

30 Points on the Fiqh of Fasting

A Summary of Kitāb'l-Şiyām - al-Sharḥ'l-Mumtī' by Sh al-'Uthaymīn ﷺ

Please find below most of the common issues concerning fasting taken from the Chapter on Fasting from *al-Sharḥ'l-Mumtī'* by the late Sh al-'Uthaymīn ﷺ and despite the obvious allowance for differences of opinion and preferences for fatwa etc, were then initially summarised into 15 pages by Ustādh Mu'ādh b. Sāmī Āl-'Abd'l-Qādir and then summarised further into 30 distinct points by Ustādh Ḥamad b. Sulaymān al-Ḥuqayl which are translated as follows:

1. *Ṣawm* or Fasting is defined as **“The worship of Allāh with the intention of refraining from food, drink, intercourse and all those things which break the fast, from the break of dawn until sunset.”**

It is sufficient for the fasting of *Ramaḍān* to make a single intention at the beginning of the month.

2. There are two obligations upon the one who is *Mukallaf* (legally responsible):

(i) to either see the new crescent moon by eyesight alone, or by use of binoculars/telescope but not by using calculations

(ii) for *Sha'bān* to complete 30 days

3. The people of a country should fast based on the testimony of a single person, and break their fast (and thereby signal the end of *Ramaḍān* and the beginning of *'Eed*) based on the testimony of two people, from those who should be known to be trustworthy and of excellent eyesight.

4. Whoever starts his fast in one country and then travels to another so that the number of his fasts ends up changing, he should complete his fasts with that second country even if this means he fasts for more than 30 days. And if it means that he fasts too little, then he makes up for that later so that he ends up fasting 29 days.

5. Those who are unable to fast but expect to be able to do so later (in the year) should make up their fasts after *Ramaḍān*

6. Feeding others (in place of fasting for those with legal excuse): it was said that it should be 1.5kg from the staple food of that country per poor person (per day), but the stronger opinion seems that it should be what fills and satisfies the poor person for that day. The feeding can be done during the current time, or delayed to a later date post-*Ramaḍān*.

7. If someone wasn't fasting for a legitimate reason and then that reason was removed such as a non-Muslim becoming Muslim, or the insane one regaining sanity, then they have to fast for the rest of that day only and they do not need to make it up later.

8. If someone breaks their fast in the beginning of the day due to a legitimate reason such as a Traveller or one who starts menstruating, and then they don't have that legitimate excuse anymore later during the same day, they are not obligated to fast for the rest of the day. They are to make up for the fast later.

9. The sick one and the Traveller: if fasting is not difficult for them then to fast is better. If it causes them problems then it's better not to fast. If there is harm in fasting or the difficulty becomes extreme, it is *impermissible* to fast.
10. If one starts fasting as a resident and then travels, he can break his fast once he has left the city.
11. The pregnant and breastfeeding are allowed to break their fast if they fear for the unborn child or the weaning baby.
12. You are allowed to break your fast to help someone else, such as to save someone who is drowning or in a fire or to give blood to someone who is dying. It is not obligatory to fast for the rest of the day, yet you are to make up the fast later.
13. The insane one and the unconscious: if they remain in such a state with no intellectual capacity for the entire period of the fasting day, there is nothing to be made up for them. As for the *Mahrūm* who is basically someone who has been overcome with sleep for the entire fasting day, then his fast is valid.
14. It is sufficient for *Ramaḍān* to make an intention for fasting (the month) on the first night, and it should be renewed again if his fasting is interrupted by travel or sickness. Also, whoever (after seeing the new crescent moon establishing the month of fasting) sleeps with the intention to fast, his fast (the next day) is valid. As for the one who intends not to fast, has broken his fast by that.
15. The food which breaks the fast is that which reaches the stomach by whatever means even via the nose. Anal suppositories do not break the fast, and likewise neither do eye drops which might leave a taste such as *koḥl* etc.
16. Whoever vomits intentionally or masturbates has broken their fast, even if done indirectly such as repeatedly thinking of something that makes him vomit, or inflames his sexual desire so that he ejaculates. The sleeping one does not break his fast through wet dreams.
17. The fast is broken if one intentionally lets blood, whether through donation or a nose bleed or via cupping. The one who does the cupping will also break *his* fast if he removes the blood using his mouth, but not if using standard instruments.
18. One doesn't ruin their fast with something that breaks the fast (a *Mufaṭṭir*) unless done with the following three conditions:
- (i) intentionally
 - (ii) aware of what he's doing i.e. not forgetfully
 - (iii) knowledgeable of the ruling on the matter
- Being knowledgeable includes completely removing all doubts, such as knowing for sure that *Fajr* has entered.
19. It is disliked for the fasting one to over-rinse and over-gargle in his nose and mouth. It is better for the one who wishes to use a toothbrush to do so after he breaks his fast.
20. Whoever doubts or is not absolutely sure that *Fajr* has started and carries on with something that would normally break his fast, his fast is valid because the *aṣl* is that the night remains. He is excused.

21. Whoever doubts or is not absolutely sure that the Sun has set and then breaks his fast, his fast is invalid because the *aṣl* is that the day still remains. He is not excused.

22. Whoever sees the Sun set whilst he is on the ground, and then takes off on a flight and sees the Sun has not set, his original breaking of the fast is correct. If he lifts off on the flight before he sees the Sun set, and then sees the Sun whilst in the air and breaks his fast, it will be invalid.

23. Sexual intercourse for the one who is fasting, whether in the front or back passage, is *ḥarām*. He has to make up the fast as well as give an expiation: freeing a slave, and if he's unable to do that then to fast two months consecutively, and if he's unable to do that he is to feed sixty poor people. If his wife is complicit to the act then the same ruling applies to her.

24. Whoever is fasting and travelling and then has intercourse or is complicit in the act, they only make up their fast later. This is because expiation is linked to that (*Ramaḍān*) fast which is obligatory whereas travelling creates a concession. Also, whoever has intercourse more than once in a day, there remains a single expiation alone.

25. Whoever has to fast two months consecutively, their fasting/expiation is not affected by breaking for a journey, illness, menstruation, post-partum bleeding, the two 'Eeds or the three days of *Tashrīq*. As for the one who ends up feeding others (in expiation) then the criterion is to ensure their fill.

26. Gathering spittle together and swallowing it intentionally, swallowing mucus (despite it being *ḥarām* due to its disgusting nature and harm), tasting food for a need without swallowing, and swallowing blood from bleeding gums unintentionally, all do not break the fast of the fasting one.

27. Arabic gum doesn't break the fast as long as it has no flavour, it doesn't splinter or disintegrate, and none of it reaches the stomach whatsoever.

28. It is the *Sunnah* to delay *Suḥūr* and to hasten *Iftār* as long as one confirms the timings. One should go with fresh dates or if not then dry dates or if not water for both meals. It is *Sunnah* when making up fasts later to act as if he was in *Ramaḍān*.

29. It is preferred to start making up missed fasts before moving on to the optional but to do them in reverse order is not a problem. Alternatively one can combine between them with a double intention i.e. by intending to make up the missed fast, and then intending the reward of the optional nature of that fast as well. This is not the case though for the six days of *Shawwāl* which should be done after *al-Qaḍā'* i.e. the missed fasts have been made up.

30. If someone passes away whilst still needing to make up fasts, his guardian can make up the fasts or divide them up between his inheritors although this is not obligatory. They can feed poor people on his behalf either from his estate or from charity of their own money. One cannot hire someone to fast on the deceased's behalf.

Wallahu ta'āla a'lam.

And may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family and all his Companions. *Amīn.*