

THE OBLIGATION OF FASTING RAMADAN

Written by Translated by Riad Nachef

Tuesday, 12 January 2010 10:08 - Last Updated Wednesday, 24 June 2015 03:44

THE OBLIGATION OF FASTING *RAMADAN*

Fasting the month of *Ramadan* is an obligation and a great worship. It is among the best acts of obedience and among the greatest deeds, and in Fasting there is great reward.

Im

a

m al-Bukh

a

riyy

related the

Q

udsiyy

h

ad

i

th

that the Prophet said

All

a

h

said:

□□□□□□□□ □□□ □□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□ □□□□□□

□□□ □□□□□□□□ □□□ □ □□ □□□□□□□□

which means: <<The reward of every good deed is multiplied from ten up to seven-hundred times--except that of the Fasting--which is usually done in sincerity and will be multiplied by as many times as *Allah* wills.>> One of the doors of Paradise, named *ar-Rayyan*, is specified for those Muslims who used to fast in this world. On the Day of Judgment it will be opened, and those who used to fast in obedience to

All

THE OBLIGATION OF FASTING RAMADAN

Written by Translated by Riad Nachef

Tuesday, 12 January 2010 10:08 - Last Updated Wednesday, 24 June 2015 03:44

nations before the nation of Prophet *Muhammad*, however, fasting the month of *Ramadan* in particular is a specification for the nation of Prophet

Mu

h

ammad

only.

Moreover, Prophet *Muhammad* named Fasting (the month of *Ramadan*) as one of the five most important matters of

Isl

a

m

in the famous

h

ad

i

th

known as

“

H

ad

i

th Jibr

i

l”

related by

al-Bukh

a

riyy

and

Muslim

. Angel

Jibr

i

l

came to the Prophet in the shape of a man with white clothes and asked the Prophet to inform him about

Isl

a

m

. In response, the Prophet said:

THE OBLIGATION OF FASTING RAMADAN

Written by Translated by Riad Nachef

Tuesday, 12 January 2010 10:08 - Last Updated Wednesday, 24 June 2015 03:44

شهادة الإسلام هي شهادة أن لا إله إلا الله وأن محمداً رسول الله
والحكمة البالغة في الدين الإسلامي هي شهادة أن لا إله إلا الله وأن محمداً رسول الله
والحكمة البالغة في الدين الإسلامي هي شهادة أن لا إله إلا الله وأن محمداً رسول الله

which means: <<*Islam* is bearing witness that no one is God except *Allah* and *Muhammad* is the Messenger of

All

a

h

, performing Prayer, paying

Z

ak

a

h

, Fasting the month of

Rama

da

n

, and performing Pilgrimage if you are able. >>

Consequently, for the one who has learned of its obligation, renouncing the obligation of fasting the month of *Ramadan* is blasphemy because it entails belying *Allah* and the Prophet. However, the one who believes Fasting is an obligation, yet does not perform this obligation (without a valid excuse) does not blaspheme--although his neglecting to fast is an enormous sin.

DETERMINING THE BEGINNING

OF

THE MONTH OF *RAMADAN*

THE OBLIGATION OF FASTING RAMADAN

Written by Translated by Riad Nachef

Tuesday, 12 January 2010 10:08 - Last Updated Wednesday, 24 June 2015 03:44

The obligation of fasting the month of *Ramadan* becomes incumbent upon the occurrence of one of two matters: to sight the crescent of R

ama

da

n

after the sunset of the 29th day of

Sha^b

a

n

(the month directly preceding

Rama

da

n

) or, if the crescent is not seen, then completing thirty (30) days of

Sha^b

a

n

. So, the beginning of the month of

Rama

da

n

, as well as the end of the month, is determined by sighting the crescent. If the crescent is not sighted, then the month would be completed by 30 days--as is the case with determining

all

the months of the lunar calendar. This is taken from the

h

ad

i

th

of the Prophet related by

al-Bukh

a

riyy

and

Muslim

:

□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□ □□□□□□ □□ □□□□ □□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□ □□

THE OBLIGATION OF FASTING RAMADAN

Written by Translated by Riad Nachef

Tuesday, 12 January 2010 10:08 - Last Updated Wednesday, 24 June 2015 03:44

th
related by
Ab
u
D
a
w
u
d
from the route of
^Abdull
a
h Ibn ^Umar. ^Abdull
a
h Ibn ^Umar
told the Prophet he had sighted the crescent, so the Prophet fasted the next day and ordered the others to fast as well.

Be warned of those who determine the month of *Ramadan* relying upon astronomical calculations. Prophet *Muhammad* informed us that such calculations are not relied upon in determining such matters.

Im
a
m A
h
mad
related in his
Musnad
that the Prophet said:

□□□□□ □□□□ □□□□□□ □□□□□□□□ □□ □□□□□□ □□ □□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□ □□□□

which means: <<We are a nation which does not depend on writings and calculations [to determine the beginning of the month]. The month is either twenty-nine or thirty days.>> Praise be to *Allah*, how easy the matter is! Any Muslim with sound sight can observe the crescent. He does not need to rely on complex calculations which only a few people understand.

THE OBLIGATION OF FASTING RAMADAN

Written by Translated by Riad Nachef

Tuesday, 12 January 2010 10:08 - Last Updated Wednesday, 24 June 2015 03:44

WHO MUST FAST

AND

WHO IS EXCUSED FROM FASTING

The first condition for one to be obligated to fast is to be Muslim. In this world the non-Muslim is not requested to fast; however, in the Hereafter, he will be punished for neglecting to fast--as he will be punished for his blasphemy. Rather, the obligation on the non-Muslim is to embrace /

sl

a

m,

then among many obligations, is to fast

Rama

da

n

.

Secondly, it is the pubescent Muslim who is obligated to fast. The child is not obligated to fast. However it is an obligation on the parents or the guardian of the child to order him or her to fast once he/she is 7 (lunar) years old, with the condition that the child's body can withstand that fasting, and he would not be harmed by it.

Also, for one to be obligated to fast, he must be of sound mind. Fasting is not obligatory on the insane person.

Fasting is not obligatory on a person whose body cannot tolerate fasting, either due to old age or because of a severe illness. Moreover, if a person would be harmed by fasting, that is, as a

THE OBLIGATION OF FASTING RAMADAN

Written by Translated by Riad Nachef

Tuesday, 12 January 2010 10:08 - Last Updated Wednesday, 24 June 2015 03:44

result of his fasting his sickness would get worse or he would die, then fasting is prohibited for him. The one who does not fast because of old age or an illness he is not hopeful to be cured of, does not have to make up the missed days of fasting. Instead, he pays an expiation to a poor Muslim for every day of fasting he missed. He can pay the expiation for every day to the same person or he can choose different people to pay to. The expiation is two cupped (average-sized) handfuls of the most common staple food of the town. In the United States, for example, the most common staple food is wheat.

Fasting is not obligatory on the menstruating woman or the woman who is in her postpartum bleeding period. In fact, it is unlawful for them to fast. The woman who missed days of fasting during *Ramadan* for these reasons has to make up each missed day.

In addition to the aforementioned, the pregnant woman is allowed not to fast if she fears harm would come to her or her baby from her fasting. This includes the breast-feeding woman as well. She is allowed not to fast if she fears harm would come to her or her baby from her fasting. Both must make up every missed day of fasting. If the reason a woman did not fast was solely the fear of harming her baby, then in addition to making up the missed days of fasting, she must pay an expiation. This expiation is two cupped, average-sized handfuls of the most common staple food of the country, for each day she missed.

The one who is traveling a distance of two or more walking days is allowed not to fast--provided his traveling is not sinful. Two or more walking days distance is about 80 statute miles. This traveler is permitted to break his fast even though he would not encounter hardship during his trip as would be the case if he crossed this distance quickly, by plane, or comfortably, in a car or a train. The matter of traveling is not based on the hardship; rather, it has to do with the distance. This facility for the traveler was mentioned in the *Qur'an*. Allah s

aid in
S
u
rat al-Ba
q
arah
, Verse 185:

{ }

THE OBLIGATION OF FASTING RAMADAN

Written by Translated by Riad Nachef

Tuesday, 12 January 2010 10:08 - Last Updated Wednesday, 24 June 2015 03:44

which means: <<If you are sick or traveling, then you are allowed to break your fast and make up these days later.>>

INTEGRALS OF FASTING

The integrals of fasting are two:

1. Each night to make the intention to fast the following day of *Ramadan*:
2. To abstain from sexual intercourse, masturbation, eating, drinking, and inserting anything with a volume into the head or the body cavity through an open inlet, excluding one's pure, *tahir* saliva while still inside the mouth--during the time from the dawn until the sunset.

Making the intention at night to fast the following day of *Ramadan* means to have the intention in one's heart to fast during the night preceding the fasting day, i.e., after the sunset and before the dawn of the following day. Sometime during that time the person must make the intention to fast the following day, and this must be done each night for the following day of fasting. As related by *at-Tirmidhiyy, an*

-Nas

a

'iyy

, and others, the Prophet said:

□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□ □□□□ □□□□□□ □□□□□□□□ □□

THE OBLIGATION OF FASTING RAMADAN

Written by Translated by Riad Nachef

Tuesday, 12 January 2010 10:08 - Last Updated Wednesday, 24 June 2015 03:44

which means: <<There is no fasting for the one who does not establish the intention for fasting the night before.>>

The intention is in the heart, and does not have to be uttered with the tongue. The one who slept at night without having had the intention to fast and woke up after the dawn missed the time of the intention. Although fasting is not valid for him that day, he is obligated to abstain from whatever a fasting person would abstain from that day, and then fast a make up for that day. If the menstrual or postpartum bleeding of a woman stopped at night, then she must intend to fast the following day. The purificatory bath is not required for her to start fasting, but rather to start praying.

The intention for any obligatory fasting for *Ramadan* must take place the night before the fast. However, for the one who is fasting an optional fast, it is not a condition that he must intend to do so the preceding night. It is valid for him to have the intention to fast that same day--if he made his intention during the morning, before the sun moves from the center of the sky towards the west--as long as he had not committed any of the invalidators of fasting since the dawn appeared.

2. The fasting person must abstain from taking into his body cavity any material that has a tangible volume from an open inlet, whether this material was food or drink or otherwise. One's fast is invalidated if he intentionally takes into his body cavity any material that has a tangible volume during the fasting day, while remembering he is fasting and knowing that it is unlawful to do so, and not because another threatened to kill him (or the like) if he did not break his fast. This person must make up the fast day(s) he invalidated without an excuse. The open inlets of the body are like the mouth, nose, anus, vagina, and others. Materials which are absorbed by the pores of the skin do not invalidate the fast because the pores of the skin are not considered to be an open inlet to the body cavity. For example, rubbing oil into the skin does not invalidate the fast.

One's own pure saliva, while still inside the mouth, if swallowed, does not invalidate the fast. If some saliva was spit outside the mouth, and it separated from the tongue--even to the lips--then was taken back in and swallowed, this would invalidate the fast. In addition, if the saliva is mixed with something else, whether pure or not, then swallowed, this invalidates the fast.

One's fast is not invalidated by what is too hard to protect oneself from swallowing. This

THE OBLIGATION OF FASTING RAMADAN

Written by Translated by Riad Nachef

Tuesday, 12 January 2010 10:08 - Last Updated Wednesday, 24 June 2015 03:44

includes the dust of the street, the dust of the flour, and the like. Although smoking a cigarette breaks the fast of the smoker himself, it does not break the fast of the person next to him who breathes in some of that smoke. It also does not break the fast for one to breathe in what is other than a physical entity, like the odor of incense or other fragrances.

Also among the conditions for the validity of fasting is for one to abstain from sexual intercourse during the day of fasting. If the person did not know one must abstain from sexual intercourse during the fasting day, or he forgot that he was fasting and performed this act, then it does not invalidate his fast. However the man or woman who performs sexual intercourse during the day of fasting while knowing this is unlawful and remembering he/she is fasting, would invalidate his/her fast by that. The expiation due for invalidating one's fasting by sexual intercourse is in the following order:

1. To set a Muslim slave free;
2. If he was unable, then to fast two consecutive lunar months, in addition to making up the day which was invalidated by his sexual intercourse;
3. If unable, then to feed each one of sixty (60) poor Muslims two cupped, average-sized handfuls of the most common staple food of the country.

Masturbation or making the *maniyy* (sexual discharge from the man or the woman) come out of one by using the hand or the like invalidates one's fasting--whether one used one's own hand or the hand of one's wife, because of a kiss, or because of other physical contact. If, however, one experienced a wet dream or *maniyy* exited from one because of certain thoughts, one's fast is not invalidated.

One's fasting is invalidated by forcing oneself to vomit, either by inserting the finger into the mouth or otherwise. In the case when the person forces himself to vomit, whether or not he swallows some of his vomit, his fast is invalidated and he has to make up that invalidated day of fast. However, the one who vomited involuntarily--without purposely forcing oneself to do so--does not break one's fast as long as one does not swallow any of the vomit or saliva mixed with the *najas*-filth.

THE OBLIGATION OF FASTING RAMADAN

Written by Translated by Riad Nachef

Tuesday, 12 January 2010 10:08 - Last Updated Wednesday, 24 June 2015 03:44

There are different sayings regarding the phlegm or congestion that drips from the head into the throat. According to *Imam ash-Shafi'iyy*, if the phlegm reached to the part of the throat above where the exit of the letter *ha'* is, and the person swallowed it, this would invalidate his fasting. However, according to

Im

a

m Ab

u

H

an

i

fah

, even if the phlegm reaches to the tongue and the person swallows it, his fasting is not invalidated--as long as he does not swallow it after it separates from his mouth. .

CONDITIONS FOR

THE VALIDITY OF THE FAST

Among the conditions for the validity of one's fasting is that the person does not become insane, not even for a moment, during the fasting day. If a person loses his sanity during the day or during part of the day, even for a moment, then his fasting will be invalidated. In addition to this, one's fasting is invalid if he loses consciousness during the entire fasting day, that is, from the dawn until sunset. If one loses consciousness for only part of the day, this does not invalidate the fast. On the other hand, sleeping does not invalidate the fast--even if one slept all day long.

THE OBLIGATION OF FASTING RAMADAN

Written by Translated by Riad Nachef

Tuesday, 12 January 2010 10:08 - Last Updated Wednesday, 24 June 2015 03:44

DAYS ON WHICH

FASTING IS UNLAWFUL

It is invalid to fast the day of the Feast of *Fitr* (*^Id-ul-Fitr*), the day of the Feast of *Adha* (*^Id-ul-'*
A *dh*
a)

and the three days after the day of

A
dha
(*Tashr*

iq
).

It is also invalid to fast the last half of

Sha^b
a
n

and the Day of Doubt, except if one joins the fasting of these with those before them or if one is fasting for an expiation (

kaff
a
rah
) , make up (*q*
a
da
,

) , vow (*nadhr*

) , or habitual consistent practice (*wird*

) , like the one who usually fasts Mondays and Thursdays.

THE OBLIGATION OF FASTING RAMADAN

Written by Translated by Riad Nachef

Tuesday, 12 January 2010 10:08 - Last Updated Wednesday, 24 June 2015 03:44

ZAKAH OF FITR

The *Zakah* of *Fitr* is due on every Muslim who is alive part of *Ramadan* and part of *Shawwal* (the month after

Rama

da

n

.) The due

Z

ak

a

h

for each is a

“

sa

^”

or four times the fill of two cupped, average-sized handfuls of the most common staple food of that country. It is an obligation upon the Muslim to pay the due

Z

ak

a

h

for himself and his Muslim dependents if on the day of the Feast of

Fi

t

r

(^

l

d-ul-Fi

t

r)

and the night after it he has enough to meet his debts, clothing, lodging, and sustenance, and the sustenance of those whom he must support.

The man must pay for his wife, his non-pubescent children, his slaves, and his poor Muslim parents. He may not pay for his pubescent children or solvent parents without their permission.

THE OBLIGATION OF FASTING RAMADAN

Written by Translated by Riad Nachef

Tuesday, 12 January 2010 10:08 - Last Updated Wednesday, 24 June 2015 03:44

It is permissible to pay the *Zakah* of *Fitr* any time during *Ramadan*, even the first night. However, it is recommended to pay the

Z
ak
a
h
during the day of the Feast, and before the prayer of the

^
l
d
, because this mends the hearts of the poor people before the prayer. It is prohibited to delay paying the

Z
ak
a
h
of
Fi
t
r
until after the sunset of the day of the Feast without an excuse.

RECIPIENTS OF ZAKAH

For all types of *Zakah*, the intention is obligatory upon setting one's *Zakah* aside. *Zakah* must be paid to the Muslims among the eight categories of people deserving of

Z
ak
a
h
as
mentioned explicitly in the
Q
ur'

THE OBLIGATION OF FASTING RAMADAN

Written by Translated by Riad Nachef

Tuesday, 12 January 2010 10:08 - Last Updated Wednesday, 24 June 2015 03:44

a
n
:

1. Those who are poor who earn less than half their basic needs (*al-fuqara*);
2. Those who are poor who earn half but less than all their basic needs (*al-masakin*);
3. The *Zakah* workers who are assigned by the caliph (*al-amilun alayha*);
4. The new converts to *Islam* whose hearts are to be reconciled (*al-mu'allafatu qulubuhum*);
5. The slaves who are short in satisfying their contract for purchasing their freedom from their owners (*al-riqab*);
6. Those who are unable to pay their debts (*al-gharimun*);
7. The volunteer fighters (*fi sabilillah*);
8. The travelers who do not have enough to enable them to reach their destination (*ibn-us-sab* *il*).

It is neither permissible nor valid to pay *Zakah* to other than those eight types of people specifically mentioned. That is why it is not valid to pay

Z
ak
a

THE OBLIGATION OF FASTING RAMADAN

Written by Translated by Riad Nachef

Tuesday, 12 January 2010 10:08 - Last Updated Wednesday, 24 June 2015 03:44

h
for every charitable project.

DEEDS RECOMMENDED WHILE FASTING

It is recommended (*sunnah*) to break one’s fast as soon as one is sure the *maghrib* has begun. It is good to break one’s fast on dates, and if not available, then by drinking water. It is good to say the following statement upon breaking one’s fast:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي صُومْتُ لَكَ وَأَنْصُرُكَ بِرِزْقِكَ فَارْحَمْنِي بِرَحْمَتِكَ

which means: <<O Allah, for Your sake I fasted, and with Your sustenance I broke my fast.>>
It was narrated from *Abu Dawud* that the Prophet used to say this supplication upon breaking his fast. It is also good to delay the

su
hu
r

meal until a time close to the dawn--but to stop eating before the dawn.

Refraining from backbiting, cursing a Muslim, and other sins, is more emphasized while fasting. In committing some sins, the reward of one’s fasting might be lessened or lost. If someone curses another, let the one cursed abstain from responding with a similar curse. Instead, let him say, “I am fasting. I am fasting.”

Paying the optional charity to the poor; reciting the *Qur’an*; staying in the mosque with the intention of *i^tikaf*, especially during

THE OBLIGATION OF FASTING RAMADAN

Written by Translated by Riad Nachef

Tuesday, 12 January 2010 10:08 - Last Updated Wednesday, 24 June 2015 03:44

the last ten days of

Rama

da

n

; praying the

Tar

a

w

ih

prayer; and inviting others to break their fast on food which you provided are all rewardable acts.

The month of *Ramadan* is a great opportunity for the person to gain a great deal of reward. Reward is earned because of performing this obligation in worship and obedience to

All

a

h

, and by performing a lot of the recommended (

sunnah

) deeds. Let the person not waste his time during this blessed month.