

## **Be Careful during the Sacred Month of Muharram**

By  
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Alhamdulillah, the month of Muharram is upon us and we begin another Hijri year, bi idhnillaah. Just as the devout Muslim eagerly awaits any chance to earn good deeds and gain Allaah's Good Pleasure, and is careful not to transgress any boundaries, we too, should prepare ourselves for the coming of the month of Muharram.

This is because Muharram is one of the four months that are SACRED in the eyes of Allaah. *"Verily, the number of months with Allaah is twelve (in a year): It was so ordained, by Allaah on the Day when He created the heavens and the earth; of them, four are sacred. That is the right religion, so wrong not yourselves therein..."* [al-Tawbah 9:36]

These four months, according to the Prophet (Sal Allaahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) are Dhul-Qa'dah, Dhul-Hijjah, Muharram and Rajab. (Bukhaari)

### **Be EXTRA CAREFUL about SINS this month**

Due to its sacredness, any bad deeds done during the sacred months are WORSE than in other months. So be extra careful and watch those eyes, ears and limbs. Guard that tongue and protect yourself from all wrongdoing.

Qatadah said:

"Wrongdoing during the sacred months is more serious and more sinful than wrongdoing at any other time. Wrongdoing at any time is a serious matter, but Allaah gives more weight to whichever of His commands He wants..." (Tafseer Ibn Katheer)

### **Do a LOT of EXTRA GOOD DEEDS this Month**

Similarly, good deeds during this month bring a greater reward than in other months. They are weightier in the sight of Allaah and bigger in ajr, out of the Mercy and Generosity of al-Rahmaan, al-Kareem.

Ibn 'Abbaas said: "Good deeds done during the four sacred months bring a greater reward." (Tafseer Ibn Katheer)

So pay extra attention to all good deeds you can do. Take advantage of every opportunity you find your way and don't let it go. Do your best and pay extra attention to salah, reciting Qur'aan, giving charity, keeping up ties of kinship, helping someone out or simply just being nice to your family. Included in the good deeds is also fasting.



### **FAST as much as you're able to:**

Fasting during the month of Muharram has a very special meaning and reward, known only to Allaah and thus the Prophet (Sal Allaahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) has highly encouraged it. In fact, it's the most beloved of fasting to Allaah after the fasting of Ramadhaan.

Abu Hurayrah RA said: *"The Messenger of Allaah (Sal Allaahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) said: 'The best of fasting after Ramadhaan is fasting Allaah's month of Muharram.'"* (Muslim).

So fast much of this special month if you are able. Or do the best you can... as fasting this month is indeed special and the best after the fardh fasting of Ramadhaan.

### **Earn double reward!**

If you have fasts that that you owe from Ramadhaan, you can fast in Muharram and get double reward, insha Allaah....one for making up the fardh fast of Ramadhaan and one for fasting in the month of Muharram.

Shaikh Ibn 'Uthaymeen said:

"Whoever fasts on the day of 'Arafah or 'Ashoora', and still owes some days from Ramadaan, his fast is valid. But if he has the intention of fasting this day to make up for a missed Ramadaan fast, he will have two rewards – one for the day of 'Arafah or 'Ashoora' and another for making up the missed fast. This applies to all voluntary fasts that are not connected to Ramadaan." (Majmoo' Fataawa Ibn 'Uthaymeen, 20/438).

### **Fast on the Day of 'Aashooraa (10th of Muharram)**

Ibn 'Abbaas said: *"The Prophet (Sal Allaahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) came to Madeenah and saw the Jews fasting on the day of 'Aashooraa'. He said, 'What is this?' They said, 'This is a righteous day, it is the day when Allaah saved the Children of Israel from their enemies, so Moosa fasted on this day.' He (Sal Allaahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) said, 'We have more right to Moosa than you,' so he fasted on that day and commanded (the Muslims) to fast on that day."* (Bukhaari)

If one fasts on the 10th of Muharram, Allaah will forgive all the (minor) sins of the previous year. Subhaan Allaah! What a blessing!

The Prophet (Sal Allaahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) said: *"For fasting the day of 'Aashooraa', I hope that Allaah will accept it as expiation for the year that went before."* (Muslim)

And Ibn 'Abbaas RA said: *"I never saw the Messenger of Allaah (Sal Allaahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) so keen to fast any day and give it priority over any other than this day, the day of 'Aashooraa'."* (Bukhaari).

### **It is Mustahabb to fast the 9th of Muharram as well**

It is good to fast on both the ninth and the tenth day, because the Prophet (Sal Allaahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) fasted on the tenth, and he intended to fast on the ninth as well, the coming year.

Ibn 'Abbaas RA said: *"When the Messenger of Allaah (Sal Allaahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) fasted on 'Aashooraa' and commanded the Muslims to fast as well, they said, 'O Messenger of Allaah, it is a day that is venerated by the Jews and Christians.' The Messenger of Allaah (Sal Allaahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) said, 'If I live to see the next year, insha Allaah, we will fast on the ninth day too.' But it so happened that the Messenger of Allaah (Sal Allaahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) passed away before the next year came."* (Muslim).

You can also fast on the 11th of Muharram, in addition to fasting on the 10th, if for some reason you couldn't fast on the 9th. ([islamqa.com](http://islamqa.com))

### **What if I can fast on the 10th ONLY.....is that ok?**

If you can fast on the 10th only and for some reason, cannot add the fast of the ninth or eleventh to it, the Ulama say that it is also permissible.

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "Fasting the day of 'Aashooraa' is expiation for one year, and it is not makrooh to single out this day for fasting." (Fataawa al-Kubra)

prayer before an obligatory prayer when there is still plenty of time, this is permissible. Whoever fasts on the day of 'Arafah or 'Ashooraa', and still owes some days from Ramadaan, his fast is valid. But if he has the intention of fasting this day to make up for a missed Ramadaan fast, he will have two rewards – one for the day of 'Arafah or 'Ashooraa' and another for making up the missed fast. This applies to all voluntary fasts that are not connected to Ramadaan.

### **Some Misconceptions and Baseless Traditions in Muharram**

There are many wrong traditions associated with the Day of Aashooraa and Muharram, which have nothing to do with the Sharee'ah. We have to be careful and guard ourselves from falling into these wrong traditions and bid'ah because this itself is sin.

1) Some other people attribute the sanctity of Aashooraa to the martyrdom of Hussain, RA. There is no doubt, that the story of Hussain, RA is one of the most tragic episodes of our history. Yet, the sanctity of 'Aashooraa' cannot be ascribed to this event because the sanctity of 'Aashooraa' was established during the days of the Prophet (Sal Allaahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) by the Prophet Sal Allaahu Alaiyhi Wa Sallam himself, much earlier than the birth of his grandson Hussain RA.

2) Some people consider Muharram an evil or unlucky month, because Hussain, RA was killed in it. So they don't hold weddings, and other celebrations during this month.

Thinking that one cannot do so, is again a baseless concept, which is contrary to the teachings of the Qur'aan and the Sunnah.

The month of Muharram is neither unlucky or lucky. Believing such things is superstition and is committing a kind of shirk since one is associating a particular event or month with having power to harm or do good and only Allaah is the One Who has power over all things.

3) Some people think it is Sunnah to prepare a particular type of meal on the 10th, (such a Khitchra, haleem, etc.) and distribute it to the poor people. And they hold big gatherings for this purpose, thinking there is special reward for doing so. This, again has no basis in the Sharee'ah.

4) Some people mourn and lament over the death of Hussain RA and hold special ceremonies for this very purpose.

However, the Prophet (Sal Allaahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) never held 'mourning ceremonies' for any of his dear family members or his beloved Sahaabah after they had passed away.

In fact he (Sal Allaahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) **forbade** us from holding mourning ceremonies on the death of **any** person, because this was the practice of the people of jahiliyyah (ignorance).

He (Sal Allaahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) said: "He is not from our group who slaps his checks, tears his clothes and cries in the manner of the people of jahiliyyah." (Bukhaari)

And if you really think about it, isn't it the greatest merit and reward that Hussain RA received, when he attained martyrdom for the sake of Allaah?!

5) Some people go to the other extreme and dress up and cook special dishes, etc. as a kind of celebration for this Day and that is ALSO against the Qur'aan and Sunnah.

6) Others hold special prayers or offer sacrifice or visit the graves, specifically on the 10th of Muharram, thinking that there is special reward or meaning for doing so in the Sharee'ah and this is also a kind of bid'ah that one should stay away from.

### **Should we congratulate each other on the new Hijri year?**

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen said:

"If someone offers you congratulations, then respond to him, but do not initiate such greetings. This is the correct view concerning this matter...I do not know of any report that the early generations of Islam congratulated one another on the occasion of the new year, rather they did not regard the first of Muharram as the first day of the new year until the caliphate of 'Umar ibn al-Khattaab (may Allaah be pleased with him).

And Imaam Ahmad said: "I do not initiate the greeting but if someone greets me I return the greeting, because responding to the greeting is obligatory. But being the first to offer congratulations is neither Sunnah nor forbidden.

### **In Conclusion:**

Our behavior during this month should be like the behavior of the Sahaabah, not one of mourning, neither one of celebration.

Rather, we should value Muharram as one of Allaah's sacred months in which we should strive to do good deeds and be extra careful of sinning. We should try and fast as much as we can in this month, especially the 9th and 10th.

We should not be superstitious about it (or for anything else, for that matter) and if someone wants to get married during it, they may. We should not cook special meals on the 10th and if someone invites us for such a meal, we should not go.

And Allaah knows best.