

Fasting (Saum)

1. Introduction : Fasting, which is the fourth pillar of Islam, is observed by Muslims in the month of Ramadan. It is derived from the word "Saum" which literally means 'to be at rest'. Contextually, it means that to abstain oneself from eating, drinking, and ~~sex~~ sexual intercourse from dawn to dusk. Its importance, advantages and blessings are entailed by the Holy Quran as well as the Sunnah and in Hadith.

2. Definition of Saum as per Dr.

Hamidullah :

Fasting in Islam means a greater effort to perform all the usual duties and more - more prayers and

more charity - and all this in the absence of food and drink."

3. Philosophy of Fasting in Islam:

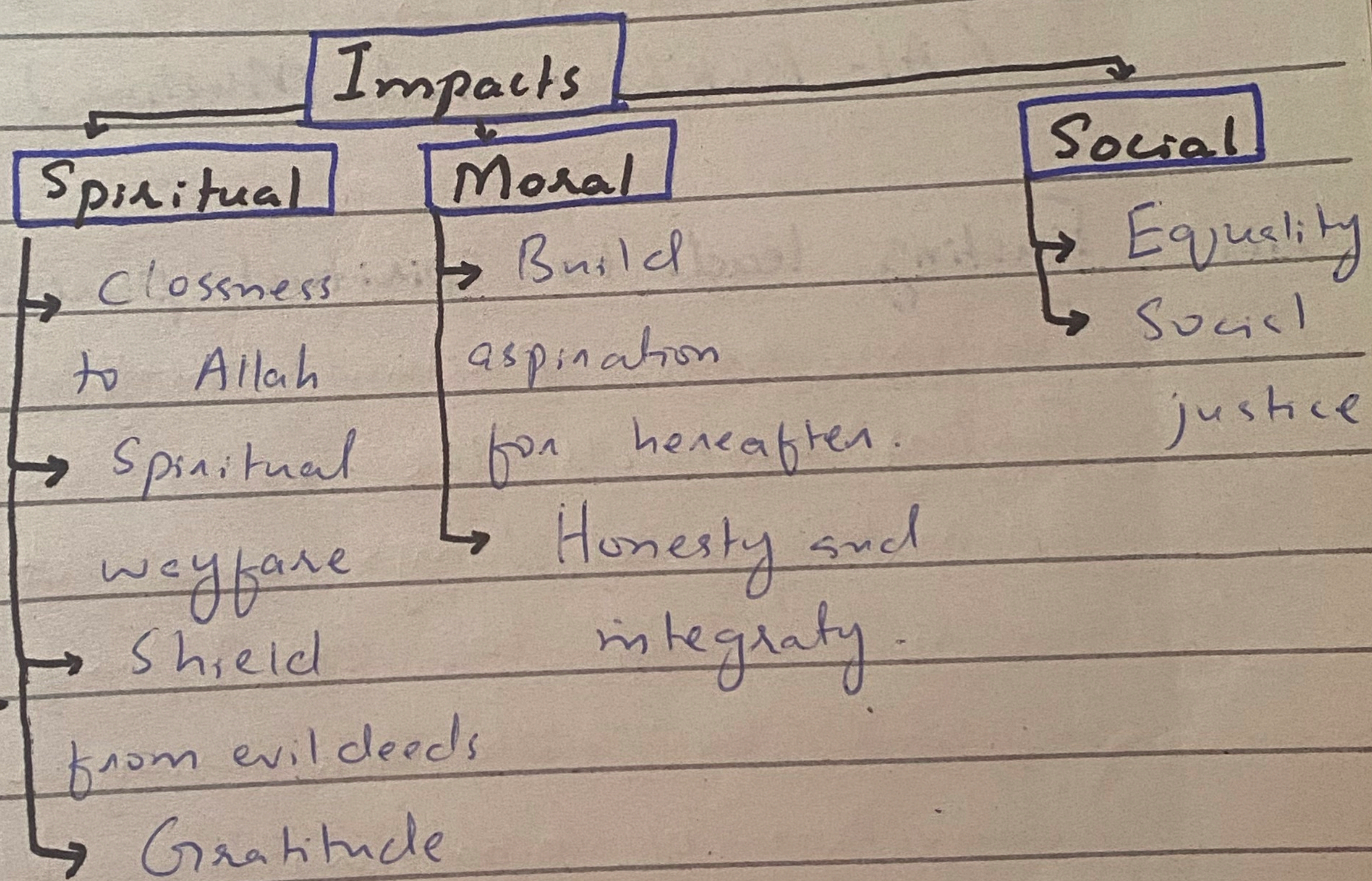
1. Purification and Renewal of the soul: Fasting is a way to cleanse the body and soul. It can be seen as a symbolic act of purification, removing negative energy and renewing one's spiritual connection. For instance, when a person during observing fast refrains himself from evil deeds, it eventually leads him towards the purification of soul.

2. Self-discipline and Self-control: Fasting helps to subdue the nafs, or the human ego, which often leads to desires and temptations. By controlling one's appetite, Muslims

(Assignment)

learn to exercise self-discipline and self-control in other aspects of life. This discipline and self-control contribute to a more balanced and virtuous character.

4. Impacts of Fasting:



1. Spiritual impacts of Fasting:

iii. Fasting aims at closeness to Allah:

Fasting can create a space for deeper spiritual reflection and meditation. By removing physical

distractions, individuals can focus more intently on their connection to Allah Almighty.

“Allah The Almighty says:
“All the deeds done by men are for Him, save fasting, which is for Me, and for which I will give a reward.”

(Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

(ii) Fasting leads to spiritual purification:

Fasters are spiritual wayfarers.

Fasting restrains the evils and promotes good doings and it leads an individual to the purification of soul by building a stronger connection of him with Allah.

The Holy Quran says

“He who observes the fasts of Ramadan, out of sincere faith, and expecting the reward

from Allah, his previous sins will be forgiven."

iii, Protect from evil deeds and thoughts:

When an individual observes fast, he also tries to prevent himself from evil deeds and thoughts. Besides, he worships Allah Almighty more which also protect him from sins and evil activities. A saying of

the prophet (SAW) 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."

iv, Fasting stimulates Humility and Gratitude: By experiencing hunger, Muslims gain a deeper understanding of plight of those

who are less fortunate and may struggle to meet their basic needs. This leads to a greater appreciation for the blessings of food and health, fostering a sense of gratitude and compassion.

2. Ethical impacts of Fasting:

(i) Fasting trains the fasters to aspire to the Hereafter:

Fasting is a trial of man's inner self and patience and teaches him self-control. Since fasting is a commandment of Allah Almighty, thus, when a person observes fast, he fulfills the commandment of Allah and protects himself from sins. Thus, fasting prepares the fasters to aspire to Hereafter.

“The man's trial in his family, property, children

estimate and meet them leads to a for the and health, of gratitude

Fasting:

masters to tea:

of man's and teaches Allah Almighty

observes

Commencement himself

try prepares to Hereafter

his

children

and neighbour is removed by prayer, fasting and charity."

(Al-Bukhaari and Muslim)

- (ii) Fasting teaches Honesty and Integrity:
Fasting can be seen as a test of character. Fasting, therefore, teaches honesty and integrity. For example, By resisting temptations and adhering to the rules of fasting, individuals can strengthen their commitment to honesty and integrity.

3. Social impacts of Fasting:

- (i) Fasting promotes the Social equality
Fasting strengthens the sense of equality among Muslims. Like, during the month of Ramadan all the Muslims, the rich and the poor, the elite and the ordinary

observe fast and fulfil the command of their creator Allah. They all show equal degree of obedience. Therefore, fasting gives a sense of equality in the muslim society.

(iii) Fasting strengthens Social justice:

Fasting can be a powerful tool for social justice. For example, muslims, during the fast, observe hunger and thirst. Thus, they become aware of the issues such as poverty and inequality and they will take actions to promote social justice and equality.

5. Conclusion:

In conclusion, fasting is the worship observed by the muslims during the month of Ramadan. It restricts the fasters from eating, drinking and sexual activities. It has many significances

on individual and collective beta levels.