



107885 - He is suffering from bleeding and blot clots in the brain - does he have to fast?

the question

My wife's father is suffering from bleeding and blood clots in the brain, may Allaah heal us and you. He cannot move and he is totally paralyzed, but he may be able to lift a cup of water with help to drink, then he will continue to hold the cup for an hour if we forget him, because he does not realize that he has finished drinking. His memory is almost gone. The doctors are unanimously agreed that there is no cure except with Allaah. He has been in the situation and getting worse for six years, praise be to Allaah, and he cannot do without daily medicine and natural remedies. This is costing them thousands every month. He has not prayed since then and he has to be carried to the bathroom, and for a year or more he has had a catheter and he has no control over his urine or stools, and he cannot even signal to us that he needs to go to the bathroom, no matter how hard we try to teach him to let us know by giving us some signal. He can hardly talk and he does not understand anything but he knows our faces and is moved when he hears sad stories, for example. We have tried to help him pray even if it is by moving his eyes, but he does not understand and he does not remember the verses and the tashahhud and the number of rak'ahs in each obligatory prayer. Does he have to offer any expiation for not praying? Or for not fasting in particular? Does he come under the heading of the sick whose families must offer the expiation for not fasting by feeding one poor person for every day? Or does he come under the heading of the insane or mentally disabled who have no understanding, so fasting and prayer are waived for them?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

If his memory is gone and his mind has changed so that he is not aware of things, then fasting and prayer are waived in his case, and he does not have to offer any expiation, because one of the



conditions of being accountable is that one should be of sound mind.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “The Pen has been lifted from three: from the sleeping person until he wakes up, from the minor until he grows up, and from the insane person until he comes to his senses.” Narrated by Abu Dawood (4403), al-Tirmidhi (1423), al-Nasaa’i (3432) and Ibn Majaah (2041). Abu Dawood said: It was narrated by Ibn Jurayj from al-Qaasim ibn Yazeed from ‘Ali from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), and he added: “and the old man who is feeble-minded.”

This hadeeth was classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh Abi Dawood.

It says in ‘Awn al-Ma’bood: “the old man who is feeble-minded”; this refers to when the mind becomes weak in old age. Al-Subki said: This implies that it is additional to the three (mentioned in the hadeeth), and this is correct. What is meant is the old man who has lost his mind due to old age, because an old man may become confused which prevents him from distinguishing things, and means that he is no longer accountable, but it is not called insanity and it does not say in the hadeeth “until he comes to his senses,” because in most cases he will not recover from this before he dies, and if he recovers for some of the time and comes back to his senses, then he is accountable for that time... End quote.

See: al-Ashbaah wa’l-Nazaa’ir by al-Suyooti, p. 212

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) said: Fasting is not obligatory unless certain conditions are met:

- 1- Being of sound mind
- 2- Being an adult
- 3- Being a Muslim
- 4- Being able to do it
- 5- Being a resident (i.e., not travelling)



6- Being free of menses and nifaas in the case of women

1 - Being of sound mind, the opposite of which is losing one's mind or reason, whether that is due to senile dementia i.e., old age, or an accident which has caused a person to lose his mind and awareness. This person does not have to do anything, because of his loss of reason. Like the one who has reached old age and reached the point of senility, he does not have to fast or feed the poor, because he has lost his mind. The same applies to one who is unconscious as the result of an accident or other cause; he does not have to fast or feed the poor, because he is not aware. End quote from Liqa' al-Baab il-Maftooh (4/220).

He also said: The one who has lost his mind as the result of old age or an accident and there is no hope of recovery, is not obliged to fast, like the one who has reached a great age and become senile and can no longer speak properly. He is like a child and is not obliged to fast. The same applies to one who has had an accident and lost his mind in a way from which there is no hope of recovery. But if there is the hope of recovery, such as if he is merely unconscious, then he has to make up the fasts when he wakes up, but if he has lost his mind completely then he does not have to fast, i.e., if he does not have to fast then he does not have to offer the fidyah either. End quote from Sharh al-Kaafi.

What appears to be the case is that he does not have to pray or fast, and there is no need to feed the poor on his behalf instead of fasting.

And Allaah knows best.