

WHEN FASTING IS WAIVED?

Islam has provided ease, convenience and flexibility to its followers. *Allah (Ta'ala)* pronounces:

﴿يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ﴾ البقرة: ١٨٥

(Translation of meaning) [“. . . He [Allah] desireth not hardship for you" (Al-Baqarah: 185).

Many a time a person faces a condition for which *Shariat* has made concessions and waived fasting for him. Such conditions are mentioned below:

1. **Travel:** *Allah (Ta'ala)* pronounces:

﴿فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَّرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ﴾ البقرة: ١٨٤

(Translation of meaning) [“. . . and (for) him who is sick among you, or on a journey, [the same] number of other days" (Al-Baqarah: 184)].

The distance which one has to travel to get this waiver is specified neither in the Quran nor in the *Sunnah*. Nevertheless, some jurists have fixed a limit of 98 kilometres.

2. **Sickness:** sickness refers to such sickness which renders fasting difficult or risky for life or which is likely to exacerbate due to fasting or fasting may likely prolong the illness. However, one should not make an excuse of illness to skip fasting. Allah knows better the content of the inner self.
3. **Pregnancy and suckling:** *Shariat* has waived fasting for the pregnant and suckling women provided fasting is harmful for her and her baby's health. The Messenger of Allah (*sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) has said: *Allah (Ta'ala)* has exempted the traveller from fasting and from fifty per cent of *salat* and waived fasting for the pregnant and suckling women (Ashabus-Sunan).
4. **Old age:** *Allah (Ta'ala)* has proclaimed:

﴿وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ﴾ البقرة: ١٨٤

(Translation of meaning) [“. . . and for those who can afford it there is a ransom: the feeding of a man in need" (Al-Baqarah: 184)].

5. If somebody is forcibly compelled to break his fast there is no encumbrance upon him. He can fast later in compensation.

Nullifiers of Fasting

1. To eat and drink consciously or the occurrence of any legal excuse like sickness, travel or compulsion to break fasting.
2. Sexual intercourse with or without ejaculation.
3. To vomit deliberately.
4. Menstruation or puerperal bleeding: If a fasting woman starts menstruating at any time during the day her fast is nullified.
5. Intake of any objects through the mouth into the stomach even if it is a pebble.
6. The intention to break fasting even if he has not eaten or drunk anything because fasting is dependent on one's will and intent.
7. Ejaculation of semen with sexual pleasure and without any disease or valid cause.

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