



Fasting

الصوم

JURISPRUDENCE

LEVEL 2

Fasting

Allah (SWT) has given us so many gifts in this world. We are lucky to have a family, spacious land and blue sky, clean water and fresh air all around us. To say thank you to Allah (SWT) we need to obey His commands. We are Muslims and we should our obedience to God by praying and fasting.



Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Understand the Importance of fasting as one of the major obligations in Islam
- Understand what it means to fast and benefits associated with including:
 - Social Benefits
 - Physical benefits
 - Spiritual benefits
- Be introduced to the following invalidators of fasting:
 - Eating
 - Drinking
 - Immersing the head in water
- Understand that whilst some actions do not break the fast, they should be avoided.
- Be informed of the rules of brushing the teeth while fasting.
- The fact that we start fasting and stop fasting based on sighting the moon
- The fact that if one cannot fast for any reason or break their fast they must make it up later
- The fact that sometimes it is forbidden to fast, like on the day of 'Īd
- The importance of not overeating and watching what you eat

WHAT IS FASTING?

Fasting, or ṣawm, as it is called in Arabic language is to keep away completely from eating, drinking and some other things, from dawn till after sunset. We stop eating before dawn (before fajr prayer) till Maghreb time (a little after the sun has gone down). When do we fast? Muslims fast in the Islamic month of Ramaḍān, which is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar.



REMEMBERING THE POOR

When we are fasting and hungry, we remember the poor and those people who do not have enough to eat. Fasting makes us appreciate all that Allah (SWT) has given us. So how do we please Allah (SWT) even more? Always remember that there are poor children especially overseas who have nothing to break their fast with. A small amount of our pocket money could help those children. See how much we can help them during this month.



HEALTHIER LIFE

Islam wants us to be healthy and strong. Fasting helps us to be healthy. Our meal times become regular as we have to eat our suḥūr and ifṭār at set times. We do not snack or eat in between and by ifṭār time we are really hungry and ready to have ifṭār.

BASIC REWARDS OF FASTING

When we are fasting, we earn rewards throughout the day. Even if when we go to rest and sleep, each breath is counted as a reward for us because we are fasting for the sake of God. Other good actions like prayers, paying charity and being good to our parents earn us extra rewards when done during the month of Ramadan.

SPECIAL DOORS OF PARADISE

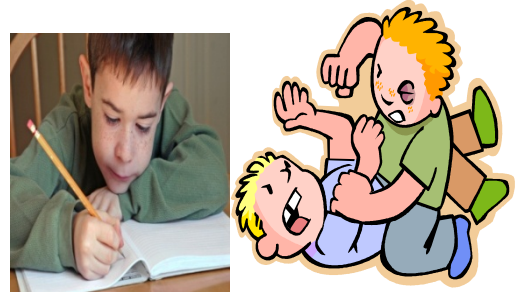
On the first night of the month of Ramaḍān, the doors of paradise are opened and they are left open till the end of the month. Therefore, ask Allah (SWT) not to close them for us. Moreover, Satan is chained and put behind bars. So, ask Allah (SWT) not to let him have power over us. The doors of hell are closed, so beg Allah (SWT) to keep them closed for us.

SPECIAL ANGELS PRAY FOR US

When we fast, special angels pray for us during the month of Ramaḍān. They pray for our forgiveness and well-being.

Class Activity

Put a cross against the thing we shouldn't do during the month of Ramaḍān. Put a tick against the things we should be doing more of during the month of Ramaḍān.



Review Questions

1. Muslims fast in the month of:

- a. Rajab
- b. Muḥarram
- c. Ramaḍān

2. We fast from:

- a. Afternoon to night
- b. Morning to afternoon
- c. Dawn to just after sunset

Fasting II

Fasting is one of the most important duties in Islam. All the Prophets sent by Allah before Prophet Muḥammad (s) commanded their followers to fast and also taught them how to fast. Allah has given us so many blessings that we are not able to count them all; like praying and paying charity, fasting is a way in which we can show Allah (SWT) that we are thankful for everything He has given us.

In the previous lesson we spoke about how fasting makes us better Muslims and the many benefits we gain from fasting. In this lesson however, we will learn about some of the actions we should avoid while we are fasting.



INVALIDATORS OF FASTING

There are a number of actions that God has forbidden us to do when we are fasting. If we do any of these things, we spoil our fast and it won't be accepted. Therefore, from the time immediately before the time for Morning Prayer (ṣuḥūr) till after sunset (ifṭār) in the Holy month of Ramadan, we should try our best to not do the following three things:

1. Eating
2. Drinking
3. Putting our entire head in water e.g. diving into a pool.

However, if we do any of these things accidentally because we may have forgotten, our fast will still be okay.



ACTIONS THAT SHOULD BE AVOIDED

Besides the above things that we can't do while fasting, there are lots of things we should try our very best to avoid so that our fast will be accepted. These things do not spoil our fasting completely, but they make our reward for fasting much less.

One of the main body parts that we should pay attention to most is our tongue. We should always think before we speak. When we do speak, we should remember:

- Be kind and not hurt anyone's feelings
- Not to lie
- Not to backbite
- Not to swear

If we have nothing good to say, we should remember what Prophet Muḥammad (saw) says:

"If man is not able to say something useful, he should keep silent from bad words and his silence will keep him far from Allah's punishment and from the harm which might happen to him as a result of saying bad words."

Class Activity

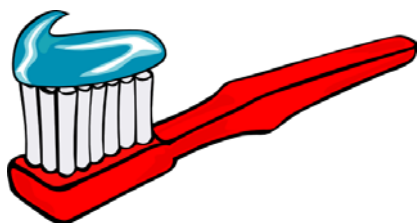
Put a red cross on the actions that break our fast and a line across things that are better not to do. Put a tick against the next that we should do more of.



BRUSHING THE TEETH WHILE FASTING

Allah (SWT) wants every Muslim to be clean, have a tidy appearance and smell nice. It is very recommended that we keep our mouth clean and smelling fresh during the Holy month of Ramadan and during any day we are fasting by brushing our teeth or using the miswāk.

Because we are not allowed to drink water or swallow any material while we are fasting, we must take extra care that we do not swallow any toothpaste or water while we are brushing or gargling.



Review Questions

1. If a person forgets that they are fasting during the month of Ramaḍān and drinks a little bit of water:

- a. Their fast is spoilt and not accepted
- b. Their fast is still okay
- c. Their fast is half-accepted

2. During the month of Ramaḍān:

- a. We should not brush our teeth during the day
- b. We can brush our teeth but make sure we don't swallow anything
- c. We should only brush at night

Fasting III

Pop Quiz

1. What "R" is the month of fasting?
2. What "S" is the last meal before fajr?
3. What "I" is the special meal to break the fast?
4. What Holy book do we recite a lot during Ramadan?
5. Would your fast be valid if you drank water by mistake?
6. Āminah took a long nap after noon. Is her fast alright?
7. Ali watched the news on TV before ifṭār. Is his fast valid?
8. Hamid took a shower after school. Is his fast valid?
9. Satan is chained during Ramaḍān. True or False

SIGHTING OF THE MOON

The Islamic calendar is a lunar calendar. That means all Islamic months begin with the sighting of the new moon. When we know that the next day might be the first of the month of Ramaḍān, we should go outside and look at the sky, to see if we can see the new moon of the month of Ramadan. Also, at the end of the month, when we know the next day might be ʿĪd day, we should go out and try to look for the new moon of the month of Shawwal.



WHAT IF ONE IS NOT ABLE TO FAST DURING RAMADAN?

Allah is very kind and He does not desire hardship for any one. Therefore if someone is sick or travelling, then he is not allowed to fast during that day or those days. But remember, after the month of Ramadan, the sick or the traveller has to make up for the day or days he or she could not fast. This is called Qaḍā' fasting.

Men and women who are elderly and weak do not have to fast at all. They are exempted from fasting. They do not have to do Qaḍā' fasts either.

Similarly, a mother who is going to have a baby soon does not need to fast if fasting is harmful to her or her baby. However, she must fast Qaḍā' when she is able to later.

After fasting for 29 days or 30 days, we see the new moon for Shawwal. So the next day is 'Īdul Fiṭr. It is a day of prayers, thanksgiving and celebrations! We do not fast on this day. We are **not allowed** to fast on 'Īd day.

WATCH WHAT YOU EAT!

When we are fasting, we have two main meals; suḥūr and ifṭār. Which one do we look forward to more? Of course the iftar! But we must take care what we eat or how much we eat at ifṭār. Let us look at the following class conversation to see why we shouldn't eat too much at ifṭār:

"What does that mean?" asked Zahrā'.

"Break your fast with a date or salt. Then eat some chicken or meat and some vegies too. Taste a little of everything that is on table spread," answered the teacher.

"What about puddings and ice-creams? I love sweets!" called out Fatima.



"Well, have the sweets too; but in small quantities."

"Why should we not over eat or feed on sweets only? Can anyone tell me?" asked the teacher.

"I think it is not good for our hungry stomach to have so much food all at once." said 'Ali

"That is right, 'Ali. Also we need to eat simple food. We do not want to upset our stomachs, do we? And remember to drink a lot of liquids" advised the teacher.

Class Activity

Phases of the Moon Project –full month's class activity. This activity is designed to get children involved and discover the phases of the moon

- Title : print out - **Phases of the Moon**
- Create a yellow full Moon. Also create a laminated background of blue(dark blue or black)
- Cut the moon into crescent slices (from left and then from right); 7 to 8 in all
- The last shape will look more like an oval, with 2 pointed ends.
- Laminate these 7-8 pieces.
- Start with the new moon; put the first silver crescent on the backdrop.(1st Ramaḍān)

- Add a slice every two days over the period of 2 weeks. (Use up all slices)
- Wow! The full moon by 15th Ramaḍān! This is the birthday of Imam Ḥasan.
- Start removing a slice over the next two weeks: children will notice the moon growing smaller
- Until, there is no moon to be seen. It is time for the new moon and Id?

c. Neither of the above

2. When the time for ifṭār comes:

- a. We should eat as much as possible as quick as possible
- b. We should eat slowly and not over-fill our stomachs
- c. We should only drink water

Class Activity: Ramadan Find-a-Word

A	A	I	D	S	U	S
M	L	W	A	Q	I	S
O	I	M	T	U	J	U
O	A	W	E	R	E	H
N	H	A	S	A	N	O
F	K	S	P	N	B	O
S	I	F	T	A	A	R

Highlight the following words in the above Find-a-Word (use 8 different as colours)

Iftaar	Ali
Suhoor	dates
Quran	Moon
Hasan	Sawm

Review Questions

1. If a person is ill during the month of Ramaḍān and fasting would hurt them:

- a. They must still fast
- b. They should not fast