

Sawm

Fasting is the fourth pillar of Islam. The Arabic word for fasting is *sawm* or *siyam*. Fasting shows great self control. A fasting Muslim may be hungry and thirsty and the food is in front of him, but he can not eat or drink because Allah told him to fast. Fasting during the month of Ramadan is obligatory by Allah in the Quran and by the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him. Allah said in the Quran:



يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨٣﴾

O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may have Taqwa.

The Prophet peace be upon him said:

“Islam is based on five (things): the testimony that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is His slave and messenger, the performance of the prayer, the payment of zakat, the fast during (the month of) Ramadan and Pilgrimage.” [Bukhari and Muslim.]

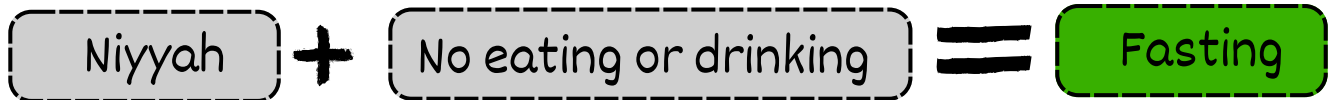
Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar.

Fasting

Fasting means abstaining from eating and drinking from dawn until sunset with intention.

fasting has two important pillars:

- 1- Niyyah (intention).
- 2- Abstaining from eating and drinking.



When is it a must to fast?

Fasting the month of Ramadan is obligatory as it is one of the pillars of Islam. The month of Ramadan starts when the month of Sha'ban ends.

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَى وَالْفُرْقَانِ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ

The month of Ramadan is that in which the Quran was revealed, a guidance to men and clear proofs of the guidance and the distinction; therefore whoever of you is present in the month, he shall fast therein.

Who must fast?

- 1- Muslim
- 4- Ability

- 2- Adult
- 5- Resident

- 3- Sane

MUSLIM

Adult

Sane

Ability

Resident

Sawm

The importance of fasting

- 1- Self-purification: This is achieved by training the soul to obey Allah's commands and avoid His prohibitions, thus restraining it from its desires.
- 2- Strengthening the willpower of the fasting person: This is accomplished by habituating them to patience and endurance in the face of whims and inclinations.
- 3- Reminding the fasting person of the greatness of Allah's blessings: Fasting temporarily withholds these blessings to foster a sense of their value.
- 4- Bringing awareness of the conditions of those who suffer from hunger among the poor and needy.
- 5- Health benefits: This is attained by giving the body's organs a break from the strain of daily functions and by preventing many diseases that result from overeating, such as obesity.

Question

If someone ate or drank forgetting that he was fasting , is he still fasting?

If someone forgot that he is fasting then ate or drank, then he is still fasting and he did not break his fasting. Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him said:

“If anyone forgets when he is fasting and eats or drinks he should complete his fast, for it is Allah who has fed him and given him drink.”[(Bukhari and Muslim.)]

QUIZ

Multiple Choice Questions

1- Which of the following is **NOT** a pillar of fasting in Islam?

- a) Intention (Niyyah)
- b) Abstaining from eating and drinking
- c) Giving zakat
- d) Both a and b

2- Who is required to fast during Ramadan?

- a) Only adult men
- b) Only those who are sick
- c) Muslims who are adult, sane, and capable
- d) Non-Muslims who wish to participate

True or False

1- Fasting is the fifth pillar of Islam.

2- A Muslim can eat and drink during the day in Ramadan if they forget that they are fasting.

3- Fasting is only obligatory for Muslims who are physically able and sane.

4- The month of Ramadan starts when the month of Sha'ban ends.

5- Fasting helps to remind Muslims of the condition of the poor and those suffering from hunger.

Fill-in-the-Blank

Fasting during the month of Ramadan is obligatory as it is one of the _____ of Islam. The primary reason for fasting is to achieve _____ through self-control and obedience to Allah. Fasting helps to increase awareness of the _____ and needs of the poor. A fasting person must abstain from eating and drinking from _____ until _____. Prophet Muhammad said that if a person forgets they are fasting and eats or drinks, they should _____ the fast.

QUIZ

Answer the Questions

1-What does the word "sawm" or "siyam" mean in Arabic, and how is it related to fasting?

2- Why is fasting during the month of Ramadan is obligatory?

3- What are the two pillars of fasting in Islam?

4- How does fasting during Ramadan help a Muslim practice self-control?

5- What does the Quran say about fasting in relation to the previous nations and its purpose?

6- Why does fasting help in self-purification according to Islamic teachings?