

Intentions in Saum (Fast)

Bismillahir Rahman ir Raheem,

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

The reward of deeds depends upon the intention:

Narrated Umar bin Al Khattab [Radi Allahu anhu: May Allah be pleased with him]:Allah's Apostle [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] said, "The reward of deeds depends upon the intention and every person will get the reward according to what he has intended. So whoever emigrated for Allah and His Apostle, then his emigration was for Allah and His Apostle. And whoever emigrated for worldly benefits or for a woman to marry, his emigration was for what he emigrated for." Al-Bukhari; Classification:'The out come of deeds depends upon the intentions.'

He who fasts hypocritically has committed Shirk:

Narrated Shaddad ibn Aws [Radi Allahu anhu: May Allah be pleased with him]

Shaddad heard Allah`s Messenger [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] say, "He who prays hypocritically has attributed a partner to Allah; he who fasts hypocritically has obtained a partner to Allah; and he who gives sadaqah hypocritically has attributed a partner to Allah."

Ahmad transmitted it.

Explanation:

Shirk basically is polytheism, i.e., the worship of others along with Allah. It also implies attributing Divine attributes to any other besides Allah. It particularly implies associating partners in worship with Allah or believing that the source of power, harm or blessings is from others besides Allah.

The intention for obligatory fast must be made before the appearance of Fajr:

Narrated Hafsa, Ummul Mu'minin [Radi Allahu anhu : May Allah be pleased with her]:The Apostle of Allah [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] said: Whoever does not determine to fast before the dawn, his fasting is null and void. [Ahmad and the Four Sunan Compilers, graded authentic by Shaikh Al-Albani in Sahih Al-Jami' As-Saghir, No.6539]

Explanation: For the obligatory fast in the month of Ramadhan, it is incumbent on everyone to have intention before the appearance of Fajr.

Intention, if observance is obligatory, intention must be thought of before Fajr, but if it is supererogatory (voluntary) there is no harm if intention of fasting is thought of after sunrise.The meaning of intention is that he is determined to fast the next day. Such intention need not be spoken aloud, as it is in reality an act of the heart, which does not involve the tongue. There are no narrations stating that the Prophet [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] uttered the intention aloud. Some textual wordings for the above intention are printed in

some of the traditional calendars such as:

"Wa-bi saumin ghad nawayt"

"I intended to observe tomorrow's fasting for the month of Ramadan,"

These are categorically baseless and authentically groundless. Therefore, the use of such audible wordings is sinful, since it is not confirmed from the Prophet [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam].

For observing supererogatory (voluntary) Saum (fast), there is no harm if intention of fasting is thought of after sunrise;

Supererogatory (voluntary) Saum (fast), can be broken at any time for any reason:

Narrated Aisha [Radi Allahu anhu : May Allah be pleased with her]:

One day the Messenger of Allah [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] said to me: Aisha, have you anything (to eat)? I said: Messenger of Allah, we have nothing here. Thereupon he said: I am observing a fast. She said: The Messenger of Allah [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] went out, and there was a present for us and (at the same time) some visitors dropped in. When the Messenger of Allah [Salla Allahu Aleihi Wassalam] came back, I said to him: Messenger of Allah, a present was given to us and (in the meanwhile) visitors came to see us. (A major portion of it has been used for them), but I have saved something for you. He said: What is it? I said: It is hays (a compound of dates and clarified butter). He said: Bring that. So I brought it to him and he ate it and then said: I woke up in the morning observing fast.

Talhah said: I narrated this hadith to Mujahid and he said: This (observing of voluntary fast) is like a person who sets apart Sadaqah out of his wealth. He may spend it if he likes, or he may retain it if he so wishes. Sahih Muslim

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. 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.