



Virtues of
Ramadhaan-ul-Mubaarak
and necessary Masaa'il
of
Fast, Taraaweesh, I'tikaaf,
Eid-ul-Fitr, Sadaqatul Fitr
and Zakaah

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VIRTUES OF RAMADHAAN-UL-MUBAARAK

Fasting is abstaining with niyyah from eating, drinking and sexual intercourse from twilight (subhe sadiq) till sunset.

The fast of Ramadhaan is also a pillar of Islam and its arrival is invigorating news and a treasure of Divine bounties and blessings.

The Prophet Sallallaahu Alayhi Wasallam says that “On the first eve of Ramadhaan ul Mubaarak, shayaateen (devils) are chained, the doors of Hell closed and the doors of Paradise and Divine mercy opened. The past sins of the one who fasts for Allah’s sake are pardoned. The (value of) odour from the mouth of the fasting one is much more than musk to Allah the most High. Allah himself will bestow reward with his own Hand of Power upon the fasting one. There is a special door in Paradise for the entrance of the fasting one; the name of which is Rayyaan.”

And is this not sufficient a punishment for the one who does not fast, that his Lord and Creator, Allah the most High is angered by his evil deed, he is remembered with disapproval and reproach in the assemblies of the angels and the virtuous. The place wherein the non-fasting eats or drinks in the days of Ramadhaan will testify on the Day of Judgement that he had committed a sin on its back.

It is therefore imperative upon Muslims that they should appreciate the fast of Ramadhaan and not prepare for their own loss in this world and the Hereafter by neglecting it.

NIYYAH (INTENTION) OF FAST

It is not necessary to pronounce the niyyah (intention) of keeping fast. Mere intention by heart that I shall be fasting today is sufficient. Niyah can be uttered in any language, though preferable in Arabic; **وَبَصَّوْمٍ عَلَيَّ نَوَيْتُ**

If without niyyah, one remains hungry, thirsty and without sexual intercourse, this will not be deemed as a fast.

The time of fast begins from twilight (subhe sadiq). Niyah for the fast of Ramadhaan is preferable before subhe sadiq and can also be determined afterwards at any time prior to one hour before noon as a precaution.

WHAT DOES NOT INVALIDATE A FAST

1. Eating, drinking and sexual intercourse out of forgetfulness
2. Performing Miswaak
3. Vomiting involuntarily
4. Smelling fragrance
5. Unintentionally swallowing dust, fly or mosquito
6. Applying hair-oil or surma to the eye
7. Wet dream (Ihtilaam)
8. Inserting water or eye drops in the eye
9. Swallowing spit or phlegm
10. Self-inducing vomit less than a mouthful
11. Lingering paan (betel leaf) colouring after gargle
12. Not bathing before subhe sadiq after sexual intercourse at night
13. Injections

WHAT INVALIDATES A FAST

1. Inserting medication in the nostril or ear
2. Self-inducing vomit mouthful or more
3. Water entering the throat whilst gargling
4. Taking snuff
5. Taking enema
6. Eating gravel, stone, iron etc.
7. Breaking fast before sunset in error
8. Eating after subhe sadiq mistaking it for night
9. Inhaling incense smoke
10. Smoking cigarettes, hookah, chewing paan (betel leaf) and tobacco
11. Swallowing spit which is predominantly mixed with blood
12. Inserting medication in the anus.

Inserting medication in the urinal organs invalidates a female's fast. However a male's fast is not invalidated by inserting medication in his urinal organs.

If any particle of food, meat etc. that was stuck between teeth is extracted and taken out of the mouth and then re eaten / swallowed, then the fast is invalidated. However, if one extracts it with the tongue and then swallows it without taking it out of the mouth, then the fast is invalidated if the food particle is larger than a chana (chickpea), otherwise not.

If one breaks the fast of Ramadhaan intentionally, then both Qadha and Kaffaarah will be necessary. Kaffaarah is fasting continuously without a break for two months. If one does not have the physical strength for that, then he will have to feed sixty poor people to their stomachs fill morning and evening.

IFTAAR AND SAHARI

Eating sahari is Sunnah. If one is not hungry, even then he should eat a dried date or two or at least drink water. Eating sahari late is Sunnah, however not so late that creates doubt in the ending time of Sahari.

Breaking fast immediately after sunset is mustahab (desirable) and to delay is makrooh (undesirable). However, on a cloudy day, one should delay in breaking the fast and haste in eating Sahari.

If possible, one should eat enough at the time of breaking the fast to reduce appetite so salaah can be offered with satisfaction and devotion.

The Imaam should not haste in performing Maghrib salaah, rather a little concession to the muqtadis (followers) is appropriate, so that all can join the jamaa'ah (congregation) with contentment after finishing with gargling etc.

It is better to break the fast with dried dates or any sweet, otherwise with water or whatever available. Some consider it a virtue to break the fast with salt; however this is false and baseless.

It is masnoon to recite the following at the time of Iftaar (breaking fast):

اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ صُيِّمْتُ وَبِكَ أَمِنْتُ وَعَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَعَلَى رِزْقِكَ أَفْطَرْتُ فَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّي

MASAA'IL OF TARAWEEH

During the nights of Ramadhaan, performing twenty rak'aat of Taraaweeh after Ishaah salaah is sunnah-e-mu'akkidah. It is also sunnah to read or listen to the Noble Qur'aan in full at least once. Both of these are separate sunnahs. Therefore those who discontinue performing

Taraaweeh after listening to the whole Qur'aan once, fulfil only one sunnah neglecting the other.

Taraaweeh is not valid before the fardh of Ishaah salaah. Hence, he who comes to the Masjid after the jamaa'ah of Ishaah is over, should perform fardh of Ishaah first and then join Taraaweeh. The missed Taraaweeh should be performed either during the recess sittings or afterwards.

However, witr can be performed before and after Taraaweeh. Therefore, it is permissible for one to complete his missed Taraaweeh after performing witr with the Imam in congregation.

It is mustahab (desirable) to sit after every four rak'aat of Taraaweeh for the duration of how long it takes to perform four rak'aat, during which one may pray durood, dua or remain silent. However, if it is feared that the Muqtadis (followers) will be burdened or attendance will decrease, then to shorten this recess will be ok.

It is not permitted at all to cut short ruku', sujud, durood, sana etc. on account of haste or displeasure from the Muqtadis. However, omitting of duas is permitted if in haste.

On the day of Khatme Qur'aan, illuminations, to enforce donations for distribution of sweets etc., to consider distribution of sweets as compulsory, to taunt those who oppose, to disturb the peace of the House of Allah; are all illegal in Shariah.

MASAA'IL OF RECITATION OF THE NOBLE QUR'AAN IN TARAWEEH

During recitation, if the meaning totally changes due to addition or omission of any word, then salaah will

become void e.g. omitting لا in فَمَا لَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ . If the meaning remains unchanged, then salaah will remain valid.

If those letters that are difficult to distinguish e.g.

سین ، صاد ، ضاد ، ظاء ، زال are recited in one another's place, then salaah is not void.

If those letters that are readily distinguished are recited in one another's place due to which meaning totally changes, then salaah becomes void e.g. if طَالِحَاتُ is recited in place of صَلَاتُ , salaah will become void.

If in change of words, the meaning is totally altered, then again salaah will become void, otherwise not. For example, instead of عَلِيمٍ one recites حَفِيفٌ وَ خَبِيرٌ , salaah is still valid, but if one recites غَافِلِينَ instead of فَاعِلِينَ in وَعَدَّا عَلَيْهَا إِنَّا كُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ , salaah will become void.

If words are changed between sentences, and the meaning is totally altered, then again salaah will become void, otherwise not. For example, in:

إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ وَإِنَّ الْفُجَّارَ لَفِي جَحِيمٍ , one recites جَحِيمٍ in place of نَعِيمٍ or نَعِيمٍ in place of جَحِيمٍ, salaah will become void, but if in

شَهِينَ وَرَفِيَهُ هُمْ فِيهَا زَوِيْرٌ وَ شَهِيْنٌ salaah will remain valid.

VIRTUES OF I'TIKAAF

Allah the Almighty says:

وَعَهَدْنَا إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ أَنْ طَهِّرَا بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْقَائِمِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ

“And We gave the (following directive) to Ibraheem and Isma'eel (Peace and Mercy be upon them both): “Purify

My House for those who are to circumambulate (make Tawaaf) and those who stay in I'tikaaf, and those who bow down or prostrate themselves (in prayers).”

Scholars have stated that from this verse we learn that the purpose of constructing Baytullah is Tawaaf, I'tikaaf and Salaah. And in the word **يَتِي** for the directive of Purification, there is indication that this order encompasses all Masaajid as all Masaajid are houses of Allah. It is apparent from this verse that I'tikaaf is a form of worship and both desired and anticipated.

I'tikaaf is of three different types: a) Waajib
b) Sunnat-e-Mu'akkidah c) Nafl

The conditions and Masaa'il of I'tikaaf are detailed in books of Fiqh. Here we relate just a few virtues from Fazaail-e-Aa'maal.

1) Hadhrat Aa'ishaah Radhiyallaahu Anhaa narrates that the Prophet Sallallaahu Alayhi Wasallam said, “Whosoever performs I'tikaaf in the state of Imaan hopeful of reward, all his previous sins will be pardoned.”

2) In a long hadith Hadhrat Ibn Abbaas Radhiyallaahu Anhu narrates from the Prophet Sallallaahu Alayhi Wasallam that, “Whomsoever performs I'tikaaf for a day, thereby seeking the pleasure of Allah, Allah will barricade three trenches between him and the fire of Hell, the width of each being more than the distance between sky and earth”.

From this hadith we learn that for every additional day that I'tikaaf is performed so much more is rewarded.

In Kashful Gummah, Allaamah Sha'raani relates a hadith wherein Rasulullah Sallallaahu Alayhi Wasallam said, “Whoever performs I'tikaaf for the final ten days of Ramadhaan, for him is the reward of two Hajj and two Umrahs and whoever performs I'tikaaf in a masjid where Jamaa'ah salaah is performed, from Maghrib until Ishaah

talking to no-one except performing salaah and reciting the Qur'aan, Allah will prepare for him a palace in Jannah”.

3) Hadhrat Ibn Abbaas Radhiyallaahu Anhu narrates that Rasulullah Sallallaahu Alayhi Wasallam said, “The person performing I'tikaaf remains safeguarded from sins, and he is indeed given the same reward as those who do righteous deeds.”

This hadith points to two great benefits of I'tikaaf. Firstly one is saved from sin due to I'tikaaf. It is true that often due to error and disregard one commits a sin even in this blessed month. To commit a sin in this blessed month of Ramadhaan is indeed a great injustice to ourselves. By remaining secluded in the masjid, one completely avoids the temptation to sin.

Secondly, when one is secluded in the masjid, one is disadvantaged by not being allowed to perform certain good deeds like joining funeral prayers, attending burials, visiting the sick etc. However, according to this hadith one is rewarded for these deeds even though he is not able to perform them.

What a great favour from Allah! How great is Allah's bounty! By performing ibaadah one receives the reward of numerous other ibaadaat. In fact Allah's mercy seeks the slightest cause to bestow His blessings and with little effort and plea, His blessings are received in abundance. If only we would truly appreciate these favours. Though true appreciation and understanding can only be achieved if we have true appreciation of Deen in our hearts.

In Fazaa'il-e- Aa'maal, Hadhrat Aqdas Shaykhul Hadeeth (Allah enlighten his grave) writes that the reward for I'tikaaf is great and what other virtue can be greater than the fact that the Noble Prophet Sallallaahu Alayhi Wasallam always used to perform I'tikaaf.

The example of one who resides in the Masjid in I'tikaaf is that of a person who, having gone to someone's door to appeal for something, refuses to leave until he has been granted his request. If this would be reality, then even the person with the hardest heart would eventually give in to his request. How much more Merciful is Allah, He seeks the slightest excuse for forgiveness, and grants without an excuse also. Thus, when someone secluding himself from the world persistently sits at His door, what doubt can there be in the fulfilment of his wishes? And whosoever Allah grants, who can describe His infinite treasures?

Allaamah ibn Qayyim, in explaining the significance of I'tikaaf writes that the actual aim is to divert the heart away from everything except Allah, and to make it come near to Allah, thereby forming a complete spiritual connection with the Creator. All worldly connections are thus cut off, for the sake of gaining Allah's attention and all thoughts, desires, love and devotion become centred around Him. As a result, an attachment with Allah is attained - a love and friendship that will be the only support in loneliness of the grave. One can possibly imagine the great ecstasy with which that time in the grave will be spent.

In Maraaqi'ul Falaah, the author writes that I'tikaaf, when properly and sincerely performed, is among the most virtuous of deeds. One cannot possibly enumerate all the great advantages and benefits in it. In actual fact, what takes place in I'tikaaf is that the heart is drawn away from everything else except the Creator, while the soul is actually laid at His door-step.

All the time, one remains in a state of 'Ibaadah', even when one is asleep, one is still in His worship striving for nearness to Him. And Allah says (according to a Hadith): "Whoever draws near to Me (the length of) one hand, then I draw nearer to him (the length of) two hands, and whoever

draws near to Me by walking, I draw nearer to him by running." Moreover, in I'tikaaf one seeks refuge in the fortress of Allah, and is safeguarded therein from all enemies etc. Many more virtues and benefits are in this act of worship.

Rasulullah Sallallaahu Alayhi Wasallam always performed I'tikaaf. Once he remained in I'tikaaf for the entire month and in the year he departed from this world, Rasulullah Sallallaahu Alayhi Wasallam performed I'tikaaf for twenty days.

Imaam Zuhri Rahmatullahi Alayhi states that it is of surprise that people have forsaken the sunnah of I'tikaaf, although Rasulullah Sallallaahu Alayhi Wasallam despite the fact that in some matters he used to perform and at times forsake, however since migrating to Madinah Munawwarah, till his demise, without fail performed I'tikaaf, never missed it (If missed, then performed Qadha as in hadith). The fact that Rasulullah Sallallaahu Alayhi Wasallam was steadfast (without renouncing those who did not perform) is proof of it being a sunnah.

Residing in the House of Allah to gain Allah's nearness, detaching oneself from the world, attention to seek Allah's mercy, eagerness to gain His forgiveness are all clear benefits of I'tikaaf.

SHAR'I RULING OF I'TIKAAF

Performing I'tikaaf for the last ten days of Ramadhaan is sunnah-e-mu'akkidah alal kifaayah. If even a single person in a locality performs I'tikaaf, then all residents of that locality are absolved from its obligation, otherwise all will be deemed sinful and deserters of sunnah.

For men's I'tikaaf, it is essential that the masjid is one wherein jamaa'ah salaah (congregational prayers) are

held five times a day. As for the females, they should perform I'tikaaf in any one room or part of the house set aside for this purpose. Niyyah is essential as is being pure from menstruation (Haidh and Nifaas). If during I'tikaaf, a female starts to menstruate or gives birth, then she will discontinue.

Sexual intercourse, kissing etc. is not permissible in I'tikaaf. It is also not permitted for men to come out of the masjid, and women to come out of their designated place of I'tikaaf unnecessarily. Leaving the place of I'tikaaf without necessity invalidates I'tikaaf i.e. the previous days of I'tikaaf are valid and the latter are nullified. However, one can come out for natural and Shar'i needs such as relieving oneself and for salaah with Jamaa'ah etc. For jumu'ah salaah, one is allowed out for the duration in which one can read Tahiyatul Masjid, the prior sunnah and after sunnah as well.

Sexual intercourse, be it intentional or in forgetfulness, both nullify I'tikaaf. Forgetfulness is disregarded in this matter. To remain completely silent in I'tikaaf is makrooh (undesirable), however futile conversation should be refrained from, rather one should engage in reciting the Noble Qur'aan or performing other forms of worship.

COMMANDS RELATING TO EID-UL-FITR

1. It is obligatory to perform two rakaah salaah on the day of Eid-ul-Fitr to express gratitude to the Almighty.
2. The time of Eid salaah commences approximately 15 minutes after sunrise and ends at noon.
3. The method of Eid salaah is as follows: Make niyyah that I am performing two rakaah salaah

waajib of Eid-ul-Fitr inclusive of six extra takbeers. Thereafter, fold hands after Takbeer-e-Tahreemah. After reciting **سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ** say **الله أكبر** 3 times, each time raising the hands up to the ears and letting go of them on to the side waiting each time as much as it takes to say **سبحان الله سبحان الله** thrice. After the third takbeer, fold your hands again. Thereafter the Imaam should read **اعوذ بالله وبسم الله**, Surah Fatihah and another surah, whilst the Muqtadis will remain silent as usual. After surah, ruku', sujud will take place and the Imaam will now stand for the second rakaah. In it, he will read surah Fatihah and another surah. Thereafter an extra three takbirs will be said by all in the same manner as before except that with the last takbeer, hands will not be folded, instead let go off by the side. Then with the fourth takbeer, one will perform ruku'.

4. Listening to the Eid khutbah (sermon after salaah) is waajib (obligatory).
5. If everyone has performed Eid salaah, then one cannot perform it by himself.
6. If the initial rakaah is missed, then when performing it, one will do qiraa'ah first, thereafter say the takbirs.
7. If one joins jamaa'ah after the Imaam has read the takbirs, he should immediately make niyyah and say the three takbirs. If he joins at the time of ruku' and is convinced he can join after saying the three takbirs then after niyyah he should say the three takbirs; otherwise he should go to ruku' and omitting tasbih say the three takbirs without raising the hands. If the Imaam rises from the ruku' before he completes

the three takbirs, then he (muqtadi) too should stand. His remaining takbirs are excused.

SUNAN OF EID-UL-FITR

1. To adorn oneself
2. To do Miswaak
3. To bathe
4. To wear nice and permitted clothing according to one's ability
5. To apply scent
6. To rise early
7. To go to the Eid-gaah early
8. To eat something sweet i.e. dried dates prior to going to the Eid-gaah
9. To pray in the Eid-gaah if there is no excuse
10. To go to the Eid-gaah from one route and returning by another route
11. To go on foot
12. To recite softly **اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ وَ اللَّهُ الْحَمْدُ**
en route to the Eid-gaah.

SADAQATUL FITR

It is obligatory for a person to give sadaqatul fitr if apart from necessary living essentials, he possesses enough wealth to meet the minimum requirement for the imposition of zakaah, even though zakaah may not be due because the year of possession is not complete. To be in possession of such wealth on the day of Eid-ul-Fitr is sufficient grounds for making sadaqatul fitr obligatory. The passing of the whole year is not a condition of sadaqatul

fitr. This is the difference between zakaah and sadaqatul fitr.

It is obligatory for a man to give sadaqatul fitr for himself and on behalf of his minor (naa-baaligh) children. If the minor are wealthy, then it will be given from their property and there is no compulsion to give from that of the father.

Sadaqatul fitr becomes obligatory at subhe sadiq of Eid day. Therefore it is not binding on a child born afterwards, or on one who dies prior to that time.

QUANTITY OF SADAQATUL FITR

The required amount of sadaqatul fitr is 1.661kg of wheat or wheatflour, but as a precaution one should give more. If one gives barley or barley flour, it should be twice the amount of wheat. If grain other than wheat and barley is given then price will be the criterion. The price of that grain should match the value of the required quantity of wheat or barley. It is even better to give the price of wheat or barley. Sadaqatul Fitr is not absolved of, if not given on Eid day; it will be necessary to give it afterwards.

ELIGIBLE RECEIPIENTS OF SADAQATUL FITR

Sadaqatul Fitr should only be given to those who are eligible to accept zakaah. One cannot give sadaqatul fitr to one's parents, grandparents, great grandparents etc., to whose progeny one belongs. Similarly one cannot give sadaqatul fitr to one's offspring i.e. children, grandchildren, great grandchildren etc.

Besides these, if other relatives (brother, sister, uncle, aunt, cousin etc.) are poor and eligible to accept zakaah then one can give sadaqatul fitr to them as one can

give to the poor and needy. Whether one gives sadaqatul fitr to one person only or shares it between a few, both are permitted.

ZAKAAH

As most people take their zakaah out in the month of Ramadhaan, therefore some necessary masaa'il relating to zakaah are stated here.

Zakaah too, is a pillar of Islam, however most Muslims neglect it; either by giving none or way too little.

Rasulullah Sallallaahu Alayhi Wasallam has said, "One who owns gold and silver and does not give zakaah, his two sides, forehead and back will be branded on the day of Judgement with highly heated slabs of fire in Hell.

He Sallallaahu Alayhi Wasallam said, "Whosoever has been given wealth by Allah the Most Exalted, and he did not pay the due zakaah, on the day of Judgement his wealth will be converted into a huge venomous bald headed python and coiled around his neck. It will pull at both his jawbones and say, 'I am your wealth, your treasure.'"

Allah protect us all! What severe punishment will be inflicted on account of a little miserliness.

NISAAB (REQUIRED MINIMUM) OF GOLD AND SILVER

One who possesses 52.5 tola of silver or 7.5 tola of gold, and a year passes; and is not in debt, is under obligation to pay zakaah. Zakaah is not payable for a lesser possession.

One-fortieth (2.5%) of whatever money or property is owned has to be paid as Zakaah e.g. one will pay £2.50 on every £100 he owns.

It is not necessary that the whole year should pass under the required nisaab, rather it is a condition that at the beginning and at the end of the year, the nisaab should be possessed. If it falls short during the year, it makes no difference. However, if no wealth remains during mid-year, but towards the end of the year, one gains wealth worth the nisaab again, then Zakaah will be calculated from the point of re-acquisition of wealth.

Zakaah is payable on all things made out of gold and silver such as jewellery, ornaments, utensils, pure gold or silver lace and brocade.

Zakaah is also payable upon merchandise if its value reaches the amount of nisaab.

In order for Zakaah to be valid, niyyah is necessary when separating the wealth for Zakaah purposes or at the time of giving it to the poor and needy.

ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS OF ZAKAAH

One who possesses 52.5 tola of silver or 7.5 tola of gold, or merchandise equivalent of it, then according to Shariah, he is deemed rich and wealthy. It is unlawful for him to accept zakaah. And one who possesses less than that, or owns that amount but is in debt, then he is eligible to accept zakaah.

It is not permissible to give zakaah to one's parents, grandparents, great grandparents etc., to whose progeny one belongs. Similarly one cannot give zakaah to one's offspring i.e. children, grandchildren, great grandchildren etc.

Besides these, if other relatives (brother, sister, uncle, aunt, cousin, step-parents, parents-in-law etc.) are poor, then one can give zakaah to them as one can give to the poor and needy.

Sayyids and Haashimis (descendants of the Noble Prophet Sallallaahu Alayhi Wasallam) are not eligible to receive zakaah. Neither is it permissible to utilize zakaah to pay some one's salary, to meet the needs of a Masjid or to shroud the deceased.

In distribution of zakaah, one has a choice of either giving all of it to only one individual, or more. However it is preferable to give one enough for one day's needs. Giving one needy equivalent to the amount of nisaab is makrooh (undesirable) unless he is in debt.

وَصَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى خَيْرِ خَلْقِهِ سَيِّدِنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ وَبَارَكَ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيمًا كَثِيرًا كَثِيرًا