

Fasting

Ordinances, Wisdoms & Merits

Researched and Compiled

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا مِنْ يَهْدِهِ
اللَّهُ فَلَا مِضْلَ لَهُ، وَمَنْ يُضِلِّمْ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ. وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ. وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ
مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ، صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

All Praise is due to Allaah. We praise Him, and seek His help and forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allaah, Most High, from the evils of our own selves and from our wicked deeds. Whomever Allaah guides cannot be misguided, and whomever He leads astray cannot be guided. I testify that there is no true God worthy of being worshipped except Allaah, alone, without partner or associate. I further testify that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger (ﷺ).¹ May Allaah's *salaah* and *salaam* also be granted to the Prophet's pure family and to all of his noble companions.

[يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ] [آل عمران، ١٠٢].

O you who believe! Fear Allaah [by doing all that He ordered and abstaining from all that He forbade] as He should be feared [obey Him, be thankful to Him, and remember Him always] and die not except in a state of Islam. [Qur'aan, 3:102].

[يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا] [النساء، ١].

O mankind! Be dutiful to your *Rabb*² [Allaah], Who created you from a single person [Adam] and from him [Adam] He created his wife [Eve],

¹ ﷺ (Sallallaahu 'alayhi wasallam): The *salaah* and *salaam* of Allaah be upon His Prophet Muhammad. The *salaah* of Allaah upon Prophet Muhammad is His Praise of the Prophet before the angels who are close to (but below) Allaah, the Most High, who *istawaa* (ascended) upon His 'Arsh (Throne), which is above the seven heavens, in a manner that suits His Majesty. The angels also praise the Prophet (ﷺ). The *salaam* is Allaah's safeguarding of the Prophet (ﷺ) from deficiencies and any kind of evil, and the protection of the Message with which he was entrusted. When the Muslim says ﷺ (sallallaahu 'alayhi wasallam), he invokes Allaah to grant His Praise and Security to Prophet Muhammad and the protection of the Message of Islam which was revealed to him (ﷺ). [See Ibnul Qayyim's *Jalaa'ul Afhaam fee Fadlis-Salaati-wa-Salaam 'alaa Muhammadin Khairil Anaam*, [Damascus, Syria: Daar Ibn Katheer, and Daar at-Turaath, Al-Madeenah, Saudi Arabia 1408/1988, p.128].

² **Rabb:** Allaah is *Ar-Rabb*. He is the One Who gave all things the power to grow, to move and to change, to Whom belongs the Creation and Commandment; the Master Who has no equal in His Sovereignty, Predominance, and Highness, The One Who Provides for and Sustains all that exists.

and from them both He created many men and women. And fear Allaah through Whom you demand your mutual [rights] and [do not cut the relations of] the wombs [kinship]. Surely, Allaah is ever an All-Watcher over you. [Qur'aan, 4:1].

[يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ﴿٧٠﴾ يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا] [الأحزاب، ٧٠-٧١].

O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allaah and fear Him, and speak [always] the truth. He will direct you to do righteous good deeds and will forgive you your sins. And whosoever obeys Allaah and His Messenger has indeed achieved a great success. [Qur'aan, 33:70-71].

أما بعد/

فإنَّ أَصْدَقَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى، وَخَيْرَ الْهَدْيِ هَدْيُ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلَّمَ، وَشَرَّ الْأُمُورِ مُحَدَّثَاتُهَا، وَكُلُّ مُحَدَّثَةٍ بَدْعَةٌ وَكُلُّ بَدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ، وَكُلُّ ضَلَالَةٍ فِي النَّارِ.

To proceed:

The most truthful speech is that of Allaah's Book [the Qur'aan] and that the best of guidance is that of Muhammad (ﷺ). The worst of evils are the *muhdathaat* (newly invented matters [in the *deen*]³), and every innovated matter (in the *deen*) is a *bid'ah*; every *bid'ah* is a *dalaalah* (misguidance), and every *dalaalah* is in the Fire of Hell.

³ *Deen*: The practical and doctrinal aspects of *deen* are more comprehensive than the Western concept of religion. The *deen* of Islam is the way of life prescribed by Allaah.

Chapter One: The Blessed Month of Ramadhan⁴

Islam is the deen of nourishment of faculties and every worship in Islam has a wisdom (and/or wisdoms), some of it may be apparent by texts and/or by the intellect.

On the other hand, some of these wisdoms may not be clear to some but may be clear to others from the people of knowledge, and this is why we are commanded to ask the people of knowledge in case we do not know.

The collective wisdoms in worship are all directed to the purification of the soul from its defects. Every worship in Islam, done in the legal way, has its influence on the self, the degree of which however differs in accordance with the degree of attachment of the worshiper to Islam.

And when worship does not influence man's soul and actions then such worship is like a body without a soul

Certainly fasting is one of the acts of worship in Islam and the month of Ramadhan is the master of months. It is a school for the believers, nourishing the heart as well as the tongue and the limbs.

Fasting this month in accordance with the way prescribed has many fruits to it. This includes:

- 1-firmness on the truth
- 2-increase in faith
- 3-strength in certainty
- 4-establishment of good manners
- 5-the manifestation of the actions of the heart from fear, hope, love and longing

The blessings of this month are diverse and reflect on the creed of the Muslim and his manners, and it is a means of protection from deviation.

In it, the Muslim tries to fulfill the rights of Allaah upon him as well as the rights of mankind in order to perfect his true slavery to His Creator, Allaah.

⁴ The name Ramadhan was given because it coincided with a time of the year when the sun vehemently heated the ground and the stones (this is known as *ar ramdaa'*).

Meaning of Fasting

Linguistically fasting means *al imsak*, abstaining. Allaah, the Most High, says:

فِيمَا تَرَيْنَ مِنَ الْبَشَرِ أَحَدًا فَقُولِي إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَنِ صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أُكَلِّمَ الْيَوْمَ إِنْسِيًّا ﴿١٩﴾

"...Verily! I have vowed a fast unto the Most Beneficent (Allaah) so I shall not speak to any human being this day." [Qur'aan, 19:26]

The meaning of the fast here is that she (Mariam عليها السلام) will abstain from speaking to any human being, as explained in the verse itself.

The legal meaning of fasting is worshiping Allaah by complying to his command to abstain from anything that constitutes a breach of fasting (such as food, drink, legal sexual intercourse, etc.) from daybreak until sunset

Rulings on Fasting the Month of Ramadhan

Fasting of Ramadhan is obligatory as established by textual proofs from the Qur'aan and the Sunnah, as well as by way of the general consensus of the Muslims.

Proofs from the Qur'aan:
Verses 2:183-185

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨٣﴾ أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ فَمَن كَانَ مِنكُم مَّرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ فَمَن تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَهُ وَأَن تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٨٤﴾ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْءَانُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَى وَالْفُرْقَانِ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَيْتُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿١٨٥﴾

2:183 O you who believe! Observing *As-Sawm* [fasting] is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become Al-Muttaqun (the pious).

2:184 [Observing *Sawm*] 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. And as for those who can fast with difficulty, (e.g. an old man, etc.), they have (a choice either to fast or) to feed a Miskeen (for every day). But whoever does good of his own accord, it is better for him. And that you fast, it is better for you if only you know.

2:185 The month of Ramadhan in which was revealed the Qur'aan, a guidance for mankind and clear proofs for the guidance and the criterion (between right and wrong). So whoever of you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the month (of Ramadhan i.e. is present at his home), he must observe *Sawm* that month, and whoever is ill or on a journey, the same number [of days which one did not observe *Sawm* must be made up] from other days. Allaah intends for you ease, and He does not want to make things difficult for you. (He wants that you) must complete the same number (of days), and that you must magnify Allaah [i.e. to say Takbeer on seeing the crescent of the months of Ramadhan and Shawwal] for having guided you so that you may be grateful to Him.

Proofs from the Sunnah:

The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Islam is founded upon five (pillars): The testimony that there is no true god worthy of worshiped except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah, the establishment of salah (prayers), the payment of Zakat (obligated charity), the fast of Ramadhan, and the Pilgrimage to the House of Allaah." [Bukhari and Muslim]

"If you see it (the crescent of the new moon of Ramadhan) then fast." [Bukhari and Muslim].

Proofs from the general consensus of the Muslims:

There is decisive consensus amongst the Muslims that fasting of the month of Ramadhan is an obligatory worship the knowledge of which is inevitably known to be of Islam.

Anyone who denies its obligation becomes a *kaafir* (disbeliever) unless he lives in a remote place whereby he does not know anything about the rulings of Islam, then he is to be taught and if then insists, after the proof is established upon him, then he commits *kufir* (disbelief). Anyone who

abandons the fasting due to laziness while he testifies to its obligation then he is in a grave danger since some scholars consider him as an apostate *kaafir*.

However the preponderating opinion is that he is not an apostate kafir but he is a rebellious *fasiq* (sinner) and he is indeed in a grave danger.

When Was Ramadhan Ordained?

The command concerning the fasting of the month of Ramadhan was in the second year after *hijrah* [the migration of the Prophet (ﷺ) from Makkah to Madinah]. So the Prophet (ﷺ) fasted nine years.

Its ordainment was in two stages:

1st Giving a choice between fasting and feeding the poor, while giving preference for fasting over feeding

2nd Decreeing fasting and abrogating the choice. Verse 2:184 was abrogated by verse **2:185** [See above]:

"So whoever of you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the month (of Ramadhan i.e. is present at his home), he must observe *Sawm* that month."

Chapter Two: Wisdoms Behind the Fasting

Allaah ﷻ says:

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

"O you who believe! Observing As-Sawm is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become *Al-Muttaqun* (the pious)." [Qur'aan, 2: 183].

The main wisdom, therefore, is to achieve *taqwa*.

Taqwa means to abandon what is unlawful. In the general sense *taqwa* encompasses the execution of what is commanded and the abandonment of what is prohibited. Therefore this asserts that, upon fasting, the believer should comply with the ordinances of Allaah ﷻ: abandoning the unlawful of sayings and actions (no backbiting, no lying, no spreading of mischief, no selling of the unlawful), avoiding all prohibited matters.

And if the person does this for a period of one month then his self will become upright and will train on uprightness for the rest of the year.

Unfortunately however, many of those who fast do not differentiate between their days of fasting and their regular days of non fasting. They take it as a habit and they don't feel the influence of fasting

Also there are those who fast the entire month with little benefit such that, by the time the month is over, you see them returning to their "normal state" prior to Ramadhan.

Allaah ﷻ says:

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْءَانُ " الآية

The month of Ramadhan in which was revealed the Qur'aan ..." [Qur'aan, 2: 185].

And this is far greater in its magnitude than the sending of rain, because the *ummah* (the Muslim nation at large) cannot be upright and established on the deen except with this type of worship in this specific month.

In this month there is a testing of the truth of intention and of compliance. Will the person comply, or will he continue to follow that which agrees with the temptations of his own self and desires? Or will he transcend that and comply with what pleases Allaah ﷻ?

If one examines the five obligatory types of worship, then he will find that some are purely physical and some are purely financial, distinguishing the miser from the generous.

For some people, praying one thousand *rakat* (units in prayers) is easier than spending a little money in charity. On the other hand, for others, it is easier to spend thousands than praying one single *raka*. That is why the *shari'ah* (revealed legislations) came in such diversity in order to distinguish those who will comply to the worship of Allaah from those who will be enslaved to their own desires.

Salah (prayers) is purely physical, saying and actions, there is no spending of wealth in it.

The hajj is purely physical and this includes all that is related to it from expenses, for example: cost of traveling, etc.

Jihad is a form of worship by striving through the physical as well as striving in wealth. It may be done physically independent of wealth and it may be done with wealth alone.

Zakah, on the other hand, is purely spending of wealth.

Wealth is beloved to man, and his attachment to it is part of his nature. Allaah ﷻ says:

إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِرَبِّهِ لَكَنُودٌ ﴿٦﴾ وَإِنَّهُ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ لَشَهِيدٌ ﴿٧﴾ وَإِنَّهُ لِحُبِّ الْخَيْرِ لَشَدِيدٌ ﴿٨﴾

**Verily! Man (disbeliever) is ungrateful to his Lord;
And to that fact he bears witness (by his deeds);
And verily, he is violent in the love of wealth.** [Qur'an, 100: 6-8]

Man covets wealth intensely and the giving of what is beloved is a means to attain that which is more beloved, the pleasure of Allaah ﷻ and His Paradise.

Since Zakat is the giving of what is intensely beloved to man, Allaah lightens its conditions by:

1. having the obligatory charity only once a year
2. it is limits to certain types of wealth

3. a specified amount is to be given depending upon the type of wealth.

In fasting there is testing and this is the refraining from seeking that which is intensely beloved.

The believer restrains from the desire for food and drinks, the desire for legal sexual intercourse. Fasting occurs during working hours and this is hard on the self. So these are times of testing to the believer, he abandons his lust for the sake of Allaah (ﷻ). Even to the extent that if he is to be beaten so as to eat one single date or to drink a glass of water, he would not do it. That is why the learned scholars of Islam said: **fasting is a secret between the slave and his Rabb.**

Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

"Allaah said: 'All the deeds of Adam's children are for them, except fasting which is for Me, and I will give the reward for it. Fasting is a shield or protection from hell and from committing sins. If one of you is fasting, he should avoid sexual relations with his wife and should avoid quarrelling, and if somebody should fight or quarrel with him, he should say, 'I am fasting.' By Him in Whose Hands my soul is, the smell coming out from the mouth of a fasting person is better in the sight of Allaah than the smell of musk.'" [Bukhari & Muslim].

"Whoever does not give up forged speech and evil actions, Allaah is not in need of his leaving his food and drink (i.e. Allaah will not accept his fasting)." [Bukhari].

So there is a clear wisdom: achieving piety and righteousness through such testing.

The more you comprehend the *shari'ah*, you will find it is most perfect in wisdom and it is in total agreement with that which is beneficial to man.

To be continued ...in shaa' Allaah