

Those Who Make Up for Missed Days

It is allowed for those who are (not chronically) ill and for travelers to break their fasts during [Ramadan](#), but they must make up for the days they missed. Allah says in the Qur'an: "And [for] him who is sick among you or on a journey, [the same] number of other days."

Mu`adh said: "Verily, Allah made the fast obligatory upon the Prophet by revealing: 'O you who believe, fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you...' until the words, 'And for those who can fast [but do not] there is a "ransom" payment...' Then, whoever wished to do so would fast and whoever wished to do so would feed a poor person, and that was sufficient for them. Then Allah revealed another verse: 'The month of Ramadan in which the Qur'an was revealed...' to the words: 'Whoever is resident among you during this month is to fast.' [By this verse,] the fast was established for those who were resident and healthy. A concession was made for the sick and travelers, and the feeding of the poor by the elderly who could not fast was [left] confirmed." (Related by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, and Al-Baihaqi with an Authentic Chain of transmitters.)

A sick person may break his fast which, if continued, would only aggravate the illness or delay its cure. In Al-Mughni it is stated: "It is related from some of the early scholars that any type of illness allows one to break the fast, even an injury to the finger or a toothache. They based their opinion on the following:

The wording of the verse is general and applies to all types of illness, and a traveler is allowed to break his fast even if he does not need to and, therefore, the same must be the case for one who is sick. This was also the opinion of Al-[Bukhari](#), `Ata', and the Dhahiris.

One who is healthy but fears that he will become ill if he fasts can break the fast, as can the person who is overcome by hunger and/or thirst and fears that he may die because of it, even if he is resident and healthy. He must make up for the days of fasting that he missed. The following two Qur'anic verses support this point: "And do not kill yourselves, Lo! Allah is ever Merciful to you," and "He has not laid upon you in your religion any hardship."

If a sick person fasts and withstands the hardships of the fast, his fast will be valid but disliked, for he did not accept the concession Allah gave him, thereby causing him much hardship. Some Companions would fast during the Prophet's lifetime while others would not (that is, if they were ill), thereby following the verdict of the Prophet. Hamzah Al-Aslami said: "O Messenger of Allah, I find within me the strength to fast while traveling. Would there be any blame upon me if I were to do so?" The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, answered: "It is a concession from Allah. Whoever takes it has done well. Whoever likes to fast, there is no blame upon him." (Related by Muslim.)

Abu Sa`id Al-Khudri reported: "We traveled with the Messenger of Allah to Makkah while we were fasting. We stopped at a place and the Messenger of Allah said: 'You are coming close to your enemies. You will be stronger if you break the fast.' That was a concession, some of us fasted, and some of us broke our fasts. Then we came to another place and the Prophet said: 'In the morning you will face your enemy. Breaking the fast will give you more strength.' So we broke our fast, taking that as the best course of action. After that, you could see some of us fasting with the Prophet while traveling." (Recorded by Ahmad, Muslim, and Abu Dawud.)

In another report, Abu Sa`id al-Khudri said: “We fought under the leadership of the Messenger of Allah during Ramadan. Some of us fasted and some of us did not. The ones who fasted did not find any fault with those who did not fast, and those who did not fast found no fault with those who fasted. They knew that if one had the strength to fast he could do so and it was good, and that if one was weak, he was allowed to break his fast, and that was good.” (Related by Ahmad and Muslim.)

The jurists differ over what is preferred (that is, to fast or not to fast while traveling). Abu Hanifah, Ash-Shafi`i, and Malik are of the opinion that if one has the ability to fast, it is better for him to do so, and if one does not have the ability to fast, it is better for him to break the fast. Ahmad said that it is best to break the fast. `Umar ibn `Abdul-`Aziz says: “The best of the two acts is the easier of the two. If it is easier for one to fast than to make up the day later on, then, in his case, to fast is better.”

Ash-Shaukani has concluded that if it is difficult for an individual to fast or to reject the concession, then it is best for him not to fast (while traveling). Similarly, if one fears that one's fasting during travel will look like showing off, then in this case, breaking the fast would be preferred. If one is not faced with such conditions, then fasting would be preferred.

If a traveler makes the intention (to fast) during the night, he can still break his fast during the day. Jabir ibn `Abdullah reported: “The Messenger of Allah left for Makkah during the year of the conquest [of Makkah] and he and the people with him fasted until he reached a certain valley. He then called for a cup of water, which he raised up so that the people could see it, and then he drank. Afterwards, he was told that some people had continued to fast, and he said: ‘Those are disobedient ones, those are disobedient ones.’ ” (Related by Muslim, At-Tirmidhi, and An-Nasa'i. At-Tirmidhi reckoned this Hadith as Authentic)

If one has already made the intention to fast while resident but then decided to travel during the day, the majority of scholars maintain that he must fast. Ahmad and Ishaq say that he may break the fast. This opinion is based on the report of Muhammad ibn Ka' b who said: "I came to Anas ibn Malik during Ramadan while he was planning on traveling. His mount was prepared for him, and he was wearing his clothes for traveling. He asked for some food and ate. I said to him: 'Is this a [Sunnah](#)?' He said, 'Yes.' Then he mounted his animal and left." (Related by At-Tirmidhi, and classified as Sound) ` Ubaid ibn Jubair said: "During Ramadan, I rode on a ship with Abu Basra Al-Ghafari from Al-Fustat. He prepared his food and said: "Come [and eat]." I said: "Are we not still among the houses [of the city – that is, they had not left yet]?" Abu Basra asked: "Are you turning away from the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah?" (Related by Ahmad and Abu Dawud. Its narrators are trustworthy.)

Ash-Shaukani contends: "These two Hadiths prove that a traveler may break his fast before he begins his journey. Of its credentials, Ibn Al-` Arabi says: 'Concerning the Hadith of Anas, it is Sahih (Authentic) and proves that one can break the fast when he is prepared to travel.'" This is the correct position.

The type of travel that allows one to break his fast is the same as the traveling which allows one to shorten the prayers. We have discussed all of the opinions on this point under the section titled, "Shortening the Prayers," and we have also recorded Ibnul-Qayyim's conclusions on this question.

Ahmad, Abu Dawud, Al-Baihaqi, and At-Tahawi recorded from Mansur Al-Kalbi that Dihya ibn Khalifah traveled a distance of one Farsakh during Ramadan. When he broke his fast, some of the people accompanying him did likewise. Some of them did not agree with this action. On his return to his city, Dihya said: “I saw some hung today that I did not suspect I would ever see. The people turned away the Messenger of Allah’s guidance and that of his companions.” He said that about the people who had fasted. Then he said: “O Allah, take [my soul] to you.” All of its narrators are trustworthy, except for Mansur al-Kalbi... although Al-`Ijli affirms his credibility.