

“O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you, as it was prescribed to those before you, that you may (learn) self restraint.” (2:183)

# Sawm

## (Fasting)

By

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## بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Sawm (fasting) means to refrain from eating, drinking and cohabiting from subha sādiq (early dawn) to sunset with a niyyah (intention) of observing fast.

Fasting in the month of Ramadhān is one of the five pillars of Islām and is fardh (compulsory) upon every muslim who is sane and mature. Fasting has many physical, moral, and social benefits. However, Allah ﷻ has made fasting compulsory so that we become pious and God-fearing.

Fasting will not be valid without niyyah. It is not necessary to express the niyyah in words. However it is preferable to recite:-

اللَّهُمَّ أَصُومُ لَكَ غَدًا

*Allahumma asoomu laka ghadan*

(O Allah tomorrow I shall be fasting for you only). In the case of Ramadhān, it is better to make niyyah in the night. However, should a person fail to do so, then it is permitted to make the niyyah during the day before zawāl (midday).

### MUSTAHAB (DESIRABLE) ACTS IN FASTING

1. To eat sehri (the meal before subha sādiq).
2. To delay the sehri up to a little before subha sādiq (early dawn).
3. To break the fast immediately after sunset.
4. To break the fast with dates. If dates are not available then with water.

5. To recite this du'ā at the time of breaking the fast :-

اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ صُمْتُ وَبِكَ آمَنْتُ وَعَلَى رِزْقِكَ أَفْطَرْتُ

*Allahumma laka sumtu wa bika āmantu wa 'ala rizqika aftartu*

(O Allah! I fasted for You and in You do I believe and with Your provision (food) do I break my fast).

### THINGS MAKROOH (DETESTABLE) WHILE FASTING

1. To chew items such as rubber, plastic etc.
2. To taste food or drink and spit it out. To collect one's saliva in the mouth and then swallow it.
4. To clean teeth or mouth with tooth-powder or toothpaste.
5. To complain of hunger or thirst.
6. To quarrel, argue with filthy words.

### THINGS THAT BREAK THE FAST

1. To eat, drink or indulge in cohabitation intentionally.
2. To burn agarbatti (incense) and inhale its smoke.
3. If water goes down the throat while gargling.
4. To vomit mouthful intentionally.
5. To swallow vomit intentionally.
6. To swallow something edible, equal to or bigger than a grain of gram, which was stuck between the teeth. However, if it is first taken out of the

mouth and then swallowed, it will break the fast whether it is smaller or bigger than the size of the grain.

7. To drop oil or medicine into ear or nose.
8. To swallow the blood from gums with saliva. However, if the blood is less than the saliva and its taste is not felt then the fast will not break.
9. Snuffing.
10. To eat and drink forgetting one is fasting and thereafter, thinking that the fast is broken to eat and drink again.
11. Smoking.
12. To apply medicine to the anus.
14. For women to apply medicine to the urinary organs.
15. To swallow intentionally a pebble, piece of paper or any item that is not used as food or medicine.
16. In all the above circumstances, only a single fast will become qadhā except in the case of number one (1), where qadhā and kaffārah both will become obligatory. (Consult an 'Ālim regarding the rules of kaffārah).

### THINGS THAT DO NOT BREAK THE FAST

1. To eat, drink or indulge in cohabitation in forgetfulness.
2. To vomit without intention.
3. To vomit intentionally less than mouthful.
4. To have a wet dream.
5. To oil the hair.
6. To use surma (collyrium) in the eyes.
7. To drop water or medicine in the eyes.

8. To clean teeth with wet or dry miswāk (a stick used for cleaning teeth).
9. To apply or smell attar (perfume).
10. To swallow a fly, mosquito, smoke or dust unintentionally.
11. To swallow one's saliva or phlegm.
12. Water entering the ears.
13. To take an injection.

### SUNNAHS IN THE MONTH OF RAMADHĀN

1. To observe taraweeh.
2. To increase the recitation of the Glorious Qur'ān.
3. To observe i'tikāf during the last ten days of Ramadhān.

### Sawm (Fasting)

Sawm is a shield, as long as he (the fasting person) does not tear it up. (*Nasa'ee*)

Note: *Fasting is a protection from Shaytān or from Allah's punishment in the Hereafter. One who indulges in sins whilst fasting such as lying, backbiting etc., they become the cause of the fast becoming wasted.*

All good deeds are for the one who renders them, but Fasting. Fasting is exclusively for me (Allah). (*Bukhāri*)

Fasting is a shield and a powerful fortress. (*Ahmad, Bayhaqi*)

I swear by that being in whose possession is the life of Muhammad! The odour of the mouth of a fasting person is sweeter to Allah than the fragrance of musk. (*Bukhāri*)

Fasting is exclusively for Allah, the reward of it (being limitless) no one knows besides Allah. (*Tabrāni*)

### Suhoor

Verily, Allah and His angels send mercy upon those who eat suhoor. (*Tabrāni*)

Eat suhoor because in suhoor lies barakah. (*Mishkāt*)

### Iftār

Whosoever gives something to a fasting person in order to break the fast, for him there shall be forgiveness for his sins and emancipation from the fire of Jahannam; and for him (the one who gives) shall be the same reward as for him (whom he fed), without that person's (the one who was fed) reward being diminished in the least. (*Ibne Khuzaamah, Bayhaqi*)

Whoever gave a person, who fasted, water to drink, Allah shall give him a drink from my fountain where after he shall never again feel thirsty until he enters Jannah. (*Ibne Khuzaamah*)

The fasting person experiences two (occasions) of delight: at the time of iftār and at the time he will meet his Rabb. (*Bukhāri*)

Not a single prayer made by a fasting person at the time of breaking fast is rejected. (*Ibne Mājah*).

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