







طلب التصريح لتداول أو طباعة المصاحف والمطبوعات

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Applicant إيمان العبيد حمة الطلب

IPP-001671 24/10/2023 تاريخ الطلب Date of application

The addressee

Reference number

الجهة المرسل إليها

الرقم المرجعي / تاريخ الطلب

عدد الصفحات	القياس	سنة الطبع	اللغة	شكل المادة	الناشر/دار الطبع	المحقق	المؤلف	عنوان المادة
50	A5	2023	انجليزية	كتاب	مركز السلام الإسلامي	نورة الظاهر ونورين عبد القاد	قدرية كاظم	Fasting is a way to Taqwa

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

لا حول ولا قوة الا بالله





FASTING

IS A WAY TO



TAQWA (PIETY)





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PREFACE

Allah enjoins upon His servants acts of worship and duties so they may attain certain goals. And by fasting in Ramadan, Allah wants His slaves to attain Taqwa (piety) during this month.

But, sadly, many of us have a wrong notion of fasting. Fasting is not mere abstinence from food and drink and the rest of the nullifiers of fasting only, not is iy just breaking our fast with those who break their fast. It is not fasting day after day, carrying on that way till the end of the month without realizing for a moment what we are asked to accomplish from our fasting.

When we observe the fast, we have to fulfill and accomplish Taqwa (piety). Not only that, but fasting one day after another should make one ascend in the degrees of Taqwa (piety) and only then can we say we have truly fasted.

In this book, we will try to focus on the essence of fasting and its significance, what is Taqwa (piety) and how to attain Taqwa (piety) while we are fasting.

We ask Allah to help us, guide us, and benefit us from this book. We ask Allah to make us from the Muttageen (pious). Ameen.

The sources used in this book are:

- 1. How fasting is a way to Taqwa? By Shaikh Hasan 'Abdul-Hameed al-Bukhaari [The teacher in al-Masjid al-Haram and the staff of Umm al-Qura University]
- 2. The meaning of fasting Ramadan faithfully and hoping for the reward from Allah by Hasan Bukhaari
- 3. The month of Ramadan has come by Shaikh 'Abdur-Razzaq al-Badr





INTRODUCTION

All acts of worship in Islam are prescribed for accomplishing specific goals. In Arabic, this is called (مقاصد). This is stressed in all the pillars of Islam, for example, the Salaat (prayer), Sawm (fasting), Zakaat (almsgiving), and Hajj (pilgrimage). It is incumbent upon the slaves to give heed to them and fulfil them accordingly.

For example, whoever intends to offer Salaat (prayer) should accomplish the purpose (goal) for which Salaat (prayer) is prescribed, and that is to be prevented from every kind of evil (wicked deed) and great sin.

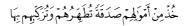
إِنَ ٱلصَّكَلُوةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ ٱلْفَحْشَآءِ وَٱلْمُنكَرُّ

Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing¹

¹ Surah Al 'Ankabut 45

This is acquired by offering the Salaat (prayer) with Khushu' (fear and humility).

The objective of Zakat (almsgiving) is purification and upliftment. As is emphasized in the Qur'an:



Take, [O, Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)], from their wealth a charity by which you purify them and cause them increase²

Similarly, when one observes the fast, he should accomplish the purpose for which fasting is prescribed and that is to attain Taqwa (piety).

-

² Surah At-Tawba 103





THE GREATEST GOAL OF FASTING

Verses 183 to 187 in Surah Al Baqarah are all about fasting.

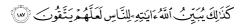
The first verse in the context of fasting ends with a great purpose and joins fasting with Taqwa (piety).

"O you who believe! Observing As-Sawm (the fast) is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become Al-Muttaqun."3

Allah says the purpose and goal behind prescribing the fast to us and those before us is so we may have Taqwa (piety).

³ Surah Al Bagarah 183

And again, in the last verse of the context of fasting, Allah mentions that He made all the verses clear to us so that we can practice Taqwa (piety).



"...Thus does Allah make clear His Ayaat (proofs, evidences, lessons, signs, revelations, verses, laws, legal and illegal things, Allah's set limits, orders, etc.) to mankind that they may become Al-Muttaqun."4

So, the first verse with regards to fasting ends with the command to have Taqwa (piety) and encourages it, and the last verse with regards to fasting also ends with a strong encouragement to have Taqwa (piety). Between these two verses, the verdicts (rulings) pertaining to fasting are mentioned in regard to the state of the traveler, the sick, and the elderly. The verses also comprise the nullifiers of fasting and the like.

This clearly shows the goal that one should hope to achieve from fasting is Taqwa (piety), and an act of worship such as fasting will surely lead its person to it.

⁴ Surah Al Baqarah 187





ESSENCE OF FASTING

It is necessary to know the correct manner of fasting in order to accomplish the purpose behind its legislation. When describing the meaning of fasting, there are two forms (or aspects) of fasting that should be drawn to one's attention:

- 1. The outer form of fasting, which is also known as Apparent fasting, is abstinence from food, drink, and having sexual relations with one's spouse.
- 2. The inner form of fasting, which is also known as Hidden fasting, is the fasting of the heart and the limbs, and to abstain from what angers and displeases Allah.

Thus, there are two kinds of fasting and these two should be joined together in order for our fast to be accepted by Allah and to achieve Tagwa (piety).

It is wrong to think that fasting in Islam is to endure hunger and thirst. If one thinks in this way, then there will be no difference between the humans' fast and the fasting of many animals (like the fasting of camels and cattle).

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

"Whoever does not give up false statements (i.e. telling lies), and evil deeds, and speaking bad words to others, Allah is not in need of his (fasting) leaving his food and drink."5

Thus, we should not just focus on the fasting of our stomachs and private parts, but we must also focus on the fasting of our hearts and limbs.

⁵ Hadeeth al Bukhari 6057

THERE ARE FOUR THINGS THAT AFFECT THE FAST:

- 1. The look of the eyes
- 2. The hearing of the ears
- 3. The desire of the belly and private parts
- 4. The speech of the tongue

Whoever protects these things has preserved his fasting, otherwise his fast will be deficient.

If one refrains from eating and drinking from Fajr till Maghrib, but is committing sins with his eyes, ears, and tongue then he has performed his duty, but he did not keep his duty towards Allah. This is because his eyes are not fasting from looking at the haraam (unlawful), his ears are not fasting from listening to the haraam (unlawful), and his tongue is not abstaining from lying and false speech. This is not the kind of fast that Allah wants from us. May Allah forgive us. Ameen.



THE RELATION BETWEEN TAQWA (PIETY) AND FASTING

Allah did not make the Salaat (prayer), Zakaat (almsgiving), or even Hajj, which is one of the greatest acts of worship in Islam that requires a great amount of effort, wealth, traveling, and consists of many other acts of worship, to be a means of achieving Taqwa (piety). Rather, He particularized fasting, from among all other acts of worship to be a means of attaining it.

In order to understand what is so special about fasting, we first need to know the importance of fasting and its virtues.

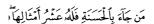
THE SIGNIFICANCE OF FASTING AND ITS VIRTUES IN ISLAM

 Allah chose to reward for it Himself apart from the rest of the pillars.

Allah made fasting a great act of worship which He loves. And He chose to reward for it Himself, apart from the rest of the pillars of Islam, as is mentioned in a Hadith Qudsi (about the fasting person):

"He has left his food, drink and desires for My sake. The fast is for Me. So I will reward (the fasting person) for it and the reward of good deeds is multiplied ten times"6

For every good deed we do, Allah will reward us ten times. This is the divine law of our Generous Lord in recompensing and rewarding His servants for their good deeds. Allah says:



⁶ Sahih al-Bukhari 1894

"Whoever brings a good deed [Islamic Monotheism and deeds of obedience to Allah and His Messenger (Salla-Allahu 'alayhi wa sallam)] shall have ten times the like thereof to his credit."

This reward is applied to all acts of worship in Islam, whether it is Salaat (prayer), Sadaqah (charity), Dhikr (remembrance), Du'a (supplication), dutifulness to parents, doing good to others, sponsoring orphans, doing good to a widow, helping the needy, and so forth. However, fasting is the only act of worship that does not follow this rule.

What will one's expectation of a reward be for an act of worship for which Allah, The Owner of Honor and Majesty, says: "It is for Me and I will give the reward for it"?

And when Allah gives the reward for something, He gives the gift of the Most Generous, the Most Rich. He will give abundant and multiple rewards such that its reward will have no limit.

⁷ Suran Al An'aam 160

Ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "Although all practices of worship are for Allah, here Allah singles out fasting, because it cannot be practiced for the sake of showing off as no one except Allah can know whether one is observing the fast or not. Therefore, fasting is a pure performance that cannot be blemished with hypocrisy." [Fat-h al-Baari]

Furthermore, the scholars have said that on the Day of Judgement when the people retaliate and take away the reward of those who wronged them, they will be unable to take the reward of fasting; Allah will protect it. Thus, fasting has great significance.

Fasting for the sake of Allah keeps hellfire away from one's face for a distance of seventy years.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

مَنْ صَامَ يَوْمًا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بَعَّدَ اللَّهُ وَجْهَهُ عَنِ النَّارِ سَبْعِينَ خَرِيفًا "Indeed, anyone who fasts for one day in the cause of Allah, Allah will keep his face away from the (Hell) fire for (a distance covered by a journey of) seventy years."8

⁸ Sahih al Bukhari 2840

Fasting in the Cause of Allah could imply the observance of obligatory or voluntary fast or fasting while being engaged in battle for the sake of Allah. Thus, if a person has observed fasting for thirty days of Ramadan, he will be kept away from the hellfire, a distance of 2100 years. This is a glad tiding for everyone who observes fasting sincerely for the sake of Allah. And we will not find this reward for any other act of worship other than fasting.

3. Fasting is a protection.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

Fast is a shield; when one of you is fasting, he should neither behave in an obscene manner nor foolishly. If a man fights or abuses him, he should say: I am fasting, I am fasting.

⁹ Sunan Abi Dawud 2363

A shield means protection. Fasting protects a person from everything that is evil or that saddens him in his affairs in this world or the next.

- 1. It protects one from obscene and vile speech and actions.
- 2. It protects one from deviation.
- 3. It protects one from the Wrath of his Lord and from the torment of Hell.

The reality of protection that fasting brings to the person in his life is also indicated in the hadith below. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said while directing the youth of this nation:

'O young people! Whoever among you is able to marry, should marry, and whoever is not able to marry, is recommended to fast, as fasting diminishes his sexual power.¹⁰

¹⁰ Sahih al Bukhari 5065

Fasting weakens and extinguishes the fire of desire in the slave. This is because abstinence from eating and drinking weakens the body due to a lack of fuel. As a result, the desire will be weakened. The human self is strengthened when he fills his stomach and becomes weak by its emptiness. Accordingly, the blood veins in which the devil flows will be constricted in the son of Adam. This is because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يَجْرِي مِنِ ابْنِ آدَمَ مَجْرَى الدَّمِ

Satan circulates in the human being as blood

circulates in the body.11

If the blood veins become constricted, the devil has no way to flow in the human body. So when one fasts, he will be away from the devil.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) also said:

¹¹ Sahih al Bukhari 2038

When the month of Ramadan starts, the gates of Heaven are opened and the gates of Hell are closed and the devils are chained.¹²

Therefore, the month of Ramadan is an exceptional opportunity for a person to achieve Taqwa (piety). This is because one of the means of attaining Taqwa (piety) is made easy since the devil is away from the person.

¹² Sahih al Bukhari 1899

WHY DOES FASTING LEAD THE SLAVE TO TAOWA (PIETY)?

The meaning of Taqwa (piety) is to take action in obedience to Allah upon a light from Allah and hoping for His reward, and it is to abandon disobedience to Allah, upon a light from Allah and fearing His punishment.

When one observes the fast and abstains from eating and drinking from Fajr to Maghrib, he is practicing an act that no one can know about except his Lord. The fasting person abstains from eating and drinking although food and drink are available. He can break his fast without anyone knowing about it, but his Taqwa of Allah refrains him from violating the prohibitions of Allah and committing sins (the prohibited acts) whilst having the ability and ease to do it.

Thus, a person is prevented from violating the prohibitions of Allah due to:

- 1. fear of Allah
- 2. full awareness of Allah's observation
- 3. hoping to attain the full reward and aspiring to not lose the reward for this act of worship
- 4. hoping to be among the righteous slaves who are Muttaqeen (pious)
- 5. hoping to have fulfilled his duty to his Lord by this act of worship without shortcomings or transgressing His limits

Accordingly, all these meanings and hopes should be brought to mind by the fasting person every day he observes fast. With the start of every new day (from Fajr) one should bring along this meaning in his intention: to be a pious slave. This should be the greatest goal that one intends to accomplish.

Then again, this meaning should not just be applied for fasting or in Ramadan, but at all times and in every affair. For example, when dealing with relatives, neighbors, parents, friends and so forth, one must practice Taqwa (piety) by giving them their rights, rendering their trusts and loans, and abstaining from oppressing or wronging them.

Another example is when one refrains from taking money unlawfully, out of fear of Allah, though it was in front of him and he was able to take it without anyone seeing him. What stopped him from taking that money? His fear of Allah.

Also, what prevents us from looking at or hearing what is unlawful? Taqwa (piety).

One wakes up for the Fajr prayer out of fear of Allah, not because he fears the people will miss him in the Masjid, or because his mother or father woke him up. He goes to the masjid because he does not want to miss the glad tidings which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) gave to those who attend Fajr Prayer in congregation in the darkness, with perfect light on the Day of Judgement.

بَشِّرِ الْمَشَّائِينَ فِي الظُّلَمِ إِلَى الْمَسَاجِدِ بِالنُّورِ التَّامِّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

Give glad tiding to those who walk to the Masajid

in the dark; of a complete light on the Day of

Resurrection. 13

¹³ Jami' at Tirmidhi 223

This person will feel sorrow if he misses the congregational prayer and considers it a calamity in this world. That is because his heart is filled with Taqwa of Allah. Therefore, it is difficult on him not to attend the Fajr prayer in congregation in the first row behind the Imaam. This is the reality of Taqwa (piety) which fasting nurtures in a person.

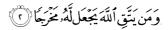




THE GREAT IMPACTS OF TAQWA (PIETY)

 Allah made Taqwa (piety) a key to get out of every difficulty.

Allah says in Surah At-Talaaq:



"...And whosoever fears Allah and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out (of every difficulty)."¹⁴

¹⁴ Surah At-Talaq 2

Taqwa (piety) is mentioned five times in Surah At-Talaq because a great amount of transgression from both sides can happen as a result of divorce. And whoever practices Taqwa (piety), Allah will make for him a way out of every difficulty.

2. Allah made Taqwa (piety) the key to provision.

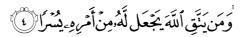
"And He will provide him from (sources) he never could imagine. And whosoever puts his trust in Allah, then He will suffice him. Verily, Allah will accomplish his purpose. Indeed Allah has set a measure for all things." 15

If we want rizq (provision), we should practice Taqwa (piety). We should never think that if we remove our hijab at work, mix unnecessarily with men or travel alone, then we will be provided. Allah says He will provide us if we have Taqwa (piety), and this is just a test for us.

¹⁵ Surah At-Talaq 3

3. Allah made Taqwa (piety) a key for making matters easy, especially when they become difficult and the gates seem closed.

Allah says:



"And whoever fears Allah - He will make his matter easy for him." ¹⁶

4. Allah made Taqwa (piety) a means to expiate sins, multiply good deeds and be elevated in degrees.

Allah says:

"...and whosoever fears Allah and keeps his duty to Him, He will remit his sins from him, and will enlarge his reward." ¹⁷

¹⁶ Surah At-Talaq 4

¹⁷ Surah At-Talaq 5

5. Taqwa (piety) is a means of salvation in the hereafter.

Taqwa (piety) will accompany the person, taking him by his hand towards salvation, safety, and exaltedness of his affairs till the Day of the greatest terror (i.e. Day of Resurrection), the Day of crossing the Siraat (the bridge). On that Day, there is no salvation except with Taqwa (piety). Allah says in Surah Maryam:

"There is not one of you but will pass over it (Hell); this is with your Lord; a Decree which must be accomplished."

"Then We shall save those who used to fear Allah and were dutiful to Him. And We shall leave the Dhaalimun (polytheists and wrongdoers, etc.) therein (humbled) to their knees (in Hell)." 18

When crossing the Siraat (bridge), one's salvation from falling into the hellfire will be according to one's portion of Taqwa (piety) that he had in his heart in the worldly life. This means whatever we collect of Taqwa (piety) from our fast and from the situations

¹⁸ Surah Maryam 71-72

we go through in life, it will benefit us in that time. It will protect us from falling into the hellfire and will make us cross the bridge safely.

Some will cross the bridge in the blink of an eye, some like lightning, some riding, some running, some walking, some crawling, and some will be caught by thorns and scratched while crossing the bridge over the hellfire. We ask Allah for the well-being. Ameen.

6. Allah will be with them.

Allah says:

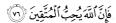
"And be conscious of Allah (keep your duty to Him and fear Him), and know that Allah is with the righteous." 19

Allah promised that we will not be alone and He will bring down tranquility in our heart, and this is when we practice Taqwa (piety).

¹⁹ Surah Al Baqarah 194

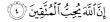
7. Allah loves the Muttaqeen (pious).

Allah says in Surah Aal-Imran:



"Allah loves the pious."20

Allah also says in Surah At-Tawbah:

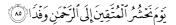


"Verily, Allah loves the pious."21

And when Allah loves a person, He will guide him to the best of his affairs.

8. Allah will honor them on the Day of Resurrection.

Allah says:



"The Day We shall gather the pious unto the Most Gracious (Allah), like a delegation (presented before a king for honour)."²²

²⁰ Surah Aal-Imran 76

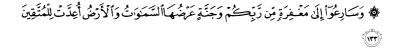
²¹ Surah At-Tawba 4

²² Surah Maryam 85

When the pious are resurrected, they will be taken by the angels and presented to Allah. This is how Allah deals with those who hope for the reward from Him. We ask Allah of His favor. Ameen.

9. Allah prepared Paradise for them.

Allah says:



"And march forth in the way (which leads to) forgiveness from your Lord, and for Paradise as wide as the heavens and the earth, prepared for the pious." ²³

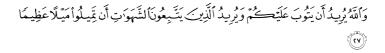
²³ Surah Aal-Imran 133

BEWARE OF LOSING THE REWARD OF YOUR FAST

There are many people who exhaust the credit of their fast as soon as they get it. They might enter the month of Ramadan diligently, observe the fast during the day with utmost righteousness, recite the Our'an profusely, pray Taraweeh prayer and may even weep from the recitation of the Imaam. They offer the Salaat (prayer) with utmost humility thereby ascending with their faith to high ranks. However, when they return home at night, they start to look at their mobile, start to look at social media, look at haraam (unlawful) and read haraam (unlawful). Or they sit in front of the TV flipping through the channels, watching both good and evil programs and committing sins with their eyes, whether intentional or unintentional until Suhoor time. In this way, they have wasted the credit they collected from their fast during the day.

No wonder these people come out of Ramadan without any change in their state; they waste the Taqwa (piety) they collect day after day. May Allah keep us away from this state. Ameen.

Also, we should especially beware of devilish humans. The jinn are chained, but the human devils may come as a test from Allah and they may spoil our fast and Taqwa (piety). Iblis does not want to enter the hellfire alone, he wants to take us all with him; so we should not listen to him. We should always remind ourselves that Allah wants us to attain Taqwa (piety). And Allah wants from us that we repent to Him.



"Allah wants to accept your repentance, but those who follow [their] passions want you to digress [into] a great deviation." 24

²⁴ Surah An-Nisaa 27



CONCLUSION

We are all slaves of Allah, and we are in need of every atom of Taqwa (piety) that we can gain from all acts of worship and duties that Allah has enjoined upon us.

The Taqwa (piety) which we learn through fasting in the month of Ramadan specifically, should be implemented throughout our life. This means to avoid committing unlawful actions out of fear of Allah, to avoid disobedience to Allah, to fear Allah's Wrath, to avoid violating the limits of Allah, and furthermore, to apply all these meanings of Taqwa (piety) in all situations in our life.

Also, we must beware of the plots of the devil who wants to deceive us and make us lose our credit of faith and Taqwa (piety), and make our fasts, recitation of the Qur'an, and acts of worship to become scattered particles of dust.

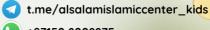
May Allah protect us and preserve our deeds. May Allah make us among those who observe fasting truly and faithfully, hoping for His reward.

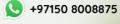


MAY ALLAH HELP US EVERY DAY TO ATTAIN TAQWA (PIETY),
SUCH THAT WE EXIT RAMADAN AND OUR NAME IS AMONG THE
MUTTAQEEN (PIOUS). WE ASK ALLAH OF HIS FAVOR. AMEEN.











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