Those who break the fast before it is time to do so

Ruling on Breaking the fast before it is time to do so

Abu Umaamah (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: I heard the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) say: “Whilst I was sleeping two men came to me and took hold of my arm and brought me to a rugged mountain. They said, ‘Climb up.’ I said, ‘I cannot do it.’ They said, ‘We will make it easy for you.’

So I climbed up until I reached the top of the mountain, where I heard loud voices. I said, ‘What are these voices?’

They said, ‘This is the screaming of the people of Hell.’ Then they took me further, and I saw people hanging by their heels, with the sides of their mouths torn, with blood streaming down their cheeks.

I said: ‘Who are these?’

It was said: ‘These are the ones who broke their fast before it was time to do so.’”

Narrated by al-Nasaa’i in *al-Kubra*, 2/246. Also narrated by Ibn Hibbaan and al-Haakim. Classed as saheeh by al-Bayhaqi and al-Dhahabi agreed with him.

This hadeeth points to the enormity of the sin of the one who breaks his fast during the day in Ramadaan deliberately with no excuse. Allaah showed His Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) the punishment of those who break their fast before it is time to do so, and he saw them in the most horrible situation. He saw them hung up by their heels as a butcher hangs up a carcass, feet up and head down. The sides of their mouths were torn and blood was flowing down from them…

This is a kind of punishment which is mentioned here as a lesson to the one who violates the sanctity of Ramadaan and destroys the fourth pillar of Islam.

Breaking the fast in Ramadaan with no valid excuse is a major sin. Al-Dhahabi (may Allaah have mercy on him) said in his book *al-Kabaa'ir*: "… The tenth major sin is not fasting in Ramadaan with no valid excuse." (*Al-Kabaa'ir*, p. 62)

Ibn al-Qayyim regarded breaking the fast during the day in Ramadaan as one of the major sins. See *A'laam al-Muwaqqi'een*, 4/401.

If it is proven that a person has broken the fast in Ramadaan with no excuse, if the authorities hear of that, they must punish and discipline him, so as to deter him and others like him, because he has committed a sin for which there is no hadd punishment or kafaarah (prescribed expiation), but ta'zeer (punishment at the judge's discretion) is prescribed in this case, and every Muslim who knows about that should denounce him for this great evil and exhort him so as to deter him and make him fear the punishment of Allaah.

Al-Dhahabi said in his book *al-Kabaa'ir* (p. 64):

"The believers are agreed that whoever does not fast the month of Ramadaan without being sick or having a valid excuse, is worse than an adulterer or extortionist or drunkard, indeed they doubt that he is even a Muslim and think that he is a heretic and deviant…"

Al-Qaffaal said:

"Whoever breaks the fast in Ramadaan, apart from having intercourse, with no excuse, has to make up that day and refrain from eating and drinking for the rest of that day. He does not have to offer any expiation but he should be punished by the ruler. This is the view of Ahmad and Dawood." (*Hilyat al-'Ulama'*, 3/198)

The one who commits this grave sin has to repent to Allaah and fast and fear the punishment of Allaah, for breaking the fast in Ramadaan is a sign of a corrupt heart and evil nature, and indicates that one takes the laws of Allaah lightly.

Does one who breaks his fast during the day in Ramadaan deliberately with no excuse have to make up the fasts he missed?

Some of the scholars say that he does not have to make up the missed fasts, rather he has to repent and adhere to the laws of Islam and do a lot of righteous deeds, because his sin is too great to be made up. Allaah only accepts fasts at times other than Ramadaan from those who had excuses, such as travelers and those who were sick, but not from those who broke the fast deliberately.

It says in *al-Ikhtiyaaraat* by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah: The one who broke the fast or missed a prayer deliberately should not make them up and it is not valid on his part.

This view was also narrated from Abu Bakr al-Siddeeq, 'Umar ibn al-Khattaab, 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib, Ibn Mas'ood and Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with them).

Others said that he does have to make up the fasts, because Allaah has enjoined that on the sick and travelers even though they have a valid excuse, so it is more appropriate that it be required when there is no excuse.

This is the view of Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyib, al-Shu'bi, Ibn Jubayr, Ibraaheem al-Nakha'i, Qutaadah and Hammaad ibn Abi Sulaymaan. And Allaah knows best.

Source: *Ahaadeeth al-Siyaam* by al-Fawzaan, p. 55.

Other Hadiths on Ramadan:

1. Read the Qur'aan, for it will come on the Day of Resurrection and intercede for its companions
2. One who eats or drinks by mistake
3. 'Umrah in Ramadaan is equivalent to Hajj
4. Whoever gives iftaar to a fasting person will have a reward like his
5. Eat suhoor, for in suhoor there is blessing

6. There are three whose du’aa’s are not rejected… including the fasting person when he breaks his fast
7. Break the fast with fresh dates
8. “The people will continue to do well so long as they hasten to break the fast.”
9. He would stay awake at night, wake his family and tie his izaar tight
10. The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) used to observe i’tikaaf during the last ten days of Ramadan
11. Whoever spends the night of Laylat al-Qadr in prayer out of faith and in the hope of reward, his previous sins will be forgiven