

FASTING

Fasting is the fourth pillar of Islam. Hadrat Abu Ayyub (may Allah be pleased with him) related that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “One who fast throughout the month of Ramadan, followed by fasting six days of Shawwal (after ‘Id al-Fitr), is as good as if he fasted throughout the year”. (Muslim).

Fasting (As-Saum) is not to eat or drink anything from the time of dawn to Maghrib. We start our fast after eating Suhoor (which is recommended to have in the middle of the night) and we break our fast at Iftar time which is when the sun sets. Small kids are encouraged to fast but it is not mandatory on them. It is recommended by our Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) to break our fasts with dates.

We have Fardh fasts and Nafl fasts. Allah (S.W.T) has prescribed us in the Qur’an to fast in the month of Ramadhan. These are the Fardh fasts. There are many Nafl fasts during the year, Example: six fasts of Shawwal, nisf Shabaan, first 10 days of Muharram, and Arafa Day. It is recommended by our Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) to fast them but it is not compulsory.

The benefits of fasting are many. Some of these are: It helps us in attaining Taqwa (being closer to Allah (S.W.T)), and it makes us remember the poor and needy people. By remembering them we do lots of acts of charity, making us kind and generous. Fasting also helps us to control our desires which will make us strong in our character. It also keeps you away from all the junk food and it makes you healthy.

In conclusion, fasting will help you go to Jannah (Paradise) and it will make you a better person. Allah (S.W.T) says in the Holy Qur’an, “O you who believe! Observing As-Sawm Is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become pious”. (Al-Baqarah, 2:183)

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