

KITAABUS SAUM (THE BOOK OF FASTING)

INTRODUCTION

“O People of Imaan! Siyaam (fasting) has been ordained for you just as it was ordained for those before you so that you attain Taqwa!” (Qur’an)

Siyaam is among the fundamental acts of Ibaadat. It has been ordained by Allah Ta’ala for the development of taqwa (piety) in the Mu’mineen. Fasting is extremely efficacious for the acquisition of taqwa. A Muslim cannot acquire Divine Proximity without taqwa. Without taqwa, the Muslim must necessarily drift far off the straight Path (Seeratul Mustaqeem) which leads to Allah Ta’ala and everlasting success in the Aakhirah.

One who denies the fardhiyat (obligation) of Saum, no longer remains a Muslim and the one who does not fast during the month of Ramadhaan is a Faasiq (an immoral and flagrant transgressor) of the highest order. Such a Faasiq totally destroys his spirituality and morality and exposes his Imaan to the gravest onslaughts of kufr.

There are numerous benefits, both spiritual and physical, of fasting. The prime benefit in the pursuit of taqwa is the suppression of the inordinate desires and demands of nafs-e-ammaarah (man’s base carnal propensity). The nafs is perpetually in collusion with Shaitaan to spiritually and morally ruin the Mu’min. If the nafs is allowed unrestrained freedom, it will succeed to make man the slave of passion, lust and base emotions. His Imaan will suffer. The Noor of his Imaan will be extinguished. It is, therefore, essential that the nafs is put in fetters. Fasting greatly aids in this direction.

By fasting, the Muslim learns to restrain his lowly desires. The nafs is not allowed free expression. The nafs becomes accustomed to submit to the Shariah’s restrictions. Carnal desires are weakened and the ability of inculcating taqwa is created.

Fasting produces purity in the rooh (soul). For such purity to come into the rooh, spiritual authorities (the Auliya) say, there is nothing that has greater efficacy than fasting. While fasting results in even physical health, it creates a feeling of palpable spiritual purity in the Mu'min. The door of Roohaaniyat (the spiritual domain) is opened up by fasting.

Fasting creates pleasure in Ibaadat. It also makes the heart more conducive for Ibaadat. The bond with Allah Ta'ala is strengthened and the Mu'min acquires a greater awareness of his spiritual and moral goals for which he has been created.

By fasting, the Mu'min progressively draws nearer to Allah Ta'ala. Once Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) supplicated:

"O Rabbul Alameen! When does the servant become closest to you?"

The Divine Reply came:

"When the servant is hungry and when he is in Sajdah."

The development of lofty, angelic attributes are engendered in the Mu'min by fasting. In fasting, man brings about in him a resemblance with the angels since the latter do not eat. They are devoid of evil inclinations and all things base. Man by reducing his worldly relations and by increasingly stripping his nafs of emotional desires, moves closer to the angelic domain. Thikrullah is the nourishment of the angels. By increasing his Thikrullah, especially in the state of fasting, the Muslim enters the realm of Divine Proximity.

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