

MUHAMMAD *ibn*
ML. HAROON ABASOOMAR



MUḤARRAM

CONTEMPORARY Q&A IN LIGHT *of*
PROPHETIC TRADITION





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Compiled by
MUHAMMAD IBN ML. HAROON ABASOOMAR



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TRANSLITERATION KEY

ء (أ)	' (A slight catch in the breath)	غ	gh (Pronounced like the <i>gh</i> in ghost)
ا	a (ā to indicate towards a diphthong, a long 'a' sound like in the word <i>mad</i>)	ف	f
ب	b	ق	q (Pronounced from the back of the throat)
ت	t	ك	k
ث	th (Pronounced as the <i>th</i> in <i>three</i>)	ل	l
ج	j	م	m
ح	h (Tensely breathed <i>h</i> sound)	ن	n
خ	kh (Pronounced as the <i>ch</i> in the Scottish word <i>loch</i>)	هـ	h
د	d	و	w
ذ	dh (Pronounced as the <i>th</i> in <i>three</i>)	ي	y
ر	r (Pronounced as the <i>r</i> in <i>arrival</i>)		<i>Ṣalla 'Llāhu 'alayhi wa sallam</i> — used subsequent to the reference of the Prophet Muḥammad, which translates, “May Allāh bless him and give him peace.”
ز	z		<i>'Alahi 'l-salām</i> — used following the mention of a Prophet or Messenger of Allāh, which translates, “May the peace of Allāh be upon him.”
س	s		<i>Raḍiya 'Llāhu 'anhu</i> — used subsequent to the reference of a Companion of the Messenger  , which translates, “May Allāh be pleased with him.”
ش	sh		<i>Raḍiya 'Llāhu 'anhā</i> — used after the reference of a female Companion of the Messenger  , which translates, “May Allāh be pleased with her.”
ص	ṣ (A strong, emphatic <i>s</i>)		
ض	ḍ (A strong, emphatic <i>d</i>)		
ط	ṭ (A strong, emphatic <i>t</i>)		
ظ	ẓ (A strong, emphatic <i>dh</i>)		
ع	' (Pronounced from the throat)		

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Introduction

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلاة والسلام على محمد سيد المرسلين وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين.

أما بعد:

In this brief booklet, some important matters related to the blessed month of Muḥarram, and specifically the tenth of this month (‘Āshūrā’) have been gathered.

These articles are a collection, which I have taken from my blog www.al-miftah.com, as well as the www.hadithanswers.com website.

May Allāh Ta‘ālā accept it and make it a means of guidance for all. Āmīn.

Muhammad ibn Ml. Haroon Abasoomar

29th September 2017 | 9th Muḥarram 1439

Why is Muḥarram called the ‘Month of Allāh’

Question

What is meant by, ‘The month of Allāh is Muḥarram?’ Why is it called, ‘The month of Allāh?’

Answer

The commentators of aḥādīth explain that Muḥarram is attributed to Allāh to enhance the greatness of this month and to show the virtue of this month.

Allāmah as-Suyūṭī further explains, “The name Muḥarram is an Islamic name, contrary to the other Islamic months, as their names have remained as they were in the days of *Jāhiliyyah* (Pre-Islamic Era).

Muḥarram was referred to as ‘*Ṣafar al-Awwal*.’ Allāh changed the name to Muḥarram once Islam had come. Therefore, this month is referred to as the month of Allāh.¹

And Allāh Ta‘ālā knows best

¹ As-Suyūṭī, *ad-Dībāj ‘alā Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, ḥadīth 2747, al-Mubārakfūrī, *Tuḥfat ‘l-Aḥwadhī*, ḥadīth 740.

The four sacred months

Question

Is there any ḥadīth which name the four sacred months?

Answer

Yes, Imām al-Bukhārī and Imām Muslim رحمهما الله have recorded the following narration on the authority of Abū Bakrah رضي الله عنه,

عن أبي بكرة، عن النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: إِنَّ الزَّمَانَ قَدْ اسْتَدَارَ كَهَيْئَتِهِ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ اللهُ السَّمَوَاتِ،
السَّنةُ اثْنَا عَشَرَ -شَهْرًا، مِنْهَا أَرْبَعَةٌ حَرَمٌ، ثَلَاثٌ مَتَوَالِيَاتٌ: ذُو الْقَعْدَةِ، وَذُو الْحِجَّةِ، وَالْمَحْرَمُ، وَرَجَبُ،
مَضْرُوزٍ الَّذِي بَيْنَ جُمَادَى، وَشَعْبَانَ.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, “...The year consists of twelve months, four of which are sacred. Three from them are consecutive, Dhul Q‘adah, Dhul Ḥijjah and Muḥarram. And [the fourth sacred month] is Rajab...”²

And Allāh Ta‘ālā knows best.

² Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ l-Bukhārī* 4662, Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1679.

Events on ‘Āshūrā’

Question

Did the following take place on ‘Āshūrā’: Ādam ﷺ was sent down from *Jannah* (heaven) and his *tawbah* (repentance) was accepted, Nūḥ ﷺ ark landed on Mount Jūdī, Ibrāhīm ﷺ being saved from the fire?

Answer

In the reliable ḥadīth sources, there is only mention of the Prophet Mūsā ﷺ and the Prophet Nūḥ ﷺ being saved on this day.

The account of Prophet Mūsā ﷺ is recorded by Ibn ‘Abbās ؓ. He narrates,

عن ابن عباس رضي الله عنهما، قال: قدم النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم المدينة فرأى اليهود تصوم يوم عاشوراء، فقال: «ما هذا؟»، قالوا: هذا يوم صالح هذا يوم نجى الله بني إسرائيل من عدوهم، فصامه موسى، قال: «أنا أحق بموسى منكم»، فصامه، وأمر بصيامه

The Prophet ﷺ came to Madinah and saw the Jews fasting on the day of ‘Āshūrā’. He asked them about that. They said, “This is a good day, this is the day on which Allāh rescued Banū Isrā’īl from their enemy. Thus, Mūsā ﷺ fasted [on this] day.” The Prophet ﷺ said, “We have more right over Mūsā ﷺ than you.” So he ﷺ fasted [on this] day and ordered [the Muslims] to fast [on that] day.³

³ Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ ‘l- Bukhārī* 2004.

With reference to the narration of Prophet Nūḥ ﷺ, Abū Hurayrah ﷺ states,

عن أبي هريرة، قال: مر النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بأناس من اليهود قد صاموا يوم عاشوراء، فقال: " ما هذا من الصوم؟ " قالوا: هذا اليوم الذي نجى الله موسى وبني إسرائيل من الغرق، وغرق فيه فرعون، وهذا يوم استوت فيه السفينة على الجودي، فصام نوح وموسى شكرا لله، فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: " أنا أحق بموسى، وأحق بصوم هذا اليوم "، فأمر أصحابه بالصوم

The Prophet ﷺ passed by a group of Jews who were fasting on the day of 'Āshūrā'. He asked them about that. They said, "This is the day on which Allāh rescued Mūsā ﷺ and Banū Isrā'īl from drowning. And it is the day in which Pharaoh drowned. And it is the day in which the ship mounted on Moun Jūdī. So Nūḥ ﷺ and Mūsā ﷺ fasted as gratitude for Allāh. The Prophet ﷺ said, "I have more right over Mūsā ﷺ and I have more right to fast on this day." Thus, he ﷺ ordered his companions to fast.⁴

I haven't seen the others mentioned in a ḥadīth of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. In my opinion it is safer to only quote the above two examples.

And Allāh Ta'ālā knows best.

⁴ Aḥmad, *Musnad Aḥmad* 8717.

Fasting in the month of Muḥarram

Question

Is the following narration reliable:

عن ابن عباس قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: من صام يوم عرفة كان له كفارة سنتين، ومن صام يوماً من المحرم فله بكل يوم ثلاثون يوماً.

It is reported from Sayyidunā ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās ؓ that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, “The one who observes the fast on the day of ‘Arafah, he will have two of his years of sins forgiven, and the who fasts during the month of Muḥarram, for each day that he fasts, he will receive the reward of fasting for an entire month.”

Answer

Since Muḥarram is from the four sacred months and is actually the best of the four, voluntary (*nafl*) fasts in this month would indeed be more rewarding than in other months.

However, this particular ḥadīth is recorded by Imām aṭ-Ṭabarānī ؓ with a very weak chain.⁵

The first part of the ḥadīth is well supported.

And Allāh Ta‘ālā knows best.

⁵ Aṭ-Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu‘jam ‘ṣ-Ṣaghīr* 2:71.

See Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Amālī ‘l-Muṭlaqah*, *Mawsū‘ah ibn Ḥajar ‘l-Ḥadīthiyyah* 2:409.

Fasting during the entire ten days of Muḥarram

Question

Is there any ḥadīth which mention any special rewards for fasting the first ten days of Muḥarram?

Answer

I haven't located any specific reward in the ḥadīth for this. However, in light of what is cited below, it is understood that fasting during the first ten days of Muḥarram are indeed more rewarding.

1. A ḥadīth in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim explains:

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «أفضل الصيام، بعد رمضان، شهر الله المحرم

Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrates, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, “The most virtuous fasts after the fasts of Ramaḍān are those of the month of Muḥarram.”⁶

2. In general, it is understood that good deeds are more rewardable during the four sacred months, Muḥarram being one of them.⁷

3. Several Tābi'ūn and other scholars have selected Muḥarram as the best of these four months.⁸

4. Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Rajab رحمه الله writes, “The best part of the month of Muḥarram is the first ten days.”⁹

⁶ Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1163.

⁷ Ibn Rajab, *Laṭā'if 'l-Ma'ārif* pg. 163.

⁸ Ibn Rajab, *Laṭā'if 'l-Ma'ārif* pg. 79.

⁹ Ibn Rajab, *Laṭā'if 'l-Ma'ārif* pg. 79.

And Allāh Ta‘ālā knows best.

Why would the Quraysh observe the fast of ‘Āshūrā’

Question

One narration indicates that the *Mushrikīn* (Polytheists) used to fast on the day of ‘Āshūrā’.

عن عائشة رضي الله عنها، قالت: كانت قريش تصوم عاشوراء في الجاهلية، وكان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يصومه، فلما هاجر إلى المدينة، صامه وأمر بصيامه، فلما فرض شهر رمضان قال: «من شاء صامه ومن شاء تركه»

‘Aishah رضي الله عنها reported that the Quraysh used to fast on the day of ‘Āshūrā’ in the pre-Islamic days and the Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم also observed it. When he صلى الله عليه وسلم migrated to Medina, he صلى الله عليه وسلم himself observed this fast and commanded (others) to observe it. But when fasting during the month of Ramaḍān was made obligatory he صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “He who wishes to observe this fast may do so, and he who wishes to abandon it may do so.”¹⁰

Is there any history or reason behind their fasting on this day?

Answer

Allāmah al-Qurṭubī رحمه الله states that it is possible that they (the Quraysh) believed this to be a part of the teaching of the Prophet Ibrāhīm عليه السلام and the Prophet Ismāīl عليه السلام, since they always claimed to be followers of the creed of these two *Anbiyā’* (Prophets) عليهم السلام.¹¹

And Allāh Ta‘ālā knows best.

¹⁰ Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 2637.

¹¹ Al-Qurṭubī, *al-Mufḥim* ḥadīth 993, Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥḥ al-Bārī* ḥadīth 2004.

The virtue of fasting on ‘Āshūrā’

Question

What is the virtue of fasting on ‘Āshūrā’? Are the major sins or minor sins forgiven?

Answer

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ is reported to have said,

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «ثلاث من كل شهر، ورمضان إلى رمضان، فهذا صيام الدهر كله، صيام يوم عرفة، أحْتَسِبَ على الله أن يكفر السنة التي قبله، والسنة التي بعده، وصيام يوم عاشوراء، أحْتَسِبَ على الله أن يكفر السنة التي قبله»

“...I hope from Allāh that fasting on the day of ‘Āshurah may atone for the sins of the preceding year.”¹²

The commentators of ḥadīth explain that the minor sins are forgiven. A person will have to make *tawbah* (repentance) for his major sins.¹³

Note: One is encouraged to add one more fast to the 10th, either before or after it.

And Allāh Ta‘ālā knows best.

¹² Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 2738.

¹³ An-Nawawī, *al-Minhāj*.

Fasting a day before or after ‘Āshūrā’

Question

What is the authenticity of the narrations stating that together with the 10th of Muḥarram, (‘Āshūrā’), we should fast on the 9th or the 11th as well?

Answer

1. Sayyidunā ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās ؓ reports that when the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was informed that the Jews and Christians revere and honour the 10th of Muḥarram (‘Āshūrā’), he ﷺ said, “Next year, we will fast on the ninth as well if Allāh wills.”¹⁴

2. Sayyidunā ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās ؓ reports that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, “If I am alive next year, I will fast on the ninth as well.”¹⁵

3. Sayyidunā ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās ؓ reports that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, “Fast on the day of ‘Āshūrā’ (10th of Muḥarram) and oppose the Jews. Fast one day before it or one day after it.”¹⁶

In light of the above, it is virtuous to fast on the 9th and 10th or the 10th and 11th of Muḥarram. In fact, Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar ؒ states, “Fasting on the 9th, 10th and 11th of Muḥarram is on the highest level of preference.”¹⁷

And Allāh Ta‘ālā knows best.

¹⁴ Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 2661

¹⁵ Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 2662.

¹⁶ Ibn Khuzaymah, *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Khuzaymah* 2095, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad Aḥmad* 1:241, at-Ṭahāwī, *Sharḥ Ma‘ānī ‘l-Āḥād* 2:78, al-Bayhaqī, *as-Sunan ‘l-Kubrā* 4:287.

¹⁷ Ibn Ḥajar, *Fath ‘l-Bārī*, under ḥadīth 2000.

Fasting on the day of ‘Āshūrā’, if it falls on a Saturday

Imām Abū Dāwūd and at-Tirmidhī   have reported from Sayyidatunā Ṣammā’  ,

عن أختها، - وقال يزيد: الصماء - أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: «لا تصوموا يوم السبت إلا
«في ما افترض عليكم، وإن لم يجد أحدكم إلا لحاء عنبه، أو عود شجرة فليعضه»

The Messenger of Allāh   said “**Don’t fast on Saturdays unless it’s an obligatory fast...**” i.e., like Ramaḍān.¹⁸

This ḥadīth has been quoted by some contemporaries to discourage people from fasting on the 10th of Muḥarram, or even the 9th or 11th of Muḥarram, if any of these dates fall on a Saturday.

This is a gross misinterpretation which stems from a lack of *faqāhah* (true understanding of the nature of *Sharī‘ah*).

Hereunder is a brief explanation of the issue as understood by the senior scholars of the ummah.

The Scholars have either interpreted the above ḥadīth differently, classified it to be abrogated or even dismissed it as weak. The details are as follows:

¹⁸ Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* 2413, at-Tirmidhī, *Sunan at-Tirmidhī* 744 and others.

Correct interpretation

1. Imām al-Bukhārī and Muslim رحمهما الله have reported via Sayyidunā Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه,

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه، قال: سمعت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، يقول: «لا يصومن أحدكم يوم الجمعة، إلا يوما قبله أو بعده»

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: “None of you should fast on a Friday, unless he fasts with it one day before or after.”¹⁹

This ḥadīth clearly states that there is no harm if one observes a fast on a Friday and Saturday together. Hence the ḥadīth that prohibits fasting on Saturdays will be interpreted to mean: fasting on a Saturday only.

Note: Those who have the habit of dismissing everything that doesn’t suit them as a “weak ḥadīth”, should take note that this ḥadīth is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. The next ḥadīth is also classified as *ṣaḥīḥ*:

2. Sayyidatunā Ummu Salamah رضي الله عنها – the honourable wife of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ – reports,

أن كريبا مولى ابن عباس، أخبره أن ابن عباس، وناسا من أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بعثوني إلى أم سلمة، أسألها عن أيّ الأيام كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أكثر صيامها...
قالت:.... إن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أكثر ما كان يصوم من الأيام يوم السبت والأحد...

“...The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ would fast on Saturdays and Sundays more than any other days...”²⁰

¹⁹ Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ l-Bukhārī* 1985, Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 2678.

²⁰ Aḥmad ibn Hanbal, *Musnad Aḥmad* 6:324. This ḥadīth is classified *ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic) by Imām Ibn Khuzaymah and Imām Ibn Ḥibbān.

Interestingly both Imām's; Ibn Khuzaymah and Ibn Ḥibbān  have recorded this ḥadīth in the **'Chapter which explains the permissibility of fasting on a Saturday coupled with another day.'**

3. Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī  says: "In light of this, we will interpret the narration that prohibits fasting on Saturdays to mean fasting on a **Saturday alone**."²¹

4. In fact, Imām al-Bayhaqī  quoted the ḥadīth of prohibition in a chapter named: 'Chapter that discusses the narrations that prohibit fasting on a Saturday **alone**.'

In other words, Imām al-Bayhaqī has also concurred with the conclusion that the ḥadīth doesn't stop one from fasting on a Saturday as long as one fasts a day before or after as well. For this reason al-Bayhaqī  ends the chapter with the ḥadīth of Umm Salamah  – cited above - that the Messenger of Allāh  would often fast on Saturdays and Sundays.²²

Note: There are many scholars who have adopted the above interpretation. I have not quoted them to avoid monotony. In fact, even Imām at-Tirmidhī  – after recording this ḥadīth – states: 'The meaning of this prohibition is when a man **singles out the day of Saturday for fasting**, since the Jews revere this day only.'²³

5. Imām aṭ-Ṭahāwī  writes: "It's possible that the prohibition applies to those who do so solely to replicate the Jews. If someone fasts on Saturday without the intention of emulating of the Jews, then it will **not be makrūh** (disliked)."²⁴

Those who claimed abrogation

See *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Khuzaymah* 2167 and *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān* 3616.

²¹ Ibn Rajab, *Laṭā'if 'l-Ma'ārif* pg.112.

²² Al-Bayhaqī, *as-Sunan 'l-Kubrā* 4:302-303.

²³ At-Tirmidhī, *Sunan at-Tirmidhī* 744.

²⁴ Aṭ-Ṭahāwī, *Sharḥ Ma'ānī 'l-Āthār* 2:81.

6. Imām Abū Dāwūd  after citing this narration in his *sunan*, he writes:

“This narration is abrogated by the ḥadīth reported by Sayyidatunā Juwayriyah ﷺ wherein she reports,

عن جويرية بنت الحارث رضي الله عنها، أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، دخل عليها يوم الجمعة وهي صائمة، فقال: «أصمت أمس؟»، قالت: لا، قال: «تريدين أن تصومي غدا؟» قالت: لا، قال: «فأفطري»

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ visited her on a Friday and discovered she was fasting. He enquired: “did you fast yesterday?” She replied: “no.” He asked further: “do you intend to fast tomorrow (Saturday)?” She said: “no.” The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: “Then don’t fast today.”²⁵

By quoting this Imām Abū Dāwūd (rahimahullah) is emphasising that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ saw nothing wrong with fasting on a Saturday.²⁶

7. Like Imām Abū Dāwūd ﷺ has done, **Imām al-Bayhaqī** ﷺ also quoted the ḥadīth of Sayyidatunā Juwayriyah ﷺ in answer to the ḥadīth of prohibition.²⁷

8. Ibn Taymiyyah ﷺ says: This ḥadīth is either *shādh* (unacceptable due to contradiction) or *mansūkh* (abrogated).”

Those who deemed it as a weak narration

9. Imām Abū Dāwūd ﷺ quotes **Imām Mālik** ﷺ to have said: “This is a mistake.”²⁸

²⁵ Al-Bukhārī, *ṣaḥīḥ l-Bukhārī* 1986, Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* 2414.

²⁶ See an interesting discussion on the details of this abrogation by Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar (rahimahullah) in *Talkhees l-Ḥabīr* 2:480.

²⁷ Al-Bayhaqī, *as-Sunan l-Kubrā* 4:303

²⁸ Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* 2416.

10. He also quotes that whenever the narration that prohibits fasting on Saturdays was mentioned before **Imām Zuhri** رحمہ اللہ he would say that it's unreliable.²⁹

Imām at-Ṭaḥāwī رحمہ اللہ has also said that Imām Zuhri رحمہ اللہ discredited this ḥadīth.³⁰

11. Imām an-Nasā'ī رحمہ اللہ after reporting this ḥadīth comments: "This ḥadīth is very contradictory."³¹

12. Imām at-Ṭaḥāwī رحمہ اللہ says: "The aḥādīth that permit fasting on a Saturday are more popular and acceptable to the 'ulamā' in comparison to this (ḥadīth of prohibition) which is *shādh* (unacceptable due to contradiction).³²

13. Ibn Taymiyyah رحمہ اللہ says: This ḥadīth is either *shādh* (unacceptable due to contradiction) or *mansūkh* (abrogated)."

14. Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar رحمہ اللہ says: "Such contradiction in a narration like this one is sufficient to weaken it."³³

Note: It's truly amazing how some people (when it suits them) choose to follow a ḥadīth as debatable as this one and ignore other aḥādīth that are authentic (like the ḥadīth of *Bukhārī/Muslim* and the other from *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Hibbān*).

15. Imām at-Ṭaḥāwī رحمہ اللہ writes in his unique aḥādīth collection entitled: '*Sharḥ Ma'ānī 'l-Āthār*,' "Indeed Rasulullah ﷺ permitted and encouraged fasting on 'Āshūrā', and he never said: "Don't fast 'Āshūrā') if it falls on a Saturday." At-Ṭaḥāwī رحمہ اللہ writes further, "That's a proof to

²⁹ Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* 2415.

See Shaykh Muḥammad Awwāmah's footnotes explaining Zuhri's statement.

³⁰ At-Ṭaḥāwī, *Sharḥ Ma'ānī 'l-Āthār* 2:81.

³¹ Ibn Ḥajar, *Talkheṣ l-Ḥabīr* 2:470.

³² At-Ṭaḥāwī, *Sharḥ Ma'ānī 'l-Āthār* 2:80.

³³ Ibn Ḥajar, *Talkheṣ l-Ḥabīr* 2:470.

show that the (‘Āshūrā’) fast can be observed on any day.”³⁴

Summary

In light of the above, one will be allowed to fast on ‘Āshūrā if it falls on a Saturday as long as it’s not done in emulation of the Jews and/or one adds a day before or after it. This is supported by authentic aḥādīth. As for the aḥādīth that apparently prohibits fasting on a Saturday other than for the obligatory fast; together with it being classified as either abrogated or weak by the senior scholars of the *ummah*, it also has a different interpretation.

In fact, some of the earlier scholars actually refused to quote this narration to anyone, for fear of creating confusion (like is the sad case today).

And Allāh Ta‘ālā knows best.

³⁴ Aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī, *Sharḥ Ma‘ānī ‘l-Āthār* 2:80.

Explanation of a comment by Mu‘āwiyah ؓ regarding fasting on ‘Āshūrā’

Question

What was Sayyidunā Mu‘āwiyah ؓ referring to when he said ‘ayna ‘ulamā’ukum’ (*Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Kitāb ‘Ṣ-Sawm*)?

Answer

The full ḥadīth is as follows,

عن حميد بن عبد الرحمن، أنه سمع معاوية بن أبي سفيان رضي الله عنهما، يوم عاشوراء عام حج على المنبر يقول: يا أهل المدينة أين علماءكم؟ سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، يقول: «هذا يوم عاشوراء ولم يكتب الله عليكم صيامه، وأنا صائم، فمن شاء، فليصم ومن شاء، فليفطر»

Ḥumayd ibn ‘Abd ‘r-Raḥmān narrates that he heard Mu‘āwiyah ibn Abī Ṣufyān ؓ say on the *minbar* (pulpit) on the day of ‘Āshūrā in the year he went on Ḥajj, ‘Oh people of Madinah! Where are your men of knowledge (‘ulamā’)? I heard the Messenger of Allāh ؐ say, “This is the day of ‘Āshūrah, Allāh has not made fasting obligatory, but I am fasting. Whoever wishes can fast and whoever wishes need not fast.”³⁵

Sayyidunā Mu‘āwiyah ؓ asked, ‘Where are your scholars,’ implying that they ought to be informing and rectifying you.

‘Allāmah an-Nawawī ؒ explains, “It seems that Sayyidunā Mu‘āwiyah ؓ heard some people regarding fasting on ‘Āshūrā’ as *wājib*, *ḥarām* or disliked. He therefore clarified the issue that it is not *wājib* or *ḥarām*, rather

³⁵ Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ l-Bukhārī* 2003, Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1129.

it is a *sunnah*.³⁶

Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar  says, ‘The context of the narration seems to indicate that Sayyidunā Mu‘āwiyah  felt that the people were not showing this fast due to importance. He therefore inquired as to where were the scholars? [They should be encouraging you to fast].³⁷

It is possible that these particular people in Madinah were not fully informed of the matter.

And Allāh Ta‘ālā knows best.

³⁶ An-Nawawī, *al-Minhāj* ḥadīth 2648.

³⁷ Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥḥ ‘l-Bārī*, ḥadīth 2003.

Seeking repentance on the day of ‘Āshūrā’

Question

Kindly mention the aḥādīth regarding Allāh’s forgiveness on the day of ‘Āshūrā’.

Answer

Imām at-Tirmidhī رحمه الله has recorded a narration on the authority of Sayyidunā Alī عليه السلام in which the following words appear,

عن علي، قال: سأله رجل فقال: أي شهر تأمرني أن أصوم بعد شهر رمضان، قال له: ما سمعت أحدا يسأل عن هذا، إلا رجلا سمعته يسأل رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، وأنا قاعد عنده، فقال: يا رسول الله، أي شهر تأمرني أن أصوم بعد شهر رمضان، قال: «إن كنت صائما بعد شهر رمضان فصم المحرم، فإنه شهر الله، فيه يوم تاب فيه على قوم، ويتوب فيه على قوم آخرين

“...If you wish to fast after the month of Ramaḍān, then fast in Muḥarram, for indeed it is the month of Allāh. [In this month] is a day in which Allāh Ta‘ālā accepted the repentance of a nation, and in which He will accept the repentance of other people.”³⁸

This narration has been declared sound by Imām at-Tirmidhī رحمه الله. Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Rajab رحمه الله has cited a few narration which specify this day to be the 10th of Muḥarram, the day of ‘Āshūrā.³⁹

And Allāh Ta‘ālā knows best.

³⁸ At-Tirmidhī, *Sunan at-Tirmidhī* 741.

See the footnotes of Shaykh Muḥammad Awwāmah, *Muṣannaf ibn Abī Shaybah* 9314.

³⁹ Ibn Rajab, *Laṭā’if l-Ma‘ārif* pg. 104.

Additional spending on the day of ‘Āshūrā’

There are several legitimate practices in Islam that have been wrongfully deemed as incorrect. In an era of religious melt-down, we cannot afford such incorrect assertions. One such practice is, ‘Spending on one’s family on the day of ‘Āshūrā’ (the 10th of Muḥarram).

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ is reported to have said,

قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: من وسع على عياله يوم عاشوراء، وسع الله عليه في سائر سنته.

“Whoever expands his expenditure on his family on the day of ‘Āshūrā, Allāh Taālā will inflate his sustenance for the rest of that year.”

Source and Authenticity of this narration

This ḥadīth has been reported by several ṣaḥābah ﷺ, among them are the following:

1. Sayyidunā Jābir ﷺ.⁴⁰

Ḥāfiẓ al-Īrāqī ﷺ has declared this chain as the most authentic one that exists for this narration. He has also confirmed it to be in par in authenticity with the standards of Imām Muslim ﷺ.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Ibn Abd l-Barr, *al-Istidhkār* 10:140.

⁴¹ As-Sakhāwī, *al-Maqāṣid 'l-Ḥasanah* 1193.

2. Sayyidunā Abū Hurayrah ؓ.⁴²

This has been classified as *ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic) by: Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Nāṣir ؓ.⁴³

3. Sayyidunā Abū Saʿīd al-Kuḍrī ؓ.⁴⁴

4. Sayyidunā ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd ؓ.⁴⁵

After recording the above ḥadīth, Imām al-Bayhaqī ؓ comments as follows, “When all the chains of these narrations are gathered, they assume [sufficient] strength.”

This statement of Imām al-Bayhaqī ؓ has been quoted with acceptance by several expert Muḥaddithūn, the likes of Imām al-Mundhirī ؓ, Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar ؓ, ʿAllāmah as-Sakhāwī ؓ and ʿAllāmah as-Suyūṭī ؓ.⁴⁶

5. Sayyidunā ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar ؓ.⁴⁷

This has also been reported with a good chain as the statement of Sayyidunā Umar ؓ.⁴⁸

Tried and Tested

Furthermore, several narrators of this ḥadīth have been reported to have echoed the following testimony, “We have tried this and have found it to be accurate.”⁴⁹

This further strengthens the credibility of the narration.

In fact, one narrator of this ḥadīth, a great Muḥaddith and Faqīh, Ṣufyān ibn ʿUyaynah ؓ said, “I have been doing this for fifty to sixty years and

⁴² Al-Bayhaqī, *ash-Shuʿab ʾl-ʾImān* 3515, Al-Mundhirī, *at-Targhib* 2:115-116.

⁴³ As-Sakhāwī, *al-Maqāṣid ʾl-Ḥasanah* 1193.

⁴⁴ Al-Bayhaqī, *ash-Shuʿab ʾl-ʾImān* 3514.

⁴⁵ Al-Bayhaqī, *ash-Shuʿab ʾl-ʾImān* 3513.

⁴⁶ Al-Mundhirī, *at-Targhib* 2:116, Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Amālī ʾl-Muṭlaqah* pg.30, As-Sakhāwī, *al-Maqāṣid ʾl-Ḥasanah* 1193, as-Suyūṭī, *al-Laʾālī ʾl-Maṣnūʾah* 2:95.

⁴⁷ Ad-Dāraquṭnī, *al-Afrād*, Ibn ʿArāq, *Tanzīhu ʾsh-Sharīʾah* 2:158.

⁴⁸ Ad-Dāraquṭnī, *al-Afrād*, As-Sakhāwī, *al-Maqāṣid ʾl-Ḥasanah* 1193, Ibn ʿArāq, *Tanzīhu ʾsh-Sharīʾah* 2:158.

⁴⁹ Ibn ʿAbd ʾl-Barr, *al-Istidhkār* 10:140.

have always seen its benefit.”⁵⁰

Imām al-Bājūrī رحمہ اللہ has written, “When the chains of this narration are all gathered, they acquire credibility.”⁵¹

Allāmah al-Īrāqī رحمہ اللہ has authored a detailed treatise on this ḥadīth, in which he has proven its acceptability beyond a shadow of doubt. He has also vehemently rebutted the assumption of Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah رحمہ اللہ that this ḥadīth has no basis. Al-Īrāqī رحمہ اللہ – like many others – has expressed his amazement at such irrational assertion!⁵²

Conclusion

I have quoted the authenticity of this narration above from ten Muḥaddithūn. This is sufficient for anyone to be convinced.

Lastly, this ḥadīth provides an ideal solution during these times of global financial constraint. This is not restricted to food only. One can spend in the form that is deemed as most appropriate.⁵³

The extent of expansion in expenditure will naturally depend on one’s mean. However, one should be careful not to exaggerate in this regard, or emulate the non-believers in their manner of ‘gifting’.

Note: The ḥadīth in question only encourages spending on one’s family. The Arabic word used is *‘iyālihi*, which translates as one’s dependents.

And Allāh Ta‘ālā knows best.

⁵⁰ Ibn Rajab, *Laṭā‘if ‘l-Ma‘ārif* pg.113.

⁵¹ Al-Qastalānī, *al-Mawāhib ‘l-Ladunniyyah* pg.492

⁵² Ibn ‘Arāq, *Tanzīhu ‘sh-Sharī‘ah* 2:158, An-Nabhānī, *Shawāhid ‘l-Ḥaqq* pg.192-195.

⁵³ Alā d-Dīn ibn ‘Abidīn, *al-Hadiyyat ‘l-‘Alā‘iyyah* pg.311.

Further verification for spending on ‘Āshūrā’

Question

With regards to the ḥadīth of spending generously on the day of ‘Āshūrā, some senior Muḥaddithūn of the past have dismissed the authenticity of the narration. How would we answer these objections?

Answer

In cases like these, one would have to say that those who refuted its authenticity were probably unaware of the reliable chains that exist for this ḥadīth. This is a common phenomenon.

Another example would be the ḥadīth of *ṣalāt ‘t-Tasbīḥ*.⁵⁴

In fact, my honorable teacher, al-Muḥaddith Shaykh Muḥammad ‘Awwāmah (may Allāh protect him) has provided several examples of this kind in his masterpiece *Āthār ‘l-Ḥadīth*.⁵⁵

These are examples of certain senior scholars being unaware of reliable chains whilst others were indeed aware of them. The accepted rule among the scholars is,

من علم حجة على من لا يعلم

“Those who know are preferred over those who don’t.”

And Allāh Ta‘ālā knows best.

⁵⁴ See Ibn Ḥajar, *Nukat* 2:848.

⁵⁵ Muḥammad Awwāmah, *Āthār ‘l-Ḥadīth* pgs. 182-186.

Applying Kuḥl on the day of ‘Āshūrā’

Question

Does the practice of applying *kuḥl* (*surmah*, antimony) on the day of ‘Āshūrā’ have any proof?

Answer

Imām al-Bayhaqī رحمہ اللہ and others have written that the practice of applying *kuḥl* (*surmah*, antimony) on the day of ‘Āshūrā’ has been reported in an extremely weak narration.⁵⁶

عن ابن عباس قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: من اكتحل بالإنمذ يوم عاشوراء، لم
ترمد عينه أبدا.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ is reported to have said, “Whoever applies antimony on his eyes on the day of ‘Āshūrā’, his eyes will never suffer soreness [or inflammatory].”

Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Rajab رحمہ اللہ, ‘Allāmah al-‘Aynī رحمہ اللہ and ‘Allāmah as-Sakhāwī رحمہ اللہ have in fact classified this as a fabrication.⁵⁷

The ‘*ulamā*’ – in the above references – have therefore ruled it as a *bid‘ah* (innovation).

And Allāh Ta‘ālā knows best.

⁵⁶ Al-Bayhaqī, *Shu‘ab l-Īman* 5:334, as-Sakhāwī, *al-Maqāsid l-Ḥasanah* 1085.

⁵⁷ Ibn Rajab, *Laṭā‘if l-Ma‘ārif* pg. 112, al-‘Aynī, *Umdat l-Qārī* ḥadīth 2000, as-Sakhāwī, *al-Maqāsid l-Ḥasanah* 1085.

Writing 'Bismillāhir Raḥmānir Raḥīm' on the first of Muḥarram

Question

Is this authentic?

"Whoever, on the first of Muḥarram, writes down the entire 'Bismillāhir Raḥmānir Raḥīm' on a piece of paper 113 times and keeps it with him, will be saved from all types of calamities and misfortunes

Answer

Muftī Muḥammad Shāfi ʿī  has mentioned this as a prescription [ʿamal]. i.e. As a tried and tested practice without necessarily being sourced from Qurān or Ḥadīth.⁵⁸

There is no harm on practising upon this especially since Muftī Muḥammad Shāfi ʿī  has stated that this is tried and tested, as long as one does not deem it Sunnah nor binding.

And Allāh Taʿālā knows best.

⁵⁸ *Jawahirul Fiqh* 2:187

Charity on ‘Āshūrā’

Question

One should ensure that he distributes charities on ‘Āshūrā’, the 10th Muḥarram, because Nabī ﷺ said:

"Whoever gives charity on the 10th of Muḥarram will be rewarded for never ever rejecting a beggar."

Answer

This is part of a lengthy narration which has been declared a fabrication by the Muḥaddithūn. The narration is therefore **not** suitable to quote.⁵⁹

And Allāh Ta‘ālā knows best.

⁵⁹ *Tanzihush Shari’ah* 2:151, *Al Athar ‘l Marfu’ah*, pg. 97

Nabī's ﷺ response after hearing the Jews' reasoning for fasting on 'Āshūrā'

Question

Kindly explain the following words that appear in a Ḥadīth related to 'Āshūrā':

فنحن أحق وأولى بموسى منكم

Answer

This phrase was Nabī's ﷺ response after hearing the Jews' reasoning for fasting on 'Āshūrā' (i.e. the 10th of Muḥarram).⁶⁰

Literally it means: [if that's the case,] then we [i.e. the Muslims] are more deserving [of following] and closer to Musa ﷺ than you all [i.e. the Jews].

Mulla 'Alī Qārī has explained that as Muslims, we conform to the core principles of Mūsā's ﷺ *din* and testify to the sanctity of the *Tawrah* [along with all of its contents] to a much higher degree than the Jews themselves. They, on the other hand, do not express the same type of reverence as they have altered, changed, and falsely interpolated many aspects of both the *Tawrah* and their religion.

Since the Jews decided to fast on the day of 'Āshūrā', because Mūsā ﷺ observed it's fast, then we as *Muslims*, having a greater connection to Mūsā ﷺ through both our creed and conduct, are honor bound to a higher degree and ought to fast as well.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ l-Bukhārī* 2004, Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1130.

⁶¹ *Mirqāt*: 2067; Also see: *Irshad 's Sari*: 2004.

And Allāh Ta‘ālā knows best.

Good deeds carried out during the four sacred months hold greater reward

Question

Who is this attributed to and please mention the reference?

اختص الله أربعة أشهر جعلهن حرما وعظم حرماتهن وجعل الذنب فيهن أعظم وجعل العمل الصالح والأجر أعظم

Allāh Ta‘ālā offered distinction to four months. He has made them sacred and has increased their sacredness. He has made sinning in them more sinful and good deeds carried out during these months more rewarding.

Answer

Imām Tabari and Imām Ibn Abī Ḥātim رحمهما الله have recorded this as the statement of Sayyidunā ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbas رضي الله عنه.⁶²

The four sacred months are Dhul Qa‘dah, Dhul Ḥijjah, Muḥarram and Rajab.⁶³

And Allāh Ta‘ālā knows best.

⁶² Tafṣīr Tabarī; *Jamī' 'l Bayān, Tafṣīr Ibn Abī Ḥātim, Surah Tawbah* 36. Also see: *Laṭā'if l-Ma'ārif*, pg. 207, Al Maktab 'l Islami edition.

⁶³ Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ l-Bukhārī* 4662, Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1679.

Passing one's hand on the head of an orphan on 'Āshūrā'

Question

What is the authenticity of this ḥadīth?

Nabī ﷺ said,

"Pass your hand over the head of an orphan on the day of 'Āshūrā', it will be as though you have done good to the orphans of the entire Ummah."

Answer

The Muḥaddithūn have declared this ḥadīth a fabrication. The ḥadīth is therefore not suitable to quote.⁶⁴

And Allāh Ta'ālā knows best.

⁶⁴ *Tanzihush Shari'ah*, 2:151, *Al Athar 'l Marfu'ah*, pg. 97.

Nabi ﷺ would revere the day of ‘Āshūrā’ and a miracle regarding his saliva

Question

What is the source of this ḥadīth?

كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يعظم يوم عاشوراء، حتى إن كان ليدعوا بصبيانه وصبيان فاطمة المراضع، فيقول لأمهاتهم: لا ترضعوهم إلى الليل ويتفل في أفواههم، فكان ريقه يجزئهم

Rasūlullāh ﷺ would revere the day of ‘Āshūrā’ so much so that he would call the suckling children and Fāṭimah’s ﷺ suckling children and instruct their mothers not to feed them till the night. Nabī ﷺ would place his saliva in their mouths and that would suffice them [against hunger].

Answer

Imām Tabarānī رحمه الله has recorded this narration. Imām Abū Ya’la رحمه الله has also recorded this narration with variation in the wording.⁶⁵

And Allāh Ta‘ālā knows best.

⁶⁵ *Al Mu’jam ‘l Kabīr*, 704, *Al Mu’jam ‘l Awsat*, 2589, *Musnad Abī Ya’la*, 7162.

An unreliable narration regarding feeding a fasting person on the day of ‘Āshūrā’

Question

How reliable is this ḥadīth?

"Whoever gives ifṭār to a person on the day of ‘Āshūrā’, it is as the whole nation of Muḥammad ﷺ broke fast by him."

Answer

This narration appears in Musnadul Firdaws on the authority of Sayyidunā ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās ؓ. This narration also appears in Faḍāil ‘l Awqāt of Imām Bayhaqī ؓ as part of a longer narration.

Sayyidunā ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās ؓ reported that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said:

"Whoever feeds a fasting person ifṭār on the day of ‘Āshūrā’, it is as though the entire ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ had ifṭār by him."⁶⁶

However, the Muḥaddithūn have declared a narrator of the ḥadīth a fabricator. It is therefore not suitable to quote.⁶⁷

And Allāh Ta‘ālā knows best.

⁶⁶ Musnad ‘l Firdaws, ḥadīth: 5783, Faḍāil ‘l Awqāt, ḥadīth: 237.

⁶⁷ Dhayl ‘l La-Alil Masnu‘ah, 1:470, ḥadīth: 570, Tanzihush Shari‘ah, 2:165. Also see: Kitāb ‘l Majruhīn Min ‘l Muḥaddithīn of Imām Ibn Hibbān, 1:324

Nabi ﷺ sought the virtue of fasting on ‘Āshūrā’

Question

Is this narration authentic?

عن عبيد الله بن أبي يزيد، سمع ابن عباس رضي الله عنهما، وستل عن صيام يوم عاشوراء فقال: ما علمت أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم صام يوما يطلب فضله على الأيام إلا هذا اليوم ولا شهرا إلا هذا الشهر. يعني رمضان

Sayyidunā ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās ؓ was asked regarding the fasting on ‘Āshūrā’. He replied, I am unaware of Rasūlullāh ﷺ singling out a day to fast, seeking its reward except this day [‘Āshūrā’] and this month [of Ramaḍān].⁶⁸

Answer

Imām Muslim ؓ has recorded this ḥadīth in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. It is therefore authentic.

Imām al-Bukhārī ؓ has recorded this narration with slight variation in the wording.⁶⁹

And Allāh Ta‘ālā knows best.

⁶⁸ Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1132.

⁶⁹ Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ l-Bukhārī* 2006.