

THE MAILS

“VOICE of ISLAM”

PO BOX 3393 - PORT ELIZABETH - 6056 - SOUTH AFRICA | Ramadhaan



Roses have thorns!
The Haqq too has thorns!
“We strike baatil with the Haqq. Then it crushes the brains of baatil.” (Qur’aan)

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“FASTING IS A SHIELD.” (HADITH)

FASTING

THE PHYSICAL DIMENSION OF FASTING

“O People of Imaan!
Siyaam (Fasting) has been ordained for you just it was ordained for those before you so that you attain Taqwa.” (Qur’aan)

Siyaam existed as a compulsory injunction for all Ummats prior to the Ummat of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

As for Muslims prior to the Fasts of Ramadhaan being decreed Fardh, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam)

and the Sahaabah would fast on the Day of Aashura (10th Muharram) and the Ayyam-e-Beedh (13th, 14th and 15th) of the Islamic months.

Literally *Saum* means abstinence – to stay away – to desist. The Shar’i meaning is abstinence from food, drink and sexual relations from Subh Saadiq to sunset with the *niyyat* of fasting.

Among the different views pertaining to the name *Ramadh*, the popular view is

that it is the month which burns away sins.

It is also said that *Ramadh* is one of the Names of Allah Ta’ala, hence the term should not be used without being prefixed with *month*, i.e. the Month of Ramadh.

Siyaam like all acts of Ibaadat consists of *Rooh (Soul)* and *Jism (Physical body)*. It has two dimensions – Spiritual and Physical.

NIYYAT

It is Mustahab (Preferable and Meritorious) to make the intention for fasting during the night time, that is prior to Subh Saadiq which is the time the Fast begins.

If the *niyyat* was not made during the night, it has to be made at any time before Nisfun Na-haar (i.e. about one hour before Zawwaal).

Abstention from food the entire day without *Niyyat* will not be a valid Fast.

It is not essential that any particular *Niyyat* formula be recited. *Niyyat* merely means to intend that one will be fasting, or is fasting. The *Niyyat* could also be made verbally in any language, e.g. one may say: ‘O Allah! Tomorrow I shall be fasting for You’.

Or one may recite in Arabic e.g.:

اللَّهُمَّ أَصُومُ غَدًا لَكَ فَاعْفِرْ لِي مَا قَدَّمْتُ وَمَا أَخَّرْتُ

I make Niyyat of tomorrows fast, therefore forgive my future and past sins.

Fitrah (Hanafi) R30
Fitrah (Shaafi) R60
Fitrah (Maaliki) R60

SAHRI

Sahri is the act of arising from sleep during the course of the night to partake of some food or drink in anticipation of the next day's fasting.

☞ Sahri is Sunnat regardless of whether one feels like eating anything or not. One should rise and eat even a date or two or merely take a gulp of water.

☞ It is of greater merit to delay Sahri. But it should not be delayed so much that Subah Saadiq has almost set in, causing doubt in the validity of the fast.

☞ It is not permissible to forgo a fast because of failure to wake up during the night for Sahri.

☞ It is not permissible to eat after the expiry of Sahri time. Sahri time expires with the commencement of Subah Saadiq.

☞ Some people con-

tinue eating even while the Fajr Athaan is being proclaimed. This act breaks the fast since the Athaan is proclaimed after expiry of Sahri time.

☞ While the best method of observing Sahri is in the later part of the night after rising from sleep, the Sahri will be valid if for some reason one remained awake until late in the night and then partook of Sahri before going to sleep.

☞ Eating by error after the ending of Sahri time necessitates QADHAA of the fast. If one ate under the mistaken impression that it was still Sahri time, the fast of the following day will not be valid. However, it is

Waajib (compulsory) to abstain from all acts which break Saum and to remain like a Saa-im (a fasting person). Qadhaa of the fast will have to be

made after Ramadhāan.

☞ A doubt in the ending of Sahri time will not invalidate the fast although it is Makrooh (a sinful act) to eat when there is a doubt as to the existence of Sahri time. But Qadhaa will not be compulsory.

Nevertheless, in view of the doubt, it will be better to make Qadhaa of such a fast.

☞ It is Mustahab to delay Sahri as late as possible, but not to the Makrooh time, i.e. when one starts doubting the validity of Sahri time.

☞ Some Ramadhāan timetables indicate a recommended time for the cessation of eating, etc. at the time of Sahri. It is not obligatory to stop eating at

NISFUN HAAHAAR

Example:

Subah Saadiq 5:30 a.m.

Sunset 5:35 p.m.

Time duration from Subah Saadiq to Sunset:

12 hrs. 5 mins divided by 2 = 6 hrs. 2 mins. Add this result to Subah Saadiq: 5:30 + 6:02 = 11:32 a.m. = Nisfun Nahaar.

If Niyyat is made for the Saum before 11:32 a.m. (in this example), the Waajib-Saum will be valid.

such recommended times. One is allowed to eat right until the ending of Sahri time which coincides with Subah Saadiq although it is best to stop eating a couple of minutes before Subah Saadiq.

☞ If Sahri was missed due to having overslept, one should not forgo fasting. It is not permissible to refrain from Saum because of having missed Sahri.

IFTAAR

* It is Mustahab to hasten with Iftaar (breaking the fast) as soon as the sun has set.

* Iftaar should be made before the Maghrib Salaat.

* The Muath-thin should make Iftaar before proclaiming the Athaan.

* At the time of Iftaar, it is Sunnat to recite the following dua:

اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ صُمْتُ وَبِكَ آمَنْتُ وَعَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَعَلَىٰ رِزْقِكَ أَفْطَرْتُ

“O Allah! I have fasted for You. I believe in You. I have trust in You, and I make Iftaar with the (Rizq) food provided by You.”

* Iftaar should preferably be made with dates. In the absence of dates, water is best. Although

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IFTAAR

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this is best, it is permissible to break the fast with any lawful food or drink.

- * It is Makrooh to make Iftaar when in doubt regarding sunset. If it is overcast, Iftaar should be delayed until there is abso-

lute certainty that the sun has set.

- * If Iftaar is made even a minute before sunset, Qadhaa of the fast is incumbent.
- * It is Makrooh to unnecessarily delay Iftaar.
- * The time of Iftaar is very auspicious. Dua is readily accepted at the time when the fast is about to end.

SAUM IN ABNORMAL TIME ZONES

In abnormal time zones where the sun either does not rise or set for months, the times of the nearest normal region should be taken for beginning and ending the Saum.

MASAA-IL OF FASTING

• The Saum of Ramadhaan commences when the sighting of the Ramadhaan Hilaal (crescent moon) has been confirmed in accordance with the rules of the Shariah. Niyyat for the Saum of Ramadhaan should be renewed each day. A single niyyat at the beginning of Ramadhaan will not suffice for the Saum of the entire month. Partaking of the Sahri meal will be an adequate niyyat for the validity of the Saum. While it is better to recite a verbal niyyat as well, the mere act of rising from sleep to participate in Sahri with the intention of fasting constitutes the actual niyyat.

• A mutlaq (i.e. without any descriptive condition) niyyat will suffice for the Saum of Ramadhaan. Thus, it is not incumbent to say: *'I am fasting the Saum of Ramadhaan or Fardh Saum'*. It will suffice to intend that one is just fasting.

• If on account of a reason accepted as valid by the Shariah, one does not fast during Ramadhaan, one should not eat in the presence of others.

• If one's Saum is nullified

by error, e.g. water slips down the throat while rinsing the mouth, one should remain the whole day as a fasting person although Qadhaa is incumbent. It will be sinful to indulge in eating once the fast is erroneously broken.

• If haidh begins during the course of the fasting day, the fast is not valid. It is not incumbent to abstain from eating during the remaining part of the day. However, she should not eat in the presence of others.

• A woman whose haidh ends during the course of the day (i.e. during Ramadhaan) should compulsorily abstain from eating, etc. Her fast on the particular day her haidh ended is not valid, hence she has to make Qadhaa in spite of having to refrain from eating, etc. on that day.

• A musaafir is permitted to refrain from Saum although it is meritorious for him/her to fast if the journey is not a difficult one. However, the Shariah allows a musaafir to refrain from fasting during Ramadhaan even if he/she encoun-

ters no difficulty on the journey. The musaafir will make Qadhaa of all Saum omitted during the journey.

• A musaafir ceases to be a musaafir on returning to his hometown or on forming a niyyat of staying fifteen days or more at any place along the journey. The non-musaafir is termed a muqem. When a musaafir becomes a muqem, he has to compulsorily abstain from eating, etc. If he becomes a muqem prior to Nisfun-Nahaar (see page 2), and he has yet not committed any act which nullifies Saum, then his niyyat for the day's fast will be valid. However, if he has already eaten, etc. prior to becoming a muqem, then although his fast will now not be valid, nevertheless, he has to compulsorily abstain from eating, etc. for the rest of the day. In addition, he has to make Qadhaa of that day.

• A muqem (one who is not a musaafir) who has started fasting and then goes on a journey, should continue with the fast. It is not permissible for this person who has become a musaafir to break the

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MASAA-IL OF FASTING

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fast.

- A musaafir who returns home (becomes a muqem) and dies before having obtained a sufficient number of days to make Qadhaa of the fasts which he/she missed while on the journey, is liable for the Qadhaa of only the number of days he/she remained alive and capable of fasting. Example: The musaafir did not fast for 20 days. On returning home, he/she died after 12 days but did not make any Qadhaa in spite of having had the opportunity to do so, he/she is, therefore, liable for only 12 days of Qadhaa, not for 20 days which were missed while on the journey. He/she has thus to make wasiyyat (a bequest) for the payment of Fidyah for the Saum which could no longer be discharged.
- When a pregnant woman has a genuine fear for either her own life or the life of the child she is bearing; it will be permissible for her to refrain from Saum. She will have to make Qadhaa of the Saum she misses as a result. Should she break her Saum during the course of the day, i.e. after having started it, the penalty

of Kaffarah does not apply to her. She is liable for only Qadhaa. She cannot compensate the missed fasts with Fidyah as long as she has the ability to fast, Qadhaa is necessary.

- Fear in this context will mean a genuine fear supported by either previous experience or by the advice of a pious Muslim physician. The word of a kaafir doctor or of a Muslim Faasiq doctor is not valid grounds for her to break her fast nor to abstain from fasting.
- When a child (a na-baaligh – one who has not attained the age of puberty) becomes baaligh during the course of the day in Ramadhaan, he/she has to compulsorily refrain from eating for the rest of that day although there is no Qadhaa for that day.
- When a non-Muslim embraces Islam during the course of the day in Ramadhaan, he/she has to refrain from eating for the rest of the day although there is no Qadhaa for that day.
- The Saum of a person who becomes unconscious after having commenced the fast, remains valid as long as medi-

cine was not administered to him/her via his/her mouth.

- A person who lapsed into unconsciousness before having made niyyat for Saum during the night or before Nisfun-Nahaar, will make Qadhaa of that day, i.e. if he/she had no intention of fasting that day.
- A person lapsed into unconsciousness before the commencement of Ramadhaan, and remained in this state the entire month. After regaining consciousness, Qadhaa of the whole month is obligatory.
- When a person lapses into unconsciousness on the first night of Ramadhaan, and remains in this state the entire month or for a number of days, then Qadhaa of the first day is not obligatory. Qadhaa of all the subsequent days – viz. the days after the day when unconsciousness started, is compulsory.
- When a child reaches the age of seven years, he/she should be ordered to observe Saum. However, there is no Qadhaa if the child breaks the fast. By the age of ten, the child should be compelled to keep the Ramadhaan fasts. This is the normal rule. Parents should use their discretion and introduce their children to Saum according to their health and strength.

KAFFAARAH

A fast of Ramadhaan broken deliberately without valid reason, after having made the niyyat for fasting during the night, brings about the penalty

of Kaffarah.

Kaffarah is the penalty which is imposed by the Shariah for the deliberate and flagrant nullification of the Saum of Ramadhaan.

(1) Kaffarah applies to only the Saum of Ramadhaan.

(2) Kaffarah comes into force only if the niyyat for

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fasting was made at night, i.e. before Subah Saadiq. Thus, if niyyat was made during the night to fast the following day, and then the fast is broken without a valid reason, the Kaffaarah penalty comes into effect.

(3) Kaffaarah for flagrantly breaking a fast of Ramadhaan is to fast 60 consecutive days – sixty days, one after the other, without missing any day in between.

(4) It is essential to make niyyat for this type of fasting from the night, i.e. before Subah Saadiq. If the niyyat is not made before Subah Saadiq, the Kaffaarah will not be valid.

(5) The Kaffaarah will be rendered invalid if for any reason – be it a valid reason – even a single day is omitted during the 60 day Kaffaarah course. Thus, if a person fasted for 59 days and failed to fast on the sixtieth day due to illness, he will have to start the Kaffaarah all over again. The only interruption which will not invalidate the Kaffaarah is haidh (the monthly menses of women).

(6) A Kaffaarah interrupted by the intervention of nifaas will be rendered invalid.

(7) A person who is unable to discharge the Kaffaarah because of ill-health or very old age, will have to feed 60 poor persons. Each miskeen (poor person) should be given two full meals for the day or the amount in cash which is given as Sadqah Fitr. This amount is the price of approximately 2 kilograms bread flour. Instead

KAFFAARAH

of cash, flour may also be given.

(8) If the grain, food or cash of 60 persons is given to one man on a single day, the Kaffaarah will not be discharged. It will be regarded as an amount/quantity given to only one person.

If the entire Kaffaarah amount/quantity is distributed on a single day to only two persons, the Kaffaarah will not be discharged thereby. Another 58 persons will have to be given each the Sadqah Fitr amount.

(9) The Kaffaarah option of feeding 60 Masaakeen (poor persons) may be discharged on a single day by feeding 60 persons or giving the cash or grain to sixty persons.

(10) The Kaffaarah may also be spread over a period of 60 days. Daily, one miskeen may be fed or given the grain/cash until 60 days.

(11) If after having paid the Kaffaarah one recovers from the illness and is able to execute the 60 day fast, then fasting 60 days becomes obligatory. The money, etc. previously given to the poor will become a Nafl charity.

(12) If any miskeen among the sixty is a small child, the Kaffaarah will not be discharged. If small children were fed, an equal number of adults will have to be fed in lieu. However, if the full Sadqah Fitr amount was given in cash to a poor child, the Kaffaarah will be fulfilled.

(13) Where the Kaffaarah op-

tion of feeding or payment is valid, another person may pay it on the instruction of the one who is liable for the Kaffaarah. Without such instruction it will not be valid.

(14) Where the Kaffaarah option of feeding or payment is valid, an interruption during the course of feeding or paying will not invalidate the Kaffaarah. Thus, if a person who is unable to fast the 60 days, undertakes to feed one miskeen for 60 days, but does not feed the miskeen for 60 consecutive days, the Kaffaarah will be valid. As long as the miskeen is fed for 60 days, the Kaffaarah will be valid even if the 60 days are spread over a long period.

(15) A single Ramadhaan makes Waajib only one Kaffaarah irrespective of the number of fasts flagrantly broken during that Ramadhaan.

(16) If fasts were flagrantly nullified in more than one Ramadhaan, the number of Kaffaarah will be equal to the number of Ramadhaan. Thus, if fasts were flagrantly broken in three different Ramadhaans, three different Kaffaarah will be obligatory.

(17) When the Kaffaarah is commenced on the 1st day of the Islamic month, then fasting two full Islamic months will suffice for the Kaffaarah even if the total number of days in the two months are 58 days (29 day months).

If, however, the Kaffaarah is started during the course of the month, then it will be necessary to fast a full 60 days.

FASTING AND HADHRAT AADAM

After Hadhrat Nabi Aadam (Alayhis salaam) had mistakenly ate from the forbidden tree in Jannat, he sincerely repented.

However, his Taubah was not accepted for 30 days because the *athr* (effect) of the haraam fruit was still in his bodily system. The *athr* was eliminated only after 30 days.

When he was totally purified even physically of the

evil effects of the forbidden fruit, his Taubah was accepted. Thus, 30 days fasting became the practice and speciality of the Ummat of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

This is the view proffered by the Sufiya (Auliya). Haafiz Ibn Hajar (Rahmatullah alayh) claims that there is no authentic *Sanad* for this narration of the Sufiya. But his view is not the final word. The illustrious

Sufiya who were great Auliya made no false claims. They were not fabricators of Ahaadith. Ibn Hajar's view is consequently simply set aside.

While the views of the Sufiya revealed by way of *Kashf* and *Ilhaam* are not *Shar'i Dalaa-il* on which *ahkaam* could be formulated, they may not be dismissed as fabrications and baseless.

THINGS WHICH BREAK THE FAST

- (1) Eating or drinking breaks the Saum.
- (2) Sexual intercourse even if there is no emergence of semen.
- (3) Smoking.
- (4) Inhaling smoke by one's own action, e.g. inhaling the smoke of incense, etc.
- (5) Application of medication into the anus.
- (6) Swallowing any substance or object which is not normally consumed as food or medicine, e.g. pebbles, paper, a coin, etc.
- (7) Pouring oil into the ears.
- (8) Saliva mingled with blood

will break the fast if the taste of blood is discernible when Swallowing.

(9) Eating deliberately after having eaten mistakenly. (Eating by mistake does not break the fast.)

(10) Water slipping down the throat while making wudhu even if not done deliberately.

(11) Deliberately inducing oneself to vomit will break the fast if the vomit is a mouthful. If the emergence of the vomit cannot be restrained, the vomit will be said to be a mouthful. Vomiting less than a mouthful will not break the fast even if deliberately induced.

(12) A food particle the size of a chana (about the size of half a pea) becoming unstuck from the teeth and slipping down the throat.

(13) Applying drops of medicine into the nostrils.

(14) Masturbation. In addition to it nullifying the Saum, it is an immoral and a sinful act. The perpetrator has been cursed by Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

(15) Medical tests undertaken by women in which any instrument, etc. is internally inserted.

(16) Ejaculation as a result of caressing and fondling the wife even if there was no sexual intercourse.

THINGS WHICH DO NOT BREAK THE FAST

- 1) Eating, drinking or indulging in sexual relations forgetfully. This means that at the time of committing these acts, one does not remember the fast. However, if one continues even momentarily after recalling the fast, the Saum will be nullified.
- 2) Applying eye-drops.

- 3) Water entering the ears.
- 4) Vomiting, no matter how much. This refers to vomiting which is not self-induced. For the rule regarding self-induced vomiting, see above no. 11.
- 5) Smoke, which is inhaled unintentionally, not by one's volition or conscious action.
- 6) Applying surmah into the

eyes.

7) Smelling anything fragrant provided that there are no vapours.

8) A food particle less than the size of a chana becoming unstuck from the teeth and slipping down the throat.

9) Swallowing saliva and slime.

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THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION OF FASTING

Siyaam is among the fundamental acts of Ibaadat. It has been ordained by Allah Ta'ala for the development of taqwa (piety) in the Mu'mineen. Fasting is extremely efficacious for the acquisition of taqwa. A Muslim cannot acquire Divine Proximity without taqwa. Without taqwa, the Muslim must necessarily drift far off the straight Path (Seeratul Mustaqeem) which leads to Allah Ta'ala and everlasting success in the Akhirah.

One who denies the fardhiyat (obligation) of Saum, no longer remains a Muslim and the one who does not fast during the month of Ramadhaan is a

Faasiq (an immoral and flagrant transgressor) of the highest order. Such a Faasiq totally destroys his spirituality and morality and exposes his Imaan to the gravest onslaughts of kufr.

There are numerous benefits, both spiritual and physical, of fasting. The prime benefit in the pursuit of taqwa is the suppression of the inordinate desires and demands of nafs-e-ammaarah (man's base carnal propensity). The nafs is perpetually in collusion with Shaitaan to spiritually and morally ruin the Mu'min. If the nafs is allowed unrestrained freedom, it will succeed to make man the slave of passion, lust and base

emotions. His Imaan will suffer. The Noor of his Imaan will be extinguished. It is, therefore, essential that the nafs is put in fetters. Fasting greatly aids in this direction.

By fasting, the Muslim learns to restrain his lowly desires. The nafs is not allowed free expression. The nafs becomes accustomed to submit to the Shariah's restrictions. Carnal desires are weakened and the ability of inculcating taqwa is created.

Fasting produces purity in the rooh (soul). For such purity to come into the rooh, spiritual authorities (the Auliya) say,
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THINGS WHICH DO NOT BREAK THE FAST

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10) Injection. The injection of medicine into the body will not break the fast provided that the medicine does not reach the brain or the stomach.
11) Blood in the saliva will not break the fast if the blood is less than the saliva. This fact will be recognised if the

taste of the blood is not discerned.

12) Using a miswaak to clean the teeth even if the miswaak is fresh and has a taste. A miswaak with artificial flavour should not be used.

13) Breastfeeding the baby.

14) If during wudhu water slips down the throat while

one does not remember the Saum, the fast will not break.

15) Ejaculation of semen during sleep.

16) Ejaculation caused by imagination.

17) Janaabat or the state of Hadath-e-Akbar which is purified by ghusl. If one has not taken ghusl and Sahri time ends, the fast is valid.

THINGS WHICH DO NOT BREAK THE FAST, BUT WHICH ARE MAKROOH DURING SAUM

Some things, while not breaking the fast, are nevertheless Makrooh to do during fasting. Makrooh means detestable and in this context Makrooh things are sinful. Makrooh things bring about a decrease in the Thawaab of the Saum. It is, therefore, essential to abstain from committing Makrooh acts. The following acts are Makrooh during fasting:

(1) Tasting. Tasting food, etc. is Makrooh if done unnecessarily.

If an ill-tempered husband shows his unjustified wrath when food has not been prepared to satisfy his taste, it will be permissible for the wife to taste the food while she is preparing it. As long as nothing goes down her throat, her fast will be valid and her act of

tasting will not be Makrooh.

(2) Using powder or paste to clean the teeth. If any of these substances slips down the throat, the Saum is nullified.

(3) Caressing, fondling or kissing the wife. If ejaculation does not occur, the Saum will be valid.

(4) To rinse the mouth at times other than when making wudhu.

(5) To put water in the nose at times other than when making

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THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION OF FASTING

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there is nothing that has greater efficacy than fasting. While fasting results in even physical health, it creates a feeling of palpable spiritual purity in the Mu'min. The door of Roo-haaniyat (the spiritual domain) is opened up by fasting.

Fasting creates pleasure in Ibaadat. It also makes the heart more conducive for Ibaadat. The bond with Allah Ta'ala is strengthened and the Mu'min acquires a greater awareness of his spiritual and moral goals for which he has been created.

By fasting, the Mu'min progressively draws nearer to Allah Ta'ala. Once Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) supplicated:

"O Rabbul Alameen! When does the servant become closest to you?"

The Divine Reply came:

"When the servant is hungry and when he is in Sajdah."

The development of lofty, angelic attributes are engendered in the Mu'min by fasting. In fasting, man brings about in him a resemblance with the angels since the latter do not eat. They

are devoid of evil inclinations and all things base. Man by reducing his worldly relations and by increasingly stripping his nafs of emotional desires, moves closer to the angelic domain. Thikrullah is the nourishment of the angels. By increasing his Thikrullah, especially in the state of fasting, the Muslim enters the realm of Divine Proximity.

Fasting engenders a feeling for the poor. Man becomes more conscious of his less fortunate brethren and their hardships. He thus learns the lesson of sacrificing some of his wealth to aid others in need. He inculcates in him feeling for humanity.

The greatest and highest benefits of fasting are the acquisition of Allah's Pleasure and lofty ranks in the Akhirah.

In a Hadith-e-Qudsi, Allah Ta'ala says:

"Saum is for Me. I shall (personally) apportion out the reward for it."

For the acquisition of the numerous benefits of Siyaam, there is, however, one vital condition, viz.: abstention from sin and futility.

Sin and futility negate the beneficial effects of fasting. It is therefore essential for the Saa-im (the fasting person) to exercise utmost care and abstain from sin and all things of futility. Should the Saa-im not be heedful of this important condition, his mere abstention from food and water will be akin to a chained animal which is denied food. Spiritually such abstention from food and drink is of no value.

The Muslim should therefore understand well the purpose of Saum and transform his abstention from food into a higher and spiritual act of Ibaadat for the achievement of all the lofty benefits by abstaining from sin, futility and all such things, acts, attitudes and thoughts which neutralise and nullify the efficacy of Saum.

In addition to the adoption of the moral principles for gaining the spiritual and moral effects of Saum, it is essential to adopt all the fiqh (juristic) rules necessary for the validity of Saum. Without these rules the Saum is rendered utterly worthless and at times totally invalid. This book explains these important and necessary rules.

THINGS WHICH DO NOT BREAK THE FAST BUT WHICH ARE MAKROOH DURING SAUM

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wudhu.

(6) To take ghusl merely for cooling.

(7) To swim.

(8) To unnecessarily apply ointment to the lips. If, however, due to pain caused by cracked lips, ointment is applied, care should be taken to prevent licking the ointment.

(9) To unnecessarily chew

something, for example, to soften it.

(10) To eat when in doubt as regards the existence of Sahri time. If later it transpires that Sahri time had in fact expired, Qadhaa will be obligatory.

(11) To make Iftaar (i.e. to break the fast) when in doubt as to the time of sunset. If it transpires that the time when Iftaar was made the sun had not

yet set, Qadhaa will be obligatory.

(12) Participating in un-Islamic activities such as watching television and playing games such as chess, draughts, monopoly, etc. The Thawaab of the Saum is destroyed by indulgence in such unlawful activities.

(13) Gheebat or backbiting.

(14) To gargle the mouth when making wudhu.

NULLIFYING THE FAST

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Many are the people whose fast is nothing but hunger.”

“Fasting is a shield. Therefore do not be immoral nor be ignorant. If anyone fights with him (the fasting person), or abuses him, he should say twice: “I am fasting”.

“Whoever does not shun falsehood, and practising it (falsehood), Allah has no need for his abstention from food and drink.”

Indulgence in gheebat (back-biting), abuse, play, amusement and in any kind of sin and futility nullifies the Fast. The value, effects and benefits of the Fast is completely destroyed. A person who engages in any such acts which are inimical for the spiritual dimension of Fasting, receives no reward for his fasting nor does he derive any benefit. He is like a chained dog deprived of food. His fasting is just like the ‘fasting’ of a chained dog. When the Fast is deprived of its *Rooh*, it is like a lifeless body, like worthless carrion.

ACTS OF NULLIFICATION

All acts of sin and futility nullify and ruin the spirituality of the Fast. Some specific acts of nullification are:

- ⇒ Watching television
- ⇒ Videos
- ⇒ Cell phone evil
- ⇒ Whatsapp gheebat
- ⇒ Speaking lies
- ⇒ Looking at ghair mahram females/males
- ⇒ Shaving and cutting the beard
- ⇒ Wearing the trousers on and below the ankles
- ⇒ Swearing – using vulgar lan-

- guage
- ⇒ Backbiting (gheebat)
- ⇒ Sport and amusement
- ⇒ Arguing
- ⇒ Papsmear tests
- ⇒ Masturbation

These and similar other acts nullify the Fast regardless of the technical validity.

Indulgence in sin and futility, especially whilst fasting is most abhorrent to Allah Ta’ala.

The punishment is multiplied manifold for sinning during the Month of Ramadhān.

QADHAA SAUM

Qadhaa means to fulfil or to compensate fasts which were not executed when they were due.

(1) It is necessary to make Qadhaa of Saum as soon as possible since one does not know when death will overtake one. While it is not Waajib to make the Qadhaa immediately after Ramadhān or on any other specific day/s, Qadhaa should not be unnecessarily delayed.

(2) For the validity of Qadhaa Saum, it is essential to make niyyat during the night, i.e. before Subah Saadiq.

(3) Saum omitted on account of haidh and nifaas has to be

made Qadhaa.

(4) It is not necessary to specify in one’s niyyat for Qadhaa the particular day/s which were omitted. It will suffice to merely intend that: *“I am keeping Qadhaa fast”*. However, if the Saum missed belongs to more than one Ramadhān, then it will be essential to specify in one’s niyyat for Qadhaa the year, e.g. *“I am making Qadhaa of the Saum of Ramadhān of the year 1443.”* etc.

(5) It is not obligatory to keep the Qadhaa Saum all at once (consecutively). The Qadhaa Saum may be spread over a period or they may be kept consecutively.

(6) Saum which is broken in any way whatsoever, deliber-

ately or erroneously, voluntarily or under compulsion, has to be made Qadhaa.

(7) Qadhaa has also to be made of Nafl fasts which were broken.

(8) Qadhaa has also to be made of Nathr Mu-ayyan fasts which were not executed on their specified days.

(9) If by the time death approaches, the Qadhaa has not yet been discharged, it will then be obligatory to make a wasiyyat (bequest) for payment of Fidyah.

(10) Similarly, if due to old age or sickness one is unable to fast and the Qadhaa has not yet been executed, wasiyyat to pay Fidyah will be Waajib (obligatory).

THINGS WHICH MAKE PERMISSIBLE THE BREAKING OF SAUM

Breaking Saum becomes permissible only in case of a real need, emergency or danger. When a fast is broken on account of a valid reason, Qadhaa of the fast is obligatory. In such cases only Qadhaa is necessary, not Kaffarah. The following are valid reasons which make permissible the breaking of Saum:

(1) Sudden sickness which endangers one's life, or which

will cause great deterioration of health if the fast is not broken.

(2) When it becomes necessary to take medicine due to having been bitten by a poisonous animal.

(3) Extreme thirst which endangers one's life.

(4) A pregnant woman having genuine fear for either her own safety or the safety of the child she is bearing, may break the

fast.

(5) A woman fearing for the life of the baby she is breastfeeding may break the fast. If her milk dries up as a result of the fast and the baby is dependent on breastfeeding, breaking the Saum is permissible.

(6) A Nafl fast may be broken to honour one's guests. Qadhaa of the fast has to be made.

WASIYYAT

Wasiyyat is a bequest which a person has to make with regard to undischarged Saum.

(1) If by the time of the approach of maut (death) a person has not executed his obligation of Qadhaa Saum or Fidyah, it will be Waajib (obligatory) on him/her to make a wasiyyat, declaring that Fidyah for the undischarged Saum obligation be paid on his/her behalf.

(2) Once the mayyit (deceased) has made a wasiyyat, it will be Waajib on the executors/heirs of the may-

yit's estate to pay the Fidyah from the estate of the deceased, i.e. from one third of the estate.

(3) If the Fidyah amount exceeds one third of the estate, payment of the excess from the mayyit's estate is not permissible. However, if all the adult heirs willingly consent to the payment of the full Fidyah (i.e. including the excess), it will be permissible. The consent of minors is not valid, hence the excess (i.e. more than one third the value of the estate) cannot be paid from the shares of the minor heirs.

FIDYAH

Fidyah is the compensation which has to be paid for the Saum which has not been executed on account of permanent disability, etc.

(1) The Fidyah amount for each compulsory fast not kept is the same as Sadqah Fitr, viz. 2kg bread flour or its cash equivalent or feeding a miskeen (poor person) two full meals for a day.

(2) Unlike Kaffarah, it is permissible to distribute the Fidyah amount among several Masaakeen (poor persons).

(3) Fidyah (as well as Kaffarah) money/food can be given to only such Muslims who are allowed to accept Zakaat.

(4) If by the time maut (death) approaches, one has not yet paid the Fidyah, it will be Waajib to make a wasiyyat (bequest) for the Fidyah to be paid.

(5) A person who is allowed to pay Fidyah for undischarged Saum, on recovering his health after having paid the Fidyah, is obliged to fast the number of days he had missed. The Fidyah thus paid will become a Nafl charity.

THINGS WHICH PERMIT ABSTENTION FROM SAUM

The following things permit one to refrain from fasting:

(1) Extreme old age which renders a person decrepit.

(2) Sickness – if there is danger to life or if the fast will

cause the sickness to deteriorate, it will be permissible to abstain from Saum.

(3) Pregnancy – if the health or life of the mother or child is threatened.

(4) Breastfeeding – if the baby is dependent thereon and if the Saum causes the milk to dry out.

(5) Journey – a musaafir (one

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THINGS WHICH PERMIT ABSTENTION FROM SAUM

(Continued from page 10)

who has undertaken a journey of 48 Islamic miles or more) is permitted to abstain from fasting. Forty-eight Islamic miles equal 77 kilometres.

(6) Haidh (menses) – the Saum of a woman in the state of haidh is not valid. She has to make Qadhaa after Ramadhaan.

(7) Nifaas (post-natal blood) – the Saum of a woman in the state of nifaas is not valid. She has to make Qadhaa after having attained tahaarah (purification – when nifaas ends).

THE VIRTUES, SIGNIFICANCE AND REWARDS OF SAUM

(1) Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“He who fasts solely for the sake of Allah Ta’ala, his previous sins are all forgiven.”

(2) *“The odour of the mouth of a Saa-im (fasting person) is sweeter to Allah than the fragrance of musk.”*

(3) It is narrated in the Hadith that on the Day of Qiyaamah, even before Reckoning has taken place, the fasting people will be sumptuously fed under the shade of Allah’s Arsh (Throne) while others will be still embroiled in the hardships of Reckoning.

(4) Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“The sleep of a Saa-im is Ibaadat and his silence is Tasbeeh (recitation of Subhaanallah); the Thawaab of his deeds is considerably increased; his dua is accepted and his sins are forgiven.”

(5) *“Saum is a shield and a powerful*

fort to save one from Jahannam.”

(6) According to the Hadith, fasting is a shield as long as the Saa-im does not rupture it with lies and backbiting (gheebat). Although the fast will be discharged, the Thawaab and efficacy of the Saum are destroyed by the commission of sin.

(7) Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that the Saa-im has been promised by Allah Ta’ala that at the time of Iftaar (at least) one of his duas will most certainly be accepted.

(8) The person who gives a Saa-im something with which to break his fast, will receive the Thawaab of the fast while nothing will be reduced of the Saa-im’s fast. This Thawaab will apply even if some water is presented with which to break fast. (Hadith)

(9) On the first night of Ramadhaan, the Doors of Heaven are opened up and all Doors remain open un-

til the end of Ramadhaan. (Hadith)

(10) Every raka’t of Salaat performed during the nights of Ramadhaan gains for the Saa-im the Thawaab of one and half thousand good deeds. In addition, special mansions will be constructed in Jannat for this person. (Hadith)

(11) On the first night of Ramadhaan, the sins committed since the previous Ramadhaan until now are forgiven. (Hadith)

(12) During Ramadhaan, 70, 000 Malaai-kaah daily make Dua of Maghfirah (forgiveness) on behalf of the Saa-im, from the time of Subah Saadiq until sunset. (Hadith)

(13) Whoever engages in gheebat (backbiting) or consumes liquor during the month of Ramadhaan, Allah Ta’ala will erase the good deeds which he had rendered throughout the year. (Hadith)

(14) Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi

wasallam) said:

“Every good deed of the son of Aadam (Alayhis salaam) is increased (in reward) from ten times to seven hundred times – and Allah Ta’ala said: ‘Except Saum, for verily, it (Saum) is for Me and I, Myself will reward it. The Saa-im abstains from desire and food for My sake’. For the Saa-im there are two (occasions of pleasure – pleasure at the time of breaking fast and pleasure at the time of meeting his Rabb.”

(15) Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Saum and the Qur’aan will intercede on behalf of the servant (of Allah). Saum will say: ‘My Rabb! I forbade him from food and desires during the day, therefore, accept my intercession on his behalf’. The Qur’aan will say: ‘I forbade him from sleep at night, therefore, accept my intercession on his behalf’. Thus, their intercession will be accepted.”

THE THREE CLASSES OF FASTING

In his Kitaab, Tableeghud Deen, Imaam Ghazaali (Rahmatullah alayh) says: Fasting, with regard to quality, are of three kinds:

(1) The Saum of the Awaam (general public – the masses). Their fast consists of only abstention from the physical acts which nullify the fast. While they abstain from eating, etc., they involve their bodies in

sin. Such Saum is merely fasting in name. (Only the Fardh obligation is discharged thereby.)

(2) In addition to abstaining from food, etc., the Saa-im (fasting person) restrains the body from acting in violation of the Shariah. He withholds his tongue from gheebat and eyes from casting gazes at ghair mahaareem. This is the

middle category of fasting.

(3) The third category of fasting is the Saum of the elite servants of Allah Ta'ala, viz. The Muttaqeen. In addition to their limbs abstaining from transgression, their hearts and minds are perpetually engrossed in Thikrullah. At all times, in their hearts there is nothing but the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala. This is fasting in the state of kamaal (perfection).

MISCELLENOUS MASAA-IL

(1) The Thawaab and spiritual benefits of Saum are eliminated by the commission of sin during the state of fasting.

(2) Fasting acts as a protecting shield for the Saa-im (fasting person) as long as he does not destroy his Saum with sin.

(3) Among the sins which destroy the benefits of Saum, the worst is gheebat (to speak ill of others in their absence). Gheebat also produces physical weakness during Saum. The fast thus becomes very difficult to observe.

(4) Indulgence in futile acts, nonsensical and idle conversation are also negatory of the benefits of Saum.

(5) While it is necessary to remember Allah Ta'ala at all times, the need for Thikrullah is greater during the fast. This greatly improves the spirituality of the fasting person and is very efficacious in bringing one closer to Allah Ta'ala.

(6) The dua of the fasting person is readily accepted by Allah Ta'ala, especially his dua at the time of Iftaar.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: *“Everything has a gateway. The gateway of Ibaadat is fasting.”*

Explaining the benefits of fast-

ing, Imam Ghazaali (Rahmatullah alayh) says:

“Fasting overpowers Shaitaan, the enemy of Allah because the base of all carnal desires is the stomach. By filling the stomach, lust exhibits its actions. Shaitaan, by manipulating these carnal desires, targets man as his prey. When the Muslim adopts hunger by fasting and the lustful desires weaken in consequence, Shaitaan is beaten into defeat and despondency.”

“Ensure that the food with which you make Iftaar is Haalal without the slightest vestige of doubt. Do not eat so much that the body feels heavy. The aim of the fast is defeated in doing so.”

IFTAAR THE SUNNAH WAY

RASULULLAH (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: **“When you make Iftaar (break the fast), do so with dates or with water (if dates are not available), for verily, it is pure and it is a purifier.”**

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) also said: **“Whoever finds dates, let him make iftaar with it. Whoever does not find dates should make**

iftaar with water.”

In a Hadith-e-Qudsi, Allah Ta'ala says: **“Verily, the most beloved servants to Me are those who are the quickest in iftaar.”** (Note: A salient feature of the Shiahs is to delay Iftaar.)

According to the Hadith, the moments of iftaar are most auspicious. It is a time of great barakat and Maqbooliyat. Duas are quickly accepted at this time.

According to the Hadith, at least one dua made at the time of iftaar is assured of acceptance. The time of iftaar should, therefore, not be squandered in feasting. Iftaar is not the time for feasting and filling the stomach.

Break the fast lightly with dates the Sunnah Way. Spend a few minutes before Iftaar and the couple of minutes after Iftaar (before Maghrib Salaat) in Dua or Thikr.