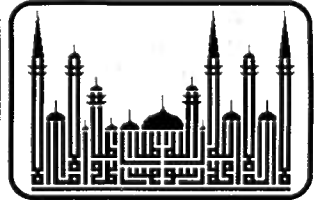


بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Perspectives



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Special Issue for Ramadan 1421

Editorial

Ramadan, the ninth month in the Islamic calendar, is the month of spiritual excitement for Muslims. It brings two of the greatest gifts of Allah, namely the institution of annual fasting, with its benefits and rewards, and the commemoration of the revelation of the Qur'an. During this blessed month the gates of paradise are opened, the gates of hell are locked and the devils are chained.

The month of Ramadan provides us with a number of opportunities to repent from our sins, and to have them forgiven by Allah. Three of these opportunities are described in the following sayings of the Prophet (PBUH):

من صام رمضان إيماناً واحتساباً غفر له ما تقدم من ذنبه .

Whoever observes the fast during the month of Ramadan, believing in Allah and seeking His rewards, will have his/her past sins forgiven.

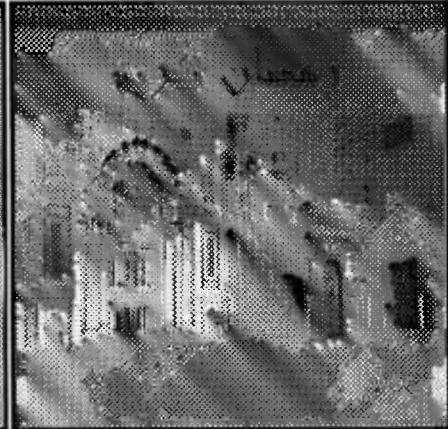
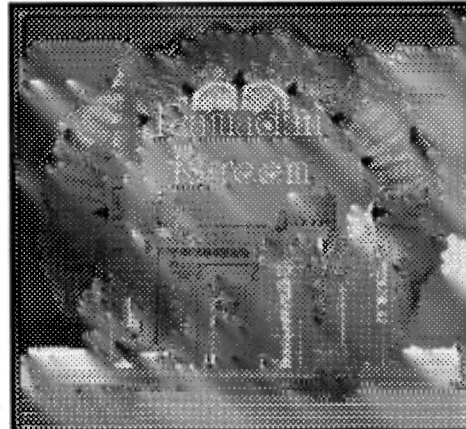
من قام رمضان إيماناً واحتساباً غفر له ما تقدم من ذنبه .

Whoever establishes prayer during the nights of Ramadan (Taraweeh prayers),

see *Editorial* / page 7

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Types of Fasting أنواع الصيام

Mandatory فرض

- *Ramadan*. صوم رمضان
- For fulfilling a vow. صوم النذر
- For Atonement /expiation صوم الكفارات
- * Intentional breaking of fast of *Ramadan* (by committing coitus).
- * Breaking a valid oath.
- * For killing (by mistake).
- * During pilgrimage (if the person cannot afford the sacrifice).
- * Hunting during pilgrimage.

Supererogatory تطوع

- *Shawwal* (six days).
- *Muharram* (especially 10th, and possibly 9th and 11th).
- *Zul-Hijjah* (especially the day of *Arafat* - for non-pilgrims).
- *Sha'aban* (as many days as possible).
- Mondays and Thursdays.
- Three days of every month (13,14, and 15)
- Fasting every other day (fasting of Prophet *Dawood*)

Forbidden/Disliked منهي عنه

- Days of *Eid-ul-Fitr* and *Eid-ul-Adha*.
- Days of *Tashreeq* (11 to 13th of *Zul-Hijjah*).
- To single out Fridays, or Saturdays as days of fasting.
- Day of doubt (about the beginning of *Ramadan*).
- Perpetual fast.
- صوم الدهر
- Continuous fast of days and nights, without break.
- وصال الصوم

Goals/Benefits of Fasting فوائد الصيام

Spiritual

- Achieving *Taqwa* (consciousness of the presence of Allah); and pleasing Allah.
- Demonstrating submission and loyalty to Allah, and developing a sense of complete obedience to Him.
- Providing an opportunity to repent from one's sins and to have them forgiven by Allah.

Moral

- Acquiring and strengthening will power, and patience.
- Relieving the individual from life's distractions, and making him/her appreciative of the gifts of Allah that one takes for granted.

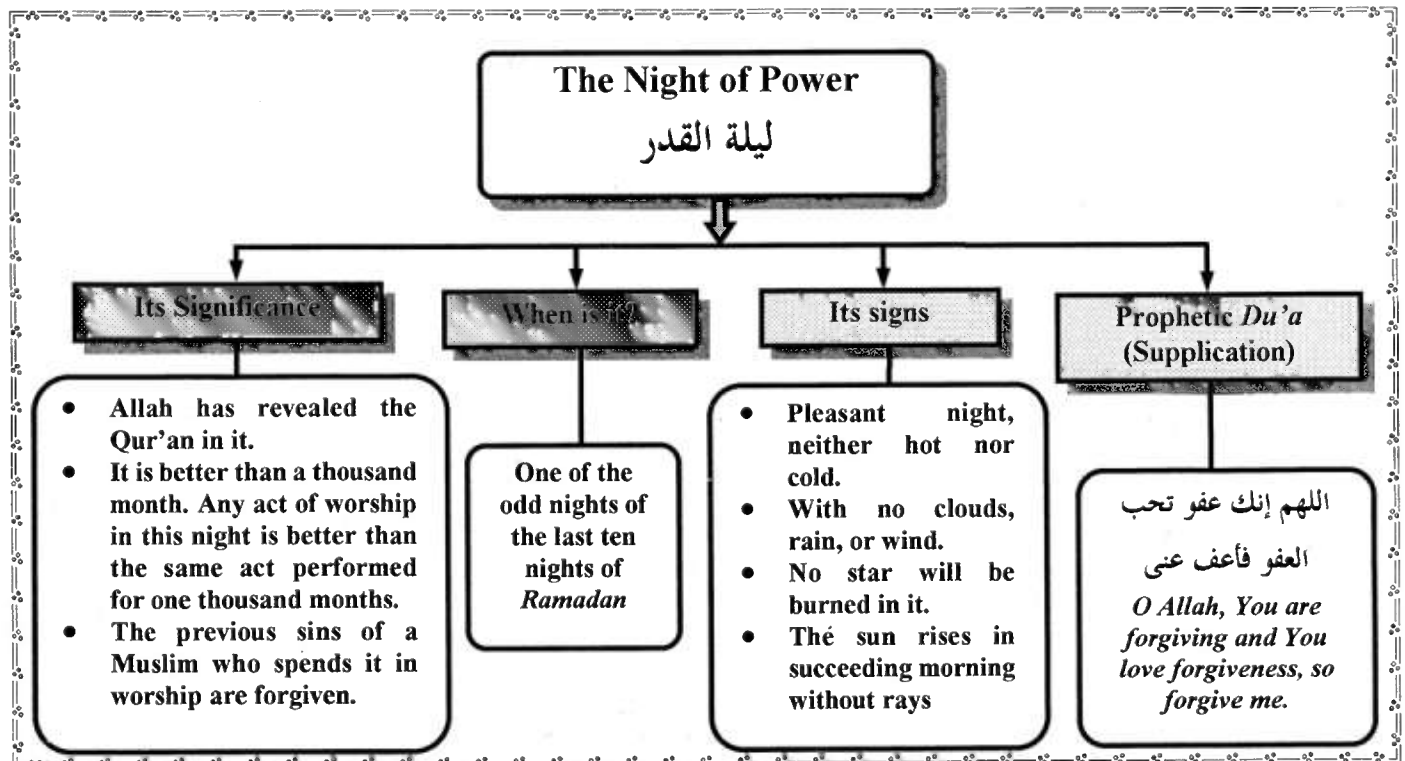
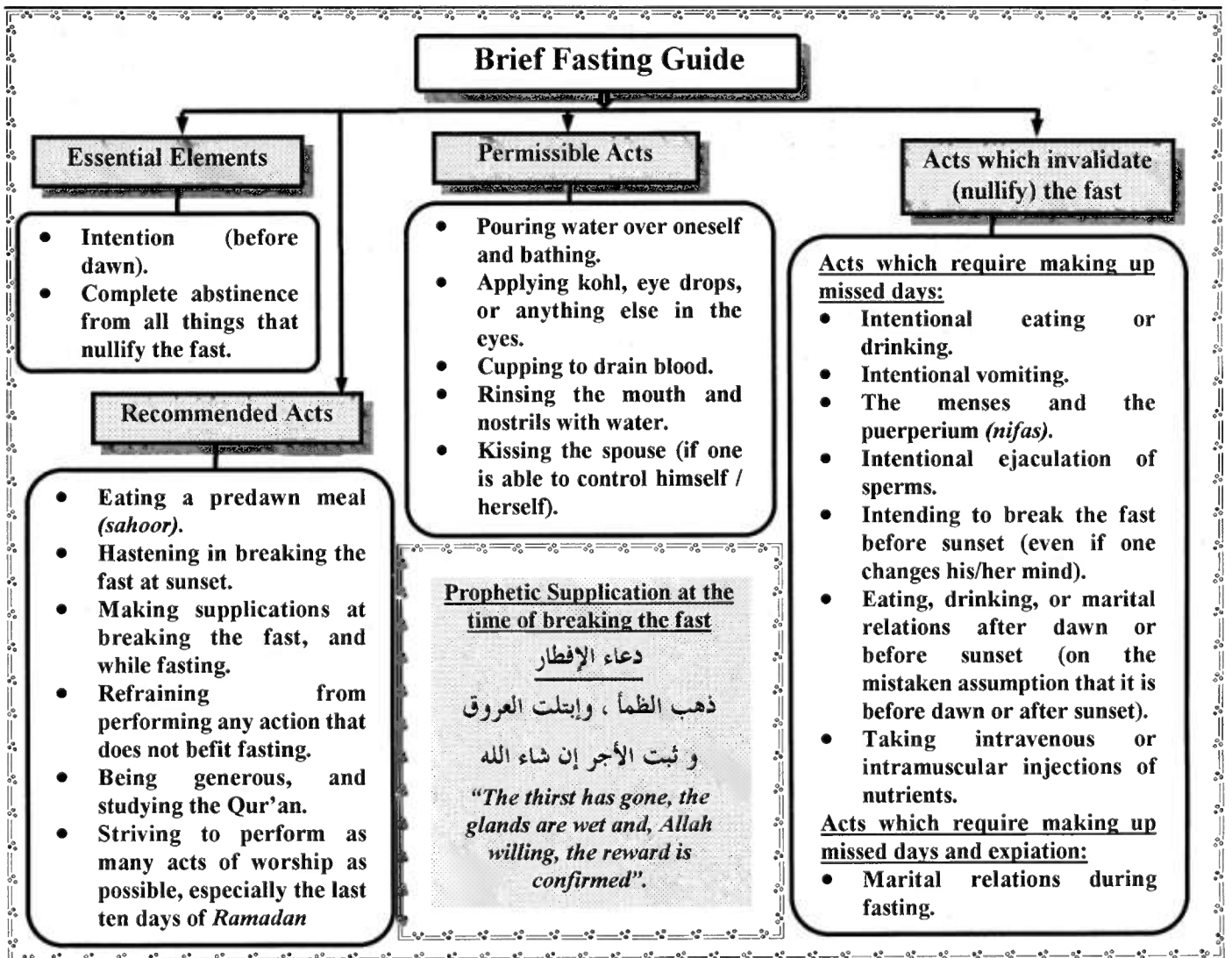
Social

- Experiencing the hardship of the poor and the needy, and sympathizing with them.
- Reminding Muslims of their brotherhood / Sisterhood and unity.

Physical/ Medical

- Helping the defense and endurance mechanism of the body.
- Rejuvenation of the brain.
- Safest way of dieting.

Fasting is a multipurpose training program promoting spiritual, mental, psychological and physical health



The *Witr* Prayer صلاة الوتر

1 Significance

- *Sunnah Mu'akkadah* (act always performed and recommended by the Prophet - PBUH).
- Observed in Ramadan, as well as in other months.

2 Time

- Starts from after *Isha* prayer and continues until *Fajr*.
- Preferable to delay it till the latter part of the night.

3 Nature and Number of *Rak'at*

- Total number of *rak'at* can be thirteen, eleven, nine, seven, five, three, or one.
- One may pray these *rak'at* one after another, without making any *tashahud*, except in the one before the last *rak'ah*, then stands to perform the last *rak'ah* wherein one makes another *tashahud* and end the prayer with *taslim*.
- If one is praying three *rak'at* it is permissible to pray two *rak'at*, conclude them and then pray one *rak'ah* with *tashahud* and *taslim*; or pray all the three *rak'at* with two *tashahud* and one *taslim*.

4 Recitation after *Fatiha*

- It is permissible to recite any *surah*.
- If one is praying three *rak'at* it is preferable to recite:
 - ⇒ *Al-A'la* (Quran:87)
سورة الأعلى
in the first
 - ⇒ *Al Kafirun* (Qur'an:109)
سورة الكافرون
in the second
 - ⇒ The last three *surahs* (Qur'an 112, 113, 114)
سورة الإخلاص،
الفلق، الناس
in the third.

5 *Al-Qunut* (Special Supplication in the Last *Rak'ah*)

- To be made during the standing posture, before *sujjud* (prostration), or before *ruku* (bowing).

اللهم إهدني فيمن هديت،
وعافني فيمن عافيت، وتولني
فيمن توليت، وبارك لي
فيما أعطيت، وقني شر ما
قضيت، فإنك تقضي ولا يقضى
عليك، وإنه لا يذل من
والت، ولا يعز من عاديت،
تباركت ربنا وتعاليت، وصلى
الله على النبي محمد

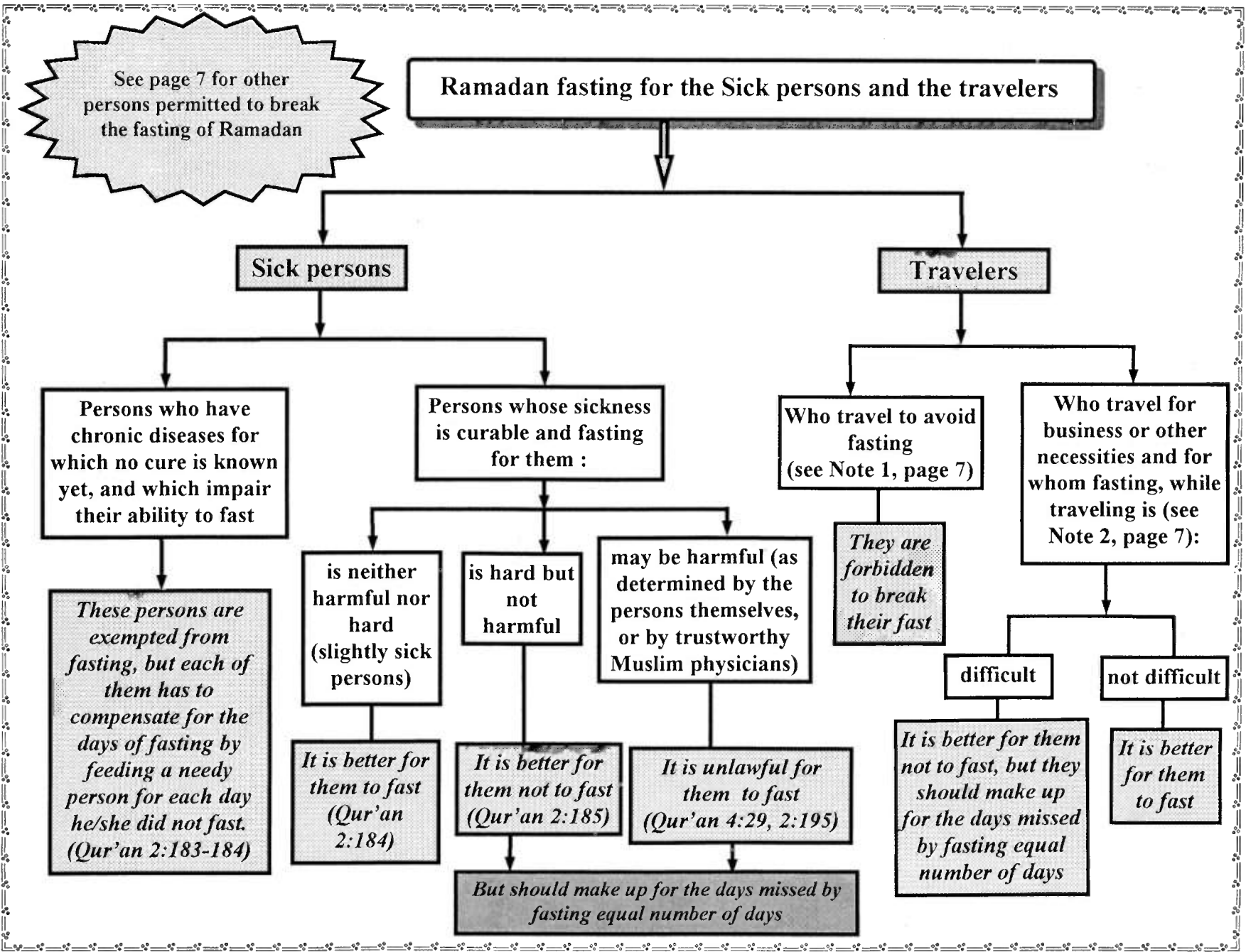
“O Allah, guide me among those whom You have guided. Grant me safety among those whom You granted safety. Take me into Your charge among those whom You have taken into Your Charge. Bless me in what You have given me. Protect me from the evil that You have decreed, for You decree and nothing is decreed for You. And there is no humiliation for whom You take as a ward and there is no honor for whom You take as an enemy. Blessed and exalted are You, our Lord.”

6 Supplication after *Witr* (after *taslim*)

سبحان الملك القدوس “Glory be to the Master, the Holy.” three times , saying after the third time رب الملائكة والروح “Lord of the angels and the spirits”. Then make the supplication

اللهم إني أعوذ برضاك من سخطك، وأعوذ بمعافاتك من عقوبتك، وأعوذ بك منك، لا أحصي ثناء عليك، أنت كما أثنيت على نفسك

“O Allah, I seek refuge in Your pleasure from Your anger. And I seek refuge in Your granting well-being from Your punishment. And I seek refuge in You from You. I cannot reckon Your praise You are as You have praised Yourself.



See page 7 for other persons permitted to break the fasting of Ramadan

Ramadan fasting for the Sick persons and the travelers

Sick persons

Travelers

Persons who have chronic diseases for which no cure is known yet, and which impair their ability to fast

These persons are exempted from fasting, but each of them has to compensate for the days of fasting by feeding a needy person for each day he/she did not fast. (Qur'an 2:183-184)

Persons whose sickness is curable and fasting for them :

is neither harmful nor hard (slightly sick persons)

It is better for them to fast (Qur'an 2:184)

is hard but not harmful

It is better for them not to fast (Qur'an 2:185)

may be harmful (as determined by the persons themselves, or by trustworthy Muslim physicians)

It is unlawful for them to fast (Qur'an 4:29, 2:195)

But should make up for the days missed by fasting equal number of days

Who travel to avoid fasting (see Note 1, page 7)

They are forbidden to break their fast

Who travel for business or other necessities and for whom fasting, while traveling is (see Note 2, page 7):

difficult

It is better for them not to fast, but they should make up for the days missed by fasting equal number of days

not difficult

It is better for them to fast

Zakat ul-Fitr زكاة الفطر

Significance/Purpose حكمتها

- Made obligatory in the month of *Sha'ban*, year 2 after *Hijra*.
- Its payment purifies the individual who fasts from any indecent act or speech.
- Its purpose is to help the poor and the needy to rejoice on *Eid* day.

Who must pay it? على من تجب؟

- Every free Muslim who possesses one *Sa'* (approximately five pounds) of dates or barley, which is needed as basic food for himself or his family for the duration of one day and night.
- Every free Muslim must pay it for himself, on behalf of his wife, servants and children (including any baby born before its prescribed time).

Amount قدرها

- One *Sa'* of wheat, barley, raisins, dry cottage cheese, rice, corn, or similar items (basic foods).
- *Imam Abu Hanifah* consider it permissible to pay an equivalent value.

When to pay it? متى تجب؟

The end of *Ramadan*:

- Sunset of the night of breaking the fast of the last day (*Imams Ahmad, Malik, and Al-Shafi'*).
- Start of *Fajr* on the day of *Eid* and before *Eid* prayers (*Imams Abu Hanifah and Malik*).
- One or two days before *Eid* (*Umar*).

To whom should it be given? مصرفها

Same eight categories as other types of *Zakah*

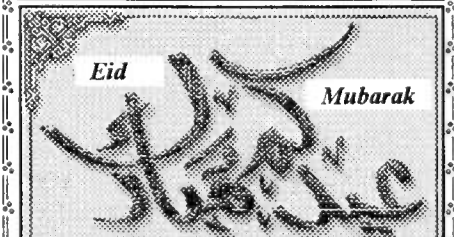
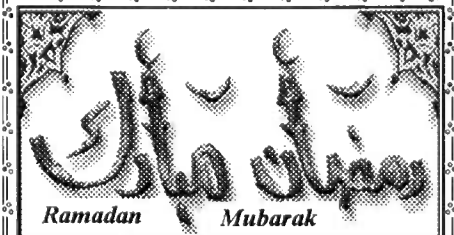
- The poor.
- The needy.
- Administrators/collectors of *Zakah*.
- Those in bondage.
- Those inclined towards Islam.
- Those in debt.
- The cause of Allah.
- The wayfarer.

Some Muslim Scholars feel that the poor and the needy are the most deserving.

Important Dates

	1422		
1421		Muharram 1,March 26, 2001
Ramadan 1,	November 27, 2000	Ramadan 1,	.November 17, 2001
Eid-ul-Fitr	December 27, 2000	Eid-ul Fitr	.December 16, 2001
Eid-ul Adha March 5, 2001	Eid-ul Adha	..February 22, 2002

Note: Please contact the national organizations listed on the back page for confirmation about these dates.



Continued from page 1

Editorial

believing in Allah and seeking His rewards, will have his/her past sins forgiven.

من قام ليلة القدر إيماناً واحتساباً
غفر له ما تقدم من ذنبه .

Whoever spends the night of the power in devotion and worship, believing in Allah and seeking His rewards, will have his/her past sins forgiven.

Fasting orients the Muslim to the art of balancing the spiritual essentials with physical needs. It awakens the mind and rekindles clear thinking and consciousness of Allah. Fasting is the sobering of the mind and the reconstruction of our spiritual faculties.

To derive the full benefits and rewards from fasting we should abstain not only from food and drink but from all forms of disobedience to Allah. We should guard all our senses and our organs (*Jawareh*) from unlawful things, and direct each of them to their special state of worship (such as recitation of the Qur'an, prayers, Islamic studies, *tasbeeh*, and other virtuous acts). Specifically, guarding our senses includes the following:

- Lowering the gaze, and refraining from looking to anything blameworthy and disapproved.
- Banning the tongue from raving, lying, backbiting, tail-bearing, obscenity, abusive language, wrangling and hypocrisy.
- Closing the ears to every reprehensible thing, because everything which is unlawful to utter is also unlawful to hear.
- Constraining the rest of the senses-restraining the hand from reaching evil, curbing the feet from pursuing wickedness; and avoiding questionable foods at the break of fast.

In addition, we should help the people who are suffering from hunger and from insecurity. If we cannot help them materially, we should remember them in our supplications.

May Allah accept our fasting, forgive our sins and make us among those who, on the day of judgment,

enter paradise from the *Ryyan* gate - the gate reserved for the fasting believers.

Ameen



Persons permitted to break the fasting of Ramadan

Muslim scholars agree that fasting is obligatory upon every sane, adult, healthy Muslim male who is not traveling at that time (see page 5). The same applies to women who are not menstruating or having childbirth bleeding. Fasting is not obligatory for the insane, and for the young children. However, the guardians of the children must gradually train them to fast

The following three categories of people are allowed to break their fast, but are obliged to feed one needy person (*Miskeen*) a day for every day of fasting that each of them did not perform:

- Elderly men and women for whom there is hardship in fasting.
- Persons who have to perform difficult jobs under harsh circumstances, and who could not find any other way to support themselves.
- Pregnant and breast-feeding women, who fear for themselves or for the baby.

For the third category, some Muslim scholars (the Hanafiyyah, Abu Ubaid and Abu Thawr) feel they have to make up for the missed days of fasting. According to Ahmad Ibn Hanbal and Al-Shafi', if such women fear only for the unborn baby, they must feed a needy person for each day missed and make up the missed days. If they fear only for themselves, or for themselves and the baby, then they are only to make up the missed days.

Ramadan fasting for the sick persons and the travelers (page 5):

Note 1

من أفطر يوماً من رمضان من غير
عذر ولا مرض لم يقضه صيام الدهر
وإن صامه .

(حديث شريف - صحيح البخاري)

Ramadan Resources on the Internet

- 1 **Ramadan and Eid ul-Fitr**
<http://www.ummah.org.uk/ramadhan/> Has moon sighting information, including a free downloadable program MoonCalc 5.1; Prayer Minder Online for hundreds of cities around the world; Ramadhan and Eid cards; links to other resources on Ramadhan including Taraweeh prayers from Haram in Mecca, and recipes for Ramdan.
- 2 **Ramadan information Center**
<http://ISLAM.org/ramadan/> provides Qur'an search, prayers, Taraweeh prayers, and free electronic Eid cards. □

Whoever breaks the fast of one day of Ramadan without having a legitimate excuse or being ill, he/she cannot compensate for that day, even if he/she were to undertake a perpetual fast.

(Prophetic Saying - Bukhari)

Note 2

عن أبي سعيد قال كنا نساfer مع رسول
الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فمننا الصائم
ومنا المفطر فلا يجد المفطر على الصائم
ولا الصائم على المفطر فكانوا يرون أنه
من وجد قوة فصام فحسن ومن وجد
ضعفاً فأفطر فحسن .

(الترمذى)

Abu Said reported that they used to travel with the Prophet (PBUH) during Ramadan, some of them fast and others break their fast, no one would consider the other wrong. The companions were of the opinion that whoever has enough strength and fasts (while traveling) then it is fine, and whoever feels weak and breaks his/her fast, then it is fine too.

(Related by Tirmidhi) □

السلامة والسلامة والسلامة