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Fruits for the Week

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THE FAST OF RAMADHAN

Fasting or As-Siyam generally means to abstain from something. What is meant here is abstaining from food, drink and sexual intercourse from dawn until sunset with the explicit intention of doing so for the sake of Allah (SWT).

The fast of Ramadhan, according to the Qur'an, Sunnah and consensus, is obligatory. The evidence from the Qur'an consists of the following two verses: "***O you who believe, fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for the people before you in order for you to gain God-consciousness.***" (Al-Baqarah:183) and "***The month of Ramadhan, during which the Qur'an was revealed, a guidance for mankind, and clear proofs of the guidance and the criterion; and whoever of you is resident, let him fast that month.***" (Al-Baqarah:185)

From the Sunnah, Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said: "***Islam is built upon the following five pillars: testifying that there is no God but Allah and that Muhammad is His Messenger, the establishment of the prayer, the giving of zakah, the fast of Ramadhan and the pilgrimage to Makkah.***" Thalhah ibn Ubaidillah reported that a man came to the Prophet (SAW) and said: "***O Messenger of Allah, tell me what Allah requires of me as regards fasting.***" He (SAW) answered: "***The month of Ramadhan.***" The man asked: "***Is***

there any other fast?" He (SAW) answered: "***No, unless you do so voluntarily.***"

From the consensus, the whole Muslim nation agrees that the fast of Ramadhan is obligatory. It is one of the pillars of Islam; and if one disputes this, he cannot be called a Muslim.

On the virtues of Ramadhan, Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet (SAW) said: "***The blessed month has come to you. Allah has made fasting during it obligatory upon you. During it, the gates to Paradise are opened and the gates to Hellfire are locked and the devils are chained. There is a night (during Ramadhan) which is better than a thousand months.***" (Ahmad, Nasa'i and Baihaqi).

Muslim relates that Abu Hurairah reported the Prophet (SAW) saying: "***The time between the five prayers, two consecutive Friday prayers and two consecutive Ramadhans are expiations for all that has happened during that period, provided that one has avoided the grave sins.***" The Prophet (SAW) also said: "***Whoever fasts during the month of Ramadhan with faith and seeks Allah's pleasure and reward will have his previous sins forgiven.***" Wallahu A'lam.

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