

Fiqh of Fasting



Chapter 1: Definition of Fasting

In Arabic, fasting is called sawm. Fasting linguistically means to abstain (to prevent from doing something.)

إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَنِ صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أُكَلِّمَ الْيَوْمَ إِنْسِيًّا

“I have pledged a fast (of silence) to the Most Gracious. I will therefore not speak to any human today” (Qur’an 19:26, Surah Maryam)

Islamically: Fasting is an act of worship in which a Muslim seeks closeness to Allah by abstaining from:

- eating
- drinking
- things that break the fast from dawn (Fajr) to sunset (Maghrib).

Chapter 2: Ruling of Fasting

Fasting in the month of Ramadan is obligatory upon every Muslim.

Allah tells us in the Qur’an:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

“O you who believe, fasting has been made obligatory upon you just as it was made obligatory upon those before you so that you may attain through your fasting Taqwa.” (Qur’an 2:183, Surah Al-Baqarah)

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ ؕ فَمَن شَهِدَ
مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ

Ramadan is the month in which the Qur’an was revealed as guidance for mankind, with clear proofs of guidance and the criterion between right and wrong. Whoever witnesses the month must fast it. (Qur’an 2:185, Surah Al-Baqarah)

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As the proof stated in the sunnah, the Prophet ﷺ said:

بُني الإسلام على خمسٍ، شَهَادَةِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ، وَإِيتَاءِ
الزَّكَاةِ، وَصَوْمِ رَمَضَانَ، وَحَجِّ الْبَيْتِ

Islam is built upon five pillars: the testimony that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, establishing the prayer, giving zakat, fasting the month of Ramadan and performing Hajj to the House. (Reported by Tirmidhi)

Why Ramadan Is Special

Narrated by Abu Hurairah (radhiyallaahu 'anhu): The Prophet ﷺ said:

إِذَا جَاءَ رَمَضَانُ فَتُتَحَّتْ أَبْوَابُ الْجَنَّةِ وَعُلِّقَتِ أَبْوَابُ النَّارِ وَصُفِّدَتِ الشَّيَاطِينُ

When Ramadan comes, the gates of Paradise are opened, the gates of the hell fire are closed and the devils are chained. (Reported by Bukhari)

Narrated by Abu Hurairah (radhiyallaahu 'anhu): 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

He who fasts during Ramadan with faith and seeking his reward from God will have his past sins forgiven; he who prays during the night in Ramadan with faith and seeking his reward from God will have his past sins forgiven; and he who passes *Lailat al-qadr* [Night of Decree] in prayer with faith and seeking his reward from God will have his past sins forgiven." (Reported by Bukhari and Muslim)

Narrated Ibn `Abbas: (radhiyallaahu 'anhumaa) who said:

كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَجْوَدَ النَّاسِ، وَأَجْوَدُ مَا يَكُونُ فِي رَمَضَانَ، حِينَ يَلْقَاهُ جِبْرِيلُ، وَكَانَ
جِبْرِيلُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ يَلْقَاهُ فِي كُلِّ لَيْلَةٍ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ، فَيَدَارِسُهُ الْقُرْآنَ فَلَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
أَجْوَدُ بِالْخَيْرِ مِنَ الرِّيحِ الْمُرْسَلَةِ

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The Prophet (ﷺ) was the most generous of all the people and he used to become more generous in Ramadan when Jabriel met him. Jabriel used to meet him every night during Ramadan to revise the Qur'an with him. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) then used to be more generous than the fast wind. (Reported by Bukhari)

Narrated by Abu Hurairah (radhiyallaahu 'anhu): The Prophet ﷺ said:

الصَّلَاةُ الْحَمْسُ وَالْجُمُعَةُ إِلَى الْجُمُعَةِ وَرَمَضَانُ إِلَى رَمَضَانَ مُكَفِّرَاتٌ لِّمَا بَيْنَهُنَّ إِذَا اجْتَنَبْتَ الْكَبَائِرَ

The five daily (prescribed) Salat, Friday (prayer) to the next Friday (prayer) and the fasting of Ramadan to the next Ramadan is expiation of the sins committed in between them as long as major sins are avoided. (Reported by Muslim)

Narrated by Sahl ibn Sa'd (radhiyallaahu 'anhu): The Prophet ﷺ said:

فِي الْجَنَّةِ بَابٌ يُقَالُ لَهُ الرَّيَّانُ لَا يَدْخُلُهُ إِلَّا الصَّائِمُونَ يُقَالُ: أَيْنَ الصَّائِمُونَ؟ فَيَقُومُونَ لَا يَدْخُلُهُ إِلَّا هُمْ، فَمَا دَخَلُوهُ أُغْلِقَ فَلَا يَدْخُلُهُ أَحَدٌ بَعْدَهُمْ

Indeed, in Paradise, there is a gate called ar-Rayyan, through which only those who fast shall enter on the Day of Judgment. None but them shall enter through it. It will be said: 'Where are those who fasted?' They will stand and only they shall enter. When they have entered, it will be closed. (Reported by Muslim)

The Benefits of Fasting

1. Purification of the human soul as it blocks the evil ways of Shataan.
2. It teaches patience and self-control. It teaches us to be honest and caring.
3. It keeps our body healthy by not eating too much. It's good for our mental health.
4. Our previous minor sins are wiped away.

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5. The breath of a fasting person in the sight of Allah is better than the fragrance of musk.



The Different Types of Fasting

1. **Obligatory Fasts:** These are fasts we must do. For example:
 - Fasting in the month of Ramadan
 - Fasting to make up for mistakes (expiations)
 - Keeping a promise to fast (vows)
2. **Encouraged Fasts:** These fasts are good to do but not required. For example:
 - Every Monday and Thursday
 - White Days on 13th, 14th and 15th of every Islamic month
 - Sawm of Dawud (Fasting every other day)
 - Fasting 6 days after Ramadan in the month of Shawwal
 - First nine days of the month of DhulHijja including the day of Arafah (ninth day of Dhul Hijjah)
 - Ashurah (9/10 of Muharram or 10/11)
3. **Disliked Fasts:** These fasts are better not to do. For example:
 - Choosing only Friday or only Saturday to fast without a special reason
4. **Not Allowed Fasts:** These fasts should never be done. For example:
 - Fasting on the Eid days
 - fasting many days in a row without eating
 - fasting the days of Tashriq (after Eid al-Adha) without reason
 - choosing to fast only in the month of Rajab

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- fasting the last day of Sha'ban because we are not sure if Ramadan has started



Chapter 3: When does Ramadan begin and end?

There are three ways:

1. Seeing the new moon

فَمَنْ شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ

Whoever sees the month should fast it. (Quran, Al-Baqarah 2:185)

The Prophet ﷺ said:

صُومُوا لِرُؤْيَيْهِ

“Start fasting when you see the new moon.”

Al-Bukhari (1909) and Muslim (1081/19)

2. A trusted person sees the moon

Ibn Umar رضي الله عنه said:

أَحْبَرْتُ النَّبِيَّ ﷺ أَنِّي رَأَيْتُ الْهَيْلَالَ فَصَامَ وَأَمَرَ النَّاسَ بِالصِّيَامِ

I told the Prophet ﷺ that I saw the new moon, so he fasted and told the people to fast.

Abu Dawud (2342), Ibn Hibban (3447), Al-Hakim (1541), Ad-Daraqutni (2127)

3. Completing 30 days of Shaaban

The Prophet ﷺ said:

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فَإِنْ لَمْ تَرَ الْهَيْلَةَ فَكُمِلُوا عِدَّةَ شَعْبَانَ ثَلَاثِينَ



If you cannot see the moon, then complete Shaaban as thirty days (Reported by Bukhari and Muslim)

The Prophet ﷺ said:

فَإِنْ لَمْ تَرَ الْهَيْلَةَ فَكُمِلُوا عِدَّةَ شَعْبَانَ ثَلَاثِينَ

“Complete Shaaban as thirty days. (Reported by Bukhari and Muslim)

To summarize:

- 1: See the new moon
- 2: Someone you trust sees the moon
- 3: Finish 30 days of Shaaban

Islamic months are lunar months, so each month can be either 29 or 30 days depending on when the new moon is sighted. That’s why we sometimes need to complete 30 days of Shaaban if we can’t see the new moon for Ramadan. The Prophet ﷺ said:

الشَّهْرُ يَكُونُ تِسْعَةً وَعِشْرِينَ وَيَكُونُ ثَلَاثِينَ فَإِذَا رَأَيْتُمُوهُ فَصُومُوا وَإِذَا رَأَيْتُمُوهُ فَأَفْطِرُوا فَإِنْ غُمَّ عَلَيْكُمْ فَكُمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ

The month may be twenty-nine days or it may be thirty. When you see it, then stop fasting and it is obscured from you (too cloudy) then complete the count." (Sunan an-Nasa'i 2138)

Is it obligatory for all Muslims in all countries to fast based on a single moon sighting? And how should Muslims in non-Muslim countries where no official sighting is done observe the fast?

Scholars Have Different Opinions

- Some scholars say one moon sighting is enough for all Muslims. When the moon is seen and confirmed anywhere, everyone should fast.

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- Other scholars say each place should follow its own moon sighting. Places with the same moon time follow together, and places with different times may be different.

- Another opinion says Muslims should follow the leader of their country to stay united and avoid arguments.



For Muslims in countries with no official sighting:

- They can try to see the moon themselves. If they cannot, they can follow the sighting from an Islamic country (if following the first opinion).
- Or they can follow the closest Islamic country to them (if following the second opinion).

Chapter 4: Pillars of Fasting

Fasting has two main pillars. Both must be there.

1. Intention: the place of the intention is in your heart.

2. Abstinence (staying away)

- The fasting person must stay away from all things that break the fast from dawn (fajr) until sunset (magrib)

Making the Intention (Niyah) for Fasting

- **Obligatory Fasts:**
You must make the intention in your heart before the Fajr prayer (before sunrise).
- **Encouraged Fasts:**
You can make the intention any time before you eat or do something that breaks the fast. The earlier you make the intention, the more reward you get.

Do We Need an Intention to Fast?

Yes. For Ramadan, having the intention to fast is required. The intention means deciding in your heart that you will fast for Allah. The intention should be made at night before Fajr for the

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next day of fasting. This rule is for obligatory fasts, like Ramadan. It does not apply to optional or voluntary fasts.



Why Is Intention Important?

Fasting means choosing not to eat or drink all day, so it must be done with a clear decision in the heart. The intention should cover the whole day of fasting.

Do we have to say the intention out loud? Do we need a new intention every day?

No. The intention is in the heart, not spoken. If someone knows that the next day is Ramadan and plans to fast then the intention is already there. Waking up to eat suhur also counts as making the intention. People should not overthink intention. Thinking too much about it can cause unnecessary worries and doubts.

Scholars have different opinions:

- Some say a new intention is needed every night
- The stronger opinion is that one intention at the start of Ramadan is enough. This one intention is enough as long as fasting is not stopped.

When Does the Intention Need to Be Renewed?

A new intention is needed if fasting is stopped for a valid reason, such as:

- Traveling
- Being sick
- Menstruation

When fasting starts again after one of these reasons, the intention should be made again. If fasting is not stopped then the first intention lasts for the whole month.

Chapter 5: Who Must Fast?

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Fasting Ramadan is obligatory upon:

- Every Muslim
- An adult (above the age of puberty)
- Sanity–Mentally healthy / Conscious (A person of sound mind)
- Ability / Strength – A person who is physically capable
- A person who is awake and aware (must understand what they are doing)
- Children do not have to fast yet but if they do, Allah will reward them. They can practice slowly like fasting a few hours or part of the day. Parents and Guardians should guide their children to fast so they can get used to it just like the Companions did with their children. If fasting is too hard or unsafe, children do not have to fast.



Chapter 6: Valid reasons not to fast

Some people are allowed not to fast.

1. Sick People

- If fasting is easy, they should fast
- If fasting makes them sicker, they should not fast but missed days are made up later

2. People who are always sick or very weak

- They do not need to fast
- They must give food to poor people instead

3. Traveling

- If fasting is easy, it is good to fast
- If it is hard, they should break the fast but missed days are made up later

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4. Health reasons for women

- They do not fast
- They must make up the days later
- There is no sin on them

5. Elderly People

- If they cannot fast at all, they must give food to poor people.
- If they cannot understand or make decisions like someone with dementia, then they are not required to fast.

Chapter 7: If an Excuse Ends During the Day

If someone was allowed to eat earlier in the day and later their excuse ends:

- They may continue eating that day
- They must make up the fast later

Chapter 8: Things That Break the Fast

1. Eating or drinking on purpose breaks the fast. This also includes anything that takes the place of eating or drinking. For example, chewing gum breaks the fast.
2. Doing grown-up physical actions. If this happens, a special punishment is required:
 - Fast 2 months in a row or if not possible
 - Feed 60 poor people
 - Free a slave
3. Do not touch your private parts when you are fasting.
4. Any injections that give nutrition like IV drips, vitamins or tablets.
5. Losing too much blood like cupping or heavy bleeding.
6. Vomiting on purpose.



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7. Menstruation or post-baby bleeding.
8. If a person makes dua to the people of the grave or slaughters for jinn, his fasting is not accepted until he repents.
9. If a person curses Allah, curses His Messenger or mocks the religion, this is a serious matter and the fasting is not accepted.
10. If a person fasts but does not pray, we do not tell him not to fast. We tell him to do both. Fast and pray and Allah will help him. Our call to Islam is to correct people and bring people together, not to push them away.



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Chapter 9: Things That Do NOT Break the Fast

1. Eating or drinking by mistake.
2. Swallowing saliva.
3. Tasting a tiny bit of food while cooking.
4. Taking a shower, wearing perfume, using makeup, brushing teeth or using a Miswak.
5. Small amounts of blood like a nosebleed, small cuts or blood tests.
6. Using eye or ear drops (try to avoid nose drops).
7. Using mouthwash is okay if none goes down your throat.
8. Being in a state of Janabah before fasting .
9. Cutting hair or nails.
10. Non-nutrition injections like anesthetic.
11. Using artificial oxygen.
12. Insulin injections for diabetes if needed (better to take at night if possible).

Things that are wrong but don't break the fast

1. Swallowing too much phlegm(mucous).
2. Saying bad things like lying, backbiting, swearing or gossiping.
3. Being mean, violent, unfair or not patient with others.

Chapter 10: Making Up Missed Fasts

- If someone could not fast and later passed away, there is no sin
- If someone could fast but did not, their family helps by fasting for them

Chapter 11: Suhoor and Iftar

Suhoor is the meal we eat before Fajr when we are fasting. Eating suhoor is a Sunnah and has a lot of reward and blessings. It is best to eat suhoor close to Fajr time, not very early. Even eating or drinking a small amount like a sip of water or a small bite of food is enough. The best food for suhoor is dates.

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For iftar, it's Sunnah to break the fast quickly after sunset.

How to break the fast:

- Preferably with ripe dates
- If none, dry dates
- If none, water
- If none, whatever is available
- If none, with intentions

Chapter 12: Taraweeh

History of Taraweeh

- Taraweeh is a sunnah prayer that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ prayed in Ramadan.
- He led people in Taraweeh for a few night then stopped because he worried it might become obligatory and too hard for everyone.
- 'A'ishah رضي الله عنها reported that the Prophet ﷺ prayed Taraweeh at night and some men followed him. Each night, more people joined until the mosque was full.
- After the Prophet ﷺ passed away, people prayed Taraweeh alone or in small groups. During the time of Umar ibn al-Khattab رضي الله عنه, he gathered people to pray Taraweeh together behind one imam.
- Since then, Muslims pray Taraweeh in congregation in mosques.

Meaning of Taraweeh

- The word Taraweeh means rest or relaxation. It is called Taraweeh because early Muslims prayed long prayers and rested after every four rakahs.

Praying With the Imam

- Whoever prays Taraweeh in Ramadan with faith and hoping for reward, Allah forgives their past sins.
- The imam should try to complete the Qur'an during Taraweeh in Ramadan.

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- If this is too hard, the imam should still pray calmly and not make it hard for the people.
- You may hold the Qur'an during Taraweeh but this is disliked in obligatory prayers.



Witr and Qunut

- After Taraweeh, the imam prays Witr and makes the Qunut du'a.
- Qunut should not be too long and not use fancy duas.

Praying More at Home

- If you want to pray more after Taraweeh at home, you can add one rakah after the imam finishes Witr to make it even.
- If you already prayed Witr with the imam and want to pray more, pray in sets of two rakahs.
- Do not repeat Witr.

Chapter 13: Ramadan is the month of the Quran

- Ramadan is a very special month because it is the month when the Qur'an was sent down.
- The Qur'an was revealed in Ramadan to guide people and show the difference between right and wrong.
- The Qur'an was sent down on a special night called Laylatul Qadr (the Night of Decree). The Prophet ﷺ, Jibril عليه السلام and the Qur'an in Ramadan
- During Ramadan, the Prophet ﷺ focused a lot on the Qur'an. Angel Jibril عليه السلام came to the Prophet ﷺ every night in Ramadan. Each year, the Prophet ﷺ completed the entire Qur'an once with Jibril عليه السلام. In the year before the Prophet ﷺ passed away, he reviewed the Qur'an twice with Jibril عليه السلام.

Best Time to Read the Qur'an

- Some scholars said daytime is good because the person is fasting.
- Others said nighttime is better because the Prophet ﷺ reviewed the Qur'an at night with Jibril عليه السلام.
- The stronger opinion is that nighttime is better for deep study of the Qur'an.
- The salaf gave extra attention to the Qur'an in Ramadan.
- Some finished the Qur'an every day.
- Some stopped other lessons to focus only on the Qur'an.

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- Some completed the Qur'an many times in the month.



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Chapter 13: Virtues of the Last Ten Nights of Ramadan

- These nights are the most special nights of the entire year. In these nights is the Night of Decree, a night better than one thousand months. These nights are a great treasure for those who worship Allah properly and single out Allah in worship.
- We should take advantage of them before they pass and we feel regret later.

1. The Prophet ﷺ worked harder in worship during these nights

- Prophet ﷺ worked extra hard in worship in the last ten nights. He stayed awake at night praying and woke up his family to worship. He increased his worship more than at any other day and night in Ramadan. During the first twenty nights, he ﷺ prayed but in the last ten nights he doubled his effort.

2. Prophet ﷺ stayed in the mosque (I'tikaf) in the last ten nights

- During these nights, Prophet ﷺ would stay in the mosque to focus only on worship. He left worldly matters and concentrated on worshipping Allah. He did this to seek the Night of Decree. Muslims should follow his example by worshipping more and reducing distractions.

3. The night of decree happens in these nights

- One of the greatest virtues of these nights is that the Night of Decree happens in them. Worship on this night is better than 83 years of worship. We should not waste these nights because they are very precious and full of blessings.

4. The Prophet ﷺ woke his family for worship

- The Prophet did not worship alone; he woke his family so they could pray and remember Allah too. These nights are a rare and priceless chance, and we should not waste them.

Standing in prayer during these nights

- A Muslim should worship sincerely hoping to reach the Night of Decree.
- Whoever prays with the imam for the whole night gets the reward as if they prayed all night.
- The Prophet ﷺ said that whoever prays on the Night of Decree with faith and hope for reward will have their past sins forgiven.

Warning about wasting these nights

- Sadly, some people ignore these nights and focus on things that can wait.
- One sign of this is how busy the markets are during these nights.

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The best deeds in the last ten nights

- The best act of worship is prayer because the Prophet spent most of the night praying.
- Another very important act is supplication.



Sunnah of I'tikaf

- One Sunnah of these nights is staying in the mosque for worship (I'tikaf).
- If someone can do I'tikaf for all ten nights, that is best and follows the Prophet's example.
- If not, they should try to do I'tikaf on the odd nights most likely to be the Night of Decree.

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Chapter 14: Zakat al-Fitr

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What is Zakat al-Fitr?

Zakaat al-Fitr is an obligatory charity given at the time of Fitr, meaning when the fasting of Ramadhan ends with Eid.

What is the wisdom behind Zakat al-Fitr?

The Prophet ﷺ explained the wisdom behind the obligation of Zakaat al-Fitr when he said:

“It is purification for the fasting person from idle talk and false speech, and also to feed the poor.”

[Narrated by Ibn Abbaas, collected by Abu Dawood] Despite a fasting person striving to avoid idle talk and false speech, he may still fall short. Zakat al-Fitr serves as a purification for this. It is also a means of showing gratitude to our Lord who allowed us to reach Ramadan and live to see Eid.

Who must pay Zakaat al-Fitr?

The Prophet ﷺ obligated Zakat al-Fitr: “Upon the Muslims, free or slave, male or female, young or old.”[Narrated by Ibn Umar, collected by al-Bukhari and Muslim] Therefore, it is obligatory upon every Muslim. The responsibility falls upon the head of the household such as the father or husband to give it on behalf of his dependants, provided he has sufficient food for himself and his family. It is not obligatory to give Zakat al-Fitr on behalf of an unborn child although it is recommended.

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What should be given?

The Prophet ﷺ obligated Zakat al-Fitr to be given as: “A Saa’ of dates, a Saa’ of barley...”

[Narrated by Ibn Umar, collected by al-Bukhari and Muslim] Abu Sa’eed al-Khudree narrated that the Companions: “Would give Zakat al-Fitr on behalf of every young and adult, free and enslaved, during the time of the Messenger of Allah, one Saa’ of staple food.” [Narrated by Abu Sa’eed al-Khudree, collected by Muslim] These narrations show that Zakat al-Fitr must be given from the staple food of one’s locality.

How much should be given?

The measure used during the time of the Prophet ﷺ was one Saa’, which is a measure of volume equal to four double handfuls of an average man. In modern measurements, this approximately equals:

- Rice: 2.3 kg
- Raisins: 1.64 kg
- Dates: 1.8 kg
- Wheat: 2.04 kg
- Lentils: 2.1 kg
- Flour: 2.06 kg
- Couscous: 1.8 kg

From these measurements, Zakat al-Fitr ranges approximately between 1.5 kg and 2.5 kg depending on the food type. For this reason, scholars recommend giving 3 kg of food as a precaution as mentioned by Shaykh Ibn Baaz.

Fiqh of Fasting



How is it given and to whom?

Zakat al-Fitr is given to poor people who cannot afford sufficient daily food for themselves and their families. There are three valid scenarios:

1. The correct amount of food is given to poor people in one's own locality. This is the Sunnah and promotes community cohesion.
2. If no poor people are found locally, it may be transferred to another community or country especially if the recipients are relatives.
3. If neither of the above is possible, then the monetary value of the food may be given. This is not from the Sunnah but is allowed in cases of need or benefit, as stated by Ibn Taymiyyah in Majmoo' al-Fataawa (25/79), where he explained that there are differing opinions and that allowing it for a need or benefit is the most just and fair view.

How should it be given?

The best practice is to give it directly to the poor in one's locality. A person should involve his wife and children in the process, including purchasing the food, measuring the amount, packaging it and delivering it. Care must be taken not to humiliate the poor. Where appropriate, anonymity should be maintained.

Why is it given specifically to the poor?

Eid is a day of joy and celebration, and no one should feel excluded. For this reason, essential food items are given to the poor without them having to ask. Muslims are also encouraged to honour the poor with gifts and kindness in appropriate ways.

When should it be given?

The best time to give Zakat al-Fitr is before the Eid prayer. It may be given a day or two earlier if there is concern that it may not reach the poor on time. If given after the Eid prayer, it is considered ordinary charity and not Zakah. The Prophet ﷺ said: "Whoever gives the Zakah before the Eid prayer, it is accepted as Zakah. Whoever gives it after the prayer, it is charity." [Narrated by Ibn Abbaas, collected by Abu Dawood]

Fiqh of Fasting

