274213 - Is My Fast Valid If I Eat After Fajr Adhan?

the question

There is a difference of opinion about the timing of Fajr prayer in Egypt. Yesterday my mother felt extremely thirsty when hearing the Adhan for Fajr, so she asked my brother and he told her to drink – following the view of a senior Salafi shaykh in Egypt who says that the official timing of the prayer is wrong, and he and his students used to eat for ten minutes after the Adhan. My brother did this repeatedly, but he does not remember how many days he did this on. What should my mother and my brother do?

Summary of answer

If someone is not certain that dawn has broken, then he may eat until he is certain. If he knows that the Mu'adhdhin gives Adhan ahead of time, or he is not sure whether he is giving it on time or ahead of time, then he may eat until he is certain. However, it is safer for him to stop (eating and drinking) as soon as he hears the Adhan.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

What is required with regard to fasting is to refrain from doing anything that breaks the fast from the break of dawn until the sun sets , because Allah, may He be Exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

{And eat and drink until the white thread of dawn becomes distinct to you from the black thread [of night].} [Al-Baqarah 2:187]

What matters is the break of dawn ; if someone is not certain that dawn has broken, then he may eat until he is certain.

Similarly, if he knows that the Mu’adhdhin gives the call to prayer ahead of time, or he is not sure whether he is giving the call to prayer on time or ahead of time, then he may eat until he is certain . However, it is more appropriate for him to stop (eating and drinking) as soon as he hears the Adhan , so as to be on the safe side.

Shaykh `Abd Al-`Aziz ibn Baz (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked: What is the Shar`i ruling on the fast of someone who hears the Adhan of Fajr but continues to eat and drink?

He replied:

“What is required of the believer is to refrain from things that break the fast, such as eating, drinking and so on, when it becomes clear to him that dawn has broken, if the fast is obligatory, such as the fast of Ramadan, or fasting in fulfilment of a vow or as an act of expiation, because Allah, may He be glorified and Exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

{And eat and drink until the white thread of dawn becomes distinct to you from the black thread [of night]. Then complete the fast until the night [i.e., sunset].} [Al-Baqarah 2:187]

So if he hears the Adhan and knows that this is the call for Fajr, then he must stop (eating etc.)

If the Mu’adhdhin gives the call to prayer before dawn breaks, then it is not obligatory to stop eating etc., and it is permissible to eat and drink until he is certain that dawn has broken.

If he does not know whether the Mu’adhdhin gives the call to prayer before dawn has broken or after, then it is better and more prudent to stop eating etc. when he hears the Adhan, but it does not matter if he eats or drinks something whilst hearing the Adhan, because he does not know (for sure) whether dawn has broken.

It is well-known that people who live in cities where there is electric lighting cannot know whether dawn has broken by looking at the sky at the time of dawn; but he should err on the side of caution by paying attention to the Adhan and the timetables which state the time of dawn, mentioning hour and minute, acting in accordance with the words of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him): “Leave that which makes you doubt for that which does not make

you doubt”; and “Whoever is cautious with regard to ambiguous matters will protect his religious commitment from shortcomings and will protect his honour from slander” and Allah is the source of strength.” (Fatawa Ramadan, compiled by Ashraf `Abd Al-Maqsud, p. 201)

Based on that, if your mother and your brother were following someone whom they trust, who says that the Adhan is given ahead of the time of the true dawn, so they ate based on that, then there is no blame on them for what they did in the past, and their fast is valid.

But in the future, they should stop eating when the Adhan begins, because the issue of errors in timetables is very controversial, especially with regard to the degree of error. So the most prudent approach with regard to fasting is to stop eating when the Adhan begins, and the most prudent approach with regard to the prayer is to delay it for twenty minutes or more.

And Allah knows best.