

Sadaf Talib - 075

Islamic Studies

Describe importance and philosophy of Fasting.
Explain its Benefits

Introduction:

Saum or **Fasting** is fundamental to Islamic religion and represents discipline, self-purification and dedication. Fasting is a powerful act of worship that improves life and fortifies ties throughout the society by developing ^{highlighting} both societal harmony and personal development.

Fasting

Literal Meaning:

Fasting is called 'saum' in the Quran. Saum is an Arabic word

Saum means

- to abstain
- to be at rest.

Contextual Meaning:

“The act of intentionally abstaining from worldly cravings to seek Allah's pleasure from Dawn until Dusk during the Holy month of Ramadan”

Holy Prophet (PBUH)

Says:

“Whoever fast during the month of Ramadan out of sincere faith and hoping Allah's reward, then all his past sin will forgive.”

According to Shari'ah

The word saum means to abstain from all those things that are forbidden during fasting from the break of dawn

to the sunset, and to do this with the intention of fasting

Philosophy of Fasting:

According to the Quran, the Islamic concept of fasting is based on

- Self-control
- Spiritual cleansing
- Taqwa (God consciousness)

Fasting is the divinely prescribed practice that creates bond with Allah and attention with Allah in all facets of life by teaching people to refrain from both bodily necessities and immoral actions

Allah says:

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

Importance of Fasting:

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) stressed the moral, spiritual and social advantages of Fasting. In His Sunnah, He highlights the importance of Fasting and **Prophet says:**

"Fasting is a shield; so when one of you fasts, if someone fights him or insults him. He should say: 'I am fasting'"

Prophet underscoring the importance of fasting as this Hadith encourages man to be patient and avoid confrontations.

Prophet says:

"The smell from the mouth of a fasting person is pleasant to Allah than the fragrance of musk"

he should not behave obscenely or foolishly.

Prophet emphasises and urged people to eat Suhoor (pre-dawn meal).

Prophet says:

"Eat Suhoor, as Suhoor there is a blessing."

Impacts of Fasting

Fasting has great impacts on both individual life of humans and social life of humans.

Individual life:

- Love of God
- Spiritual Development
- Physical Health
- Compassion and generosity.

Creating love of God

Fasting is a powerful tool that creates love of God in man's heart and strengthens the relationship with their creator.

Hadith Qudsi:

“Fasting is for Me, and I will reward it. He leaves his desire and his food for My sake.”
(Shahi Bhukhai)

Muslims enhance their devotion throughout the Ramadan by ~~doing~~ reciting Quran, praying extended periods (Taraweeh), and asking for forgiveness in the nights of Laylatul-Qadr (Night of Decree). These deeds enhance a profounding and lasting love of Allah.

Spiritual Development:

Fasting is primarily an institution for a spiritual and self-control. Fasting is considered a way to purify the body and soul. A person fasting trains their heart to rely alone

on Allah and do not do bad things or haram things.

Fasting avoids a person to make bad things and instills a sense of right deeds.

Prophet says:

"Fast is free from hypocrisy"

Quran emphasis:

"that you may ward off evil"

Therefore, abstain from immoral actions, fast cleans the soul and enhance spiritual development.

Ensuring Physical Health

Fasting during the Ramadan has major health advantages as it is linked to improve metabolism, detoxification and also cure chronic illnesses like blood sugar, lower cholesterol and can help

manage people their weight while embracing mental clarity and emotional well-being.

Adding, the customs of Iftar and Suhoor promoting balanced nutrition.

Prophet (PBUH) says:

“The son of Adam fills no vessel worse than his stomach.”

Compassion and Generosity:

Fasting encourages and cultivates virtues like humility, kindness and generosity. It teaches a lesson of charitable attitude by giving direct-donations, meal-sharing and sponsoring neighborhood projects.

According to Hadith:

“The Messenger of Allah was was generous of people, and even more generous during Ramadan.”

(Sahih Bukhari)

Collective Life

- Strengthening Community Bonds
- Enhancing Social Responsibility
- Promoting Equality
- Promoting Tolerance.

Strengthening Community Bonds:

Fasting promotes a sense of solidarity and togetherness among different social groups.

Fasting creates a sense of compassion and strengthening the communal bonds.

It also ties the bonds with familial relationships like persons sits together at the time of suhor and iftar and sometimes with their friends and neighbours.

Prophet says:

“When one you invited on iftar, let it him accept it.”

This promotes a social harmony among communities -

Enhancing Social Responsibility

Fasting during Ramadan promotes social responsibility. Hunger and thirst make people aware of the hardships of less-fortunate and inspire them to give whatever they have for less-fortunate. Social duty is emphasising in

Quran saying:

"The example of those, who spend their wealth for the sake of Allah is like a seed that grows in seven ears, in each ear, there are hundred grains"

It develops a sense of giving charity and Zakat, which eradicate poverty from the society.

Prophet says:

"Whoever feeds a fasting person he will earn reward like him, without any reduction to his reward"

Promoting Equality:

Fasting develops a sense of equality with one another. During the month of fast all members of Muslim society rich and poor, white and black, ruler and ruled, the elite and ordinary are in same rank and condition.

Allah says:

"decreed upon you fasting as it was decreed upon those before you"

It shows that all are slaves of one Master and all are subjected equal to Him.

Prophet says:

"None of you truly believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself."

Prophet (PBUH) highlighted solidarity and equality. And gives a lesson that all are equal and share equal level of obedience.

Promoting Tolerance:

Fasting strengthens a sense of tolerance in its observer. It is obligatory for an observer to be tolerant and to curb the anger while fasting.

Allah does not accept the fast of a person that indulges in acts like lying, fighting and backbiting.

Prophet regarded Ramadan "the month of patience" and called fast as the "half-patience".

As a result it creates patience to be humble with others and evaluate difference in opinions.

Fasting makes a society peaceful and calm and engage others to make a serenity in society.

Conclusion :-

In a nutshell, Fasting is an act that depriving oneself from food, drink and other essentials from dawn to sunset. Fasting is still a potent means to promote social cohesiveness, spiritual development, mental health and cultivate tolerance.

