172889 - He broke his fast when he was observing a naafil fast in order to accept an invitation to a meal; will he be rewarded for his intention to fast and accepting the invitation?

the question

My Question is regarding the nawafil fasting. I understand that when one is fasting voluntarily (i.e. not the compulsory fasts such as Ramadhaan etc), then if someone invites him to a meal it is permissable for him to accept the invitation and break his fast - and he is rewarded two rewards (the complete reward for the fast and the reward for accepting the invitation of the meal).
Firstly I ask if you could please elaborate on this issue and give more information and explanation of it.
Secondly, what is the ruling if a person is invited to a meal on a different day (i.e. in a few days time) and that day coincides with the day one usually fasts on (i.e. on a monday or thursday, or the alternate day fasting) - then is it still permissable for him to accept the invitation and fast the beginning of the day up until he attends the meal, or should he reject the invitation. I really needed this second point clarified, as I could not find any information regarding it.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

If a Muslim intends to fast one day and starts to fast, then he decides to break the fast, he may do so, because completing a voluntary fast is not obligatory, but it is mustahabb for him to complete it if there is no excuse. If there is an excuse or an interest to be served by breaking the fast, there is nothing wrong with doing so in this case, and the fasting person who broke his fast will be rewarded – in sha Allah – for what he intended of serving a shar'i interest, such as if he wanted to be kind to a friend of his who would be offending by his not eating food offered when visiting him or not accepting his invitation, or if he wanted to do an act of worship that fasting made him too

weak to do, and it could bring him more reward than observing the naafil fast, and so on.

But we have not come across anything to indicate that he will be given the reward in full like one who actually fasted; rather what seems to be the case is that he will be rewarded for his intention, and the reward is according to the intention; it is not the same as the reward of one who had the intention and did the action.

For more information please see the answer to question no. 49610 .

Secondly:

The more correct view is that the intention of breaking the fast to accept an invitation the next day means that one cannot form the intention to fast that day.

Based on that, it is not valid for one who has decided to accept an invitation to eat on a particular day to form the intention of fasting on that day from the night before.

Fasting does not prevent one from accepting an invitation; rather it is permissible for one who receives an invitation when he is fasting to offer du‘aa’ for the one who invited him and not break his fast. Thus the fasting person will maintain his habitual fast whilst also accepting his friend’s invitation. But if he knows that the one who is inviting him has gone to some effort for his sake and that if he does not eat when visiting him it will upset his friend, then it is mustahabb for him to break his naafil fast and eat with his friend.

And Allah knows best.