

### Fast 18: Moderation in fasting (2)

- We look further at Hadith reports in **Bukhari** which show how the teachings of Islam introduce ease into fasting, rather than make it unnecessarily hard.
- The Holy Prophet said regarding a person who eats or drinks during the fast by forgetfulness:

“If he forgets and eats or drinks, he should complete his fast, for it was Allah Who made him eat and drink.” (Hadith 1933)

- What happens if a person mistakenly thinks that the sun has set and ends the fast?

Asma, daughter of Abu Bakr, reported: During the time of the Prophet we broke the fast on a cloudy day and then the sun appeared. (Hadith 1959)

As it is not mentioned here whether they were required to do another fast to make up for this “spoiled” fast, many scholars (but not the majority) conclude that this fast is still valid and another fast is not required. Even in modern times, someone could make a similar mistake by, for example, misreading a Ramadan time table.

- Companions of the Holy Prophet, and Muslims of their next generation, have shown by their example and statements that certain actions do not break the fast:

Ibn Umar moistened his cloth and placed it over him while he was fasting.

Ash-Sha’biyy entered a bath while he was fasting. Ibn Abbas said: There is no harm if one tastes the food in the cooking-pot or anything else. Al-Hasan said: There is no harm for the fasting person to rinse his mouth and getting cooled. Ibn Mas’ūd said: When one of you is fasting, he can get up in the morning, apply oil to his head and comb his hair. Anas said: I have a pond, I dive into it while I am fasting. It has been reported about the Prophet that he brushed his teeth with *miswak* while he was fasting. Ata said: If he swallows his spittle I cannot say that his fast is nullified. (Heading to hadith 1930)

Ata said: If he takes water into his nose and it goes into the throat unintentionally, there is no harm. Al-Hasan said: If a fly goes into the throat, there is nothing for him to do about it. (Heading to hadith 1933)

Ata said: One should leave off fasting on account of illness of any kind, as Allah has said (in the Quran). And Hasan and Ibrahim said, concerning the woman who is breast feeding and the one who is pregnant, when they fear about themselves or their child, they should not fast, then later on make up the (missed) fasts. And as to the very old man when he cannot bear fasting, Anas (a servant of the Holy Prophet), after he became old, fed a needy person daily,

with bread and meat, during Ramadan for a year or two, and did not fast.  
(Heading to hadith 4505)

Al-Hasan said: There is no harm if the person fasting puts water into the nostrils provided it does not reach his throat. Ata said: There is no harm if he puts water into the nose and some of it goes down his throat, because he cannot help it. (Heading after hadith 1934)

- Any fasts missed during Ramadan, which require to be made up later, can be completed at any time before the next Ramadan:

Ibn Abbas said: There is nothing wrong in completing the missed fasts on non-successive days (i.e., they don't have to be done one after another in a row).

Aishah said: "It used to happen to me that I had to make up missed fasts from Ramadan and I could not make them up till the month of Sha'ban (the month before the next Ramadan)." Yahya added: "This was because she was busy in the service of the Prophet." (Hadith 1950 and the chapter heading above it)

- Salman and Abu Darda were two Companions of the Holy Prophet between whom he had established a bond of brotherhood at Madinah. Once Salman came to stay with Abu Darda and found that his wife was dressed very scruffily. He asked her: "Why are you in this state?" She said: "Your brother Abu Darda feels no need of worldly things." He had given himself to voluntary fasting every day and praying for a long time every night. Meanwhile Abu Darda came in and prepared food for Salman. He asked Abu Darda: "Eat with me." Abu Darda said: "I am fasting." Salmān said: "I won't eat unless you eat." So Abu Darda had to abandon his fast and eat with Salman. When they went to sleep at night, Abu Darda got up shortly afterwards and stood for prayer. Salman said to him: "Go to sleep". So he went to sleep, and got up again after a while for prayer. Again Salman told him: "Go to sleep." So he went to sleep. When it was the last part of the night, Salman said to him: "Now you can get up", and they both said the prayer. Salman told him:

"Allah has a right over you, and your own self has a right over you, and your family has a right over you. So fulfil the rights of everyone who has a right over you."

Later, Abu Darda went to the Holy Prophet and mentioned this whole incident to him. The Holy Prophet said: "Salman said the right thing." (Hadith 1968)

The advice given by Salman to Abu Darda means that you have to keep a balance between your duty of worship of Allah and all your duties in this world, which include care of your own self and discharging your duties to others in the world.