

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

# Basic Teachings of Islam

## Sawm– Fasting

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# What invalidates a fast

- Following is a general list that invalidates fasting:
  - Eating & drinking
  - Intimate husband & wife relations
  - Taking medicine through the mouth or from other parts of the body
  - Smoking and sniffing drugs through the nose.

# What invalidates a fast

- When a fast is invalidated, it must be kept again after Ramadan.
- Sometimes, the person must also pay compensation (kuffara) for making his fast invalid.
- It is important to understand when a person has to atone for his missed fasts since if he does not he will be committing a serious sin.

# What necessitates atonement (Kuffara)

- In short, a person is required to compensate for breaking his fast if the activity he used to break his fast is generally regarded as a **pleasing** activity.
- Therefore, any items that are normally consumed as food or medicine, breaks the fast and requires atonement.
- Performing conjugal relationships during fasting also requires atonement.

# What is Kuffara – Atonement

- The kuffara of breaking a fast is one of the followings:
  - Freeing a slave
  - Fasting continuously for 60 days
  - Feeding 60 people twice a day.

# What is Kuffara – Atonement

- If a person chooses to fast, he has to fast continuously for 60 days without a single break.
- If a person misses even a day, he has to start fasting from all over again.
- Women going through their monthly periods are exempt from this ruling.
- If she stops fasting due to her monthly periods, she can start fasting where she had left before her monthly period.

# What is Kuffara – Atonement

- If a person decides to feed poor or needy people, then he has to feed 60 needy people twice a day.
- The person can also feed one person two meals a day for 60 days.
- The person can also pay equivalent amount to the needy people.

# What is Kuffara – Atonement

- If a person misses more than one fast of the same month of Ramadan, one kuffara is sufficient.
- If more than one fast has been missed from different months of Ramadan, separate kuffara has to be given for each separate month of Ramadan.

## **Some examples of what invalidates a fast but does not necessitate atonement**

- In the above section we discussed that in some situations if a person terminates his fast he would have to compensate for it.
- In the following section we explain those actions that would invalidate the fast but would **not** require the person to pay compensation.

## **Some examples of what invalidates a fast but does not necessitate atonement**

- Eating and drinking items that are not normally regarded as food items or medicines, breaks the fast but **does not necessitate atonement** (food items or medicine taken by habit, on daily routine or provide nourishment does necessitate compensation).
- A person has to make up such broken fast after the end of Ramadan.
- Such food items include: stones, clay, paper, grass, uncooked rice, and chapatti flour.

## **Some examples of what invalidates a fast but does not necessitate atonement**

- Similarly, a food item that is not consumed without chewing, does not necessitate atonement if swallowed without chewing.
- Consumption of food items that are disliked to consume or people feel revulsion towards them does not require atonement.
- Such items include: eating food already chewed by others, eating ones or others spit.

## **Some examples of what invalidates a fast but does not necessitate atonement**

- If a person unintentionally vomits and intentionally swallows back the vomit, then the fast breaks.
- If a person intentionally vomits, then his fast breaks automatically (despite the fact that he swallows it or not).
- Using ear drops

# **Some examples of what invalidates a fast but does not necessitate atonement**

- Tasting and chewing without a valid reason breaks the fast.
  - One valid reason for tasting is for a wife who has ill-mannered husband and she fears that her bad cooking will make her husband loose his temper.
  - In this case she can taste a bit of her cooking with her tongue and once she has tasted the cooking, to spit the rest of it out and rinse her mouth afterwards.
  - No food items or taste should go down the throat.

## **Some examples of what invalidates a fast but does not necessitate atonement**

- Similarly, one valid reason for chewing is chewing food for really young children.
  - If someone has really small children who are unable to chew the food for themselves
  - and require others to chew the food for them
  - and if there is no one around who is exempt from fasting to chew it,
  - then the person fasting can chew the food and give it to the children.
  - The person should rinse the mouth afterwards and no food pieces or taste should go down the throat.

## **Some examples of what invalidates a fast but does not necessitate atonement**

- If a person intentionally or unintentionally swallows a small piece of food that was stuck between the teeth, it does not break his fast.
- If the food piece was large (the size of a chickpea), and the person swallows it intentionally, then it breaks his fast.

## **Some examples of what invalidates a fast but does not necessitate atonement**

- Similarly, if a person takes out food remains from his mouth (small or large) and then puts it back into his mouth and swallows it, this also breaks his fast.
- If a person's gums are bleeding and he swallows the blood with his saliva, if he can taste the blood in his throat, that also breaks his fast.

## **Some examples of what invalidates a fast but does not necessitate atonement**

- If a person cries and tears flow into his mouth and he swallows them, his fasts breaks.
- If a person intentionally takes in smoke (fire, cigarette and even Agar-Bati) with his mouth or nose, it breaks the fast.

## **Some examples of what invalidates a fast but does not necessitate atonement**

- If a person intentionally enters water in his ears and it affects his brain, it breaks the fast.
- However, if water enters the ears unintentionally, such as during taking a bath, then it does not break the fast.
- During taking a bath, or when applying water to the body, extra care should be taken to ensure it does not enter the body.

## **Some examples of what invalidates a fast but does not necessitate atonement**

- Swimming does not break the fast but there is a serious possibility that during swimming water will enter the body through ear and nose.
- Therefore, during fasting swimming must be avoided.

## **Some examples of what invalidates a fast but does not necessitate atonement**

- Use of toothpaste or mouthwash during fasting invalidates the fast as the taste of the toothpaste enter the body with the saliva.
- Using toothbrush alone does not affect the fast.
- A person can use miswak as mush as he likes during fasting.

## **Some examples of what invalidates a fast but does not necessitate atonement**

- To gargle or taking water to the end of the nose must be avoided during fasting as there is a possibility that the water will enter the body through these actions.
- If water does enter the body, it will invalidate the fast.

## **Some examples of what invalidates a fast but does not necessitate atonement**

- Care should be taken while washing up the private parts during fasting, as excessive use of water may cause some water to enter the body.
- Forcing something to enter the body through the private parts (something wet or if all of it goes inside) breaks the fast.

## **Some examples of what invalidates a fast but does not necessitate atonement**

- Any unusual sexual activity during fasting that results in ejaculation (other than sexual intercourse between husband and wife) also breaks the fast but does not require compensation.
- Physical contact between husband and wife during fasting time must be avoided.

## **Some examples of what invalidates a fast but does not necessitate atonement**

- Seminal discharge without sexual activity, such as lifting a weight or wet dreams, does not break the fast.

## What does not invalidate a fast

- Eating, drinking or having sexual intercourse **forgetfully** does not break the fast.
- It is important to understand that Allah Almighty knows the intentions and thoughts of human beings.
- A person cannot pretend to carry out an action forgetfully as Allah will be aware of his intention.

## What does not invalidate a fast

- Vomiting unintentionally does not break the fast.
- Flies, smoke, dust entering the body **unintentionally** does not break the fast.
  - Its important not to use agar-bati, or any other fragrances that give out smoke, during fasting as it may cause the fasting person to breath in the smoke and invalidate his fast.
- Using eye-lashes, surma, whiskers, or oiling the body does not break the fast.
- Bleeding does not break the fast unless the blood discharged goes back into the body.

# What does not invalidate a fast

- Lying, backbiting, telling tales, swearing, rude and indecent talks, being physically and verbally abusive would not invalidate the fast.
  - But these actions are extremely prohibited during fasting.
  - These actions are generally prohibited for Muslims and during fasting it requires the person to be extra careful.
- Using eye drops does not break the fast (but using ear drops do).

## **What does not invalidate a fast**

- Wet dreams during fasting does not break or render the fast.
- After having wet dreams, taking a bath become an obligation.
- A person must take the obligatory bath as quickly as possible in order to purify himself.

## **What does not invalidate a fast**

- Sometimes a person may wake up for Sehri (pre-dawn meal) and find himself in need of an obligatory bath. In this situation, follow the following points:
- There is enough time for having a bath and sehri:
  - in this situation the person must take a bath first and then have his sehri meal.

# What does not invalidate a fast

- Just enough time for Wudu or Tayammum:
  - there is not much time for taking a bath before sehri, or the person fears that if he takes a bath he will miss his sehri,
  - in this situation the person can perform wudu or tayammum (dry ablution) to clean himself and then have his sehri meal.

# What does not invalidate a fast

- Just enough time for sehri meal:
  - if the person has woken up too late so that if he takes a bath or performs wudu then he will miss his sehri meal,
  - it is permissible for him to have his sehri meal.
  - After having his sehri meal, he can take the bath afterwards.

## **What does not invalidate a fast**

- Having wet dreams or being impure during fasting does not terminate or render the fast.
- However, a person must remove impurities from himself as quickly as possible.
- Kissing without ejaculation does not break the fast.
- However, physical contact with the opposite gender should be avoided during fasting as there is the possibility that it may render the fast.