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Some Rulings on Fasting

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English

إنجليزي



The Scientific Committee under the Presidency of
Religious Affairs at the Sacred Mosque and the
Prophet's Mosque

مِنْ أَحْكَامِ الصَّيَامِ

Some Rulings on Fasting

اللَّجْنَةُ الْعِلْمِيَّةُ

بِرئاسةِ الشُّؤْنِ الدِّيْنِيَّةِ بِالمَسْجِدِ الحَرَامِ وَالمَسْجِدِ النَّبَوِيِّ

The Scientific Committee under the Presidency of
Religious Affairs at the Sacred Mosque and the
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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Some Rulings on Fasting

The First Topic

Meaning of fasting and the obligation of fasting Ramadan

Firstly: Meaning of fasting:

Fasting: It means worshipping Allah Almighty by abstaining from all that nullifies fasting from break of dawn to sunset.

Secondly: The obligation of fasting Ramadan

Fasting Ramadan is a pillar of Islam, without which a Muslim's faith cannot stand. Fasting is an obligation upon all nations, though its manner and timing may differ, as Allah Almighty says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨٣﴾﴾

{O you who believe, fasting is prescribed upon you as it was prescribed upon those who were before you, so that you may become righteous.} [Surat al-Baqarah: 183] The Arabic verb 'Kutiba' means: made obligatory.

Its obligation is proven by the Qur'an, the Sunnah, and the consensus.

- As for the Qur'an, Allah Almighty says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن

قَبْلَكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨٤﴾ أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ...﴿١٨٥﴾

{O you who believe, fasting is prescribed upon you as it was prescribed upon those who were before you, so that you may become righteous

[Fasting is for] a specific number of days;} [Surat al-Baqarah: 183-184]

- As for the Sunnah, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«بُنِيَ الْإِسْلَامُ عَلَى خَمْسٍ: شَهَادَةِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، وَإِقَامَ الصَّلَاةِ، وَإِيتَاءَ الزَّكَاةِ، وَصَوْمَ رَمَضَانَ، وَحَجَّ الْبَيْتِ».

“Islam is built upon five pillars: testifying that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, establishing prayer, giving Zakah, fasting the month of Ramadan, and performing Hajj to the House.”¹.

- As for the consensus: Muslims unanimously agreed on the obligation of fasting Ramadan, and whoever denies its obligation is a disbeliever.

The Second Topic

The merits of the month of Ramadan

This great month has immense virtues and merits distinguishing it from all other months. Among them are:

1. The sending down of the Noble Qur'an therein, as Allah Almighty says:

¹ Agreed upon, narrated by Al-Bukhāri no. 8 (1/11), and Muslim no. 16 (1/34).

﴿شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ...﴾

{Ramadan is a month in which the Qur'an was sent down} [Surat al-Baqarah: 185]

2. The gates of Paradise are opened due to the abundance of good deeds performed therein.

3. The gates of Hellfire are closed in this month due to the scarcity of sins.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِذَا جَاءَ رَمَضَانُ، فَتُتَحَّتْ أَبْوَابُ الْجَنَّةِ، وَغُلِّقَتْ أَبْوَابُ النَّارِ، وَصُفِّدَتِ الشَّيَاطِينُ».

“When Ramadan comes, the gates of Paradise are opened, the gates of Hellfire are closed, and the devils are chained.”¹

4. Among its virtues is what is indicated by the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ):

«مَا مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ يَعْمَلُهَا ابْنُ آدَمَ إِلَّا كُتِبَ لَهُ عَشْرُ حَسَنَاتٍ إِلَى سَبْعِمِائَةٍ ضِعْفٍ، قَالَ اللَّهُ: إِلَّا الصَّيَامَ، فَإِنَّهُ لِي وَأَنَا أَجْزِي بِهِ، يَدْعُ شَهْوَتُهُ وَطَعَامُهُ مِنْ أَجْلِي، الصَّيَامُ جُنَّةٌ، وَلِلصَّائِمِ فَرْحَتَانِ: فَرْحَةٌ عِنْدَ فِطْرِهِ، وَفَرْحَةٌ عِنْدَ لِقَاءِ رَبِّهِ، وَلِخُلُوفٍ فِيمَ الصَّائِمِ أَطْيَبُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ رِيحِ الْمِسْكِ».

“There is no good deed that the son of Adam performs except that it is written for him as ten good deeds up to seven hundred deeds. Allah says: ‘Except for fasting, which is for Me, and I shall give

¹ Agreed upon, narrated by Al-Bukhāri no. 1898 (3/25), and Muslim no. 1079 (2/758).

reward for it. He gives up his desires and food for My sake.' Fasting is a shield, and the fasting person has two moments of joy: a moment of joy when he breaks his fast and a moment of joy when he meets his Lord. Verily, the smell of the mouth of the fasting person is more pleasant to Allah than the fragrance of musk."¹ The multiplication of reward for fasting is not confined to a certain number.

5. Sincerity in fasting is greater than other acts; based on His saying:

«تَرَكَ شَهْوَتَهُ وَطَعَامَهُ وَشَرَابَهُ مِنْ أَجْلِي».

"He gives up his desire, food, and drink for My sake."².

6. Allah Almighty has designated a gate in Paradise for those who fast, which is Ar-Rayyān, through which no one else will enter.

7. The fasting person has a supplication that is surly answered; as the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«لِلصَّائِمِ عِنْدَ فِطْرِهِ دَعْوَةٌ لَا تُرَدُّ».

"For the fasting person at the time of breaking his fast, there is a supplication that is not rejected."³.

8. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

¹ Narrated by An-Nasā'i in Al-Kubra, no. 2536 (3/131).

² See previous reference.

³ Narrated by Ibn Mājah, no. 1753 (1/775).

«مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا، غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ».

“Whoever fasts Ramadān out of faith and seeking reward from Allah, will have his past sins forgiven.”¹.

Therefore, a Muslim should fast it out of faith and seeking reward so that he may attain the reward and have his sins forgiven.

The Third Topic

What confirms the commencement of the month of Ramadan

The commencement of the month of Ramadan is confirmed by one of two things:

1) By sighting its crescent; as the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِذَا رَأَيْتُمُ الْهِلَالَ فَصُومُوا، وَإِذَا رَأَيْتُمُوهُ فَأَفْطِرُوا، فَإِنْ غَمَّ عَلَيْكُمْ فَأَقْدُرُوا لَهُ»

“When you see the crescent, observe the fast, and when you see it again, then break the fast. If the sky is overcast (cloudy) and you cannot see it, then estimate for it.”². The Prophet (ﷺ) also said:

«لَا تَصُومُوا حَتَّى تَرَوْا الْهِلَالَ، وَلَا تُفْطِرُوا حَتَّى تَرَوْهُ».

“Do not observe the fast until you see the

¹ Agreed upon, narrated by Al-Bukhāri, no. 38 (1/16), and Muslim, no. 760 (1/523).

² Narrated by Imām Ahmad in Al-Musnad, no. 6323 (10/402), and An-Nasā’i in Al-Kubra, no. 2446 (3/102).

crescent, and do not break the fast until you see it.”¹.

2) If the crescent is not sighted, then complete the month of Sha‘bān as thirty days, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«الشَّهْرُ تِسْعٌ وَعِشْرُونَ لَيْلَةً، فَلَا تَصُومُوا حَتَّى تَرَوْهُ، فَإِنْ غَمَّ عَلَيْكُمْ فَأَكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ ثَلَاثِينَ».

“A month is twenty-nine nights, so do not fast until you see it. If the sky is cloudy for you to see it, then complete it as thirty.”².

The Fourth Topic **Intention in fasting**

The intention is a condition for the validity of every act, and one must intend the fast of Ramadan during the night, based on the the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ):

«مَنْ لَمْ يُبَيِّتِ الصِّيَامَ قَبْلَ الْفَجْرِ، فَلَا صِيَامَ لَهُ».

“Whoever does not have the intention of fasting before dawn, his fast is invalid.”³.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah have mercy upon him) said: “Whoever knows that tomorrow is Ramadan and intends to fast, has

¹ Agreed upon, narrated by Al-Bukhārī, no. 1906 (3/27), and Muslim, no. 1080 (2/759).

² Agreed upon, narrated by Al-Bukhārī, no. 1907 (3/27), and Muslim, no. 1081 (2/762).

³ Narrated by An-Nasā’i in Al-Kubra, no. 2652 (3/170).

indeed made the intention to fast, whether he verbalizes the intention or not. This is the practice of the general Muslims; all of them make the intention to fast.”¹.

The Fifth Topic

Upon whom is fasting due?

Fasting is due upon every Muslim who is adult and sane.

If he is in good health and at home, he is required to observe it in its due time. However, if he is ill, he is required to make it up.

If he is healthy and on a journey, he is given the choice to fast or not, though it is better not to fast.

Fasting is not due on a disbeliever, nor is it valid from him. If he reverts during the month, he should fast the remaining days, but he is not required to make up for the days missed in the state of disbelief.

Fasting is not obligatory upon a minor, but it is valid from a discerning minor and is considered a voluntary act for him.

Fasting is not obligatory upon an insane person, and if he fasts while in a state of insanity, it is invalid due to the absence of intention.

The Sixth Topic

Who is excused from fasting?

The following categories are excused from the

¹ Al-Fatāwa Al-Kubra (2/469).

obligation of fasting in the month of Ramadan:

1. A sick person for whom fasting is challenging is recommended to break his fast.

2. A traveler upon whom Ramadan commenced while he was on a journey, or who initiated a journey within the month covering a distance of 80 kilometers or more.

3. It is prohibited for women in menstruation or in the postpartum period to fast during the period of menstruation or post-partum bleeding, based on the statement of 'Ā'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her): "We used to experience that, and we were commanded to make up for the missed fasts, but not the missed prayers."¹.

4. A person with a chronic illness that has no hope of recovery and who is continuously unable to fast should not fast and, instead, feed a needy person for each day. He should provide half a Sā' of wheat or similar food, and he is not required to make up for the fast.

5. The elderly person who is unable to fast should not fast and feed a poor person for each day, and he is not obligated to make up for it.

6. Pregnant and breastfeeding women, if they fear harm from fasting for themselves or their babies, are permitted not to fast and should make up for the missed days. However, if they do not fast

¹ Narrated by Muslim in his Sahīh Collection, no. 335 (1/265).

out of concern for their babies only, they should make up the days and feed a needy person for each day.

The Seventh Topic

Nullifiers of fasting

1. Sexual intercourse:

Whoever engages in sexual intercourse during the day of Ramadan, his fasting becomes invalid, and he is required to refrain from food and drink for the rest of the day. He must repent and seek forgiveness and make up for the day he engaged in intercourse. He is also obligated to offer expiation, which is to set a slave free; if not possible, fasting two consecutive months; and if not possible, feeding sixty poor people, giving each poor person half a Sā' of wheat or other food that is customary in the country.

2. Discharge of semen due to kissing, touching, masturbation, or repeated gazing:

If a fasting person ejaculates due to any of these causes, his fast is invalidated, and he must refrain from eating and drinking, and make up for that day. There is no expiation required, but he must repent, feel remorse, seek forgiveness, and avoid these things that arouse desire, for he is in a great act of worship.

3. Eating and drinking deliberately.

4. The extraction of blood from the fasting

person, whether by Hijāmah (cupping), bloodletting, or donating blood.

The basis for this is the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ) regarding cupping:

«أَفْطَرَ الْحَاجِمُ وَالْمَحْجُومُ».

“The cupper and the one for whom cupping is done both have broken their fast.”¹.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah have mercy upon him) said: “The view that cupping invalidates fasting is held by the majority of the Hadīth scholars, such as Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Is'hāq ibn Rāhawayh, Ibn Khuzaymah, Ibn al-Mundhir, and others.”².

As for the blood that comes out unintentionally from the fasting person, such as a nosebleed, surgical bleeding, or tooth extraction, and the like, it does not affect the fast.

5. Vomiting:

Intentionally extracting food or drink from the stomach through the mouth invalidates the fast. However, if one is overcome by vomiting and it happened without his choice, it does not affect his fast, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«مَنْ ذَرَعَهُ الْقَيْءُ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْهِ قَضَاءٌ، وَمَنْ اسْتَقَاءَ فَلَيْقُضُ».

¹ Narrated by Al-Bukhāri, no. 1937 (3/33), and Ahmad in his Musnad Collection, no. 26217 (43/278).

² Majmū' Al-Fatāwa (25/252).

“Whoever is overcome by vomiting does not have to make up for that day, but whoever vomits deliberately must make up for that day.”¹ The meaning of "dhar'ahu" is: to overpower him.

The Eighth Topic

Recommended acts of fasting

1) Suhūr; as reported by Anas ibn Mālīk (may Allah be pleased with him) who said: The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«تَسَحَّرُوا، فَإِنَّ فِي السُّحُورِ بَرَكَهً».

“Have Suhūr, for indeed there is a blessing in Suhūr.”²

2) Delaying Suhūr (pre-dawn meal) as long as one does not fear the break of dawn.

3) Hastening to break the fast if there is certainty about sunset. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

«لَا تَزَالُ أُمَّتِي بِخَيْرٍ، مَا أَخَرُوا السُّحُورَ، وَعَجَّلُوا الْفِطْرَ».

“My Ummah will remain upon goodness as long as they delay Suhūr and hasten to break the fast.”³

4) It is recommended to break the fast with fresh dates; if not available, then with dried dates; and if

¹ Narrated by Imam Ahmad in his Musnad Collection, no. 10463 (16/283), and At-Tirmidhi in Al-Jāmi‘ Al-Kabīr, no. 720 (2/91).

² Agreed upon, narrated by Al-Bukhārī, no. 1923 (3/29), and Muslim, no. 1095 (2/770).

³ Narrated by Ahmad in his Musnad Collection, no. 12507 (35/399).

not available, then with water, based on the statement of Anas (may Allah be pleased with him):

«كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ يُفْطِرُ عَلَى رُطَبَاتٍ قَبْلَ أَنْ يُصَلِّيَ، فَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ رُطَبَاتٌ، فَعَلَى تَمْرَاتٍ، فَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ، حَسَا حَسَوَاتٍ مِنْ مَاءٍ».

“The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to break his fast with fresh dates before praying; if there were no fresh dates, then with dried dates; and if there were no dried dates, he would take few sips of water.”¹.

5) It is recommended for the fasting person to supplicate at the time of breaking the fast with whatever he wishes. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

«إِنَّ لِلصَّائِمِ عِنْدَ فِطْرِهِ دَعْوَةً لَا تُرَدُّ».

“He who is fasting has a supplication at the time of breaking his fast that is not rejected.”².

6) Engaging frequently in various acts of worship, such as reciting the Qur'an, remembering Allah Almighty, performing voluntary night prayer, offering Tarāweih, observing the confirmed regular Sunnah prayers, giving charity, and contributing to good causes; for indeed, good deeds erase bad deeds.

¹ Narrated by Abu Dāwūd, no. 2356 (2/306).

² Narrated by Ibn Mājah, no. 1753 (1/775).

The Ninth Topic

Reminders

A fasting person must avoid lying, backbiting, and cursing. If someone insults or curses him, he should say: "I am fasting."

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«الصَّيَامُ جُنَّةٌ، فَلَا يَرْفُثُ وَلَا يَجْهَلُ، وَإِنْ امْرُؤٌ قَاتَلَهُ أَوْ شَاتَمَهُ، فَلْيَقُلْ: إِنِّي صَائِمٌ، إِنِّي صَائِمٌ».

"Fasting is a shield, so the fasting person should avoid obscene language and acting impudently, and if a person fights or insults him, let him say: 'I am fasting' twice."¹

Among the things forbidden to a fasting person is excessive rinsing of the mouth and sniffing water into the nose, as water might reach his stomach.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«وَبَالِغٌ فِي الْإِسْتِنْشَاقِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ صَائِمًا».

"Sniff water deep into your nose unless you are fasting."²

Using the tooth-stick does not affect the fast; rather, it is recommended and encouraged for both the fasting person and others at the earlier and latter part of the day, according to the correct view.

¹ Narrated by Al-Bukhārim, no. 1894 (3/24).

² Narrated by Abu Dāwūd, no. 2366 (2/308), and At-Tirmidhi in Al-Jāmi' Al-Kabīr, no. 788 (2/147).

The Tenth Topic

Making up for the missed days of Ramadan

Whoever breaks the fast in Ramadan due to a permissible reason, such as the legitimate excuses that allow breaking the fast, or due to a prohibited reason, like invalidating one's fast through sexual intercourse or otherwise, is required to make up for it, as Allah Almighty says:

﴿...فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ...﴾

{then an equal number of other days [are to be made up]} [Surat al-Baqarah :184] It is recommended for him to hasten in making up the missed fast to absolve his liability, and it is recommended that the making up be consecutive, as making up mirrors the original performance. However, it is permissible for him to delay it, as its time is extended.

He may also make it up separately, but if only a portion of Sha'bān remains equivalent to what he owes, then it is obligatory for him to fast consecutively by consensus due to the limited time. It is not permissible to delay it beyond the next Ramadan without an excuse.

The one who delays making up for the fast until after the following Ramadan has two cases:

To delay it for a valid excuse according to the

Shariah, like continuing to be sick until the following Ramadan. In this case, one is required only to make up for it.

To delay it without a valid excuse, in this case, one must make up for the fast along with feeding a needy person for each missed day, giving each half a Sā' of the country's staple food.

Voluntary fast for those who have missed days of fasting: It is preferable for whoever missed days of fasting from Ramadan to hasten to make up for them before voluntary fasting. However, if such a voluntary fast has a specific time that could be missed, like the fasting of 'Arafah and 'Āshūrā', then one may fast them before making up for the missed days of fasting, since there is much leeway in this regard. However, one should not fast the six days of Shawwāl except after making up for the missed fasts of Ramadan.

This is what I was able to compile. May Allah's abundant peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and his Companions.



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