

A background image showing a plate of dates and a pen nib on a scroll, symbolizing the month of Ramadan.

30

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON

# FASTING IN RAMAḌĀN

By al-'Allāmah 'Abdul-'Azīz b. Bāz

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# 30 Questions and Answers on Fasting and Ramaḍān<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> These question and answers have been extracted from Vol.12 of the Fatāwā of al-Imam ibn Baz (رحمته الله). The 30 questions and answers collection has been distributed independently in Arabic.

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# The Obligation of Fasting the Month of Ramaḍān

## 1) Who is obligated to fast in Ramaḍān? What are the virtues of fasting in that month?

Fasting in the month of Ramaḍān is obligatory upon every legally responsible adult; males and females. However, it is recommended for a child that has reached the age of seven to fast, if they can do so. The parents must command their children (who have reached the age of seven) to fast as they would the obligatory prayers. The main proof of this is the statement of Allāh:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ • أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ ۚ فَمَن كَانَ مِنكُم مَّرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ۚ فَمَن تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّهُ وَأَن تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ • شَهْرَ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْءَانُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ ۚ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ ۖ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۗ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ وَلِيُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِيُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَيْتُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

○ you who believe! Observing As-Saum (the fasting) has been prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may obtain piety and righteousness. [Observing Saum (fasts)] for a fixed number of days, but if any of you is ill or on a journey,

the same number (should be made up) from other days. The month of Ramaḍān in which the Qur'an was revealed, as a guidance for mankind and clear proofs for the guidance and the criterion (between right and wrong). So, whoever from amongst you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the month (of Ramaḍān), he must fast that month, and whoever is ill or on a journey, the same number [of days which one did not fast, must be made up from other days. (Baqarah:183-185)

**Also, the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ):**

"Islam is built upon five pillars: The testimony that there is none that deserves to be worshipped in reality except Allāh and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh, and the establishment of the prayer, the giving of Zakat (charity), fasting in the Ramaḍān and to perform Ḥajj."<sup>2</sup>

**Likewise, his statement (ﷺ):**

"Islam is to testify that none has the right to be worshipped except Allāh and that Muḥammad (ﷺ) is the Messenger of Allāh; that you observe Ṣalāh (prayers), pay Zakat, fast (the month of) Ramaḍān and perform Ḥajj (pilgrimage) of the House, provided you have resources of making the journey to it."<sup>3</sup>

**In Ṣaḥīḥ Al Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, on the authority of Abī Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:**

"Whoever fasts the month of Ramaḍān out of sincere Faith (i.e. belief) hoping for a reward from Allāh, then all his past sins will be forgiven,"<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Agreed upon: Al Bukhārī (8), Muslim (16), reported by 'Abdullāh b.'Umar (رضي الله عنه)

<sup>3</sup> Muslim: (8), reported by 'Umar b. al-Khaṭāb (رضي الله عنه)

<sup>4</sup> Al Bukhārī (2014), Muslim (760)

It has been reported from him (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) that Allāh, the Majestic and the Exalted, said:

"Every act of the son of Adam is for him except fasting. It is done for My sake, and I will reward for it. He gives up his desires and his food for My sake. Fasting is a shield, and the fasting person has two moments of joy; one when he breaks his fast and another when he meets his Lord. And the smell that comes from the mouth of the fasting person is better to Allāh than the fragrance of musk."<sup>5</sup>

In conclusion, the narrations regarding the virtues of fasting, in general, are plenty and known and from Allāh is aid and guidance.

## 2) Who is exempt from fasting in the month of Ramaḍān? Please benefit us, May Allāh reward you with good.

Those who are exempt are; the one who has lost his sanity and consciousness, the young boy and girl who have not reached puberty, the menstruating and postpartum woman, the sick, and the traveler.

As for the menstruating and postpartum women, then essentially fasting is obligatory. However, their condition prevents them from being allowed to fast. They have to make up the fasting days missed in Ramaḍān after their menses and postnatal period have ended.

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<sup>5</sup> Agreed upon: Al Bukhārī (1894,1904), Muslim (1151), reported by Abī Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. Al-Ḥadīth al- Qudsī

As for the sick and the traveler, it is permissible for them to fast or break their fast in Ramaḍān. Breaking their fast is recommended. This is based on the statement of Allāh:

وَمَنْ كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ

Whoever is ill or on a journey, the same number [of days which one did not fast must be made up from other days. (2:185)

However, if the sick person's illness is terminal, after confirmation from trustworthy doctors, then neither fasting is obligatory for him nor is it mandatory to make it up. Instead, it is upon him to feed a poor person for every day he broke his fast. The amount due is two combined prophetic handfuls (approximately 1.087kg). This also applies to the elderly man and woman who are unable to fast. They have to feed a poor person two prophetic handfuls of their normal food for each day they did not fast. Fasting is not upon them nor is making it up after Ramaḍān. It is also permissible for them to pay the compensation in one go, for the whole month. This can be done at the beginning, the end, or during the month. It can be given to one person (every day of the month) or more. As for the pregnant and breastfeeding woman, if they find fasting difficult, they are allowed to break their fast and make it up just like the traveler and the sick.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Abdullāh b. 'Abbās رضي الله عنه said: "If a pregnant woman fears for herself and a breastfeeding woman fears for her baby in (the fasting days of) Ramaḍān, they both should break their fast and feed a poor person for each day they missed".

Reported in at-Ṭabarānī (2758) with a chain of narrators of the same calibre as the narrators found in the authentic collection of al-Bukhārī and Muslim. See al-Irwāa al-Ghalīl (4:19). Also refer to Ad-Daraqūṭnī (250)

# The Ruling on the One Who is Unable to Fast Due to an Illness

3) If a woman has an illness and loses her cognizance faculties and thus breaks her fast for seven months of Ramaḍān without feeding the poor, she recovers and can fast (after the seven years), is it permissible for her son to fast on her behalf? Or should she fast even though it could affect her health in the future, as she has a nervous system disease? Is it permissible to feed the poor on her behalf instead?

If she has not fasted due to her losing her cognizance faculties, then she does not have to make up any fast. This is because the legislation has exempted her from fasting for the period she lost her sense of cognizance based on the narration of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ):

"The pen has been lifted for three (types of people)..."

From those he mentioned (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) was:

"...the one who has lost his mind (is exempt) until he regains his senses."<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> At-Tirmidhī (1423), al-Musnad (1/140) and ibn Khuzaymah (1003)



So, the one who is devoid of her senses due to any kind of illness is under the same ruling as the one who has lost her mind. She is not accountable for acts of worship. However, if she (the mother) does not fast due to an illness whilst her faculties of thinking are intact and sound, then it is incumbent upon her to make up those fasting days once she has recovered. She does this according to her ability, even if it is done on various days of the week or months. If it is the case that she succumbs to her illness and dies, no compensation needs to be done on her behalf.

On the other hand, whilst she is alive, it is impermissible for anyone to fast on her behalf. May Allāh grant us all prosperity and reward you with good for taking care of your mother and her affairs.

# Ordering Children to Fast

4) Is a boy, who has reached the stage where he has the faculties to elicit meanings, ordered to fast? Is it counted as a fast if he reached puberty during a particular fasting day?

As has been mentioned previously in question one, when boys or girls have reached the age of seven and above, they should be ordered to fast, so they can get acquainted and used to fasting. It is upon their parents and guardians to command them to fast just as they ordered them to pray the obligatory prayers. When they reach puberty, it is now obligatory for them to fast. If they reach puberty during the fasting day, they will be rewarded for that day. If a child reaches fifteen years old during a fasting day at the noon prayer (for example), the fast is accepted. The first part of the day is considered a supererogatory fast and the last part counts as an obligatory fast. This is if they had not reached puberty before that.

Puberty is ascertained by the growth of pubic hair or if ejaculation occurs through desires. The ruling applies for both the boy and girl except for the female there is a fourth sign of puberty; menstruation.

# How is the Beginning and End of the Month Ascertained

## 5) How is the beginning of the month of Ramaḍān established?

According to all of the people of knowledge, the new moon for the month of Ramaḍān is established by sighting it. This is based on the statement of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ):

"Begin fasting (Ramaḍān) when you sight it (the new moon). Break the fast (for Ramaḍān) when you sight (the new moon for the tenth month, Shawwāl). But if (due to clouds) the actual position of the month is concealed from you, you should then count thirty days."<sup>8</sup>

That which is obligatory is that the Muslims fast upon the sighting of the new moon for Ramaḍān which will be sighted on the last evening of the previous month, 30<sup>th</sup> Sha'bān.<sup>9</sup> In that case, Sha'bān would be less (than the maximum days of a month) and fasting will commence. Likewise, if the new moon is sighted on the night of the 30<sup>th</sup> Ramaḍān, the people would have fasted 29 days and will therefore end their fast.

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<sup>8</sup> An-Nasāī (2124) Reported by ibn 'Abbās رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا. Authenticated by As-Shaykh al-Albānī in *Ṣaḥīḥ wa Da'īf An-Nasāī* (5/268) with this specific wording. It is also reported in *Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī* (1909) and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (1081) with slight variations in their wordings.

<sup>9</sup> **Note:** the night precedes the daytime in a full day (24 hours). Therefore, there will not be a 30<sup>th</sup> day for Sha'bān.

As for when the new moon has not been sighted (in both situations), then the 30-day month of Sha'bān will be completed (fasting then begins the following Fajr) and the 30-day month of Ramaḍān will be completed (fasting will then cease the following sunset). As for when the moon has been sighted, then (the timing will go according to the sighting) and all praise is for Allāh.

All of these rulings are following authentic narrations from the Prophet (ﷺ). From these narrations is his (ﷺ) statement:

" Begin fasting (Ramaḍān) on sighting it (the new moon) and break (fast) on sighting it (the new moon), but if the sky is cloudy for you, then complete the number (of thirty)."<sup>10</sup>

And in another wording:

"...But if (due to clouds) the actual position of the month is concealed from you, then complete thirty days of Sha'bān."<sup>11</sup>

In this text, there is a clear mentioning of the month of Sha'bān.

In another (general) wording:

"...But if (due to clouds) the actual position of the month is concealed from you, then complete thirty."<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Saḥīḥ Muslim (1081) and Saḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī (1909), this specific wording is in Saḥīḥ Muslim on the authority of Abi Hurayrah رضي الله عنه.

<sup>11</sup> Saḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī (1909)

<sup>12</sup> Saḥīḥ Muslim (1081)

6) How many witnesses are sufficient to establish the beginning and end of the month of Ramaḍān? What is the ruling on the one who, on his own, sights the new moon for the beginning and end of the month?

The end of the month is established by the testimony of two trustworthy witnesses or more. According to the correct scholastic opinion, one trustworthy witness is sufficient in establishing the beginning of the month. This is based on that which has been authenticated from the Prophet (ﷺ) where he said:

"If two witnesses testify that they have sighted the moon, then start your fast (the beginning of the month) and break it (the end of the month)."<sup>13</sup>

It has also been established that al-Ḥārith b. Ḥātib (رضي الله عنه) said:

"The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) took a pledge from us that we should perform the rites of hajj after sighting the moon. If we do not sight it and two reliable people bear witness, we should perform the rites of hajj based on their witness."

It is established that the Messenger (ﷺ) ordered the people to fast based on the testimony of ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنهما) and likewise the testimony of a bedouin and he (ﷺ) did not request an additional witness in both instances. Therefore, one witness is sufficient to confirm the beginning of the month. This is the

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<sup>13</sup> Musnad Aḥmad (4/231), An-Nasāī (2116) reported by 'Abdur-Raḥmān bin Zayd bin al-Khaṭāb (رضي الله عنه).

position of the majority of scholars based on the narration of ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنهما):

"...The people were trying to sight the new moon (of Ramaḍān) and when I reported to the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) that **I had seen it**, he fasted and commanded the people to fast."<sup>14</sup>

As for the narration of the bedouin, it was stated that he sighted the new moon, so the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

"Do you testify that there is none that deserves to be worship in truth except Allāh and that I am the Messenger of Allāh?" The bedouin responded with: 'yes'. The Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) then ordered the people to fast.<sup>15</sup>

So, if the new moon is sighted for Ramaḍān by a trustworthy witness, fasting is then obligatory upon all. As for establishing the end of the month, then it has to be sighted by two trustworthy witnesses. This also applies to the remaining months. This is due to the authenticated statement of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم):

" If two (Muslim) witnesses testify that they have sighted the moon, then start your fast (the beginning of the month) and break it (the end of the month)."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Abi Dawūd: (2343) Authenticated by ibn Ḥajr (in Talkhīs al-Ḥabīr 2/187) and ibn Ḥazm (in al-Maḥllā 4/375, dar al-Fikr print). As- Shaykh al-Albānī discusses the narration in detail in Irwāa al-Ghalīl (4/17). As-Shaykh Muḥammad al-Uthaymīn also discussed the ḥadīth and its ruling in Sharḥ al-Mumtī' (6/312), deeming it sound.

<sup>15</sup> At-Tirmidhī (961), ibn Majah (1652) reported by ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما). This narration has been deemed weak by various scholars due contradictory reporting from one of the narrators; Sammāk bin Ḥarb. From these scholars are As-Shaykh al-Albānī (Irwāa al-Ghalīl (4/15). However, in this instance, the meaning is supported by the previous narration; Abi Dawūd (2343). See Sharḥ al-Mumtī' (6/320).

<sup>16</sup> Musnad Aḥmad (4/231), An-Nasāī (2116) reported by 'Abdur-Raḥmān bin Zayd bin al-Khaṭāb (رضي الله عنه)

That which is intended here is that the testimony of two witnesses to confirm the end of the month is necessary. This applies to all the months.

As for establishing the beginning of Ramaḍān, then one witness is sufficient based on the two previously mentioned narrations (ibn 'Umar and the Bedouin رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ).

The wisdom behind these rulings - and Allāh knows best- is precautionary (to make sure of the sightings) as the scholars have mentioned. So, if someone individually sights the moon signaling the end of Ramaḍān, then he should continue fasting with the people and break when the people break. This is the correct opinion which is based on the statement of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ):

"The fast is the day in which the people fast, the ending of the fast is the day the people end their fast, and the sacrifice is the day the people sacrifice."<sup>17</sup>

Some scholars hold that the single witness should act according to his sighting, and fast. This opinion is based upon the statement of Allāh, the Most High:

فَمَنْ شَهِدَ مِنْكُمْ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ

"So, whoever sights the (new) moon, then he must begin to fast" (2:185)

However, the correct stance is that it impermissible for him to fast or end his fast for the month with his

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<sup>17</sup> Tirmidhī (697) - Ḥasan (sound) narration [Tirmidhī, al-Albānī (Silsilah As-Ṣaḥīḥah (223))]

sighting of the moon alone. This is (also) the position of Shaykh al-Islām ibn Taymiyyah.<sup>18</sup> However, if he lives alone in the wilderness, he should fast according to his sighting of the moon, and Allāh knows best.

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<sup>18</sup> Majmū' al-Fatāwā (25/108-109)



# The Ruling on Acting on the Use of Machinery Such as Observatories to Sight the New Moon.

## 7) Is the sighting of a new moon valid and authentic if ascertained through modern types of machinery?

Calculations (star counts) are not to be returned to in establishing the new moon for Ramaḍān or other months related to the divine legislation. This is a consensus and is agreed upon by the people of knowledge. Shaykh al- Islām Abu al-'Abbās Aḥmad bin 'Abdul- Ḥalīm bin Taymiyyah<sup>19</sup> reported this consensus. The (main) evidence for this is in the statement of the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ):

"Begin fasting (Ramaḍān) when you sight it (the new moon). Break the fast (for Ramaḍān) when you sight (the new moon for the tenth month, Shawwāl). But if (due to clouds) the actual position of the month is concealed from you, you should then count thirty days"<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Majmū' al-Fatāwā (25/207). Shaykh al-Islām confirms this consensus amongst the companions (Ṣaḥābah) regarding the impermissibility of relying on star counts (calculations) to calculate the coming of Ramaḍān.

<sup>20</sup> An-Nasāī (2124) Reported by ibn 'Abbās. Authenticated by As-Shaykh al-Albānī in Ṣaḥīḥ wa Da'īf An-Nasāī (5/268) with this specific wording. It is also reported in Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī (1909) and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim (1081) with slight variations in their wordings.

As for using machinery, that which is apparent from the legislative proofs is that people are not bound to search for the crescent using these tools. It is sufficient to search for it by the naked eye. However, if someone sights the new moon using modern machinery and is certain of the sighting after sunset along with being trustworthy, then I do not know of any problem in accepting it. This is because it is still ascertained visually not by calculation or star counts.

So, whoever sights the new moon through astronomical observatories, or from the top of a mountain or in a lighthouse and it is confirmed he sighted it visually, it is accepted. Whether it is sighted through an observatory, a lighthouse, or any machinery, it is accepted as long as a trustworthy witness attests that he sighted it visually. This also includes a telescope which is a kind of endoscope that brings things nearer visually. There is no problem with using these tools. However, the main mode of sighting the moon is by the naked eye. This applies to divine legislations like; the beginning and end of Ramaḍān, the specifying of the Ḥajj days, and other legislations. May Allāh guide us all to have a good understanding of the religion and be steadfast upon it. He is indeed the Most Kind and Generous.

# The Ruling on the One Whose Fasting Month Extends to Thirty- One Days

8) Our esteemed Shaykh, what is the ruling on an individual that begins his fast for Ramaḍān whilst in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia then he travels to another country that has yet to begin their fast (as a country). Should he now fast thirty-one days (an extra day, due to the present country being late to start their fasting month)?

He should fast with the new country he resides in and should break his fast when they do. His status is that of a resident of a new country that he is currently in. This is based on the statement of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم):

"The fast is the day in which the people fast, the ending of the fast is the day the people end their fast, and the sacrifice is the day the people sacrifice."<sup>21</sup>

Therefore, it is upon him to fast with the people of the country and in turn, end his fast with them. However, if it is the case that they end up not completing twenty-nine days, he ends his fast with them and compensates for that missing day later. This is because a month

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<sup>21</sup> Tirmidhī: (697) - Ḥasan (sound) narration [Tirmidhī, al-Albānī (Silsilah As-Ṣaḥīḥah (223))

cannot be less than twenty-nine days. Aid and guidance are from Allāh.

# The Ruling on the One Who Persistently Fasts Thirty Days at All Costs

9) What is Allāh and His Messenger's ruling on a people who persistently fast thirty days for Ramaḍān at all costs, and refuse to fast less?

This act is incorrect. This is reprehensible and in opposition to the Book of Allāh, and the Sunnah of His Messenger; Muḥammad (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), his companions and family (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ). This is based on Allāh's statement ﷻ:

﴿ يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَهْلِ<sup>ط</sup> قُلْ هِيَ مَوَاقِيتُ لِلنَّاسِ وَالْحَجِّ<sup>ط</sup> ﴾

They ask you (O Muḥammad صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) about new moons. Say: These are signs to mark fixed periods for mankind and the pilgrimage. (2:189)

Likewise, the statement of the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

"Begin the fast upon sighting the moon and end your fast upon sighting the new moon. However, if (due to clouds) the actual position of the month is concealed from you, then complete thirty in number."<sup>22</sup>

In another wording:

"complete thirty."<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Saḥīḥ Muslim (1081)

<sup>23</sup> ibid

Therefore, the one who always fasts thirty days irrespective of the sighting of the new moon has opposed the Sunnah and consensus. He has introduced a newly invented matter in the religion of which Allāh ﷺ said:

أَتَّبِعُوا مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُونَ

Follow what has been sent down to you from your Lord (the Qur'an and Prophet Muḥammad's Sunnah), and do not follow protectors and helpers besides Him (Allāh). Little is it do you remember! (7:3)

He ﷺ also said:

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

Say (O Muḥammad ﷺ to mankind): "If you (truly) love Allah then follow me; Allāh will love you and forgive you of your sins. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (3:31)

He ﷺ said:

وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

And whatsoever the Messenger gives you to do, then do it. And whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it), and fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Severe in punishment. (59:7)

And He ﷺ said:

تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ◉ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ نَارًا خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَلَهُ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ

These are the limits (set by) Allah, and whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger (Muḥammad) will be admitted to Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise), to abide therein, and that will be a

great success. And whosoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger (Muḥammad ) and transgresses His limits, He will cast him into the Fire, to abide therein; and he shall have a disgraceful torment. (4:13-14)

These verses show us the obligation of using the sightings (to determine the number of days in the month stated by the Messenger ﷺ). If the month is a full thirty days, then the people fast thirty days. If it so happens to be twenty-nine days, we also fast twenty-nine days in obedience to Allāh and His Messenger (ﷺ).

There are widespread narrations from the Messenger (ﷺ) proving that the months are either twenty-nine days or thirty days. From them is his statement (ﷺ):

"A month is twenty-nine days. So, do not fast until you sight the new moon. If the moon is concealed from your vision, then complete thirty in number."<sup>24</sup>

"The month is like this, this and this" pointing with his ten fingers three times and folding his thumb. Then he said: "The month is (also) like this, this and this." He pointed with all his fingers but this time he did not fold his thumb."<sup>25</sup>

In this narration, the Messenger (ﷺ) is informing us that occasionally there will be a thirty-day month and on other occasions, there will be twenty-nine days. The authentic narrations on this topic are of a

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<sup>24</sup> Agreed upon. Reported in al-Bukhārī (1907) and Muslim (1080).

<sup>25</sup> Muslim (1080), reported by Sa'ad bin 'Ubaydah and 'Abdullāh b. 'Umar رضي الله عنهما

level of authenticity that they have been universally accepted by the people of knowledge and faith; the companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) and those that follow their way correctly. They implemented these narrations and searched for the new moon of Sha'bān, Ramaḍān, and Shawwāl. They base this practice on authentic means of ascertaining whether it is a maximum month (thirty days) or a minimum month (twenty-nine days). So, that which is mandatory upon all Muslims is that they follow this noble methodology. They must leave all that which opposes this way; by way of clinging to the opinion of humankind and what they have introduced from innovations. With this, they will be counted amongst those who are on the path of those whom Allāh has promised Jannah (paradise) and His pleasure, in His سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى statement:

وَالسَّيْقُونَ الْأَوْلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ  
وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

And the first to embrace Islam; from those who migrated from Makkah to Al-Madinah and the Ansar; the citizens of Al-Madinah who helped and gave aid to the Muslims, and also those who followed their way exactly, Allah is pleased with them as they are with Him. He has prepared for them Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), to dwell therein forever. That is the supreme success. (9:100)

Because of this, the Prophet (ﷺ) commanded the people to search for the new moon and to complete a full thirty days if the moon had not been sighted on the night of the 30<sup>th</sup> Sha'bān (to signify the beginning of Ramaḍān) or the night of the 30<sup>th</sup> Ramaḍān.



Therefore, it is impermissible for anyone to rule by his opinion and intellect by saying: "the month of Ramaḍān will always be thirty days." This is because this stance is in conflict and opposition to the various authentic narrations from the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). It is also in conflict with the consensus of the scholars of Islam. Various scholars universally agree that the days in the month can be thirty or twenty- nine. Reality testifies to this. This is known and confirmed by anyone who has knowledge regarding this affair. Indeed, Allāh said in His Mighty Book:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ ۖ فَإِن تَنَزَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۚ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا

○ you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger (Muḥammad), and those of you (Muslims) who are in authority. If you differ in anything, refer it to Allah and His Messenger if you truly believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination. (4:59)

The scholars of tafsīr (exegesis) and others have said that returning to Allāh means returning to His Noble Book. Returning to the Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) means taking affairs back to him (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) during his lifetime and to his authenticated Sunnah after his death.

We have presented to you proofs from the Book of Allāh, the Sunnah of His Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), and the consensus of the people of knowledge that a month can on occasions be twenty-nine days and other occasions thirty days. It is not allowed for anyone to oppose this fundamental principle.

From Allāh assistance is sought. He is sufficient for us  
and what an excellent protector He is.

# Fasting Only Twenty-Eight Days

## 10) Is it permissible to fast only twenty-eight days in Ramaḍān?

It has been established in relatively widespread (mustafāḍāh) authentic narrations from the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) that no month can be less than twenty-nine days. If the month has been established through legislative means after twenty-eight days of fasting, then it means that they missed the first fasting day of Ramaḍān. Therefore, they have to make that day up. It is impossible for there to be just twenty-eight days in a month. There are either twenty-nine days or thirty days.

Shaykh al-Islām ibn Taymiyyah in his Fatāwā mentions that this situation occurred in the time of 'Alī bin Abī Ṭālib (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ). People fasted twenty-eight days. 'Alī ordered them to make up the day they missed to complete a twenty-nine day month.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Majmū' al-Fatāwā: (25/154-155).

# The Ruling on the Fast of the Individual Who Leaves the Prayer

11) There is an individual who fasts and performs certain types of worship. However, he does not pray. Is his fast and acts of worship valid and accepted?

In the name of Allāh, I proceed and All praise is for Him. The correct opinion is that the one that leaves the prayer intentionally disbelieves with a disbelief that takes one out of the fold of al-Islām. Based on this, his fast is not valid and neither are the rest of his other acts of worship until he repents to Allāh ﷻ. The proof of this is His *سُبْحَانَہُ وَتَعَالَى* statement :

وَلَوْ أَشْرَكُوا لَحَبِطَ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

If they had joined in worship others with Allah, all that they had done would have been of no benefit to them. (6:88)

Other verses and narrations (aḥādīth) with the same meaning are also used as proof for this position.

Some scholars hold that the one who abandons the prayer remains in the fold of Islām. Therefore, his fast is valid along with his other acts of worship. This is if he holds the prayer to be obligatory, but out of laziness and negligence, he leaves it. The correct opinion is the

first; which is that he disbelieves with a disbelief that takes him out of the fold of Islām if he abandons the prayer intentionally. Even if he accepts its obligation. There are many proofs for this opinion. From them is the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ):

"That which distinguishes a man from disbelief and polytheism is the abandonment of the prayer"<sup>27</sup>

Likewise, his statement ﷺ:

"The covenant that stands between us and them is the Ṣalāh (the prayer); whoever abandons it, he has committed disbelief."<sup>28</sup>

Al-'Allāmah ibn Al-Qayyim went into some detail regarding this topic in a treatise written specifically on the topic of the prayer and its rulings. It is a very beneficial book which one should return to and benefit from.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Muslim (82), from the narration by Jābir bin 'Abdillāh رضي الله عنه.

<sup>28</sup> At-Tirmidhī (2621), An-Nasā'ī (423), ibn Mājah (1097); from the narration of Abī Mūsā al-Ash'arī رضي الله عنه.

<sup>29</sup> Scholars differed regarding the faith of the one who leaves the prayer due to laziness and negligence. Regarding this the great scholar of al-Madīnah, Muḥammad Amān al-Jāmi said: "...In any case, leaving the prayer is a serious and dangerous affair. Would anyone with sense be pleased that he or she is in a position where the scholars differed regarding him; (is he a disbeliever or a muslim?) who would like the affirmation of their faith to be an issue scholars differed regarding?!" [Sharḥ al-Fatāwā al-Ḥamawiyah al-Kubrā, p.113]

# A Piece of Advice for the One that Fasts but is Negligent Regarding the Prayer

12) Some of the youth - may Allāh guide them - are lazy regarding their prayers during Ramaḍān and other periods. However, they observe the fast in Ramaḍān and bear the thirst and pangs of hunger. What is your advice for them and what is the ruling and status of their fasts?

My advice to them is to reflect deeply on their situation. They should know that the prayer is the most important pillar in Islām after the testimony of faith. The one that does not pray and abandons the prayer out of laziness and negligence, he is - according to the correct opinion - a disbeliever, an apostate who has left the fold of Islām. This affair is not to be treated lightly because the fasting, charity, or worship (in general) of the apostate is neither valid nor accepted. This is based on the statement of Allāh ﷻ:

وَمَا مَنَعَهُمْ أَنْ تُقْبَلَ مِنْهُمْ نَفَقَتُهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْهُمْ كَفَرُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ. وَلَا يَأْتُونَ الصَّلَاةَ إِلَّا وَهُمْ كُسَالَىٰ وَلَا يُنْفِقُونَ إِلَّا وَهُمْ كَارِهِونَ

...And nothing prevented their contributions from being accepted, except that due to their disbelief in Allah and His Messenger (Muḥammad ﷺ); and that they did not approach the prayer

(as-Ṣalāh) except in a state of laziness; and they would never offer contributions except unwillingly. (9:53)

So, Allāh has clarified that due to their disbelief, their charity is not accepted even though its monetary benefits extend to others. He also said:

وَقَدِمْنَا إِلَىٰ مَا عَمِلُوا مِنْ عَمَلٍ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ هَبَاءً مَّنْثُورًا

And We shall bring forth whatever deeds they have done and make such turn them to scattered floating particles of dust. (25:23)

Those that fast, but abandon the prayer, their act of fasting will not be accepted. Rather, their deeds are rejected as long as they have been labeled as disbelievers based on evidence from the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of His Messenger (صَلَّىٰ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

Therefore, my advice to them is to fear Allāh ﷻ, maintain and establish the prayer on time and in congregation. I guarantee that if they did this, by the power of Allāh, they will increase in their yearning for praying on time in congregation after Ramaḍān. This is because when an individual turns and repents to his Lord sincerely, the results could find him being a better Muslim than he was before his repentance. An example of this has been mentioned regarding Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام after he ate from the tree.

Allāh said:

ثُمَّ اجْتَبَاهُ رَبُّهُ وَفَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ وَهَدَىٰ

Then his Lord chose him, and turned to him with forgiveness, and guided him. (20:122)

# The Ruling on Those Who Break Their Fast in the Daytime of Ramaḍān With No Valid Excuse

13) What is the ruling on an individual who breaks his fast in the daytime of Ramaḍān whilst accepting its obligation?

Whoever intentionally breaks his fast during the daytime of Ramaḍān without a valid legislated excuse, has committed a major sin. According to the correct opinion, this individual has not disbelieved. However, he has to repent to Allāh and make up the day(s) he had missed. Many evidences show that he has not disbelieved as long as he does not deny its obligation. In this case, he has broken his fast due to negligence and laziness. Upon him is to feed a poor person for every day he has missed if he has delayed making up the fasts before the next Ramaḍān has arrived without any legislative excuse.

Similar to this is the one who has abandoned giving zakāh or performing ḥajj whilst having the ability to do so. As long as he has not denied their obligation, he has not disbelieved. It is then upon him to pay the



zakāh he owes from previous years and to perform the obligatory ḥajj along with repenting to Allāh sincerely for delaying his obligatory duties. General evidences show that the one who neglects zakāh and ḥajj has not left the fold of Islām. From these evidences is the narration of the one who is punished by his wealth on the Day of Judgment for not giving zakāh. It states that after the punishment he will be shown his course; either to paradise or to the hellfire.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Narrated in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim (97), from the ḥadīth of Abī Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ:

"مَا مِنْ صَاحِبٍ ذَهَبٍ وَلَا فِضَّةٍ لَا يُؤَدِّي مِنْهَا حَقَّهَا إِلَّا إِذَا كَانَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ صُفِّحَتْ لَهُ صَفَائِحٌ مِنْ نَارٍ فَأُحْمِي عَلَيْهَا فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ فَيُكْوَى بِهَا جَنْبُهُ وَجَبِينُهُ وَظَهْرُهُ كُلَّمَا بُرِّدَتْ أُعِيدَتْ لَهُ فِي يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُ خَمْسِينَ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ حَتَّى يُقْتَضَى بَيْنَ الْعِبَادِ فَيُرَى سَبِيلَهُ إِمَّا إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَإِمَّا إِلَى النَّارِ..."

"There is not an owner of gold or silver that does not pay what is due on him (in zakāh, except that when the Day of Resurrection comes, plates of fire would be beaten out for him; these would then be heated in the fire of Hell and his sides, his forehead and his back would be cauterized with them. Whenever these cool down, the process is repeated during a day the extent of which would tantamount to fifty thousand years, until judgement has been made between the servants, and he sees whether his path takes him to Paradise or to Hell."

# Fasting When Traveling

14. Should the one who travels by transportation to make his journey easy, break his fast in Ramaḍān? Is it better for the traveler to fast or break his fast?

The traveler has a choice between fasting or breaking his fast. Both were practiced by the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and his companions (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ). On the authority of Abī Sa'īd al-Khudrī (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) who said:

"We went out on an expedition with Allāh's Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) on the 16th of Ramaḍān. Some of us fasted whilst others broke their fast. The ones that fasted did not fault the ones that broke, nor did the ones who broke find fault in the ones who fasted."<sup>31</sup>

Allāh ﷻ said:

وَمَنْ كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ

Whoever is ill or on a journey, the same number [of days which one did not fast, must be made up from other days. (2:185)

He ﷻ has made it permissible to break one's fast when traveling. The Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) also said:

"Allāh the Most High loves that His allowances be practiced, just as he dislikes that disobedience to Him be committed."<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Muslim (1116)

<sup>32</sup> Musnad of al-Imam Aḥmad (2/108), ibn Khuzaymah (2027). Authenticated by ibn Ḥibbān (3567)

In another wording;

"Allāh loves that His allowances be practiced as He loves the duties he has prescribed be implemented."<sup>33</sup>

It is from the Sunnah to break one's fast when traveling, as this is what the Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions did. That which is apparent from the legislative proofs is that breaking one's fast as a traveler is more preferable especially in cases when there are extreme heat and immense hardship (on the journey). In this instance, it is disliked for that traveler to fast.

The proof of this is in the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ):

"It is not from righteousness to fast when you are a traveler (and there is extreme hardship)."

As for the one who chooses to fast on his journey, then that is acceptable if it is not too difficult for him. If the Muslim feels that making up the fast will be burdensome and difficult for him, he should fast. There is no difference whether the transportation is comfortable or not, due to lack of restriction within the proofs and evidences (he has the choice; he can fast or break his fast). Both cases are considered traveling, so he practices the allowances.

Allāh ﷻ has legislated for His servants the rulings for the traveler and resident, during the time of the

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<sup>33</sup> Ibn Hibbān (353), at-Ṭabarānī in Al-Kabīr (11880) reported by 'Abdullāh ibn Abbas (رضي الله عنه). Authenticated by al-'Allāmah al-Albānī - Irwāa al-Ghalīl (3/10-11)

Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), for all those after him until the day of Judgement. He is fully aware of what has and will happen in all predicaments (on a journey). He is aware of the various means that are used or could be used in a journey. If the ruling was to change, He ﷺ would have mentioned it. As He said:

وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تِبْيَانًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ

And We have sent down to you the Book (the Qur'an) as an exposition of everything, a guidance, a mercy, and glad tidings for those who have submitted themselves (to Allah as Muslims).  
(16:89)

He also said in Sūrah al-Naḥl:

وَالْخَيْلَ وَالْبِغَالَ وَالْحَمِيرَ لِتَرْكَبُوهَا وَزِينَةً وَيَخْلُقُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

And (He has created) horses, mules, and donkeys, for you to ride and as an adornment. And He creates (other) things of which you have no knowledge of. (16:8)

# Menstruation and Fasting

15) What is the ruling on the fast of the menstruating and postpartum woman? If she delays compensating her missed days past the following Ramaḍān, what is upon her?

Menstruating and postpartum women must break their fast in both instances. It is not permitted for them to fast nor perform the prayer during those periods. If they were to pray or fast, both acts of worship would be invalid. They have to make up the fasting days but are exempt from making up the prayers. This is based on the narration of 'Ā'isha (رضي الله عنها):

"We were commanded to make up the missed fasting days, but not the missed prayers."<sup>34</sup>

The authenticity of this narration is agreed upon. The scholars agree with that which 'Ā'isha (رضي الله عنها) mentioned regarding the obligation of making up the fasting days but not the missed prayers for the menstruating and postpartum woman. This is a mercy from Allāh ﷻ. He has made it easy for them as the prayer is repeated regularly throughout the day (daily). If they were compelled to make those prayers up, it would be of great hardship.

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<sup>34</sup> Al-Bukhārī (321), Muslim (335), this specific version is found in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim.

As for fasting, then this is only once a year, Ramaḍān.

There is no hardship in making these days up.

Therefore, the one who delays making up her fast, in that it surpasses the following Ramaḍān, then she must repent to Allāh, make up the missed fasting days and feed a poor person for every day owed.

This ruling also applies to the sick and the traveler if they delay compensating those missed days until past the following Ramaḍān. They must repent to Allāh, make up the missed days, and feed for every day owed, a poor person. If their traveling or illness extends past the following Ramaḍān, then upon them is to make up those days once they have recovered ( for the sick), or returned home from their journey (for the traveler).

### **16) If a woman uses medication to stop the menstrual or post-natal flow, what is the ruling regarding this?**

If a woman uses medication such as tablets or injections to halt menstrual and post-natal flow and it succeeds, she performs the ritual bathing (ghusl). Then, she is permitted to pray and fast as her fasting and prayers are valid.

### **17) Is it permissible for a woman to use contraceptive tablets to prevent pregnancy and delay her menstrual cycle in Ramaḍān?**

There is no issue in this, as she benefits from being able to fast with the people whilst avoiding any compensation. This

is if it is not detrimental to her health. As we find that some women have been harmed by these tablets.

# Fasting and the Ailing Elderly Person

18) A man has reached seventy-five years of age and finds fasting difficult as he is ulcerous. What is the ruling on this man?

If fasting is difficult for both the elderly male and female, they should break their fast and feed a poor person for every day they broke their fast. This can be done either by sharing a meal with the poor or by donating around 1.087kg of dates, wheat, or rice to them for every day missed.

If the elderly male and female are sick with ulcers or other types of illnesses, breaking their fast is now more justified. They are under the category of the sick. They do not feed the poor but instead make up the missed days once they have recovered. If they are unable to compensate for the fasting days missed due to old age, they feed a poor person for every day missed as mentioned earlier. This ruling was given by ibn 'Abbās (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا) and others from the people of knowledge. The basis of this ruling is Allāh's statement:

وَمَنْ كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۗ

So, whoever is sick from amongst you or traveling, then they can make up their fasting days in the days after. (2:184)



The old and helpless are unable to make up the fasting days missed, so feeding the poor becomes mandatory upon them as compensation. When fasting became very difficult for Anas bin Mālik (رضي الله عنه) due to old age, he broke his fast and fed a poor person for every day missed.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, guidance is with Allāh.

### 19) My friend's father is an old man. He is inconsistent with his prayers. However, for the past six years, he has not fasted due to terminal heart disease. Is it permissible for his daughters to fast on his behalf?

As long as he is alive and doctors have attested to his inability to fast due to the terminal illness with little hope of his state changing, then he feeds a poor person for every day he broke his fast. This is similar to the ruling for the helpless elderly man and woman who are unable to fast. He feeds that poor person around 1.087kg of dates and its likes from local food. This ruling also applies to a terminally ill person (of any age). It is not permissible to fast on their behalf unless they died whilst owing fasting days. The family members have the choice to do a good deed by fasting on behalf of the deceased; like the statement of the Messenger

(صلى الله عليه وسلم):

"Whoever dies owing some fasting days, their relatives can fast on their behalf. If they compensate by feeding the poor on their behalf, that will suffice."<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Muṣannaf 'Abdur-Razzāq (4/220 number 7570)

<sup>36</sup> Agreed upon - al-Bukhārī (1952) and Muslim (1147) reported by 'Ā'isha (رضي الله عنها).

# 10 Rulings That May have Escaped the Fasting Person

Many things happen to the fasting person unintentionally. For example, getting injured, bleeding, vomiting, or things entering the throat involuntarily; like water or petrol. These affairs do not break or nullify the person's fast. This also applies to giving blood samples or taking injections without the intent of nourishing the system. Similar to the above is delaying taking a ritual bath (ghusl) until after dawn whilst in a state of sexual impurity, or post-menstruation or completing the postpartum period. These affairs, amongst others, do not invalidate, break or affect one's fast.

## 20) What is the ruling on the fasting person swallowing spittle or saliva in the daytime?

Swallowing saliva does not break his fast. I do not know any difference of opinion in that regard amongst the people of knowledge. As for mucus and phlegm, they must be spat out once it reaches the mouth. It is not permissible for the fasting person to swallow them as he can avoid it. Phlegm and mucus are not the same as saliva and spittle. There is no harm in swallowing spittle as it is essentially from one's saliva. If he spits it out, this is fine.

## 21) What is the ruling on the one who eats or drinks in the daytime of Ramaḍān unintentionally?

His fast is still valid and nothing is upon him, based on the statement of Allāh ﷻ in the final verses of Sūrah al-Baqarah:

رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِن دَسِينَا أَوْ أخطَانَا

Our Lord! Do not punish us if we forget or fall into error." (2:286)

It is authentically narrated from the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) that Allāh said (regarding this request):

"I have done so (answered your request)."<sup>37</sup>

Likewise, another proof is that which has been established from Abī Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

"Whoever forgetfully eats or drinks whilst he is fasting, then he should continue his fast, as it was Allāh who fed him and gave him something to drink."<sup>38</sup>

Therefore, the one who eats or drinks forgetfully, nothing is upon him, his fast is still valid. However, if he remembers whilst eating, he should stop immediately and continue his fast for that day.

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<sup>37</sup> Muslim (126), reported by 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه)

<sup>38</sup> Agreed Upon - al-Bukhārī (1933,6669), Muslim (1155)

## 22) What is the ruling on using injections for the veins and muscles of the fasting person? Likewise, does anesthesia, enemas and it's like invalidate the fast?

That which is correct regarding injections in the veins and muscles is that they do not break one's fast. The things that break the fast are the injections for specific nutritional purposes. This is if it is used intentionally. As those normal (non-nutritional) injections do not break one's fast. That is because having injections in the veins is not from the same category as food and drink. This is more so the case for injection in the muscle parts. However, for precautionary purposes, if he compensated the day he took these two injections, that would be better.

That which is safer, all together, is if he was able to take the injection, if possible, in the evening (after the fasting day). In this, he takes the side of caution in an issue like this where the scholars differed. By doing this, he is following the statement of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ):

"Leave that which is doubtful for that which is not doubtful"<sup>39</sup>

This ḥadīth was reported by al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ).

The above ruling applies to the one who has been given local anesthesia injections. These are normally given to patients when they are having their teeth

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<sup>39</sup> Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad (1/200), at-Tirmidhī (2581), an-Nasāī (5711), authenticated by al-Imām ad-Dhahabī and al-Imām al-Albānī. See Irwāa al-Ghalīl (1/44).

surgically cleaned or having a filling or an extraction. They are excused. However, the fasting person must try and refrain from swallowing any kind of medicine, fluid, or blood (during the operation). These types of injections do not affect the validity of one's fast. The reason for this is that these injections do not fall under the category of food and drink, so the origin is that the fast is valid.

This ruling also applies to the enema or medical fluids administered anally, urinarly, or through the sexual organs; like suppositories. There is no harm in this if the sick person requires it. This is the most correct position in the affair, the position held by Shaykh al-Islām ibn Taymiyyah. Many scholars have come to an agreement that the aforementioned modes of medication do not equate to eating and drinking. Therefore, taking these forms of treatment does not break a fast.

### **23) What is the ruling on using toothpaste, ear, nose, and eye drops for the fasting person? If the fasting person finds the taste of the above in his throat, what should he do?**

Just like using the siwāk, using toothpaste to brush your teeth does not break your fast. There is no problem with using toothpaste at the beginning or end of the day. Some people of knowledge hold that it is disliked to use it after noon.

However, this opinion is inferior in weight, based on the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ):

"The siwāk is purifying for the mouth and pleasing to The Lord (Allāh)"<sup>40</sup>

He (ﷺ) also said:

" Had I not thought it difficult for my Ummah, I would have commanded them to use the siwāk before every prayer."<sup>41</sup>

The Ḥuḥr and 'Aḥr prayers are both included in this narration (ḥadīth), and they are both after noon. However, one needs to be careful not to allow the toothpaste to enter his stomach. If it does enter unintentionally, then no compensation is upon him (the fast is still valid).

Likewise, eyedrops and eardrops do not break one's fast according to the most correct of two opinions of the scholars. If anyone finds the taste of the drops in their throat, it is safer (not obligatory) to compensate that day. This is because they are not essentially avenues used to eat or drink.

As for nose drops, this is impermissible because the nose has a passage where food or drink can pass into

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<sup>40</sup> Reported by al-Imām Aḥmad in al-Musnad (6/62,124), an-Nasāī (5), narrated by 'Āisha (رضي الله عنها). Authenticated by ibn Khuzayma in Ṣaḥīḥ ibn Khuzaymah (135) This hadeeth was also narrated by Abī Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) in Ṣaḥīḥ ibn Ḥibbān (1067), authenticated by Sh. Al-Albānī in Silsilah as-Ṣaḥīḥah (6/55).

<sup>41</sup> Agreed upon: al-Bukhārī (724,888), Muslim (252), narrated by Abī Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه).

the stomach. The Prophet (ﷺ) said to Laqīṭ ibn Šabra (رضي الله عنه)<sup>42</sup>:

"Sniff water up into your nostrils, thoroughly, except when you are fasting."<sup>43</sup>

So, whoever takes nose drops during a fasting day, has to make up that day, based on this narration and others, if the taste of it reaches his throat.

He should not sniff into his nose Oūd. As for other types of perfume, there is no issue with the fasting person smelling them. Except for al-Bukhūr (incense) because some scholars hold that it breaks one's fast if sniffed thoroughly through the nose. This is because it rises to the brain and it has a strong diffusion. If it has been smelt unintentionally then this does not break his or her fast.

Likewise, smelling various types of perfume, colognes or incense does not break the fast as long as it has not been sniffed thoroughly through the nose.

If these drops are used and do not extend to the stomach via the nose or throat, it is permissible to use them in the daytime of Ramaḍān. By the will of Allāh ﷻ, this will not affect the fast.

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<sup>42</sup> Al-'Uqaylī, although scholars differed regarding his lineage. His biography is found in al-Iṣābah (3/311) and Usdul- Ghābah (4/522)

<sup>43</sup> Abū Dāwūd (142), at-Tirmidhī (887), authenticated by at-Tirmidhī, al-Baghawī, and ibn al-Qaṭān [at-Talkhīṣ al-Ḥabīr: (1/139), Dar al-Qurṭaba]

## 24) What is the ruling on using kuḥul and other cosmetics during a fasting day? Do they break your fast?

The kuḥul does not break a man's or woman's fast. This is the most superior and correct opinion of the two positions in this issue. However, using it in the evening is preferred for the fasting person. This also applies to other things that are used to beautify the face; like soap, make-up, and other components like ḥenna that are used for the outer-skin. There is no harm if a fasting person uses them. However, it is not befitting to use make-up if it damages or harms one's face.

## 25) What is the ruling on the fasting person using oral or nasal inhalers out of necessity, like the one who has asthma?

There is no problem in using an inhaler if it is out of necessity. If it is possible to delay using it until the evening, this is better and safer. Otherwise, it is permissible if one is compelled to use it, based on the statement of Allāh in Sūrah Al-An'ām:

وَقَدْ فَصَّلَ لَكُمْ مَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِلَّا مَا اضْطُرِرْتُمْ إِلَيْهِ<sup>ط</sup>

He has explained to you in detail what is forbidden for you, which excludes that which is (done) out of compulsion and necessity.

Besides, it does not equate to eating and drinking. It is similar to taking a blood sample or an injection that has no nutritional value.



**26) If one kisses their spouse whilst fasting or watches indecent films and programs, after which there appears pre-seminal fluid, does he have to make up his fast?**

Prostatic fluid secretion does not invalidate one's fast. This is the strongest of the two opinions on this issue. Whether it is a result of him kissing his wife, watching lewd films, or any other affair that raises and builds the desires, the fast is not broken. However, it is impermissible to watch indecent and lewd films. It is also impermissible to listen to that which Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has prohibited from music and it's like. As for in the case when one ejaculates due to proactively building sexual desires, this invalidates the fast. This is the ruling, whether it is as a result of kissing, intimacy, repetitive viewing, or anything that excites the desires like masturbation, etc. However, if this occurs through one's thoughts and pondering or if the emission is nocturnal, this does not invalidate the fast, even if he ejaculates.

**27) When I was fasting and sleeping in the masjid, I woke up to find I had a nocturnal emission. Does this sexual dream affect my fast? Bearing in mind I prayed even though I did not have a ritual bath (ghusl).**

Nocturnal emissions (wet dreams) do not invalidate nor affect one's fast because their occurrence is out of the individual's control. However, he must have ghusl

(before he prays). This is because the Prophet (ﷺ) was asked regarding this and he said that it is upon the individual who had the dream to take the bath if he finds fluid (as evidence of ejaculation). He (ﷺ) said:

"Bathing is obligatory when there is seminal emission"<sup>44</sup>

Also, his statement (ﷺ) to Umm Sulaim (رضي الله عنها), when she asked him (ﷺ) about nocturnal emissions and whether it warranted ghusl or not. He (ﷺ) responded and said:

"Yes (bathe), if you see discharge."<sup>45</sup>

Whoever prays intentionally whilst in the state of major ritual impurity (junub), has committed a major error and a great wrong. The one that does this has to repeat his prayer after making ghusl, and repent to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى.

Likewise, if his state of being junub came about during the night or he had nocturnal emission after Fajr and delayed making ghusl until the zuhr (noon) prayer, there is no problem with this. If he had sexual intercourse with his wife in the middle of the night but did not make ghusl until after Fajr, there is no problem with that.

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<sup>44</sup> Muslim (343), reported by Abī Sa'ūd al-Khudrī رضي الله عنه

<sup>45</sup> Al-Bukhārī (282), Muslim (313)

It has been reported about the Prophet (ﷺ) that he:

"...Used to wake up in junub after having relations, then he would make ghusl and fast."<sup>46</sup>

Similar to this is the state of the menstruating and postpartum woman. If their period finished in the middle of the night and they had not made ghusl before dawn, then there is no issue with that. Their fast is valid. However, it is impermissible for them to delay the bath until after the sun has risen. They must hasten to bathe before that time so they pray the Fajr prayer in its prescribed time. Likewise, males must bathe early so they can pray in congregation.

The menstruating and postpartum women should give themselves enough time to pray their Maghrib and 'Isha prayers (for that night) as its obligation applies to them once they finished their period or cycle in the middle of the night. This was a ruling given by a group of the companions of the Prophet (ﷺ). Similarly, if their cycle ended at 'Aṣr time, they should hasten to bathe so they can pray the Ṣuḥr and 'Aṣr prayers for that day before sunset. And Allāh ﷻ is the one that aids and guides.

**28) If someone is fasting and started to bleed, does he break his fast or complete it? Can he donate blood or give blood samples whilst fasting?**

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<sup>46</sup> Agreed upon - al-Bukhārī (1930), Muslim (1109) reported by 'Ā'isha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا.

Blood omitting from the body whilst fasting does not invalidate the fast except for cupping. If somebody cups, the correct opinion is that cupping breaks the fast. This is a great difference of opinion between the scholars of Islam. The majority hold that cupping does not invalidate the fast. However, the correct opinion and superior position is that it does invalidate the fast, based upon the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ):

"The one giving cupping and the one receiving it, both break their fast."<sup>47</sup>

Donating blood does not invalidate the fast. The omission of blood that invalidates the fast is the one that occurs during cupping based upon the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ) above. We make an analogy with cupping as it relates to one intentionally extracting a substantial amount of blood from his body which in turn weakens it. This act invalidates the fast just like cupping. As for blood donations, which is safer is to delay it until after iftar because usually a lot of blood is taken so therefore it becomes similar to cupping. The Islamic legislation does not differentiate between entities that are intertwined just as it does not combine two separate components.

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<sup>47</sup> Abū Dāwūd (2367), narrated by Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) and other than him. Reported and also authenticated by ibn Khuzaymah (1964,1965). Some of the scholars of ḥadīth hold this narration to be abrogated by the narration of Anas b. Mālik (رضي الله عنه) which states that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) permitted it. Anas (رضي الله عنه), himself, after that, cupped whilst he was fasting [Ad-Darqūṭnī (329)]. There has been great discussion between the people of knowledge regarding whether cupping invalidates the fast of the cupper and the recipient. No doubt, the safest option is to avoid cupping if possible until after sunset.

As for that which occurs unintentionally as nose bleeds, vaginal bleeding, injury to the body from a knife cut whilst chopping up meat, for example, or a glass cut, and similar occurrences, this does not invalidate the fast even if the bleeding was substantial.

Likewise, small omissions of blood do not affect one's fast, like in the case of blood sampling, when it is required. This amount is excused because it is done out of necessity and it does not equate to those affairs that invalidate the fast as is established in the pure Islamic legislation. So, therefore, the fast is valid. That which invalidates the fast is menstruation, post-partum, and cupping (as it relates to blood).

**29) What is the ruling on the one who has sexual intercourse in the daytime of Ramaḍān whilst he was fasting? Is it permissible for the traveler, who has broken his fast, to have carnal relations with his wife?**

For the one who had sexual intercourse with his wife in the daytime of Ramaḍān whilst fasting, he has to fulfill the penalty for that act. He has to free a believing slave. If he is unable to do this, then he has to fast for two consecutive months. If he is unable to do that, then he has to feed sixty poor people. Every poor person is to be given around 1.087kg (rice, dates..). On top of that, he has to continue fasting that same day the violation occurred and repent to Allāh سُبْحَانَكَ وَبِحَمْدِكَ for the sin he committed. As for the traveler or the sick person who

has a sickness that permits him to break his fast, then there is no penalty upon him. He just has to make up the day he broke his fast (after Ramaḍān). This is because it is permissible for the sick and the traveler to break their fast by carnal relations or other means. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى said:

وَمَنْ كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ<sup>ط</sup>

So, whoever is sick from amongst you or traveling, then they can make up their fasting days in the days after. (2:184)

The ruling of the woman in this situation mirrors that of the man if her fast is that of an obligatory fast. She has to pay the same penalty and compensation. If she is a traveler or is afflicted with a sickness that makes fasting difficult, then no penalty is upon her.<sup>48</sup>

### 30) Does (impermissible) backbiting break one's fast?

Backbiting (whether it is permissible or impermissible) does not break your fast. Backbiting is mentioning something about your brother that he dislikes, based on the statement of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى:

وَلَا يَغْتَاب بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا ۗ اللَّهُ

...And do not backbite one another. (49:12)

The same ruling applies to slandering, revilement, abuse, and lying. These do not break one's fast. However, they are all sins, so caution needs to be

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<sup>48</sup> She makes up the fast she missed due to her traveling or being sick.

taken and these acts must be avoided. These acts wound and weaken the fast based on the statement of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم):

"Whoever does not leave false speech and acting upon it and ignorance, Allāh does not need him to leave his food or drink"<sup>49</sup>

Also, he stated (صلى الله عليه وسلم) :

"Fasting is a shield. When any one of you is fasting on a day, he should neither indulge in obscene language nor raise his voice; or if anyone reviles him or tries to quarrel with him, he should say: *'I am fasting.'*"

There are many narrations about this issue.

هذا وصلى الله وسلم على نبينا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين

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<sup>49</sup> Al-Bukhārī (1903, 6085), narrated by Abī Hurayrah رضى الله عنه.