20049 - Can You Single Friday for ‘Arafah Fasting?

the question

Please could you tell me whether it is allowed for us to perform voluntary fasts on Fridays? What should we do if ‘Arafah falls on Friday, can we single out Friday for ‘Arafah fasting?

Summary of answer

If ‘Ashura or ‘Arafah coincides with a Friday, you may fast because your intention is to fast ‘Ashura or ‘Arafah, not to fast on a Friday.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Fasting on Friday

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: “I heard the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) say, ‘None of you should fast on a Friday unless he fasts the day before or the day after.’” (Narrated by al-Bukhari, 1849, Muslim, 1929)

Muslim narrated in his Sahih that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, “Do not single out the night of Jumu’ah [i.e.Thursday night] from among other nights for praying qiyam al-layl, and do not single out Friday from among other days for fasting, unless it is a fast that one of you regularly observes.” (al-Siyam, 1930)

In al-Sahih, Juwayriyah bint al-Harith (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) entered upon her on a Friday when she was fasting. He asked her, “Did you fast yesterday?” She said, “No.” He asked, “Are you going to fast tomorrow?” She said, “No.” He said, “Then break your fast.” Hammad ibn al-Ja’d said, “I heard Qatadah say,

Abu Ayyub told me that Juwayriyah spoke to him and he told her to stop her fast and she did so." (Narrated by al-Bukhari, al-Sawm, 1850)

Ibn Qudamah said: "It is makruh to single out the day of Friday for fasting , unless that coincides with a fast which one usually observes, such as a person who fasts alternate days, and a day that he fasts coincides with Friday, or a person who has the habit of fasting on the first or last day of the month, or the middle day of the month." (al-Mughni, vol. 3, p. 53)

Al-Nawawi said: "Our companions (i.e. the Shafi'is) said: it is makruh to single out the day of Friday for fasting, but if one joins it with the day before or the day after, or it coincides with a day which he habitually fasts, or he vowed to fast the day that his sick loved one was cured, or the day So and So returns, and that day happens to be a Friday, then it is not makruh (al-Majmu' Sharh al-Muhadhdhab, vol. 6, p. 479)

Shaykh al-Islam (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "The Sunnah says that it is makruh to single out Rajab for fasting , and it is makruh to single out Friday (for fasting)." (al-Fatawa al-Kubra, vol. 6, p. 180)

Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymin said: "As for Friday, it is not Sunnah to fast on this day, and it is makruh to single it out for fasting." (See al-Sharh al-Mumti', vol. 6, p. 465)

Fasting on Friday when it coincides with 'Arafah

Excluded from this prohibition is one who fasts the day before or after, or if it coincides with days that he habitually fasts, such as one who fasts al-Ayyam al-Bid(the 13th, 14th and 15th of each hijri month), or who has the habit of fasting a specific day such as the Day of 'Arafah, and it coincides with a Friday .

From this it may be understood that it is permissible for a person who has vowed to fast on the day when So and So returns, for example, or the day when So and So recovers from sickness, to observe that fast if that day happens to be a Friday. (See Fath al-Bari by Ibn Hajar).

The same applies to one who has fasts to make up from Ramadan. “It is permissible for a Muslim to fast on a Friday to make up a day from Ramadan, even if he fasts the Friday on its own.” (Fatwa al-Lajnah al-Daimah, vol. 10, p. 347)

Similarly, if ‘Ashura’ or Arafah coincides with a Friday, he may fast, because his intention is to fast ‘Ashura’ or ‘Arafah, not to fast on a Friday. And Allah is the Source of strength.

And Allah knows best.