

It is recommended that the supplicant dresses well in clean garment, sit well, and face the *qiblah*, and choose of supplications in Al-Qur'an like the saying of the Almighty Allah in chapter Al-Baqarah:

“...Our Lord give us good in this world and good in the hereafter and defend us from the torment of the fire.”

(Al-Qur'an, 2:201)

Or what has been reported from the Messenger because he was given the best composition of words and phrases.

Striving in Devotion in the Last Ten Days of Ramadan

Allah, the Almighty, in His mercy and wisdom, favored certain hours, days, and months with His benevolence. Among these months, Ramadan is the month of favor, the month of *Al-Qur'an*. Of the days of Ramadan, the last ten days are the most meritorious for the acts of recitation of *Al-Qur'an*, nightly Sunnah prayers, etc., which weigh heavily on the scale of deeds, (*mizaaan*). After all, as we will see, in this month and during these last ten days, it is on one of the odd numbered days that the annual return of deeds takes place, the night known as the Night of Power.

In a hadith by Bukhari and Muslim, the Messenger's wife related that:

“When the month of Ramadan enters its last ten days, the Messenger of Allah (saas) spends his night praying and wakes up his family to join him, and he would tighten his belt.”

In this hadith, we see how the Messenger's wife, 'Aishah, (raa), informed us of what took place in her house during the last ten days of Ramadan. This was not the right time for the eyes to get their full in sleep. The Prophet (saas) didn't do this alone. His whole family was involved and the hadith used the word “tighten his belt” in its figurative sense to mean an all-out seriousness of the devotion.

Things Permitted During Fast

Although fasting entails restriction and abstinence there are certain things that are permitted for the faster to do. They include:

Bathing (*Al-Ghusul*), provided extra caution is taken to prevent water being swallowed by the mouth or nose.

'Aishah (raa) reported that:

“The Messenger of Allah (saas) used to wake up defiled with semen while fasting, then he took his bath.” (Bukhari and Muslim)

In another hadith, the Messenger of Allah (saas) has been seen pouring water on his head while he was fasting to minimize the thirst and heat.

These two reports prove that bathing are lawful during the fast, regardless of the reason, whether to cool the body or for cleanliness. Ibn `Umar (raa) has been reported to have wet a cloth and covered his body with it. Anas bin Malik (raa) used to have a pool and he used to jump into it to cool his body.

Al-Kuhl, coloring the eyelids, or using eye drops, such as “Vinsine”, is permitted whether the solution reaches the throat or not, the reason being the eyes are not the regular passage for food or nourishment. The strength of this case lies on the report by Anas bin Malik, (raa), who was the Messenger's cook for life. Anas used to color his eyes with kuhl while fasting.

Being in the company of the Prophet (saas) for that long, while coloring the eyes, the Prophet would have seen him and corrected him if it was wrong. So is the case with ear drops or any medicine being applied on open wounds, whether the person feels it in the throat or not, because these things are not food or drink, nor are they substitutes. The above is the understanding

of many scholars, including Imams Shafi'e, Abu Hanifah and Sheikh Ibn 'Taymiyyah (raa)

Kissing (*Qublah*) for faster who can control himself, for married couples, expressing affection toward each other by kissing is inevitable. It may take place any time, day or night. To deny or prohibit this feeling during Ramadan would undoubtedly lead to some hardship. Therefore, the Lawgiver permitted a man to kiss his spouse on the cheek, hand, or mouth or hold hand and embrace, if he feels like it and can control his feelings. The Messenger's wife Aishah (raa) reported:

“The Messenger (saas) used to kiss while fasting and to embrace while fasting, but he was the most able person to control his desire.” (Tirmidhi, Bukhari, Muslim)

In another report by 'Umar (raa), he stated:

“I felt the urge one day during fast, so I kissed (my wife). After realizing what I had done, I went to the Messenger of Allah (saas) and informed him that I had committed a great sin by kissing while fasting. The Messenger responded: ‘Do you break fast if you rinse your mouth with water?’ Umar said, ‘No, nothing is wrong with rinsing.’ Then, the Messenger said, ‘Why bother?’” (Ahmed/Abu-Dawuud)

Inferring from this hadith, many scholars among the companions see nothing wrong with kissing, provided the believer can control his feelings. If he cannot control himself, kissing becomes *haraam* (unlawful) because it leads to unlawful acts. This general rule is known in Islamic jurisprudence as *saduz zaree'ah* (closing the door that may lead to unlawful acts). The fear of getting carried away leads some scholars to say kissing is undesirable (*makruuh*) and one better not do it for fear of ejaculation.

Rinsing Mouth (*Madmadah*) Is one of the procedures of ablution (wudu). Therefore, the faster is permitted to rinse his mouth and cleanse his nose by sniffing in water and blowing it out. However, during fasting the process should be applied lightly for fear of swallowing water. The Messenger of Allah (saas) said:

“...If you sniff water through your nose do it thoroughly unless you are fasting.” (Abu Dawuud)

This hadith indicates two things: the faster who is making *wudu* or just wants to rinse his mouth should do it with utmost caution least he may swallow the water and invalidate his fast. The hadith is a proof that the nose is a regular passage, like the mouth, of nourishment and as such takes its rules. Thus, if water passes through the mouth or nose to the stomach, the fast is invalidated. Not so with the eyes or ears.

But what if, during rinsing, you swallow water? Does that break the fast? If water reaches the throat unintentionally, or without negligence on your part, the fast is still valid, but if water is swallowed intentionally, the fast is nullified.

Things Permitted to the FASTER as Un-avoidable

Things that are a part of daily living, such as swallowing saliva, mucus, street dust, or mill dust (for workers at the mill), are unavoidable, and they do not nullify the fast. Also, tasting of foods by cooks or tasting it with intention to buy, provided the food is not swallowed, but spit out. Nor is the fast affected by smelling a perfume or using it on the body or cloth. But intentionally sniffing any particles that might travel through the nose to the belly would spoil the fast.

The faster is allowed to eat and drink and have sexual intercourse from sundown until the break of dawn. When dawn breaks and there is food in the mouth, it should be spit out and one should cease from ejaculation. If one swallows the food or continues to have sex, his fast is nullified. In a hadith by Muslim and Bukhari (raa) reported by 'Aisha (raa) the Messenger of Allah (saas) said:

“When Bilal calls adhan at night eat and drink until Ibn Umm Maktum calls.”

The hadith indicates there used to be two adhans; the first one was announced by Bilal Ibn Rabah (raa). The purpose of which was two fold: to wake the believers up for *sahuur* and to indicate the period of *sahuur*; and Abdullah Ibn Umm-Maktum's to announce the time to stop eating and prepare for morning prayer.

For women, bleeding as a result of menstruation, or post child-birth, if the blood stops, may delay their bathing (ghusl) until daybreak and may wake up fasting, but they should cleanse themselves, before performing prayer, Salaat.

Nullifiers of the Fast

There are two categories of nullifiers of fast:

1. nullifiers that entail redemption (*qadaa*).
2. nullifiers that entail redemption of the day or days invalidated (*qadaa*), and expiation, (*kaffaarah*).

Nullifiers that Entail Redemption (*Al-Qada*)

The first nullifiers are when the fast is rendered invalid and it must be redeemed after Ramadan in a period extending over eleven months, but no later than the next Ramadan.

The nullifiers are:

1. Intentionally eating or drinking by allowing food and drink to travel through the mouth or nose to the stomach. When this happens, the fast is nullified, even if it is just a bite or a sip.

On the other hand, if eating or drinking occurs unintentionally, by mistake, and, for example, if a person forgetfully drinks after jogging, the fast is correct and resumes and no redemption is necessary provided the faster does not continue to eat or drink after he remembers. This ruling rests on the hadith narrated by many reporters by way of Abu Hurairah (raa) that the Prophet (saas) said:

“Whoever forgets -while fasting - and eats or drinks, should stop immediately and resume or complete his fast. For he has just been fed and quenched by Allah.”
(Agreed Upon)

The hadith indicates there is no need to worry if forgetfulness overcomes a faster causing him or her to eat or drink. Besides, Allah (SWT), in His mercy, justifies the person continuing to fast because the sustenance that he took was a direct gift from Allah, to the faster. The believer must be aware that this phenomenon occurs usually in the first few days of the fast, before the body and the mind adjust themselves to the new eating schedule.

2. A substitute for food and drink is as good a nullifier of fast as the real thing. By food substitute we mean two things:

Giving a faster a blood transfusion due to the loss of blood resulting from an injury, invalidates the fast, the reason being blood is a form of nourishment like food. Is not one of the reasons for eating to get blood flowing within our system?

Feeding an individual through the stomach, or intravenously, (through the veins), parenteral feeding (injecting nutrients into the body) as a substitute for food and drink invalidates the fast. Because this is substitute for food it takes its case in nullifying the fast.

3. Inducing vomiting nullifies the fast. By this is meant, intentionally causing the contents of the stomach to be ejected through the mouth either by wringing the stomach, or palpating the throat, or by smelling or looking at an emetic substance. In this case, the fast should be redeemed later or after Ramadan, but if the fast is a Sunnah fast, one has a choice to make it up later or not. In a hadith related by Abu Hurairah (raa) the Messenger of Allah (saas) said:

“Whoever is overcome by vomiting wouldn't have to make it up, but if vomiting is the result of inducement (the fast is invalidated) and would have to be made up.”
(Ahmed)

It is important to say that the amount of the ejected contents, whether it is little or much, has no effect on the ruling.

One of the reasons why induced vomiting invalidates fasting is when the contents of the belly are thrown up, the body, which is already short on nourishment, is further weakened. Therefore, the Lawgiver as a mercy tells the believer to go ahead and break this day, and make it up later.

However, no faster should break his fast because he or she feels nausea, until the vomiting actually occurs.

4. Bleeding as a result of menstruation (known as *hayd*), or post childbirth bleeding, (*nifaas*), nullifies the fast, even if it occurs moments before sunset, and the iftar time. In this case, the fast is no longer valid, and even if the woman tried to continue, it would still not be valid. It has been reported that the Prophet (saas) said regarding menstruation,

“When a woman experiences her monthly period, she will not pray or fast, but she shall redeem the fast after Ramadan, but not Salaat.”

5. Ejaculation of semen, as a result of kissing, hugging, using the hand (as in self-pollution) or using any object for a sexual purpose for both men and women invalidates the fast because this is *shahawah*, a sensuous or lustful act that nullifies the fast. In a hadith *Al-Qudsi*, the Messenger of Allah (saas) has been reported as saying referring to the faster:

“He who abstains from his food, his drink and his lustful desires for My (Allah) sake.” (*Al-Bukhari*)

But if ejaculation occurs as result of a wet dream, or just unintentional thinking that is devoid of actual acts or inducements, the fast remains valid. Allah (SWT) will not hold one responsible for things randomly thought of which do not accompany the deed. The Messenger of Allah (saas) said:

“Verily, Allah has pardoned my community, (Ummah) what their souls entertain in so far as they do not do or speak.” (Agreed upon)

This citation is referring to the case of thoughts borne in mind. There are bad thoughts and good thoughts. The bad thoughts