

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Fasting During Ramadaan

Islamic legal rules of fasting: By Dr. Muzammil Siddiqi

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Duaa for keeping fast:

Wa bisawmi ghadeen nawaytu min shahri ramadaan

I intent to fast today for the month of Ramadaan

Duaa when breaking fast:

Allahumma Inni laka sumtu wa bika amantu wa ?la rizqika aftartu.

O Allah, I fasted for You and I believe in You and I break my fast with Your sustain

More Ramadaan Duaas:

<http://www.global-right-path.com/Downloads/Ramadaan-Duaas.pdf>

What is Sawm (Fasting)?

The Arabic word for fasting is called "sawm" in the Quraan. The word sawm literally means "to abstain". Chapter Maryam of the Quraan says that Mary the mother of Jesus said "I have vowed a "sawm" (fast) for the sake of the Merciful, so today I shall not speak to anyone." [Quraan 19:26]. According to Shariyah, the word sawm means to abstain from all those things that are forbidden during fasting from the break of dawn to the sunset, and to do this with the intention of fasting.

Purpose of Fasting

In chapter 2 verse 183 the Quraan says, "O you who believe, fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those who were before you, in order that you may learn taqwa (piety)".

Taqwa is a very important spiritual and ethical term of the Quraan. It is the sum total of all Islamic spirituality and ethics. It is a quality in a believer's life that keeps him or her aware of God all the time. A person who has taqwa loves to do good and avoid evil for the sake of God. Taqwa is piety, righteousness and consciousness of God. Taqwa requires patience and perseverance. Fasting teaches patience, and with patience one can rise to the high position of taqwa.

The Prophet said that fasting is a shield. It protects a person from sin and lustful desires. When the disciples of Jesus asked him how to cast the evil spirits away, he is reported to have said, "But this kind never comes out except by prayer and fasting." (Matthew 17:21).

According to Imam Al Ghazali, fasting produces a semblance of divine quality of samadiyyah (freedom from want) in a human being. Imam Ibn Al Qayyim, viewed fasting as a means of releasing the human spirit from the clutches of desire, thus allowing moderation to prevail in the carnal self. Imam Shah Waliullah Dahlawi (d. 1762 C.E.) viewed fasting as a means of weakening the bestial and reinforcing the angelic elements in human beings. Maulana Mawdudi (d. 1979 C.E.) emphasized that fasting for a full month every year trains a person individually, and the Muslim community as a whole, in piety and self-restraint.

Fasting Is Obligatory

In the second year of Hijrah, Muslims were commanded to fast in the month of Ramadaan every year as mentioned in the verse above [Al-Baqarah 2:183]. The Quraan further says "The month of Ramadaan is that in which was revealed the Quraan, wherein is guidance for humankind and the clear signs of guidance and distinction. Thus whosoever among you witness the month must fast..." [Al-Baqarah 2:184].

Prophet Muhammad (Peace-Be-Upon-Him) explained this further in a number of his statements reported in the books of Hadith. It is reported by Imam Al-Bukhari and Imam Muslim on the authority of Ibn Umar that the Messenger of God said, "Islam is built upon five pillars: testifying that there is no god except God and that Muhammad (Peace-Be-Upon-Him) is

the Messenger of God, performing Prayer, paying the zakah, making the pilgrimage to the Sacred House (Hajj), and fasting during the month of Ramadaan."

The entire Muslim world is unanimous in the principal of fasting in the month of Ramadaan and considers it obligatory upon every person who is physically capable (mukallaf).

Rules of Fasting

A) Who must fast?

Muslims all over the world wait eagerly for Ramadaan, as it is a time of increased inner peace and well-being.

Fasting in the month of Ramadaan is obligatory upon every adult Muslim, male or female, who has reached puberty, is sane and who is not sick or traveling.

Sickness could be a temporary sickness from which a person expects to be cured soon. Such a person should not fast during the days of his or her sickness, but he or she must fast later after Ramadaan to complete the missed days. Those who are sick with incurable illness and expect no better health are also allowed not to fast but they must pay the fidyah, which is giving a day's meals for each fast missed to a needy person. Instead of food for one day one can also give equivalent amount of money to a needy person. Women in their menses and post-natal bleeding are not allowed to fast, but they must make up the fast later after Ramadaan. If pregnant women and mothers who are nursing babies can also postpone their fasting to a later time when they are able to do so.

A travel according to the Shariah is any journey that takes you away from your city of residence, a minimum of **48 miles or 80 kilometers**. The journey must be for a good cause. One must avoid frivolous travel during Ramadaan which causes a person to miss fasting. If possible one should try to change their travel plans during Ramadaan to be able to fast and should not travel unless it is necessary. The traveler who misses the fasts of Ramadaan must make up those missed days later as soon as possible after Ramadaan.

B) Fasting According to the Sunnah

1 - Take sahur (pre-dawn meal). It is Sunnah and there is a great reward and blessing in taking sahur. The best time for sahur is the last half hour before dawn or the time for Fajr prayer.

2 - Take iftar (break-fast) immediately after sunset. Shariah considers sunset when the disk of the sun goes below the horizon and disappears completely.

3 - During the fast, abstain from all false talks and deeds. Do not quarrel, have disputes, indulge in arguments, use bad words, or do anything that is forbidden. You should try to discipline yourself morally and ethically, besides gaining physical training and discipline. You should also not make a show of your fasting by talking too much about it, or by showing dry lips and a hungry stomach, or by showing a bad temper. The fasting person must be a pleasant person with good spirits and good cheer.

4 - During the fast, do acts of charity and goodness to others and increase your worship and reading of the Quraan. Everyone should try to read the whole Quraan at least once during the month of Ramadaan.

C) Things That Invalidate Fasting Things

You must avoid doing anything that may render your fast invalid. Things that invalidate the fast and require qadaa' (making up for these days) are the following:

1 - Eating, drinking or smoking deliberately, including taking any non-nourishing items by mouth or nose.

2 - Deliberately causing yourself to vomit.

3 - The beginning of menstrual or post-childbirth bleeding even in the last moment before sunset.

4 - Sexual intercourse or other sexual contact (or masturbation) that results in ejaculation (in men) or vaginal secretions (orgasm) in women.

5 - Eating, drinking, smoking or having sexual intercourse after Fajr (dawn) on the mistaken assumption that it is not Fajr time yet. Similarly, engaging in these acts before Maghrib (sunset) on the mistaken assumption that it is already Maghrib time.

Sexual intercourse during fasting is forbidden. Those who engage in it must make both qadaa' (make up the fasts) and kaffarah (expiation by fasting for **60** days after Ramadaan or by feeding **60** poor people for each day of fast broken in this way). According to Imam Abu Hanifah, eating and/or drinking deliberately during fast also entail the same qadaa' and kaffarah.

D) Things That Do Not Invalidate Fasting

Using a miswak to clean your teeth does not invalidate fasting

During fast, the following things are permissible:

1 - Taking a bath or shower. If water is swallowed involuntarily it will not invalidate the fast. According to most of the jurists, swimming is also allowed in fasting, but one should avoid diving, because that will cause the water to go from the mouth or nose into the stomach.

2 - Using perfumes, wearing contact lenses or using eye drops.

3 - Taking injections or having a blood test.

4 - Using miswak (tooth-stick) or toothbrush (even with tooth paste) and rinsing the mouth or nostrils with water, provided it is not overdone (so as to avoid swallowing water).

5 - Eating, drinking or smoking unintentionally, i.e., forgetting that one was fasting. But one must stop as soon as one remembers and should continue one's fast.

6 - Sleeping during the daytime and having a wet-dream does not break one's fast. Also, if one has intercourse during the night and was not able to make ghusl (bathe) before dawn, he or she can begin fast and make ghusl later. Women whose menstruation stops during the night may begin fasting even if they have not made ghusl yet. In all these cases, bathing (ghusl) is necessary but fast is valid even without bathing.

7 - Light Kissing (NOT Sexual Kissing) between husband and wife is allowed in fasting, BUT one should try to AVOID it so that one may not do anything further that is forbidden during the fast.

E) Requirements for Fasting to Be Valid

There are basically two main components of fasting:

1 - The intention (niyyah) for fasting. One should make a sincere intention to fast for the sake of God every day before dawn. The intention need not be in words, but must be with the sincerity of the heart and mind. Some jurists are of the opinion that the intention can be made once only for the whole month and does not have to be repeated every day. It is, however, better to make intention every day to take full benefit of fasting.

2 - Abstaining from dawn to dusk from everything that invalidates fasting as mentioned above.

Dr. Muzammil H. Siddiqi is the imam and director of the Islamic Society of Orange County, California, USA and former president of the Islamic Society of North America.

Fasting during Journey or illness in the month of Ramadaan:

(Fasting) for a fixed number of days; but if any of you is ill, or on a journey, the prescribed number (Should be made up) from days later. For those who can do it (With hardship), is a ransom, the feeding of one that is indigent. But he that will give more, of his own free will,- it is better for him. And it is better for you that ye fast, if ye only knew. (Al_Quraan_002-184)

It is suggested that if you are on a Journey which is up to two hours, i.e. **200-KM** (in **old** time around **48-miles**) for one way from door to door, you should continue fasting, BUT if your travel time is more than two hours, you should skip the fast and make it up at a later date. Remember, for air travel, even for an hour of air time could be much more than that, usually more than five hours due to the travel time to the airport and the wait at the airport. So most of the air travel you

must skip fasting during Ramadaan and make it up at a later date. If one can go for work and come back on the same day and that can be on a regular schedule, he/she should continue fasting, otherwise he/she must skip it and make up for it later.

Delaying Periods (Menstruation) in the Month of Ramadaan:

Be Careful in playing against the laws of Allah. Allah created women with this thing. Don't ever think to do against the will of Allah, otherwise Allah may punish you. Don't trust the scientists, one day they say it is ok and then **20-30** years later they say this is the cause of the thing you tried **20-30** years ago. Don't think that your reward will be less because of this, unless you don't make up the counting of fasting later.

Reciting the Quraan during the Menstruation (Periods):

There is NO harm in a menstruating or post-partum bleeding woman reading the books of supplications that are written for the rites of the pilgrimage. In fact, there is nothing wrong with her reciting the Quraan according to the correct opinion. There is no authentic, clear text prohibiting a menstruating or post-partum bleeding woman from reciting the Quraan. The thing that is narrated is concerned with the sexually defiled person only, as such should not recite the Quraan while he is sexually defiled. This is based on the Hadeeth of 'Alee. (Reference: <http://www.fatwa-online.com>)

Fasting during Ramadaan on the North or South Poles during their Summer:

Reference: <http://www.islamicity.com>

Are we Muslims during Ramadaan only?

If we are Muslims during Ramadaan only then it looks like during Ramadaan we really worship Allah **BUT** rest of the year we worship Shaytaan. Don't be like this. **Enter into Islaam Completely.**

Ramadaan is a month of getting training and applying in your life forever, what you learn, only this way your Emaan will increase, otherwise it will be like we are Muslims during Ramadaan only, and rest of the year we are Shaitaan.

You cannot learn during Ramadaan, UNLESS you know **Arabic Language** or at least **read the Translation of Quraan** till you learn the Arabic Language.

May Allah help us to become REAL Muslims to help, serve and save humanity, AMEEN.

Universal Exceptional Fasting-Salaat Timing Method, By Irshad Mahmood:

Allah told to face Makkah means **FOLLOW Makkah** and **get GUIDANCE from Makkah for Hajj, Umrah, Salaat, Ramadaan and Eid etc.**, and do not divide Religion Islaam, since those who Divide their Religion and break up into Sects, thou hast NO part in them in the least: their affair is with Allah, (Ref: Al_Quraan_002:125-129, 002:130-138, 002:142-144, 002:149-150, 002:189, 003:095-097, 003:103, 003:106, 006:096, 006:159, 010:005). **Remember:** When there is summer on the north of equator, there is winter on the south of it and Fasting and Salaat timings are different over there.

Fasting for only few hours is not a fasting at all and fasting for over **16** hours is like having extreme hardship on people. Main purpose of fasting is to follow the commandments of Allah without hardship (Ref: Al_Quraan_002:84-185). To find medical reason, which recommends **12** hours of fasting for health benefits on occasional basis, visit <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fasting>.

Although Allah has granted to skip fasting for those who cannot fast for valid reasons (Ref: Al_Quraan_002:84-185), and provided us following options:

- 1> Fast if you can with no major hardship.
- 2> Skip fasting and makeup on some other days in case you are sick or travel or having extreme hardship.
- 3> Skip fasting and pay due to the poor for those days in case you cannot makeup later.

Below is just a case study (FYI): Since Universe is expanding (Ref: Al_Quraan_051:047). Also people not only started living in the far north and far south on this planet earth, where normal day and night is based on 24 hours clock instead of daylight and night but also moving above in space. It is time now to re-analyze **Fasting** and **Salaat** timing in the light of the Quraan, Really Authentic Hadeeth and Ijtihad. Scholars of the past had suggested on following Makkah timings, or the nearest city on the south below 64 degrees if living north or nearest city on the north below 64 degrees if living on the

south. Great thanks to the scholars of past, who have already done ground works to show us the signs that there is real need for this **simplified Universal Exceptional Fasting/Salaat Timing Method** as an adjustment (Reference: <http://www.islamicvoice.com/2001-06/dialogue.htm> and <http://www.islamicity.com>). Those who fall beyond these limits should follow Makkah (Saudi Arabia) Timing.

To have Iftaar and Sahoor one need certain number of hours gap to digest otherwise it will be like one meal a day, and you might not be able to do the challenging work after few days due to reduced energy level in you.

Also keep in mind that as per medical research **7 to 8 hours** of **sleep** is necessary for a **normal** person. It will be extremely hard for those who drive vehicle or aircraft or spacecraft or any complex machinery and may cause accidents if not taken extra precautions. **Surgeons must avoid surgery if not having enough sleep or have much less energy and cannot concentrate on their duties, to save patients' lives.**

It is not practical, in one hour at night, end fasting, then offer Maghrib Salaat, then offer Isha Salaat, which includes Taraveeh Prayers, then eat Sahoor before start of Fasting, then finally offer Fajr (Dawn) Salaat. Similarly it is not practical to have a one hour period of fasting, and have the remainder be 23 hours of night.

Allah does not wish to make the religion difficult for you, (Ref_Al_Quraan_:002:184-185, 005:006).

Maghrib and Isha Prayers may be combined in case of bad weather, nighttime getting extremely shorter in the extreme regions, etc.

CONCEPT OF TIME FREEZE:

As we have noticed, there is a **NATURAL TIME FREEZE** for certain days during peak summer, as well as peak winter in **Makkah (Saudi Arabia)** which is at **21.4167° N, 39.8167° E**. It will help us understand the concept of **TIME FREEZE**. Extracted time data has been taken from <http://www.guidedways.com>.

Keep in mind that **Sunrise Freeze and Sunset Freeze are on different days in Makkah (Saudi Arabia).**

Date From	Date To	Start of Fajr Freeze	End of Fajr / Sunrise Freeze	Maghrib / Sunset Freeze
May 29, 2011	Jun 16, 2011	04:11 AM	05:38 AM	
Jun 26, 2011	Jul 12, 2011			07:07 PM
Nov 23, 2011	Dec 01, 2011			05:37 PM
Jan 10, 2012	Jan 23, 2012	05:38 AM	07:01 AM	

In Makkah (Saudi Arabia), 21.4167° N, 39.8167° E, during summer peak fasting time is around fifteen (15) hours while in Madinah it is **over** 15 hours and during winter peak fasting time is around twelve (12) hours. Those who live in such an exceptional area (i.e. where it is becoming hardship on them), people can freeze the **Fasting** and **Salaat** Time when fasting time becomes longer than fifteen (16) hours or fasting becomes shorter than twelve (12) hours like in Makkah. Below is an example for **Stockholm (Sweden)**. <http://www.guidedways.com>

Suggested Forced Time Freeze for Salaat and Fasting in Stockholm (Sweden) for summer: Adopt Salaat and Fasting time accordingly for your region. Start of Fajr should be one hour before End of Fajr.

Date From	Date To	Start of Fajr Freeze	End of Fajr Freeze	Maghrib Freeze
Apr 22, 2011	Aug 22, 2011	04:18 AM	05:18 AM	
Apr 22, 2011	Aug 25, 2011			08:17 PM

If in any region Fasting Hours increases beyond sixteen (16) hours, people can freeze that at sixteen (16) hours.

Suggested Forced Time Freeze for Salaat and Fasting in Stockholm (Sweden) for winter: Adopt Salaat and Fasting time accordingly for your region. Start of Fajr should be one hour before End of Fajr.

Date From	Date To	Start of Fajr Freeze	End of Fajr Freeze	Maghrib Freeze
Oct 08, 2011	Feb 23, 2012	06:05 AM	07:05 AM	

If in any region Fasting Hours drops below twelve (12) hours, people can freeze that at twelve (12) hours as well.

People in other regions in the far north or south should follow similar method according to their local time.

Regions falling beyond these limits e.g. in space etc., people should follow Makkah (Saudi Arabia) Fasting/Salaat Timing.

Scholars should adjust their Calendar for the benefit of Muslim Ummah.

The month of Ramadaan is that in which the Quran was revealed, a guidance to men and clear proofs of the guidance and the distinction; therefore whoever of you is present in the month, he shall fast therein, and whoever is sick or upon a journey, then (he shall fast) a (like) number of other days; **Allah desires ease for you, and He does not desire for you difficulty (hardship)**, and (He desires) that you should complete the number and that you should exalt the greatness of Allah for His having guided you and that you may give thanks. **(Al_Quraan_002:185)**

O you who believe! when you rise up to prayer, wash your faces and your hands as far as the elbows, and wipe your heads and your feet to the ankles; and if you are under an obligation to perform a total ablution, then wash (yourselves) and if you are sick or on a journey, or one of you come from the privy, or you have touched the women, and you cannot find water, betake yourselves to pure earth and wipe your faces and your hands therewith, **Allah does not desire to put on you any difficulty**, but He wishes to purify you and that He may complete His favor on you, so that you may be grateful, **(Al_Quraan_005:006)**.

Read Al-Quraan, the Miracle of Miracles and free from contradictions and errors

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