

Lesson Two

‘FIQH OF RAMADAN’

Fasting literally means to keep away and abstain from something and technically it means abstaining from food, drink and sexual relationship with one’s wife, with the intention of worship between dawn and sunset.

The following questions/answers cover the Fiqh of fasting:

Q: Is an intention for fasting necessary and when should one make the intention(niyah)for the fast of Ramadan?

A: The intention for fasting is necessary but very simple: It is to know in your heart that you will fast that day, (although it is recommended to make the intention verbally). It is valid to have this intention any time from Maghrib the night before up to the Islamic midday of the actual day of fasting, for current Ramadan fasts and voluntary fasts. The Islamic midday is half way between the beginning of Fajr and Maghrib times.

Q: What if a person woke up in the ‘state of Major impurity’ (needing Ghusl) in Ramadan after the time of suhur ended; can they still make an intention to fast?

A: yes, although one should bathe as soon as possible to become pure. The intention of fasting has no connection with a person needing Ghusl.

Q: What is the difference between a Qadha and Kaffara?

A: Qadha (makeup) means to keep another fast in order to make up for the fast which was invalidated with a valid islamic reason or not kept, whilst Kaffara (expiation) means to perform an act to expiate the sin of having broken a fast intentionally.

Q: In what way is a Kaffara fulfilled?

A: A Kaffara may be given in the following two ways:

- 1) Fasting for two months consecutively without missing a single fast,
- 2) Feeding sixty poor people to their fill for two meals, or feed one poor person two meals a day- for sixty days.
- 3) Give sixty poor persons (approx 2.2 kg) of wheat or its value in cash or food grains.
- 4) give to one poor person not less than (approx 2.2 kg) of wheat, rice or food grains, etc. or its value in cash for sixty days, which is approx (£2.50), (this value can change, and one needs to check the equivalent cash of wheat when giving).

It should be remembered that if one has the ability to fast then one cannot adopt the second method; rather, one will have to fast for sixty days continuously.

Q: What if someone unfortunately didn't practice the deen before and now wants to make up for their (qadha) and (Kaffara), what should they do?

A: one needs to calculate how many fasts were missed and make (qadha) of them, and if any fasts were broken intentionally then (kaffara) will also have to be done.

For example, Zayd from the age of 15 (reached puberty), so fasting became Fardh on him. However, due his ignorance and lack of practicing he kept some, also missed some and later on also broke some intentionally, after keeping the intention to fast.

Missing the fast: Not fasting at all (when one is able to) is a major sin, and (qadha) will have to be done for all fasts missed.

So for example in 2005, Zayd didn't fast at all for 10 days of the month of Ramadan, and after Ramadan was over he realised his mistake and made sincere repentance, then he will make up (qadha) for the 10 days missed. (no (kaffara)).

Fasting and then breaking intentionally: If one did make the intention to fast and then broke it intentionally, (without any valid islamic legal reason), this is also a major sin, and (qadha) will have to be done for all fasts missed 'and also (kaffara)'.

So, for example in 2007 Zayd broke 4 fasts intentionally, in 2009 he broke 3 fasts intentionally. In 2010 he again realised his mistake and made sincere repentance. So now, he needs to make up all fasts he broke intentionally (so 7 fasts qadha) & also 'one' (kaffara) will be enough and necessary to make up for many previous instances of breaking fasts.

Please note: one (kaffara) suffices many instances of breaking of the fast.

Q: Does taking out blood or a blood test invalidate one's fast?

A: No, a blood test does not invalidate the fast, as it is merely the taking out of blood. However, it will be disliked if it could weaken one from being able to maintain the fast.

Q: Does smoking invalidate one's fast?

A: Yes, it does invalidate one's fast. If done intentionally, (qadha) and (kaffara) will be necessary. (Ramadhan is a good time to quit smoking forever!).

Q: Is it allowed to use an Asthma Pump during the Fast?

A: If one has a genuine medical need for an asthma pump during the fast, then it would be permitted to use it. However, it would break the fast and require that the fast be made up later (Qadha).

Those who need to use an asthma pump many times a day (chronic asthmatics) and find it difficult to fast, have the dispensation of not fasting and paying the 'Fidya' instead. Islam is a religion of mercy and does not order its followers to do something that is beyond their capability. Therefore, chronic asthmatics need not suffer by fasting; rather, if they are genuinely not able to keep a fast or make it up later, they may pay the expiatory payment instead. However, it should be remembered that if one becomes capable of

fasting again, one will have to make up for the missed fasts despite paying the 'Fidya'.

Q: what is 'Fidya'?

A: Is an expiatory payment made, to make up for each fast missed of Ramadhan – only can be paid by that person who has no hope of recovering after Ramadhan and will never gain the strength to fast. So for each fast missed, (approx 2.2 kg) of wheat or (approx 4.4 kg) of barley have to be given in sadaka – or the equivalent of this in cash, which is approx (£2.50) for each fast missed, (this value can change and one needs to check the equivalent cash of wheat or barley when giving). If someone has given this payment for their fasts and in the future recovers or gains strength to fast once again, one 'must' now make the number of fasts missed previously, whatever was given in fidya before will be counted as sadaka and 'reward' for him.

Q: When does vomiting break one's fast?

A: a) Vomiting a 'mouthful deliberately': breaks ones fast, even if none was swallowed.

b) Vomiting 'less than a mouthful deliberately' will not break the fast, unless one swallows the vomit down whilst being conscious of one's fast, if one was not conscious of one's fast and swallowed the vomit back forgetfully, the fast will remain valid.

c) Vomiting 'non-deliberately' 'mouthful' or 'less than a mouthful' will not break the fast, unless one swallows the vomit down whilst being conscious of one's fast, if one was not conscious of one's fast and swallowed the vomit back forgetfully, the fast will remain valid.

If one's fast is broken by vomiting, then one will only have to make up (qadha) for the fast.

Q: How does one decide when vomiting is a mouthful?

A: The definition of "mouthful vomiting" is that which one cannot hold back in one's mouth without difficulty.

Q: Can a woman on menstruation (haydh) or post-natal bleeding (nifas)fast?

A: No, she cannot fast. It will be unlawful (haram) for her to do so. she will have to make (Qadha) for the missed fasts.

Q: Does one have to perform the Qadha fasts immediately after Ramadhan?

A: No, it is not necessary. However, it is recommended to complete the missed fasts of Ramadhan as soon as possible.

Q: When can a sick person break his/her fast on the opinion of a doctor?

A: When a competent Muslim doctor says that if he/she continues fasting, it will bring danger to his/her life or severely effect the health, then in such a situation it will be permitted to break one's fast. One will not be liable for a (Kaffara), but will only have to make up for the fast (Qadha).

Q: Does swallowing ones own saliva break the fast?

A: Swallowing one's own saliva has no affect on the fast and does not break the fast.

Q: Do wet dreams break ones fast?

A: emission that happens because of wet dreams does not break one's fast. But what does break one's fast, is when emission happens because of stimulation, whether this stimulation is haram (such as masturbating), or whether this stimulation is permissible, (such as what is caused by one's wife).

Q: Can patches such as nicotine be used whilst fasting?

A: nicotine or medical patches do not invalidate one's fast, since it is used through the skin and not through the mouth or any other normal channel/opening of the body.

Q: Does injections and being put on drips at the doctors/hospital break one's fast?

A: Although, it is better to avoid taking injections whilst fasting unnecessarily, even if a substance was to reach the stomach or brain, but it did not enter through a direct normal channel, such as the mouth/nose/ear, it will not break the fast. This is the reason why injections and drips (even those that have nutritive value) do not invalidate the fast. However, if a person needed to take an injection of some kind of nourishment, direct through the stomach area, this would break the fast and have to be made up (qadha).

Q: Does 'inhaling' smokes of Lobans/ perfumes break ones fast?

A: Firstly, in order for one's fast to become invalid, one has to inhale the smoke intentionally and deliberately. If the smoke of a perfume entered through one's nose or throat unintentionally, then one's fast will not break. Applying Itr on the body/clothes is fine. Secondly, in the situation where one's fast does become invalid (i.e. when one deliberately inhales something that has a perceptible body), one will only have to make up for the fast later (qadha) but a expiation (kaffara) will not be necessary.

In light of the above explanation, if one accidentally inhaled perfume, then one's fast will not become invalid. However, if one intentionally and deliberately sprayed the perfume (that has a perceptible body) in the nose and inhaled it, then the fast would become invalid, hence one will have to make up for the fast later.

Q: Does medicine through the nose / eye drops / ear drops break the fast?

A: Nose: medicine through the nose 'will' break the fast, and (qadha) necessary.

Eyes: medicine through the eyes such as eye drops 'will not' break the fast-as not through a natural inlet of the body.

Ears: any medicine through the ears will break the fast. However, 'water' through the ears will 'not' break the fast.

Q: What about if water goes down the throat or nose whilst doing wudu or ghusl?

A: Water going down the throat or nose (whilst being conscious of one's fast), will break the fast and (qadha) will be necessary. However, if one forgetfully does so and (was not conscious of ones fast), then this will not break the fast.

Q: Can you use a Miswaak whilst fasting?

A: 1) It remains a sunnah to brush one's teeth (Miswaak) throughout the day, even while fasting.

2) The taste of the (Miswaak) remaining does not invalidate one's fast.

3) But If you are certain that you swallowed a particle of wood, your fast is invalidated. If unsure, one resorts to one's operating certainty: the fast is valid, for certainty is not lifted by mere doubt.

Q: Can you brush your teeth with toothpaste whilst fasting?

A: It is disliked doing so, and if any toothpaste is swallowed or saliva changed by the toothpaste gets swallowed, one's fast is invalidated. It is best to avoid using toothpaste while fasting, unless one can do so without endangering one's fast.

Q: What about if I swallowed some blood that came out from my gums, whilst doing wudhu?

A: if the colour of the blood is more than the saliva with which it is mixed, and you swallowed it, then the fast will break and (qadha) will be necessary. If your saliva was more or a minor amount was tasted, and you are unsure whether or not it was swallowed, then your fast will not break.

Q: what if someone is unable to fast due to a valid reason, like 'severe illness' or if due to old age fasting would make one ill?

A: 1. medical conditions need to be discussed with doctor (preferably Muslim doctor).

2. Then one should consult with a scholar, to discuss the medical opinion and to determine if one will be exempt from fasting.

3. If it is determined that one cannot fast, then;

1) one makes up fast after Ramadan (when one is capable of doing so).

2) If one is a very old or sickly person and is unlikely to again regain the strength to fast then, one expiates for the missed fasts by giving 'fidya'.

Q: can someone fast for another person, like for the sickly person whom hajj is done for?

A: No one is allowed to fast for another (sick or fit) person. (Only Hajj can be made for another person, under certain conditions), but it is 'not valid' to pray(salah) or fast for another person.

Q: Does a traveller have to fast?

A: A traveller is one who is undertaking a journey of more than 92 kms (57.5 miles)- and does not intend staying 'more than 14 days' (so in other words, one won't be staying 15 days or more), at his destination. He can make up the fast/s after, if travelling - However, it is 'better' for him to fast in Ramadan than to fast later, provided the journey is not a demanding one. (Generally, travelling and staying at different destinations can now be done with ease, so one should endeavour if possible, not to leave the fasts of Ramadan, even when travelling).