



IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST GRACIOUS, THE MOST MERCIFUL

## RAMADAN – on fasting

### Introduction

It is appropriate that every Muslim should receive the blessed month of Ramadan with repentance, sincerity, resoluteness and earnestness. He/she should make the intention to perform extra acts of devotion and worship therein, including the Night Prayer (qiyam), recitation of Qur'an, and abundant charity to the poor and needy.

1. On the authority of Anas (may Allah be pleased with him): The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), used to say the following when the month of Rajab began. "Oh Allah! Bless us in Rajab and Sha'ban, and bring us, oh Allah, to Ramadan." [Narrated by Tabarani and Ahmad]

2. **Abu Hurairah, with whom Allah is pleased, reported that the Prophet, (s), said: "My Ummah is given five privileges in the month of Ramadan that no Ummah was given before:**

- \* **The khuloof of the mouth of a fasting person is sweeter in the estimation of Allah than the fragrance of musk.**
- \* **The angels keep praying to Allah to forgive them (i.e. those who are fasting), until they break their fast.**
- \* **Allah decorates Jannah every day saying to it, 'My pious slaves are about to be relieved of their burdens and sufferings and enter you'.**
- \* **Satans are chained in this month, so that they are not able to accomplish their evil**
- \* **The believers' sins are forgiven by the last night of Ramadan.**

**Someone asked the Messenger of Allah (S): Is it the night of Lailatul-Qadr'? He said: 'no. But the laborer is usually paid upon finishing his task.'**

3. Indeed, the Prophet (s.a.w.) has said: "Perhaps a person fasting will receive nothing from his fasting except hunger and thirst." [Ibn Maajah, Ad-Daarimee, Ahmad, al-Baihaqee, Saheeh] This hadeeth should raise our concern about fasting and increase our desire to perform this act of worship with the best intention and in accordance with the Sunnah of the Prophet (s.a.w.).

- i. It is the month of the **Qur'an**, with regards to revelation and study. ("The month of Ramadan is that in which was revealed the Qur'an." [Qur'an, 2:185]). On the authority of Ibn `Abbas: Angel Gabriel used to meet the Prophet every night in Ramadan and used to study Qur'an with him.
- ii. It is the month of **seclusion**. Ibn `Umar said, "The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) used to seclude himself for the last ten days of the month of Ramadan."
- iii. It is the month of **generosity**. Ibn `Abbas said, "The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) used to be at his most generous in Ramadan."
- iv. It is the month of **standing** (in **voluntary night prayer**). On the authority of Abu Hurayrah: The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "Whoever stands (in voluntary night prayer) during Ramadan, with faith and in expectancy of reward, his previous sins are forgiven him."
- v. It is the month of the **compulsory fast**, because of Allah's saying, "So, whoever among you witnesses the month should fast." [Qur'an, 2:185] A terrible error prevalent among people is to talk about Ramadan just as they talk about the obligation of fasting, as if Ramadan and fasting are synonymous, each carrying the meaning of the other and not anything more nor less. Yet, fasting is one of many acts of worship in Ramadan.

## 1. The Arrival of Ramadan

This event is confirmed by sighting the new moon, even if it is seen by only one just person, or by the passage of thirty days in the immediately preceding month of Sha'ban.

Ibn 'Umar said: "The people were looking for the **new moon** and when I reported to the Messenger of Allah that I had seen it, he fasted and ordered the people to fast." This is related by **Abu Dawud, al-Hakim, and Ibn Hibban**, who declared it to be sahih.

Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet instructed: "Fast after you have seen it [the **new crescent**] and end the fast [at the end of the month] when you see it. If it is hidden from you, then wait until the thirty days of Sha'ban have passed." This is related by **al-Bukhari and Muslim**.

## 2. Different Locations

According to the majority of scholars, it does not matter if the new moon has been sighted in a different location. In other words, after the new moon is seen anywhere in the world, it becomes obligatory for all Muslims to begin fasting, as the Prophet said: "Fast due to its sighting and break the fast due to its sighting." This hadith is a general address directed to the whole Muslim world - that is, "if any one of you sees the moon in any place, then that will be a sighting for all of the people."

According to 'Ikrimah, al-Qasim ibn Muhammad, Salim, Ishaq, the correct opinion among the Hanafiyyah, and the chosen opinion among the Shafiyyah, every "country" (or territory) is to take into consideration its own sighting and not necessarily to follow the sighting of others. This is based on what Kuraib said: "While I was in ash-Sham, the new moon of Ramadan appeared on Thursday night. I returned

to Madinah at the end of the month. There, Ibn 'Abbas asked me: 'When did you people see the new moon?' I said: 'We saw it on Thursday night.' He said: 'Did you see it yourself?' I said: 'Yes, the people saw it, and they and Mu'awiyah fasted.' He said: 'But we saw it on Friday night. We will not stop fasting until we complete thirty days or until we see the new moon.' I said: 'Isn't Mu'awiyah's sighting and fasting sufficient for you?' He said: 'No . . . This is the order of the Messenger of Allah.' " This is related by Ahmad, Muslim, and at-Tirmizhi.

### 3. The Virtues of Ramadan

- i. Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said: "The blessed month has come to you. Allah has made fasting during it obligatory upon you. During it, **the gates to Paradise are opened and the gates to hellfire are locked, and the devils are chained.** There is a night [during this month] which is better than a thousand months. Whoever is deprived of its good is really deprived [of something great]." This is related by **Ahmad, an-Nasa'i, and al-Baihaqi.**
- ii. 'Arfajah testifies to this: "We were with 'Utbah ibn Farqad while he was discussing Ramadan. A companion of the Prophet entered upon the scene. When 'Utbah saw him, he became shy and stopped talking. The man [the companion] spoke about Ramadan, saying: 'I heard the Messenger of Allah say during Ramadan: "The gates of Hell are closed, the gates of Paradise are opened, and the **devils are in chains.** An angel calls out: 'O you who intend to do good deeds, have glad tidings. O you who intend to do evil, refrain, until Ramadan is completed.'" "
- iii. **Muslim** relates that Abu Hurairah reported the Prophet saying: "The time between the five prayers, two consecutive Friday prayers, and two consecutive Ramadans are **expiations for all that has happened during that period,** provided that one has avoided the grave sins."
- iv. Abu Sa'id al-Khudri reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said: "Whoever fasts the month of Ramadan, obeying all of its limitations and guarding himself against what is forbidden, has in fact **atoned for any sins he committed before it.**" **Ahmad and alBaihaqi** related this hadith with a good chain.
- v. Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said: "Whoever fasts the month of Ramadan with faith and seeks Allah's pleasure and reward will have **his previous sins forgiven.**" This hadith is related by **Ahmad** and the compilers of the sunan.

### 4. The Fast of Ramadan

The fast of Ramadan, according to the Qur'an, sunnah and consensus, is **obligatory.**

The evidence from the **Qur'an** consists of the following two verses: "O you who believe, fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for the people before you in order for you to gain God consciousness, and, "...The month of Ramadan, during which the Qur'an was revealed, a guidance for mankind, and clear proofs of the

guidance and the criterion; and whoever of you is resident, let him fast the month" **[al-Baqarah 185]**.

From the **sunnah** we have the following statements of the Prophet: "Islam is built upon [the following] five pillars: testifying that there is no God except Allah and that Muhammad is His Messenger, the establishment of the prayer, the giving of zakah, the fast of Ramadan and the pilgrimage to Makkah." Talhah ibn 'Ubaidullah reported that a man came to the Prophet and said: "O Messenger of Allah, tell me what Allah requires of me as regards fasting." He answered, "The month of Ramadan." The man asked: "Is there any other [fast]?" The Prophet answered: "No, unless you do so voluntarily."

The whole Muslim nation agrees that the fast of Ramadan is obligatory. It is one of the pillars of Islam, and if one disputes this, he cannot be called a Muslim.

## 5. The Virtues of Fasting

- i. Abu Hurairah reported the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, saying: "Allah said: 'Every action of the son of Adam is for him except fasting, for that is **solely for Me. I give the reward for it.**' The fast is a shield. If one is fasting, he should not use foul language, raise his voice, or behave foolishly. If someone reviles him or fights with him he should say, 'I am fasting,' twice. By the One in whose hand is the soul of Muhammad, the [bad] breath of the one who is fasting is better in the sight of Allah on the Day of Resurrection than the smell of musk. The one who is fasting is happy at two times: when he breaks his fast he is happy with it, and when he meets his Lord he will be happy that he has fasted." This is related by **Ahmad, Muslim, and an-Nasa'i**. A similar version was recorded by **al-Bukhari and Abu Dawud**, but with the following addition: "He leaves his food, drink, and desires for My sake. **His fasting is for Me... I will give the reward for it, and for every good deed, he will receive ten similar to it.**"
- ii. The fact that he is abstaining from food and drink both in public and in secret shows his honest faith and strong love of Allah, and his knowledge and feeling that Allah is all-knowing of everything. For this reason Allah has made the reward for fasting greater than for any other type of worship. Allah said in the **hadith Qudsi: "Every deed of the son of Adam will be multiplied [in rewards], the good deed by ten of its like, up to seven hundreds, up to whatever Allah wills, except fasting, it is for Me and I will reward it. He abandons his desire and his food for My sake.."** (Related by **Muslim**) Ibn al-Qayyim said: "...And people may see that a person is not eating in front of them, but the fact that he is really abandoning his food and his desire for the sake of God is a thing that nobody can find out about, and that is the essence of fasting." (Zaad al-Ma'ad 2/29).
- iii. 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr reported that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, said: "The fast and the Qur'an are two **intercessors** for the servant of Allah on the Day of Resurrection. The fast will say: 'O Lord, I prevented him from his food and desires during the day. Let me intercede for him.' The Qur'an will say:

'I prevented him from sleeping at night. Let me intercede for him.' And their intercession will be accepted." **Ahmad** related this hadith with a sahih chain.

- iv. Abu Umamah reported: "I came to the Messenger of Allah and said: 'Order me to do **a deed that will allow me to enter Paradise.**' He said: 'Stick to fasting, as there is no equivalent to it.' Then I came to him again and he said: '**Stick to fasting.**'" This hadith is related by **Ahmad, an-Nasa'i, and al-Hakim** who classified it as sahih.
- v. Abu Sa'id al-Khudri reported that the Messenger of Allah said: "No servant fasts on a day in the path of Allah except that **Allah removes the hellfire seventy years further away from his face.**" This is related by "the group," except for Abu Dawud.
- v. Sahl ibn Sa'd reported that the Prophet said: "There is a **gate to Paradise that is called ar-Rayyan.** On the Day of Resurrection it will say: 'Where are those who fasted?' When the last [one] has passed through the gate, it will be locked." This is related by **alBukhari and Muslim.**

## 6. Essential elements of fasting

### i. The Intention

Allah instructs in the Qur'an: "And they are ordained nothing else than to serve Allah, keeping religion pure for Him." The Prophet, upon whom be peace, said: "***Actions are judged according to the intention behind them, and for everyone is what he intended.***"

The intention must be made before fajr and during every night of Ramadan. This point is based on the hadith of Hafsah which reported that the Prophet said: "Whoever does not determine to fast before fajr will have no fast" (that is, it won't be accepted). This is related by **Ahmad, an-Nasa'i, at-Tirmizhi, Abu Dawud, and Ibn Majah. Ibn Khuzaimah and Ibn Hibban** have classified it as sahih.

The intention is valid during any part of the night. It need not be spoken, as it is in reality an act of the heart which does not involve the tongue. It will be fulfilled by one's intention to fast out of obedience to Allah and for seeking His pleasure.

If one eats one's pre-dawn meal (sahoor) with the intention of fasting and to get closer to Allah by such abstinence, then one has performed the intention. If one determines that one will fast on the next day solely for the sake of Allah, then one has performed the intention even if a pre-dawn meal was not consumed.

According to many of the jurists, the intention for a voluntary fast may be made at any time before any food is consumed. This opinion is based on 'Aishah's hadith: "The Prophet came to us one day and said: 'Do you have any [food]?' We said, 'No.' He said: 'Therefore, I am fasting.'" This is related by Muslim and Abu Dawud.

The Hanafiyyah and Shaf'iyyah stipulate that the intention must be made before noon (for voluntary fasts). The apparent opinion of Ibn Mas'ud and Ahmad is that the intention may be made before or after noon.

## **ii. Who must fast**

All scholars agree that fasting is obligatory upon every sane, adult, healthy Muslim male who is not travelling at that time. As for a woman, she must not be menstruating or having post-childbirth bleeding. People who are insane, minors, and those who are travelling, menstruating, or going through post-childbirth bleeding, and the elderly and breast-feeding or pregnant women do not need to observe the fast.

For some, the fast is not obligatory at all, for example, the insane. In the case of young people, their parents or guardians should order them to fast. Some are to break the fast and make up the missed days of fasting at a later date, while others are to break the fast and pay a "ransom" (in which case, they are not obliged to make up the days they missed). We shall discuss each group in more detail.

## **iii. The fast of the insane**

Fasting is not obligatory for the insane because of their inability to understand what they are doing. 'Ali reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said: "The pen is raised for three groups [of people]--that is, they will not be responsible for their actions: the insane until they become sane, those who are sleeping until they awaken, and the young until they reach puberty." This is related by **Ahmad, Abu Dawud, and at-Tirmizhi**.

## **iv. The fast of the young [non-adults]**

Though the young are not required to fast, it is proper for their guardians to encourage them to fast so they will become accustomed to it at an early age. They may fast as long as they are able to and then may break it. ArRabi'a bint Mu'awiyah reported: "The Messenger of Allah sent a man, on the morning of the day of 'Ashurah, to the residences of the Ansar, saying: 'Whoever has spent the morning fasting is to complete his fast. Whoever has not spent this morning fasting should fast for the remainder of the day.' We fasted after that announcement, as did our young children. We would go to the mosque and make toys stuffed with cotton for them to play with. If one of them started crying due to hunger, we would give them a toy to play with until it was time to eat." This is related by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

## **v. Those who are permitted to break the fast, but who must pay a "ransom" for not fasting**

Elderly men and women are permitted to break their fasts, as are the chronically ill, and those who have to perform difficult jobs under harsh circumstances and who could not find any other way to support themselves. All of these people are allowed to break their fast, because such a practice would place too much hardship on them during any part of the year. They are obliged to **feed one poor person [miskin] a day** (for every day of fasting that they do not perform). The scholars differ over how much

food is to be supplied, for example, a sa', half a sa', or a madd. There is nothing in the sunnah that mentions exactly how much is to be given.

Ibn 'Abbas said: "An elderly man is permitted to break his fast, but he must feed a poor person daily. If he does this, he does not have to make up the days that he did not fast. This is related by **ad-Daraqutni** and by **al-Hakim**, who said it is sahih. Al-Bukhari recorded that 'Ata heard Ibn 'Abbas recite the 'ayah: "And for those who can fast [but do not], there is a 'ransom': the feeding of a person in need" [al-Baqarah 185]. Then Ibn 'Abbas continued: "It has not been abrogated. [Its ruling applies] to elderly men and women who are not able to fast. Instead, they must feed one poor person on a daily basis."

The same is true for one who is chronically ill and as such cannot fast, and for one who is forced to work under harsh circumstances and as such cannot endure the additional burden of fasting. Both groups must also feed one poor person daily.

Commenting on al-Baqarah's 'ayah, Sheikh Muhammad 'Abduh says: "What is meant by those who can fast' [(but do not) in the Qur'anic verse] is the weak elderly people, the chronically ill, and so on, and similarly, those workers who are working under severe conditions, such as coal miners. The same applies to criminals who are sentenced to life imprisonment with hard labor. They have to pay the 'ransom' if they have the means to do so."

Pregnant and breast-feeding women, if they fear for themselves or for the baby, can break the fast and pay the "ransom." They do not have to make up the days missed. Abu Dawud related from 'Ikrimah that Ibn 'Abbas said concerning the 'ayah "And for those who can fast [but do not],": "This is a concession for the elderly, as they can fast. They are to break the fast and feed one poor person a day. Pregnant or breast-feeding women, if they fear for the child, can do likewise." This is related by **al-Bazzar**. At the end of the report, there is the addition: "Ibn 'Abbas used to say to his wives who were pregnant: 'You are in the same situation as those who can fast [but do not]. You are to pay the "ransom" and do not have to make up the days later.' " Of its chain, **ad-Daraqutni** says it is sahih.

Nafi' reported that Ibn 'Umar was asked about a pregnant woman who feared for her unborn baby. He replied: "She is to break the fast and to feed one poor person a day one madd of barley."

There is also a hadith that states: "Allah has relieved the travelers of fasting and half of the prayer, and the pregnant and the breast-feeding women of the fast." According to the Hanafiyyah, Abu Ubaid, and Abu Thaur, such women are only to make up the missed days of fasting, and they are not supposed to feed one poor person a day. According to Ahmad and ash-Shafi'i, if such women fear only for the baby, they must pay the "ransom" and make up the days later. If they fear only for themselves or for themselves and the baby, then they are only to make up the missed days at a later date.

## 7. The manner of Fasting

### i. Eating a pre-dawn meal

All Muslims agree that it is preferred to eat a pre-dawn meal and that there is no sin upon one who does not do so. Anas reported that the Messenger of Allah said: "Eat a pre-dawn meal, for there are **blessings** in it." This is related by **al-Bukhari and Muslim**.

Al-Miqdam ibn Madyakrib reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said: "You should eat this pre-dawn meal for it is a **blessed nourishment**." This is related by **an-Nasa'i** with a good chain. The reason why it is a blessing is that it strengthens the fasting person, makes him more energetic, and makes the fast easier for him.

### ii. What would fulfill the sunnah of eating a pre-dawn meal

The sunnah would be fulfilled by eating a small or large quantity of food, or even just by drinking a sip of water. Abu Sa'id al-Khudri reported that the Messenger of Allah said: "The **pre-dawn meal is blessed**, so do not neglect it **even if you only take a sip of water**. Verily, **Allah and the angels pray for those who have pre-dawn meals**." This is related by **Ahmad**.

### iii. The time for the pre-dawn meal

The time for the pre-dawn meal is between the middle of the night and dawn. It is considered **best to delay it** (that is, as close to dawn a possible). Zaid ibn Thabit reported: "We ate the pre-dawn meal with the Messenger of Allah and then we got up for the prayer. He was asked: 'What was the amount of time between the two?' He responded: '[The time it would take to recite] fifty verses.'" This is recounted by **al-Bukhari and Muslim**.

'Amr ibn Maimun adds: "The companions of Muhammad, upon whom be peace, would be the **first to break the fast and the last to eat their pre-dawn meals**." This is recorded by **al-Baihaqi** with a sahih chain.

### iv. Hastening in breaking the fast

It is preferred for the fasting person to hasten in breaking the fast when the sun has set. Sahl ibn Sad reported that the Prophet said: "The people will always be with the good as long as they **hasten in breaking the fast**." This is related by **al-Bukhari and Muslim**.

The fast should be broken with an odd number of dates or, if that is not available, with some water. Anas reported: "The Messenger of Allah would break his fast with **ripe dates** before he would pray. If those were not available, he would eat dried dates. If those were not available, he would drink some water." This hadith is related by **Abu Dawud** and by **al-Hakim**, who called it sahih, and by at-Tirmizhi, who called it hassan.

Sulaiman ibn 'Amr reported that the Prophet said: "If one of you is fasting, he should break his fast with **dates**. If dates are not available, then with **water**, for water is purifying." This is related by **Ahmad** and by **at-Tirmizhi**, who called it hassan sahih.



The preceding hadith also shows that it is preferred to break the fast in the above manner **before praying**. After the prayer, the person may continue to eat, but if the evening meal is ready, one may begin with that. Anas reported that the Messenger of Allah said: **"If the food is already presented, eat before the sunset prayer and do not eat your meals in haste."** This is related by **al-Bukhari and Muslim**.

#### **v. Supplications while breaking the fast and while fasting**

**Ibn Majah** related from 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Aas that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said: "A fasting person, upon breaking his fast, has a **supplication that will not be rejected**. When 'Abdullah broke his fast he would say: "O Allah, I ask of You, by Your mercy that encompasses everything, to forgive me."

It is confirmed that the Prophet would say: The thirst has gone, the glands are wet and, Allah willing, the reward is confirmed. In mural form, it is reported that he would say: "O Allah, for You I have fasted and with Your provisions do I break my fast."

**At-Tirmizhi** recorded, with a good chain, that the Prophet said: "Three people will not have their supplications rejected: a fasting person until he breaks his fast, a just ruler, and an oppressed person."

#### **vi. Refraining from performing any actions that do not benefit the fasting**

Fasting is a type of worship that **draws one closer to Allah**. Allah has prescribed it to purify the soul and to train it in good deeds. The fasting person **must be on guard** against any act that may cause him to lose the benefits of his fast. Thus, his fast will increase his God-consciousness, and Allah says in the Qur'an: "O you who believe, fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you so perchance **you may attain God consciousness**."

Fasting is not just refraining from eating and drinking, but it is also refraining from everything else that Allah has forbidden. Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet said: "Fasting is not [abstaining] from eating and drinking only, but also from **vain speech and foul language**. If one of you is being cursed or annoyed, he should say: "I am fasting, I am fasting." This is related by **Ibn Khuzaimah, Ibn Hibban, and al-Hakim**. The latter said that it is sahih according to Muslim's criterion.

Abu Hurairah also reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said: **"Allah does not need the fast of one who does not abandon false speech or acting according to his false speech."** This is related by **the group**, except for Muslim.

Abu Hurairah narrated that the Prophet said: "Perhaps a fasting person will get nothing from his fast save hunger, and perhaps the one who stands to pray at night will get nothing from his standing except sleeplessness." This is related by **an-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, and al-Hakim**. The latter said that it is sahih according to al-Bukhari's criterion.

### **vii. Fasting, using the tooth stick [brush]**

It is preferred for the fasting person to use a tooth stick or a brush. There is no difference if he uses it at the beginning or the ending of the day. **At-Tirmizhi** affirms that: "Ash-Shafhi **did not see anything wrong with using a tooth stick [brush] during the beginning or the ending of the day.**" The Prophet would use his tooth stick [brush] while fasting.

### **viii. Fasting, being generous and studying the Qur'an**

Being generous and studying the Qur'an is recommended during any time, but it is especially stressed during the month of Ramadan. **Al-Bukhari** recorded that Ibn 'Abbas said: "The Prophet was the most generous of people, but he would be his most generous during Ramadan when he would meet with [the angel] Gabriel. He would meet with him every night and recite the Qur'an. When Gabriel met him, he used to be more generous than a fast wind."

### **ix. Fasting, striving to perform as many acts of worship as possible during the last ten days of Ramadan**

**Al-Bukhari and Muslim** record from 'Aishah that during the last ten days of Ramadan, the Messenger of Allah would wake his wives up during the night and then remain apart from them (that is, being busy in acts of worship). A version in **Muslim** states: "He would strive [to do acts of worship] during the last ten days of Ramadan more than he would at any other time." **At-Tirmizhi** also recorded this from 'Ali.

## **8. Acts That are Permissible During the Fast**

The following acts are permissible for the fasting person:

### **i. Pouring water over one's self and submersing one's self in water**

Abu Bakr ibn 'Abdurrahman reported from a number of companions that they had seen Allah's Messenger pour water over his head while he was fasting due to thirst or extreme heat. This is related by **Ahmad, Malik, and Abu Dawud** with a sahih chain.

In the two Sahih of al-Bukhari and Muslim, it is related from 'Aishah that the Prophet would rise in the morning on a fasting day and then would perform ghusl (a complete bath). If during the bath some water is swallowed unintentionally, the fast is still valid.

### **ii. applying kohl or eyedrops or anything else to the eyes**

These acts are all permissible, even if some taste from it finds its way to the throat, as the eyes are not a passageway to the stomach. Anas reported that he would apply kohl while he was fasting. This is the opinion of the Shaf'iyyah. Ibn al-Munzhir records the same opinion from 'Ata, al-Hassan, an-Nakha'i, al-Au~a'i, Abu Hanifah, Abu Thaur, and Dawud. It is related from the following companions: Ibn 'Umar, Anas, and Ibn Abu 'Aufa. According to **at-Tirmizhi**, nothing authentic has been related from the Prophet concerning this question.

### iii. kissing for one who has the ability to control himself

It is confirmed that 'Aishah said: "The Prophet would kiss and embrace while he was fasting, for he had the most control of all of you over his desires." 'Umar said: "I was excited one time and I kissed [my wife] while I was fasting. I went to the Prophet and said: 'Today I committed a horrendous act--I kissed while I was fasting.' The Prophet asked: 'What do you think of rinsing with water while fasting?' I said: 'There is nothing wrong with that.' The Prophet said: 'Then what is the question about?'"

Ibn al-Munzhir says: " 'Umar, Ibn 'Abbas, Abu Hurairah, 'Aishah, 'Ata, ash-Sha'bi, al-Hassan, Ahmad, and Ishaq permit kissing. The Hanafiyyah and Shaf'iyyah say that it is disliked if it incites one's desires. If it does not do so, it is not disliked although it is better to avoid it." There is no difference between an old man or a young man in this matter. The question is whether or not the kiss excites one's desires. If it does, it is disliked. If it does not, it is not disliked although it is best to avoid it. It does not matter if the kiss was on the cheek or on the lips, and so on. Touching with the hand or embracing follow the same ruling as kissing.

### iv. any type of injection

Injections do not break the fast whether they are for feeding the person or just medicine. It does not matter if the injection was intravenous or underneath the skin. It also does not matter if what was injected reaches the stomach, as it does not reach the stomach through the customary manner (that food does).

### v. cupping to drain blood

The Prophet, upon whom be peace, was cupped while he was fasting. However, if doing this weakens the fasting person, it is disliked. Thabit al-Bunani asked Anas: "Did you dislike cupping for a fasting person during the time of the Prophet?" He answered: "No [we did not], unless it made someone weak." This is related by al-Bukhari and others. Vivisection follows the same ruling as cupping.

### vi. rinsing the mouth and nose

These acts are allowed in general, but it is disliked to exaggerate (that is, use a lot of water and put the water deep into the mouth or nose while fasting). Laqit ibn Sabra reported that the Prophet said: "Exaggerate when rinsing your nose unless you are fasting." This is related by an-Nasa'i, Abu Dawud, at-Tirmizhi, and Ibn Majah. At-Tirmizhi called it *hassan sahih*.

Scholars dislike using nose drops (that is, applying medicine through the nose) while one is fasting, for they are of the opinion that it breaks the fast. There is a hadith that supports their opinion.

Ibn Qudamah sums up the various opinions on the subject: "If while gargling or rinsing the nose for the sake of purifying one's self [for example, for prayer] water reaches the throat **unintentionally** and not due to exaggeration, there is **no problem**."

This is according to al-Auza'i, Ishaq, and one statement from ash-Shaf'i, which is related from Ibn 'Abbas. Malik and Abu Hanifah hold that it breaks the fast because that water reaches the stomach. If he was aware that he was fasting, it breaks his fast, as if he would have drunk intentionally. The first opinion is stronger, since [the water] reached the throat without intention or exaggeration. It is similar to having a fly enter the mouth and proceed to the throat. That differentiates it from an intentional act."

**vii. Those things which one could not protect one's self from, such as swallowing one's saliva, the dust of the road, sifting flour and so on are all overlooked**

Ibn 'Abbas ruling is that: "There is no problem with tasting liquid food or something you wish to purchase." Al-Hassan used to chew the walnuts for his grandson while he was fasting. Ibrahim also permitted that.

Chewing gum (unlike the one in vogue in the West, it has no sweetness or fragrance) is disliked. The gum must not break into pieces. Those who say that it is disliked include ash-Sha'bi, anNakha'i, the Hanafiyyah, the Shaf'iyyah, and the Hanbaliyyah. 'Aishah and 'Ata permit chewing, as nothing reaches the stomach and it is just like putting pebbles into one's mouth provided it does not break into parts. If a part of it breaks off and enters the stomach, it will break the fast.

Ibn Taimiyyah says: "Smelling perfumes does not harm the fast." Enlarging upon the subject, he says: "As for kohl, injections, drops dropped into the urethra [that is, enemas for medicinal purposes], and treatment for brain and stomach injuries, there is some dispute among the scholars. Some say that none of these break the fast, some say that all except kohl would break the fast, while others say all except the drops break the fast, or that the kohl or drops do not break the fast but that the rest do." **Ibn Taimiyyah** continues: "The first opinion on this question is preferred. The most apparent conclusion is that **none of them break the fast**. The fast is part of the religion of Islam. Both the layman and specialist must be knowledgeable about it. If the preceding actions were forbidden by Allah and His Messenger to the fasting person because they would ruin the fast, then it would have been obligatory upon the Messenger to clarify that fact. If he had done so, his companions would have known about it and would have passed it on to the rest of the Muslims. Since no one has related that not from the Prophet, not with an authentic or a weak hadith, nor in mursal or musnad form then it must be the case that such acts do not void [the fast]." He also says: "**If the ruling is one that would affect everyone or everyday matters, then the Prophet would have clarified it to a general audience.** It is well-known that kohl was in common use as were oils, washing, incense, and perfume. If they broke the fast, the Prophet would have mentioned them, as he mentioned other things [that break the fast]. Since he did not do so, they belong to the class of perfumes, incense, and dyes. Incense goes through the nose and enters the head and lands on the body. Dyes or oils are absorbed by the skin and the body is refreshed by it. The case of perfumes is similar. Since these have not been [explicitly] prohibited to the fasting person, it points to the fact that using them is permissible for the fasting person and so is kohl. The Muslims during the time of the Prophet would injure themselves, either from jihad or otherwise, and would injure their stomachs or skulls. If that would have ended their fasts, it would have been made clear to them [by the Prophet]."

Since that was not prohibited for the fasting person, it must not break the fast." **Ibn Taimiyyah** continues: "No one eats kohl and no one causes it to enter his stomach-- neither through his nose nor through his mouth. Anal enemas are also not taken as food. Indeed, it helps the body to release whatever is in the intestines and it does not reach the stomach. Any medicine that is used to treat stomach wounds or head injuries [that is taken orally] is not considered similar to food. Allah says in the Qur'an: 'Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you.' The Prophet, upon whom be peace, said: 'Fasting is a shield,' and, Verily, Satan rushes through the body like the flowing of the blood [in the body]. You should constrict his rushing by hunger and fasting.' To increase his Allah-consciousness a fasting person must not eat or drink because food and drink cause the veins to fill up with blood in which Satan circulates [in one's body]. They become easier for Satan through eating and drinking, not from enemas, kohl, or medicines applied through the penis or used to treat stomach and brain injuries."

#### **viii. the fasting person can eat, drink, and perform sexual intercourse until fajr**

If someone has food in his mouth when fajr is beginning, he should spit it out. If he is having intercourse (with his wife) at that time, he should immediately stop. If he does so, his fast will still be valid. If he continues in these actions at that time, he will have broken his fast. Al-Bukhari and Muslim record from Aishah that the Prophet said: "Bilal makes the call to prayer while it is still night; therefore, eat and drink until Ibn Umm Maktum makes the call to prayer."

#### **ix. It is permissible for the fasting person to be sexually defiled in the morning (that is, a person is not required to perform ghusl before fajr)**

The hadith from 'Aishah on this point has already been mentioned.

#### **x. Menstruating or post-childbirth bleeding women**

If the blood of a menstruating woman or of a woman with post-childbirth bleeding stops during the night, she can delay ghusl until the morning and still fast but, she must perform ghusl before the morning prayer.

### **8. Actions that Void the Fast**

The actions that void the fast may be divided into two types:

- 1- those which void the fast and require that the day be **made up later**, and
- 2- those which void the fast and, in addition to being made up, **also require an act of expiation.**

#### **i. Intentional eating or drinking**

If one eats due to **forgetfulness**, a **mistake**, or **coercion**, then he **does not have to make up the day** later or perform any expiation. Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet said: "**Whoever forgets he is fasting, and eats or drinks is to complete his**

**fast, as it was Allah who fed him and gave him something to drink."** This is related by the group.

Commenting on it, at-Tirmizhi says: "Most of the scholars act according to this hadith. It is the opinion of Sufyan ath-Thauri, ash-Shafi'i, Ahrnad, and Ishaq."

Abu Hanifah reported that the Prophet said: "Whoever breaks his fast during Ramadan due to forgetfulness is not to make up the day later or to perform any expiation." This is related by ad-Daraqutni, al-Baihaqi, and al-Hakim, who says that it is sahih according to Muslim's criterion. Ibn Hajr says that its chain is sahih.

Ibn 'Abbas reported that the Prophet said: "**Allah will not hold anyone of this nation responsible for what is done in error, forgetfulness or under coercion.**" This is recounted by Ibn Majah, at-Tabarani, and al-Hakim.

## **ii. intentional vomiting**

If one is overcome and vomits unintentionally, he does not have to make up the day later on or perform the acts of expiation. Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said: "Whoever is overcome and vomits is not to make up the day." Whoever vomits intentionally must make up the day." This is related by **Ahmad, Abu Dawud, at-Tirmizhi, Ibn Majah, Ibn Hibban, ad-Daraqutni, and al-Hakim.** The latter called it sahih.

Of the report's credibility, al-Khattabi says: "I do not know of any difference of opinion among the scholars on this point. If one vomits unintentionally he is not in need of making up the day, while one who vomits intentionally must make up the day later."

## **iii. the menses and post-childbirth bleeding**

Even if such bleeding begins just before the sunset, the fast of that day is rendered void and the day must be made up. There is a consensus of scholars on this point.

## **iv. ejaculation of sperm**

Ejaculation voids the fast even if it was just due to kissing, hugging, or masturbation, and the day must be made up. If the ejaculation was due to looking at or thinking about something, then it is like having a wet dream during the day and it, therefore, does not void the fast nor is there any requirement on the person. Similarly, ejaculation of seminal fluid does not harm the fast in any way.

## **v. Eating something that is not nourishing, such as salt**

Someone who uses a lot of salt for a reason other than eating, in which it goes down to the stomach, breaks the fast according to most scholars.

**vi. If one has the intention, while he is fasting, to break the fast, he in effect voids the fast even if he does not actually eat anything**

This is because the intention is one of the pillars of the fast and, if one changes his intention, he has nullified his fast.

**vii. If one eats, drinks, or has intercourse, thinking that the sun has set or that fajr has not occurred**

In such cases, according to most scholars and the four imams, that person is to make up that day. However, there is a difference of opinion on this point. Ishaq, Dawud, Ibn Hazm, 'Ata, 'Urwah, al-Hassan al-Basri, and Mujahid maintain that such a fast is sound and that the person need not make up the day later. They base their opinion on the fact that Allah says in the Qur'an: "And there is no sin for you in the mistakes you make unintentionally, but what your hearts purpose [that will be a sin for you]."

**viii. Unintentional mistakes**

The Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, said: "Allah will not hold anyone of this nation responsible for what is done by mistake . . ."

'Abdurrazaq related that Mamar reported from al-Amash that Zaid ibn Wahb said: "The people broke their fast during the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khattab. I saw a big pot being brought from Hafsah's house and the people drank. Then the sun appeared from behind the clouds and this distressed the people. They said: 'We have to make up this day.' 'Umar asked: 'Why? By Allah, we have not involved ourselves in any sin.' "

Al-Bukhari records that Asma' bint Abu Bakr said: "We broke the fast of Ramadan when it was cloudy during the time of the Prophet, and then the sun appeared again."

Commenting on the subject, Ibn Taimiyyah says: "This points to two things:

-1- that it is not preferred for one to delay breaking the fast until one is absolutely certain that the sun has set . . . and

-2- that it is not necessary to make up such a day. If the Prophet would have ordered them to make up that day, it would have become public knowledge. The fact that it has been related that they broke their fast [and that it has not been related that they were ordered to make up that day] points to the fact that they were not ordered to make up that day."

The **only action**, according to most scholars, which requires that both the **day be made up and the act of expiation** be performed is having **sexual intercourse during a day of Ramadan**.

Abu Hurairah reported that a man came to the Messenger of Allah and said: "I am destroyed, O Messenger of Allah!" The Prophet asked: "What has destroyed you?" He said, "I had intercourse with my wife during a day of Ramadan." The Prophet asked: "Are you able to free a slave?" He said, "No". The Prophet asked: "Is it possible for you to fast for two consecutive months?" He said, "No." The Prophet asked: "Is it possible for you to feed sixty poor people?" He said, "No." The Prophet said: "Then sit." A basket of dates was brought to the Prophet and he said to the man: Give this in charity. The man said: "To someone poorer than us? There is no one in this city who

is poorer than us!" The Prophet laughed until his molar teeth could be seen and said: "Go and feed your family with it." This is related by **the group**.

Most scholars say that both men and women have to perform the acts of expiation if they intentionally have intercourse during a day of Ramadan on which they had intended to fast. If they had intercourse out of forgetfulness or not due to choice--that is, due to coercion, or they did not have the intention to fast, then the expiation is not obligatory on either one of them. If the woman was forced to have intercourse by the man, the expiation will be obligatory only upon the man.

According to ash-Shafi'i, the expiation is not obligatory upon the woman in any case--that is, regardless if it was due to choice or coercion, and she need only make up the day of fasting that she voided. An-Nawawi says: "The most authentic opinion, in general, is that the expiation is obligatory upon the man only and that there is nothing upon the woman. There is nothing obligatory on her in relation to this matter, as it is a matter of [paying] money [due to something related to] sexual intercourse and this refers to the duty of the man and not the woman. [In this way,] it is similar to the case of dowry."

Abu Dawud says: "Ahmad was asked about someone who had sex during Ramadan: 'Is there any expiation upon the woman?' He said: 'I have not heard of any.'" In al-Mughni it is stated: "This refers to the fact that the Prophet ordered the man who had had sexual intercourse to free a slave. He did not order the woman to do anything, although he obviously knew that she was a partner in the act."

According to most scholars, acts of expiation must be performed in the order that was mentioned in the hadith. The first command is to **free a slave**. If this is not possible, the person is to **fast for two consecutive months**. If that is not possible, the person is to **feed sixty poor people with meals that are similar to an average meal in his household**. The person cannot jump from one act to another unless he is not able to perform the prior order commanded. According to the Malikiyyah and a narration from Ahmad, the person is free to choose any of the above three acts and that will be sufficient for him.

This latter opinion is based on the report from Malik and Ibn Juraij on the authority of Humaid ibn 'Abdurrahman who reported that Abu Hurairah narrated that a man broke his fast during Ramadan and the Prophet ordered him, as an expiation, to free a slave or fast two months consecutively or to feed sixty poor people. This is related by Muslim.

In the preceding hadith, the word "or" implies choice, but according to some, the reason for the expiation to be performed was different and therefore the person could choose, as in the case of the expiation for breaking an oath. Ash-Shaukani says: "In the different narrations, there is evidence that the expiation is to be performed in order or according to one's choice. Those who relate it to be in order are more in number. Al-Muhallab and al-Qurtubi combined the narrations and said that the event [of someone breaking the fast] occurred more than once."

Al-Hafizh differs: "This is not correct. It was just one event and the parts are all united. So the crux of the matter is that there was not more than one event. Some



combine the reports and say that following the order is preferred, but that one may choose. Others say the opposite."

Whoever has sexual intercourse (with his wife) on a day of Ramadan and, before he performs the act of expiation, has intercourse on another day of Ramadan, need only perform one act of expiation according to a narration from Ahmad and the Hanafiyyah. This is because there is a punishment for acts that are repeated, and if the expiation or punishment is not carried out, all the acts are taken together as one. According to Malik, ash-Shaf'i, and Ahmad, the person must perform the expiation twice, as each day of Ramadan is a separate act of worship. If the expiation is obligatory because the person voided the fast, the separate acts are not combined together.

All scholars agree that if the person intentionally had intercourse during a day of Ramadan and has performed the expiation and then has intercourse on another day of Ramadan, then another expiation becomes obligatory upon him. Similarly, they are in agreement that if one has intercourse twice during a day, before performing the expiation for the first act, then he need only perform one act of expiation. If he has performed the expiation for the first one, then he need not perform an act of expiation for the second, according to most scholars. Ahmad says that in such a case, he must perform a total of two acts of expiation.