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Two Concise Treatises on Zakah and Fasting



His Eminence Shaykh
'Abdul-'Azīz bin 'Abdullah bin Bāz
(May Allah have mercy upon him)

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رِسَالَتَانِ مُوجَزَتَانِ فِي الزَّكَاةِ وَالصِّيَامِ

Two Concise Treatises on Zakah and Fasting

سَمَاةُ الشَّيْخِ

عَبْدِ الْعَزِيزِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ بَازٍ

رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

His Eminence Shaykh
'Abdul-'Azīz bin 'Abdullah bin Bāz
(May Allah have mercy upon him)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the
Most Merciful

The First Treatise

Important Researches on Zakah

All praise is due to Allah Alone, and may Allah's peace and blessings be upon the one after whom there is no prophet, and upon his family and Companions. To proceed:

The motivation for writing this discourse is to offer advice and remind Muslims about the obligation of Zakah, which many Muslims have neglected and have not fulfilled in the prescribed manner, despite its great importance and being one of the five pillars of Islam without which its structure cannot stand, as per the Hadīth of the Prophet (ﷺ):

«بُنِيَ الْإِسْلَامُ عَلَى خَمْسٍ: شَهَادَةِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ، وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ، وَصَوْمِ رَمَضَانَ، وَحَجِّ الْبَيْتِ».

“Islam was built on five (pillars): testifying that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, establishing prayer, giving Zakah, fasting Ramadan, and pilgrimage to the House.”¹ [Its authenticity is agreed upon]

¹ Narrated by Al-Bukhāri, no. (8) and Muslim, no. (16).

The obligation of Zakah on Muslims is one of the most evident virtues of Islam, demonstrating its care for the affairs of its followers due to its numerous benefits and the dire need of the poor Muslims for it.

Among its benefits is strengthening bonds of affection between the rich and the poor, for souls are naturally inclined to love those who do good to them.

Among its benefits are: purifying and refining the soul, distancing it from the traits of stinginess and miserliness, as the Noble Qur'an alludes to this meaning in His Almighty saying:

﴿خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِمْ بِهَا...﴾

{Take charity from their wealth to cleanse and purify them...} [Surat at-Tawbah: 103].

Among them are: training the Muslim with qualities of generosity, kindness, and compassion towards those in need.

And among them are: seeking blessing, increase, and recompense from Allah, as He Almighty says:

﴿...وَمَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَهُوَ يُخْلِفُهُ، وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ﴾

{Whatever you spend in charity, He will compensate for it, for He is the Best of Providers.} [Surat Saba': 39] And in the authentic Hadīth, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Allah Almighty says:

«يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ أَنْفِقْ نُنْفِقُ عَلَيْكَ...».

“O son of Adam, spend, and We will spend on you...”¹, And there are numerous other benefits.

A stern warning has been issued regarding those who are stingy with it or fall short in giving it. Allah Almighty says:

﴿...وَالَّذِينَ يَكْنِزُونَ الذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ وَلَا يُنْفِقُونَهَا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٣٤﴾ يَوْمَ يُحْمَى عَلَيْهَا فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ فَتُكْوَى بِهَا جِبَاهُهُمْ وَجُنُوبُهُمْ وَظُهُورُهُمْ هَذَا مَا كَنْزْتُمْ لِأَنْفُسِكُمْ فَذُوقُوا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْنِزُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾﴾

{Those who hoard gold and silver and do not spend it in the way of Allah, give them tidings of a painful punishment.

On the Day when their treasures will be heated up in the Fire of Hell, and their foreheads, sides and backs will be branded therewith. [They will be told], “This is what you hoarded for yourselves; so taste [the punishment of] what you used to hoard.”} [Surat at-Tawbah: 34-35] Every wealth whose Zakah is not paid is a treasure with which its owner will be punished on the Day of Judgment, as indicated by the authentic Hadith from the Prophet (ﷺ), who said:

«مَا مِنْ صَاحِبِ ذَهَبٍ وَلَا فِضَّةٍ لَا يُؤَدِّي حَقَّهَا إِلَّا إِذَا كَانَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ صَفَّحَتْ لَهُ صَفَائِحُ مِنْ نَارٍ، فَأُحْمِي عَلَيْهَا فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ، فَيُكْوَى بِهَا جَنْبُهُ وَجَبِينُهُ وَظَهْرُهُ كُلَّمَا بَرَدَتْ أُعِيدَتْ لَهُ فِي يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُ خَمْسِينَ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ حَتَّى يُقْضَى بَيْنَ الْعِبَادِ، فَيُرَى

¹ Narrated by Muslim, no. (993).

سَبِيلَهُ: إِمَّا إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ، وَإِمَّا إِلَى النَّارِ».

“There is no owner of gold or silver who does not pay what is due on it except that on the Day of Judgment they will be made for him sheets of fire and will be heated in the fire of Hell. His side, forehead, and back will be branded with them. Whenever they cool down, they will be heated again on a day the length of which is fifty thousand years, until judgment is pronounced among the creation, and he will be shown his path, either to Paradise or to Hellfire.”¹

The Prophet (ﷺ) then mentioned the owner of camels, cows, and sheep who does not pay their Zakah, and he informed that he will be tormented with them on the Day of Judgment.

And the Prophet (ﷺ) is authentically reported to have said:

«مَنْ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ مَالًا فَلَمْ يُؤَدِّ زَكَاتَهُ مِثْلَ لَهُ سُجَاعًا أَفْرَعَهُ رَبِيبَتَانِ يُطَوَّقُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، ثُمَّ يَأْخُذُ بِلَهْزِمَتَيْهِ (يَعْنِي شِدْقَيْهِ)، ثُمَّ يَقُولُ: أَنَا مَالِكٌ، أَنَا كَنْزُكَ»، ثُمَّ تَلَا النَّبِيُّ ﷺ قَوْلَهُ تَعَالَى: ﴿وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَبْخُلُونَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ هُوَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ بَلْ هُوَ شَرٌّ لَّهُمْ سَيُطَوَّقُونَ مَا بَخُلُوا بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ...﴾

“If Allah gives wealth to anyone and he does not pay its Zakah, his wealth will be made to appear to him as a bald-headed snake with two black spots over its eyes. It will encircle his neck on the Day of

¹ Narrated by Muslim, no. (987).

Judgment, and it will seize his jaws (i.e., his cheeks), then say: 'I am your wealth; I am your treasure.'" Then, the Prophet (ﷺ) recited the verse: {Those who greedily withhold what Allah has given them of His grace should not think that it is good for them; rather, it is bad for them; their necks will be chained by what they greedily withheld on the Day of Resurrection...} [Surat Āl 'Imrān: 180]¹.

Zakah is obligatory on four categories: the produce of the earth, including grains and fruits; Sā'imah (freely-grazing) livestock; gold and silver; and merchandise.

Each of these four categories has a specific Nisāb (minimum Zakatable amount), below which Zakah is not obligatory. The Nisāb for grains and fruits is five Wasqs, with each Wasq being sixty Sā's according to the Sā' of the Prophet (ﷺ). This applies to dates, raisins, wheat, rice, barley, and similar items, totaling three hundred Sā's according to the Sā' of the Prophet (ﷺ), which is equivalent to four handfuls by the hands of a man of average build when both hands are full.

One-tenth is due if the date palms and crops are irrigated without expenses, i.e., by rain, rivers, flowing springs, and the like.

If they are irrigated with expenses and labor, such as by water-lifting devices and machines, then

¹ Narrated by Al-Bukhāri, no. (1338).

half of one-tenth is due, as reported in an authentic Hadīth from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).

As for the Nisāb of freely-grazing camels, cows, and sheep, it is detailed in the authentic Hadīths of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). Those who wish to know about it can ask the people of knowledge. Were it not for intending brevity, we would have mentioned it for completion of benefit.

The Nisāb of silver is one hundred and forty Mithqāls, and its amount in Saudi Arabian dirhams is fifty-six riyals.

The Nisāb of gold is twenty Mithqāls, which is equivalent to 11 Saudi pounds and 3 sevenths of a pound, or 92 grams. Zakah on them is one-fourth of one-tenth, or 2.5%, for anyone who possesses the Nisāb of either or both, and a Hawl (lunar year) has passed over it.

Profit is subordinate to the principal and does not require a new year, just as the produce of freely-grazing livestock is subordinate to its principal and does not require a new year if its principal amounts to the Nisāb.

Banknotes, which people use today, whether called dirham, dinar, dollar, or any other name, take the same ruling as gold and silver. If their value reaches the Nisāb of silver or gold, and a year has passed, Zakah becomes due on them.

Women's jewelry made of gold or silver is treated like money, especially if it reaches the Nisāb

and a lunar year has elapsed. Zakah is due on it, even if it is intended for personal use or lending, according to the most correct of the two scholarly opinions, due to the general statement of the Prophet (ﷺ):

«مَا مِنْ صَاحِبِ ذَهَبٍ أَوْ فِضَّةٍ لَا يُؤَدِّي زَكَاتَهَا إِلَّا إِذَا كَانَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ صُفِّحَتْ لَهُ صَفَائِحٌ مِنْ نَارٍ».

“There is no owner of gold or silver who does not pay its Zakah except that on the Day of Resurrection they will be made for him sheets of fire.”¹ to the end of the aforementioned Hadīth.

And it was authentically reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) saw a woman wearing two gold bracelets, and he said:

«أَتُعْطِينَ زَكَاةَ هَذَا؟». قَالَتْ: لَا. قَالَ: «أَيْسُرُكَ أَنْ يُسَوِّرَكَ اللَّهُ بِهِمَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ سِوَارَيْنِ مِنْ نَارٍ!». فَأَلْقَتْهُمَا، وَقَالَتْ: «هُمَا لِلَّهِ وَلِرَسُولِهِ».

“Do you give Zakah on this?” She said: No. He said: “Would it please you that Allah adorns you with two bracelets of fire on the Day of Judgment because of them?” So, she threw them away and said: “They are for Allah and His Messenger.”²

It is authentically reported that 'Umm Salamah (may Allah be pleased with her) used to wear gold ornaments and said: “O Messenger of Allah, is this

¹ Narrated by Muslim, no. (987).

² Narrated by Abu Dāwūd, no. (1563), and An-Nasā'i, no. (2270), with a Hasan (sound) chain of narration.

hoarded wealth?” He replied:

«مَا بَلَغَ أَنْ يُزَكَّى فَزَكِّي فَلَيْسَ بِكَزْرٍ».

“Whatever reaches the amount liable for Zakah and its Zakah is paid is not considered hoarded wealth.”¹ There are other Hadīths in this regard.

As for the commercial goods, which are the items prepared for sale, they should be evaluated at the end of the year, and a quarter of a tenth of their value should be given, whether their value is equal to, more than, or less than their price, as per the Hadīth of Samurah (may Allah be pleased with him), who reported:

«كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ يَأْمُرُنَا أَنْ نُخْرِجَ الصَّدَقَةَ مِنَ الَّذِي نُعِدُّهُ لِلْبَيْعِ».

“The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to command us to give charity from what we prepare for sale.”²

This includes lands prepared for sale, buildings, cars, water-lifting machines, and other types of goods meant for sale.

Real estates prepared for renting, not for sale, are subject to Zakah on their rental income if a lunar year passes over it, but not on the properties themselves, as they are not intended for sale. Similarly, private and rental cars are not subject to Zakah if they are not prepared for sale, but rather purchased by their owner for personal use.

¹ Narrated by Abu Dāwūd, no. (1564).

² Narrated by Abu Dāwūd, no. (1562).

If the owner of a taxi or anyone else accumulates money that reaches the Nisāb, Zakah is obligatory on it with the elapse of a lunar year, regardless of whether it was intended for expenses, marriage, purchasing property, settling a debt, or any other purpose, due to the generality of the Shar‘i proofs indicating the obligation of Zakah in such cases.

The correct view among the scholars is that debt does not prevent Zakah, as previously mentioned.

Similarly, the wealth of orphans and the insane is subject to Zakah, according to the majority of scholars if it reaches the Nisāb and a year has passed. Their guardians must pay it with the intention of doing so on their behalf at the completion of the year, due to the general indication of the evidence, such as the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ) in the Hadīth of Mu‘ādh (may Allah be pleased with him) when he sent him to the people of Yemen:

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ افْتَرَضَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَدَقَةً فِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ تُوْخَذُ مِنْ أَعْيَانِهِمْ، وَتُرَدُّ فِي فُقَرَائِهِمْ».

“Allah has enjoined upon them a charity in their wealth, to be taken from their rich and given to their poor.”¹

Zakah is the right of Allah, and it is not permissible to show favoritism in it to those who do

¹ Narrated by Al-Bukhāri, no. (1395) and Muslim, no. (19).

not deserve it, nor for a person to use it to bring benefit to himself or ward off harm, nor to protect his wealth or avert blame. Rather, a Muslim must pay his Zakah to those who are entitled to it, as they are its rightful recipients, not for any other purpose, with a willing heart and sincerity to Allah in this; so that his liability is absolved, and he deserves great reward and recompense.

Allah Almighty clarifies in His Noble Book the categories of Zakah recipients, saying:

﴿إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْعَمِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمَوْلَّاتِ فُلُوهُنَّ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغَرَمِينَ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَأَبْنِ السَّبِيلِ فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٦٠﴾﴾

{Alms [i.e., zakah] is only for the poor and the needy; those in charge of it; those whose hearts may be attracted [to Islam]; for freeing those in bondage; for those in debt; for the cause of Allah; and for [the stranded] traveler – as ordained by Allah, for Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.} [Surat at-Tawbah: 60]

In the conclusion of this noble verse with these two great names is a reminder from Allah Almighty to His servants that He is the All-Knowing of the conditions of His servants: who among them deserves charity and who does not. He is the All-Wise in His legislation and decree, putting things only in their appropriate places, even if some of the

secrets of His wisdom are hidden from some people; so that the servants may find reassurance in His legislation and submit to His judgment.

We ask Allah Almighty to guide us and the Muslims to understand His religion properly, to be sincere in our dealings with Him, to hasten towards what pleases Him, and to be away from what incurs His wrath. Indeed, He is All-Hearing and Ever-Near.

And may Allah's peace and blessings be upon His slave and Messenger Muhammad and his family and Companions.

The General President of the Directorates of
Scholarly Research, Iftā', Da'wah, and Guidance

His Eminence Shaykh
'Abdul-'Azīz ibn 'Abdullāh ibn Bāz

The Second Treatise

The merit of fasting and Qiyām (voluntary night prayer) during Ramadan, along with important rulings that may be unknown to some people

From ‘Abdul-‘Azīz ibn ‘Abdullah ibn Bāz to those among the Muslims who observe it—may Allah guide me and them to the path of the people of faith, and grant me and them understanding of the Sunnah and the Qur’an, Amen.

And may Allah’s peace, mercy, and blessings be upon you.

To proceed: This is a concise counsel concerning the virtue of fasting and performing Qiyām during Ramadan, and the merit of competing in it with righteous deeds, along with clarifying important rulings that may be unknown to some people.

It is authentically reported that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to give glad tidings to his Companions about the coming of the month of Ramadan. He (ﷺ) would inform them that it is a month in which the gates of mercy and the gates of Paradise are opened, the gates of Hellfire are closed, and the devils are chained. He would say:

«إِذَا كَانَتْ أَوَّلَ لَيْلَةٍ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ فَتُحْتَفَتُ أَبْوَابُ الْجَنَّةِ فَلَمْ يُغْلَقْ مِنْهَا بَابٌ،
وَعُلِقَتِ أَبْوَابُ جَهَنَّمَ فَلَمْ يُفْتَحْ مِنْهَا بَابٌ، وَصُقِّدَتِ الشَّيَاطِينُ، وَيُنَادِي مُنَادٍ: يَا

بَاغِيِ الْخَيْرِ أَقْبِلْ، وَبَاغِيِ الشَّرِّ أَقْصِرْ. وَلِلَّهِ عِتْقَاءُ مِنَ النَّارِ، وَذَلِكَ كُلُّ لَيْلَةٍ».

“When the first night of Ramadan arrives, the gates of Paradise are opened, and not a single gate is closed; the gates of Hellfire are closed, and not a single gate is opened; the devils are chained, and a caller announces: O seeker of good, come forward, and O seeker of evil, desist. And Allah will free some people from Hellfire, and that is every night.”

Moreover, the Prophet (ﷺ) would say:

«جَاءَكُمْ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ شَهْرُ بَرَكَةٍ يَغْشَاكُمْ اللَّهُ فِيهِ: فَيُنزِلُ الرَّحْمَةَ وَيُحِطُّ الْخَطَايَا، وَيَسْتَجِيبُ الدُّعَاءَ، يَنْظُرُ اللَّهُ إِلَى تَنَافُسِكُمْ فِيهِ فَيُبَاهِي بِكُمْ مَلَائِكَتَهُ؛ فَأَرُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ خَيْرًا؛ فَإِنَّ الشَّقِيَّ مَنْ حُرِمَ فِيهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ».

“Ramadan has come to you, a month of blessings in which Allah envelops you: He sends down mercy, absolves sins, and answers supplications. Allah observes your competition in it and boasts of you to His angels; so let Allah see something good from yourselves, for indeed, the miserable one is he who is deprived of Allah’s mercy in it.”

Furthermore, the Prophet (ﷺ) would say:

«مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ، وَمَنْ قَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ، وَمَنْ قَامَ لَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ».

“Whoever fasts Ramadan out of faith and seeking reward from Allah will have his past sins

forgiven; and whoever performs Qiyām during Ramadan, faithfully and expecting its reward from Allah, will have his past sins forgiven; and whoever offers Qiyām during the Night of Qadr, faithfully and expecting its reward from Allah, will have his past sins forgiven.”

The Prophet (ﷺ) would also say:

«يَقُولُ اللَّهُ: كُلُّ عَمَلٍ ابْنِ آدَمَ لَهُ الْحَسَنَةُ بِعَشْرِ أَمْثَالِهَا إِلَى سَبْعِمِائَةِ ضِعْفٍ إِلَّا الصَّيَامَ فَإِنَّهُ لِي وَأَنَا أَجْزِي بِهِ؛ تَرَكَ شَهْوَتَهُ وَطَعَامَهُ وَشَرَابَهُ مِنْ أَجْلِي. لِلصَّائِمِ فَرْحَتَانِ: فَرْحَةٌ عِنْدَ فِطْرِهِ، وَفَرْحَةٌ عِنْدَ لِقَاءِ رَبِّهِ. وَخُلُوفٌ فَمِ الصَّائِمِ أَطْيَبُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ رِيحِ الْمِسْكِ».

“Allah says: Every deed of the son of Adam is for him; a good deed is multiplied ten times up to seven hundred times, except for fasting, which is for Me, and I give the reward for it. He leaves his desires, food, and drink for My sake. The fasting person has two joys: one when he breaks his fast, and another when he meets his Lord. Indeed, the smell of the mouth of a fasting person is more pleasant to Allah than the fragrance of musk.”

The Hadīths concerning the merit of fasting and performing Qiyām during Ramadan, as well as the general merit of fasting, are numerous.

A believer should seize this opportunity, which is the blessing Allah has granted him by allowing him to witness the month of Ramadan. He should hasten to perform acts of obedience, avoid sins, and

strive to fulfill what Allah has obligated upon him, especially the five prayers, for they are the pillar of Islam and the greatest of obligations after the two testimonies of faith. It is incumbent upon every Muslim, male and female, to observe them and perform them at their prescribed times with humility and tranquility.

Among her most important duties towards men is performing it in congregation in the houses of Allah, which Allah has permitted to be exalted and where His name is remembered, as He said:

﴿وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَءَاتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾﴾

{And establish prayer, give zakah, and bow [to Allah] with those who bow.} [Surat al-Baqarah: 43] Allah Almighty also says:

﴿حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَىٰ وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ ﴿٢٣٨﴾﴾

{Be mindful of the prayers, especially the middle prayer; and stand before Allah in complete devotion.} [Surat al-Baqarah: 238] Allah Almighty also says:

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١﴾ الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ ﴿٢﴾﴾

{The believers have attained true success: those who humble themselves in their prayers,} [Surat al-Mu'minun: 1-2] until He said:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَىٰ صَلَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْوَارِثُونَ ﴿٤١﴾ الَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ

الْفِرْدَوْسَ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿١١﴾

{and those who properly observe their prayers. They will be the inheritors, who will inherit Paradise. They will abide therein eternally.} [Surat al-Mu'minūn: 9-11] The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«العَهْدُ الَّذِي بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَهُمُ الصَّلَاةُ فَمَنْ تَرَكَهَا فَقَدْ كَفَرَ.»

“The covenant between us and them is the prayer; whoever abandons it has disbelieved.”

The most important duty after prayer is the giving of Zakah, as Allah Almighty said:

﴿وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُنَفَاءَ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقَيِّمَةِ ﴿٥﴾﴾

{although they were commanded only to worship Allah with sincere devotion to Him, being inclined to the true faith, and to establish prayer and give zakah; that is the true religion.} [Surat al-Bayyinah: 5] Allah Almighty also says:

﴿وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾﴾

{Establish prayer, give zakah and obey the Messenger, so that you may be shown mercy.} [Surat an-Nūr: 56]

The Holy Book of Allah and the noble Sunnah of His Messenger indicate that whoever does not pay the Zakah due on his wealth will be punished by it on the Day of Judgment.

The most important matter after prayer and

Zakah is fasting of the month of Ramadan, which is one of the five pillars of Islam mentioned in the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ):

«بُنِيَ الْإِسْلَامُ عَلَى خَمْسٍ: شَهَادَةِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ، وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ، وَصَوْمِ رَمَضَانَ، وَحَجِّ الْبَيْتِ».

“Islam is built upon five pillars: testifying that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, establishing prayer, giving Zakah, fasting the month of Ramadan, and performing Hajj to the House.”

A Muslim must preserve his fasting and Qiyām from what Allah has prohibited him from in terms of words and deeds, because the purpose of fasting is to obey Allah Almighty and to honor His sanctities, to strive against one’s desires in obedience to one’s Lord, and to accustom oneself to patience in refraining from what Allah has forbidden. The purpose is not merely to abstain from food, drink, and other nullifiers of the fast. For this reason, it is authentically reported from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) that he said:

«الصِّيَامُ جُنَّةٌ، فَإِذَا كَانَ يَوْمٌ صَوْمٍ أَحَدِكُمْ فَلَا يَرْفُثْ وَلَا يَصْحَبْ، فَإِنْ سَابَهُ أَحَدٌ أَوْ قَاتَلَهُ فَلْيَقُلْ: إِنِّي صَائِمٌ».

“Fasting is a shield. When any of you is fasting, he should avoid obscene language and loud voice, and if anyone curses him or quarrels with him, he should say: I am fasting.” The Prophet (ﷺ) is

authentically reported to have said:

«مَنْ لَمْ يَدَعْ قَوْلَ الزُّورِ وَالْعَمَلَ بِهِ وَالْجَهْلَ فَلَيْسَ لِلَّهِ حَاجَةٌ فِي أَنْ يَدَعَ طَعَامَهُ
وَشَرَابَهُ».

“Whoever does not give up false speech and acting upon it and does not abandon foolishness, Allah is in no need of him giving up his food and drink.” It is understood from these texts and others that it is obligatory for the fasting person to be cautious of everything Allah Almighty has prohibited and to uphold everything He has enjoined. By doing so, it is hoped that he would attain forgiveness, emancipation from Hellfire, and the acceptance of his fasting and Qiyām.

There are matters that may be unknown to some people:

It is obligatory for a Muslim to fast out of faith and in pursuit of reward from Allah, not for showing off, seeking fame, imitating others, or following family or community. The obligation is to fast because of the belief that Allah has enjoined it, and to seek its reward from his Lord. Similarly, performing Qiyām in Ramadan must be done out of faith and in pursuit of reward from Allah, not for any other reason. This is why the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ، وَمَنْ قَامَ رَمَضَانَ
إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ، وَمَنْ قَامَ لَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ

لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ».

“Whoever fasts Ramadan out of faith and seeking reward from Allah will have his past sins forgiven; and whoever performs Qiyām during Ramadan, faithfully and expecting its reward from Allah, will have his past sins forgiven; and whoever offers Qiyām during the Night of Decree, out of faith and in pursuit of divine reward, will have his past sins forgiven.”

Among the matters whose ruling might be unknown to some people are those that may occur to a fasting person, such as wounds, nosebleeds, vomiting, or water or gasoline reaching his throat without his choice. All these matters do not invalidate the fast. However, if one deliberately vomits, his fast becomes invalidated, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«مَنْ ذَرَعَهُ الرَّيُّ فَلَا قِضَاءَ عَلَيْهِ، وَمَنْ اسْتَقَاءَ فَعَلَيْهِ الْقِضَاءُ».

“Whoever is overcome by vomiting is not required to make up, but whoever vomits intentionally must make up.”

A similar situation arises for a fasting person who delays Ghusl (ritual bath) from Janābah (major ritual impurity) until dawn, and for some women who delay Ghusl from menstruation or post-partum bleeding until dawn if they attain purity before dawn. In this case, she is required to fast, and

there is no objection to delaying Ghusl until after the break of dawn. However, she must not delay it until sunrise; rather, she must perform Ghusl and pray Fajr before sunrise. Similarly, the person in the state of major impurity must not delay Ghusl until after sunrise; rather, he is obliged to perform Ghusl and offer the Fajr prayer before sunrise. It is incumbent upon the man to hasten in doing so in order to catch the Fajr prayer with the congregation.

Among the matters that do not invalidate the fast are blood tests and injections that are not intended for nourishment. However, it is preferable and more cautious to delay these until night if possible, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«دَعْ مَا يَرِيْبُكَ إِلَى مَا لَا يَرِيْبُكَ.»

“Leave what you doubt for what you do not doubt.”

Moreover, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«مَنْ اتَّقَى الشُّبُهَاتِ فَقَدْ اسْتَبْرَأَ لِدِينِهِ وَعَرْضِهِ.»

“Whoever avoids doubtful matters, has indeed cleared his liability regarding his religion and honor.”

Among the matters whose ruling is unknown to some people is the lack of tranquility in prayer, whether obligatory or voluntary. Authentic Hadīths from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) indicate that

tranquility is a pillar of prayer, without which the prayer is invalid. It involves stillness in prayer, Khushū' (humility and focus), and avoiding haste until each joint returns to its place. Many people perform Tarāweih prayer (voluntary night prayer in Ramadan) without understanding it or achieving tranquility, rather pecking through it. Such a prayer, in this manner, is invalid, and its performer is sinful and not rewarded.

Among the matters whose ruling may be unclear to some people is the belief held by some that Tarāweih cannot be less than twenty Rak'ahs (unit of prayer), while others think it cannot exceed eleven or thirteen Rak'ahs. All of this is a misconception and an error contrary to the evidence.

Authentic Hadiths from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) indicate that the night prayer is flexible, with no fixed limit that must not be exceeded. It is authentically reported that he (ﷺ) would pray eleven Rak'ahs at night, sometimes thirteen Rak'ahs, and sometimes less than that, both in Ramadan and outside of it. When asked about the night prayer, he said:

«مَثْنِي مَثْنِي، فَإِذَا خَشِي أَحَدُكُمْ الصُّبْحَ صَلَّى رَكْعَةً وَاحِدَةً تُوتِرُ لَهُ مَا قَدْ صَلَّى.»

“Two and two, and if any of you fears the approach of dawn, let him offer one Rak'ah as Witr for what he has prayed.” [Its authenticity is agreed

upon]

He did not specify a certain number of Rak'ahs, neither in Ramadan nor outside it. For this reason, the Companions during the time of 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) sometimes prayed twenty-three Rak'ahs and at other times eleven Rak'ahs. All of this has been authentically reported from 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) and from the Companions during his era.

Some of the righteous predecessors used to offer thirty-six Rak'ahs in Ramadan and perform Witr with three Rak'ahs, while others would offer forty-one Rak'ahs. This was mentioned by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah and other scholars. He (may Allah have mercy upon him) also stated that there is a flexibility in this matter. He further mentioned that it is preferable for those who prolong the recitation, bowing, and prostration to reduce the number of Rak'ahs, and for those who shorten the recitation, bowing, and prostration to increase the number. This is the essence of his words, may Allah have mercy upon him.

Whoever contemplates the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ), will know that the best practice in all of this is to offer eleven or thirteen Rak'ahs in Ramadan and at other times, as this aligns with the practice of the Prophet (ﷺ) in most of his circumstances. It is also more considerate for the worshipers and closer to achieving humility and

tranquility. There is no harm or dislike for those who increase beyond this, as previously mentioned.

It is preferable for one who prays Qiyām with the Imam during Ramadan not to leave until the Imam finishes, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِنَّ الرَّجُلَ إِذَا قَامَ مَعَ الْإِمَامِ حَتَّى يَنْصَرِفَ كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَهُ قِيَامَ لَيْلَةٍ.»

“Indeed, when a man performs Qiyām along with the Imam until he (the Imam) leaves, Allah shall record for him the reward of Qiyām for one whole night.”

It is prescribed for all Muslims to strive in various forms of worship during this blessed month, including performing voluntary prayers, reciting the Qur’an with reflection and understanding, increasing in Tasbīh (glorification), Tahlīl (proclamation of Allah’s oneness), Tahmīd (praise), Takbīr (proclamation of Allah’s greatness), seeking forgiveness, and making lawful supplications. Additionally, enjoining good and forbidding evil, calling others to Allah, comforting the poor and needy, striving in dutifulness to parents, maintaining kinship ties, honoring neighbors, visiting the sick, and other acts of goodness are encouraged, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said in the aforementioned Hadīth:

«يَنْظُرُ اللَّهُ إِلَى تَنَافُسِكُمْ فِيهِ، فَيُبَاهِي بِكُمْ مَلَائِكَتَهُ؛ فَأَرُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ خَيْرًا، فَإِنَّ الشَّقِيَّ مَنْ حُرِمَ فِيهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ.»

“Allah looks at your competition in it and boasts of you to His angels; so let Allah see something good from yourselves, for indeed, the miserable one is he who is deprived of Allah’s mercy in it.”

Moreover, it is narrated from him (ﷺ) that he said:

«مَنْ تَقَرَّبَ فِيهِ بِحُضَلَةٍ مِنْ حُضَالِ الْحَيْرِ كَانَ كَمَنْ أَدَّى فَرِيضَةً فِيمَا سِوَاهُ، وَمَنْ أَدَّى فِيهِ فَرِيضَةً كَانَ كَمَنْ أَدَّى سَبْعِينَ فَرِيضَةً فِيمَا سِوَاهُ».

“Whoever draws close in it with a good deed, it will be as if he has performed an obligatory act in other times, and whoever performs an obligatory act in it, it will be as if he has performed seventy obligatory acts in other times.”

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said in the authentic Hadīth:

«عُمْرَةٌ فِي رَمَضَانَ تَعْدِلُ حَجَّةً، أَوْ قَالَ: حَجَّةً مَعِي».

“Umrah in Ramadan is equivalent to Hajj—or he said: Hajj with me.”

The Hadīths and reports indicating the legitimacy of racing and competing in various acts of goodness during this blessed month are numerous.

We ask Allah Almighty to grant us and all Muslims success in all that pleases Him, to accept our fasting and Qiyām, to rectify our affairs, and to protect us all from the trials that lead us astray. We also ask Him, Glorified is He, to reform the Muslims' leaders and unite their word upon the truth. Indeed, He is the Guardian of that and Capable of it.

And may the peace, mercy, and blessings of Allah be upon you all.



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