

## Suhoor (the pre-dawn meal)

The Statement of Allah (Ta'ala):

"...And eat and drink until the white thread (light) of dawn appears to you distinct from the black thread (darkness of night), then complete your Saum(fast) till the nightfall..." [Surah Al-Baqara:ayat:187]

Narrated Al-Bara [Radi Allahu anhu : May Allah be pleased with him]:The Prophet [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] said as above. [Reported by Al-Bukhari]

Narrated Adi bin Hatim [Radi Allahu anhu : May Allah be pleased with him]:

When the following verses were revealed: "[Until the white thread appears to you, distinct from the](#)

[black thread](#),"I took two (hair) strings, one black and the other white, and kept them under my pillow and went on looking at them throughout the night but could not make anything out of it. So, the next morning I went to Allah's Messenger [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] and told him the whole story. He explained to me, "[That verse means the darkness of night and the whiteness of dawn](#)." .[Reported by Al-Bukhari;Classification:Fasting: 'And eat and drink until the white thread (light) of dawn'

Narrated Sahl bin Saud[Radi Allahu anhu : May Allah be pleased withhim]:When the following Verses were revealed: "[Eat and drink until the white thread appears to you, distinct from the black thread...](#)" and '[of dawn](#)' (minal fajr) was not revealed, some people who intended to Saum (fast), tied black and white threads to their legs and went on eating till they differentiated between the two. Allah then revealed the words, '[of dawn](#)' (minal fajr) , and it became clear that meant night and day. .[Reported by Al-Bukhari;Classification:Fasting: 'And eat and drink until the white thread (light) of dawn'

What is the interval between the (end of) of Sahur and the Salat-ul-Fajr?

Narrated Anas [Radi Allahu anhu : May Allah be pleased with him]: Zaid bin Thabit [Radi Allahu anhu : May Allah be pleased with him] said, "We took the Suhur with the Prophet[Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] . Then he stood for As-Salat (the prayer)." I asked, "What was the interval between the Suhur and the Adhan?" He replied, "The interval was sufficient to recite fifty verses of the Quran." [Reported by Al-Bukhari;Classification:Interval between end of Suhur and Fajr]

The Sahur is a blessing but it is not compulsory.

For the Prophet [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] and his Companions kept observing fasting continuously for more than one day and (of course) no Sahur was taken (during that prolonged fast).

Narrated Abdullah [Radi Allahu anhu : May Allah be pleased with him]: The Prophet [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] observed fasting for days continuously; the people also did the same but it was difficult for them. So, the Prophet [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] forbade them (to observe fast continuously for more than one day). They said, "But you observe fast without break (no food was taken in the evening or in the morning)." The Prophet [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] replied, "I am not like you, for I am provided with food and drink (by Allah)." [Reported by Al-Bukhari; Classification: Fasting: Suhur is not compulsory]

Narrated Anas bin Malik [Radi Allahu anhu : May Allah be pleased with him]: The Prophet [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] said, "[Take Suhur as there is a blessing \(Barakah\) in it.](#)" [Reported by Al-Bukhari; Classification: Fasting: Suhur is not compulsory]

Explanation: Barakah means the abundance and continuity of goodness.

Suhur is a distinctive mark with which Allah has blessed the Muslim Ummah

Amr bin Al-`As [Radi Allahu anhu : May Allah be pleased with him] reported: The Messenger of Allah [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] said, "[The difference between our observance of Saum \(fasting\) and that of the people of the Scriptures is Suhur \(predawn meal in Ramadan\).](#)" [Muslim].

There are blessings in Suhoor ...

Abu Hurairah [Radi Allahu anhu : May Allah be pleased with him] narrated that the Messenger of Allah [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] said: "[Indeed Allah placed blessing in the Suhoor and in the weighing \[of grain\]](#)". [Shirazi and al-Khateeb/ al-Jami`us-Sagheer; Hasan]

Anas [Radi Allahu anhu : May Allah be pleased with him] reported that the Messenger of Allah [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] said: "[Eat Suhoor, for there are blessings in it.](#)" [al-Bukhari and Muslim]

Salman [Radi Allahu anhu : May Allah be pleased with him] also reported that the Prophet [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] said: "[Blessing is in three : The Jama`a \[the congregation of the Muslims\], The Thareed \[a broth of \(crumbled\) bread and meat\] and the Suhoor](#)". [Tabarani and Abu Nu`aim; Hasan]

A companion said: "I entered upon the Prophet [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] and he was taking the Suhoor and he said: "[It is a blessing](#)

which Allah has given to you, so do not leave it". [Ahmad and an-Nasa'i; Sahih].

Abud-Dardaa' [Radi Allahu anhu : May Allah be pleased withhim] reported that the Prophet [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] said: "[Come to the blessed morning meal \(meaning the Suhoor\)](#)". [Ahmad, an-Nasa`i and Abu Dawood].

"Perhaps the greatest blessing of Suhoor is that Allah Subhanahu wa Ta`ala (SWT) [Most High and Free of all imperfection], covers the people eating Suhoor with His forgiveness and send His Mercy upon them. The angles ask for forgiveness for them and supplicate to Allah to pardon them, so that they may be granted freedom from the Fire by the Most Merciful in the month of the Qur'an

Allah and His angels send blessing for those who take Suhur:

Allah's Messenger [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] said:"[Taking the pre-dawn meal in Ramadan is a blessing, so do not leave it, even by drinking a mouthful of water. For Allah the Noble and the Mighty, and His angels send blessing over those who have taken the pre-dawn meal.](#)" (Ahmad, graded authentic by Shaikh Al-Albani in Sahih Al-Jami' As-Saghir, No.3683)

Explanation:'Allah and His angels send blessing' signifies that Allah sends His Grace, Honor, Blessings, and Mercy on him, and His angels ask Allah to bless and forgive him.

Taking the Sahur hurriedly (shortly before dawn).

Narrated Sahl bin Saud[Radi Allahu anhu : May Allah be pleased withhim]:I used to take my Sahur meals with my family and then hurry up for presenting myself for the Fajr prayer with Allah's Messenger [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam].[Reported by Al-Bukhari;Classification:Fasting:Taking meals hurriedly before dawn]

Explanation: They used to take the meal of Sahur so late at night that they hurried in eating so that they might offer the Fajr prayer with Allah's Messenger [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam].

The statement of the Prophet [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] : The Adhan of Bilal should not stop you from taking Sahur (before-dawn-meal).

Narrated 'Aisha [Radi Allahu anha : May Allah be pleased with her] : Bilal used to pronounce the Adhan at night, so Allah's Messenger [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] said, "Carry on taking your meals (eat and drink) till Ibn Umm Maktum pronounces the Adhan (call to prayer), for he does not pronounce it till it is dawn.[Reported by Al-Bukhari]

Ibn `Umar [Radi Allahu anhu : May Allah be pleased with him] reported: The Messenger of Allah [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] had two Mu'adhdhin: Bilal and Ibn Umm Maktum (May Allah be pleased with them). The Messenger of Allah [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] said, "[Bilal proclaims Adhan \[call to Salat \(prayer\)\] at fag end of night, so eat and drink till Ibn Umm Maktum pronounces Adhan.](#)" Ibn `Umar (May Allah be pleased with them) added: And the gap between their Adhan was not more than the time spent in one's getting down and the other's climbing (the minaret).[Al-Bukhari and Muslim].

Commentary: We learn from this Hadith that in the days of the Prophet [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] there used to be two Mu'adhdhin and two Adhan in the morning. The first Adhan was meant to warn the people who were taking the Suhur meals that the time for the Suhur was about to finish and they should make preparation for Fajr prayer. Soon after that there was a second Adhan by another Mu'adhdhin which signified that the time for food was finished and people should attend to Salat.

So far, the question of time between the two Adhan is concerned, `Ulama' have stated that after announcing the Adhan, Bilal used to be engaged in prayer, etc., and waited for the daybreak. When the time for the daybreak drew near, he would then come down and inform Ibn Umm Maktum who would then make Wudu', and then proceed to call the Adhan at the beginning of the daybreak.

When any of you hears the summons to prayer while he has a vessel in his hand:

Narrated AbuHurayrah [Radi Allahu anhu: May Allah be pleased with him]:

The Prophet [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] said: When any of you hears the summons to prayer while he has a vessel in his hand, he should not lay it down till he fulfils his need. Reported by Sunan of Abu Dawood

Explanation: Imaam Muhammad Naasir-ud-Deen Al-Albaanee explains: Indeed there is an authentic hadeeth reported from the Prophet (saws) which shows the ease afforded by Islaam, to be counted as one of the principles of Islaam, which the Muslims are proud of, especially with regard to the matter of Fasting, since Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic, concluded the aayahs concerning Fasting with His Saying:

'Allaah desires ease for you, and He does not desire to make things difficult for you.

So from this ease is his (saws) saying, " If one of you hears the call to Prayer and the vessel is in the hand of one of you, then let him not put it down until he fulfils his need from it."

" If one of you hears the call to Prayer and the vessel" the vessel containing food, whether it be milk, some drink, water, anything which a person may take as Suhoor, and he hears the Adhaan, then he should not say, Now the food is forbidden due to the Adhaan being heard. The person who has had enough, it is not allowed for him to then have any more, whether it be a drink, or some fruit, when he has had his fill of whatever he was eating.

But as for the one who hears the Adhaan and he has not yet taken what he needs from the food and the drink, then the Messenger (saws) made that lawful for him. So he clearly said, in the clear and eloquent Arabic language, " If one of you hears the call to Prayer, and the vessel is in his hand, then let him not put it down until he fulfils his need from it."

And what is meant here by the call is the second call, the second Adhaan. It is not the first Adhaan, which they wrongly call the Adhaan of Imsaak (i.e. withholding). We must know that there is no basis for calling the first Adhaan the Adhaan for withholding (imsaak).

The second Adhaan is when we are to withhold, and this is clearly stated in the Quraan, since Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic, says:

'And eat and drink until the white thread of dawn becomes clear to you from the black thread of the night.'

So eating becomes forbidden at the start of the time of the Fajr Prayer. There is no separation between these two things. There is no withholding from food and drink for a quarter of an hour, or less than that, or more than that, before the start of the time for the Fajr Prayer. Not at all.

Because [the Prayer becomes due when the true dawn appears, and food becomes forbidden for the fasting person when the true dawn appears](#). So there is no separation between these two matters at all.

So therefore there occurs in the hadeeth agreed upon by al-Bukharee and Muslim, from the hadeeth of 'Abdullaah Ibn 'Umar Ibn al-Khattaab (raa), that the Prophet (saws) said, "Let not the Adhaan of Bilaal deceive you..." meaning, the first Adhaan, "...because he gives the Adhaan in order to awaken the person who is sleeping, and so that the person who wishes to eat the pre-dawn meal can do so. So eat and drink until Ibn Umm Maktoon gives the Adhaan."

Ibn Umm Maktoon, whose name was 'Amr, was a blind man, and he was the one about whom the Saying of Allaah, the Exalted and Most High, came down:

'He frowned and turned away, that a blind man had come to him' to the end of the Ayaat.

So he used to give the second Adhaan, the Adhaan which means that eating becomes prohibited and that it is now time for the Fajr Prayer.

How did he used to give the Adhaan when he was blind? This is a question, which naturally occurs to some people. 'Amr Ibn Umm Maktoom used to climb on the roof of the mosque, but he could not see the dawn, so he would wait until someone passing by saw the dawn. So when someone saw that the dawn had appeared and spread across the horizon, they would say to him, It is morning. It is morning. Then he would give the Adhaan.

So you will notice here that the Adhaan of 'Amr ibn Umm Maktoom was after the Fajr had appeared, and had been seen by the people whilst they were walking in the streets. So when it was said to him, "It is morning. It is

morning," he would give the Adhaan.

So therefore there is latitude in the affair, since the muadhdhin (the one who calls to prayer) would be delayed in giving the Adhaan until he heard the people telling him, "It is morning, it is morning." And then Allaah's Messenger (saws) said: "If one of you hears the call to Prayer and the vessel is in his hand, then let him not put it down until he has fulfilled his need from it."

So Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic, spoke truly when He said at the end of those Aayahs related to Fasting:

'Allaah desires to make things easy for you, and He does not desire to make things difficult for you.'

and '...that you should complete the number of days, and that you should glorify Allaah by mentioning takbeer for His having guided you, and that you should be thankful.'

So therefore from the Fiqh that is to be criticized, and which runs contrary to this Sunnah, is that a person says, "If someone hears the Adhaan and has some food in his mouth, then he must spit it out." So this is over strictness, and (ghuluww) exceeding the limits in the Religion, and the Lord of all of the creation admonished us, and reminded us, in His Book and in the Sunnah of His Prophet (saws) that we should not exceed the due limits in our Religion. So He said, in the Noble Quraan:

'O People of the Book! Do not exceed the limits in your religion, and do not say anything about Allaah except the truth.'

And our Messenger (saws) said to us, or he (saws) said, "Beware of (ghuluww) exceeding the limits in the Religion. Because those who came before you were destroyed by their exceeding the limits in their Religion."

So Allaah's Messenger (saws) has made it clear to us that there is latitude and a margin of ease in the matter of a person's taking suhoor, to the extent that he said: "If one of you hears the call to Prayer whilst the vessel is in his hand, then let him not put it down until he has completed his need from it."

References:

1. Al-Bukhari : Name of book of Hadith, which is known for its authenticity and correctness.

2. Riyadh-us-Saliheen; Abu Zakariya Yahya bin Sharaf an-nuwi damishqi

3. Sahih Muslim

4. Sunan of Abu Dawood

5. Tirmidhi (Name of book of Hadith)

Footnote (Explanation) :

SAAW: Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam, i.e. the Salat of Allah and His Salaam (Peace) be upon Prophet Muhammad. The Salat of Allah upon Prophet Muhammad is His Praise and mentioning of the Prophet to the angels in the Most High place in Heaven.