

FASTING DURING RAMADAN

Fasting during the month of Ramadan is obligatory. One who denies it is a *Kafir* (Disbeliever). It is one of the obligatory practices of Islam. *Allah (Ta'ala)* pronounces:

﴿شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ
وَالْفُرْقَانِ ۚ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ ۖ﴾ البقرة: ١٨٥

(Translation of meaning) [“The month of Ramadan during which was revealed the Quran, a guidance for mankind, and clear proofs of the guidance and the Criterion of right and wrong. And whosoever of you is present, let him fast the month. (Al-Baqarah: 185)]. The Messenger of Allah (*sallAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*) said: Anybody who, keeping the faith and desiring reward from Allah, fasts during Ramadan has all his past sins forgiven (Al-Bukhari & Muslim)). According to another narration, the Messenger of Allah (*sallAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*) said: On the first night of Ramadan all the Satans and wicked jinn are imprisoned and all the doors of Hell are closed and none of them is kept open and all the doors of Paradise are opened and none of them is kept closed. And an announcer calls, 'O doers of good move forward! And O doers of evil move back!' *Allah (Ta'ala)* also frees a large number of people from Hell every night (Tirmizi, Hakim). Once the Messenger of Allah (*sallAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*), while delivering a sermon on the last night of Sha’ban, dwelt upon the virtues of Ramadan: This is a month first part of which is all beneficence; the middle part is forgiveness and the last part is deliverance from Hell (Baihaqi, Ibn Habban, Ibn Khazimah).

Because fasting during Ramadan is one of the pillars of Islam if anybody leaves it without a valid excuse and after being fully informed of its importance, then *Allah (Ta'ala)* will reckon with him strictly. And even if he recoups it during the whole of his life, it will be in vain **and will not be acceptable to Allah Almighty.**

When to Commence Fasting?

Fasting commences on sighting the moon of the month of Ramadan. If the moon of Ramadan is not visible fasting will commence after passing the 30 of Sha’ban. The Messenger of Allah (*sallAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*) pronounced: Don’t begin your fast without sighting the moon of Ramadan and likewise don’t end it without sighting the moon. If the weather is cloudy and moon is not

visible then complete the count of 30 (Al-Bukhari & Muslim)). According to another narrative, he said that a month may be of 29 days. Therefore, don't begin your fast unless you sight the moon and if the weather is cloudy then complete the count of 30 (Al-Bukhari & Muslim)).

For whom Fasting is Obligatory?

Fasting is obligatory for all Muslim males and females provided they are adult, sane and capable of fasting. Females must be clean of menstrual and puerperal flows.

Fasting of Minors

Fasting is not obligatory for minors. However, if possible, their guardians should encourage them to fast so that after being used to bear the hardship in early age they develop a habit of fasting when they grow up. Though minors are exempted from fasting yet they will surely deserve the reward if they take the courage to fast.

Requirements of Fasting

1. From the break of dawn till sunset one should abstain absolutely from eating and drinking and avoid all acts which nullify the fast.
2. To have an intention to keep fasting. The will to fast is as necessary as for engaging in other forms of worship. One should will to keep fast in obedience to the commands of the Lord and to seek His pleasure. One can will to do so every day before the break of dawn or once for the whole of the month on the very first day of Ramadan.

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