

However, he would have to make up the day or days he missed after Ramadan. Allah (SWT) states:

“Fasting is for a fixed number of days, but if any of you is ill, or on a journey, the prescribed number (missed) should be made up...”

(Al-Qur'an, 2:184)

This verse indicates that when the believer intends to fast and discovers during a journey that he or she can not continue, he should break and make it up later. If a traveler who is not fasting returns home during the daytime, his fasting of that day is invalid because he did not observe it from the beginning of the day. The mandatory fast starts with the break of dawn.

Should he observe the rest of the day in fasting or not? Some scholars say he should restrain from eating the rest of the day as respect for the fast, although he would have to make it up later. But others said there is no valid reason to force a person who has been permitted by the Lawgiver not to fast at the beginning of the day, to abstain for the rest of the day.

That is why Abdullah bin Mas'eud (raa) said,

“Whoever eats in the beginning of the day should eat at the end of the day.” (Majalis Shar Ramadan)

This means if a person is allowed to eat early part of the morning due certain valid reasons, it is lawful for him to eat at the later part of the day. This is also the ruling of Malik and Shafi'e. But they say he should not eat or drink in public because no one knows the reason of his breaking and, so that they do not think badly of him, or so some weak-minded person will not try to emulate his action.

Breaking Fast to Save Life

Whoever is compelled to break his fast for a valid reason, such as donating blood to save a life, and he or she does not have strength to do so without food, the person is allowed to break his fast. Indeed, it is mandatory on him to break, because saving a life is mandatory. As they say: *Mala, yatimul wajib illa bihi fahuwa wajib.* (An action necessary to accomplish a mandatory act is mandatory.) Similarly, the person who needs to break his fast to gain strength so as to participate in defending Muslim life and property should break his fast.

In a hadith reported by Abi Sa'ed Al-Khudri (raa) he said:

“We journeyed with the Messenger of Allah to Makkah while observing the fast of Ramadan. When we stopped at a place, he said, ‘You are getting near your enemy and breaking fast will help you gain your strength.’ This was a concession. Some of us continued to fast, while others broke their fast. Then, we stopped again, and the Messenger of Allah (saas) said, ‘You are meeting your enemy in the morning and breaking fast is better for your stamina.’ ‘Break!’ That was an order. So, we broke.” (Muslim/Ahmed)

This hadith indicates how the desire to regain strength is an independent reason, besides a journey, to permit someone to break his fast.

Redemption of Ramadan (*Al-Qada*)

The groups who are permitted to break fast due to the reasons mentioned should redeem the day(s) they missed after Ramadan. Allah (SWT) states:

**“The prescribed number (should be made up)
from days later.”**

(Al-Qur'an 2:185)

If he breaks the whole month, the whole month should be redeemed. If the month is 30 days, 30 days are due on him. If the month is 29 days, 29 days are due.

Technically, the time period of redemption is the whole year before next Ramadan. If he missed ten days, the redemption is due ten days before next Ramadan. However, it is preferred to redeem as soon as the obstacle is removed, because it is better to meet the obligation and free yourself from the responsibility without delay known as *Ibraudh-Dhimmah*.

It should not be delayed until next Ramadan without any good reason. The Prophet's wife `Aishah has been reported as saying,

“Sometime when I miss some days of Ramadan, I would not be able to redeem them except in the month of Sha`aban.”

The narrator of the Hadith, Yahya, added:

“She was busy serving the Messenger of Allah (saas).”
(Bukhari and Muslim)

Delaying to the next Ramadan may lead to piling up fasts which may be difficult for him to make up, or he may die in the mean time. If he died before making it up, there will be no blame on him because Allah gave him allowance to make up

missed fasts. But if he is able but neglected it, his next of kin should redeem on his behalf.

The Prophet (saas) said:

“Whoever dies before redeeming his missed fast, his next of kin should redeem it for him.” (Bkhari/Muslim)

Indeed, a group of relatives can redeem it for him, each fasting a certain amount of days until the *qada* is complete. If there is no next of kin, or there is one who does not wish to fast on his behalf, his guardian (*Wali*) can redeem it by feeding people instead of fasting.

The proof for this case is two things: analogy (*al-Qiyaas*) and Sunnah. The fear of the elderly person of fasting, in that it may endanger his life, is similar to the case of pregnant and nursing women. Some said the same text cited as a proof for permitting the elderly to break fast and feed poor people can be cited here too, because the verse is general.

In a Hadith reported by Anas Bin Malik Alka`aby (raa), the Messenger of Allah (saas) said:

“Allah permitted the sojourner to break fast (and make it up), and his Salat is cut in half. Also, pregnant women and nursing mothers are permitted to break their fast.”
(Tirmidhi)

If menstruation appears while the woman is fasting, even if it is seconds before sunset, the fast of that day is invalidated and she should make the day up, that is, if the fast is a mandatory fast, like Ramadan; but if it is a voluntary fast, she has the option of making it up or not. Should menstruation appear during daytime, the rest of the day's fast is invalidated.

If menstruation ceases during the night, even seconds before *Fajr*, the fast of that day becomes mandatory, because she is among the eligible, and the obstacle (*mawaani'e*) to eligibility

has been removed. She should fast even before she takes *ghusl* (shower, or purifying bath).

Similarly, with a woman bleeding as a result of childbirth (*nifas*), her case is identical to that of a menstruating woman.

Days in Which Fasting is Prohibited

As much as fasting is one of the most important pillars of Al-Islam, there are certain days during which the Lawgiver prohibited the believer to fast.

1. The Two 'Eids

There are two annual celebrations in Islam: *`Eidul Fitr* and *`Eidul Adha*. These *`Eids* symbolize the period of happiness when Muslims all over the world commemorate the festivities with the praise of Allah and public prayers after which they go home to feast with family and friends. Obviously, fasting and the *`Eid* do not mix. If it is *`Eidul-Fitr*, the fast-breaking feast, how could one celebrate the ending of the annual fast period with a fast? And if it is *`Eidul Adha*, Festivity of Sacrifice, how could one sacrifice an animal and not eat it?

This is why the majority of Muslims agreed that fasting on the days of *`Eid* is prohibited. If you have to make up a fast, it should not be on these days. In a hadith related by Umar bin Al-Khattab (raa), he said:

“The Messenger of Allah (saas) prohibited fasting on these two days: on the day of fast-breaking, because you have just broken your fast of Ramadan; and on the day of sacrifice you are supposed to eat from your sacrifice.”
(Ahmed and others)

2. Three Days Following `Eidul Adha, the Days of Tashreeq.

The days of *Tashreeq* are the three days following *`Eidul Adha*. These three days are the most important days as far as the fes-

tivity of `Eid and public display of happiness are concerned. Muslims usually take off work and visit other Muslims to share this happiness with them. These are the days of giving gifts to the family, relatives, and the needy.

Abu Hurairah (raa) reported the Prophet (saas) sent Abdullah bin Huzairah (raa) to go around *Mina* to announce to the pilgrims,

“Do not fast these days (three days after 'Arafah). These are days of eating and drinking and remembrance of Allah (SWT).” (Ahmed)

Although the hadith addressed the congregation of pilgrims, its meaning and implication are general to every Muslim who is being advised not to observe fast on these days. This is the understanding of the majority of scholars. The minority said if one vowed to expiate, or make up his fast, he may fast during these days. The majority responded that the minority opinion is good but it has no proof that it would be okay to fast during these days.

3. Singling Out Friday for Fasting

Friday, *Jum'ah*, is a weekly festival for Muslims. They celebrate with congregational prayer and meeting each other. The Lawgiver, (*Shaare'e*) prohibited singling it out with the observance of fast. This is why the scholars said: This is an exception or undesired prohibition, *Makruuh*, not of the same strength as the absolute prohibition of *Haram*; that is, one can observe it, provided that the Friday fast is cushioned by fasting the day before and the day after, or that Friday occurs on the day of 'Arafah, or on the tenth of Muharram, as these are days whose fast is highly encouraged.

The prohibition here rests on the hadith related by Abdullah Ibn 'Umar (raa), who said:

“The Prophet (saas) visited his wife Juwayrah bint Harith and found her fasting on Friday. He asked her, ‘Did you fast yesterday?’ ‘No,’ she replied. He asked again: ‘Do you plan to fast tomorrow?’ she replied, ‘No.’ He said: ‘Then, break your fast.’ ” (Ahmed)

In another hadith reported by 'Amir Al-Ashairee (raa):

“I heard the Prophet say ‘Friday is your day of feast, so do not observe it in fasting unless you fast a day before and a day after.’ ”

Jabir bin Abdullah (raa) related: The Prophet (saas) said:

“Do not single out *Jum'ah* night among the nights for nightly prayer (*Tahajjud*), nor single out Friday for fasting unless it happens to coincide with fasting that you are accustomed to.” (Muslim)

These hadiths are proof that the prohibition is with the condition that a believer has set his mind to fast only Friday. The desire to single out this otherwise important day with undue emphasis is what the Lawgiver wants to prevent. A Muslim does not live only for *Jum'ah*. One can see that in other religions, only certain days are accorded any religious significance while the rest of the days are relegated for secular pursuits.

4. Singling Out Saturday for Fast

For the very reason why we are forbidden to single our Friday for fasting, we are also prohibited to fast only on Saturdays or, in that case, only on Sundays. But there is also another reason. Saturday is the weekly festival for the Jews as Sunday is for the Christians. Islam has encouraged and instructed the believers to stay away and not lend any religious significance to these two days. We do not fast on our day of feast. We can fast on the day of their feast but without singling it out. This is why the

statement prohibiting the customs of Saturday fasting is very strong. The Prophet (saas) said:

“Do not fast on Saturday, unless it is part of what Allah has prescribed for you. If you could not find anything to eat but a grape skin or a piece of wood, you should chew it.” (Ahmed)

The Prophet's wife Umm Salmah (raa) stated:

“The Prophet used to observe Saturday and Sunday with fasting (along with other days), and would say, ‘These are the *Eids* of polytheists and I like to differ with them.’ ”

This hadith implies that a believer should not lend spiritual significance to the religious festivities of non-Muslims.

5. No Fasting on the Day of Doubt (Yawmush-Shakk)

I mentioned earlier that intention (niyyah), is one of the two important elements of fasting. It implies certainty or an effort to ascertain the day of fast. There is no such thing as saying that ‘I will fast if it happens to be Ramadan.’ That shaky assumption is not accepted in starting the Fast, and it is known as *sawm yawmush-shakk*. In a *athar* reported from `Amaar bin Yaasir (raa) he said:

“Whoever fasts the day he is doubtful (whether it is the first day or not or the last day of Ramadan or not), he has disobeyed the Messenger of Allah (Aba Qasim).” (Tirmidhi)

Fasting in this manner, even if the day is correct, is not valid. Abu-Hurairah reported that the Messenger of Allah (saas) said:

“Do not fast a day or two before Ramadan, unless that fast coincides with a fast the person usually observes. In that case, he may fast that day.” (Muslim/ Bukhari)

On the authority of this hadith, many scholars forbid a man or woman to decide in doubt. No matter what is the outcome, that day would have to be redeemed.

6. No Fasting for Life (Sawmud-Dahr)

The essence of Islam and its noble teachings always take into account the general interests and welfare, *al-maslahah*, of Muslims. Thus, the prohibition of fasting for a whole year or for life, for the simple reason that it may lead to one's physical ruin or religious asceticism. Both are vehemently rejected by Islam; and to relegate Islam to such ascetic, rigid abstinence would undoubtedly infringe on the believer's other religious and social obligations. The Messenger of Allah (saas) has been reported as saying:

“No fast for whoever fasts forever.” (Muslim and Bukhari)

Inferring from this hadith, the scholars say that if the fast is interrupted during the days of the `Eids and three days following them there is no prohibition. They cited another Hadith in which the Prophet (saas) advised Hamzah Al Aslami (raa) to continue his fast, when he said to him:

“Fast, if you so desire, and break.”

The preference for anyone who would like to fast that much is to fast the fast of Prophet David, who has been reported as fasting one day and breaking the next.

7. No Married Woman Should Fast without the Consent of Her Husband

If a wife decides to fast a voluntary fast, it is incumbent upon her to inform her husband and seek his permission, because he may be desiring her during his fast and cannot fulfil his desire,