

رمضان المبارك
شهر مبارك



RAMADHAAN AL MUBARAK
THE BLESSED MONTH

DARUL ULOOM
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

RAMADHAN / THE MONTH OF BLESSINGS AND VIRTUES

In a tradition narrated by Abu Hurairah (R.A), the Messenger of Allah (S.A) is reported to have said, "When Ramadhan enters, all the doors of Paradise are opened and all the doors of Hell are locked and the Satans are chained". (Bukhari and Muslim).

In another tradition recorded by Tirmizi, Ibn Majah and others, the Prophet (S.A) is reported to have said, "When the first night of Ramadhan enters, the Satans and mischievous Jinns are chained. All the doors of Hell are locked, and not a single one is left open. All the doors of Paradise are open and not a single one remains closed. An announcer then announces, 'O Seeker of good, advance (in your good deeds), and O Seeker of evil, decrease (your evil deeds), and Allah emancipates many souls from the fire of Hell, and this occurs every night.'" (Ibn Majah; Tirmidhi with a good Isnad (chain of narrators).

These traditions speak of certain actions which occur only in the month of Ramadhan, and hence, they are all special with this blessed month. The opening of the doors of Paradise is due to the great number of good actions done by the believers in this month, and also an encouragement to increase their good deeds. The locking of the doors of Hell is a mercy to the believers due to the minimum number of sins committed in this month. The chaining of the Satans and mischievous Jinns is also a mercy to the believers, so that their acts of worship are not disrupted by these wicked beings.

In another tradition, Ubaadah bin Saamit (R.A) narrates that the Prophet (S.A) said, "The month of Ramadhan, the month of blessings, has come to you. It is a month in which Allah turns to you and sends down upon you His special mercy, forgives your faults, accepts Duas (supplication), appreciates your competition for the greatest good, and boast to the angels about you. So show to Allah your righteousness; for certainly the most unfortunate one is he who is deprived of Allah's mercy in this month". (Tabarani, who said that all the narrators are reliable and trustworthy)

Along with these great virtues, one of the most outstanding acts of worship which is directly connected to the month is that of fasting. From among all acts of worship, fasting in Islam is known to be that worship which causes one's sins to be forgiven quickly by Allah. Regarding this, the Messenger of Allah (S.A) said, "Whosoever fast the month of Ramadhan with Imaan (firm faith) and the hope of receiving rewards, then all his past sins will be forgiven". (Bukhari and Muslim).

In another Hadith, the Messenger of Allah (S.A) said, "Every act of the son of Adam is multiplied. A good deed is rewarded with ten of its kind until seven hundred times. Allah says, 'Except the fast. It is for me and I shall give its reward. He (the fasting person) gave up his desires and food for my sake'. There are two (times) of joy for a fasting person, one at the time of breaking the fast and the other at the time of meeting his Lord. Certainly, the scent of the mouth (of the fasting person) is sweeter in the sight of Allah than the fragrance of musk." (Bukhari and Muslim).

Sahl bin Sa'd (R.A) also reports that the Messenger of Allah (S.A) said, "In Paradise, there is a door which is called Ar-Rayyaan, the fasting ones would enter through this on the Day of Judgement, and no one besides them will be able to enter. It shall be announced 'Where are those who observed the fast?' The fasting ones will then stand and enter and no one besides them will enter. When they have entered, the door will be locked." (Bukhari and Muslim)

THE LAW OF FASTING IN RAMADHAN

Observing the fast of Ramadhan is compulsory on an individual basis and is evident from the Holy Quraan and blessed traditions of the Prophet (S.A.). The Holy Quraan states, 'The month of Ramadhan is the month in which the Holy Quraan was sent down, a guidance for mankind and clear signs of guidance and a criterion. So, whosoever among you is present in this month, **let him observe the fast**'. (2:183).

It is therefore compulsory upon a Muslim, male or female, who has reached the age of puberty to observe the fast of Ramadhan. Those who have not reached this age, are not commanded to observe the fast, however, they should be trained by their parents to observe it.

While abstaining from food, drink and the fulfilment of one's desires, the fasting person is also ordered to give up such things which can corrupt the fast and erase the rewards. He must give up vain talk, falsehood, lust, sins and indecent/immoral behavior. It is for this reason, the Messenger of Allah (S.A) is reported to have said, "When one of you is fasting, he should not behave in an obscene (indecent) manner nor should he shout, yell or rage. If anyone curses or abuses him or fights with him, he should say, 'I am a fasting person'. (Bukhari).

When the fast is not observed in its proper manner, then it cannot bring about the required result. We can see this clearly from the following tradition of the Messenger of Allah (S.A.). He said, 'Many of those who fast obtain nothing through such fasting except hunger, and many of those who perform Salaah by night gain nothing in it except the discomfort of staying awake'. (Ibn Maajah, Nasaai, Ibn Khuzaimah).

THOSE WHO ARE EXCUSED FROM THE FAST

A woman in the state of her monthly menses or in Nifaas (post-partum blood) cannot observe the fast. The Prophet (S.A.) said, "A woman who is in the state of her monthly menses cannot perform Salaah nor can she fast." (Bukhari). However, she must make up for the missed days at a later time.

Whenever a person becomes a traveler (i.e. a person who undertakes a journey for more than 48 miles to a place other than his residence for less than fifteen days), he is given the allowance to delay his fast until he completes his journey. In other words, if he has undertaken a journey in Ramadhan, it is not compulsory for him to observe the fast at that time. If he wishes, he can continue in the state of 'not-fasting' due to his journey. However, it is essential upon him to make up for the missed fasts at another time when he is not on a journey. If, there is no difficulty upon him on the journey, then it is better to fast.

If a person becomes sick in the month of Ramadhan and can still observe the fast without any difficulties, he should do so. However, if there are difficulties, one should not observe the fast but must make up for it after recovery. If a person is afflicted with a permanent illness (which makes it difficult to observe the fast) and there are no signs of recovery for him nor hope of getting better (to make up for the missed fasts), the person must pay a 'Fidyah' (redemption) for every missed fast of Ramadhan.

When one reaches old age and is no longer able to keep the fast, it is permissible for one not to observe the fast. However, one must pay a 'Fidyah' redemption for each missed fast of Ramadhan.

The redemption is half (1/2) Saa' of wheat (i.e., approximately 2 1/2 lbs) or its equivalent in value for every missed fast which has to be given in Sadaqah to the poor and needy. Fidyah for the entire month of Ramadhan can be given at the beginning of the month, however, it is not proper to give it before the arrival of the month. Fidyah for the entire month can be given to one person.

If a woman is pregnant and she fears harm upon herself by observing the fast, or she fears harm upon her unborn baby, she can forego the fast during Ramadhan and make up for it at a later time when she is free from pregnancy. Similar is the case of a nursing mother when she fears for herself and the health of her baby by observing the fast.

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