was written in the most authentic book on Maliki Fiqh, al-Mudawwanah (vol.1, pg. 193-94), by Qadi Sahnoun (Rahimahullah): "Ibn al-Qasim said, 'The *rak'ahs* (of *taraweeh*) with *witr* are 39.' Imam Malik said, 'This is what the people have agreed upon from amongst the predecessors, and the people have not stopped doing it.'" (For an explanation of why it was 36 *rak'ahs* see the quote below from Allamah Anwar Shah Kashmiri).

"Not even one of the the four Imams believes in less than 20 rak'ahs of taraweeh; the practice and belief of the majority of the Companions was also this. Imam Malik (Allah's mercy be upon him) believes in more than 20 rak'ahs; he is positive that they are 36. According to Imam Malik's practise only 20 rak'ahs of taraweeh will be said in congregation, but the general practice and method of the citizens of Madinah was that during the brief rest interval (after every 4 rak'ahs), when the Imam sat down after 4 rak'ahs, they used to perform 4 more rak'ahs. The men who said the taraweeh in the sacred mosque at Makkah, used to circumambulate (Tawaf) the Ka'ba during this brief recess. The people of Madinah, naturally, could not circumambulate the Ka'ba and hence, instead, they used to perform 16 rak'ahs more (in total) during these brief recesses."

Let's not forget that moderation is the best option, especially when it comes to congregational prayers. I think there should be a set standard based on at least capability, time, and convenience, ranging from 8 rakahs to 36 rakahs, and from 30

minutes to 120 minutes (2 hours). We really need to take into consideration the aged, the sick, the weak or fatigue-stricken, etc. when dealing with congregational prayers such as Taraweeh.

To add force to the preceding argument, if we go by the Hadith narrated by Ib Abbas to the effect that The Prophet (pbuh) performed 20 rak'ahs and the witr prayer (afterwards) in the month of Ramadan without congregation, then we can say with no uncertain terms that observing more than 8 rakahs of Taraweh is exclusively personal, rather than public.

Below are the factual accounts:

Ibn Abbas said, "Verily, the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) in the month of Ramadaan, used to perform 20 *rak'ahs* and the *witr* prayer (afterwards) without congregation." (Reported in al-Sunan al-Bayhaqi, vol.2, pg. 496, Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah, Kabiri of Imam al-Tabarani, Ibn Aadi in his Musnad, and by Imam Baghawi in his Majmua-as-Sahabah).

Both Bukhaari (1129) and Muslim (761) narrated from Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) prayed one night in the mosque, and the people followed him in prayer. Then he prayed the next night, and many people came. Then they gathered on the third or fourth night, and the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not come out to them. The next morning he said: "I saw what you did, and nothing kept me from coming out to you except the fact that I feared that it would be made obligatory for you." And that was in Ramadan

## **THE TARAWEEH PRAYER AND THE TAHAJUD PRAYER**

Both prayers are classified as part of qiyaam al-layl. However, the Qiyaam al-layl during Ramadan is called Taraweeh. One can observe Taraweeh immediately after Isha Prayer, followed by Tahajjud later in the night.

### **THE VIRTUES OF THE TARAWEEH PRAYER**

Abu Hurayrah said: Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) said "He who prays during the night in Ramadan with faith and seeking his reward from Allah will have his past sins forgiven." (Agreed Upon)

### **TIME FOR THE TARAWEEH PRAYER**

The time for the Taraweeh Prayer is between Isha and Fajr. Usually, it is observed congregationally after the Isha prayer in the Masjid.

## **HOW IS THE TARAWEEH PRAYER PERFORMED? 4 BY 4 OR 2 BY 2?**

Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: "The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to pray eleven rak'ahs at night, and say the tasleem after each two rak'ahs, and he would pray Witr with one rak'ah." Saheeh, (agreed upon)

The 2 rakahs by 2 rakahs practice is further supported by the Hadith of Ibn Umar according to which a man asked the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) about prayer at night. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Prayers at night are to be offered two by two (two rakahs at a time). If any of you fears that the time of dawn is approaching then let him pray one rak'ah as Witr." (Narrated by al-Bukhari, 846; Muslim, 749)

Note that the 4 by 4 as mentioned in another Hadith is only half time for resting after prolonged standing and recitation (otherwise there is no need for such a rest); it does not mean 4 rakahs with just one tasleem.

This means that you pray 2 rakahs and say tasleem and another 2 rakahs and say tasleem, after which you take a rest; followed by another 2 rakahs and tasleem and yet another 2 rakahs and tasleem, after which you take another rest; followed by 3 rakahs, two of shaf'i and 1 of witr.

## **WHAT IS RECITED IN THE TARAWEEH PRAYER?**

During the standing portions of the prayer, long sections of the Qur'an are read. The Qur'an is divided into equal parts (called juz) for the purpose of reading sections of equal length during each of the Ramadan nights. Thus 1/30 of the Qur'an is read on successive evenings, so that by the end of the month the entire Qur'an has been completed.

If you have memorised the whole Qur'an, then after reciting Surah Fathiha in the first rakah of the first Taraweeh Prayer, recite the beginning of Surah Baqarah, the second Surah of the Qur'an. You can recite one Juz (1/30 of the Qur'an), depending on not only your stamina, but also that of your followers as well. Then in the second rakah, after you have recited Surah Fathiha, resume your recitation of the Qur'an from where you ended in the previous rakah. This means that in each rakah you start your Quranic recitation from where you ended in the previous rakah. After the end of the 8 rakahs of Taraweeh, make a note of where you finished your recitation of the Qur'an. So the next day you begin your recitation from where you ended previously. By the end of Ramadan, you will probably have recited the whole of the Qur'an and the congregation will have listened to its recitation.

If you are praying at home but have not memorised the whole Qur'an, then recite what you have memorised of the Qur'an in the 8 rakahs, and then observe 3 rakahs, 2 of Shaf'i and 1 of Witr.

The Prophet's recitation used to vary; sometimes it would be long, at other times short. Sometimes in every rakah he would recite the equivalent of 'Yaa ayyuha'l-

muzammil, which is twenty Verses; sometimes he would recite the equivalent of fifty Verses. He used to say, "Whoever prays at night and reads one hundred aayaat will not be recorded as one of the negligent." According to another Hadith: "...and reads two hundred aayaat, will be recorded as one of the devout and sincere believers."

## SHAF'I AND WITR

The time for observance of these units of Prayer is after Isha and before Fajr. The two rakahs following the Isah Prayer are referred to as Shafi'i, whereas the single number is known as Witr. Thus adding these three units of Prayer to 8 rakahs of Taraweeh or Tahajjud will produce an odd number, 11.

**Witr, single rakah or not?** The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Prayers at night are to be offered two by two (two rakahs at a time). If any of you fears that the time of dawn is approaching then let him **pray one rak'ah as Witr.**" (Narrated by al-Bukhari, 846; Muslim, 749) Moreover, Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: "The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to pray eleven rak'ahs at night, and say the tasleem after each two rak'ahs, **and he would pray Witr with one rak'ah.**" Saheeh, (agreed upon)

In Qiyaam of Ramadan, Sheik Albaani said: "It is Sunnah to recite Sabbih ismi Rabbika al-'A'laa in the first rakah, Qul Yaa ayyuha'l-Kaafiroon in the second rakah, and Qul Huwa Allaahu ahad in the third rak'ah. Sometimes 'Qul a'oodhu bi Rabbi'l-Falaq' and 'Qul a'odhu bi Rabbi'l-Naas' may be added as well."

The worshipper may also humble themselves before Allah by reciting the following du'a which The Prophet (pbuh) taught his grandson, al-Hasan ibn Ali (may Allah be pleased with him): "Allaahumma'hdinee fiman hadayta wa 'aafinee fiman 'aafayta wa tawallanee fiman tawallayta wa baarik lee fima a'tayta wa qinee sharra maa qadayt, fa innaka taqdee wa laa yuqdaa 'alayk. Wa innahu laa yadhillu man waalayta wa laa ya'izzu man 'aadayt. Tabaarakta Rabbanaa wa ta'aalayt. Laa majaa minka illa ilayk."

(O Allaah, guide me along with those whom You have guided, pardon me along with those whom You have pardoned, be an ally to me along with those whom You are an ally to, and bless for me that which You have bestowed. Protect me from the evil You have decreed, for verily You decree and none can decree over You. For surety, he whom You show allegiance to is never abased and he whom You take an enemy is never honored and mighty. O our Lord, Blessed and Exalted are You. There is no refuge from You except with You)."

## WHAT TO SAY AFTER WITR

It is Sunnah to say at the end of witr (before or after the salaam):

"Allaahumma innee a'oodhu bi ridaaka min sakhatika wa bi mu'aafaatika min 'aqoobatika, wa a'oodhu bika minka. La uhsee thanaa'an 'alayka, anta kamaa athnayta 'ala nafsik."

(O Allah, I seek refuge in Your good pleasure from Your wrath, and in Your protection from Your punishment. I seek refuge with You from You. I cannot praise You enough, and You are as You have praised Yourself.”

When The Prophet (pbuh) gave salaam at the end of witr, he said: “Subhaan il-Malik il-Quddoos, subhaan il-Malik il-Quddoos, subhaan il-Malik il-Quddoos (Glory be to the Sovereign, the Most Holy), Rabbil malaa ikati war roohi (Lood of the angels and the Spirit), raising his voice.

### **TWO RAKAHS AFTER WITR, AFTER WHICH THERE IS NO WITR AGAIN**

A person may pray two rakahs after witr if he wishes, because it is proven that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did this. He said, “This travelling is exhausting and difficult, so after any one of you prays witr, let him pray two rakahs. If he wakes up, this is fine, otherwise these two rakahs will be counted for him.”

It is Sunnah to recite Idha zulzilal al-ard and Qul yaa ayyuha’l-kaafiroon in these two rakahs. (From Qiyaam Ramadan by al-Albani)

### **ANOTHER TWO RAKAHS, BUT AFTER FAJR AZAN AND BEFORE FAJR PRAYER (RAKAHTAINI FAJR)**

The Prophet (pbuh) used to recite ‘Qul yaa ayyuha’l-kaafiroon’ in the first rakah and Qul huwa-llaahu ahad in the second.

## CHAPTER 8

### ITIKAF (SECLUSION)

Itikaf, seclusion in the Mosque, is a recommended act of devotion during the last ten days of Ramadan. This fact is supported by the following Statement of Allah: "...while you are making 'Itikaaf in the Mosques..." Q. 2:187 Its observance in Ramadan is also established in the Hadith of Abu Hurairah (RA), which reads: "Allah's Messenger (pbuh) would make 'Itikaaf for ten days in every Ramadan. But when it was the year in which he died, he made 'Itikaf for twenty days."

This act of devotion is carried out not only in Ramadan, but also in other months of the lunar year. This is for the obvious reasons that The Prophet (pbuh) observed Itikaf in the last ten days of Shawaal. [According to a Hadith from Aishah reported by Bukhari, Muslim, and Ibn Khuzaimah in their Saheeh collections.] and that 'Umar (RA) said to The Prophet (pbuh): "I made an oath (to Allah) in the Days of Ignorance that I would make 'Itikaaf for one night in the Masjid Al-Haraam, (should I do it)? The Prophet (saws) responded: 'Fulfill your oath.' So he made 'Itikaaf for one night." Reported by Bukhari, Muslim, and Ibn Khuzaimah. And it is referenced in Saheeh Sunan Abu Dawood (2136-2137).

#### NECESSARY CONDITIONS FOR ITIKAF

1. **It Should be Done in The Mosque.** "...while you are making 'Itikaf in the Mosque..." Q. 2:187 Al-Bayhaqee reported from Ibn 'Abbas that he said: "Verily, the most hated of things to Allah are the innovations. And verily from the innovations is making 'Itikaf in the masaajid that are located in the houses."
2. **It is Forbidden to Leave The Mosque.** Aishah (raa) said: "The Sunnah for the one doing 'Itikaaf is that he should not go out (of the masjid) except for some need that he must fulfill. He should not witness a funeral..."
3. **The Mosque Must Hold Jumu'ah Prayers.** Aishah (raa) said: "...And there is no 'Itikaf except in a masjid that establishes the Jumu'ah (Friday congregational prayer)..."
4. **One Must be Fasting.** Aishah (raa) said: "... And the Sunnah for the one doing 'Itikaf is that he should be fasting (on the day he makes 'Itikaf)."

Shaikh-ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah said, " It is not legislated in the Religion that one who goes out to the masjid for prayer or other than that is supposed to make an intention for the amount of time he will spend in Itikaf." This is what Shaikh-ul-Islaam clarified in his *Ikhtiyaaraat*.

## WHAT IS PERMISSIBLE FOR THE PERSON MAKING ITIKAF:

1. **It is permissible for him to leave the masjid in order to fulfill a need.** Aishah (raa) said: "...and he (saw) would not enter the house unless he had a [human] need, while making 'Itikaf."

2. **It is permissible for the one making 'Itikaf and others to make wudoo (ablution) in the masjid.** According to a man who used to serve the Prophet (pbuh): "The Prophet would make a light wudoo (ablution) in the masjid." [ Reported by Al-Bayhaqee with a good chain and Ahmad (5/364) in abridged form with an authentic chain of narration.

3. **He may set up a small tent in the back of the masjid in which he makes 'Itikaf.** Aa'ishah (raa) used to set up a *khibaa* (tent) for the Prophet (pbuh) when he would make 'Itikaf. Reported by Bukhari and Muslim from the Hadith of Aishah. Her doing it is stated in the report of Bukhari and his commanding it is stated in the report of Muslim.

4. **A woman is allowed to make Itikaf and visit her husband (who is making 'Itikaf) in the masjid.** It is permissible for a woman to visit her husband while he is making 'Itikaf. According to Safiyyah (raa): "The Prophet (saw) was making Itikaf in the masjid during the last ten days of Ramadan, so I went to visit him one night, and his wives were with him. So I spoke to him for an hour, then I got up to leave and he said: 'Don't rush, I'll go out with you.' So he got up with me to escort me out." And her dwelling used to be in the home of Usaamah Ibn Zayd. Then they walked until they reached the door of the masjid, which was by the door of Umm Salamah. Then two men from the Ansaar passed by and when they saw the Prophet (saw), they rushed away. So the Prophet (saw) said: 'Slow down! This is (my wife) Safiyyah Bint Huyai. So they said: SubhaanAllaah, O Messenger of Allah.' He (saw) said: 'Verily, the Devil flows through the human like the flowing of blood. And I feared lest he put some evil into your hearts.'" [Or he (saw) said: "something into your hearts." Reported by Bukhari and Muslim and also Abu Dawood

And she also said: "The Prophet (saw) would observe Itikaf during the last ten days of Ramadan, until he died. Then his wives observed Itikaf after him."

Note: Having sexual intercourse nullifies one's Itikaf, based on Allah's Saying: "And do not have sexual relations with them (your wives) while you are making 'Itikaf in the masaajid."

Ibn Abbas (raa) said: "If the person making Itikaf has sexual relations then he nullifies his 'Itikaf and must start it over again." There is no recompense (*kaffarah*) that is binding upon him due to a lack of anything being mentioned about that by the Prophet (saw) and his Companions.

## THE VIRTUES OF ITIKAF

1. Ali Ibn Hussain (RA) narrates from his father that The Prophet (pbuh) said: "He who observnes the ten days Itikaf during Ramadan will obtain the reward of two Hajj and two Umrah." (Bayhaqi)
2. Abudullah bin Abbas (RA) reported that The Prophet (pbuh) said: "Whosoever for Allah's Sake did even one day's Itikaf, Allah would keep him away from Jahannam by trenches." (Tabarani)
3. Ibn Abbas (RA) reported that The Prophet (pbuh) said (about a person who engages in Itikaf): "That he is safe from sin and he also gets that reward which everyone (outside Itikaf) gets for pious deeds." Ibn Majah

## CHAPTER 9

### EID UL-FITR AND ZAKAT UL-FITR

عيد الفطر  
Eīd ul-Fiṭr  
(Festivity after completing the fasting month of Ramadan)



Eid ul-Fitr Meal, Malaysia

**EID-UL-FITR** is a Muslim Holiday that marks the end of Ramadan, the Islamic Holy Month of Fasting. *Eid* is an Arabic word which means "festivity", while *Fiṭr* means "breaking the fast". Upon completing 29 or 30 days of dawn-to-sunset fasting during the entire month of Ramadan, adherents of the True Faith of Islam celebrate Eid ul-Fitr on the first day through the third day of the month of Shawwal.

This Prayer is, depending on which juristic opinion is followed, *Fard* (obligatory), *Mustahabb* (strongly recommended, just short of obligatory) or *mandoob* (preferable).

This Festival, like Eid Adha, is an occasion for showing gratitude to Allah and for remembering Him, as well as for entertaining ourselves. It really calls for celebration, for Aishah narrated that when her father, Abu Bakr, stopped young girls from singing on an Eid day, The Prophet (pbuh) said: "Abu Bakr! [Let them sing]; every nation has an 'ied and [this day] is our Eid."

Eid al-Fitr is celebrated for one, two or three days. Common greetings during this holiday are the Arabic greeting '*Eid Mubārak* ("Blessed Eid") or '*Eid Sa'eed* ("Happy Eid"). Muslims are also encouraged on this day to forgive and forget any differences with others or animosities that might have occurred during the year.

It is forbidden to fast on the Day of Eid. It is customary to acknowledge this with a small sweet breakfast, preferably of the date fruit, before attending the Eid Prayer.

## **HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

According to Anas (RA), "When the Prophet (pbuh) arrived in Madinah, he found people celebrating two specific days in which they used to entertain themselves with recreation and merriment. He asked them about the nature of these festivities at which they replied that these days were occasions of fun and recreation. At this, the Prophet (pbuh) remarked that the Almighty has fixed two days [of festivity] instead of these for you which are better than these: Eid al-fitr and Eid al-adha."

**ZAKAT-UL-FITR** is an obligatory act of charity that forms part of the Fast of Ramadan. It is characterised by the following elements:

1. It is approximately 5.5 pounds of rice, wheat, dates, or similar food items.
2. Is not recommended to give it in the form of money, clothes, or any other non-food items. But the Hanafi School of Thought allows people to give it in monetary form, if they wish to do so.
3. It must be given on the Day of Eid. It can also be paid one or two days before Eid-ul-Fitr.
4. It should be given on behalf of every Muslim (dependant), regardless of gender or age.

## **EID CELEBRATION IN SAUDI ARABIA**

Saudis celebrate Eid ul-Fitr with a display of sense of Islam. They decorate their homes and prepare sumptuous meals for relatives and friends. In fact, they often take delight in competing for excellence in such praise-worthy qualities as love, compassion, and charity during Eid.

Eid festivities in Saudi Arabia may vary culturally depending on the region, but one common trend in all celebrations is that the generosity and hospitality of the Saudis become quite apparent during Eid. First, it is common Saudi tradition for families to gather at the patriarchal home after the Eid Prayers. Before the special Eid meal is served, young children line up in front of each adult family member who dispenses *Riyals* (Saudi currency) to them. It is also typical of family members to give out gift bags, which are beautifully decorated and which contain candies and toys, to children.

Even many shopkeepers show their generosity during Eid by providing free Eid gifts with each purchase. For example, during Eid, many of the chocolate shops give

each customer who buys a selection of candies a free crystal candy dish with their purchase.

In the spirit of Eid, many Saudis go out of their way to show their kindness and generosity. It is common for even complete strangers to greet one another at random, even by occupants of vehicles waiting at traffic lights. Sometimes even toys and gifts are given to children by strangers.

It is also traditional in some areas for Saudi men to go and buy large quantities of rice and other staples and then leave them anonymously at the doors of those who are less-fortunate. Also, in some areas in the middle of Saudi Arabia, such as Al Qassim, it's a common tradition that during Eid's morning and after the Eid Prayer, people put large rugs on one of streets of their neighborhood and each household prepares a large meal where these meals are shared by all neighbours.

## **HOW THE TWO EID PRAYERS ARE OBSERVED**

Each of these Prayers comprises two rakahs characterised by audible Qur-anic Recitation. There is no Call to Prayer (Adhan) and no Second Call (Ikamah). No Prayer of any kind is said before or after them, and the time of their observance is from twenty minutes after sunrise until noon.

### **1. THE PRAYER OF THE FEAST OF BREAKING THE FAST (AL-FITR)**

Having performed Fajr (the Dawn Prayer) on the first day of Shawwal, Muslims first of all perform Ghusl (Ritual Bath), dress themselves in their best clothes, purify themselves, perfume themselves (except women), and brake their fast, if possible with a few dates. They then go to the Prayer Ground. All these things follow the tradition of the Prophet (pbuh) during the Feast.

The Imam stands up to perform this blessed prayer with the people. The followers form themselves into straight rows. The Imam, having inspected the rows, says the Words of Greatness and the followers say them after him, recites the Opening and Facing Allah Prayer to himself alongside his followers. He then says the Words of Greatness **الله أكبر** six times, with the congregation repeating it after him, on each occasion raising his hands to his ears and then putting them together on his chest. The congregation follows likewise. Between two Words of Greatness, the followers recite to themselves the following Words: **سبحان الله والحمد لله ولا اله الا الله والله أكبر** "Glory be to Allah. Thanks be to Allah. There is no god but Allah. Allah is Great."

These Words of Greatness, totaling seven in all, are completed before the recitation of the Qu'ran begins. The Imam then recites the Opening Verse aloud and it is recommended that he recites the whole of the chapter beginning with "Glorify the Name of thy Guardian Lord, the Most High" after it. He then bows and makes two prostrations.

Next, the Imam rises from the second prostration and, standing upright, he proclaims the Word of Greatness **الله اكبر** five times, separating each by these Words: **سبحان الله والحمد لله ولا اله الا الله والله اكبر** "Glory be to Allah. Thanks be to Allah. There is no god but Allah. Allah is great."

Again, he recites the Opening Verse aloud; and it is recommended that he recites the whole of the chapter beginning with "The Disaster," after which he bows, prostrates, and then sits back to say the Words of Witness, reciting the whole of the Words of Greeting. He concludes the Prayer with the Words of Peace, followed by the Words of Greatness in which he is joined by the congregation, saying: **الله اكبر الله اكبر الله اكبر**

**الله اكبر** "Allah is great, Allah is great, Allah is Great, Allah is Great. There is no god but Allah and Allah is great. Allah is great. Praise be to Allah."

Finally, the Imam moves to the pulpit to deliver the Eid Sermon, which touches on issues pertaining to Islam in general and Muslims in particular. Its message encompasses all the sublime ideals expressed by Islam, the entrusting of the realisation of these ideals to Muslims, and their adherence to its values such as love, peace, mercy, compassion, tolerance, patience, generosity, and justice, not forgetting the significance of the Feast. .

At the end of the Sermon, the Imam leaves the pulpit and exchanges handshakes with the worshippers (except with women) who also exchange greetings and expression of joy among themselves.

## **2. THE PRAYER OF THE FEAST OF IMMOLATION (AL-ADHA)**

The Prayer of the Feast of Immolation is exactly the same as the Prayer of the Feast of Breaking the Fast in the Words of Greatness, the recitations, and the form it takes. The only difference is in the Resolve; in one you intend to perform the Prayer of the Feast of Breaking the Fast; in the other you resolve to perform the Prayer of the Feast of Immolation.

In the Feast of Breaking the Fast, there is no need to say the Words of Greatness on leaving your house for the Prayer Ground, but in the Feast of Sacrifice, it is required by tradition that you say them from the time of leaving your house until your arrival at the Place of Worship.

Worshippers proclaim the following in unison and in a low voice while going to the Eid Ground: Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar. Laa ilaaha ilal-lahu wal-Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar wa-lilla hil hamd.

Recitation ceases as soon as they get to the place of Eid or once the Imam commences activities.

## **FURTHER CLARIFICATION**

The eminent Imams are all in agreement with what has been discussed regarding the Prayers for the two Feasts, but they they differ concerning the exact number of times the Words of Greatness should be recited due to variations in related evidence. The pattern most widely known and for which the evidence is strongest – and the opinion held by most Imams – is that the Words of Greatness should be repeated seven times in the first rakah, and five times in the second.

This may be compared with the view held by the Hanafis who say the Words of Greatness four times, in addition to the one before the recitation in the first rakah, and three times in the second, after the Opening Verse and the chapter of the Qur'an come to an end. They say the Words of Greatness for the bow. Every time they say the Words during the two feasts, the Imam and his followers raise their hands. Both methods are correct and are based upon evidence.

Worshippers are recommended to use separate routes to and from the Prayer Ground.

May Allah the Almighty accept this effort of us! Ameen!

Eid Mubarak! Eid Mubarak!! Eid Mubarak!!!

# CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is worth reiterating that the spirit with which the Ramadan Fasting is observed not be exposed to such impious practices as soothsaying, demonic protection, and ancestral sacrifice, as well as deeds of unrighteousness as pornography, indecent exposure, Movies (Hausa, Dagbane, Japanese, Hollywood, series, Ghanaian, Nigerian, etc.), fornication , backbiting, slander, gossip, exchanging handshakes with people of the opposite sex, and listening to sexy but insinuating music; rather, such strength of mind and of heart be shielded from being destroyed by all that is impious and unrighteous.

Let's just sincerely repent of our wrong doings before, during, and after the Blessed Month of Ramadan; and with that, we stand a clear chance of being intellectually, spiritually, morally, and materially uplifted. What a sense of religious refinement!