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Assalaam 'alaykum warahmatullaahi wabarakaatuh

Surat ul Qadr

1. Verily, We have sent it down in the Night of Al-Qadr,
2. And What will make you know what the Night of Al-Qadr is?
3. The Night of Al-Qadr is better than a thousand months.
4. Therein descend the angels and the Ruh by their Lord's permission with every matter.
5. There is peace until the appearance of dawn. [Q3:150]

LAYLATUL QADR

We sent it (Qur'aan) down on a blessed night (Night of Al-Qadr).

Verily, We are ever warning [mankind that Our Torment will reach those who disbelieve in Our Oneness of Lordship and worship]. Therein (that night) is decreed every matter of ordainments.

As a Command (or this Qur'aan) from Us. Verily, We are ever sending (Messengers), (As) mercy from your Lord. Verily, He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower." [44:1-6]

On this night the destiny of all creatures for the coming year is decreed. It is written who will live or die, who will be saved or doomed, who will be destined for Paradise or Hell and all else that Allaah wills in that year. On this night, this information is transferred from al-Lawh al-Mahfooth (the Protected Tablet) to the lower heavens & Allaah knows best

It is not known exactly when Laylatul Qadr is. When the Prophet (saw) came out to tell the people, two of the Companions were arguing. He (saw) said: "I came out to tell you when Laylatul-Qadr was, and So and so and So and so were arguing, so it (knowledge of when it was) was taken away from me. Perhaps this is

better for you. So seek it on the 9th, 7th and the 5th (i.e. the odd-numbered nights).' [Bukhaaree]

He (saw) said: "Seek Laylatul Qadr in the odd-numbered nights of the last ten nights of Ramadaan." [Bukhaaree]

The Prophet (saw) used to strive hard (in worship) during these days in a way that he did not strive at any other times [Muslim]. Among the things he did were secluding himself in I'tikaaf, stay up at night, waking his family and girding his loins. [Bukhaaree & Muslim]

Some scholars say Laylatul Qadr moves, not coming on a specific night each year. An-Nawawi (rh) said: "This is the apparent meaning because of the conflict between the saheeh ahaadeeth on this matter, and there is no way to reconcile the ahaadeeth apart from saying Laylatul Qadr moves." [al-Majmoo', 6/450]

Allaah has concealed this night so His slaves will strive to seek it, and strive hard in worship, just as He has concealed the hour of Jumu'ah, and so on. The devoted servant of Allaah makes these nights alive with

While doing everyday actions according to the Sunnah, the whole life of a believer becomes an act of worship. Furthermore, the Prophet (saw) said Du'aa is worship" [Tirmidhee, Abu Dawood]

Allaah has encouraged us to take advantage of certain times to make du'aa, e.g during Ramadaan - especially on Laylatul Qadr, the Night of Power. On this night, the single most important event in human history unfolded as the Glorious Qur'aan was brought down to the lowest heaven from the Protected Tablet, which lies with Allaah. To emphasize this point, Allaah says, 'And what will make you know what the (the value of the) Night of Qadr is.' [97:2]

Allaah (swt) Says,

"Haa-Meem. [These letters are one of the miracles of the Qur'aan. None but Allaah knows their meanings.]

By the manifest Book (this Qur'aan) that makes things clear.

prayer, reading and reflecting on the Qur'aan. He makes sincere du'aa to Allaah, begging for His forgiveness. Allaah comes down to the lowest heaven during the last third of each night and announces: 'Whoever makes du'aa, I shall answer it. Whoever asks (for something halaal) I shall grant it; and whoever seeks forgiveness, I shall forgive him.'

[Bukhaaree]

If one witnesses Laylatul Qadr, he should say, 'O Allaah, You are Forgiving and Generous, and you love forgiveness, so forgive me.'

[Ahmad, Tirmidhi & Ibn Maajah]

Laylatul Qadr is the night of forgiveness. The Prophet (saw) said: "Whoever fasts the month of Ramadaan or stays up during Laylatul Qadr, out of faith and in the hope of earning reward, all his previous sins will be forgiven."

[Bukhaaree & Muslim]

This is while believing in Allaah's promise of reward, with no other aim or purpose, such as showing off etc."

[Fath al-Baari, 4/251]

Many angels and the Ruh descend on this blessed night. They come down when Allaah's Blessing and Mercy come down, just as they do when the Qur'aan is recited, and they beat their wings for the one who sincerely seeks knowledge, out of respect for him." [Ibn Katheer]. The Ruh is Jibraa'eel (as), who is mentioned in this manner as a sign of respect for him.

This night is described as peaceful and safe. Shaytaan cannot do any evil or cause any harm on this night [Ibn Katheer]. On this night, many people are saved from punishment because of what they do to worship Allaah.

SIGNS OF LAYLATUL QADR

1: From Ubayy ibn Ka'b (ra): the Prophet (saw) announced that one of its signs was that when the sun rose on the following morning, it had no (visible) rays.

[Muslim]

2: From Ibn 'Abbaas (ra): the Prophet (saw) said: "Laylatul Qadr is a pleasant night, neither hot nor cold, and on the following day the sun rises red and weak."

[Saheeh]

3: From Waathilah ibn al-Asqa' (ra): The Prophet (saw) said: "Laylatul Qadr is a bright night, neither hot nor cold, in which no meteors are seen."

[Majma' al-Zawaa'id & Ahmad]

These three saheeh ahaadeeth explain the signs which indicate Laylat al-Qadr.

I'TIKAAF

I'tikaaf is to stay in the masjid solely to worship Allaah. It is prescribed in Islam and strongly recommended. Al-Zuhri (rh) said: "How strange the Muslims are! They have given up I'tikaaf, despite the fact that the Prophet (saw) never abandoned this practice from the time he came to Madeenah until his death."

There are many hidden benefits in our acts of worship and much wisdom behind them. The basis of all deeds is the heart, as the Prophet (saw) said, "In the body there is an organ which if it is sound, the entire body will be sound, and if it is corrupt, the entire body will be corrupt. That organ is the heart."

[Bukhaaree, Muslim]

Worldly distractions and preoccupations distract the heart, eg food, drink, marital relations, excessive talking, sleeping and socializing. These divert people from the remembrance of Allaah, rendering the heart unable to concentrate or focus on worship. So Allaah has prescribed acts of worship, such as fasting, to protect the heart from such negative effects. Fasting deprives a person of food, drink and

marital relations during the day, and this denial of excessive enjoyments strengthens the heart spiritually.

Just as fasting is a shield, protecting the heart from physical influences, so I'tikaaf offers immense hidden benefits. It protects one from the effects of excessive socializing and talking. This is because a person does I'tikaaf on his own, turning to Allaah by praying, reading Qur'aan, making dhikr, reciting du'aa', etc. It offers protection from sleeping too much, as he devotes his time to drawing closer to Allaah through various acts of acts of worship; he does not stay in the mosque to sleep. These all help make the believer's heart turn towards Allaah.

When a person has all the means of purifying his heart by keeping away from that which distracts him from worship, this will be more effective in helping him to turn towards Allaah with devotion and humility. Hence the Salaf recommended one to combine fasting and I'tikaaf. "It was not reported that the Prophet (saw) ever did I'tikaaf when he was not fasting. Aa'ishah (ra) said: 'There is no I'tikaaf except with fasting.'

[Abu Dawood]

Allaah did not mention I'tikaaf except in conjunction with fasting. Ibn Taymiyah (rh) believed fasting to be a condition of I'tikaaf.

WITH THE PROPHET (SAW) IN HIS I'TIKAAF

The Prophet (saw) did I'tikaaf during the first ten days of Ramadaan, then in the middle ten days, seeking Laylat al-Qadr, then it became clear to him that it was in the last ten days, after which he always spent them (the last ten days) in I'tikaaf.

The Messenger of Allaah (saw) used to do I'tikaaf during the middle ten days of the month, and when the night of the twentieth had passed and the twenty-first had begun, he would go back to his home, and those who were doing I'tikaaf with him also went home. Then one month he made I'tikaaf on that night when he used to go home. Then he addressed the people, commanding them as Allaah willed, then he said: 'I used to spend these ten days in I'tikaaf, but now I want to spend these last ten days in I'tikaaf, so whoever used to do I'tikaaf with me, let him stay in his place of I'tikaaf. I was shown that night (Laylat al-Qadr) then I was made to forget it, so seek it during the last ten nights, in the odd-numbered nights. And I saw myself prostrating in: it rained on the night of the twenty-first, and the roof of the mosque leaked water and mud in the place where the Messenger of Allaah (saw) was praying. When he had finished praying Fajr, his face was wet with water and mud, so what he had seen came to pass. And this was one of the signs of his Prophethood.'

The Prophet (saw) continued to do I'tikaaf during the last ten days of Ramadaan until he died, then his wives continued to do I'tikaaf after he died. [Bukhaaree, Muslim]

During the year in which he (saw) died, he spent twenty days in I'tikaaf [Bukhaaree], i.e., the middle and last ten days. This was for a number of reasons:

1. Jibra'eel reviewed the Qur'aan with him twice that year [Bukhaaree]. It was appropriate for him to spend 20 days in I'tikaaf, so he could review the Qur'aan twice.

2. He (saw) wanted to increase his righteous deeds and do more acts of worship, because he (saw) knew his time of death was near, as we may understand from the words of Allaah

“When there comes the Help of Allaah (to you, O Muhammad against your enemies) and the Conquest (of Makkah). And you see that the people enter Allaah’s religion (Islam) in crowds. So glorify the Praises of your Lord, and ask His forgiveness. Verily, He is the One Who accepts the repentance and Who forgives.”

[110:1-3]

So Allaah commanded His Prophet (saw) to increase his *Tasbeeh* and his *Istighfaar* towards the end of his life.

3. He (saw) did that in gratitude to Allaah for the blessings that He had bestowed upon him of righteous deeds such as jihaad, teaching, fasting and qiyaam (praying at night), and for the blessings of the revelation of the Qur'aan to him, raising high his fame, and other favours that Allaah had bestowed upon him.

The Prophet (saw) said:

“There is no gathering of people in a house, from amongst the houses of Allaah, except that they recite the Book of Allaah and they study it, except that tranquillity descends upon them, mercy comes to them, they are encircled by angels and Allaah mentions them to those who are with Him.”

[Muslim]

ZAKAAT AL FITR

Zakaat al Fitr is an obligatory charity on every Muslim at the end of the month of Ramadan. The Prophet (saw) enjoined the payment of one Sa'a (approx. the volume of 5 lb of good wheat) of dates or one Sa'a of barley as Zakaat al Fitr on every Muslim, young and old, male and female, free and slave." [Bukhaaree & Muslim]

The purpose of Zakaat al Fitr is to purify the one who has fasted from any type of indecent act or speech he might have committed while fasting. It also helps the poor and the needy:

‘The Prophet (saw) enjoined Zakaat al Fitr on the one who fasts to shield him from any indecent act or speech and for the purpose of providing food for the needy.’ [Abu Daawood & Ibn Majah]

Zakaat al-Fitr has to be paid by the end of Ramadaan. There are two times to pay Zakaat al-Fitr. Either one or two days before 'Eid as 'Umar (ra) used to do, or the day of Eid before the 'Eid prayer. The Prophet (saw) said: "If one pays Zakaat al Fitr before the Salaah, it is considered an accepted Zakaat, if he pays it after the Salaah, it is considered an ordinary charity." [Abu Daawood]

Zakaah is one of the pillars of Islaam. Allaah says:

"...That which they withhold shall be hung around their necks on the Day of Arising."

[3:180]

"This is the treasure which you laid up for yourselves! Taste, then, your hoarded treasure!"

[9:34-35]

They were enjoined only to worship Allaah, ... and to establish the Salaat and the Zakaah. Such is the upright religion.' [98:5]

'Let not those who are miserly with what Allaah has given them of His bounty think that this is good for them. Rather, it is bad for them. That which they withhold shall be hung around their necks on the Day of Arising.' [3:180]

The Prophet (saw) said, "Whoever is given wealth by Allaah and does not pay the Zakaah due upon it shall find that on the Day of Arising it is made to appear to him as a hairless snake with two black specks, which chains him, and then seizes him by his jaw and says, 'I am your wealth! I am your treasure!'" he then recited:

'Those who lay up treasures of gold and silver and spend them not in the way of Allaah; give them the news of a painful punishment, on the Day when that [wealth] will be heated in Hellfire, and

their fore-heads, sides and backs branded with it: "This is the treasure which you laid up for yourselves! Taste, then, your hoarded treasure!"

[9:34-35]

[Bukhaaree]

Zakaah is paid on surplus wealth that is left over after the passing of a year. It is a payment on the accumulated wealth. Leaving aside animals and agricultural yield, Zakaah is paid at almost a uniform rate of 2 1/2%.

Paying Zakaah purifies the heart of the love of material wealth. The man who spends offers that as a humble gift before his Lord and thus affirms the truth that nothing is dearer to him in life than the love of Allaah and that he is fully prepared to sacrifice everything for His sake.

Acquisition of wealth for its own sake or so that it may increase the worth of its collector is condemned. Mere accumulation of wealth counts as nothing in the sight of Allaah and has no benefit, in this world or the next.

How many Muslims in the world today sincerely pay Zakaah to purify their wealth and to help their Muslim brethren. Since we are missing, lacking or very weak in that foundation, is it any surprise that:

So many Muslims are starving and in need today?

So much Muslim wealth is wasted on luxury?

So much Muslim wealth is spent on forbidden items?

So little Muslim wealth is spent on sacrificing for the sake of Allaah?

The Prophet (saw) was ordered to fight the people until they made the Sha-haadah, established prayer and paid Zakaah. Abu Bakr (ra) continued this after him. What does that mean for us today? If they were alive today, would we be fighting alongside them or would we be from those whom they would be fighting?

Let us make sure that we pay the Zakaah and fulfil all of the other pillars of Islam correctly and sincerely for Allaah's sake, so that our Islaam as a whole will be strong and Allaah will be pleased with us.

Abul-Abbas as-Sa'idi (ra) said,

"A man came to the Prophet (saw) and said: 'O Messenger of Allaah! Guide me to such an action that when I do it, Allaah will love me and the people will also love me.' He said, 'Be detached from this world and then Allaah will love you, and do not be attached to what people have and then the people will love you.'" [Ibn-Ma'jah]

ETIQUETTES OF 'EID

2 'Eids Mercy to the Ummah

The Prophet (saw) said:

"I came to you and you had, in Jaahileeyah, 2 days for play and amusement. Indeed Allaah has replaced them for you by that which is better than them: The day of Nahr (Slaughtering) and the day of Fitr (breaking fast)."

[Ahmed, Aboo Daawood & Nasa'ee]

Ibn Taymiyyah (rh) said: 'The 'Eid prayer is obligatory upon all individuals.'

He (saw) never left this prayer and he ordered the people to go to it, so much so that he also ordered mature and menstruating women to attend. The menstruating women were ordered to stay away from the actual Prayer, witness the good and witness the supplications of the Muslims. [Bukhaaree & Muslim]

Permission to listen to Daff

[daff: simple hand drum - like a tambourine without bells]

'Aaishah (ra) said: *"The Prophet (saw) entered into my presence while I had 2 young girls singing songs about a battle, so he reclined upon his mattress and turned his face away. Abu Bakr (ra) then walked in and rebuked me saying: 'The music of Shaytaan in front of the Prophet (saw)!' Allaah's Messenger (saw) approached him and said: "O Abu Bakr every people have an 'Eid and this is our 'Eid."*

[Bukhaaree & Muslim]

The girls were not trained singers and the poetry contained descriptions of war.

Songs containing evil lyrics are prohibited.

Time of 'Eid Prayer

It is best to pray the 'Eid al-Adhaa Prayer at it's earliest possible time, so that people can go and offer their sacrifices, and to delay the Prayer of 'Eid al-Fitr, so that the people can give their sadaqah." [Muslim]

No Adhaan or Iqaamah

Jaabir Ibn Samurah (ra) said: "I prayed the 'Eid Prayers with Allaah's Messenger (saw) many times, without an Adhaan or an Iqaamah."

[Abu Daawood, Tirmidhee]

Preparation for 'Eid Prayer

Ibn Musayyib (rh) said: *"The Sunnah acts of 'Eid al-Fitr are 3: walking to the musallaa, eating before proceeding to the musallaa and bathing."* [Saheeh]

It is preferred to bathe, wear one's best clothes and, for men, to apply perfume before going to the 'Eid prayer.

Ibn Al-Qayyim (rh) said: "The Prophet (saw) used to wear his best clothes for the 'Eid prayers and he had clothes that he reserved for the two 'Eids and Jumu'ah."

Imaam as-Sindhee (rh) said :

"... Beautification for 'Eid was an established custom amongst the companions and the Prophet (saw) did not disapprove of it. So the custom remained."

Does One Pray Before or After the 'Eid Prayer?

The Prophet (saw) prayed two rak'ahs on the day of Fitr and he did not pray before or after this. [Bukhaaree & Muslim]

Going to prayer area

'On the days of 'Eid, the Prophet, (saw) would go to the prayer area by one route and come back by another route (walking).' [Bukhaaree]

Eating before going to 'Eid Salaah

The Prophet (saw) would not go out on the day of 'Eid al-Fitr without eating an odd number of dates." [Bukhaaree]

Making Takbeer

Takbeer starts from the night before 'Eid until the Imaam comes out to start the prayer. Allaah says

"You should complete the prescribed period and then you should glorify Allaah (say Takbeer) for having guided you so that you may be grateful to Him." [2:185]

The form of takbeer is related by `Umar and Ibn Mas`ud (ra):

"Allaahu Akbar, Allaahu Akbar, Laa illaaha illallah. Allaahu Akbar. Allaahu Akbar wa lillaahil-hamd."

Saying the takbeer aloud does not mean it is permitted to say it in unison as there is no evidence to support this.

Congratulating each other

It has been narrated that when the Prophet's companions met each other on 'Eid day, they would say to each other: "May Allaah accept from us and from you."

'Taqabbal Allaahu minna wa minkum' [Ahmad]

1. *Make Takbeer*
2. *Have a bath*
3. *Wear best clothes*
4. *Apply perfume (men only)*
5. *Eat before leaving to pray*
6. *Walk to prayer place*
7. *No prayer before nor after Eid prayer*
8. *Return home via different route*

“Fear Allaah wherever you are, follow up the evil deed with a good one and it will remove it, and deal with people with good conduct.”

[Tirmidhee]

that he or she is negligent. It is this very feeling that leads to doing more righteous deeds after Ramadaan and getting more rewards.

‘Umar Ibn Abdul-Azeez (ra) wrote to some people saying:

“Istighfaar mends what foolish talk and obscenity may have damaged in one’s fasting.”

Ibn Al Qayyim (rh), while explaining man’s need for Istighfaar said,

“Having pleasure and being content with merely doing an act of obedience is a delusion of the mind and a sign of its stupidity, for the resolute and knowledgeable people seek forgiveness immediately after each act of worship because they recognize their negligence and their failure to give Allaah what befits His Majesty and Greatness in that act.”

Though we have bid farewell to Ramadaan, this should not mean a farewell to acts of worship.

At the beginning of Ramadaan, our hearts were full of happiness, hoping for the Mercy of Allaah and fearing His retribution . We ask Allaah (swt) to accept our fasting and prayers, to accept from us our past deeds and to bless us the remaining part of our lives. Blessed is he whose sins were forgiven and his repentance accepted.

It is established in the Religion of Allaah that all righteous deeds must be ended with Istighfaar (seeking Allaah’s Forgiveness). Prayers, Hajj, night prayers and meetings are all concluded with it.

Fasting should also be concluded with *Al-Istighfaar* to amend any acts of forgetfulness, negligence and perversion we might have committed. *Al-Istighfaar* erases feelings of arrogance and pride from the heart and lets one feel

Rather, a Muslim should rather strengthen the tie between himself and his Lord so that he may have a perpetual blessing. As for those who break their covenant with their Lord and abandon the Masaajid as soon as Ramadaan ends, such are evil people who know their Lord only in Ramadaan and afterwards turn back on their heels.

Allaah says,

“Say (O Muhammad): Verily, my prayer, my sacrifice, my living and my dying are for Allaah (alone), Lord of all the worlds.”

[Al-An’aam: 161]

There is no value in an act of worship by which one does not increase in piety and fear of Allaah. Let us ponder on the saying of Ibn Al Qayyim (rh) who said,

“There is indeed a distance between a righteous deed and the heart and there are in that distance a lot of obstacles that prevent the deed from reaching the heart. Hence you see a man who has many deeds to his credit and yet nothing of that finds its way to his heart, for he never carried out the deed out of love for Allaah, fear of Him, hope in His mercy, in abstention from worldly life or out of craving for the Hereafter. Neither does he possess the light by which he can differentiate between the friends of Allaah and His enemies.

Had the impact of his deed reached his heart, he

would have had the light and recognized the truth and falsehood.”

Ramadaan filled our minds with blessings. It awakened our conscience and purified our souls. He who has benefited from Ramadaan is the one whose condition after Ramadaan becomes better than it was before.

Doing good deeds after previous ones is a sign that those former deeds have been accepted. Equally, going back to evil deeds after having done good ones is a sign of its invalidity and its been rejected.

The Prophet (saw) said.

“Fear Allaah wherever you are, follow up the evil deed with a good one and it will remove it, and deal with people with good conduct.” [Tirmidhee]

Therefore, let the shinning breezes of this Ramadaan be the key to blessings all the time and in your way of life. Endeavour to be kind to your parents and neighbours, make visits to your brethren, help the oppressed, take care of the orphans, adjust matters of difference between you and others, feed the destitute and stand by the distressed. Make the afflicted Muslims happy, be kind to your kith and kin, defend the honors of your brothers and always be a source of good as you were in the month of Ramadaan.

Q.1 What is the description of the Eid prayer?

The Eid prayer is one where the imam attends and leads the people in praying two rak'ahs. 'Umar (ra) said: "The prayer of al-Fitr is two rak'ahs and the prayer of al-Adha is two rak'ahs, complete and not shortened."

[Nasaa'i, Ibn Khuzaymah. saheeh]

The Messenger of Allaah (saw) used to come out on the day of al-Fitr and al-Adha to the prayer place, and the first thing he would do was to offer the prayer.

[Bukhaari]

In the first rak'ah he should say "Allaahu akbar" to start the prayer, after which he should say six or seven more takbeers, because of the hadeeth of 'Aa'ishah (ra), "The takbeer of al-Fitr and al-Adha is seven takbeers in the first rak'ah and five takbeers in the second, apart from the takbeer of rukoo'."

[Abu Dawood, Saheeh]

Then he should recite al-Faatihah, and recite Soorat Qaf in the first rak'ah. In the second rak'ah he should stand up saying takbeer, and when he has stood up completely he should say takbeer five times, and recite Soorat al-Faatihah then Soorat al-Qamr. The Prophet (saw) used to recite these two soorahs during the two Eids. Or if he wishes he can recite Soorat al-A'la in the first rak'ah and Soorat al-Ghaashiyah in the second, because it was narrated that the Prophet (saw) used to recite al-A'la and al-Ghaashiyah in the Eid prayer.

The imam should revive the Sunnah by reciting these soorahs so that the Muslims will become familiar with the Sunnah.

After the prayer, the imam should address the people. Part of the khutbah should be addressed specifically to the women, telling them of the things that they should do and warning them against the things that they should avoid, as the Prophet (saw) used to do.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn 'Uthaymeen (rh),

The prayer comes before the khutbah. One of the rulings of Eid is that the prayer comes before the khutbah, because of the hadeeth of Jaabir ibn 'Abd-Allaah who said, The Prophet (saw) came out on the day of al-Fitr and started with the prayer before the khutbah.

[Bukhaari, Muslim]

Another indication that the khutbah comes after the prayer is the hadeeth of Abu Sa'eed (ra) who said: The Messenger of Allaah (saw) used to come out to the prayer place on the day of al-Fitr and al-Adha, and the first thing he would start with was the prayer, then he would go and stand facing the people, while the people were sitting in their rows, and he would preach to them and advise them and command them. If he wanted to send out a military expedition he would do so and if he wanted to tell the people to do something he would do so, then he would leave.

Abu Sa'eed said: The people continued to do that until I went out with Marwaan – who was the governor of Madeenah – on Eid al-Adha or Eid al-Fitr, and when we came to the prayer-place, there was a minbar that had been built by Katheer ibn al-Salt. When Marwaan wanted to ascend it before he prayed, I grabbed his garment and he pushed me away and climbed up and delivered the khutbah before the prayer. I said, "You have changed it by Allaah."

He said, "O Abu Sa'eed, what you knew has gone."

I said, "What I know, by Allaah, is better than what I do not know."

He said, "The people will not sit and listen to us after the prayer, so we did it before the prayer."

[Bukhaari]

Q.2 What is the ruling on fasting six days of Shawwaal

Fasting six days of Shawwaal after the obligatory fast of Ramadaan is a recommended Sunnah and in this there is great virtue and an immense reward. Whoever fasts these six days will

have recorded for him a reward as if he had fasted a whole year:

The Messenger of Allaah (saw) said: "Whoever fasts Ramadaan and follows it with six days of Shawwaal, it will be as if he fasted for a lifetime."

[Muslim, Abu Dawood, al-Tirmidhi, al-Nisaa'i and Ibn Maajah]

The Prophet (saw) explained this when he said:

"Whoever fasts for six days after (Eid) al-Fitr has completed the year: (whoever does a good deed will have ten like it)." According to another report: "Allaah has made for each good deed ten like it, so a month is like fasting ten months, and fasting six days completes the year."

[Nisaa'i & Ibn Maajah. al-Targheeb wa'l-Tarheeb]

Another of the important benefits of fasting six days of Shawwaal is that it makes up for any shortfall in a person's obligatory Ramadaan fasts, because no one is free of shortcomings or sins that have a negative effect on his fasting. On the Day of Resurrection, some of his naafil deeds will be taken to make up the shortcomings in his obligatory deeds, as the Prophet (saw) said: "The first thing for which people will be brought to account on the Day of Resurrection will be their salaah (prayer). Our Lord, may He be glorified and exalted, will say to His angels – although He knows best – 'Look at the salaah of My slave, whether it is complete or incomplete.' If it is perfect, it will be recorded as perfect, and if something is lacking, He will say, 'Look and see whether My slave did any voluntary (naafil) prayers.' If he did some voluntary prayers, [Allaah] will say, Complete the obligatory actions of My slave from his voluntary actions.' Then all his actions will be dealt with in a similar manner."

[Abu Dawood]

And Allaah knows best.

Shaykh Al-Munajjid

Q.3 When can I start fasting in Shawwal?

You can start fasting six days of Shawwaal from the second day of Shawwaal, because it is haraam to fast on the day of Eid. You can fast the six days at any time during Shawwaal, although the best of good deeds are those which are done soonest.

These days do not have to be fasted immediately after Eid al-Fitr; it is permissible to start fasting them one or more days after Eid, and they may be done consecutively or separately during the month of Shawwaal, according to what is easier for a person. There is plenty of room for manoeuvre in this matter, and this is not obligatory, it is Sunnah.

Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa'imah, 10/391

Q.4 If a person fasts 6 days of Shawwaal after Ramadaan when he has not completed the Ramadaan fasts (with a legitimate reason), will he have the same reward as one who completed Ramadaan followed by 6 days of Shawwaal?

The precise rewards for the deeds which people do for the sake of Allaah is something which is known only to Allaah. If a person seeks the reward from Allaah and strives to obey Him, his reward will not be lost, as Allaah says:

“We shall not make the reward of anyone who does his (righteous) deeds in the most perfect manner to be lost.”
[al-Kahf 18:30]

If someone has missed some of the days of Ramadaan, he should fast them first, then fast six days of Shawwaal, because he cannot follow the fast of Ramadaan with six days of Shawwaal unless he has completed his Ramadaan fast.

Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa'imah,

Q.5 What should a woman do first: fast the six days of Shawwal or make up the missed days in Ramadan due to her monthly period?

If she wants to earn the reward mentioned in the hadeeth of the Prophet (saw), “Whoever fasts Ramadaan then follows it with six days of Shawwaal, it will be as if he fasted for a lifetime” [Muslim], then she should complete her Ramadaan fasts first, then follow it with six days of Shawwaal, so that the hadeeth will be applicable to her too, and she will gain the reward mentioned in it.

As regards the matter of permissibility, it is permissible for her to delay making up her Ramadaan fasts, provided that she makes them up before the next Ramadaan comes along.

Shaykh Al-Munajjid

Q.6 Is it a condition that the six days of Shawwal be fasted consecutively, or can I separate them?

It is not a necessary condition that they should be fasted consecutively. If you fast them separately or consecutively, it is OK. The sooner you do them, the better, because Allaah says:

so compete in good deeds

[al-Maaidah 5:48]

And march forth in the way (which leads to) forgiveness from your Lord

[Aal Imran 3:133]

[Moosa peace be upon him said:] and I hastened to You, O my Lord, that You might be pleased

[Ta-Ha 20:84]

Al-Nawawi (rh) said:

Our companions said: it is recommended to fast six days of Shawwaal. Because of this hadeeth they said: it is recommended to fast these days consecutively at the beginning of Shawwaal, but if one separates them or delays them until after Shawwaal, this is permissible, because he will still be following the general guidelines of the hadeeth. We have no dispute regarding this matter, and this was also the view of Ahmad and Dawood.

Al-Majmoo Sharh al-Muhadhdhab

Q.7 Will a person be rewarded if he combines three of the six days of Shawwaal with the Ayyaam al-Beed (Days 13,14,15 from every month)?

Shaykh, 'Abd al-'Azeez ibn Baaz (rh) replied that hopefully he will be rewarded for that, because it is true that he fasted the six days, and it is also true that he fasted the Ayyaam al-Beed, and the Bounty of Allaah is great indeed.

With regard to this particular matter, Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen (rh) replied as follows:

“Yes, if he fasts six days of Shawwaal, he does not have to fast Ayyaam al-Beed during that month too, whether he fasted the six days at the same time as al-Ayyaam al-Beed (the 13th, 14th and 15th of the hijri month) or before them or after them, because it is true that he has fasted three days of the month. 'Aa'ishah (ra) said: ‘The Prophet (saw) used to fast three days of every month, and he did not bother whether he fasted them at the beginning of the month or in the middle or at the end.’”

This case is similar to that of Tahiyyat al-Masjid (prayer to “greet the mosque” upon entering), which does not have to be done if one prays a regular prayer upon entering the mosque. So if you enter the mosque and pray a regular Sunnah prayer, you do not have to pray Tahiyyat al-masjid... And Allaah knows best.

Shaykh, 'Abd al-'Azeez ibn 'Abd-Allaah ibn Baaz
Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen