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How does the month of *Ramadan* start?

Praise be to *Allah*, the Lord of the worlds, and may *Allah* raise the rank of our Master *Muhammad*, and protect his nation from what he fears for it.

Fasting during *Ramadan* is among the best acts of obedience, among the greatest deeds, and one of the most important matters of Islam.

The scholars of the four schools of Islamic Jurisprudence (*madhhabs*) agreed that the basis for determining the beginning of *Ramadan* is as follows:

The crescent is observed with the naked eye after the sunset of the 29th day of Sha[^]ban¹. If the crescent is sighted, then the following day will be the first day of Ramadan. If the

¹ *Sha[^]ban* is the 8th month in the lunar Calendar (i.e. the month preceding *Ramadan*).

crescent was not in view, then the next day will be the 30th day of Sha[^]baⁿ and the day after that will be the beginning of Rama[^]daⁿ.

Muslims in all countries around the world have implemented this practice in determining the beginning and the end of Rama[^]daⁿ and the highly knowledgeable scholars have ruled accordingly. Moreover, they have stated that the reliance should be placed on this rule and no attention should be given to the sayings of mathematicians and astronomers.

Prophet Mu[^]ham[^]ma[^]d ﷺ said what means:

“Begin fasting Rama[^]daⁿ upon seeing the crescent and end it upon seeing the crescent of the following month. But if the crescent is blocked from view, then complete the fast for 30 days”.

(Narrated by Im[^]am A[^]h[^]ma[^]d in his Mus[^]na[^]d, Mus[^]li[^]m in his Sa[^]hi[^]h and an-Na[^]sa[^]’iyy and Ibn Ma[^]ja[^]h in their Sunan through the route of Ab[^]u Hurayrah)

Al-Buk[^]ha[^]riyy, Mus[^]li[^]m, and others narrated through the route of ^Ab[^]dulla[^]h Ibn ^U[^]ma[^]r, may Alla[^]h raise his rank, that the Prophet ﷺ said what means:

“The lunar month is 29 nights, so do not fast until you sight the crescent. But if the crescent was blocked from view, then complete the month to 30”.

Im[^]am A[^]h[^]ma[^]d, Mus[^]li[^]m, Ab[^]u Da[^]wu[^]d and An-Na[^]sa[^]’iyy all narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said what means:

“We do not rely on writings or calculations to determine the beginning or the end of the month. The month is either 29 or 30 days”.

Sayings of the four Schools of Islamic Jurisprudence

From The Ha[^]na[^]fiyy School:

Ibn ^A[^]bi[^]dīn, (died in 1252AH), in his annotations on ‘Ad-durr Al-Mukhta[^]r’ a well-known book said what means:

“The statement of the astronomers is not taken into consideration”. i.e. in determining the beginning and end of Rama[^]daⁿ.

Moreover, the book ‘Al-Mi[^]ra[^]ji’ states:

“Their sayings are not taken into consideration by the scholarly consensus and it is not permissible for the astronomer to fast relying on his own calculation”.

From The Ma[^]li[^]kiyy School:

Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn Aḥmad Mayyarah Al-Maḥliyy, (died in 1072 AH), in 'Addurr Ath-Thamīn' said that Ash-Shahāb Al-Qarāfiyy, (died in 684 AH), related that Sanad, (died in 541 AH), said what means:

"If an imām (Muslim ruler) declared the beginning of fasting based upon calculations, then the Muslims must not follow him, because the scholars of the Salaf agreed, by consensus, that determining Ramaḍān by calculations is invalid".

In 'Ash-Sharḥ al-Kabīr' Shaykh Aḥmad ad-Dardīr, (died in 1201AH), from the school of Imām Maḥlik, said what means:

"It is stated that the beginning of Ramaḍān is not confirmed by the saying of an astronomer, neither for himself nor for others".

From The Shafi'iyy School:

In his book Asnā Al-Matalib Sharḥ Rawḍ Attalib, Shaykh Zakariyya Al-Anṣariyy, (died in 925AH), said what means:

"The calculations of the astronomers have no significance. They do not determine the obligation of fasting and it is a sin to rely on them for that purpose. The meaning of Ayah: [وَبِالنَّجْمِ هُمْ يَهْتَدُونَ¹⁶] (Surat An-Naḥl) refers to deducing the direction of the Qiblah".

From The Hambaliyy School:

In his book, 'Kashshaf Al-Qina', Al-Buḥūtiyy al-Hambaliyy, (died in 1051 AH), who is among the famous Hambaliyy scholars, said what means:

"If one intended to fast the 30th day of Shaḥbān without relying on lawful evidence namely sighting the crescent or after completing Shaḥbān 30 days then one's fasting is invalid. Take the case for instance of the one who based his fasting on calculations or astronomy because the horizon was blocked by clouds; his fasting is invalid because his basis is religiously invalid. This judgement stands even if in reality these calculations often coincided with the beginning of Ramaḍān. Similarly, the one who fasts after a night of clear sky based on calculations, his fasting is invalid for the same reason, even if valid testimony later revealed that the day had been the first of Ramaḍān".

Conclusion

Clearly, the Scholars of the four schools agree that no consideration should be given to the sayings of astrologers, astronomers and/or mathematicians for determining the beginning and end of the month of Ramaḍān. Moreover, many scholars conveyed the scholarly consensus on this ruling. Reliance should be placed upon sighting the crescent or completing 30 days of Shaḥbān as mentioned by many numbers of scholars within these schools.

We advise every Muslim to abide by the sayings mentioned by the scholars of the four schools. The Muslim nation unanimously agreed on the high rank and integrity of those scholars. Let the Muslim learn the rules of fasting by studying under someone who possesses both knowledge and trustworthiness and is someone who has acquired the knowledge from another trustworthy and knowledgeable person, and so on until the continuous chain reaches right back to the Prophet ﷺ.

Fasting the Month of *Ramadan*

Fasting the month of *Ramadan* is an obligation and a great act of worship. It is among the best acts of obedience. In fasting there is a great reward.

The obligation of fasting *Ramadan* on the believers is known from the *Qur'an* and the *hadith*. *Allah* said in *Surat-ul-Baqarah* Verse 183:

[يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ]
{سورة البقرة 183}

Which means: **“O believers, fasting is an obligation upon you, as it was ordained upon the Muslim nations before you, to help you become pious”**.

Fasting was an obligation on the nations before the nation of Prophet *Muhammad* ﷺ. However, fasting the month of *Ramadan* in particular is a specification for the nation of Prophet *Muhammad* ﷺ only.

Consequently, for the one who has learned of its obligation, renouncing the obligation of fasting the month of *Ramadan* is blasphemy because it entails belying *Allah* and the Prophet ﷺ.

Who Must Fast *Ramadan*

Every accountable Muslim is obligated to fast the month of *Ramadan*.

A young child is not obligated to fast. However, it is an obligation on the guardian of the child to order him or her to fast once the child reaches 7 (lunar) years of age, with the condition that the child's body can withstand fasting without being harmed.

For one to be obligated to fast, one must be of sound mind. Fasting is not obligatory on the insane person.

Fasting is not obligatory on a person whose body cannot tolerate fasting, either due to old age or severe illness.

The one who is traveling a walking distance of two or more days (about 80 miles or 130 kilometers) is permitted to break one's fast, provided that one's reason for traveling is not

sinful, and one leaves the boundaries of his hometown before dawn. However, one must make up the missed days.

Fasting is not obligatory on the menstruating woman, or the woman who is in her postpartum bleeding period. In fact, it is unlawful for them to fast. The woman who misses days of fasting during *Ramadan* for these reasons, has to make up the missed days.

The pregnant woman is permitted to break her fast if she fears harm may come to her or her baby from fasting. This includes the breast-feeding woman as well. She is permitted to break her fast if she fears harm may come to her or her baby from fasting. Both must make up every missed day of fasting.

Integrals² Of Fasting

It is obligatory to make the intention each night to fast the following day of *Ramadan*. This means to have the intention in one's heart during the night preceding the fasting day (i.e. after the sunset and before the dawn of the following day). If the menstrual or postpartum bleeding of a woman stops at night, then she must intend to fast the following day.

One must abstain from inserting any substance into the head or the body cavity through an open inlet excluding one's pure *tahir* (saliva) while still inside the mouth between dawn and sunset. The open inlets of the body are the mouth, nose, ear, anus, and vagina.

One must abstain from sexual intercourse and masturbation.

One's fasting is invalidated by forcing oneself to vomit either by inserting the finger into the mouth or otherwise.

Finally, the Muslim must abstain from committing apostasy³ at all times. Apostasy takes one out of Islam. Apostasy invalidates fasting even if one returns to Islam immediately afterwards. After returning to Islam, one must abstain from eating and other fasting invalidators for the remainder of the day. Moreover, one must make up the invalidated day(s) of fasting after *Ramadan*.

Obligations upon the one not fasting during *Ramadan*

The obligation upon the one who does not fast during the month of *Ramadan* is classified into four categories:

Making up all the missed days only.

² An integral of fasting is that part of fasting without which the fasting is not valid.

³ Apostasy is invalidating one's Islam by committing a blasphemous belief, a blasphemous act, or a blasphemous saying.

Making up all the missed days and paying the *fidyah*⁴ (expiation).

Paying the *fidyah* only.

Making up all the missed days and fulfilling a *kaffarah*⁵.

The first category would include the following:

The sick person who is hopeful to be cured of his illness;

The person who is traveling a walking distance of two or more days (about 80 miles);

The menstruating woman or the woman who is in her postpartum bleeding period;

The one who invalidates one's fast by other than having sexual intercourse;

The pregnant or the breast-feeding woman who fears harm would come to her from her fasting;

Each one of the above-mentioned must make up all the missed days without paying *fidyah*.

The second category would include:

The pregnant or the breast-feeding woman who fears harm would merely come to her baby from her fasting must make up every missed day of fasting in addition to paying the *fidyah*.

The one who does not make up the missed days of fasting until the coming of the following *Ramadan*. In this case, one must make up every missed day of fasting in addition to paying the *fidyah*.

Note: According to the *Hanafiyy* School the above-mentioned are only obligated to make up the missed days.

The third category would include:

The person whose body cannot tolerate fasting, due to an old age. Such a person is not obligated to fast, however, one pays *fidyah* to a poor Muslim for every missed day of fasting.

The sick person who cannot fast due to an illness one is not hopeful to be cured of. Such a person does not have to make up the missed days of fasting, instead, one pays *fidyah* to a poor Muslim for every missed day of fasting.

⁴ The *fidyah* is one *mudd* which is a pair of average-sized hands cupped together filled with the most common staple food of the region.

⁵ A *kaffarah* is to free a Muslim slave; if unable, then to fast two consecutive lunar months; if unable, then to feed sixty (60) poor Muslims each the quantity of one *mudd* of the most common staple food of the region.

The *fidyah* in the Hanafiyy School is to feed a poor Muslim a lunch and a dinner, or a lunch and paying the value of a dinner or the opposite, or to pay half a sa^ (Abu Hanifah said that the sa^ is six *mudds*) of wheat, or one sa^ of dates, barley, or raisins, or to pay the value of it.

The fourth category would include:

The man who will fully engages in sexual intercourse during the day of fasting while knowing it is unlawful to do so and remembering that he is fasting, invalidates his fast. Such a person has to make up the invalidated day and fulfill the *kaffarah*.

If the *kaffarah* left out, it cannot be compensated for by anything else.

Recommended Deeds While Fasting

It is recommended (*Sunnah*)⁶ to break one's fast as soon as one is sure that the time of the *maghrib* (sunset) prayer has begun. It is recommended to say the following statement upon breaking one's fast:

اللهم لك صُمتُ وعلى رزقك أفطرتُ

This means: **“O Allah, I fasted seeking your reward and with Your sustenance I broke my fast”.**

It is also recommended to delay the *sahur* meal until a time close to the dawn, but one must not eat or drink after the dawn.

Refraining from backbiting, cursing a Muslim, and other sins is more emphasized while fasting. In committing some sins, the reward of one's fasting might be lessened or lost. If someone curses another, let the one cursed abstain from responding with a similar curse. Instead, let him say: “I am fasting. I am fasting”.

Paying the optional charity to the poor, reciting the *Qur'an*, staying in the mosque with the intention of *i^tikaf*, especially during the last ten days of *Ramadan*, praying the *Tarawih* prayer, and inviting others to break their fast on food which you provide are all rewardable acts.

Types of Blasphemy

The Scholars of the four *madhhabs* classified apostasy into three categories: beliefs in the heart, actions committed by certain parts of the body, and sayings with the tongue.

Ar-Ramliyy, from the School of *Imam ash-Shafi^iyy*, classified apostasy into these three categories and gave examples of each in his book 'Explanation of *Minhaj* ' as did *an-Nawawiyy* in his book '*Rawdat at-Talibin*'.

⁶ Recommended (*Sunnah*) means it is rewardable if done with the proper intention, but if it is not done at all, one is not sinful.

Qadi ^Iyad and Muhammad ^illaysh from the Malikiyy School gave examples of these three types of apostasy. Likewise did Ibn ^Abidin and Badrur-Rashid from the Hanafiyy School and Al-Buhutiyy from the Hambaliyy School.

As-Subkiyy said in his book 'At-Tabaqat':

"Imam Al-Ashariyy, his students and all Muslims agree that one becomes a blasphemer (kafir) by saying a blasphemous word or committing a blasphemous act. Such a person is not a believer in Allah, and shall remain in Hellfire forever, if one dies in that state, even if one knew the truth in his heart. This is a case of scholarly consensus (Ijma^), not even two Muslims would disagree on this matter".

The muhaddith, hafidh, faqih⁷ and linguist Murtada az-Zabidiyy said:

"The scholars from the four madhhabs categorized apostasy into three types".

Each one of these three categories of apostasy is divided into many subdivisions, and the scholars gave many examples of each.

Apostate Beliefs

Examples of the first category of apostasy are:

Believing that anything other than Allah exists without a beginning. Qadi ^Iyad al-Mutawalli, ibn Hajar al-^Asqalaniyy and others established the scholarly consensus (Ijma^) on the blasphemy of the one who believes that the world exists without a beginning. Allah is the only One who exists without a beginning, and everything else is a creation of Allah and has a beginning.

Renouncing any of the attributes of Allah commonly known among the Muslims such as His Power, Will, Knowledge, Hearing, Sight, Life and the like. Renouncing any of these attributes of Allah is blasphemous because the mind alone is sufficient to deduce that Allah must be attributed with these attributes (i.e. these attributes are intellectually necessary to be attributed to God and thus one would not be excused for being ignorant about these matters).

Ibn al-Jawziyy said:

"There is scholarly consensus on the blasphemy of the one who denies the fact that Allah has Power over everything".

Believing that Allah resembles any of His creations whether in His Self, or Attributes, or Creating is blasphemous. The one who believes that Allah is a body or light, or believes that Allah dwells in the heavens, or that He sits on the ^Arsh (Throne) is a blasphemer. All these are attributes of the creation and are non-befitting to attribute to the Creator. Had Allah been attributed with such attributes, He would have been similar to His creations.

⁷ A faqih is the one who is highly knowledgeable in the Religion.

Allah said in *Surat-Ash-Shura*, Ayah 11:

[لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ¹¹]

Which means: **“Nothing is like Him in any way”**.

Had Allah been a body, He would have been susceptible to the things all bodies are susceptible to such as change, divisibility, needing to occupy a space and annihilation. These are impossible to be attributed to Allah as they are indications of shortage and weakness.

Apostate Actions

The second category of apostasy is apostate actions (i.e. actions committed by different parts of the body) includes:

Prostrating to an idol.

Knowingly throwing the Book of the *Qur'an* in the garbage. This was stated by *Ibn ^Abidin* and others for this action indicates belittlement.

Apostate Sayings

The third category of apostasy is the apostate sayings uttered with the tongue. They are very numerous, some examples are:

To curse Allah, any of the prophets, or any of the angels (as stated by *Qadi ^Iyad*).

To say to a Muslim: ‘O blasphemer’, while intending that the religion of the addressed person is blasphemy.

To say about something that had happened: ‘It didn’t happen by the Will of Allah’.

It is also blasphemous for one to deem as lawful that which is commonly known among the Muslims to be unlawful (e.g. adultery, fornication, stealing, drinking alcohol)

To deem as unlawful that which is commonly known among the Muslims to be lawful (e.g. selling, marriage).

THE GENERAL RULE IS: any belief, action, or saying which belittles Allah, His Books, His Messengers, His Angels, His Rites, the well-known practices of His Religion, His Rules, His Promise, or His Threat is blasphemy. Hence, human beings must use the utmost caution to avoid blasphemy.

It is an obligation upon the one who commits apostasy to immediately clear oneself of it and return to Islam by uttering the Testification of Faith⁸ (two *shahadahs*). One is also obligated to regret having committed apostasy and to intend not to repeat it in the future.

⁸ The Testification of faith is: No one is God except Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.

A large number of *faqih*s like the *Hanafiyy faqih*, *Badr-ur-Rashid* (who lived around the 8th Hijriyy Century) and *Qadi ^lyad*, may *Allah ta^ala*, have mercy upon them, enumerated many examples about the blasphemous sayings which one needs to know, because whoever does not know evil is more likely to fall into it.

The Night Of *Qadr*

The Night of *Qadr* is a very great night in the blessed month of *Ramadan*. The night of *Qadr* means “the Night of Greatness” and is the best night of the year. During this night, a great book, the *Qur’an* was copied from the Guarded Tablet and sent down to *Baytul-^Izzah* in the first sky. Each year, during the Night of *Qadr*, great angels and great mercies come down to earth. This night is not specific to the nation of Prophet *Muhammad* ﷺ. The night of *Qadr* coincided a night during the month of *Ramadan* of each year in the time of the previous prophets. However, what is specific for the nation of Prophet *Muhammad* ﷺ is that *Allah* ordered them to fast the whole month of *Ramadan*.

In *Surat al-Qadr*, *Allah*, *ta^ala*, said:

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ {1} وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ {2} لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ
{3} تَنْزِيلُ الْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالرُّوحِ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ {4} سَلَامٌ هِيَ حَتَّىٰ مَطْلَعِ الْفَجْرِ
{5} {سورة القدر}

The first verse means:

“The whole *Qur’an* was sent down as a complete book during the Night of *Qadr*”.

The *Qur’an* was copied from the Guarded Tablet and was sent down as a complete book to *Baytul-^Izzah* in the first sky. This occurred on the Night of *Qadr* in the month of *Ramadan*. Then, on the next day, *Jibril* came to the Prophet with the first five verses of *Suratul-^Alaq* making the beginning of the revelation to the Prophet ﷺ.

Ibn Hibban narrated from *Wathilah Ibn al-`Asqa^* that the Prophet ﷺ said what means:

“The Torah was sent down on the 6th night of *Ramadan*, the *Injil* on the 13th night, the *Zabur* on the 18th night, and the *Qur’an* on the 24th night of *Ramadan*”.

From this *hadith* the scholars understood that it is not a condition that the Night of *Qadr* falls on the 27th or the 29th of the month of *Ramadan*, although from other *hadiths* we know that this is most likely the case. Since the Night of *Qadr* might coincide any of the nights of *Ramadan*, the Muslims should put forth effort to pray optional prayers each night of *Ramadan*, seeking the promised reward granted to the one who prays this optional prayers during that night. Moreover, making an extra effort in performing acts of

worship especially during the last ten days of *Ramadan* is highly recommended, because in previous years the Night of *Qadr* coincided one of those nights.

The second verse literally means:

"How would you (Muhammad) know what the Night of Qadr is?"

This means that before *Allah* informed you, you did not know what the merit of that Night is. This *ayah* is truly a question, which emphasizes the high status of this night and encourages the person to seek its goodness.

The third verse is the answer to the previous question. It means:

"The reward one receives for praying during this night is greater than the reward one receives for performing prayers for a 1000 months where the Night of Qadr is not part of".

The fourth verse means:

"The angels (in great numbers), including Jibril, descend from the sky to the earth during that night, and Allah gives them the knowledge of what is going to happen for the coming year".

It was narrated through *Abu-Hurayrah* that the number of angels who will descend to earth during that night is more than the number of pebbles on earth. *Jibril*, who is referred to as *ar-Ruh* in this verse, will be among them.

Al-Hakim narrated that during the Night of *Qadr* *Jibril* comes down to earth with a group of angels, and they make supplication (*du'a*) for every slave standing up or sitting down praising *Allah*. In another narration it is mentioned that these angels descend to earth at sunset and stay until dawn.

During the Night of *Qadr*, *Allah tabaraka wa ta'ala* informs the angels about what is going to happen during this year and until the night of *Qadr* of the following year. Such information include the sustenance (*rizq*), births, deaths, calamities, enjoyments, the changes in the lives of the slaves, and the like. This is the meaning of *min kulli amr* (of all the matters) in the verse. *Allah* informs the angels about the details of the matters, which will happen in the current year and until the night of *Qadr* of the following year. In addition, the angels copy will be given some tasks to fulfil during that year.

The fifth verse means:

The night is full of safety, goodness, and blessings (for the obedient believer) until the break of dawn.

Among the signs that validate one's seeing the Night of *Qadr* are:

To see a great, clear light during the night other than the light of the sun, the moon, or electricity;

To see the trees prostrating;

To hear the voices of angels;

And to see the angels in their original form with two, three, four or more wings;

The way the sun raises the next morning is an indication that the previous night was the Night of Qadr. Its light and heat would not be intense.

It is a privilege and a very good sign for the person who sees the Night of Qadr and makes supplication (*du^ʿa*) during it. A great reward is hoped for this person, and, by the will of Allah the supplication would be answered.

At-Tirmidhiyy narrated from [^]A'ishah that she said:

"O Prophet of Allah, if I encounter the Night of Qadr, then what should I say? (What supplication should I make during it?)"

The Prophet ﷺ answered what means:

"Say: O Allah, You are the One who generously forgives and You command forgiveness hence I humbly ask You to forgive me".

May Allah bless us with seeing this great Night and making supplication.

The wisdom behind keeping the Night of Qadr unspecified for the slaves is to encourage them to pray during all the nights of Ramadan with the hope that they would obtain the great reward specified for those who pray during that night, whether one prays two or more *rak^ʿahs*.

Reciting for a long duration of time while praying is better than reciting for a short duration of time. Hence, praying a few *rak^ʿahs* with a long duration of recitation in each *rak^ʿah* is better than praying many *rak^ʿahs* with a short duration of recitation. Whether or not one sees any of the signs of the Night of Qadr, one will still receive the promised reward for praying during that night.

Al-Bukhariyy and *Muslim* narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: Allah will forgive the previous sins of those who pray during the Night of Qadr seeking Allah's reward.

Al-Bukhariyy and *Muslim* also narrated from the route of [^]A'ishah that the Prophet ﷺ put special emphasis urging Muslims to pray during the last ten nights of Ramadan, since in most cases, the Night of Qadr falls on one of those nights.

Al-Bukhariyy and *Muslim* also narrated that [^]A'ishah said:

"The Prophet ﷺ used to put forth effort in performing acts of worship during the last ten nights of Ramadan ... he used to pray the whole night and awaken his wives to pray".

They also related from the route of [^]A'ishah that the Prophet ﷺ used to make *i[^]tikaf* (stay in the mosque with a specific intention) during the last ten nights of *Ramadaan* each year until he died.

Praying during all the nights of *Ramadaan* has a special and great reward. Prophet *Muhammad* ﷺ urged us to do that.

O Allah, You are the One who generously forgives and You command forgiveness hence I humbly ask You to forgive me.

Zakah Of Fitr

The *Fitr Zakah* is due on every Muslim who is alive for part of *Ramadaan* and part of *Shawwal*⁹.

The due *Zakah* for each is a sa¹⁰. It is an obligation upon the Muslim to pay the due *Zakah* for himself and his Muslim dependants if on the day of [^]Id and the night after it one has enough to meet his debts, clothing, lodging, and sustenance, and the sustenance of those whom one must support.

The man must pay the *Fitr Zakah* for his wife, non-pubescent children, slaves, and poor Muslim parents. He may not pay for his pubescent children or solvent parents without their permission. It is permissible to pay the *Fitr Zakah* any time during *Ramadaan*, even on the first night. However, it is recommended to pay it during the day of [^]Id before the [^]Id Prayer, because this mends the hearts of the poor people before the Prayer. It is prohibited to delay paying the *Fitr Zakah* until after the sunset of the day of [^]Id without an excuse.

Note: In the *Hanafiyy* School the due *Fitr Zakah* for each is half a sa of wheat, or a sa of barley, dates, or raisins, or the value of it. (The sa according to *Imam Abu Hanifah* is six *mudds*).

Recipients Of Zakah

For all types of *Zakah*, the intention is obligatory upon setting one's *Zakah* aside. *Zakah* must be paid to the Muslims who meet the requirement among the eight categories deserving of *Zakah*.

The eight categories deserving of *Zakah* are:

(Fuqara[^]): Those who are poor and who earn less than half of their basic needs.

(Masakin): Those who are poor and who earn half or more yet less than what meets all their basic needs.

⁹ The 10th month in the lunar Calendar, (i.e. the month following *Ramadaan*).

¹⁰ The sa is four times a pair of average sized hands cupped together filled with the most common staple food of one's region.

(*Al-amilun alayha*): The *Zakah* workers who are assigned by the caliph.

(*Al-mu'allafatu qulubuhum*): The new converts to Islam whose hearts are to be reconciled.

(*Riqab*): The slaves who are short in satisfying their contract for purchasing their freedom from their owners.

(*Gharimun*): Those who are unable to pay their debts.

(*Fj sabilillah*): The volunteer fighters.

(*Ibn-us-sabij*): The travellers who are unable financially to reach their destination.

It is neither permissible nor valid to pay *Zakah* to other than those eight types of people specifically mentioned. That is why it is not valid to pay *Zakah* as funding for any charitable project such as building a mosque or the like.

It is not permissible to pay *Zakah* to any member of the *Hashim* or *al-Muttalib* clan. *Hashim* and *al-Muttalib* were brothers, the sons of *Abdu-Manaf* one of the great grandfathers of prophet *Muhammad* ﷺ.

Id Prayer

Id prayer can be performed in congregation or individually any time between sunrise and the setting time of the Noon Prayer. The best time for performing the Id prayer is after the sun has reached the height of a spear (approximately 20 minutes after sunrise). However if one missed the Id Prayer one can make it up.

The Id prayer is not preceded by *adhan* (the call to announce the prayer time) or *iqamah* (the call to start the prayer).

The one who performs the Id prayer, must satisfy the conditions and avoid the invalidators of prayer. The Id prayer is two *rakahs*. It is initiated with the opening *takbir*, with the intention to perform the Id prayer. This is followed by seven *takbirs*. After each *takbir* (except for the seventh *takbirs*) one recites the following: (*subhanallah, walhamdulillah, wala ilaha illallah, wallahu akbar*). Then one recites *al-Isti'adhah*¹¹, *Suratul-Fatihah* and *Surat Qaf* or *Surat al-A'la*. In the second *rakah* one says five *takbirs* before reciting the *Fatihah* followed by *Surat al-Qamar* or *Surat al-Ghshiyah*. If one starts with the *Fatihah* leaving out any or the entire *takbirs*, one's prayer is still valid, however one would miss out on the reward of the *takbirs*. In this case, one should continue with one's prayer order.

¹¹ *Al-Isti'adhah* is seeking refuge with *Allah* from the devil by saying *A'udhu billahi minash-shaytanir-rajim*.

After the prayer, it is recommended that the *imam* delivers two speeches starting with nine *takbirs* in the first *khutbah* and seven in the second. The *imam* may teach the people significant matters pertaining to *Zakatul-Fitr*.

Recommended acts on the Day of [^]Id

It is *Sunnah* on the day of [^]Id to do the following:

To have the purificatory bath before going to the prayer;

To wear perfume;

To clip one's fingernails;

To wear the best of one's clothes;

To return home via a different route from that which one took to go to the place of prayer;

To go early to the mosque except for the *imam*;

To eat something such as dates or the like before going to the prayer;

To walk to the place of prayer;

To recite the *takbirs* of [^]Id repeatedly. This is highly recommended and its time starts after the sunset of the last day of *Ramadan* and ends when the *imam* says the opening *takbir* of the [^]Id prayer. This can be attained by one saying in one's home, market places, mosques, and while walking the streets.

Congratulating one another on the day of [^]Id for performing the acts of worship during *Ramadan* and asking *Allah* to accept their good deeds is also rewardable, as stated by *Ibn Hajar* and *Al-Bayhaqiyy*.

It is *Sunnah* to spend the night preceding the day of [^]Id in acts of worship such as praying. It is *Sunnah mu'akkadah* to pray the [^]Id prayer as Prophet *Muhammad* ﷺ used to pray every [^]Id Prayer.

Takbirs Of [^]Id

Allahu akbarullahu akbarullahu akbar,

La ilaha illallah. Allahu akbar Allahu akbar wa lillahi-hamd. (3 times)

Allahu akbaru kabira

Wal-hamdu lillahi kathira

Wa subhanallahi wa bihamdihi bukratawwa 'asila.

*Lā ilāha illallāhu waḥdaḥ,
Ṣadaqa wa[^]daḥ, wa naṣara [^]abdaḥ,
Wa 'a[^]azza jundaḥ, Wa hazamal-'aḥzāba waḥdaḥ*

*Lā ilāha illallāḥ,
Wa lā na[^]budu illālyḡḥ.
Mukhlisīna laḥud-Dīna Wa law kariḥal-kāfīruḥ*

*Allāḥumma ṣālli [^]alā (sayyidīḡ) Muḥammad,
Wa[^]alā alī (sayyidīḡ) Muḥammad,
Wa[^]alā aṣḥābi (sayyidīḡ) Muḥammad,
Wa[^]alā anṣarī (sayyidīḡ) Muḥammad,
Wa[^]alā azwajī (sayyidīḡ) Muḥammad,
Wa[^]alā dhurriyyatī (sayyidīḡ) Muḥammadiw-Wa sallim taslīman kathīra.
Rabbī ḡfir lī wa liwalidāyya rabbīḥamḥuḡ kamaḡ rabbāni ṣāḡḥirā.*

Meaning Of The [^]Id Takbir

*Allāḥ is The Greatest.(I.e. in status)
No one is God except Allāḥ.
Allāḥ is The Greatest and Praise is due to Allāḥ.*

*Allāḥ is The Greatest. And much praise is due to Allāḥ.
We clear Allāḥ of all the attributes of imperfection and praise Him in the morning and in the evening.*

*No one is God except Allāḥ
He (Allāḥ) fulfilled His promise and gave Victory to His slave (The Prophet).
He strengthened His soldiers and by His Power the aḥzāb were defeated.*

*No one is God except Allāḥ.
We do not worship anyone but Him.
Our worship is dedicated only to Him.
Even if the non believers hate it.*

*We ask Allāḥ to raise the status of (our master) Muḥammad,
And the āl (wives and Muslim relatives) of our (master) Muḥammad,*

*And the sahabah (companions) of our (master) Muhammad,
And the ansar (the people of Madīnah who supported the Prophet) of our (master) Muhammad,
And the wives of our (master) Muhammad,
And the descendents of our (master) Muhammad,
And save the (Muslim) Nation of our (master) Muhammad.
O Allh forgive me and my parents and have mercy on them for the great effort they put to raise me.*