



- SECLUSION IN THE HOUSE OF ALLAH
- THE NIGHT OF POWER
- EID UL FITR

“THE NIGHT OF POWER IS BETTER THAN ONE THOUSAND MONTHS”
(Sura Qadr)

ITIKAAF
(SECLUSION IN THE MASJID)

Ramadhan is a time of worship to Allah and gaining closeness to Him. Among the many ways leading to His closeness is the act of I'tikaaf. I'tikaaf is to seclude oneself in the Masjid with the intention of worshipping of Allah.

I'tikaaf can include such seclusion for which the period is fixed as well as when it is not fixed. Based upon this the scholars have considered three types of I'tikaaf; Wajib, Sunnah and Nafil.

Wajib I'tikaaf refers to that essential seclusion in the Masjid which comes into effect through a vow/promise/oath, or as the Qadaa of a Sunnah I'tikaaf which became null. The least period for this type of I'tikaaf is one day and its night, and must be accompanied by fasting of the day with expressed intention.

The Sunnah I'tikaaf refers to that seclusion in the Masjid during the last ten days of Ramadaan which must also be observed along with fasting of the days. It begins before the sunset of the 20th day of Ramadaan, (i.e. before the 21st night), and ends when the moon of Shawwaal is sighted.

Nafil I'tikaaf refers to optional seclusion in the Masjid for any amount of time. The period is not fixed and fasting is not a condition for its observance.

So long as a person remains in the Masjid with the intention of seclusion as a form of worship to Allah, it will constitute I'tikaaf.

I'tikaaf is indeed a great and significant form of worship to Allah for which He bestows an abundance of rewards and benefits. It was also an established practice of the Holy Prophet (SA) which he used to perform frequently, especially in the Holy month of Ramadaan. Sometimes, he would even remain in I'tikaaf for the entire month of Ramadaan in order to achieve rewards of Lailatul Qadr and closeness to Allah. This has been mentioned in an authentic Hadith narrated

by Abu Saeed Khudri who said that “Rasulullah (SA) once performed I'tikaaf in a tent (inside the Masjid) for the first ten days of Ramadaan and then extended it to the middle ten days. Thereafter, he put his head out of the tent and said: ‘Verily in search of Lailatul Qadr did I perform I'tikaaf for the first ten days and extended it to the next ten days for the same purpose; then I was told that this night is in the last ten days, so those with me should also continue the I'tikaaf.’” (Bukhaari and Muslim)

Every year after the Hijrah (migration) to Madinah until his departure from this world, the Prophet (SAW) remained in I'tikaaf for the last ten days of Ramadaan. In fact, in the last year of his blessed life, he remained in I'tikaaf for the last twenty days of Ramadaan.

Aishah (RA), the blessed wife of the Prophet (SA) relates that, “Rasulullah (SA) used to perform I'tikaaf regularly during the last ten days of Ramadaan until he passed away. Then his wives observed this practice after him.” (Bukhaari and Muslim)

It has also been reported by Abu Hurairah (RA) that, “Rasulullah (SA) performed I'tikaaf for ten days every year in the month of Ramadaan. In the year he passed away, he observed it for twenty days.” (Bukhaari)

Therefore, in conformity with the continuous practice of the Prophet (SA) and those after him, the Jurists of Islam have considered I'tikaaf performed in the last ten days of Ramadaan as ‘Sunnah Muakkadah ‘alal Kifaayah’, (i.e. an emphasized Sunnah upon a sufficing basis). Therefore, if at least one sane, adult Muslim, male or female, observes it in a locality, then all the other Muslims would be saved from the sin of neglecting this emphasized Sunnah. If however, no one from the locality performs it, then all would be guilty of neglecting the emphasized Sunnah of I'tikaaf.

The author of Hidayah (an authoritative text on Fiqh) writes, ‘It is correct to say that it is Sunnah Muakkadah because Rasulullah (SA) regularly performed I'tikaaf in the last ten days of

Ramadaan, and doing something with regularity is a proof of it being Sunnah.’” (Hedaya Vol. 1 Pg. 229)

The Sunnah I'tikaaf would not be fulfilled for a period less than ten days and must be accompanied with fasting. Therefore, if one remained in I'tikaaf only a few days of the last ten days and did not remain for the other days, the Sunnah will not be achieved. Likewise, if one did not fast in these days whether out of negligence or because of valid excuses like sickness or journey, the Sunnah I'tikaaf will also not be achieved and in both cases it will be regarded as Nafil I'tikaaf.

REWARDS AND VIRTUES

There are many traditions which mention the excellent virtues and benefits of observing I'tikaaf. In one Hadith, Ibn Abbas (RA) said, “The person performing I'tikaaf remains free from sins, and he is indeed given the same reward as for those who do righteous deeds.” (Ibn Majah)

By remaining in the Masjid, the right atmosphere is created for doing good actions, and at the same time, it serves as a protective shield for the person against the evils and sinful temptations that lurk outside.

The person observing I'tikaaf has been prevented, by the Shariah, from performing other good actions out of the Masjid, like Janaazah, visiting the sick, etc. The Hadith gives the good tidings to those in I'tikaaf, of the rewards of these actions in spite of not doing them. This is because the person in I'tikaaf remains in the house of Allah as His guest to engage in His worship, and to seek His pleasure only. As such, he does not leave the Masjid for his own needs or desires. Thus Allah, Who is the Giver of rewards to those who engage in actions outside the Masjid becomes pleased with those inside the Masjid in I'tikaaf and may give them the same rewards, out of His great bounty and mercy.

In another narration, it has been reported by Hazrat Ibn Abbaas (RA) that the Prophet (SA) said, “Whosoever

performs I'tikaaf for a day (thereby seeking Allah's pleasure), Allah will place three trenches between him and the fire of Hell, the width of each trench being greater than the distance between the Heaven and the Earth." (Tabrani, Baihaqi, Hakim)

Aisha (RA) narrates that Rasulullah (SA) said, "If a Muslim performs I'tikaaf with the hope of gaining reward, then all his previous sins are forgiven." (Dailami)

In another Hadith reported by Husain (RA), the Prophet (SA) said, "Whoever performs I'tikaaf for the final ten days of Ramadaan, for him is the reward of two Hajj and two Umrahs; and whoever performs I'tikaaf from Maghrib until Isha, doing nothing except performing Salaah and reciting the Holy Quraan, Allah will prepare a place for him in Jannah." (Baihaqi and Tabrani)

Along with these virtues, I'tikaaf also creates a bond between a servant and Allah. Which brings him closer to Allah. Regarding this, the great scholar Hafiz Ibn Qayyim has stated: **"The basic purpose of I'tikaaf is that the heart gets attached to Allah, and with it, one attains inner composure and self-control; pre-occupation with the mundane things of life ceases; absorption in the eternal reality takes its place. The state is reached whereby all fears, hopes and apprehensions are superseded by the love and remembrance of Allah; every anxiety is transformed into the anxiety for Him; every thought and feeling is blended with the eagerness to gain His nearness and to earn His good favour; devotion to the Almighty is generated instead of devotion to the world, and it becomes a provision for the grave where there will be neither a friend nor a helper. This is the high aim and purpose of I'tikaaf which is the speciality of the most sublime part of Ramadaan, i.e. the last ten days."**

The similarity of the person in I'tikaaf is like a beggar who has knocked at the door of someone very generous and is determined not to leave and not to stop knocking until he receives what he desires. The author of Maraqiul Falah has mentioned, 'what actually takes place in I'tikaaf, is that the heart is drawn away from everything else except the Creator, while his soul is actually laid at His doorstep.'

Allah, Who is Most Merciful and Relenting, will surely fulfill the needs of His servants, answer their calls, and quench their thirst for forgiveness, rewards and mercy while they are in this state of devotion and worship during I'tikaaf.

While in I'tikaaf, one receives the additional benefits and virtues of: Lailatul Qadr (better than one thousand months in rewards); congregational Salaah (25 to 27 times more reward); performance of Salaah in the first row (great rewards so much so that people would fight for it if it is known); waiting for Salaah before its time and from one Salaah to the other (angels supplicate for mercy and forgiveness for him); a person's heart becomes attached to the Masjid (one of those who will be shaded on the Day of Judgement from the burning sun); and it becomes easy to perform other Sunnah and Nafl acts of I'baadah like Tahajjud, Ishraaq, recitation of Quraan, Dhikr, etc., for which there are special rewards.

PLACE OF I'TIKAAF

I'tikaaf of males must be performed in the Masjid. The most preferred place for I'tikaaf is Al Masjidul Haram in Makka, then Masjid an Nabawi in Madinah, then Masjidul Aqsaa in Jerusalem, then the Jami' Masjid (main congregational Masjid) in one's town, then the Masjid with the most amount of worshipers where the five daily Salaah are performed in congregation. If the five congregational Salaah are observed only during the days of I'tikaaf, then I'tikaaf will be allowed in it. To do I'tikaaf in Masaajid in which the five congregational Salaah are not performed even during the days of I'tikaaf is not preferred.

It should be noted that the Masjid refers to the area of the building which was fixed as Masjid by the persons or organization who erected the Masjid and demarcated its boundaries. Any extended hall, annexed building, etc. even under the same roof of the fixed Masjid area will not be considered as Masjid. If one who is performing I'tikaaf goes to that area knowingly or unknowingly, without a valid Shariah excuse, the I'tikaaf is rendered null. It is therefore important for those intending the performance of I'tikaaf to enquire and know the boundaries of the Masjid where he is performing his I'tikaaf.

I'tikaaf of women will be performed in the prayer room/area of their home. If such a place is not fixed, then she should demarcate an area fixed for the purpose. It is Makruuh (disliked) for women to observe I'tikaaf in the Masjid.

LAWS PERTAINING TO LEAVING THE MASJID

A person performing I'tikaaf must spend all his time in the Masjid and should not go outside, except to fulfill those religious and natural necessities which cannot be fulfilled within the Masjid.

The valid reasons for leaving the Masjid which will not nullify the I'tikaaf are as follows:

- **To answer the call of nature.**

One should go to the nearest facility which can fulfill his need. If the toilet is occupied then it is permissible to wait until it is vacant. However, one should not delay unnecessarily after using it. It is also permissible if incidentally, on the way, there was Janaazah Salaah being performed and one joined its performance.

- **To take an obligatory bath.**

When the need arises, it is permissible for one to exit the masjid to take a compulsory bath. It is also permissible for one to take a Sunnah bath for the Jum'ah salat.

- **To make Wudhu.**

It is permissible to exit the masjid in order to perform wudhu when one is without it, and needs to fulfill acts of worship which need wudhu. If facilities are provided inside the Masjid for Wudhu, then one is not allowed to leave for that reason, but should ensure that droplets do not fall onto the Masjid floor while making Wudhu.

- **To call the Adhaan.**

It is permissible for the Muadh-dhin, as well as for another person desirous of calling the Adhaan, to leave the Masjid to call the Adhaan, but they must return immediately.

- **For organizing meals.**

If no one is available to organize food and drink for the person in I'tikaaf, he is allowed to leave, organize quickly his meals, and thereafter return in the Masjid to eat and drink therein. If someone is available then it is not permissible for him to leave. It should be noted that to assist someone in I'tikaaf brings great rewards.

- **Proceeding to another Masjid.**

If Jum'ah is not performed in the Masjid where I'tikaaf is being performed then one in I'tikaaf is allowed to leave for another Masjid in which it is being observed. He must leave his Masjid at such a time that would allow him to reach and perform his Sunnah Salaah at the next Masjid just before the commencement of the Khutbah.

BREAKERS OF I'TIKAAF

Only Wajib and Sunnah I'tikaaf are rendered invalid. Nafil I'tikaaf is not considered null by any act.

- To leave the Masjid without a valid Shariah reason for even a moment, whether intentionally, unintentionally, by mistake or under compulsion will render the I'tikaaf null.

- If the fast is broken during the day of I'tikaaf, whether for a valid or an invalid reason, the I'tikaaf will become null. If one forgot that he was fasting and ate or drank something then neither the fast nor the I'tikaaf will be broken, provided that he did not continue eating or drinking when he remembered.

- Having intimate relationship with a woman/wife with or without emission, as well as kissing, fondling and other such acts which leads to emission will nullify the I'tikaaf.

PERMISSIBLE FACTORS TO BREAK THE I'TIKAAF

The following are factors/reasons which may occur which makes it permissible to break the I'tikaaf. However, the Qadha of it must be performed.

- To seek medical treatment if a disease emerges which cannot be cured except by leaving the Masjid.

- To save a person from grave harm, distress and danger.

- To take care of one's parents, wife or children, if they are afflicted with a sickness, and have no one to tend to them.

- If one is compelled by force to leave the masjid.

- If a Janaazah arrives and there is no one else to perform it.

MAKRUUH (DISLIKED) ACTS WHILE OBSERVING I'TIKAAF

- To maintain total silence

- To indulge in waste and idle talks

- To engage in excessive sleeping so as to waste the time.

- To unnecessarily pass wind in the Masjid
- To read books or magazines which are not Islamic in nature

- To set up the partition for those in I'tikaaf in such a way that it inconveniences others

- To engage in worldly activities unnecessarily.

LAILATUL QADR THE NIGHT OF POWER

From among the special nights of the month of Ramadhan, there is one which is known as Laylatul Qadr (The Night of Power). A person who engages in worship on this particular night will be given a reward better than one who has performed worship for one thousand months.

Allah has named a Surah after this night in the Holy Quraan, and in it He mentions the great virtue of this night He says: "The Night of Power is better than one thousand months." (Surah 97.V 3)

Allah has been very kind to the Ummah of Muhammad (SA) where, due to the virtue and blessings of this night, we are able to compete with the previous nations in doing good deeds even though our life span may be shorter.

Regarding this night, Ibn Abi Hatim has reported from Mujahid that the Messenger of Allah (SA) was told about a person from the Bani Israeel who used to worship Allah throughout the night, and fought in the path of Allah during the day for one thousand months.

Upon hearing this, the Sahabas, (RA) though amazed at the actions of such a devout servant became despondent, as it would have been impossible for them to attain such rewards. Allah then revealed Surah Qadr as a mercy and consolation to the believers that whosoever stands on the Night of Power in the worship of Allah, will be given a reward better than one who worships Allah for one thousand months.

Another great significance of the Night of Power as mentioned in Surah Qadr is that the Holy Quraan was sent down from the Preserved Tablet to the lowest Heaven, and then revealed to the Prophet (SA) in that very month. On this night, Angel Jibraeel along with other angels descend, making Dua of mercy for those believers whom they find busy in the worship of Allah.

Lastly, Allah mentions in this Surah that on the Night of Power, one will be able to experience a sort of peace and tranquility until the break of dawn, a night of complete goodness having no evil in it.

Abu Hurairah (RA) reports that the Messenger of Allah (SA) said, "Whosoever stands in worship on the Night of Power with sincere faith and hope of gaining reward, all his previous (minor) sins will be forgiven." (Bukhaari and Muslim)

The commentators mention about this Hadith that the Messenger of Allah (SA) exhorts the believers not only to stand

in Salaah, but also to perform all other types of worship.

Therefore, one who performs worship on this night solely to gain the pleasure of Allah and not for any worldly gain and benefit with the belief and hope that Allah will reward him for his good deeds, will Inshallah have his previous (minor) sins forgiven.

It should also be noted that this night does not have any specific form of worship nor does it have a fixed amount. We should therefore exert ourselves on this night in Nafil Salaah, recitation of the Holy Quraan, doing the Zikr of Allah, making Dua etc. to the best of our abilities.

As for the actual date of the Night of Power, it lies only in the knowledge of Allah Ta'aala. The Messenger of Allah (SA) himself searched for this night as it is mentioned in a tradition, "The Messenger of Allah (SA) secluded himself for the first ten nights of Ramadhan. Then he secluded himself for the middle ten nights. Then he raised his head and said, "Verily I secluded myself in the first ten nights of Ramadhan seeking this night. Then I secluded myself in the middle ten nights. Then I was approached and told that it is in the last ten nights." (Bukhaari)

He (SA) has also stated in another tradition: "Search for the blessed night in the odd nights from the last ten nights of Ramadhan. (Bukhaari)

The scholars are of different opinions as to which night is actually the Night of Power because of the various traditions that have reached them from the Messenger of Allah (SA) and his Companions (RA). However, it is necessary for us to search for the Night of Power in the odd nights from the last ten nights of Ramadhan, as indicated to us from the above mentioned traditions.

One should therefore not think that the Night of Power must be on a particular night, but one must search for it, as this is what the Messenger of Allah (SA) has taught us to do.

While we do not know which night is the Night of Power, there are some signs given to us by the Messenger of Allah (SA) in a narration of Ubaadah bin Saamit (R.A) reported by Imam Baihaqi, which can give us an indication to it.

They are as follows:

1. The night will be very quiet and serene.
2. The moon will be bright and radiant.
3. The temperature of the night will be neither too hot nor too cold.
4. No shooting stars will be flung at the Satans until the break of dawn.
5. The sun will rise in that morning without any radiant beams of light.

In an authentic tradition, Aisha (RA) said, "O Messenger of Allah, inform me what I should say if I recognize the Night of Power. He said, "Say : **Al-laa hum-ma in-naka 'afuw-wun kariimun tu hib-bul 'afwa fa'fu an-ni.**" (O Allah! You are forgiving. You love to forgive, so forgive me.) (Imam Ahmad, Ibn Majah and Tirmizi)

We as believers, in trying to find the Night of Power should also say this Dua in abundance acting upon the advice of the Messenger of Allah (SA) hoping to gain the forgiveness of Allah.

Finally, the Messenger of Allah (SA) said in a tradition, "The One who has deprived himself of this night, has deprived himself of everything good. And none is deprived of its good except he who is completely unfortunate." (Ibn Majah)

EID UL FITR

Eid ul Fitr (Festival of the Breaking of the Fast) is the first day of the 10th lunar month, Shawwaal. It marks the end of the holy month of Ramadhan.

Eid ul Fitr is one of the two days of festivity in Islam. The other being Eid ul Adhaa. This has been established from an authentic Hadith narrated by Anas (RA) that upon arriving in Madinah, the Prophet (SA) found its people celebrating two days, which were upheld from the Days of Jaahiliya (Ignorance). The Prophet (SA) said: "When I came upon you, you had two days that you continued to celebrate from Jaahiliya. Indeed, Allah has substituted them for you with what is better, the Day of Sacrifice and the Day of Fitr." [Ahmad, Abu Daud]

In another Hadith, the Prophet (SA) said referring to Eid ul Fitr: "Certainly for every community there is a day of Eid and this is our Eid". [Bukhari, Muslim]

The word 'Eid' literally means 'recurrence'. Thus, 'Eid' is an occasion which returns and recurs at specified times with renewed happiness and joy. Muslims will return to the gathering of Eid with renewed zeal and enthusiasm, and Allah returns to His servants with renewed bounties and rewards.

Even the nights which precede the days of Eid, have also been marked as a time of great virtue, and the scholars have considered it Mustahab (desirable) to do Ibaa-dah on these nights. Rasulullah (SA) said:

"The heart of the person who remains awake (in Ibaadah)- during the nights of Eid ul Fitr and Eid ul Adhaa, will not die on the Day when hearts will be dead, i. e. the Day of Qiyaamah " [Tibrani]

The Day of Eid follows its night with the blessings, forgiveness and mercy of Allah to His servants who fasted during the day and who stood up at night in prayer. Allah rewards them immensely for having fulfilled their duties to him by adhering to restraint and guarding against evil; who endeavored in acts of piety and righteousness; who became engrossed in dua, dhikr and recitation of Quraan; who displayed kindness, love and compassion for others, and who spent the month of Ramadaan seeking His pleasure.

The Day of Eid is also spent in thankfulness to Allah. Muslims will perform the Eid Salaah, which is Wajib (incumbent) and listen to the Khutba (sermon), which is Sunnah (commendable).

To give general charity on this day is commendable and rewarding. However, Sadaqatul Fitr (Charity of Eid) is Waajib (incumbent) and must be given before the Eid Salaah. It is especially meant for the poor and the needy so that they too can celebrate Eid. It becomes binding to be given by all adults for themselves as well as all their dependents when one possesses wealth beyond his needs for the day.

SOME COMMENDABLE ACTS ON THE DAY OF EID

- To rise as early as possible;
- To perform Ghusl (bath);
- To use miswaak;
- To apply 'Itr (Halaal, non-alcoholic perfume);
- To wear one's best clothes;
- To eat something sweet (such as dates) before departing for Eid Salaah;
- To give Sadaqatul Fitr before leaving for the Musallah (Eid Ghah or Masjid);
- To walk to the Musallah. However, there is no harm in using any means of conveyance if the Musallah is a distance or there is an excuse;
- To go to the Musallah using one route and to return by another route;
- To recite the Takbeer while going to the Musallah. The takbeer is –

Al-laa hu akbar, al-laa hu akbar, laa ilaaha il-lallaa hu wal-laa hu akbar, Allahu Akbar wa lil-laa hil hamd.

MOON SIGHTING UPDATE

SHAWWAAL/EID UL FITR
1439AH

DATE: The 29th of Ramadhan 1439 (AH) is **Thursday 14th June 2018.**

Sighting should be done after sunset of this day.

SIGHTING INFORMATION: The new moon (crescent) will be born on Wednesday 13th June 2018 at 5:05 p.m. Sunset on Thursday 14th June 2018 will be at 6:32 p.m. At sunset of this day, the moon will be 25 hrs 27 mins old.

Muslims are reminded to look for the crescent to commence the month of Shawwaal 1439 AH and for the determination of Eid ul Fitr.

If the moon is sighted, then Eid ul Fitr will be celebrated on Friday 15th June 2018 and if it is not sighted, Ramadhan will complete 30 days and Eid ul Fitr will be celebrated on Saturday 16th June 2018.

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