

# Fasting

# Contents of the Lecture

Introduction to Fasting

What is Fasting?

When Does Fasting Become Obligatory?

What are the Different Types of Fasts?

What are the Stipulations For a Valid Fast?

What Is the Intention?

When Is the Islamic Midday?

What Are Some Recommended Acts While Fasting?

Are There Actions That Can Vitate the Fast?

What are the Acts That Do Not Break the Fast?

What are the Acts That Are Disliked While Fasting?

# Introduction to Fasting

Fasting the month of Ramadan is one of the five pillars of Islam. The Companion Abdullah ibn Umar ibn al-Khattab (Allah be pleased with him) said, “I heard the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and give him peace) say: ‘The religion of Islam is based upon five (pillars): testifying that there is no deity except God and Muhammad is the Messenger of God; establishing the prayer; giving zakat; making pilgrimage; and fasting (the month) of Ramadan.’” [Bukhari; Muslim]

The act of fasting was also practiced by previous religious communities. Likewise, it has been ordained for the followers of the Prophet Muhammad (Allah bless him and give him peace). Allah All-Mighty says in the Quran, “O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed onto you as it was prescribed onto those before you, that perhaps ye may (learn) self-restraint.” [Surat Al-Baqara, . 183]

# What is Fasting?

- ▶ Linguistically, the word fasting in the Arabic language means unconditional 'restraint' (imsak) from any action or speech during any time.
- ▶ According to the Sacred Law, fasting is the act of:
  - a. refraining from engaging in sexual activity,
  - b. refraining from entering anything into the body cavity,
  - c. whether deliberately or accidentally,
  - d. from true dawn to the time the sun sets
  - e. accompanied with the intention of fasting

# When Does Fasting Become Obligatory?

Fasting the month of Ramadan is obligatory upon every Muslim, male and female, who is sane and pubescent. This ruling also applies to making up any unperformed Ramadan fasts whether due to an excuse or one's own remissness. Therefore, a person is obliged to makeup missed Ramadan fasts. [[Shurunbulali, Maraqi al-Falah](#)]

# Who Is Excused From Fasting the Month of Ramadan?

- ▶ Fasting the month of Ramadan is not obligatory upon a menstruating woman or a woman in the state of lochia (post-natal bleeding) because fasting is not permitted while they are in this state. [Shurunbulali, Imdad al-Fattah]
- ▶ Sick people and women who are pregnant or breastfeeding are obliged to fast. However, illness can excuse a person from fasting if one reasonably fears that the act of fasting would increase the sickness or slow the recovery process. The same ruling applies to a woman who is pregnant or breastfeeding and reasonably fears that fasting will harm her or her baby. Reasonable fear is known by: 1) manifest signs, 2) a relevant past experience, or 3) the notification of an upright, Muslim doctor/expert. [Shurunbulali, Maraqi al-Falah; Shurunbulali, Imdad al-Fattah]
- ▶ A traveler is also excused from fasting if he initiates his journey before the time of Fajr enters. However, it is better that he fasts providing that this does not cause undue hardship. If a person begins fasting a day of Ramadan and then travels, he is obliged to complete his fast.
- ▶ All of the aforementioned individuals are obliged to make up their missed fasts once Ramadan has ended in a time that they are able. There is no expiation for a person who delays making up their missed fasts, though it is superior to make them up immediately if they are able.



# What are the Different Types of Fasts?

- ▶ 1. Specified Obligatory (fard) fasts: the current month of Ramadan
- ▶ 2. Non-Specified Obligatory (fard) fasts: make up fasts from a past Ramadan
- ▶ 3. Specified Necessary (wajib) fasts: specified vowed fasts
- ▶ 4. Non-Specified Necessary (wajib) fasts:
  - ▶ Emphasized Sunna fast:
    - ▶ the 9th of Dhul al-Hijjah (the day of Arafat)
    - ▶ the 10th of Muharram (the day of 'Ashura) along with either the ninth or the eleventh day
- 6. Recommended fasts
  - ▶ 7. Voluntary (nafl) fasts: any fast other than the aforementioned as long as it is not disliked
  - ▶ 8. Slightly Disliked (makruh tanzih) fasts
  - ▶ 9. Prohibitively disliked (makruh tahrimi), sinful fasts:
    - ▶ the day of Eid al-Fitr
    - ▶ the day of Eid al-Adha and the three days that follow (al-Ayyam al-Tashriq)

# What Is the Intention?

The intention is needed for each day one fasts, even in the month of Ramadan. [Shurunbulali, Imdad al-Fattah; Ala al-Din Abidin, al-Hadiyya al-Alaiyya]

The intention is the determination one feels in the heart to do something. [Ala al-Din Abidin, al-Hadiyya al-Alaiyya] A way to envision this point is if a person was to ask one what they are doing, one would affirm that they are fasting.

Practically-speaking, it is nearly impossible to not have the intention in the Hanafi madhhab. One does not have to verbally state the intention, though it is better.



# When Does One Make the Intention?

- **Category A:** For the specified obligatory, specified necessary, emphasized sunna, recommended, and nafl fasts, the following rulings apply to the intention:
  - 1. One must make the intention in the appropriate time in order for the fast to count.
  - 2. The time of the intention is from Maghrib of the previous night to before the Islamic midday (see definition below) of the following day. This is providing that one did nothing that would invalidate the fast from the start of Fajr time.
  - 3. Scholars confirm that it is superior for one to make the intention the night before one fasts (i.e. any time from Maghrib to the entering of Fajr) due to the difference of opinion from other schools on this point.
  - 4. It is sufficient to intend to fast without specifying if the fast is obligatory, necessary, sunna, recommended, or nafl.
- **Category B:**
  - For non-specified obligatory and non-specified necessary fasts, the following rulings apply to the intention:
  - 1. One must make the intention in the appropriate time in order for the fast to count.
  - 2. The time for the intention is from Maghrib of the previous night to the entering of Fajr on the day one desires to fast.
  - 3. One must also specify the type of fast when intending.
  - 4. If one made the intention after the entering of Fajr to before the Islamic midday (see definition below), then this fast counts as a voluntary (nafl) fast instead.
- [Shurunbulali, Imdad al-Fattah; Ala al-Din Abidin, al-Hadiyya al-Alaiyya]

# When Is the Islamic Midday?

- ▶ The Islamic midday (al-Dahwa al-Kubra) is the half-way point between the entering of Fajr time to the entering of Maghrib time. It does not mean noon, nor does it mean the zawal. [Mulla Khusru, Durar al-Hikam Sharh Ghurar al-Ahkam; ibn Abidin, Radd al-Muhtar]
- ▶ For example, if Fajr entered at 5 am and Maghrib entered at 5 pm, then the Islamic midday would be the half-way point between this 12 hour time span, which is 11 am. Thus, in this example, a person would have from the entering of Maghrib of the previous night to before 11 am of the next day to make the intention if he is performing a fast from category A.
- ▶ The intention must be made 'before' the Islamic midday because one needs to fast with the intention for the majority of the day. According to the Sacred Law, this would be akin to fasting the entire day. [Mulla Khusru, Durar al-Hikam Sharh Ghurar al-Ahkam; ibn Abidin, Radd al-Muhtar]

# What Are Some Recommended Acts While Fasting?

To eat the pre-dawn meal (suhur) before Fajr time enters

To delay the pre-dawn meal closer to the time before Fajr enters

To hasten to break one's fast at the entering of Maghrib

# What Does a Woman Do If Her Period Starts In Ramadan?

- ▶ If her menstruation starts in Ramadan during the night (i.e. any time from the entering of Maghrib to before the entering of Fajr), then she refrains from fasting the following day and for the duration that she is menstruating. [Hedaya Hartford, Birgivi's Manual Interpreted]
- ▶ If her menstruation starts in Ramadan during the day (i.e. any time from the entering of Fajr to the entering of Maghrib), then her fast is vitiated and it does not count. She must make up this day after Ramadan has ended in a time when she is able. She must refrain from fasting for the duration that she is menstruating. [Shurunbulali, Maraqi al-Falah; Shurunbulali, Imdad al-Fattah; Tahtawi, Hashiyya al-Tahtawi]
- ▶ A menstruating woman can eat and drink during the day in Ramadan. If she believes that it is unlawful for her to eat or drink, then it is necessary for her to do so as refraining from food or drink with the intention of fasting is unlawful for her. [Tahtawi, Hashiyya al-Tahtawi; Shurunbulali, Imdad al-Fattah]
- ▶ A menstruating woman should record the number of days she missed while fasting and make them up after Ramadan ends in a time when she is able.
- ▶ The same rulings apply to a woman in a state of lochia (post-natal bleeding).

# What Does a Woman Do If her Period Ends In Ramadan?

- ▶ If her menstruation stops in Ramadan during the night (i.e. any time from the entering of Maghrib to before the entering of Fajr), then she performs a purificatory bath (ghusl), begins her obligatory worship, and she is obliged to fast the following day and the remainder of Ramadan. [Hedaya Hartford, Birgivi's Manual Interpreted]
- ▶ Note: There are details to this point if her menstruation ends before the menstrual maximum of 10 complete days and the ghusl time finishes within the Fajr time. Please refer to Hedaya Hartford's 'Birgivi's Manual Interpreted.'
- ▶ If her menstruation stops in Ramadan during the day (i.e. any time after the entering of Fajr up to the entering of Maghrib), then she performs a purificatory bath (ghusl), begins her obligatory worship and she acts like a fasting person until the Maghrib time enters due to the sacredness of the month of Ramadan. [Hedaya Hartford, Birgivi's Manual Interpreted] It is necessary for her to abstain from eating and drinking for the remainder of the day. [Shurunbulali, Maraqi al-Falah; Shurunbulali, Imdad al-Fattah] She is sinful if she does not do so. However, this day of acting like a fasting person does not count as a fast. She must make up this day after Ramadan has ended in a time when she is able. [ibid] She is obliged to fast the following day and the remainder of Ramadan.
- ▶ A menstruating woman should record the number of days she missed while fasting and make them up after Ramadan ends in a time when she is able.
- ▶ The same rulings apply to a woman in a state of lochia (post-natal bleeding).



# Are There Actions That Can Vitate the Fast?

- ▶ Yes, there are actions that can vitiate the fast. These actions fall under two categories: 1) that which vitiates the fast and requires a makeup along with expiation and 2) that which vitiates the fast and requires makeup only. [ibn Abidin, Radd al-Muhtar]
- ▶ For the first category, the principle returns to deliberately performing an act that vitiates the fast by one's own free will and without a valid reason. Deliberately means that one remembers that one is fasting and purposely performs an action that breaks the fast. [ibid] These actions are outlined below in the section 'category 1.'
- ▶ For the second category, the principle returns to accidentally performing an act that vitiates the fast. It also includes acts performed by force of a third party. Accidentally means that one remembers that one is fasting but broke the fast by one's own doing without the intention to purposely break the fast. [Tahtawi, Hashiyya al-Tahtawi; Related in Radd al-Muhtar] These actions are outlined below in the section 'category 2.'
- ▶ If any of the actions from category 1 are performed forgetfully, then they do not vitiate the fast. Forgetfully means that one does not have the presence of mind that one is fasting when performing the action. [Shurunbulali, Imdad al-Fattah] The Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) said, "Whoever forgets that he is fasting and eats or drinks, then he still completes his fast. It is only Allah who fed him and gave him drink." [Bukhari] In another narration, the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) said, "If a fasting person eats forgetfully, it is only provision Allah put forth to him and there is no makeup upon him." [Bukhari]



# Category 1: Acts That Vitate the Fast & Require Makeup & Expiation

Acts that invalidate the fast and require a makeup along with expiation only relate to the current Ramadan fasts. Otherwise, if one performs any of the following actions while performing a fast outside of the current month of Ramadan, such as a make-up fast, then the fast is vitiated and only a makeup is required. One does not owe the expiation.

If done deliberately, by one's own free will, and without a valid reason while fasting a current Ramadan fast, the following acts invalidate the fast and require a makeup along with expiation:

1. eating or drinking something that humans would normally consume and this consummation nourishes, medicates, or pleases the body in some way
2. actual sexual intercourse,
3. swallowing the saliva of one's spouse

## Category 2: Acts That Vitate the Fast & Require Make Up But Do Not Require Expiation

- ▶ eating or drinking accidentally
- ▶ eating or drinking because one thought Maghrib entered but Maghrib did not enter
- ▶ eating or drinking because one doubted that Fajr entered but Fajr really did enter
- ▶ eating or drinking forgetfully and thereafter thinking that the fast is broken, to deliberately eat and drink again
- ▶ swallowing what is between the teeth, on the condition that it is the size of a chickpea or bigger
- ▶ swallowing a pebble or other items that people wouldn't typically eat
- ▶ swallowing water by accident when gargling for wudu or ghusl (with the exception of water that remains in the mouth—see next category)
- ▶ swallowing blood that exits from the gums and preponderates over the saliva
- ▶ swallowing toothpaste or mouthwash
- ▶ deliberately swallowing vomit that reaches a mouthful
- ▶ deliberately vomiting a mouthful, regardless if one swallows it or not
- ▶ vomiting and thereafter thinking that the fast is broken, to deliberately vomit again
- ▶ smoke that enters the throat by one's doing, on the condition one's body doesn't benefit from it

# What are the Acts That Do Not Break the Fast?

- ▶ eating or drinking something forgetfully (see aforementioned definition)
- ▶ eating what is between the teeth if it is less than the size of a chickpea
- ▶ tasting the leftover traces of medicine in the mouth or throat
- ▶ chewing on a sesame seed without swallowing it, if its taste doesn't reach the throat
- ▶ dust or smoke (including smoke from 'ud or incense) entering one's throat without one's doing
- ▶ a mosquito, fly, or any other object entering one's throat without one's doing
- ▶ swallowing the wetness that remains after washing one's mouth for wudu or ghusl
- ▶ swallowing one or two drops of sweat or tears that enter the mouth and mixes with one's saliva, on the condition that one cannot taste its saltiness
- ▶ swallowing one's own saliva
- ▶ swallowing one's own phlegm after clearing the throat
- ▶ swallowing vomit that emerges in the mouth without one's doing, even if it is a mouthful
- ▶ deliberately vomiting less than a mouthful, regardless if one swallows it or not
- ▶ using a miswak or toothbrush
- ▶ wetting one's lips with one's saliva while speaking and swallowing it
- ▶ swallowing blood that exits from the gums and does not preponderate over the saliva on the condition one cannot taste it
- ▶ pulling back saliva into one's mouth that flows to the chin like a string on the condition that it stays connected and does not break off
- ▶ backbiting

# What is the Expiation?

The expiation is to fast sixty consecutive days in the year without any interruption. One must choose a time where one can fast these sixty days without the days of Eid or the three days after Eid al-Adha (al-Ayyam al-Tashriq) interrupting the fasts because of the prohibition of fasting on these days. [Shurunbulali, Maraqi al-Falah] If one does not fast them consecutively, then one must restart the 60 day period each time the continuity of the fasts is broken. [Tahtawi, Hashiyya al-Tahtawi]

The only exceptions to this rule are if one is menstruating or in a state of lochia (post-natal bleeding). A menstruating woman must continue to fast after she becomes pure, and she cannot delay the completion of the expiation. If she does delay fasting after becoming pure, then she must restart the 60 days of fasting. [Tahtawi, Hashiyya al-Tahtawi] The same ruling applies to a woman in the state of lochia.

If one is genuinely unable to perform the sixty consecutive fasts based on reasonable surety, then one must either:

- a. feed the same sixty, poor people to their fill for two meals, or
- b. feed one poor person to his fill for two meals a day for sixty days, or
- c. give sixty poor people half a sa' of wheat (or similar food grains) or its monetary value, or
- d. give sixty poor people a sa' of dates (or similar food grains) or its monetary value, or
- e. give one poor person either c or d for sixty days.

empty stomach to feed the soul

THANKS FOR KEEPING EYE ON THE CONTENT

**LECTURER :MAHMOOD AKHTAR**