



ALI 402: Preparation for the Month of Ramadan

According to Fatawa of Ayatullah Sistani and Ayatullah Khamenei
Blessed Month of Sha'abaan 1438
May 2017

What We'll Cover insha'Allah

- Philosophy of Fasting in Brief
- Fasting for Children
- Fasting for Young Mukallafeen
- What if I have qadhaa left over?
- Penalties (Fidyah and Kaffarah)
- Mustahab Fasts
- Fasting and Travel
- Does X break my fast?
- When do I fast?
- How should I fast?

Philosophy of Fasting

"Why do Muslims fast?"

"Why does Allah want us to go through such difficulties in order to worship Him?"

How can such questions be answered?

Philosophy of Fasting from the Qur'an

- O you who have faith! Prescribed for you is fasting as it was prescribed for those who were before you, *so that you may be God wary*. (2:183)
- ...Allah desires ease for you, and He does not desire hardship for you, and so that you may complete the number, *and magnify Allah for guiding you, and that you may give thanks*. (2:185)

Philosophy of Fasting from Hadith

- The Prophet (s) said, "Fast and you will be healthy." (Scale of Wisdom, #1158)
- The Prophet (s) said, "Fasting is incumbent upon you, for verily it severs the roots [of desires] and removes wildness." (Scale of Wisdom, #1158)
- The Prophet (s) said, "If the servant were to know what is in Ramadan, he would wish that it would last the entire year!" (Bihar al-Anwar v. 93 p. 346)

Philosophy of Fasting from Hadith

- Imam al-Askari (a) was once asked the reasoning behind the obligation of fasting, to which he replied, "That the rich may experience the pain of hunger and bestow his generosity thereby upon the poor." (Scale of Wisdom, #1158)
- Imam ar-Rida (a), when asked about the wisdom behind fasting, said, "Allah tests them with an act of obedience so that they can attain ranks with Him, so He can make them aware of the bounties of tasty water and good bread. When they feel thirsty during the day they are fasting, they remember the Great Thirst of the hereafter, and that encourages them towards obedience." (Bihar al-Anwar v. 6 p. 113)

Resolution

"Why do Muslims fast?" "Why does Allah want us to go through such difficulties in order to worship Him?" How can such questions be answered?



We fast because:

- a) It is a command of Allah
- b) Fasting has benefits such as:
 - a) Reminding us of hunger
 - b) Health benefits
 - c) Spiritual benefits
 - d) Community benefits
 - e) Opportunity to serve Allah

Anything wrong here?

Fasting of Children



My 6 year old has been asking if he can fast this year, and a local centre has organized special prizes for young children who fast. I am keen on my son winning the prize, so I encourage him to fast despite his hunger pangs, and promise to give him a special prize of my own as well.

Fasting during the month of Ramadhan is compulsory on everyone who is:

- *Mukallaf* → Sane and Baligh
- Not traveling (more details later)
- Women only: Clean from *haydh* and *nifaas*
- Not being ill (more details later)
- Able to keep the fast (more details later)

Fasting of a non-baaligh

- Imam as-Sadiq (peace be upon him) said: "And at the age of 7, we ask our children to fast to their capability, either half of the day or more or less, and we order them to break their fast when they become hungry or thirsty. This is so that they become used to fasting. Thus you should ask your [male] children to fast at the age of 9, and tell them to break their fast when they are thirsty or hungry." (*Usul al-Kafi*)

Practical Suggestions

- Fasting **before physical maturity has developed**: should not be encouraged
- Fasting **after the physical maturity has developed, but before coming of age**: should be asked to break fast when they are thirsty or hungry
- Avoid asking young children, "Are you fasting today?" or hint it is better to fast for a child who has not come of age to fast the entire day. This includes giving prizes to non-baaligh children for fasting, and announcing to the community when a non-baaligh child has fasted for the whole day.

Resolution

My 6 year old has been asking if he can fast this year, and a local centre has organized special prizes for young children who fast. I am keen on my son winning the prize, so I encourage him to fast despite his hunger pangs, and promise to give him a special prize of my own as well.



Fasting for children of this age is not found within the tradition of the Ahlul Bayt (a). There are other ways of celebrating the month of Ramadan for children of this age, such as reading, memorization, and understanding of the Qur'an.

What should he do?

Bulugh Uncertainties



Hamid is now 15 years old. He did not fast in the month of Ramadan of last year. He is now baligh, but he is not sure whether he was baligh during the *last* month of Ramadan.

Ahmad is also 15 years old. He also did not fast in the month of Ramadan last year. Now he knows that he actually was baligh at that time, but at that time he didn't know.

What should they do?

Resolution

Hamid is now 15 years old. He did not fast in the month of Ramadan of last year. He is now baligh, but he is not sure whether he was baligh during the last month of Ramadan.

Ahmad is also 15 years old. He also did not fast in the month of Ramadan last year. Now he knows that he actually was baligh at that time, but at that time he didn't know.

What should they do?



Hamid does not have to make up any fasts.

Ahmad will have to make up the fasts that he missed but there is no other penalty on him.

Anything wrong here?

Medical Conditions



I'm down with a flu, and I know I need to drink a lot of fluids to get better. But, it's the month of Ramadan, and I really don't want to miss any fasts. So, I decide to suffer through a few days of fasts while being sick.

What if fasting will make me sick, prolong or intensify my sickness, entail unbearable difficulty, or harm me?

- If I **am sure** that I will be harmed by fasting, fasting is not obligatory.
- If I **am not sure** I will be harmed by fasting, but based on rationally acceptable grounds, I **fear** that I will be harmed, fasting is not obligatory.
- "Harm" includes damage to the body, becoming sick, prolonging sickness, or intensifying sickness
- "Harm" does not include normally acceptable / bearable levels of hunger, thirst, weariness, headaches, and other difficulties that go away within a couple of hours after iftaar

Will my fast be valid if it is harmful?

- Making an intention to fast when sickness is negatively affected or you know of or fear harm is not correct. The fast will be invalid.
- If you know it will be (Ayat. Sistani: extremely) harmful or you fear it will be (Ayat. Sistani: extremely) harmful, the fast is not only invalid but also *haram*.
- Ayat Sistani: If I fear that fasting will be harmful, but the harm is not extreme, I can fast with the intention of *raja* and if it turns out to be not harmful, my fast will be correct.
- If I didn't fear that fasting would be harmful, but it turns out to be harmful, the fast is invalid.

Resolution

I'm down with a flu, and I know I need to drink a lot of fluids to get better. But, it's the month of Ramadhan, and I really don't want to miss any fasts. So, I decide to suffer through a few days of fasts while being sick.



My fasting is invalid, and I will need to do qadha of the fast after the month of Ramadhan.

What should I do?

Medical Conditions



By fasting, I won't be able to take some heart medicine at the right time which could in turn result in heart issues.

Resolution

By fasting, I won't be able to take some heart medicine at the right time which could in turn result in heart issues.



Fasting is invalid and potentially impermissible.

What should I do?

Medical Conditions



I just recovered from an infection last night and today is my day to recuperate. If I fast, I fear that I won't recuperate properly and the infection will come back.

Resolution

I just recovered from an infection last night and today is my day to recuperate. If I fast, I fear that I won't recuperate properly and the infection will come back.



Fasting that will delay recovery from illness is not valid.

What should I do?

Medical Conditions

I have a mild cough and fasting might keep my throat feeling uncomfortable.

Resolution

I have a mild cough and fasting might keep my throat feeling uncomfortable.



Such a minor condition would not be a barrier to fasting.

What is the answer?

Diabetes



A man has a mild case of diabetes. He takes insulin before fajr time. Sometimes, when fasting during the day, he feels dizziness, in which case he knows he must take some sugar. Is he allowed to fast?

Resolution

A man has a mild case of diabetes. He takes insulin before fajr time. Sometimes, when fasting during the day, he feels dizziness, in which case he knows he must take some sugar. Is he allowed to fast?

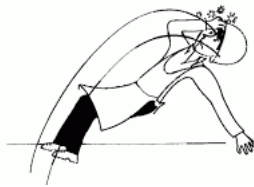


As long as fasting doesn't harm his body, he should fast until he feels the dizziness.

If he feels dizzy, he must break his fast to have the sugar, and do qadha of the fast after the month (if he is able to).

Is fasting necessary?

Fasting of Young
Mukallafeen



My nine year old daughter consistently faints when she doesn't eat every 6 hours, and she fears this will happen when she fasts.

Are young Mukallafeen too young to fast in these long days?

- Fasting is an obligation on those who have come of age unless it entails significant harm or unbearable difficulty
- The human body is amazing at being able to adapt
- The social effect of having a community fast together is amazing

Resolution

My nine year old daughter consistently faints when she doesn't eat every 6 hours, and she fears this will happen when she fasts.



Fasting is harmful for her body, and so it is not obligatory for her to fast.

Is fasting necessary?

Fasting of Young
Mukallafeen

My 15 year old son
doesn't like the feeling of
being very hungry when
he fasts.

Resolution

My 15 year old son doesn't like the feeling of being very hungry when he fasts



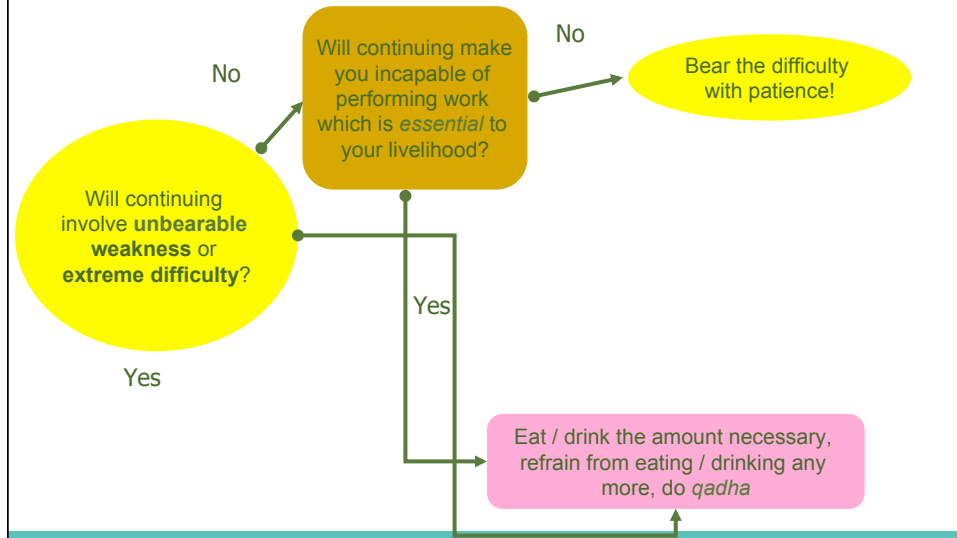
Feeling hungry during the day is natural and a means of spiritual growth. By being patient and having wholesome suhoor and iftar meals, he will get used to it.

Is fasting necessary?

Fasting of Young
Mukallafeen

When my ten year old daughter fasts, she gets hungrier throughout the day and consistently, by late afternoon, the hunger becomes unbearable.

What if I'm fasting and things get difficult?



Resolution

When my ten year old daughter fasts, she gets hungrier throughout the day and consistently, by late afternoon, the hunger becomes unbearable.



She should fast with the niyyah of qurbah. Then, when the hunger is unbearable, she can eat a minimal amount and then refrain from eating til end of day, and do qadha later.

Is fasting necessary?

Fasting of Young
Mukallafeen



When my 13 year old son who is baaligh plays a lot of sports during the daytime of the month of Ramadan, he gets unbearably thirsty and is unable to keep on fasting.

Resolution

When my 13 year old son who is baaligh plays a lot of sports during the month of Ramadan, he gets unbearably thirsty and is unable to keep on fasting.



He should avoid playing to that level of intensity, and make sure to prepare for the fast by, for example, resting and having wholesome suhoor and iftar meals.

Is fasting necessary?

Fasting of Young
Mukallafeen

When my 11 year old daughter doesn't drink water at suhoor, she gets unbearably thirsty during the day and is forced to break her fast.

Resolution

When my 11 year old daughter doesn't drink water at suhoor, she gets unbearably thirsty during the day and is forced to break her fast.



She should drink water at suhoor time in order for the fasting to be easier to bear.

Is fasting necessary?

Doctor's Opinion

I go for a checkup and the doctor tells me that fasting is not good for my diabetes situation. His/her word causes me to fear that fasting will cause me harm.

Weight of Doctor's Opinion

- Doctor's opinion can be the source of the fear of harm
- But, if I'm certain fasting won't cause me any harm despite what the doctor says, I must fast

Resolution

I go for a checkup and the doctor tells me that fasting is not good for my diabetes situation. His/her word causes me to fear that fasting will cause me harm.



Since my fear of fasting causing harm is based on rational grounds, I would not be able to fast.

Is fasting necessary?

Expecting Mother-To-Be

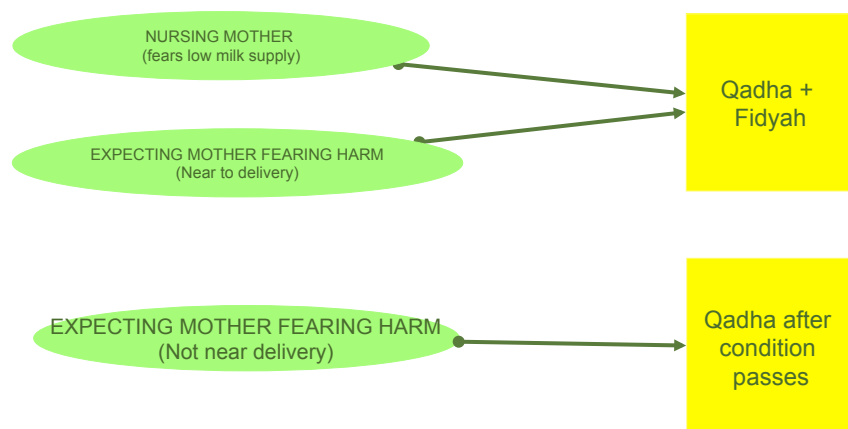


A lady is expecting a child. She goes for an ultrasound. After the results come in, she is told by the doctor to eat frequent meals to ensure proper growth of the child.

If a woman is expecting

If she knows or fears (based on rational grounds) that fasting will harm her or the child's health, fasting is not obligatory. It is also prohibited (Ayat Sistani: if the harm is extreme).

Consequences for not fasting due to expecting / nursing



Resolution

A lady is expecting a child. She goes for an ultrasound. After the results come in, she is told by the doctor to eat frequent meals to ensure proper growth of the child.



If based on the doctor's advice she develops conviction that fasting will be harmful for her baby, or she fears it will be harmful, she should not fast. Later on, she will make up the qadha and if her delivery is near, she will give one fidyah for each day that was missed.

Is fasting necessary?

Nursing Mother



A new mother knows that she is not able to produce enough milk to satisfy her nursing baby when she fasts every day.

If a woman is breastfeeding and her milk supply is low,

If she fears (based on rational grounds) that fasting will harm her or the child's health, fasting is not valid.

Ayat. Sistani: *Ihtiyaat waajib* for her to use an alternative if available.

To discuss: Is using formula a valid alternative?

Resolution

A new mother knows that she is not able to produce enough milk to satisfy her nursing baby when she fasts every day.



She should not fast and instead give fidyah for each day missed and make up the qadha later.

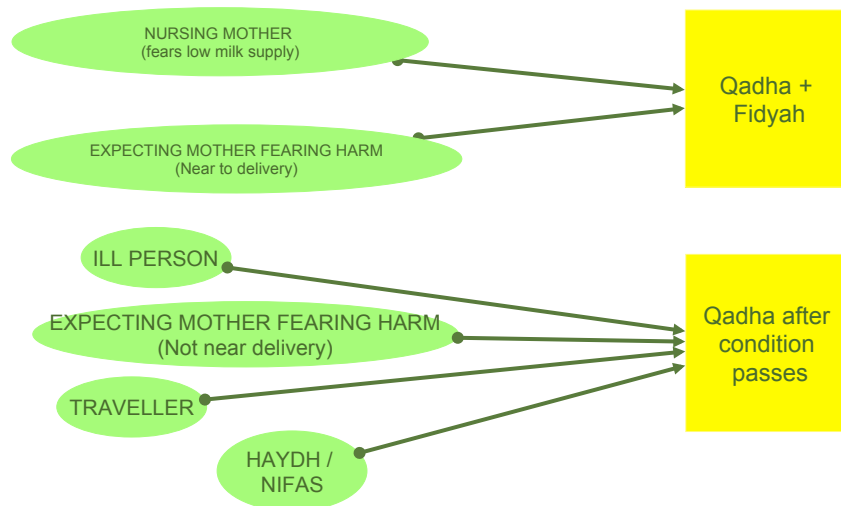
Note: According to some maraaji, if a non-harmful alternative is available, she should make use of it, according to ihtiyaat wajib.

What are the Consequences?

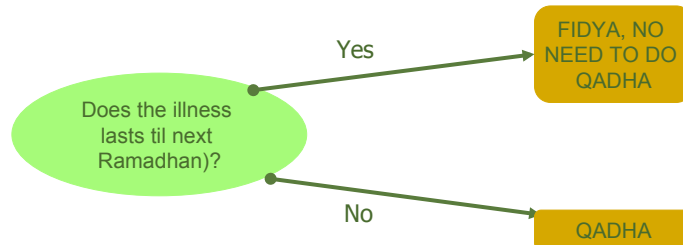
Qadha Fasts

I missed a number of fasts during the last month of Ramadan. How do I go about making them up? Do I have to give any penalties?

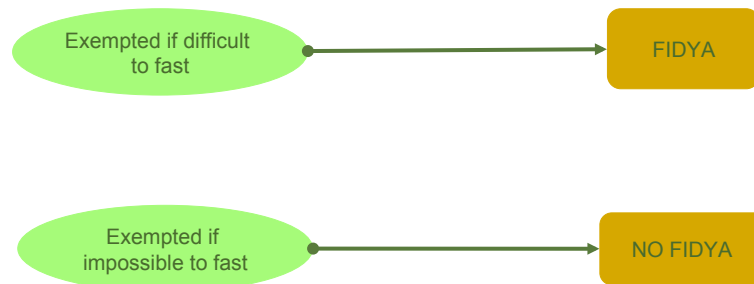
Consequences for not fasting due to valid excuse



Prolonged sickness



Consequences for not fasting for the elderly



Note: According to Ayat. Khomeini, if an elderly person regains ability to fast, it is ihtiyaat waajib to make up the fasts that are missed.

About fidyah

- Fidyah (literally meaning *badal* - *alternative*) is one mudd = 3/4 kg of food (better to give wheat) to a poor Muslim (Sistani: ihtiyat wajib that it be a shi`ah)
 - This is different than just feeding someone a meal
- Fidyah for multiple days can be given to one person
- Must be delivered as food (not as money to buy food)

About fidyah

- Can appoint a wakeel (like a trusted charity or even the needy person him/herself) who will take money, purchase food, and distribute
- Does not have to be given locally
- Does not need to be given right away but shouldn't be delayed negligently

Kaffarah

- Penalty for various acts, including deliberately breaking one's fast: Qadha, plus, for each day, either:
 - Feeding 60 individual poor people to their fill or giving each one *mudd* of food (can't be individual who are *wajib al-nafaqah*) (Sistani: ihtiyaat waajib that it be a mu'min)
- OR
- Fasting for 60 days (First 31 days straight - except due to a valid excuse. For remaining 29, refer to Islamic laws for details.)
- When the fast is broken with something *haram*, it is ihtiyaat mustahab to give both kaffarahs

When does Kaffarah apply?

According to Ayat. Sistani:

- When one of the following is done *intentionally*:
 - Eating / drinking
 - Sexual intercourse
 - *Istimnaa'*
 - Remaining in state of *janabah* til Fajr
- If one was ignorant about one of these acts breaking one's fast, Kaffarah does not apply, unless his ignorance was not excusable and he wasn't sure about it being okay to do.

When does Kaffarah apply?

According to Ayat. Khamenei:

- When any of the acts mentioned is done *intentionally*, including:
 - Eating / drinking
 - Sexual intercourse
 - *Istimnaa'*
 - Remaining in state of *janabah* til Fajr
 - Submerging entire head under water (Ihtiyat Wajib)
 - Inhaling smoke / thick dust
- If one was ignorant about one of these acts breaking one's fast, Kaffarah does not apply

Resolution

I missed a number of fasts during the last month of Ramadan. How do I go about making them up? Do I have to give any penalties?



Identify the reason for why you missed the fasts. If the conditions are in place, each of the fasts need to be made up as qadhaa. In addition, fidyah or kaffarah may apply.

What are the Consequences?

Qadha Fasts

I am not sure exactly how many fasts I've missed in the past months of Ramadan. It could have been as few as 10 fasts or as many as 15 fasts. How many do I have to make up? Is there any order I should observe?

What if I don't know how many to make up?

- It is only wajib to make up the fasts that you are sure that you have to make up
- Ayat Khamenei: Except for example, when you went traveling and you know when you stopped fasting (for example 10th of Ramadan) but you are unsure about the end date of your travel (for example 15th or 16th)

Order in which Qadha fasts should be made up

- It is not necessary to make up fasts in the order that they were missed, or to keep in mind which qadha fast from which year you are making up.
- However, if there is limited time to make up the qadha fasts from the last month of Ramadan before the next Ramadan arrives, it is better (Ayat Khamenei: Ihtiyat Wajib) to make up the qadha from last year to avoid consequences.

Resolution

I am not sure exactly how many fasts I've missed in the past months of Ramadan. It could have been as few as 10 fasts or as many as 15 fasts. How many do I have to make up? Is there any order I should observe?



It is necessary to make up 10 fasts. If there is limited time left before the next month of Ramadan, make up the fasts from last year before the fasts from previous years.

What are the Consequences?**Qadha Fasts**

I had 7 fasts to make up from the last month of Ramadan due to travel and illness, but I only got around to making up 3 of them before the new month of Ramadan has arrived. What is my responsibility with regards to the remaining 4 fasts?

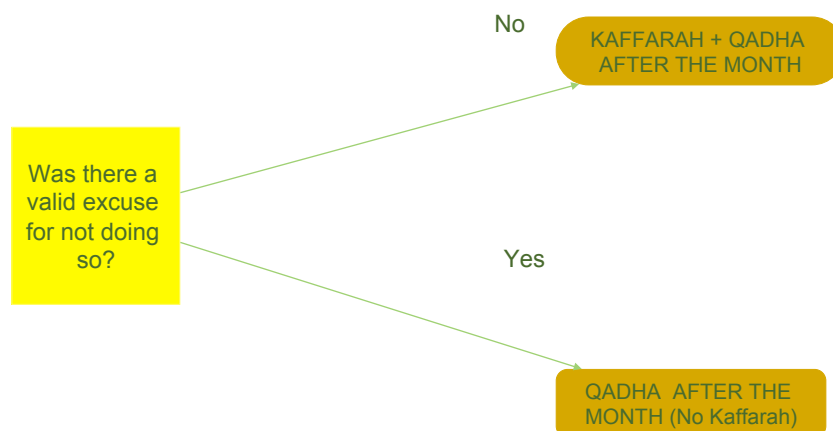
Do I have to make up a qadhaa fast before the next month of Ramadhan?

Ayat. Sistani: *ihitiyaat mustahab*

Ayat Khamenei: *ihitiyaat waajib*

Consequences for delaying making up Qadha before next month of Ramadhan (Ayat Sistani)

- For each fast that was missed, a kaffarah for the delay is obligatory
- Fast needs to be made up as Qadha after the month of Ramadhan
- This kaffarah is a one-time penalty for delay, and does not get repeated if the qadha is delayed til the next year or beyond
- The amount of the kaffarah is the same as previously mentioned for fidyah (750 g of food, preferably wheat, etc.)

Consequences for delaying making up Qadha before next month of Ramadhan (Ayat Khamenei)

Resolution

I had 7 fasts to make up from the last month of Ramadan due to travel and illness, but I only got around to making up 3 of them before the new month of Ramadan has arrived. What is my responsibility with regards to the remaining 4 fasts?



I would need to make up the remaining 4 fasts after this month of Ramadan, and give 4 Kaffarahs of Delay - 750 g of food for a needy mu'min x 4 (unless I wasn't able to make up the fasts due to a valid excuse, like travel, and I was following Ayat. Khamenei's opinion).

What are the Consequences?

Qadha Fasts

During the last month of Ramadan, I missed 3 fasts due to no valid excuse. I am not going to be able to make them up before the next month of Ramadan. What is my responsibility?

Resolution

During the last month of Ramadan, I missed 3 fasts due to no valid excuse. I am not going to be able to make them up before the next month of Ramadan. What is my responsibility?



I would need to

- a) do istighfaar for not observing the command of Allah
- b) make up these 3 fasts after this month of Ramadan
- c) give 3 Kaffarahs for the delay (3 mudds), and 3 kaffarahs for deliberately not fasting (3 times of feeding 60 needy believers or fasting 60 days)

Anything wrong here?

Fidyah

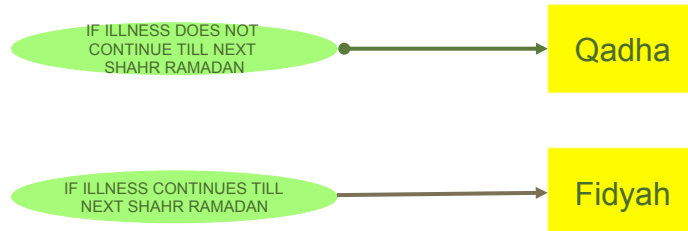
وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مَسْكِينٍ

سورة البقرة



There is someone who has a medical problem that does not allow him to fast at all. He knows that he will not be able to keep his fast for the entire month of Ramadan, so he sends 30 days worth of fidyah to a poor mu'min on the 1st night of Ramadan.

If I miss a fast due to illness, do I have to give fidyah?



Resolution

If someone knows he will never be able to fast due to an ongoing medical condition, can he give 30 days worth of fidyah to a poor mu'min from the beginning of the month of Ramadhan?



No - rather, he should wait until the month of Ramadan finishes. If the medical condition continues till the next year's month of Ramadan, at that point, the fidyah is due upon him for each fast he was unable to make up during the course of the year.

Anything wrong here?

Mustahab Fasts



I have some outstanding Qadha fasts, but I would like to take advantage of the month of Sha'baan by keeping a few Mustahab fasts in it.

When is it not permissible to keep a Mustahab fast?

Some conditions that would make keeping a Mustahab fast invalid include:

- When someone has outstanding Qadha fasts of the month of Ramadan to make up
- When someone is traveling
- Ayat. Sistani:

When, for a wife, it would conflict with the rights of the husband, or according to Ihtiyat Wajib he prevents her from keeping it. Ihtiyat Mustahab for her to seek his permission.

When for a child, it would cause trouble to his parents on account of their compassion for him.

Resolution

I have some outstanding Qadha fasts, but I would like to take advantage of the month of Sha'baan by keeping a few Mustahab fasts in it.

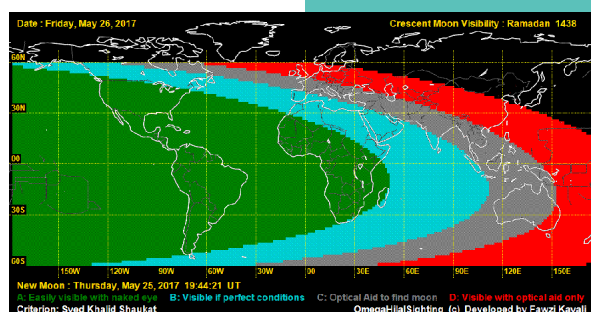


Mustahab fasts kept when you have outstanding Qadha fasts are not valid.

Should I fast?

Yawm ash-Shakk

29 days of Sha'baan have passed. Now it's either the last day of Sha'baan or the first day of Shahr Ramadan as I'm not sure yet whether the moon was sighted in a reliable manner. Should I fast today?



Resolution

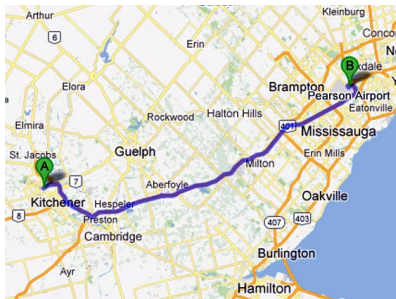
29 days of Sha'baan have passed. Now it's either the last day of Sha'baan or the first day of Shahr Ramadan as I'm not sure yet whether the moon was sighted in a reliable manner. Should I fast today?



Answer: I don't need to fast, but if I do fast, I can do so with the intention of fasting - if it's not the month of Ramadan, it can be a qadhaa or nadhr fast, or a mustahab fast (if the conditions apply), and if it is the month of Ramadan, it will count as the first fast of the month.

What is the answer?

Fasting of a Traveler



It's the month of Ramadan. I need to leave the Toronto area for Waterloo at 11 am for a quick trip, but I'll be back by 2 pm. Can I fast?

Am I allowed to travel during the month of Ramadhan?

- Yes, although doing so can be makrooh (throughout the month, or at least until the 23rd day) unless for something necessary / important
- It is *ihitiyaat mustahab* for a traveler to stay away from food, drink, etc. during the daytime of the month of Ramadan

If I travel, I am exempted from fasting and my fasting is invalid unless...

- I am planning to stay in a place for ten days or more
- I am considered to be a 'frequent traveler'
- I am traveling to my 'watan'
- The travel is sinful

I must keep my fast if I travel and

- I cross the city boundary while departing from my hometown at or after dhuhr

OR

- I cross into the city boundary in my hometown (or place of temporary residency) before dhuhr and I haven't committing any act that would break a fast

Resolution

It's the month of Ramadan. I need to leave the Toronto area for Waterloo at 11 am for a quick trip, but I'll be back by 2 pm. Can I fast?



Waterloo is another city that is more than 22 km away from the edge of the greater Toronto area, so when I travel there for less than 10 days, I will be considered a traveler according to Islamic Law (unless I am a frequent traveler). Since I'm leaving before dhuhr and arriving after dhuhr, my fast will become invalid once I cross the Hadd at-Tarakhuss (**until then, I have to keep my fast**).

What is the answer?

Fasting of a Traveler



It's the month of Ramadan. I had to go overseas for a business trip and was unable to fast during this time due to travel. However, I will insha'Allah be arriving back in town by 11 am. Can I fast on this day?

Resolution

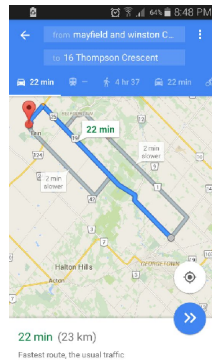
It's the month of Ramadan. I had to go overseas for a business trip and was unable to fast during this time due to travel. However, I will insha'Allah be arriving back in town by 11 am. Can I fast on this day?



If I don't do anything to break a fast (like eating breakfast) from the time of Fajr till I land, I must fast upon landing back in town (since I'm landing before dhuhr). Otherwise, I can't fast and I'll have to do its qadha (although it's mustahab to refrain from eating or drinking til maghrib).

What is the answer?

Calculating distance for becoming a traveler



Distance “as the crow flies” between the edge of my city and my destination: **18 km**

Driving distance: **23 km**

Will I be considered a traveler?

Resolution

Is the required travel distance to become a traveler based on “as the crow flies” distance or how much I actually travel?

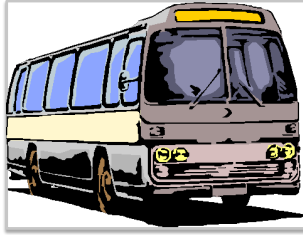


Based on how much I actually travel, not on “as the crow flies”.

In the example given, I would be a traveler.

What is the answer?

Fasting of a Traveler



I travel to work from Toronto to Ottawa three times a week and I couldn't take off during the month of Ramadan. "No worries," I tell myself, as I pop a date in my mouth once my bus leaves the terminal. "I'll just make it up after the month of Ramadan."

I am allowed to break my fast when traveling

- As soon as I intend to travel the required distance (approx. 22 km) away from the city border and I have crossed the *hadd al-tarakkus*
 - Ayat. Sistani: Where a traveler has gone far enough to be hidden from the sight of city-dwellers
 - Ayat. Khamenei: Where a traveler has gone far enough to not hear the Adhan from the edge of the city (Ihtiyat Mustahab to also consider where you can't see the walls of the city)
- Note: The ruling is slightly different if I am traveling away from a place of temporary residency.

Who is a frequent traveler?

A frequent traveler is one who prays full and can fast despite traveling.

Who is a frequent traveler?

Ayat Khamenei: If my work is commonly considered to be in a different city than my hometown, then if I ever travel to work 3 times without there being a ten day gap in between travels, upon starting the third trip I become a frequent traveler.

A student who travels for the purposes of studying should act according to ihtiyaat.

Who is a frequent traveler?

Ayat Khamenei: If I ever stay in a place for 10 days in a row and don't go to work, then the next time I start up traveling for work again, for the first trip I will be considered a traveler but for the second and onwards I will pray full.

Who is a frequent traveler?

- Ayat Sistani: I become a frequent traveler when I intend to be in a state of travel (for work or other purposes) for either:
 - 6 months of the upcoming year, and in those 6 months I will be traveling for approximately 10 days a month at least (or say, 9 days in one month and 11 in another)
- OR
- 3 months of the upcoming year and 3 months in the next year, and within those months I will be traveling for a total of approximately ten days a month

What about other non-work-related travels?

- Ayat Khamenei: If I'm a frequent traveler due to work, I would still pray shortened and not being able to fast on other non-work travels.
- Ayat Sistani: If I'm a frequent traveler, I pray full and am able to fast on all travels.

Resolution

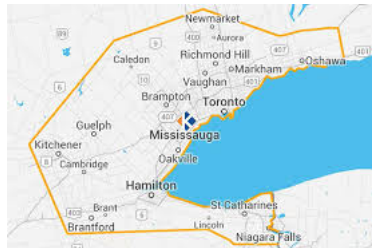
I travel to work from Toronto to Ottawa three times a week and I couldn't take off during the month of Ramadan. "No worries," I tell myself, as I pop a date in my mouth once my bus leaves the terminal. "I'll just make it up after the month of Ramadan."



As someone who travels out of town that frequently for work, I'm able to fast when I'm traveling, so if I eat something deliberately, I have to give qadhaa and fidyah. Also, if I am not a frequent traveler, when traveling at least 44 km round trip, I'm allowed to break my fast only if I leave before dhuhr and after passing the hadd al-tarakkhus.

What is the answer?

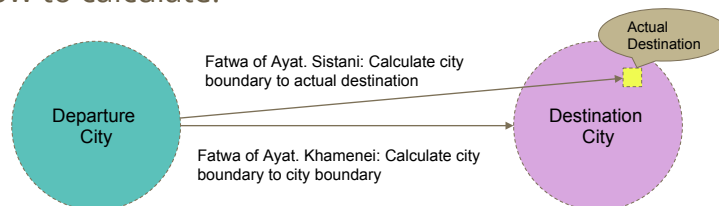
Traveling to a Location in a Nearby City



I live in Mississauga which is part of the greater Toronto area. I'm traveling to Hamilton in the morning. The distance from the city limit of Hamilton to the city limit of the greater Toronto area is less than 22 km. However, after entering Hamilton, I will be traveling 25 km within Hamilton to my destination. Will my prayers be shortened or full? Can I keep my fast?

Required distance in order to be considered a traveler

- If my roundtrip distance is 8 farsakh (approximately 44 km), I will be considered a traveler. Or, in other words, if my one-way distance is 4 farsakh (approximately 22 km), I will be considered a traveler.
- How to calculate:



Resolution

I live in Mississauga which is part of the greater Toronto area. I'm traveling to Hamilton in the morning. The distance from the city limit of Hamilton to the city limit of the greater Toronto area is less than 22 km. However, after entering Hamilton, I will be traveling 25 km within Hamilton to my destination. Will my prayers be shortened or full? Can I keep my fast?



According to the fatwa of Ayatullah Khamenei, my prayers will be full and I can keep my fast.

According to the fatwa of Ayatullah Sistani, my prayers will be shortened and I can't keep my fast.

What breaks my fast?

Step 2: Refrain from 9 Things from Fajr til Maghrib

- Food and drink
- Liquid enema
- Vomiting
- Swallowing thick dust and smoke
- Immersing head under water
- Spousal relations
- Istimnaa
- Remaining in Janabah after fajr
- Lying about Allah and His Prophet (s)

No food and drink

- I can't eat and drink from fajr to maghrib
 - What if I have food in my mouth at fajr time?



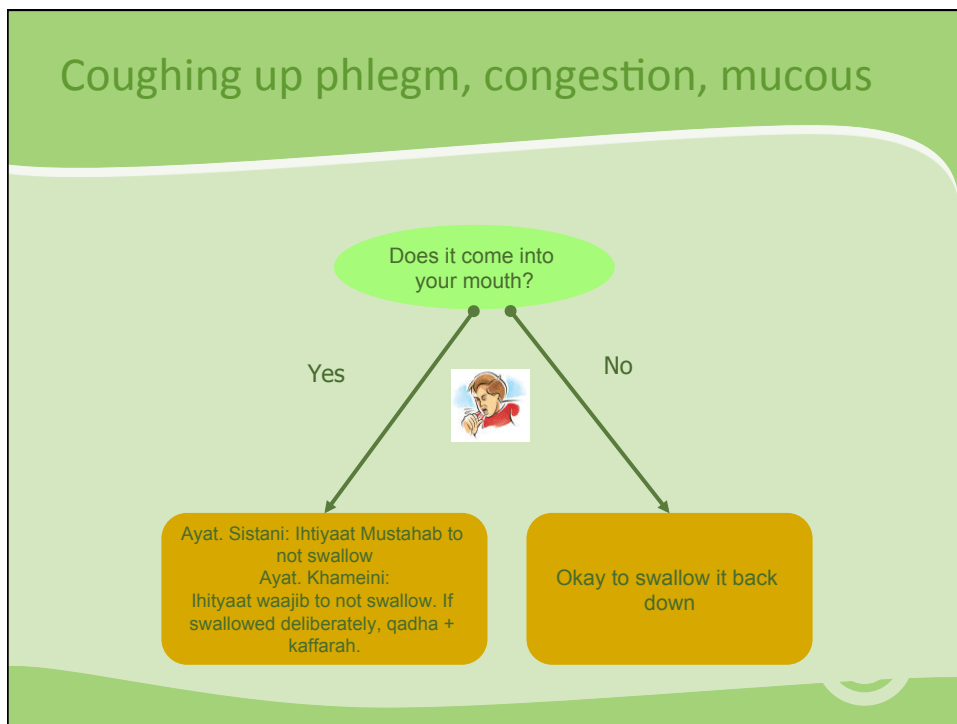
Scenario

- I would need to spit it out. Intentionally eating/drinking/ etc. past fajr time and being careless about its arrival, or swallowing something left in your teeth during the day
→ invalid fast + qadhaa + kaffarah.

In order for my fast to be broken, eating/drinking has to be...

- Deliberate
- Swallowed
- From the “outside”
 - Saliva is okay
 - Coughing up or spitting up – see next slide
- Through the mouth

Coughing up phlegm, congestion, mucous



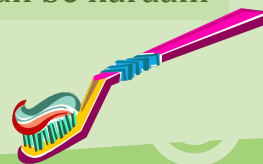
Can I rinse my mouth with water when fasting?

- Yes, as long as you don't swallow
- Makrooh to do so to without a valid purpose
- Better to spit out 3 times after rinsing
- In some cases if it is swallowed then qadhaa is necessary

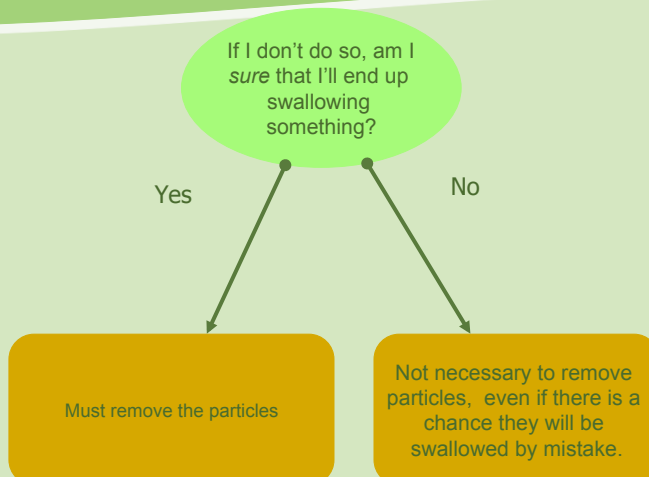


Can I clean my teeth?

- Yes, brushing - even with toothpaste – and flossing – even with flavored floss – is ok as long as nothing is swallowed deliberately
- Using a wet toothbrush / stick is makrooh
- According to some, using a dry brush is mustahab
- Troubling others with bad breath can be haraam



Do I have to floss or use a toothpick to remove any food particles before fasting?



Can I take medicine?

- Medicine that enters through the mouth (orally) like pills and syrups: Not ok (unless necessary, in which case qadha is necessary)
- Inhaler: Ok, as long as it enters the respiratory tract and medicine is not swallowed

Can I take medicine?

- Eyedrops, nosedrops, eardrops:
 - Ok, even if you taste something in your mouth
 - Should not be used as a way to eat or drink
- Insulin: ok

Injections

- Medicinal injections while fasting: Okay
- Anesthetic injections while fasting (Ayat. Khameini: ok, Ayat. Sistani: better to avoid)
- Food- base injections (Ayat. Sistani: better to avoid, Ayat. Khameini: ihtiyaat waajib to avoid)
- Vaccination (Ayat. Khameini: as long as the vein is not injected)

Going to the dentist

- Is okay as long as one does not intentionally swallow blood, medicine, or water.
- Makrooh to cause mouth to bleed.

Scenario

I brush furiously after *suhoor*, but after waking up from my post-Fajr nap, I fear the onset of bad breath. Can I brush again? What about mouthwash?



Resolution

Yes, I can brush and use mouthwash while I'm fasting, as long as I take care not to swallow anything.

Vomiting

- Vomiting breaks my fast - if it is deliberate!
 - Deliberate vomiting → qadha is wajib
 - Otherwise my fast is still intact

Questions about Vomiting

- I feel like vomiting. Do I have to stop myself from vomiting?
 - Yes, if doing so will not cause harm or difficulty (Ayat. Khomeini)
 - Not necessary (Ayat. Sistani)

Questions about Vomiting

- Can I eat at night if I know it will make me vomit?
 - Yes, but after vomiting, qadha is
 - Wajib (Ayat. Khomeini)
 - Mustahab (Ayat. Sistani)

Is deliberate belching allowed?

- to belch: To expel gas noisily from the stomach through the mouth; burp.

If I belch, am I sure that
vomit or food/drink
come up?

Yes

No or Not sure

Ayat Khamenei: Not allowed to
belch intentionally
Ayat. Sistani: Not allowed to
belch intentionally if it would be
considered as vomiting

Okay to belch, but if anything
comes up, spit it out!

Inhaling dust and smoke breaks my fast when...

- Inhaling is deliberate
- Dust/smoke is thick and reaches throat
- Examples:
 - Smoke from cigarettes or tobacco
 - Dusty air from sweeping a dusty ground
 - Steam -- but only if it condenses in my mouth and I swallow it!

Can I deliberately put my head under water while fasting?

- Ayatullah Khamenei
Ihtiyaat waajib to avoid and invalidates fast
- Ayatullah Sistani
Severely makruh but does not invalidate fast
 - But if your head is completely covered, like a scuba diver, it is permissible and not makruh
- Showering is okay
- Taking a bath is okay as long as I don't dip my head under water
 - It is makruh for a woman to sit in water when fasting

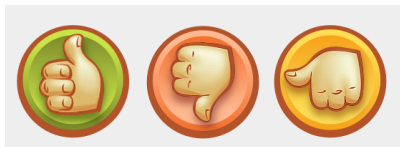


Some other things that will break my fast

- Sexual intercourse
 - Kissing and other acts that will lead to something that would cause the fast to break is not allowed
- Any deliberate act that causes the discharge of *mani* (for men) or excess secretion (for women)
- Intentionally remaining in the state of janabah / haydh / nifas til fajr (details to come)

What is the answer?

Do's and Don'ts of Fasting



Are the following haram, makrooh, or mubaah while fasting?

- Using perfume
- Smelling a rose
- Gargling
- Going to the dentist
- Inhaling steam
- Inhaling helium

Better to avoid...



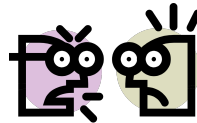
Rinsing with water excessively



Smelling fragrance from herbs and flowers (perfume is ok)



Tooth extraction or any other action which will cause bleeding in the mouth



Pointless argumentation and dispute



A wet tooth brush for brushing

Resolution

Are the following **haram**, **makrooh**, or **mubaah** while fasting?



Using perfume

Smelling a rose

Gargling (as long as nothing is swallowed)

Going to the dentist (if it involves removing teeth and/or causes bleeding)

Inhaling steam (as long as you don't swallow condensed steam)

Inhaling helium

What is the answer?

Do's and Don'ts of Fasting



How would each of these actions affect my fasting?

- Smoking a cigarette
- Lying
- Contributing to a seemingly endless debate on social media about a controversial issue

Resolution

How do smoking, lying and arguing affect my fast?



Lying is a major sin, but it breaks the only when lying with respect to Allah, the Prophet, and the Imams (a).

Smoking is not allowed when fasting (ihtiyaat wajib).

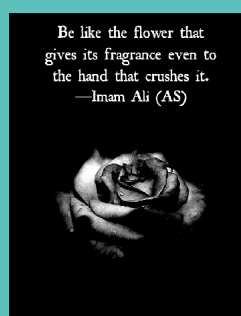
Pointless arguing and debating is makruh in general and especially when fasting.

What's Wrong Here?

Forwarding Quotes



I saw this beautiful quote on social media, and I immediately reposted it to all my contacts as inspiration while fasting in the month of Ramadan:



Resolution

Can I forward quotes from the Ahlul Bayt (a) to others while fasting?



- Falsely attributing something to Allah or the Ahlul Bayt (a) is a major sin and would make my fast baatil (according to ihtiyat wajib)
- Directly attributing a quote to Allah or the Prophet (s) or Imams (a) without being sure they said it would make my fast invalid - According to ihtiyat - wajib (Ayat. Sistani)

Resolution

Can I forward quotes from the Ahlul Bayt (a) to others while fasting?



- Saying that "It is reported that Imam Ali (a) said..." for a hadith that is found in a book would not break my fast
- Note: No reference has been found for the quote, "Be like the flower that gives its fragrance..." and it is likely based on the words of ulamaa

What if I enter the state of janabah at night?

- Deliberately staying in this state until fajr time invalidates my fast
- If there is not enough time left for a ghusl before fajr, tayammum in place of ghusl
 - Should then do ghusl before doing the fajr prayer
 - If there wasn't enough time left because of a valid reason, qadhaa is mustahab
- If I don't do ghusl [or tayammum], my fast is batil. Consequence: Keep the fast with the niyyah of *qurbah* + make up fast with niyyah of *qurbah*

For a woman who becomes clean from haydh/ nifaas at night

- Needs to perform ghusl before fajr, or tayammum if there is not enough time for ghusl or she is unable to perform ghusl

Can I go to sleep at night after entering the state of janabah?

- Yes, if I am intending to wake up before fajr to do ghusl and I'm confident of about waking up. Then,
 - If I oversleep past fajr without waking up: no qadha
 - If I wake up once before fajr and then oversleep: qadha
- Otherwise, if I sleep without intending to wake up before fajr to perform ghusl, and I sleep past fajr, I have to do qadha and pay kaffarah

What if I enter the state of janabah while asleep?

- If it happens at night:
 - If I wake up
 - Before fajr, I have to do ghusl
 - Can only go back to sleep if I intend to wake up before fajr to do the ghusl and I am confident I will do so.
 - Ayat. Sistani: If I oversleep, have to give qadhaa.
 - Ayat Khamenei: If I wake up again and go back to sleep and oversleep, have to give qadhaa.
 - After fajr, my fast is intact
- If it happens while asleep after fajr: my fast is intact



A common scenario where tayammum would become wajib

- In a night in the month of Ramadhan, I enter the state of janabah (or I become clean from haydh) but I don't have time to do ghusl before fajr

When do I fast?

The month of Ramadhan begins when one of the following occurs...

- I see the new crescent with my own eyes
 - By the naked eye only (Ayat. Sistani)
 - Optical device can also be used (Ayat. Khameini)
- Two local aadil witnesses report having seen it
- So many people report seeing it locally that I derive conviction
- 30 days of the previous month have passed
- I derive conviction through some other means

Note: Trying to sight the moon (*istihlaal*) is *mustahab*.

Does an out-of-town sighting count?

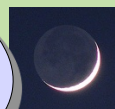
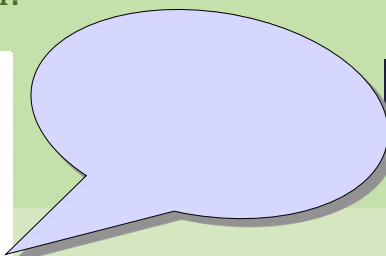
- Yes, if that sighting necessitates sighting in my area (were it not for circumstances like cloudy weather).

Factors to consider:

- Altitude
- Magnitude
- Time crescent will remain in horizon after sunset
- Azimuth
- Elongation
- Percent illumination

It's the 30th of Sha'aban and I'm not sure if the moon was seen yet!

- Fasting is not wajib, but if I fast, I should not intend that this is a fast for the month of Ramadhan!



If I find out today actually is the 1st of Ramadhan when previously it wasn't clear...

- If I am fasting, I will convert my niyyah to the month of Ramadhan
- If I am not fasting,
 - If I haven't done anything to violate a fast, I must start fasting (if it's before dhuhhr time!)
 - Otherwise I have to do imsaak (refrain from doing anything that would break a fast) and qadhaa

Scenario

A friend sends me a WhatsApp message on the night after the 29th day of the month of Sha'aaan wishing me a blessed Ramadhan. I excitedly tell my family, "The month of Ramadhan is here!" and begin to send all my contacts messages of congratulation.

Resolution

By default, I assume that the current month will stretch until 30 days. I need to see the new moon or investigate and arrive at conviction regarding the start of the new month.

How should I fast?

Step 1: Having a Niyyah (Intention, Purpose)

- A niyyah is something that you have while performing an act of worship - not something you need to say or do or specifically pass through your mind.



Step 1: Having a Niyyah (Intention, Purpose)

- If someone asks me why I'm fasting, I should know that I am fasting in the month of Ramadhan out of obedience to Allah (swt)

When do I need to intend to fast during the month of Ramadan?

Three Options:

- Option 1: By fajr time each day
 - If I forget or sleep through, and I remember before the time of dhuhr, and I haven't don't anything to break my fast, I can still make the intention to fast.
 - If I remember after dhuhr and I haven't done anything to break my fast, it is *ihitiyaat wajib* to make the intention to fast and do qadhaa as well.
 - If I do something to break my fast (like eat breakfast) and then remember that I should be fasting, I should refrain from doing anything else to break my fast and do qadhaa.
 - This is different then when I did make the intention to fast but then I ate breakfast by mistake - in that case, my fast would not be broken.

When do I need to intend to fast for the month of Ramadan?

Option 2: Before the month begins

- For the entire month at one go before the month begins. This intention should be present throughout the month.

When do I need to intend to fast for the month of Ramadan?

- Option 3: Before the month begins and before each fast

Fasting is from **Fajr** til **Maghrib**

- **Fajr**: The true dawn. **Maghrib**: When the redness in the Eastern sky has faded out into darkness
- Fasting needs to take place *from when one is certain that fajr has set in until one is certain that the time for maghrib has arrived*
 - Taking precaution is recommended
- Timings need to be ascertained with conviction – timetables & software can help to attain conviction but should be used with care

Scenario

- Unintentionally eating/drinking/etc. past fajr time while being careless about its arrival → invalid fast + qadhaa
- or depending on a timetable

Scenario

- Intentionally eating/drinking/etc. past fajr time and being careless about its arrival, or swallowing something left in your teeth → invalid fast + qadhaa + kaffarah

In places where there is no night or no complete darkening takes place

- If the redness in the eastern sky never disappears but there is a time of darkening and a time of lighting up, the start of the relative lighting up is taken as fajr
- If there is no night at all, it's waajib to move to another place during shahr Ramadhan (Ayatullah Sistani)
- Rules of weakness, harm and excessive difficulty may apply

According to some scholars, *mustahab* to perform maghribayn prayers before iftaar

- Unless:
 - Someone is waiting
 - Doing so will cause one to not be able to recite the prayer with proper attention

I must keep the niyyah throughout the fast



Wanting to break the fast, or even being unsure about continuing the fast - even if I repent and don't actually go ahead with it - invalidates the fast!

Example: It's really hot outside! I step out and suddenly find myself doubting whether I have the resolve to actually stick it out. "I definitely deserve some juice," I whisper to myself.