

## Fasting major part of Sha'baan, fasting second half

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

### *Reconciling the hadeeths regarding fasting the major part of Sha'baan and the interdiction of fasting the second half of it*

**Question:** What is the reason for which the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ fasts many days of Sha'baan and how can we remove the contradiction regarding the hadeeths which forbid to fast the second half of Sha'baan? May Allaah reward you with good.

**Answer:** All praise is due to Allaah, the Lord of the Worlds. Peace and blessing be upon whom Allaah sent as a mercy to the Worlds, upon his Family, his Companions and his Brothers until the Day of Resurrection.

It is reported in the authentic hadeeth of `A'ishah رضي الله عنها that she said: "**The Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ never fasted in any month more than in the month of Sha'baan**"<sup>1</sup>. According to Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها: "**the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ did not fast the whole month except Sha'baan which he combined with Ramadhaan**"<sup>2</sup>.

Fasting the whole month means the major part of it, as "**The major part has the status of the totality**", though, the figurative use of the word is not very often, and the principle is that it means the proper sense. However, what makes us say that it is used figuratively is what is reported in the authentic hadeeth of `A'ishah رضي الله عنها who said: "**I never saw Allaah's Apostle صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ fasting for a whole month except the month of Ramadhaan, and did not see him fasting in any other month more than in the month of Sha'baan**"<sup>3</sup>. It is also reported that she رضي الله عنها said: "**I have never seen him having fasted a whole month since he came to Madeenah, except when it was Ramadhaan**"<sup>4</sup>. This is supported by the hadeeth of Ibn `Abbaas

<sup>1</sup> Reported by Al-Bukhaaree, chapter of « Fasting », concerning the fasting of the month of Sha'baan (1/471) and by Muslim, chapter of « Fasting » (1/513) number (1156), on the authority of `A'ishah رضي الله عنها.

<sup>2</sup> Reported by Aboo Dawood, chapter of « Fasting », concerning one who links the fasting of the month of Sha'baan with the fasting of the month of Ramadhaan (2/521), by At-Tirmidhee, chapter of « Fasting », concerning the fact of linking the fasting of the month of Sha'baan with the fasting of the month of Ramadhaan, and by Ahmed (6/311), on the authority of Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها. This hadeeth is judged authentic by Al-Albaanee in « Saheeh Abee Dawood » (hadeeth 2336).

<sup>3</sup> Reported by Al-Bukhaaree, chapter of « Fasting », concerning the fasting of the month of Sha'baan (1/471) and by Muslim, chapter of « Fasting » (1/513) number (1156), on the authority of `A'ishah رضي الله عنها.

<sup>4</sup> Reported by Muslim, chapter of « Fasting » (1/513) number (1156) and by An-Nasaa'ee, chapter of « Fasting » (hadeeth 2349), on the authority of `A'ishah رضي الله عنها.

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رضي الله عنهما who said: **"The Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ never fasted for a whole month except the month of Ramadhan"**<sup>5</sup>.

The reason behind fasting much in Sha'baan, is that it is a month in which deeds are taken up to Allaah تعالى. The Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ would like that his deeds be taken up while he is fasting, as it is established in the hadeeth of Ussaama Ibn Zayd رضي الله عنهما, he said: "O Messenger of Allaah, I do not see you fasting in any month more than in Sha'baan. He said, **'that is a month (Sha'baan) which people neglect between Rajab and Ramadhan. It is the month in which people's deeds are taken up to the Lord of the Worlds, and I would like my deeds to be taken up whilst I am fasting'**"<sup>6</sup>.

There is nothing that prevents a person from catching up in Sha'baan the supererogatory accumulated days that he did not fast because of a travel, incident or impediment, hoping that his deeds will be taken up while fasting. Moreover, the fasting person in Sha'baan will find, after having accustomed himself to fast, a sweetness and a pleasure in fasting, that will allow him to start the month of Ramadhan with vigour and energy and his soul will be trained to obey The Most Beneficent<sup>7</sup>.

This been said, the contradiction disappears when we reconcile the hadeeths which indicate the permissibility and recommendation of fasting the major part of Sha'baan and the prohibition of fasting the second part of it which is mentioned in the hadeeth attributed to the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ by Aboo Hurairah رضي الله عنه: **"When the middle of Sha'baan comes, do not fast till the month of Ramadhan"**<sup>8</sup>, and the prohibition to fast a day or two before the beginning of Ramadhan mentioned in the hadeeth of the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: **"None of you should fast a day or two before the month of Ramadhan unless he has the habit of fasting (optionally and if his fasting coincides with that day) then he can fast it"**<sup>9</sup>.

So, the contradiction can be ruled out by the exception mentioned in the hadeeth of Aboo Hurairah when he said: **"...unless he has a habit of fasting, then he can fast it"**, that is to say, unless it coincides with a day he has the habit to fast<sup>10</sup>, as someone who has the habit of

<sup>5</sup> Reported by Al-Bukhaaree, chapter of « Fasting », concerning what is mentioned about the Prophet's fasting and about his non-fasting (1/471) and by Muslim, chapter of « Fasting » (1/513) number (1156), on the authority of Ibn `Abbaas رضي الله عنهما.

<sup>6</sup> Reported by An-Nasaa'ee, chapter of « Fasting », concerning the fasting of the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ (hadeeth 2357) and by Ahmad (5/201), on the authority of Ussaama Ibn Zayd رضي الله عنهما. Al-Albaanee judged it Hassan (good) in « Al-Irwaa' » (4/103).

<sup>7</sup> See: "Lataa'if Al-Ma`arif" by Ibn Rajab (135).

<sup>8</sup> Reported by Aboo Dawood, chapter of « Fasting », concerning the detestation of that (2/521), by At-Tirmidhee, chapter of « Fasting », concerning the detestation of fasting the second half of Sha'baan due to the coming of the month of Ramadhan (hadeeth 738), by Ibn Maajah, chapter of « Fasting », concerning what is reported about the interdiction of observing fasting before the beginning of Ramadhan, except for one who is used to fast, then this fasting coincides with that day (hadeeth 1651) and by Ahmad (2/442), on the authority of Aboo Hurairah رضي الله عنه. This hadeeth is judged authentic by Al-Albaanee in « Saheeh Al-Jaami' » (hadeeth 397).

<sup>9</sup> Reported by Al-Bukhaaree, chapter of « Fasting », concerning the fact that one should not fast one or two days before the beginning of Ramadhan (1/457) and by Muslim, chapter of « Fasting » (1/483) number (1082), on the authority of Aboo Hurairah رضي الله عنه.

<sup>10</sup> See: « Al-Majmoo' » by An-Nawawee (6/400).

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fasting supererogatory fast like: the fasting on Monday and Thursday, or the fasting of Dawood (David) عليه السلام who fasts one day and not the next, or fasting three days in each month. Therefore, the prohibition concerns someone who fasts those days (in the second half of Sha'baan) without having a habit of fasting<sup>11</sup>, that is to say, supererogatory fasting.

We add to this meaning with greater reason: making up, expiation and vow whether it is absolute or restricted, as performing these is obligatory, since the proofs concerning the obligation of making up (missed days of fasting), expiation and fulfilment of vows are unequivocal and certain. Moreover, it is established in the rules of the fundamentals of jurisprudence that: "**What is certain does not annul or contradict what is uncertain**"<sup>12</sup>.

The perfect knowledge belongs to Allaah. Our last prayer is all praise is due to Allaah, the Lord of the Worlds. Peace and blessing be upon our Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, his Family, his Companions and Brothers till the Day of Resurrection.

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<sup>11</sup> See: « Fath Al-Baaree » by Ibn Hajar (4/215) and « Subul As-Salaam » by As-San`aani (2/349).

<sup>12</sup> See: the non-contradiction of what is certain and what is uncertain in « Sharh Al-Mumti` » by Ash-Sheeraazi (2/950-951), in « Al-Faqeeh Wal-Mutafaqqih » by Al-Khateeb Al-Baghdaadi (1/215), in « Al-Minhaaj » by Al-Baaji (page 120) and in « Sharh Tanqeeh Al-Fusool » by Al-Qaraafi (page 421).