

The SIMPLE TRUTH

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“The Simple Truth”

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Editorial:

THE MONTH OF BLESSING

The blessed month of Ramadhan for fast has come. It is the fourth pillar of Islam. It was the month that the revelation of Holy Quran commenced. It is the reason that Muslims recite the Holy Quran and listen it during taraweeh. The spiritual regimen of fasting, recitation of Holy Quran and devotion, is meant to inculcate in us a true sense of identity.

A Muslim who is recharged during Ramadhan is ever conscious of his/her standing before the One Lord. Such a true believer cannot take any life which has declared as sacred, he cannot rob others of they have posses. He/she is compassionate and caring. Ramadhan exposes us to hunger and thirst. So we become more empathetic people around the globe. Fasting has innumerable benefits. When we refrain ourselves from lust, abstain from eating and drinking for the sake of One Lord, we do it for one purpose, that is obey Lord, worship Him and imbue our heart with God's fear.

We Muslims show the world that we are for peace, justice, pluralism and tolerance. We are

against terrorism, injustice and hate. We stand and speak up against the discourse of hate, intolerance, selfishness which are increasingly raising their heads in the country and world.

In this Holy month, we should be consistent in the remembrance of Allah and continue our relationship with Book of Allah, by reciting it and practicing on it. We should be more charitable and generous and break our bad habits.

Lastly let us remember all those who are Suffering in various parts of the world under various forms of atrocities and persecution. Let us remember those who are sick and suffering. May the Merciful Lord heal them and grant them health and wellness. Let us pray for those who have passed away, male and female, the young and old. Let us remember the Lord of the universe in our prayer to help us and accept our fasting and every good thing we do. Let us pray that Allah may grant us and our countrymen peace, felicity and success. Ameen.

NIGHT OF DIGNITY

“We have indeed sent it down in the Night of Dignity, And what do you know what the Night of Dignity is? The Night of Dignity is better than a thousand months. Therein the angels and the Spirit (Ruhul-Ameen) descend by the command of their Lord, on every errand. It (that Night) is all peace until the rising of the dawn”. (Surah Al-Qadar, 97:1-5)

Qadar means honour and dignity and Lailatul Qadar means the night of honour and dignity. It is this night in which the first divine revelation came to the Prophet (S.A.W.), when he was in prayer in the cave of Hira. Since this night enjoys the honour of having the first revelation brought to the Prophet, it has been named as the Night of Dignity (Lailatul Qadar), and in the Surah Dukhan, it has also been called the “Auspicious Night”.

The greatness of the Night of Dignity is on account of the fact that the revelation of the Quran commenced from this night.

The selection of a night

instead of a day for revealing the Quran is not without good reason. The time of night is quiet and peaceful. The God-loving and virtuous people are more inclined towards God. This peaceful time is very suitable for the nourishment of the soul, and particularly the last hours of the night is the most proper time for praying and for seeking Allah’s help, for this reason the Quran and Hadith have spoken of great importance of praying and seeking Allah’s help in the last part of the night.”

Dr. Abdllah Yusuf Ali writes; “The 21 the 23th, 25th, 27th or 29th of Ramadhan have been suggested as the night of power. The night of power is better than a thousand Months. It transcends time; for it is Allah’s power dispelling the Darkness of Ignorance, by His Revelation, in every kind of affairs.

“A thousand” must be taken in an indefinite sense; as denoting a very long period of time.

The “Spirit” usually understood to the angel Gabriel.

LAST ODD NIGHTS

1. Hazrat Ayesha narrates that the Messenger of Allah has said: “Seek the Night of Dignity (Shabe-Qadar) in the odd nights of Ramadhan (*Bukhari-Kitab Salatul Tarawih*)

2. Hazrat Ayesha (Allah be pleased with her) and Ibn Numair reported Allah’s Messenger (S.A.W.) as saying: Look for (and in the words of Waki, seek) Lailatul Qadar in the last ten nights of Ramadhan. (*Saheeh Muslim, Kitab Al-Sawm, Hadith No. 2632*)

By odd nights are meant the twenty first, the twenty third, the twenty fifth, the twenty seventh and twenty night of the month of Ramadhan. No one night has been fixed so that the yearning to seek it may increase and people may spend more nights in worshipping. From this aspect, the importance of *Eitikaf* (meditation) during the last ten days of Ramadhan is clear.

one part of the world there is night while in the other it is day, therefore when in Makkah there is the Night of Dignity then how the people in distaste regions will find it? The answer is that whatever time the Shariah has declared as auspicious for prayers, for that local time only would be proper, for example, the last part of the night which is considered auspicious for the acceptance or the answering of a man’s prayer, or the time for the Friday congregational prayers is observed according to the local timings and calendar, and this does not take away the blessings or the auspiciousness which are attached to the specific timings, or the days. Similarly, the blessings and the auspiciousness of the Night of Dignity remain undisturbed in spite of following the local timings or calendar, and the people of every region can derive benefit from them.

The question is raised that in

THE MONTH OF RAMADHAN: TIME FOR STOCKTAKING

By Mohammad Rafi

Ramadhan comes every year to remind us that it is not a month of mere fasting but a time to reassess our commitment to God for upholding and practising His directives as revealed in the Holy Qura'n. It is not a month to "finish" reading of the Holy Qura'n in *Taraweeh* in three, six, ten or twenty seven days. The Holy Book was revealed as guidance and has to be attentively and carefully read with attention as well as devotion.

The next step is to comprehend the message it contains and apply it practically in our daily life for a peaceful, contented and harmonious living. The rapid unintelligible reading of the Holy Qura'n in the month of Ramadhan and in other months too is quite common. The Holy Qura'n talks about those people who study the Qura'n as it should be studied: (Sura Al-Baqarah: 221)

The word Qira'at means mere reading and *Tilawat* means reading with full comprehension.

The commonly-used term "fast" does not clearly indicate the true meaning and spirit of the month. The Qura'nic term *Saum* means controlling one's desires and disciplining oneself within the limits prescribed by God. Sa'im is the one who stops himself from treading the wrong path by controlling himself.

Muslims all over the world generally observe this month in a routine manner by fasting from dawn to dusk. They feel at the time of *Iftar* that their obligations are fulfilled. Little do they realize that Islam as

a way of life, is a round the clock affair. It is not confined to rituals, but encompass all their activities. Rituals are easy to perform and are usually satisfying. A true test of Muslim comes in the practical application of Divine laws in everyday life.

The Holy Qura'n says that this month has been chosen for collective training. The objective of this training is to establish Allah's supremacy for He has shown us a well-lighted way. (Sura Al-Baqarah: 185)

The Holy Qura'n is now recited to acquire the reward of a virtuous act: It is because the way the Holy Qura'n is recited during *Taraweeh* prayers is neither understood nor does the congregation comprehend as to what they have listened. The Holy Qura'n is the most widely read Book in the world but sadly its readers are not aware of its meanings. This injustice is not done to any other book in the world.

Ramadhan provides us an opportunity to refresh our beliefs and the Qura'nic teachings. The Holy Qura'n tells us that if humanity follows the Divine guidance in letter and spirit, it will rediscover the Paradise that was lost by man as a result of disobedience of God's instructions.

Through this message Prophet Muhammad (may blessing and peace of Allah be upon him) reformed and transformed a cruel, unjust, ignorant and disintegrated society into a united, just and enlightened one. Today, Muslims who were directed by the Holy Qura'n to work toward solving the problems of humanity are unable to solve their own problems.

The month also emphasises that freedom of faith is the corner stone of Islam. There is no compulsion or coercion in Islam (2 : 250). The Christian missionary T.W. Aranold wrote: “For any organised attempt to force the acceptance of Islam on the non-Muslim population or of any systematic persecution intended to stamp out Christian religion we hear nothing. Had the Caliphs chosen to adopt either course of action, they might have swept away Christianity as easily as Ferdinand and Isabella drove Islam out of Spain.”

The basic objective of the revelation of the Holy Qura’n during this month was to give Muslims specific guidance to develop themselves. For that, it is important to have an ideal standard. This objective standard incorporates all attributes and develop these attributes, within human limits, he come near to God.

During Ramadhan and at all times Muslims should strive to protect themselves from the dangers of evil and adopt the Divine laws. The next step is that of thanking God for the rewards that are forthcoming as a result of disciplining their lives.

If you ask a Muslim the reason for his fasting, he would straightway respond by saying that he is obeying the directives given in the Holy Qura’n (2: 183) In other words he accepts the fact that the Divine directives have to be obeyed. This simple principle should be applied to all other directives; otherwise we would be accepting one directive of the Holy Qura’n and ignoring others.

The Holy Qura’n was revealed from time to time over a period of 23 years. Prophet Muhammad (may blessing and peace of Allah be upon him) had made foolproof arrangements for its transcription

and preservation and before he died it had been fully written and compiled in the form of a book by honourable, pious and just writers. This is how the Holy Qura’n testifies to its compilation negating the man-made and confusing theories.

This Holy month tells us that individual interest has to be replaced by the ideal of the good of humanity at large. Equity and justice should prevail over oppression and exploitation. Man’s desire to dominate others must end and every one must live in peace and harmony. This is exactly the opposite of what Muslims are now doing.

Ramadhan also reminds us that men have no right to rule over other men: yet it does not advocate a lawless, anarchical society. It lays down the principle that Allah alone has the right to rule over them (12: 40) and none ahs the right to any share in it (18: 26).

Sovereignty belongs to Allah alone “The question arises how Allah should be obeyed. The answer is by observing His laws as given in the Holy Qura’n. This totally negates theocracy and modern secularism.

Ramadhan also marks us think about the importance of the Qura’nic teachings in our daily life. It should generate new energy and conviction in discovering the forgotten values of Islam.

Islam is the name of obedience to Divine laws, not by compulsion but by obedience from core of the heart. It is the accomplishment of laws in such a way that a true follower of these laws cannot ever touch a thing unlawful.

Ramadhan is stocktaking time through which we have to evaluate the sum total of our deeds and consequences spread over the whole year and to oversee as to what extent we have marched ahead on this scale in one year.

WELCOME THE MONTH OF THE QURAN

By: Dr. Muhammad Salem

Allah has given the month of Ramadhan a special virtue over the other months of the year by mentioning its name in the Holy Qura'n, by revealing the Qura'n in it and by prescribing fasting on Muslims during this month to promote their power of will and teach them self restraint, thus associating the bliss of the revelation of the Holy Qura'n with the prescription of fasting as an expression of gratitude to Allah for such a great blessing.

This strong link between the revelation of the Holy Qura'n as a blessing and the fasting as an expression of gratitude to Allah is clearly indicated in the verse: "The month of Ramadhan, during which the Qura'n was revealed, a guidance for mankind, and clear proofs of the guidance and the criterion. Whoever of you is resident, let him fast the month." (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:185)

The Holy Qura'n is a Constitution for life by which Allah has meant to move human beings from misery to happiness from the moment He sent our Prophet Muhammad (may blessing and

peace of Allah be upon him) until the day of Judgement. Since it was revealed in the month of Ramadhan, the Prophet (may blessing and peace of Allah be upon him) and Muslims after him recite it day and night during this blessing month. The Holy Prophet used to recite several long Surah of the Holy Qura'n in one single night. Moreover, Angel Gabriel would recite the Holy Qura'n with the Holy Prophet (may blessing and peace of Allah be upon him) every Ramadhan. Our rightly guided ancestors would spend the days of Ramadhan reciting the Holy Qura'n and studying its meanings.

The Holy Qura'n was revealed to communicate to people the purpose of their existence, inform them of the nature of this life, the basis of the test put to them in this world, and their duties towards their Creator, to give them the good news of the hereafter, and describe what constitutes through the Angel Gabriel to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may blessing and peace of Allah be upon him) in Arabic. The revelation began with the words: "Read in the name of

your Lord.” (96:1) Other Surahs and verses followed over a period of 23 years depending on the events that took place during the life of the Holy Prophet (may blessing and peace of Allah be upon him). It is the major and eternal miracle of the Prophet (may blessing and peace of Allah be upon him). Immune to any possible form of distortion, it is a book with miraculous fluency, purity and eloquence to an astonishing level. This manifests itself in the miraculous style of the Holy Qura’n characterized by clarity, force and beauty which make human being, unable to imitate. The Holy Qura’n is a guidance and mercy for all mankind. It is also the definitive criterion by which to distinguish right from wrong, for which reason another name of the Holy Qura’n is “Al-Furqan”, which means the “criterion”. Indeed, it moved the Arab from the state of ignorance in which they had been engulfed before the advent of Islam to the position of leadership of the whole world.

The Holy Qura’n challenged the Arabs to bring a similar book. When they could not do it, they were given an easier challenge of bringing just to Surahs similar to the Qura’n. When they even failed to do this, they were challenged to bring one single Surah, but they

failed to produce anything close to the Holy Qura’n.

The Holy Qura’n enjoys a special style of expression. Its word arrangement is neither metrical and rhythmic poetry, nor is it free prose. In this manner, one finds that the Holy Qura’n reveals all of its meanings in the expression that befits it in the words around it and the meanings with it you will not find that lacking in any of its verses. The challenge to imitate it is clear in its style in terms of being a special genre of speech which does not resemble any speech of human beings, in terms of the application of meanings in words and sentences which befit them and in terms of the effect of the words on the hearing of those who comprehend its eloquence and look deeply into its meanings. Even those who do not comprehend its meanings feel the majestic eloquence it presents to the extent that they differentiate it from human speech. Although it is not a book of history, it has contained news of the past, the present and the future.

The way the Qura’n is arranged is miraculous and a clear proof that it is a revelation from Allah. Humans usually arrange their written works in an introduction, the main body and a conclusion. No author would put the

conclusion before the introduction. However, this rule does not apply to the Holy Qura'n.

The Holy Qura'n has revitalized the goals of the life and commissioned Muslims to play the role of leaders. It has given them the right to guide the lost humanity to light, order and discipline. The concept of monotheism and values of equality, solidarity and morality, the principles that protect faith, life, property, reason and offspring and the stringent measures to eliminate crime all lead the world to a happy life in this world and a happier one in the life to come.

Throughout history, Muslim scholars have authored thousands of books on the various sciences of the Holy Qura'n. Jalaluddin Al-Souyouti stated that Muslim scholars are unanimously agreed that the number of the Holy Qura'n Surahs is 114. Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) said that the number of the verses of the Holy Qura'n is 6616, that the number of the verses of its words is 77934, and that the number of its letters is 323671.

In his book the History of Arabs, Philip Hitti states that the number of Surah revealed during the Makkah period are ninety. The reflect the state of struggle of the Prophet (may blessing and peace of Allah be upon him) and his

companions (may Allah be blessed with them). These Surah are short and replete with calls to monotheism. However, the number of Surahs revealed during the Madinan period is twenty four, The are long and rich with legal provisions and regulations concerned with social life.

A major characteristic of the Holy Qura'n is that reciting it is itself an act of worship. However, the Qura'n is not meant to be chanted on certain occasions. Rather, it is a guide to a comprehensive style of life on which the early generation of Muslims built their civilization and took it as a pillar for their state, thought and society.

It is not strange for Muslims to take the Qura'n to heart throughout the months of the year especially during Ramadhan as it is the month of the Qura'n.

Last but not least, the Qura'n is the source of happiness for Muslims and a spring of inspiration and power. Thanks to it, Muslims conquered the world, became the leaders of nations and the best nation ever, a position which they will not regain unless and until they revive its teachings in their hearts, minds and real life.

FATAWAS FOR RAMADHAN

By: Allama Abdul Aziz Ben Abdullah Ben Baz

Commencing Fast in a State of Ceremonial Impurity

Question: Can a person in a state of impurity (Janabat) fast, even if he delays washing his body (ghusl) until after dawn break? Is it true that a fasting person must wash his body not later than midday?

Answer: If a person wakes up in the morning of a day of fasting and finds himself in the state of ceremonial impurity i.e. *Janabat*, his fasting remains valid. He needs only to have his major ablution, i.e. *ghusl*. The same applies if he gets into the state of ceremonial impurity during the night and delays having a shower to remove it. That does not invalidate his fasting. Obviously, he may miss Fajr prayer if he delays having a bath.

That such a person should take his shower before midday is preferable, but if he does not, the delay does not invalidate his fast. The preference here is only to take care of his prayers. Otherwise, his fast remains valid. While missing a prayer does not invalidate fasting, it is strongly censurable. The two acts of worship are treated

separately, but missing either one is an act that should not be done by a Muslim.

CONCESSION OF NOT FASTING

Question: At times, I get a very severe pain in my neck which needs analgesic tablets to relieve me because I suffer from cervical spondylitis. It happened once or twice in the month of Ramadhan that the pain was so severe that I could not bear it any longer and broke my fast to take the tablets. Should I still feed one poor person for breaking my fast? What procedure should I follow if it happens again? Perhaps I should add that I get such a severe pain two or three times a month.

Answer: It is important that a Muslim should know enough Islamic teachings to enable him to fulfil his duties in the proper manner without accidentally invalidating any duty he is fulfilling. To do this, he needs to study a few Islamic principles and learn the regulations which govern each of the main duties of Islam. There are certain matters which you can fulfill once you know the Islamic position on them. Once you learn that it is forbidden to steal,

lie, backbite, give a false testimony, drink intoxicants, you can refrain from doing any of these vices immediately, without any need to learn any thing more concerning them. It is needless to say that if you undertake a more detailed study of the Islamic principles, you will be able to understand how Islam views every aspect of human activity, but that is not particularly essential to implement such teaching of Islam which relate to these particular aspects.

On the other hand, it is not enough that you learn that it is your duty to pray, pay Zakah, fast or do the pilgrimage. In each one of these, you have to make a further study in order to know when or how you have to fulfil any of these duties. Moreover, you should learn what thing to avoid in order not to render your efforts null and void. How can any Muslim offer a valid prayer, if he does not know that he has to have ablution before it and to stand up facing the direction which leads from his spot to the Ka'abah in Makkah, and that he should offer five prayers every day, and that each one of them has its time range during which it must be offered? How can one fast properly if he does not know that it is during the month of Ramadhan that fasting is a duty, or that he should start this fasting at dawn and finish at sunset?

Fasting in the month of Ramadhan in one of the main Islamic duties. Every Muslim who is able to do so must fast every day of the month of Ramadhan from dawn to dusk, during which time he may not eat or drink or have sex with his wife. Allah knows that people may go through certain conditions when they cannot fulfil the duties of fasting or when its fulfillment presents considerable hardship. Therefore, he has allowed people who may have such conditions for doing so, requiring them at the same time to compensate for the days of Ramadhan during which they could not fast by fasting later in the year an equal number of days to these days. This means that the idea of compensating for non-fasting in Ramadhan is acceptable while such an idea is not acceptable in another major Islamic duty; namely, the obligatory prayers. It is not open to any person to decide that he is unable to offer them at a later time. This principle is acceptable in-fasting on certain conditions. Moreover, the compensation is of a duration similar to the concession. If a person does not fast two days in Ramadhan for valid reasons he has to compensate for them by fasting two days (sometime) later. There is no punishment and no need for undertaking an additional duty by

way of atonment.

This situation which allow or require a Muslim not to fast during the month of Ramadhan are illness, traveling and, for women only, being pregnant, breastfeeding and having period. There are certain details for each of these conditions.

When people know about the concession of not fasting when one is ill or traveling, they assume that the illness must be of the severe kind and that the travel must be of the very tiring type to qualify the ill person or the traveller to make use of this concession. This is not right. Allah has stated this condition in the Holy Qura'n in the most general of terms. Therefore, any situation which people normally describe as illness in all that is needed for a person to make use of Allah's concession. The only thing required of him is to compensate for each day he missed for a valid reason after Ramadhan. It is not necessary that those compensatory days be offered consecutively. Compensatory fasting may be taken at any time during the rest of the year until the next month of Ramadhan is due.

Exemption from fasting during illness or travel is a concession of which all Muslims may avail themselves. If they fast, then their fasting is valid, although it is perhaps more preferable they

should avail themselves of the concession. In the case of a woman in her period or in her postnatal bleeding period, non-fasting is mandatory. If she fast, her fasting is not acceptable. Indeed, she puts herself in a difficult position if she does. Compensation by fasting a similar number of days would still be required in these cases.

As for a woman who is pregnant or who is breast-feeding, she may not fast if she fears for her health or (for the health of) her baby. I will come to the compensation she has to offer in a little while. My reader asks about feeding a poor person. This is a compensation for not fasting which was required of Muslims in the very early days of Islam when fasting was not obligatory. A Muslim could then choose not to fast, but to feed a poor person instead. Ever since the second year of the Prophet's settlement in Madinah, fasting in the month of Ramadhan became obligatory on all Muslims who are able to undertake this duty. It is no longer a matter of choice between fasting and feeding a poor person. However, if a person is in such a condition that makes him unable to fast in Ramadhan and unable to fast later, what can he do? The answer is that compensation by feeding a poor person is operative in this case. For each day of Ramadhan, he should give every

poor person two meals of the average type he has in his home normally. He may, if he so wishes, give the poor person the cost of that meal in cash, according to a number of eminent scholars. The persons to whom this opinion remains valid are: (1) a very old man or woman who can no longer bear the difficulty of fasting from dawn to dusk; (2) a person who is chronically ill and has little hope of recovery; and (3) a woman, who is pregnant or breast feeding, particularly one who finds herself pregnant this year, breast-feeding next year, pregnant again the following year and breast-feeding the year after that. She is thus in a similar situation to a person who is chronically ill. In all these cases, compensation may be made by way of feeding a poor person for one day (two meals) in place of each missed day of fasting.

In this condition which my reader has put to me, this last method of compensation does not apply. When he has this pain, which he says he has two or three times each month, he may go ahead and have his painkiller tablet. What he is required to do is to fast one day in compensation for each day of non-fasting in Ramadhan.

INTAKE OF MEDICINE WHILE FASTING

Question: I would like to know whether intramuscular or intravenous injection may be given to a fasting person, in normal circumstances or in emergency. Can a person who suffers from asthma use his aerosol inhaler while fasting? What is the ruling regarding the case of ear, nasal and eye drops, suppository and the drawing of blood for investigation during fasting?

Answer: Injections of both types may be given to a fasting person in any situation. Similarly, samples of blood may be taken from a person while he is fasting. Some people try to distinguish between intramuscular and intravenous injections, approving of the former and disapproving of the latter. There are certainly no grounds for making such a distinction when neither method is used for feeding purposes.

Likewise, the use of aerosol inhalers by asthma patients, to relieve their breathlessness, is permissible and does not invalidate fasting. There are some scholars who argue that the use of such inhalers invalidates fasting. They advise the patients who continue fasting but to take necessary medication and that they should fast later instead, if they are able to. It is perhaps more correct to advise patients to use the inhaler when the need arises and to

continue their fasting. It is true that one uses the inhaler through one's mouth, but the aim is to get the medicine into the lungs. Some fine particles may be left in the mouth, but this is not food. I personally use my Ventolin inhaler when I need to (use it) during the day of fasting, for I have a mild case of asthma.

The use of ear, nasal and eye drops as well as suppositories is, perhaps, a little more controversial. In past generations, scholars ruled that all these invalidate fasting, since they considered that they went through the passages which lead to the "internal space" of the body. We have now learned that this is not the case. Moreover, as Imam Ibn Hazm says, people do not use these organs to get food inside them. Allah has forbidden us to eat, drink and to have sex during the day of fasting. When we take eye drops or nasal drops, we do not violate His orders, because these are not food or drinks. Hence, they do not invalidate our fasting.

Perhaps I should add a word about illness and fasting. When a person is ill, he is allowed not to fast, provided that he compensates by fasting a similar number of days later. Since Allah has given sick people His concession, it is better if they use it. At the same time, I realize that there are certain conditions which may require the

use of nasal or eye drops, without the person being considered sick enough to justify exemption from fasting.

PREGANANCY AND OTHER SITUATIONS FOR FASTING

Question: Recently my husband heard a teacher saying that a pregnant woman may avail herself of the concession not to fast in Ramadhan only if she fears for her health. If she fears for her baby and does not fast, she is required not only to compensate by fasting a day for a missed day, but also for feeding ten poor people as well. This seems to me a very stringent measure while the case may be a genuine worry for the well-being of an unborn baby. Please comment.

Answer: There is certainly some mistake either by the teacher or by your husband. No scholar mentions a compensation of feeding ten poor people for a day of fasting when the fasting is not observed. When the compensation of feeding is required for any purpose, it takes only feeding poor person two meals for every day when the duty of fasting was not observed for a legitimate reason. Therefore, it could be a mistake of reporting on your husband's part. Or the teacher could have confused the requirement of feeding ten poor people as atonement for an oath that has not been honoured, with

the requirement of feeding one poor person for not fasting.

Be that as it may, scholars have different views on what a pregnant or breast-feeding woman need to do in compensation for not fasting during Ramadhan on account of her respective situation. The differences are the result of how scholars view the situation of these women.

If you take their condition as similar to that of an ill person, then you come up with a requirement that differs from that defined by a secular who considers the condition as similar to that of a person who is too weak to fast.

If we take the case of a pregnant woman similar to that caused by illness, then she is required to fast a day for a missed day when she has given birth and regained her strength. While on the other hand, if we consider her case similar to that of a person weakened by old age and unable to fast then the requirement is that she should compensate by feeding one poor person for each day when she does not fast.

Some scholars find her situation having similarity to both conditions and require the compensation required of both. Considering all views, it is perhaps more valid to say that the initial requirement of compensation that applies to a woman who does not fast because

of pregnancy or breast-feeding is that she should fast a similar number of days after Ramadhan in over, and she is in a position to do so.

However, a woman may find herself pregnant this year and breast-feeding next year, then pregnant again the following year, than breast-feeding the year after that. She may not find herself able to fast for several consecutive years. In such a situation, she may take advantage of compensating by feeding one poor person two meals for each day she has not fasted. It is not necessary to feed the same poor person. She may feed any number of persons, provided she keeps a proper count and ensures that for each day she feeds one poor person two meals.

I hope I have clarified the question for you. You will appreciate that there is nothing stringent about such a requirement. Indeed, the concession given by God to those who are travelling and those who are unwell, including pregnant and breast-feeding women and the elderly people, which exempts them from fasting and replaces it with appropriate compensation, has a clear purpose outlined by God in the Holy Qura'n: "Allah intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship." (Sura Al-Baqarah: 185)

It is human beings who make things difficult and hard to follow, while God wishes to make them easy.

SWIMMING WHILE FASTING

Question: Is it permissible for a fasting person to have a bath or to swim in a pool or a river where there is a chance of water entering his ear or nose, etc?

Answer: If you are asked to define Islamic fasting, you are likely to say that it is a deliberate abstention from eating, drinking, and sex, every day during the month of Ramadhan from dawn until sunset. If this is a correct definition, which it is indeed - if we add to it that such deliberate abstention is undertaken in obedience to Allah and fulfillment of His order – then anything that constitutes a breach of any restriction which fasting involves will render your fast invalid. Therefore, in order to know whether a particular action invalidates your fasting or not, we have to make sure whether it constitutes such a breach. When you swim, it is true that there is a chance of having a drop of water getting in your ear or nose, but does it constitute drinking? On the other hand, can the use of nasal eye or eardrops be considered a form of drinking? Obviously not. Hence, such use does not

invalidate fasting. Similarly, the use of nasal or mouth inhaler, of the type normally used by people who have asthma is perfectly appropriate for a fasting person.

TASTING FOOD WHILE FASTING

Question: I have read that a fasting woman is allowed to taste the food that she cooks for her husband if he is of the type who gets very angry if the taste is not right. If this is true is it permissible for a fasting mother to taste the food she prepares for her infant?

Answer: Let us first be clear about what we are talking about. Eating is different from tasting. You do not need to eat a mouthful or a spoonful of something and swallow it in order to determine its taste. If a woman takes a spoonful of her cooking, chews it and swallows it, she spoils her fast. Whether she does it in order to avoid a row with her husband who may be very difficult to please when it comes to food, or for any other reason, the verdict remains the same. What she does in this case is eating, which is forbidden during fasting.

However, it is not necessary for any person to swallow something in order to find out its taste. It is with the front part of one's tongue that one finds out how something tastes. If a woman puts a small piece of her cooking in her mouth in order to taste it with her tongue,

without allowing it to reach her throat, before bringing it out her fast remains valid. However, scholars agree that this should be done only when there is a real need for it, as in the case of a woman's husband who may be very upset over his food. A woman should try to make her husband more understanding when it comes to cooking while fasting.

The need to taste an infant's food is less pressing, since it is possible to feel the temperature of the food with the back of one's hand. It is also possible to determine how sweet or salty the food is, by following the right recipe. But if the tasting is done as I have explained it does not invalidate fasting. The thing to watch out for is whether the woman feels the taste in her throat. If she does, she has invalidate her fast.

USE OF MISWAK OR BRUSHING TEETH

A *miswak* is a short stick which is taken from the branches of a particular tree, known as "araak". When the outer skin is removed, it can be used as a toothbrush. Normally it is used without any toothpaste. It apparently has good cleansing effects on the teeth. The use of such a *miswak* is recommended during ablution and before prayer.

To use a miswak or a tooth brush while fasting is permissible.

However, when one used toothpaste, one parts oneself unnecessarily, is a position which could spoil one's fast. When one rinses his mouth, one needs to do that thoroughly, not as one normally does is ablution. Therefore, there is really a danger of swallowing something involuntarily. That is enough to render his fasting invalid for the day. From another point of view, it is discouraged to use a miswak or toothbrush after midday on any fasting day. The Holy Prophet mentions that the smell of the mouth of a person who is fasting is "better," in Allah's sight, than the smell of musk." When he uses a miswak or a toothbrush, he spoils that smell. This is the reason why it is discouraged. But it does not invalidate his fasting if he does not swallow anything of the water with which he rinses his mouth or washes out the toothpaste.

HAPPY EID GREETINGS

*Maulana Asghar Ali Imam Mahadi Salafi, Ameer Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth Hind, Maulana Mohd Haroon Sanabili (General Secretary) and Alhaj Wakeel Parvez (Finance Secretary), rest of office bearers of Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth Hind, and office of the Simple Truth extend their happy Eid Greetings to all Muslim brothers and Sisters. ****

ZAKAT: AN OBLIGATORY ACT OF ISLAM

By Abdul Hamid Siddiqi

Of the five fundamentals of Islam, Zakat occupies the third position, the first being the Kalima Taiyyeba (La ilaha illallah, Muhammadur Rasoolullah-

The second being prayer (Salat) and the third being Zakat. This word is derived from Zaka, which means “it (a plant grew.)” The second derivative of this word carries the sense of purification, e.g. *Qad aflaha man zakkaha* (he is indeed successful who purified himself.) The other word used for Zakat both in the Holy Quran and the Hadeeth is *Sadaqa* which is derived from *Sidq* (the truth). Both these words are highly meaningful.

The spending of wealth for the sake of Allah purifies the heart of man of the love of material wealth. The man who spends it offers that as a humble gift before the Lord and thus affirms the truth that nothing is dearer to him in life than the love of Allah and that he is fully prepared to sacrifice everything for His Sake.

Secondly, Zakat is the most effective measure to improve the economic condition of the have-nots. It is not, however, a mere tax, but a form of worship whereby a man comes close to his Lord. The Muslims have, therefore, been

enjoined to pay *Zakat* with the same sense of earnestness and devotion in which the seeker of the Lord observes the prayer. The primary motive of Zakat is religious and spiritual, while the social and economic aspects are subservient to it. It’s social significance is that it awakens in man the sense of brotherhood with less fortunate members of society, and stirs him moral conscience to make sacrifice for their sake. From the economic point of view it discourages hoarding and concentration of wealth and helps it steady and constant flow from the rich to poor. It is in fact a good means of providing purchasing power to the poor, for ameliorating their hard lot and enabling them to stand on their own legs.

It should also be remembered that *Zakat* or *Sadaqa* in Islam is not a voluntary act of charity which a rich man gives to the poor out of his own sweet will, but it is an obligatory act which every Muslim is enjoined upon to perform if he is sincere in his belief in God and the Hereafter. Thus there is no burden of obligation on one who receives *Zakat*, but a sense of thankfulness and gratitude on the part of the giver, since he has been enabled by the recipient to discharge his obligation that he owes to

God and society.

“(O Prophet)! Take sadaqa (zakat) out of their property – thou wouldst cleanse them and purify them thereby.” Al-Quran, 9:103.)

“And away from it (the Hell) shall be kept the most faithful to duty who gives his wealth, purifying himself.” (92:17-18)

So much is the importance of *Zakat* in Islam that it has been mentioned at 82 places in the Holy Quran in close connection with prayer. The companions of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) knew its basic importance in Islam. It is a known fact that after the death of the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.) when some of the tribes, who believed in the Oneness of God and observed prayer, refused to pay *Zakat*, to the first Caliph Abu Bakr Siddiq (R.A.). In an answer to the advice of Hadhrat Umar (R.A.) to show tolerance towards such people, Abu Bakr said in explicit terms, “By Allah, I would definitely wage a war against them who dissociate prayer from *Zakat*. “*Zakat* is paid on the surplus of a payment on the accumulated wealth leaving aside animals and agricultural yield, *Zakat* is paid at almost a uniform rate of 2.5 percent.

The minimum standard of surplus wealth over which *Zakat* is charged is known as *Nisab*. It differs with different kinds of property, the most important being 200 dirhams of 52.5 tolas (nearly 21 oz.) in

case of silver, and 20 mithqals or 7.5 tolas (nearly 3 oz) in case of gold. The *nisab* of cash is the same as that of gold and silver.

As regards the persons to whom *Zakat* is to be paid, they have been clearly described in the Holy Quran: “Alms are only for the poor, the needy, the officials charged with the duty of collection, those whose hearts are inclined to truth, the ransoming of captives, those in debt, in the way of Allah, and the wayfarer.” (9: 60)

A basic principle has been laid down for the *Sadaqa* in the agricultural produce. If the land is irrigated by artificial methods, 1/20th part of the yield is to be paid as *Zakat*, but if the land is irrigated by rainfall, streams, rivers, fountains or by the inner moisture of the earth; i.e. by the natural resources of water, then 1/10th (*usher*) is to be paid as *Zakat*. There is some difference of opinion whether *usher* is levied on all types of agricultural yield or on some particular types. Imam Shaukani and Amir Muhammad b. Ismail are in favour of the second opinion; i.e. it is to be paid on wheat, barley, dates and raisians. Imam Malik and Shafii believe that *Zakat* is payable on that yield which can be dried or stored for food.

According to Imam Abu Hanifa, *Zakat* is to be paid on all types of agricultural yield, provided the aim of cultivation is to improve upon the land and make it more useful for growing of crops. Thus only fuel, bamboo, grass and those trees which bear

no fruit are exempted from *Zakat*. He considers *Zakat* to be compulsory even on vegetables and fruit, which according to some Ahadith, are exempted from *Zakat*. The scholars have reconciled the two views, saying that the exemption granted in case of vegetables implies that the proceeds of the *Zakat* are to be sent to *Baitul Mal*, and the owner may himself distribute it among the poor.

(Editor's Note)

PUNISHMENT FOR NON-PAYMENT OF ZAKAT

(Zakat is an obligatory act of worship. The Holy Quran has repeatedly mentioned Salat and Zakat as the foundation of Faith. By paying Zakat or fulfilling the right of the fellow beings man not only performs his duty but also provides means to perfect his own personality.

The wealth that could prove to be the source of one's ease and comfort on the Day of Judgement if Zakat were paid on it, would become curse for its owner, if Zakat were not paid. A miser and lover of money who, like a snake, sits on his wealth disallowing his fellow beings to be benefited from it, will be severely punished on the Day of Judgement. His wealth will become a snake with black spot and bite him. "Black Spots" on the body of the snake indicates the enormity of the punishment as only a very poisonous snake has black spots on its body.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) said: "The man whom Allah gave wealth and he did not pay Zakat on it, then, on the Day of Judgement this property will become an extremely poisonous bald snake and bite him. The snake will have two black spots on its foreheads and will entwine itself round his neck and grip his jaws and say: "I am your wealth and your treasure." Then the Prophet (S.A.W.) recited the verse of the Holy Quran: "And let not those who covetously withhold of the gifts which Allah has given them of His grace, think that it is good for them; may it will be the worse for them; soon shall the things which they covetously withheld be tied to their necks like a twisted collar on the Day of Judgement." (Bukhari and Muslim)

A VERY HAPPY RAMADHAN

A very Happy Ramadhan to our readers. Since this is the month of Ramadhan, the month of Quran, tawbah and restrain, we as a Muslim can at the very least moderate ourselves in an attempt to reap the blessings that Allah promised us.

Maulana Asghar Ali Imam Mahadi Salafi

Ameer Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth Hind

Maulana Mohd Haroon Sanabli
General Secretary, Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth Hind

Al Haj Wakeel Parvez

Finance Secretary Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth Hind

TAQWA: MESSAGE OF RAMADHAN

By: Momin Noorul Hasan

“O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you even as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may ward off (evil)” (Surah Al-Baqrah:2,183)

These verses of the Holy Quran bring to light the distinctive characteristic of the Islamic fast, i.e. “warding off evils”. In Arabic it is known as *Taqwa* which means “fear of God” or keeping oneself away from vices”.

As a matter of fact, Ramadhan is a month of training which aims at training the Muslims to keep themselves away from vices for the rest of 11 months to follow. But, unfortunately, the Muslims have confined *Taqwa* to this month only which is totally against the spirit of the Holy Quran. In fact, *taqwa* which is the fundamental message of Ramadhan is not an yearly practice as the Muslims have made it for their own convenience. On the contrary, *Taqwa* should permeate their daily lives.

The Islamic fast tries to create *Taqwa* in two ways- physically as well as spiritually. Physically, the keeper of the fast must abstain from eating, drinking and coition from morning to evening. It is

notable that which fasting, the Muslims have to go without food and water for more than 12 hours either in summer or in winter. So it is a very hard worship ordained by the Holy Quran. Surely, a training is always hard. It is for this reason that wayfarers and the sick and children are exempted from fasting. But they (excluding children) have to complete the fasting in other days of the year.

Fast begins as soon as the whiteness of the dawn becomes manifest from the blackness of the night. That is why the Muslims have to wake up a bit after midnight to eat what is generally called *sahri*, the meal emphasized by the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) in order to get strength during the day. Traditions say that if one hears the call of Azaan, he should not give up eating, instead, he should finish *Sahri* before the call concludes. Thus it is imperative to eat *Sahri* in order to gain strength to complete the fast till the sun sets in the evening.

The time of breaking the fast is really very very auspicious, sacred and full of blessings. Special arrangements are made in homes, in mosques and in some Muslim

restaurants, free of cost, for breaking the fast. A number of food items, including various kinds of fruits, sweets and other dishes are prepared and served to the observers of the fast. This is popularly known as *iftaar*. It is generally asserted that prayers entreated to God at the time of *iftaar* are answered by Him.

Sofar as spiritual *Taqwa* is concerned, the Muslims keep their eyes and hearts clean of all lustful things and thoughts during the fast. They spend their wealth in the way of Allah by paying the *Zakat*- the poor due and alms to the poor, the needy and the deserved. They submit their own choice to the will of God by reciting the Holy Quran and offering *taraweeh* prayers besides congregational prayers five times a day with renewed zeal and devotion. They remain patient at the time of anger as patience is an inseparable part of *taqwa*. They try their level best to eschew all verbal and corporal disputes as traditions say that abuses, harsh talks and quarrels spoil the fast. Some Ulama have gone to the extent of saying that these things even break the fast depriving one of the immense reward of fasting promised by God.

It goes without saying that the tolerance and self restraint gained on account of fasting can check many a clash, communal or otherwise, in our country if applied to every day life by the Muslims.

Thus they can proudly say to the world that Islam does not teach violence but patience of the highest quality. Their life can also become as pious, calm and full of bliss as those of the Muslims belonging to the era of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.).

One may ask, and he will be certainly right in doing so, as to why they Muslims are not so tolerant today as they should have been. The answer is quite simple. Today the Muslims have given themselves to mundane pleasure. They do not care how they come by wealth. Nor do they care how they spend the wealth which Allah has bestowed upon them. They spend it lavishly on worldly comforts and luxuries. They have become accustomed to live life of their own choice. Though they remember very well the teachings of Islam, they are not prepared to conform to those teachings.

But, unfortunately, they are Muslims, though they can be counted on fingers, who still firmly stick to *Taqwa* in their every day life, that is, they fear Allah and remember Him as He deserves to be remembered. They are the true Muslims and are remembered by Him as He has promised in the Holy Quran. Such Muslims are successful in this world as well as in the Hereafter.

News from Headquarter:

THE EXECUTIVE BODY'S MEETING OF MARKAZI JAMIAT AHLE HADEETH HIND CONCLUDED AMICABLY

Important dicisions, suggestions and Resolutions adopted

New Delhi 18th March 2023

The Executive Body's meeting of Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth Hind held under the chair of its Ameer, Maulana Asghar Ali Imam Mahadi Salafi on 18th March 2023 (Saturday) at Ahle Hadeeth Complex, Abul Fazal Enclave, Okhla, New Delhi where respected members of Executive Body from various states and special invitees were present. The meeting started with recitation of Holy Quran by Dr. Abdul Aziz Madani.

The Ameer, after Hamdu Salat and welcoming address delivered his counsil to maintain strong faith in One Lord, improve the belief in Monotheism, follow the Kitabu Sunnat, taqwa wa tiharat, unity, co-existence, brotherhood,

friendship, good morality and transparency in daily affairs. He emphasized to follow the discipline like Salfe Saleheen. He advised to follow the communal harmony, familiarize the human relation, enlighten the Islamic morals and practice to countrymen. He strongly condemned every type of terrorism, distorting peace, religious hatred, unsocial activities and extremism. He said that strong faith, patience, courage and wisdom are good signs of KHIRE UMMAT.

Maulana Haroon Sanabli (the General Secretary) presented the Activity Report of Markazi Jamiat which was appreciated and adopted with Satisfaction. Moreover, Alhaj Wakeel Parwez (Finance Secretary) presented the Income and

March, 2023

“The Simple Truth”

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Expendure Report of Markazi Jamiat which was happily accepted. The meeting viewed Jamiat's dawati, educational, organizational, constructional, social plans and human services in depth. The Excutive Body appealed the generous people to finance the Ahle Hadees Manzil at Jama Masjid Delhi and Ahle Hadeeth Complex Okhla which has numerous aims. The Excetive Body congratulated the newly elected office bearers. The following resolutions related to Mulku-Mullat, nations and world affairs were accepted: The resolutions adopted were to familiarize the Islamic teachings and high standard of morality and to remove ill-feelings, spread in society, rumours, hate of others. Religious books, their religious leaders as well as give respect to them. Moreover, they appeal generous people to finance the Madarsas and take action again the hate mongers targeting a particular group. It appeled to familiarize communal harmony and brotherhood in the country which were the old tradtion of the country. Moreover, it strongly

condemned the terror acts in the country and abroad as well as the unsocial activities in the world. Likewise, it appealed the governments to give compensation to youth released from jail by respected Judiciary and execute the recommendations of established commissions and committees to upgrade the educational, social and economic conditions of one of the large minority group in the country. The Executive Body appealed to control the day to day high prices, unemployment and create more jobs and make awareness among public of harmfulness of dowry. It was expressed sorrow over the earthquake in Turkey and Syria and showed sympathy over the loss of life and property and appealed the world to help in reconstruction work and relief matter. In resolutions it was said that war between some countries is not the Soutlion of any problem. It should be solved through negotiation. The Palestinians right should be given to them by Israil and it should be made a responsible country to follow the international law which

is in favour of humanity. The executive Body welcomed the renewed diplomatic relation between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Although the Saudi government always made a close and pleasant relation with its neighbours.

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED:

1. In the present circumstances, dawatu-tabligh is very important. Sofar we failed to do so. Although there are various organizations and institutions for this purpose but there are negativeness. The Executive Body of Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth Hind appeals all Muslim Organisations, institutions, Imams, and Islamic scholars to convey the Islamic teachings to countrymen so that our existence could be useful for others. Specially there is need to convey the Islamic monotheism in light of Islamic teachings to remove the ill-feeling of countrymen.

2. There has been tradition of respecting the other religious books and leaders in this country. The constitution gives freedom of religion and life according to his/her choice. It is sad that some

people for certain political reasons do insult the religious books and interpret it wrongly. The Executive Body appeals all citizens to respect other religious books and leaders as well as refrain themselves from interpreting wrongly the others religious books.

3. The Executive Body believes that deeni Madaris and Jamiat are financially in bad shape after Corona virus. Their educational condition is in bad condition. Therefore, it is necessary to bring back it like previous one. So the Executive Body appeals the generous and wealthy people to finance them like before.

4. The provoking speech is increasing day-by-day in our beloved country. Some politicians are creating hatred in the country without any fear of law by their provocative speeches and defaming the country. So the Executive Body appeals the government to take action against such a hate mongers so that there could be brotherhood and communal harmony in the country as well as good image of the country could prevail.

5. The Executive Body of Markazi Jamiat is condemning the terror acts and unsocial activities in the country and abroad. It is unjust to associate terror and unsocial acts with a particular religion. Because on religion of the world does not permit such an unsocial & and terror acts. The persons involved in such acts are responsible for themselves.

6. The Executive Body believes that action should be taken against the law breakers and all should be treated equally. The wrong doers, who were honourably released from the jail by respectful judiciary. The government should compensate them to bring back them to normal life and action should be taken against those who were ruining their life.

7. There are economic, educational and social backwardness of Muslim minority in the country. A number of commissions and committees had recommended to improve their conditions. The Executive Body appeals the central and state governments to implement their recommendations.

8. Presently the day-to-day rising prices and unemployment are serious issues in the country. The poor and middle class families are suffering due to this and they feel difficulty to cope with life. Their house hold needs and education are suffering due to these problems. So the Exective Body appeals to central and state governments to create more jobs and control the high rising prices.

9. The running trend of dowary is getting worse in our socity. The marriage of daughters now a days is getting very difficult affecting Muslim society too, which needs immediate reform. The Executive Body appeals the Imams, khateeb, institutions, social and reforming organizations to familirise its harmfulness to public. So that this ugly face of dowary come to an end.

10. The executive Body expresses its sorrow over the earthquake in Turkey and Syria and showed grave concern on loss of life and property. Moreover, it conveyes the condolences to families, affected pople and its government appealing the world to help and send relief to them. The

Executive Body believes it is a natural disaster through which a lesson is obtained.

11. The war in any part of the world is sorrowful which affects mental, economic, and social conditions. So, it is necessary for affected countries to reconcile the matter through peaceful means and appeal the world powers to make efforts stopping the war.

12. The atrocities of Israil against Palestinians is causing grave concern to peace loving countries. The rights be given to Palestinians. The actions of Israil is against the International law and UN resolutions. It is necessary the Israil should obey the U.N. resolutions to establish peace in Middle East which is useful to humanity.

13. Diplomatic Relation is very important for a country's progress and development because the long breakdown causes harm. Recently Saudi Arabia and Iran have renewed diplomatic relation. Hope the same would contine and better relation between the two could prevail. The Exective Body

welcomes the events and hope the better relation would be beneficial for both the countries.

14. The Executive Body of Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth condoles on the death of Jamat, Jamiat and important personalities like mutuwalli of mosque Taliyan Jodhpur (Rajasthan) Janab Abdur Raheem, Shakeeluz Zaman Ansari the former state minister , Bihar government; Master Raeesul Aazam, the President Madarsa Manzarul Uloom Bali Rampur (Bihar, Champaran) and district deputy Ameer, Ahle Hadeeth West Champaran; Sagheer Ahmad, the son-in-law of Sultan Khan, the Finance Secretary; S.M. Sabir, Gali Qasimjan Delhi, the father in law of Daughter Dr. Abul Hayat Ashraf, the Editor of the English Simple Truth, an organ of Markazi Jamiat AhleHadeeth Hind and Ghulam Muhammad, former Ameer of Jammu & Kashmir's Jamiate Ahle Hadeeth.

May Allah forgive their sins and pray for their heavenly abode and hope a betterment from Almighty.

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