

Assignment 3:-

Describe the importance and philosophy of Fasting (SOUM).
Also explain its individual and collective benefits?

يا ايها الذين امنوا كتب عليكم الصيام
كما كتب على الذين من قبلكم لعلكم
تتقون. (القران)

"O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you that you may become righteous."

1. Introduction:

Fasting is one of the "Five Pillars of Islam" or disciplines of the faith.

Fasting is a discipline that enables the muslim to realize the pangs of hunger and thirst.

Soum according to Islam is primarily a spiritual discipline. A new consciousness of higher life, a life above that which is maintained by eating and drinking, has been awakened.

The spiritual and moral values, fasting as prescribed in the Quran has also a social value, more effective than that which is realized through Salat. The appearance of the moon of the **Ramadan** is a signal for a mass movement towards **equality** which is not limited to one vicinity or even one country, but affects the whole muslim world. The rich and the poor may stand shoulder to shoulder in one row in the mosque, but in their houses, they live in different environments. **Fasting** is

the best method through which soul gets purification and all evils are suppressed.

According to Imam Ghazali:-

"Fast does not mean only to control on food and water but it means to control oneself from evil thinking, looking, listening and evil talking."

too lengthy introduction. shorten it a bit.

2. Meaning & Philosophy of Fasting:

The fourth pillar of Islam is

"Fasting" the technical term for it is which literally means [to be at rest]"

In Arabic language, the word 'Saum' which is translated into English as 'Fasting' means "To stop", "To refrain".

In Islamic lexicon, 'Saum' is used for the practice by which man abstains from eating and avoids

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sexual intercourse from dawn to sunset.

Like all other worship, fasting is also a source to be nearer to Allah.

Regarding fasting, Allah Almighty has said in a Hadithe - Qudsi:-

الصوم لي وأنا اجزي به

Fasting is for me and I will give its reward.

Fasting is obligatory for all muslims. Allah says that, I will give best reward to my people's, who are fasting and praying for me. Allah knows best - is because fasting covers the entire day.

3. Importance of fasting in Quran & Hadith

(i) [Fasting in Quran]

Fasting in the month of **Ramdan** is obligatory on the whole mankind. It has been so since the time of prophet Adam (PBUH). During the blessed month of Ramdan, Muslims are required to abstain from food and drink from dawn to dusk for 30 days.

★ The first and foremost quality of the fast is that it creates piety and fear of Allah. **Surah-Al-Baqarah Verse 183** succinctly presents the why, when and how of fasting.

"O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you that you may become righteous."

(ii) Fasting in Hadiths:-

A saying of the prophet (PBUH) signifies the same thing in the following words.

Fasting is a shield for you as it saves you from sins in this world and would protect you from hell in the Hereafter"

The Holy prophet ﷺ said:-

If a man leaves a fast without any lawful reasons, he cannot compensate it even if he observes fast for the whole life. (Tirmidhi)

4 Objectives of Fasting:-

There is great importance attached with Fasting for Allah made it obligatory

(i) Purgation of one's self

One of the main objectives of fasting is Purgation of one's soul and its Piety. A believer, who fights hunger and thirst from dawn to dusk, he neither casts an evil eye on anyone, nor does he think about evil, actually purges his soul from the dirt of sins. And self purification is the core objective as well as the true essence of fasting.

Allah say in the Holy Quran:-

قد افلح من تزكى

"Truly he succeeds that purifies it."

(ii) Obedience To Allah

The first and the foremost objective of fasting is following Allah's will and His commandments. A fast is observed only to abide by the

obedience of Allah, the Almighty, to accept that He is the real Master and sustainer and we are His servants.

(iii) Attainments of Allah's pleasure

There is a Hadith-Qudsi about those who observe fast:

الصوم لي وأنا آتيه
Fasting is for me and I

will give its reward.

A Muslim observes fast so that his Master and the creator may be pleased with him. The secret to attain Allah's pleasure lies in unwavering obedience to him. If they are contented with and surrender to Allah's will, He will surely reward them.

(iv) Tolerance and patience

One purpose of fasting is to make the observer tolerant and patient. If a man remains hungry, thirsty and avoids evil deeds, he becomes tolerant and patient and this trait remains in his character even after Ramadan.

2) Character Building

The purpose of fasting is character building too. If a man addicted to abusing, backbiting and adultery, starts keeping fast during Ramadan, his fasting will keep him away from all these vices. If he does not shun these evils then according to the Holy Prophet

(PBUH)

"Allah does not care about a person if he

remains hungry".

It is also because the purpose of fasting cannot be achieved in this way.

(vi) Piety

The basic aim of fasting is to cultivate piety and foster virtues in man.

(vii) Cooperation

By cultivating a sense of cooperation in man, fasting creates tolerance and patience and fosters the spirit of cooperation in society. Fasting gives the message of cooperation to the whole humanity.

(viii) Thanksgiving

Fasting stirs man to thank his real creator and Master. While describing the purpose of fasting for its observers, Allah says

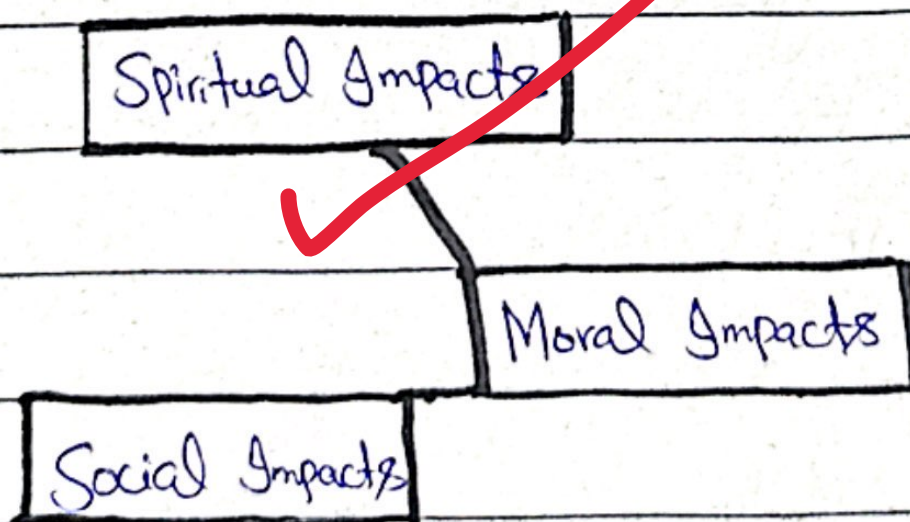
in the Holy Quran:-

"Allah has made fasting compulsory for you so that you become thankful."

Thanksgiving to Allah is also a purpose of fasting just like obedience to Allah, attainment of Allah's pleasure, piety and self purification.

5. Impacts of fasting on Human Life and Society:-

There are three major impacts on Human life and society.



1) Spiritual Impacts:-

(i) Discipline and self-control

Fasting has immense spiritual value for it is basically a spiritual exercise and discipline. It brings man closer to Allah and remove all barriers between him and his Lord.

"O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you - so that you may fear Allah."

(Al-Quran)

(ii) Obedience To God

Fasting strengthens the spiritual powers of man and clarifies his mental and spiritual vision for seeing and experiencing the multifarious manifestations of His Lord.

(iii) Shield against sin

Fasting protects man from all kinds of temptations of body and mind and keeps man on the right

path. It is a shield against all kinds of sins.

According to Abu Hurairah (R.A)

"Fasting is a shield or shelter against committing sin."

b) Moral Impacts

i) Building Moral character

Fasting teaches a man moral discipline through practical training during the month of Ramadan. It is through fasting that he suffers and undergoes trials of hunger and thirst. It helps in building up his moral character.

ii) Fasting destroys the pride of Man:

The kind or beggar landlord or

layman becomes weak after fasting.

All men realize the severity of fasting also.

c) Social Impacts

i) Brotherhood and Sympathy

Hunger is, in fact, a great revealing experience. It shows people what it is like to be hungry. It helps them to feel and share other people's suffering in hunger and thirst.

ii) Economic Benefits

Among other Blessings, fasting brings enormous economic benefits for the muslim community - During the month of Ramadan, the rich people spend very generously on the poor to win the pleasure of God. The month of Ramadan is a month of

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blessings and the muslims spend
more.

overall good answer!! improve the paper presentation and the references a bit.

the answer is lengthy and will affect your time management. shorten it.

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