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ISL130:AŞ- ŞALĀT AND AŞ-ŞAWM

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MODULE 1

Unit 1: The concept of *Ibādah*(worship in Islam)

2: *Ṣalāt*: Definition, Significance and Pre-requisite for its validity

3: *Wuḍū'u* (Ablution) Description and Significance.

4: Description of a complete *Rak-ah*.

5: Differences between *Ṣalāt* and *Du'ā'*.

UNIT 1

THE CONCEPT OF *IBĀDAH* (WORSHIP IN ISLAM)

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1.0 Introduction

Islam in its broadest context can be divided into two major parts; faith and devotional duties. You will find these two parts emphasized side by side throughout the passages of the Holy *Qurān* which indicates that one without the other is of less value.

As you have learnt in the foregoing units, the first part consists of truths we are incapable of knowing on our own as you have learnt in the belief in God, His Angels, His Books, His *Messenger s*, the Resurrection and Predestination.

In the second part are the four practical worships viz: *Ṣalāt* (Prayer), *Zakāt* (Charity), *Ṣawm* (Fasting) and *Hajj* (Pilgrimage to Mecca). In it also are included practical instructions regarding human life and conduct; the dos and don'ts which are further split up into sub-divisions like morality, social conduct, rights and duties etc, etc.

In this unit, we shall examine the concept of worship in Islam while in the subsequent units of this Module we shall study *Ṣalāt* (the Canonical Prayer), the requisites for its validity, its various kinds and what the whole rituals signify shall not be left out.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- i. Identify the relationship between faith and worship in Islam
- ii. Define the term *Ibādah* and assess the concept.
- iii. Discuss the various aspects of *Ibādah*.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Definition and Concept of *Ibādah*

Ibādah is the Islamic term for worship. It is an Arabic word for whose dictionary meaning is to worship, to adore, to venerate among other meanings. Submissiveness, humility, adoration or veneration etc is thus *Ibādah* whether to God, animate or inanimate objects, celestial bodies, human beings, selfish desires or any thing other than God. Apart from this dictionary meaning of the word, the Holy *Qur'ān* is also replete with the use of the word in this sense. The concordance of *Qur'ān* ic vocabularies lists many of such usage. From the same root comes also the derivative-noun '*Abd*' meaning, slave, worshipper, servant etc.

In Islam however, *Ibādah* means worship or adoration deserved from mankind only by the Creator and Grantor of the best of favours such as life, understanding, hearing and seeing. Also in a tradition related by Abu Hurayrah, the Prophet Muhammad (S) is reported as saying 'let no one say to a servant '*abdī*' my slave; rather, say *fatāya*; my young boy. This is to avoid using a diction which gives the impression that they adore him. Eligibility of adoration belongs only to the Lord of mankind; masters and servants alike among them.

Hence, Allah *ta'ālā* has said I have created the *Jinn* and mankind only to worship Me . . . And to every people we sent a prophet to convey to them that they ought to worship Allah and avoid *Tāghūt*. Your Lord has decreed that you shall worship none but Him and

show kindness to your parents. Worship Allah and do not associate any other thing or being with Him. etc.

3.2 Scope of *Ibādah*

The *Ibādah* for which Allah created man is such that is wholly for man's own good and the fulfilment of man's own spiritual destiny. We have been commanded to it by God so that we may thereby strengthen our awareness of Him and make ourselves worthy of His special grace.

Our *Ibādah* should be such that should reflect in our daily conduct, such that should determine our attitudes towards life and help us to attain moral and spiritual perfection. If it fails to urge us to safeguard the rights of others, especially the weak and the poor, it is of no value to the worshiper. *Qur'ān* 107: 1-7 says :

أَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي يُكَذِّبُ بِالْإِيمَانِ * فَذَلِكَ الَّذِي يَدْعُ الْيَتِيمَ * وَلَا يَحِضُّ عَلَى
طَعَامِ
الْمَسْكِينِ * فَوَيْلٌ لِلْمُصَلِّينَ * الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ * الَّذِينَ
هُمْ يُرَاؤُونَ * وَيَمْنَعُونَ الْمَاعُونَ *

Have you seen him who belies religion? That is the one who drives away the orphan with harshness and does not urge the feeding of the poor. Woe be onto the worshippers who are unmindful of their prayers. Who do good only to show off and refrain from acts of kindness.

Thus, if we remove from the road a stone, a thorn or a banana peel with the thought in our mind that the next man may not be injured through them; it is service to man. If we look upon the needy sympathetically, rescue him from his misery and suffering, feed and clothes him, it constitutes an act of worship and piety. An English rendition of *Hadīth* 25 of the Forty Selected Traditions of al-Nawawī goes as follows:

From Abu Dharr who reported that some people from among the Companions of the Apostle of God said to the Prophet: O Apostle of God, the rich people take off all the rewards. They say prayers just as we do; they fast just as we do; but they can give in charity out of the super abundance of their wealth (and so surpass us in storing up merits that will bring rewards). He said: Has not God appointed for you what you should give in charitable alms? Truly in every *tasbeeh* is a charity worship in every *takbīr* is a charity-worship; in every *tahmīd* is a charity worship; in every *tahlīl* is a charity worship, in every enjoining of righteousness is a charity-worship; in every

forbidding of what is wrong is a charity worship even when one of you makes love to his wife that is a charity-worship. They said: Oh Apostle of God! how is it that when one of us satisfies his desires (with his wife) there will be for him in that a reward. He answered: had he made it in a forbidden thing would he not have committed a sin? So when he puts it in the lawful things there is a reward for it also.

And in *Hadīth*: 26 of the same collection

An act of charity-worship is done each day that the sun rises, if you straighten out (some trouble) between two persons. If you help (lift) a man in his beast, mounting him thereon or lifting up his baggage on it is a charity and in a good word is charity – worship, and in every step you take to prayer is a charity worship and whenever you remove something harmful from the path, that is a charity worship.

Hence *Ibādah* in general includes all actions which are performed with the aim of gaining pleasure of God and earning nearness unto Him, be it devotional, economic, commercial, political, social or any other acts carried out exclusively to pay reverent service to Allah.

By virtue of man's quality of mind, body and behaviour, compared with other animate and inanimate objects in the creation, it is worthy of him to stay permanently in a state of divine worship and glorification to God. The special favours bestowed upon him by God and the exquisite rewards set aside for him would seem to require that he did not spend a moment of his life in anything except divine worship and glorification like the angels. (see *Qur'ān* 21:19 – 20).

But since man has to serve as the vicegerent of God on earth and fulfill that crucial role in the entire design of the creation, he has not been bound to constant worship and glorification. Nor has he been constrained to keep himself permanently engaged in *qiyām*, *rukū'*, *sujūd* or other forms of worship as the case is with planets, trees, mountains, birds and animals!

In view of this, there was need for mankind some acts of worship that will be in keeping with the distinctiveness of his personality with his position and function in the world and with the duties and obligations entrusted to him as the vice-gerent of God on earth. These acts of devotional worships are *Ṣalāt*, (canonical prayer), *zakāt* (charity), *Ṣiyām* (fasting) and *Hajj* (pilgrimage).

Exercise

Give an explanation of the term *Ibādah* which will include all its various branches.

4.0 Conclusion

In Islam, worship is a fundamental aspect of life. Worship is the very object of man's creation. Since Allah is the source of all goodness and power, He stands beyond all needs of human service. It is therefore for man's own benefit that he should place himself under divine protection by worshipping Allah, the divine being.

The term *Ibādah* does not mean praying five times daily, nor observing the other three devotional worships only. According to several verses of the glorious *Qur'ān* and passages of *ahādith*, *Ibādah* means observance of all that Allah prescribes as vital duties that will benefit the nation, the family, the neighbours, the less fortunate people and humanity at large. The twin duties of faith and righteous deeds are mentioned in several verse of the glorious *Qur'ān* again and again as the means of attaining eternal bliss. The *Qur'ān* says: "For those who believe and work righteous deeds, there will be Gardens of Bliss." (Q 31:8)

5.0 Summary

In Islam, the concept of worship is the fundamental aspect not only of religious life but of life itself. In summary, it could be stated as follows:

- i. *Ibādah* (worship) means not only the prayer of the five pillars of Islam, but Allah's consciousness and good deeds.
- ii. *Ibādah* includes all lawful acts done, and unlawful acts avoided, in the spirit of obedience to Allah. Therefore, even earning one's livelihood can become an act of worship.
- iii. *Ibādah* includes all acts of charity done to seek Allah's pleasure.
- iv. The pillars of Islam, Allah's consciousness, and good deeds are all aspects of worship, and for those who try to practise these to the best of their ability, Allah has promised the reward of paradise
- v. Prayer is a part of *Ibādah*, and it is the first step towards the spiritual perfection of man.

6.0 Tutor - Marked Assignment

Define *Ibādah* and discuss its various components.

The five pillars of Islam are not end by themselves but a means to an end. Explain briefly.

7.0 References/Further Readings

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UNIT 2

ŞALĀT: DEFINITION AND PRE-REQUISITE FOR VALIDITY.

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- 1.0: Introduction
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- 3.1: Definition of *Şalāt*
- 3.2: Pre-Requisite for Validity
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1.0 Introduction

In the previous unit, you were taught that man has been created purposely for the worship of God. You were also made to understand the concept of worship in Islam. Regular observance of *Şalāt*, Alms-giving, Fasting, Hajj were all identified as major acts of devotional worships in Islam. It was also emphasized that among other things, *Ibādah* in general includes all actions which are performed with the aim of gaining pleasure of God and earning nearness to Him, be it social, commercial, political or even some meritorious acts such as recitation of formulae of testimony, glorification and other activities that may be intended to be acts of worship. In this unit, you will be able to learn the meaning of *Şalāt*, its significance, and the prerequisites for its validity. You will agree with me that a deep study of this topic is worth-while considering the fact that *Şalāt* is an indispensable aspect of the Muslims' daily life.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- i. define *Şalāt*
- ii. understand the significance of *Şalāt*.
- iii. and identify the pre-requisite for its validity

1.0 Main Content

3.1 Definition of *Salāt* (Ritual Prayer In Islam).

The dictionary meaning of *Ṣalāt* is prayer and supplication while the technical (*Fiqh*) definition of the term is “the act of devotion which begins with the *Takbīratu `l- Ihrām* (the first uttering of *Allahu Akbar* and terminates with *Taslīm*. i.e. the uttering of *As-Salām ‘alaykum*).

The *Ṣalāt* devotional worship is the second pillar of Islam after *Imān* in whose mode all the possible positions which are necessary for developing the right attitude of reverence have been combined. This ritual includes standing, bowing, prostration and sitting postures and all these positions are sufficient to inspire the heart of a worshipper with feelings of humility before the Divine Being, Allah.

The *Qurān* uses the term for canonical prayer which stands for “attending to, praying or seeking nearness to Allah”. The glorious Book also taught the essentials of the devotional worship. It says:

قُلْ أَمَرَ رَبِّي بِالْقِسْطِ وَأَقِيمُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ عِندَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَادْعُوهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ كَمَا بَدَأَكُمْ تَعُودُونَ

“Say: my Lord hath commanded justice, and that ye set your whole selves (to Him) at every time and place of prayer, and call upon Him, making your devotion sincere as in His sight: such as He created you in the beginning, so shall ye return”. (Q 7:29)

And elsewhere, it reads:

كَلَّا لَا تُطِيعُهُ وَاسْجُدْ وَاقْتَرِبْ

“Nay, heed him not. But bow down in adoration and bring thyself closer (to God)”. (Q 96:19)

And the Prophet (S.A.W.) has demonstrated practically how it has to be observed and performed and gave the directive: صَلُّوا كَمَا رَأَيْتُمُونِي أُصَلِّي

Meaning: Observe your *Ṣalāt* the way you see me observe mine.

The question you should ask yourself now is how would one attend to Allah, seek nearness to Him and invoke Him. There is one and only one correct answer to this question and that is by following the way taught by the prophet (S.A.W.) of Allah, which

alone is the right and authentic way. The Holy prophet (S.A.W.) has not only taught the essentials of the prayer, its recitals, times and *rakāh* and its full procedures, but also practically demonstrated all this during his life.

Self Assessment Exercise

Give the various definitions of *Ṣalāt*.

3. 2: Pre-Requisite for Validity

There are three pre-requisites for performing *Ṣalāt*. It is when they have been fulfilled before one can stand before God for *Ṣalāt*. These three conditions are:

- i. *At-Tahārah wa `l-wuḍū`u* (*cleanliness and ablution*): This includes cleanliness of the body, the garments and the place where the *Ṣalāt* is to be performed.
- ii. *Satru `l-`awrah* (concealing of private part). In the case of a man it is desirable that he be covered at least from the navel to the knees, the sides, the front, and the rear. A woman's body should be totally covered except for her hands and face.
- iii. *Tawajjuhu `l-qiblah* facing direction of Ka `bah in Mecca.

At-Tahārah, Wudū` and Ghuslu

“O ye who believe, when you prepare for prayer, wash your faces and your hands to the elbows; rub your heads and your feet to the ankles.’ Q.5:7

This *āyah* is the basis for the compulsory act of performing ablution without which *Ṣalāt* will not be valid. On the other hand the Prophet had given practical illustrations of how it should be performed. Our assumption is that how to perform ablution is well known to you. The important points we would note therefore would be on the Islamic attitude to cleanliness in general.

Islam demands complete cleanliness from people all the time. It established the basis of *Ṣalāt* prayer on purifying the heart from the unseemliness of doubt, polytheism, hypocrisy, deviation, hatred, rancor and envy. (b). Cleaning the body and purifying it from filth, dirt, and defilement.

“God loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean.” Q.2:22. The Prophet said: ‘Cleanliness is half of faith’ and ‘The key to prayer is cleanliness. Another report narrated from him says “Cleanliness is part of faith.” Water which may be used should be the natural water of rain, rivers, the sea, springs, wells or bore holes. Its taste, colour and smell must be normal and should any of these three characteristics be abnormal then the water, according to the rule of Islamic Law is defiled and may not be drunk nor used. Nor may it be used for purification. The view of Islamic in this respect is supported and confirmed by modern medicine and common sense.

He who would perform *Ṣalāt* must perform it wearing clean clothes. In addition, the place in which the prayer is to be performed should be as clean as his body. Should there be dirt on any of these things he must remove it with water, cleaning it and removing the stain. Filths which should be removed include urine, excrement, semen, saliva of dogs and pigs and bloods.

A woman must remove all traces of her menstrual period when it ends and perform ritual bath called *ghuslu `l-hayḍah*. She must also perform the ritual bath after childbirth called (*ghuslu `n-nifās*). She is exempted from performance of *Ṣalāt* during her menstrual period. She can only be reciting portions of the *Qur’ān* she learnt by heart. As well; she may not be carrying the Holy Scripture. Neither should she enter the mosque with menstrual or childbirth blood. She is also exempted from taking part in *Ramādān* fast. Similarly a woman in childbirth does not perform the prayer even though the time of post-natal blood-letting lasts forty days. It is valid for her to assemble at ‘Arafah during pilgrimage, but circumambulating the Ka’bah should be postponed.

A man may not have sexual intercourse with his wife during her menstrual period or following childbirth as this is harmful to them both. The most modern views concerning hygiene are those which have always been held by Islam.

They ask thee concerning women’s course; say: “they are a hurt and pollution so keep away from women during their courses, and do not approach them until they are clean. But when they have purified themselves ye may approach them, in any manner, time or place ordained for you by God. For God loves who keep themselves pure and clean. (Q.2:222) .

Self Assessment Exercise

Mention some pre-requisite of *Salāt*. Elaborate on *at-Tahārah*.

2.0 Conclusion

Ṣalāt is the act of devotion which begins with the *Takbīratu ʿl-Ihrām* terminates with *Taslīm*. It is the second important pillar of Islam. It is the very object of man's creation. *Ṣalāt* is part of *Ibadah*, worship. It is the first step towards the spiritual perfection of man. The pre-requisite for the validity of *Ṣalāt* which should be observed by a Muslim includes ritual cleanliness, concealment of nudity and facing the direction of Kaabah. *Ṣalāt* is to be performed in a particular form and at stated time. *Ṣalāt* is a moral and spiritual discipline which should lead us to cultivate righteous habits and selfless service to humanity.

5.0 Summary

After *Imān* comes *Ṣalāt* prayer as the best and the foremost important physical and spiritual worship in Islam. *Ṣalāt* prayer is very important and obligatory to a Muslim. It is something binding on every Muslim, provided one is sane, adult, clean and in one's proper senses.

Indeed, the observance of the prayer is a natural consequence of your affirmation of faith and you should know that one is incomplete and imperfect without the other. An ideal prayer is that which is observed consciously with full regard for all its inward and outward requirements.

6.0 Tutor - Marked Assignment

Discuss the Islamic concept of worship with particular reference to *Ṣalāt* prayer.

Identify two verses of the Glorious *Qur'ān* which discuss *Ṣalāt*.

Explain the importance of *Ṣalāt* prayer in Islam.

7.0 Reference/Further Readings

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UNIT 3

SIGNIFICANCE, DESCRIPTION OF A RAK'AH AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN *ŞALĀT* AND *DU'Ā'*

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In unit 2 above you learnt the definition, and prerequisites for the validity of *Şalāt*. We were also able to establish that the *Şalāt* mode of worship involves purity of body, soul and place. It also involves standing bowing and prostration. You will agree with me that at this point, you need to know what the mode of worship signifies. Similarly as you might have been aware, every prayer consists of a number of *rak'ah* and each prayer has its own prescribed number of two, three or four *rak'ah*. Therefore, it is worthwhile to understand what makes up a *rak'ah* in a prayer.

You may also remember that the word prayer is included in the literal meaning of *Şalāt* while another word for prayer or supplication in the Islamic usage is *Du'ā'*. What then is the difference between *Şalāt* and *Du'ā'*? The answer to this question will be provided for you in this unit.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to

- i. Understand the significance of *Şalāt*.
- ii. Perform and describe a unit of *Şalāt* called *rak'ah*
- iii. Mention the prescribed number of *rak'ah* in each obligatory prayer.
- iv. Distinguish between *salat* and *du'ā'*

3.0 Main Content

3.1. Significance of *Ṣalāt*

Ṣalāt is the first and most important duty in Islam after one has borne witness to Divine Oneness and the Apostleship of the Holy Prophet.

In the *Mirāj*, the nocturnal journey of the Prophet, in which he was taken through the seven heavens to the presence of God, fifty daily *Ṣalāt* were prescribed for the believers. This was done to remind man that he was created purposely to worship God and that the number of daily services originally ordained for him was fifty; and that God out of His mercy reduced the fifty to five and made the five equivalent of fifty in reward.

The time-schedule of *Ṣalāt* is indicated in the *Qur'ān* :

Establish worship at the going down of the sun until the dark of the night and also at dawn. Prayer at dawn is the time of immediate nearness. Q. 17:78 (With the down of the sun – *Zuhr*, *Asr* and *Maghrib*- prayers are meant,). With 'until the dark of the night' *Ishā* is meant; and with 'at dawn' *Subh*-payer is meant.

Another verse of the *Qur'ān* reads:

Celebrate the praise of thy Lord before the rising of the sun and before the going down thereof. And glorify him some hours of the night, and at the two ends of the day, that thou may find acceptance. (Q. 20: 130)

The spiritual significance of these hours and the heavenly blessings which descend in them are known only to Allah and His Apostle.

The five daily prayers, with their fixed hours and *rak-^cahs*, are the spiritual food prescribed for mankind by his Creator who is not only the Healer of the soul but also their Maker and to whose Will they must submit.

The *Ṣalāt* ought to be offered at the hours and in the form, measure and manner laid down by God.

It has however been suggested that one of the reasons for the marking out of these hours is that the polytheists used to worship their false deities like the sun, the stars, the stones and the fire, at that very time. Hence, the same hours were fixed for the worship of One True God.

Ṣalāt is the pillar of faith, the means to salvation and the line of demarcation between a Muslim and an apostate. The *Qur'ān* says: And establish worship and be not of those who ascribe partners (unto Him). Q. 30 – 31. “But if they (the unbelievers) repent and establish worship and pay the poor due then leave their way free” Q. 9:5. “But if they repent and establish worship and pay the poor-due than they are your brethren in religion.” Q.9:11.

It is also related in many *Hadīth* s that the Prophet said: “Between a man and apostasy there is only the giving up of *Ṣalāt*.” Another one says: “What separates believers from apostasy is simply the *Ṣalāt*.”

Ṣalāt is enjoined upon every one: whether he is free or in bondage, rich or poor, healthy or sick, and on a journey or sojourn at home. No man or woman who has attained the age of adulthood is exempted from it. Unlike the other obligatory mode of worship, *Zakāt*, *Ṣawm* and *Hajj* which are subject to various conditions, the *Ṣalāt* should not be neglected even on the battle field.

It is an obligation about which even a divine *Messenger* or a saint cannot afford to be negligent for a moment till death. “And worship thy Lord till the inevitable cometh unto thee” is a commandment of God unto the Prophet Muhammad in Q. 15: 99. If anyone imagines that after attaining the goal of God realization as a result of spiritual exercises or that due to his being engaged in the service of Islam in any other way or because of his lofty achievements and high position *Ṣalāt* no longer remained compulsory for him and he can dispense with it, he is labouring under a grievous delusion.

Verily, prayer prevents human beings from all shameful deeds and forbidden things and the remembrance of Allah is the most distinguished virtue (for mankind) Q. 29:45.

Ṣalāt stands for expression of one’s humbleness and total surrender in devotion to someone whose help one would seek in times of need, i. e God, the Merciful. A believer can never be at ease without it. The Prophet words: “the coolness of my eyes is in *Ṣalāt*”

convey this meaning vividly. He also used to say during the time for prayer. “O Bilāl! Give the call to *Ṣalāt* and bring comfort to my heart”.

Ṣalāt is the link through which the devotee establishes close communion with his Creator. In it he hopes to find remedy for his ills. God says, in the *Qur’ān* : “O ye who believe! Seek help in steadfastness and *Ṣalāt*! Allah is with the steadfast” Q. 2: 153. Whenever the Prophet was worried he used to turn to *Ṣalāt* for help.

Salat is an act in which the physical, mental and spiritual aspects of man partake. The body, partakes, in it through the acts of standing erect kneeling and prostrating. The tongue partakes in it through recitation, the mind partakes in it through reflection and the heart through fear and hope.

See Q. 22: 27, Q.23:10, Q. 32:16, Q.13:13. Thus *Ṣalāt* combines the forms of worship of all creatures.

Self Assessment Exercise

1. Discuss three points that show the importance of *Ṣalāt*.
2. Examine the significance of *Ṣalāt*.

3. 2 Definition and Description of a *Rak-^c ah*

The word *rak-^c ah* means genuflection. Literarily, it means an act of bowing down before Allah but technically it means a complete unit of act of devotion in *Ṣalāt*, which includes standing, bowing down, prostrating and sitting down.

Every *Ṣalāt* prayer consists of a certain number of *rak-^c ah* grouped into twos or multiples of two. There is a sitting down and the recitation of *attahiyyah* at the end of every second *raka^c h*. Therefore, a complete *rak^c ah* is as follows:

- a. You will be expected to stand up with both hands raised to the level of the ears with the face towards the *Qiblah* with the words, *Allāhu Akbar*, meaning God is the Greatest.
- b. The standing position is maintained until *Ṣurah al-fātihah* and any other chapter, verse or verses of the glorious *Qur’ān* are recited.
- c. Again the words *Allahu Akbar* will be pronounced while you bend your head down with the palms resting on your knees. This is known as *Ruku^c* position.

- d. In this position, you are expected to say “*subhāna rabiyy-al-azim wa bihamdihi*” meaning “Glory and praise be to my Great Lord.”.
- e. The standing position is resumed again with the words “*sami’a Allāhu liman hamidahu, rabbanā wa laka `l-hamdu*”, meaning “Allah listens to him who praises Him. Oh our Lord, Yours is praise”.
- f. Next you move to the prostration position with the toes of both feet, both knees, both hands and the forehead touching the ground. This position is called the *sajdah*, “prostration”. While in this position, you will offer a prayer by saying: “*subhāna rabbiya `l-a`lā faghfirlī*”, meaning “Glory be to You my Lord, the Most High forgive me”.
- g. You will sit down placing your both hands on your thighs, and repeat the *sajdah* the second time. Thus, you have come to the end of a complete *rak`ah*.

Each prayer has its own prescribed number of two, three or four *rak`ah* which are as follows:

- a. The **Fajr**, (*Subh*) prayer. It has two compulsory *rak`ah* and two *rak`ah* of *Sunnah* to be observed before the compulsory *rak`ah*
- b. **Zuhr**, early noon prayer. It has four obligatory *rak`ah* and two supererogatory *nafil* before and after.
- c. ‘**Asr**, late afternoon prayer consists of four obligatory *rak`ah* and two or four supererogatory *nafil* before it.
- d. **Maghrib**, evening prayer, is of three obligatory *rak`ah* and two supererogatory *nafil* after.
- e. ‘**Isha**’, Night prayer consists of four obligatory *rak`ah* two or four voluntary *rak`ah* before and three *rak`ah* of *shaf-‘i* and *witr* after.

The *Rak`ahs* which are necessary for each of the *Ṣalāt* to observe have been fixed. The Prophet and after him, the blessed companions observed these hours throughout their lives and in all circumstances. There has been such a great deal of continuity, regularity and uniformity about the *Ṣalāt* that it is impossible to find a parallel among any other community. The Muslim Ummah have preserved it zealously and passed it on dutifully from one generation to another without a single day’s break.

Self Assessment Exercise

Define and describe the word *rak`ah*

3.3. Differences between *Ṣalāt* and *Du‘ā’*

After *Īmān* (faith) comes *Ṣalāt*, (prayer), as an important physical and spiritual worship in Islam. Literally, both *Ṣalāt* and *Du‘ā’* mean prayer, supplication and making a request by the inferior entity to the Superior, invariably by man to God. As a technical term, however, while *Ṣalāt* applies to the canonical or devotional worship, *Du‘ā’* implies “supplication” which is an act of asking for something in a humble form from Allah. There are other major differences between the two, i.e. *Ṣalāt* and *Du‘ā’*.

In the first instance, *Ṣalāt* prayer has been made obligatory for particular categories of people and it is an obligatory duty which has to be carried out by all adults; having Islam and belief in the oneness of Allah as an essential condition. Unlike, *hajj* and *zakat* that are obligatory for rich Muslims only and fasting which is a prescription only in the month of *Ramaḍān*, the performance of *Ṣalāt* is compulsory, on the rich and the poor, healthy or sick, resident at home or on a journey. Whereas, *Du‘ā’* supplication is voluntary without any conditionality for whoever chooses to offer it.

Moreover, *Ṣalāt*, the Islamic ritual prayer, has specific times and is expected to be performed at appointed times. Each of the five daily prayers has its period of observations which have been treated earlier. On the other hand, *Du‘ā’* supplication has no specific time and can be offered at any time.

The ritual prayer of Islam, *Ṣalāt*, cannot be offered except after the fulfilment of certain prerequisites, namely; ritual purity, cleanliness of body, soul, and place and wearing of ritually clean garment. It is also conditional that the direction of *Ka‘bah* must be faced. All the above requirements are not needed when it has to do with *Du‘ā’* supplication. The cleanliness of the body, the garments, the place and covering the body may not be necessary.

For *Ṣalāt*, there is the mode of worship and procedures. You will be expected to observe the following:

- a. Pronouncing the *takbīr*, that is *Allah Akbar*
- b. Recitation of *Sūratu ‘l-Fātihah* and any other *Sūrah* or verse
- c. Assuming bowing posture. (*Rukū‘*)
- d. Standing from *Rukū‘* position
- e. Observing the *sajdah*, prostration

- f. Sitting for the second prostration
- g. Observing the second *sajdah*
- h. Recitation of *Tashahhud*

However, with *Du‘ā’*, supplication, there is neither specific procedures nor any mode. There is also a great departure between *Ṣalāt* and *Du‘ā’* with regards to the language. Naturally, you would have preferred unfolding your heart before your Maker by praying in the language in which you can readily express your feeling. However, with *Ṣalāt* the Islamic ritual prayer, the language which you will be expected to use in observing it is Arabic, the language of the glorious *Qur‘ān*. Whereas with supplication, *dua*, you are free to express yourself in those languages convenient for you. Both *Ṣalāt* and *Du‘ā’* can be observed in congregation or individually. However the *Qur‘ān* and *Hadīth* lay great emphasis on the observance of *Ṣalāt* in congregation as will be discussed later.

Exercise

Explain the concept of *Ṣalāt* and *Du‘ā’* in Islam.

4.0 Conclusion

Ṣalāt, the Islamic ritual prayer, is the second important pillar of Islam after *Īmān*. It is an obligatory duty for every Muslim, male or female rich or poor. On the other hand *Du‘ā’*, supplication is a voluntary duty for every body, Muslims or non-Muslims.

A *rak‘ah* is a section or unit of the prayer which may be *fard*, obligatory, *Sunnah*, non-obligatory or special prayer. Each prayer has its own prescribed number of *rak‘ahs* it could be two, three, four or multiple of two *rak‘ah*. A *rak‘ah* consists of an act of standing up, bowing down, prostrating and sitting from prostration. In each of the positions there are special supplications that you are expected to offer. Quite many differences exist between *Ṣalāt* and *Du‘ā’*. These are in the areas of mode of worship and procedures, times of worship, the pre-requisites, such as cleanliness of the body, garment, place of worship and performance of *wudu* ablution or *Gushlu*, ritual bath. Also *Ṣalāt* can only be observed in Arabic language while you can offer your *Du‘ā’* in any language of your choice.

5.0 Summary

This unit examines the importance Islam attaches to the *Ṣalāt* ritual prayer. It highlights the five daily ritual prayers which are compulsory and must be observed by all adult Muslim and their routines and procedures. Apart from this, a brief account of specific prerequisites for observation of the rituals of the devotional worships is also discussed in the unit.

In addition,, the unit gives the literal and technical meaning of a *Rak'ah*, describes it fully and provides the number of *rak'ahs* that constitute each *Ṣalāt*. *Du'ā'* is a supplication, an invocation and humble request to Almighty Allah. *Du'ā'* is a voluntary duty which has no specific time, nor specific routine and procedure. The unit concludes with a discussion of the differences between *Ṣalāt* ritual prayer and *Du'ā'* supplication.

6.0. Tutor - Marked Assignments

Define *Ṣalāt* and *Du'ā'* and show the differences between them.

Describe a complete *rak'ah* of *Ṣalāt* and mention the number in each of the five daily prayers.

Identify some verses of the glorious *Qur'ān* which support the prescribed times of prayer in Islam.

7.0 Reference/Further Readings

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Module 2

Unit 1: The Daily, *Jumu'ah* and Two *Eid Prayers*

2: *Jamā'ah*, *Qaṣr*, *Marīd Janāzah* and *Sujūd Sahw*.

3. *Tarāwīh*, *Tahajjud*, *Istikhārah*, *Istisqā*, *Kusūf* and *Khusūf*

UNIT 1:

THE DAILY, JUMU'AH AND TWO EID PRAYERS

Contents

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- 4.0: Conclusion
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1.0 Introduction

In Module 1, we examined the concept and scope of worship (*Ibādah*), defined *Ṣalāt* and discussed prerequisites for its validity. We identified the significance of the canonical worship and described what constitute a *rak'ah*. The differences between *Ṣalāt* and *Du'ā'* were also highlighted. In this module other important components of the all important pillar of Islam which is second only to faith will be introduced to you. Specifically, you will begin with five daily obligatory prayers and some ceremonial prayers; the daily, *Jumu'ah*, and *Eid Salahs*.

2.0 Objective

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- (i) Discuss issues relating to the five daily prayers
- (ii) Explain other occasional or ceremonial prayers in Islam
- (iii) Explain when they are observed and how to observe them.

3.0 Main Content

3. 1. The Five Daily Prayers

The obligatory prayers are the five daily prayers observed at prescribed times. Q.20:130 reads:

فَاصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ غُرُوبِهَا
وَمِنْ أَنَاءِ اللَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْ وَأَطْرَافَ النَّهَارِ لَعَلَّكَ تَرْضَىٰ*

Meaning:

Therefore, be patient with what they say, and celebrate (constantly) the praises of thy Lord, before the rising of the sun, and before its setting, celebrate them for part of hours of the night, and at the sides of the day: that thou may be pleased”

فَإِذَا قُضِيَتْ الصَّلَاةُ فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ فَإِذَا اطْمَأْنَنْتُمْ
 فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَوْقُوتًا

The Holy Book speaks further in Chapter 4 Verse 103:

When ye pass (congregation)prayers, celebrate God’s praises, standing, sitting or lying down on your sides; but when ye are free from danger, set up regular prayers, for such prayers are enjoined on believers at stated times.

These verses of the glorious *Qur’ān* set out the various periods and procedures that the obligatory prayers are to be observed. The following can be deduced from the divine portions:

(a) *Subh*: This is the Morning Prayer; it is observed after dawn and before sunrise. It is also known as *Fajr* prayer in Q.17:78. which reads:

أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذُلُوكِ الشَّمْسِ إِلَىٰ عَسَقِ اللَّيْلِ وَقُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ إِنَّ قُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ كَانَ مَشْهُودًا

Establish regular prayers at the sun’s decline till the darkness of the night; and the *Fajr*/morning reading of the *Qur’ān* (in prayer) for the reading of the *Qur’ān* in the *fajr* (prayer carry their testimony).

(b) *Zuhr*: This is the early noon prayer. This prayer and the first mentioned earlier are referred to in the above quoted verse.

(c) ‘*Aṣr*: - This is the evening prayer; it is performed when the sun is about midway on its course to setting.

(d) *Maghrib*: This is the sunset prayer, it is observed immediately the sun sets.

(e) ‘*Ishā*’: - This is the early night prayer, it is observed when the glow in the West disappears. The ‘*Ishā*’ prayer is mentioned like the *Ṣubh* prayer in the glorious *Qur’ān* .

O ye who believe! Let those whom your right hands possess and (children)

among you, who have not come of age, ask your permission (before they come to your presence) on three occasions, before morning, prayer, then while ye doff your clothes for the noonday heat; and after the late night prayer these are your three times of undress; outside those times it is not wrong for you or for them to move about attending to each other. Thus, does God make clear the signs to you, for God is full of knowledge and wisdom (Q 24: 58)

After or before these five daily obligatory prayers, there are certain numbers of *Sunnah* or supererogatory prayers called *nāfilahs* which accompany each of the obligatory prayers. The diagram below gives an analysis of the times of *Shaf' i* and *Witr*, *Ḍuhā* etc. etc.

TIMES OF THE OBLIGATORY SALAT AND NUMBER OF RAK' AHS

S/No	Name of Prayer	Prescribed period (approximately)	<i>Fard</i>	Number of <i>Rak' ahs</i> <i>Sunnah</i>	Note
1	<i>Ṣalāt Subh</i> Morning prayer.	From dawn till sunrise	2, Loud <i>Qirā'at</i>	2, Before <i>Fard</i>	No <i>Nawāfil</i> or any <i>sajdah</i> should be performed after <i>Fard</i> of <i>subh</i> prayer till sunrises.
2	<i>Ṣalāt Zuhr</i> The Noon Prayer.	From early afternoon when the sun begins to decline (about 1.30 p.m.) till next prayer.	4, Silent <i>Qirā'at</i>	2 or 4 <i>Sunnah</i> before <i>Fard</i> and 2 <i>Sunnah</i> after <i>Fard</i> .	
3	<i>Ṣalāt al-'Aṣr</i> The late Afternoon.	Late Afternoon (about 3.30p.m.) till almost sunset	4, Silent <i>Qirā'at</i>	2 or 4 <i>Sunnah</i> before <i>Fard</i> .	No <i>Nawāfil</i> or any <i>sajdah</i> should be performed after <i>Fard</i> of ' <i>Aṣr</i> till the <i>Maghrib</i> prayer time.
4	<i>Ṣalāt al-Maghrib</i>	Immediately	3, Loud <i>Qirā'at</i> in the first		

	The sun-set prayer.	after sunset	two <i>rak'ahs</i> & silent <i>Qirā'at</i> in the third <i>Rak-'ah</i>	2, After <i>fard</i>	
5	<i>Ṣalāt Isha.</i> The Night Prayer	From about 7.30 p.m. when the red glow in the west has disappeared till midnight.	4, Loud <i>qirā'at</i> in the first two <i>rak-'ahs</i> & silent <i>qirā'at</i> in the last two <i>Rak-'ahs</i>	2 or 4 <i>Sunnah</i> before the <i>fard</i>	2 <i>rak'ahs</i> plus 1 <i>rak'ah</i> of <i>witr</i>

3.2 *Jumuat* (Friday Prayer)

The Friday prayer is obligatory for every Muslim, except the slaves, the women, the children and the sick. The obligatory nature of Friday prayer is supported by the *Qur'ān*, *Sunnah* and consensus of the Muslim. It occupies an important place among the distinctive features of Islam. Q.62:9 says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ
وَدَرُّوا الْبَيْعَ دَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

“O believers! When you hear the call to the Friday prayer, hasten to the remembrance of Allah and leave your trading, this is better for you only if you know it” (Q 62:9)

The other prayers can be offered in congregation and if missed can be offered singly later, but not so for Friday prayer. It is conditioned upon congregation of at least twelve worshippers. If missed, it cannot be offered later; *Zuhr* is to be performed in its place.

An essential part of this Friday prayer is that there should be a *khutbah* (sermon) to be delivered at the commencement of the service. It is also prescribed that one who wants to attend Friday prayer should be clean and take Friday prayer supererogatory ritual bath, have his hair and nails cut and put on decent available cloth. It is also recommendatory to use perfume and attend the mosque early in the afternoon.

3.3 The Two *Eid Ṣalāts* (*Eidu `l-Fiṭr* and *Eidu `l-Aḏhā* Prayers)

A. *Eidu `l-Fiṭr* Prayer

The Muslims celebrate *Eidu`l-Fiṭr* on the first day of the lunar month of Shawwal to mark the completion of annual *Ramaḍān* fast. The *Eidu`l-Adhā* is celebrated on the 10th of the lunar month of Dhul-Hajj to offer sacrifice to God as did Prophets Ibrahim and Muhammad (PBUH) in obedience to the Commandment of Almighty God.

The following eleven things have been prescribed to the faithful Muslims to be done in preparation for the two services.

- (i) To rise early enough in the morning of the *Eid* days
- (ii) To brush the teeth
- (iii) To have bath for the *Eid* after the *Fajr* prayer
- (iv) To put up the best available dress
- (v) To use perfume
- (vi) To arrange for one's personal adornment.
- (vii) To give out *Zakāt al- Fiṭr* before departure for the *Eidu`l-Fiṭr* prayer.
- (viii) To eat some sweet things before going for the *Eidu`l-Fiṭr* prayer.
- (ix) To reach the prayer ground as early as possible.
- (x) To go through one way and return by the other.
- (xi) To be full of meditation by pronouncing the *takbīr* on the way in a low voice

In addition, it is recommendatory for adults to fast till the end of *Eid-al-Adhā* prayer on that day and to be pronouncing the *Tasbīhāt* and *Takbīrāt* after fourteen congregational prayers thereafter.

The two *Eid* prayers consist of two *Rak`ahs* and are observed in the opening ground and in congregation. They are observed in mosques in places where the weather is sometimes hostile.

The time for the *Eid* prayers starts when the sun has risen and brightened up sufficiently and lasts till it begins to decline. As far as possible, the prayer should be delayed, the *Eid-al-Adhā* prayer should be offered a little earlier than the *Eidu`l-Fiṭr* prayer.

The two *Eids* are emphatic *Sunnah* observed by every Muslim upon whom *Jumu`at* prayer is obligatory. Pilgrims are not suppose to observe *Ṣalāt Eidu`l-Adhā* because their assembly at Arafat stands in its place; but some do go to the Sacred Mosque in Makkah to observe it.

Two *Rak`ahs* are necessary (*wājib*) to be performed for both the *Eids* like all other voluntary prayers. After the first *takbīrs*, the *Imām* pronounces other six one after the

other and the congregation follows him simultaneously. The *Imām* recites loudly the *Sūrat al-Fātihah* and another *Sūrah* and then follows the *Rukū'u* and *Sujūd*. This completes the first *Rak-'ah*. Then the *Imām* and the congregation rise up for the second *Rak-'ah*. The *Imām* then says five *takbirs* followed by the congregation. Then the *Suratu 'l-Fātihah* and another *Sūrah* are recited preferably *Sūratu sh-Shams* and thus the second *rak-'ah* is also completed as in other prayers.

After the completion of the *Eid* prayers, the *Imām* delivers a sermon (*Khutbah*) in which he admonishes the congregation concerning the principles of *Zakātu 'l-Fiṭr* and thanks Allah on the completion of *Ramaḍān* fasts and preaches about other essential matters if it is the *Eidu 'l-Fiṭr*. If it is *Eid-al-Adhā* he likewise teaches them the principles of sacrifice and the spirit behind it.

The *Khutbah* is delivered in two parts - though not very necessarily the *Imām* taking a little rest by sitting in the middle of the sermon while silent short supplications are made by the audience. He may deal with any subject relating to the welfare of the community in the *Khutbah* during which absolute quiet should prevail.

There are some very orthodox and conservative people who insist that the *Khutbah* should be delivered in Arabic language only. Some even go to the extreme of using a stereotyped sermon delivered in monotone without any modulation and variation. This is because the *Imām* is ignorant of the art of elocution and even the Arabic language. Therefore the congregation suffers from a parrot-like sermon delivered monotonously. The *Khutbah* need not necessarily be in Arabic language because it is quite a different thing from the actual prayer in which of course Arabic must be maintained.

A *Khutbah* is an admonition to the people, an exhortation to awaken them to their sense of duty and to their responsibility. It is meant to throw light on all questions of life. Therefore it should be given in the language of the people to whom it is addressed or should at least be translated in their language.

Self Assessment Exercises

Mention the five daily prayers in Islam and explain their significance.

Discuss the *Jumu'at* prayer briefly.

Describe when the two festival prayers of *Eidu 'l-Fiṭr* and *Eidu 'l-Adhā* are performed.

4.0 Conclusion

There are five daily prayers which are obligatory for every free, adult and sane Muslim to observe. They are the Ṣubḥ, Zuhr, ‘Aṣr, Maghrib and ‘Ishā’. The prayers have their appointed times and prescribed procedures and should be observed punctually and regularly.

The *Jumu‘ah* prayer is a weekly Friday prayer that is obligatory as supported by the *Qur‘ān*, the *Sunnah* and the consensus of the Muslims. The prayer is expected to be conducted in a central mosque, not a *rātibī* mosque.

Eidu `l-Fitr and *Eidu `l-Adhā* prayers are also two important prayers observed by Muslims during the festivals of annual *Ramaḍān* fast and the feast of immolation respectively.

All are important Muslim prayers that are usually observed in congregation the benefits of which are both spiritual and social.

5.0 Summary

This unit acquaints you with the five daily prayers, the Friday prayer and the two Eid prayers. It discusses how, why, when and where they are observed. It also identifies their significance and what form should *Khutbah* take and what should constitute its content.

6.0 Tutor - Marked Assignments

1. Examine the basis of the five daily canonical prayers in Islam. Give their times and the number of supererogatory *rak‘ats* that are usually observed before each of them.
2. Discuss the two *Eid* prayers in full. State what should constitute the form and content of their *Khutbahs*, among other things.

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UNIT 2

JAMĀ ‘AH, QAṢR, MARĪḌ AND JANĀZAH PRAYERS.

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- 3.3: Prayer of the Sick (*Marīd*)
- 3.4: *Ṣalātu`l-Janāzah* (Funeral Prayer).
- 3.5 The Grave
- 4.0: Conclusion
- 5.0: Summary
- 6.0: Tutor - Marked Assignment
- 7.0: References/Further Readings

1.0 Introduction

In the previous unit, you learnt about the daily, Friday and two *Eid* Prayers. In this unit you will learn about *Ṣalātu`l-Jamā'ah*, *Ṣalātu`l-Qaṣr*, *Ṣalātu`l-Marīd*, and *Ṣalātu`l-Janāzah*. This means how to pray in congregation, shortening of prayer while on a journey, prayer of the sick and funeral service. You will agree with me that these are important matters the knowledge of which is indispensable for the Muslim whose duty is to observe the Islamic canonical prayers. This lesson thus becomes important.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to

- (i) observe prayer in congregation and understand its significance
- (ii) describe prayer of the traveller and the sick and describe how they are observed.
- (iii) describe how to observe the *Janāzah* prayer.
- (iv) say when and how the prostration of error is performed.

3.0 Main Content

3.1. Prayer in Congregation and Its Significance

Both the *Qur'ān* and *Hadīth* lay special emphasis on observing prayers in congregation.

The *Qur'ān* says: **وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ**

And be steadfast in prayer; practice regular charity, and bow down your heads

with those who bow down in worship. (Q 2:43)

Even in battlefield, there is instruction about observing the prayer collectively. When it is time for prayer during actual fighting, a group of the Muslim soldiers are to go and offer the prayer in congregation under the leadership of an Imam while some others stand on guard. Then the group rotates.

When ye pass (congregational) prayer, celebrate God's praises, standing, and

sitting down or lying down on your sides, but when ye are free from danger, set up regular; regular prayers are enjoined on believers at stated times. (Q 4:103)

On the other hand, the *Hadīths* related to the Prophet Muhammad extols prayer in congregation: “congregational prayer is twenty seven times more meritorious than observing prayer as an individual.” One who lives near the mosque should say his prayers in the mosque; and for every step you take when you are going to say your prayer in the mosque is a reward.

Thus in Islam, the Muslim body, both men and women, gather together at the appointed times to praise and glorify Allah and address their petitions to Him particularly for the five daily prayers, the *Jumu‘at* and the two *Eid* prayers. The place where this is done is known as *Masjid*, a mosque. It is therefore worthwhile to study the observance of prayer in congregation.

The place where the congregational prayer is expected to be performed is known as *masjid* (mosque). In the mosque the Muslims stand shoulder to shoulder in a row or in several rows as the case may be and one person chosen from among them as leader and is known as *Imām*. The *Imām* stands in front and leads the prayer. However, if there are women in the congregation, as it ought to be, they will form a row or several rows at the back of the rows of men.

It should be noted that the distance between the *Imām* and the first row should generally be four feet in order to make the prostration easy. The smallest number of people that can form a congregational prayer is two people.

If it happens that you enter late and you find out that the *Imām* has started, the best thing is to join the congregation where you met them. You should not just wait until when the congregation have finished before you say your own prayer.

The next thing you should do is that when the *Imām* finishes you should rise up and make for those *Rak‘ah* you missed. For example, if you missed one *Rak‘ah* when the *Imām* pronounces the *taslim*, you will rise up and observe the one *Rak‘ah* and recite extra *Tashahhud* before your *taslim*.

However, if the number of *Rak‘ah* you missed is three, you will rise up to make the second *Rak‘ah* and recite the *Tashahhud* and you will then follow it with another two

Rak'ah and make another *Tashahhud*, before final *salāmah*. It is essential to know that a *Rak'ah* has been missed the moment the *Imām* has risen from *ruku'u*.

You will agree with me that prayer in congregation will avail members having a sense of belonging to a Muslim family, both the rich and the poor, the high ranking and the low ranking standing shoulder to shoulder without any separation and worshippers getting conscious of their membership of a universal brotherhood.

EXERCISE

- (i) Explain what is a congregational prayer and its significance
- (ii) Mention two benefits of a congregational prayer.

3.2 *Qaşru`ş- Şalāt* (Shortening of *Şalāt* while on a Journey)

The *Qur'ān* says: “When you go on a journey, there is no harm if you shorten *Şalāt*
(Q 4:101)

Thus the rule governing *Şalāt* grants concession to a traveller to shorten his prayer while on a journey. This shortening of the prayers is allowed only in those fard prayers where one normally has to offer four *Rak'ahs*; that is *Zuhr*, *'Aşr* and *'Ishāi* prayers. In the *Şubhi* and *Maghrib* prayers no shortening is allowed. One has to offer the two and three *Rak'ahs* respectively.

There are differences of opinion with regards to the length of the journey. According to a school of thought, the distance varies between 9 and 48 miles while a school is of the opinion that the distance must be about 36 miles away from the traveller's place of habitation. However, the journey could be considered as one in which a person could walk normally and travel for three days from morning till sunset. The traveller is allowed to continue to shorten the prayer till he returns as long as he does not settle down anywhere. He should resume saying his prayers in full wherever he settles down for more than three days.

Joining Prayers Together: A traveller may perform the noon prayer (*zuhr*) and the afternoon (*'asr*) prayers together at the same time. This can be done, for instance, either by delaying the noon prayer until the time comes for the afternoon prayer or the Sunset Prayer until the time comes for *'Ishā* prayer, and performing both of them together at a

later time. This is called *jam'u takhīr* (Deferred Joining). The joining could also be done in advance; called *jam'u taqdīm* (Joining in Advance). Both types are permitted when there is need for them. The only prayers which may be joined are the noon and afternoon or the sunset and the evening prayers. Joining the morning and the noon prayers for example, or the Sunset and the afternoon prayers is not allowed. The joining is so ordained to relieve the people and is based on the action of the Prophet at the time of Tab^ʿk expedition. However, separate *Iqāmah* will be made for each of the combined prayers.

Self Assessment Exercise

What do you understand by *Qaṣru ḥ-Ṣalāt*?

3.3 Prayer of the Sick (*Marīd*)

In Islam, regardless of the severity and seriousness of an ailment the daily prayers have to be observed at the prescribed times. If a sick person is unable to perform all the acts of the prayer, he is allowed to perform that which he can and perform others symbolically. If a person is unable to stand up for the prayer, either due to excessive weakness, feeling of dizziness, instability or inability to perform *rukū'u* and *sujūd* properly, he is allowed to offer his prayer while sitting. If he is to observe the prayer sitting, he should sit in the prescribed way – the *Qa'dah*. However, he may sit in any way he likes if that too is not possible.

However, if a patient is too weak to perform a prayer even by symbolic signs he may abandon it and offer it later on recovery as a missed prayer. In the situation where the weakness persists and he misses five consecutive prayers, he stands exempted and need not offer them at all later.

Self Assessment Exercise

Discuss the prayer of the sick.

3. 4. Funeral prayer (*Janāzah*)

When a Muslim dies, the body is properly washed with soap or some disinfectant. In washing the dead body, the parts which are washed in the *wudū'* are taken first, then the whole body is washed. It is then shrouded in one, five or more sheets of cloth. Then the body is placed on a bier, if necessary in a coffin and carried on the shoulders as a mark of respect to its last resting place.

The *Janāzah* service may be held anywhere, in a mosque, or in an open space or even in the graveyard if sufficient space is available. All those who may want to take part in the service must perform ablution. The bier is placed in the front of the *Imām* who stands in front of its breast facing the *Qiblah*. The other people stand behind the *Imām* in straight rows, three or more but of an odd number. The intention is to offer the funeral prayer of four *takbīrs* as follows:-

- (i) The *Imām*, saying the first *takbīr* raises the hands to the ears and places it in the positions as in prayer, and the followers do the same after him. The glorification of Almighty Allah is offered.
- (ii) The *Imām* pronounces the second *takbīr* without raising the hands to the ears and invokes the Blessings of Allah upon the prophet (SAW) known as *Ṣalāt ‘alā `n-Nabiyy*.
- (iii) At the third *takbīr*, the *Imām* offers a prayer for the forgiveness of the deceased
- (iv) After the fourth *takbīr* the *taslīm* is pronounced loudly by the *Imām* and that terminates the prayer.

It should be mentioned that *Janāzah* prayer has neither *Adhān* nor *Iqāmah*. As soon as the prayer is over, the corpse should be taken to the graveyard for burial.

The grave : The grave is dug in such a way that the body may be laid to rest in it facing the direction of Ka‘bah. (*Qiblah*). The grave is generally four feet wide, six deep. During the process of filling of the grave with sand, it is usual for some to recite portions from the *Qur’ān* , e.g. *Sūratu Yāsīn* . After this, people say individual prayers for the soul of the deceased and then disperse.

On hearing the death of a fellow mankind a Muslim consoles himself by saying *Innā lillāhi wa innā ilaihi rāji ‘un*. It is recorded in the *Imām Bukhārī’s Sound Collection of Hadīth*, (Vol. 23:4), that the Holy Prophet held a funeral service in absentia, when he received news of the death of Negus, King of Abyssinia. From this, it is inferred that funeral service may be held in the case of a dead person where the body is not present. Funeral service may also be held over a still-born child but has the form developed, based on an *Hadīth*, reported by (Abu Dāwud).

Self Assessment Exercise

Write notes on (i) *Janāzah* prayer (ii) the grave and how the corpse is laid in it.

4.0 Conclusion

Salāt (prayer) particularly, the obligatory one, has to be performed in congregation as much as possible, even at the battle field. This is preferably done in the Mosque. It has

immense spiritual and social benefit. The Mosque and the organization of the congregational prayer are a means of keeping the Islamic spirit active and alive and to create and sustain the feeling of Muslim brotherhood. The offering of prayer in congregation is twenty seven times more meritorious than offering it as individuals.

When a journey of about seventy kilometers is undertaken, it is allowed to shorten the prayers that consist of up to four *Rak'ah*. This concession has been granted by Allah and became the *Sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad. However, a traveller who does not want to take advantage of this concession is not committing any sin.

We must endeavour to perform the canonical prayers taking the different postures when we are hale and hearty. But in times of sickness or some sort of incapacitation we may observe *Salāts* standing, sitting, lying on our back or just using symbols of any kind.

The *Ṣalāt Janāzah* must be said on the corpse of a deceased Muslim before burial. It consists of four *takbīrs* after each of which *Ṣalāt 'alā `n-Nabiyy, al-Fātihah*, supplication for the deceased and *taslim* are offered respectively before the deceased is buried in the grave.

5.0 Summary

In this unit you are able to learn the Scriptural basis, rules and procedure of observing canonical prayer in congregation and the practice of *Qaṣru `s- Ṣalāt*, i.e. shortening of obligatory four *rak'ah* prayers while undertaken a journey. You were also reminded that our *Ṣalāt* must be properly observed standing, bowing, prostrating and focusing prostration point as much as possible. But in case of sickness, what should be done has also been explained. *Ṣalāt Janāzah* – Funeral service was the last treated in the unit. It only remains for us to add that this latter *Ṣalāt* is *farḍ kifāyah*, i. e. communally obligatory. A group of Muslim in the community must rise up for the occasion. If not they all become sinners.

6.0 TUTOR - MARKED ASSIGNMENTS

1. Discuss observing *Ṣalāt* in congregation. Show its spiritual and social importance.
2. Explain the prayer of a traveller briefly.
3. Examine the obligatory duty of the Muslims in a community regarding the corpse of their deceased member.

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UNIT 3

TARĀWĪH, TAHAJJUD, ISTIKHĀRAH, ISTISQĀ, KUSŪF AND KHUSŪF

Contents

- 1.0: Introduction
- 2.0: Objectives
- 3.0: Main Content
- 3.1: *Tarāwīh, Tahajjud, Istikhārah*
- 3. 2: *Istisqā, Kusūf And Khusūf*
- 4.0: Conclusion
- 5.0: Summary

- 6.0: Tutor - Marked Assignment
7.0: References/Further Readings

In Unit 2. you were able to learn something about *Ṣalāt* in congregation, the concession of shortening *Ṣalāt* while on a journey, how to perform *Ṣalāt* when one is sick and the *Ṣalāt Janāzah*. In this unit, you will learn something about *Tarāwīh*, *Tahajjud*, *Istikhārah*. You will agree with me that these are names you are well familiar with. Three other kinds of occasional *Ṣalāts* that will be explained to you are the *Istisqā*, *Kusūf* and *Khusūf* prayers; They are all *nawāfil* which are occasional, voluntary and specially performed at prescribed times and having some conditions and regulations attached to them.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- (i) Mention six voluntary *nawāfil*.
- (ii) Explain when and how some of the special prayers are performed
- (iii) Relate their significance of the prayers.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 *Tarāwīh*

Tarāwīh prayer consists of eight or ten *rak'ahs* to be observed after *Ishā'* prayer in the month of *Ramaḍān* and before the *shaf'i* and *witr*. Many Companions of Prophet Muhammad (S) were reported to have observed ten *raka'ahs*.

The nomenclature *Tarāwīh* derives from the practice whereby devotees take time to rest after the fourth *rak'ah* because of long standing for recitation from the *Qur'ān* by the *Imām*.

In a report agreed upon by both *Imāms* *Bukhāri* and *Muslim*, '*Āishah*, the Prophet's beloved wife, is quoted as saying the *Messenger* of God did not exceed eleven *rak'ahs* (in this night devotional service) during or outside *Ramaḍān*. She mentioned thirteen in another report.

However the number of the *rak'ats* was increased and the length of standing for recitation was reduced during the caliphate of 'Umar ibn *Khattāb* who noticed fatigue in the people. It is thus permissible to say twenty perfect *rak'ahs*. The devotional exercise legally has the *Sunnah* status, i.e. its observer, male or female, earns reward while a defaulter is deprived.

Whether observed twenty or ten or eight *rak'ahs* excluding the *shaf'i* and *witr*, a *juz'u*, i. e. one over thirty portions of the *Qur'ān*, used to be recited every night as is the practice

in the Holy Kab‘ah in Makkah and the Prophet’s mosque in Madina nowadays. The Imām should take the congregation into consideration, observe proper recitation and not prolong unnecessarily. This prayer should be performed two *rak‘ahs* at a time like any other *sunnah* or *nafl* prayers.

Self Assessment Exercise

Discuss the origin, development and significance of *Tarāwīh*..

3.2 Tahajjud

Literally, the word *Tahajjud* means, “to break the sleep and get up.” The *Qur‘ān* has recommended it again and again to the Believers and the manner in which it speaks of those who offer it denotes that it is no less important than *fard* prayers. In Q.lxxiii 1-9, the Prophet was commanded:

O thou wrapped in thy garment! Keep vigil the night long (in prayer), save a little – a Half thereof, or abate a little thereof or add a little thereto – and recite the *Qur‘ān* in measure, for soon we shall send down to thee a weighty Message. Truly the rising by night is most potent for governing (the soul), and most suitable for framing the word (of Prayer and Praise). Lo! Thou hast by day a chain of business. So remember the name of thy Lord and devote thyself with a complete devotion – Lord of the East and the West; there is no God save Him; so chose thou Him alone for thy defender. (Q,73:1-9)

And some part of the night awake for it (i.e. *tahajjad*), a largess for thee. It may be that thy Lord will raise thee to a praised estate.” (Q.17:79)

The Prophet (S) observed *Tahajjud* regularly during his lifetime. Indeed he was fond of it to the extent that his feet swelled up due to long stretches of standing. An Hadīth related by Mughīrah ibn Shu‘bah says “ It was said to him, ‘Allah has forgiven all your sins of the past as well as the future. (Why then, should you exert yourself so excessively in prayer?). The Prophet replied, “‘Should I not be a grateful bondman’? Similarly Aishah relates that: ‘the *Tahajjud* of the Prophet consisted of eight *rak‘ats*. He used to say a very long four, and another fairly long four. He would then terminate it with three *rak‘ahs* of *witr*.’”

The *Sīrah*, the Traditions and the Islamic history abound with reports of how vigilant and how perseverant the Prophet and the Companions were in the observance of *Tahajjud*.

And God extols their quality: “The faithful servants of the Beneficent are they who walk upon the earth modestly ... And who spend the night before their Lord, prostrating and standing..” And through the ages *Tahajjud* constituted the regular practice of all virtuous and godly men, theologians, jihadists, reformers etc.etc.

As a matter of fact, the *Tahajjud* prayer is a sure and effective means of self-purification and developing qualities of steadfastness and fortitude in the way of Allah. It is usually characterized by long recitations; although recitation according to individual ability will also serve the purpose.

The word *Tahajjud* according to the *Qur’ān* quoted above implies that one should rise for

it after sleeping for a part of the night, i.e. 3.00 a. m. latest; while the minimum of two *rak’ahs* and maximum of eight are to be performed.

Self Assessment Exercise

Discuss *Tahajjud* and explain its significance.

3.3 Istikhārah Prayer

Literally, the word *Istikhārah* means, “to desire good and seek well being”. When a person is faced with a dilemma and cannot decide between alternatives regarding an important affair of life, he is requested to observe two *rak’ahs* of *nafl* .

After the observance, he will glorify the name of Allah, invoke blessing on the Prophet (S) and recite the *Istikhārah* supplication as taught by the Prophet (S) for divine help and guidance which goes as follows:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَخِيرُكَ بِعِلْمِكَ وَأَسْتَقْدِرُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ . وَأَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ

فَضْلِكَ الْعَظِيمِ . فَإِنَّكَ تَقْدِرُ وَلَا أَقْدِرُ . وَتَعْلَمُ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ .
 وَأَنْتَ عَلَامُ الْغُيُوبِ . اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ اَنْ هَذَا الْاَمْرَ
 (وَيَسْمَى الْاَمْرَ الَّذِي هَمَّ بِفَعْلِهِ) خَيْرًا لِي فِي دِيْنِي وَمَعَاشِي
 وَعَاقِبَةِ اَمْرِي ، (اَوْ قَالَ-عَاجِلْ اَمْرِي وَاَجَلِيْهِ - فَاَقْدِرْهُ لِي ، يَسِّرْهُ لِي ، ثُمَّ
 بَارِكْ لِي فِيْهِ ، وَ اِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ اَنْ هَذَا الْاَمْرَ (وَيَسْمَى الْاَمْرَ
 الْاَمْرَ اَيْضًا) شَرًّا لِي فِي دِيْنِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ اَمْرِي ، (اَوْ قَالَ-
 عَاجِلْ اَمْرِي وَاَجَلِيْهِ- فَاَصْرِفْهُ عَنِّي وَاَصْرِفْنِي عَنْهُ ، وَاَقْدِرْ لِي
 الْخَيْرَ حَيْثُ كَانَ ثُمَّ اَرْضِنِي بِهِ .

Meaning:

O Allah, verily I seek the good from You by Your knowledge, and I seek the decree from You by Your Power and I ask of you, Your tremendous bounty. Because You decree and I do not, and You know and I do not know; and You are the total Knower of the unseen.

‘O Allah, if You know this affair [and he would name it] is good for me, in my religion and my livelihood and the final outcome of my affairs [or he (S) said: In my immediate affairs and long term ones] then decree it for me, and bless me in it, and if you know this affairs [and he would name it], is evil for me in my religion and livelihood and in the final outcome of my affairs, [or he (S) said: In my immediate affairs and my long term ones], then divert it away from me, and divert me away from it, and decree for me the good wherever it may be, then make me content with that. (Bukhāri)

At the end he should go to sleep with the face turned towards the direction of Ka‘bah (*Qiblah*).

This prayer could be repeated seven times. Some scholars were of the view that if one dreams of something white or green, one should take it for a beneficial thing and adopt it and if one sees something black or red, one should regard it as harmful and avoid it.

The *Ṣalāt* and *Du‘ā’* should be done by the person himself just as he takes medicine for himself, with the certainty that his Lord, Whom he consulted for the right choice, will direct him to what is best for him. And the sign that the thing is good is that Allah will make the means of its attainment easy for him. So beware of seeking guidance in your affairs by methods outside the *Sunnah* such as seeking dream interpretation or unapproved spiritual succour from impostors who pose as holy men. For instance such men when checking the compatibility of prospective spouses resort to numerology or other methods which have no basis in the religion of Islam.

Self Assessment Exercise

What is *Istikhārah* and how should it be done?

3.4. *Istisqā'* (Prayer Service for Rain)

Istisqā' is a special prayer observed by the Muslims when there is a prolonged drought. It is otherwise known as service for rain and practised by the Prophet (S). It is observed in the open at the outskirts of the town. It consists of two *rak'ahs* to be performed in congregation. The recitation in the prayer is done in loud voice as in the *Jumu'ah* prayer. After the observance of the prayer the congregation makes a request for rain, and while returning from the prayer, members are requested to turn over their dresses.

3.5 *Ṣalawātu 'l-Khusuf wa 'l-Kusuf* (Eclipses of the Moon and the Sun Prayers)

The eclipses of the moon and the sun are two unusual natural phenomena. For this reason Islam recommends performance of special prayers for the two phenomena. Through these prayers and the recitation from the *Qur'ān*, and through confiding in God, comes peace of mind to the devotees. It is *Sunnah* to perform two *rak'ahs* of prayer each on the occasion of the solar and lunar eclipses.

At a solar eclipse especially the prayer should be offered in congregation. There is no need for *Ādhān* or *Iqāmah*. In the observation of the prayer, the *Imām* may recite a long *Sūrah* such as *al-Baqarah* and *Āli-Imrān* audibly like that of *Jumu'ah* service, and observe long *ruku'u* and *sajdah*.

After the observance of the prayer, the *Imām* leads the congregation in humble supplications to Allah while the followers respond with *ta'mīn* (saying of amen.) The supplication could continue until the eclipse is over. At the lunar eclipse, the prayer may be offered individually.

Similarly, it is permissible to offer a *nafl* prayer of two *rak'ahs* when there is a calamity

or fear or affliction such as wind storm, rain storm, earthquake striking of lightning or incidence of epidemics like plague, or fear of an enemy or chaos or general destruction.

The prayer is known as *Ṣalātu `l- khawf* and could be observed individually.

Meanwhile, on the occasion of the eclipse of the moon or the sun – or by extension, any sort of human or natural calamity- for which people may start insinuating the cause of a strange event, the Prophet urged his community to give alms, to remember God, to seek forgiveness, during the events which are but signs of God. A genuine tradition relates that the prophet said:

“ The sun and the moon are two of Almighty God’s signs which are not eclipsed for the death of anyone, nor for his being alive”.

Self Assessment Exercises

1. Reflect again over the trio of *Istisqā*, *Khusūf* and *Kusūf* prayers and show their significance.
2. Explain in brief how any of the prayers is performed.

4.0 Conclusion

In Islam, there are a few special voluntary prayers, which the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) observed at special occasions and commended them to his followers. The Prophet (S) prescribed them as a means of seeking nearness to Allah or spiritual high rank. Such prayers are the *Tarāwih* and *Tahajjud*. They are sometimes called *Qiyāmu `l-Layl*. There are some other *Sunnah* prayers recommended for warding off calamity, fear and affliction. They have all been treated in the foregoing paragraphs.

5.0 Summary

The voluntary ritual prayers treated in this unit are *Tarāwih* and *Tahajjud*, *Istisqā*, *Khusūf* and *Kusūf*. The time, how and purpose of performing them were highlighted. Some of them are a means of seeking spiritual high rank and nearness to Allah while others are performed to console the faithful and ward off calamity, fear and affliction.

6. TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS

1. Discuss the origin, development and significance of *Tarāwīh* or *Tahajjud*.
2. Explain how the trio of *Istisqā*, *Khusūf* and *Kusūf* prayers are performed and show their significance.

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UNIT 4

DIVISIONS OF *ṢALĀT* ACTIVITIES

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 - 3.1: The *Farā'id* of *Ṣalāt*
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1.0 Introduction.

The activities of *Ṣalāts* are usually divided into:

1. *Farā'id*; i.e. obligatory acts that must be performed or corrected if error occurs in them; otherwise the *Ṣalāt* is not valid.
2. *Sunnan*; i.e. Traditional practices coming down to us from the Prophet's time.
3. *Mustahabbāt*; i. e. Desirable actions or worthy practices which, if observed, will be rewarded and their omission will not be punished. But they are worthy practices and it is better to observe them.
4. The *Mubḥilāt*; i.e. Vitiations or acts which render a prayer void.

A proper knowledge of these divisions is desirable; hence, the importance of this Unit.

2.0. Objectives

At the end of this lesson you should be able to

1. Identify the *Farā'id* of *Ṣalāt* and learn them for practical purposes
2. Recognize the *Sunnan* of *Ṣalāt* and learn them for practical purposes
3. Mention the *Mustahabbāt* of *Ṣalāt* and observe them.
4. Know those things that render *Ṣalāt* void and keep away from them.

3.0 Main Content

3.1. The *Farā'id* of *Ṣalāt*.

These are the obligatory observances (*farā'id*) of the prayer the omission of which will render the prayer invalid. They are fifteen:

1. The intention (*niyyah*) of the prayer.
2. The first *takbīr* (saying of *Allahu Akbar*).
3. Standing upright for it.
4. The recitation of the *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*.
5. Standing upright while reciting the *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*.
6. The *rukū'u* (bending posture)
7. Remaining for a short while in that posture.
8. Rising up from that posture (from *rukū'u*)
9. The two prostrations (*sujūd*)

10. Raising from the posture of the *sujūd*.
11. Sitting a while in between the two prostrations.
12. Sitting for a while second time after rising from the second prostration until the *salām*.
- 13 The *taslīm*: i.e. saying of *As-salām ‘alaykum wa rahmatullah*.
- 14 Quietness for a while (*at-Ṭumānīnah*).
- 15 Performing various postures of prayers one after the other.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Enumerate the 15 obligatory acts of *Ṣalāt*.

3.2 The Sunnan of Ṣalāt

These are traditional practices coming down to us from the Prophet’s time. They are also fifteen as follows:

1. The *Iqāmah* or (standing posture).
2. Recitation of a *sūrah* or a verses after the *Sūrat al-Fātihah* in the first and second *rak’ahs*.
3. Standing upright for it (i.e. for recitation).
4. Reciting the *Sūrat al-Fātihah* and the other *sūrah* or verses loudly, whenever it is to be said loudly, silently whenever it is to be said silently.
5. Saying all the other *takbīrs* with the exception of the first or main *Takbīratu `l-Ihrām*.
6. Saying of *sami’Allahu liman hamidahu* after the *Imām* or saying it by one’s self if the person is offering prayers alone.
7. A prolonged sitting, up to the *salām*, after rising from the second prostration.
8. Returning the *salām* (*As-salām ‘alaykum wa rahmatullah*) after the *Imām* by all the congregation.
- 9 Saying the *salām* to the left hand side if there is a person praying there.
- 10 The recitation of the *tashahhud*. (also called *tahiyyah*)
- 11 Saying praises on the Holy Prophet after the second *tashahhud*.
- 12 The first sitting between the two *sujud* (prostrations)
- 13 Recitation for the *Imām* or a single person.
- 14 Saying the *salām* aloud for the last time.

15 Silence to be observed by those following the *Imām*.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

How many are the *Sunnan* of *Ṣalāt*? Mention them.

3.3. The *Mustahabbāt* of *Ṣalāt*.

The *Mustahabbāt* actions are those worthy practices which, if observed, will be rewarded and their omission will not be punished as stated above. But they are worthy practices and it is better to observe them. The *Mustahabbāt* of the prayers are twenty-six.

1. Silent recitation (*Qirā'at*) by those following the *Imām* when *Imām* himself is reciting silently.
2. Raising of the two hands (for *takbīr*) at the time of the first *takbīr* (*Allāhu Akbar*)
3. Long recitation of *Āyahs* (verses) or the *Sūrah* of the *Qur'ān* for the morning (*Subh*) and noon (*Zuhr*) prayers.
4. Recitation of short *Āyahs* (verses) or *Sūrah* of the *Qur'ān* for late-afternoon (*Asr*) and sunset (*Maghrib*) prayers.
5. The medium size (i.e. not too long and not too short) *Āyahs* or *Sūrah* of the *Qur'ān* to be recited for night (*Ishā'*) prayers.
6. Shortening of the recitation of the *Qur'ān* in the second *rak'ah* as compared to the first *rak'ah*.
- 7 Observing the first *julūs* (sitting posture) between two prostrations (*sujūd*).
- 8 Saying *rabbānā wa laka 'l-hamd* by the person following the *Imām* or even while saying prayers by one's self.
9. Saying of the *subhāna rabbī al- 'azīm* in the *rukū'* (bending posture) and *subhāna rabbī al- A'lā* in the *sujūd* (prostrations).
- 10 Saying of *āmīn* after the recitation of the *Sūratu 'l-Fātihah* silently when the *Sūratu 'l- fātihah* is recited silently; loudly if the *fātihah* is recited loudly.
- 11 Recitation of the *qunūt* silently for the morning prayer (*subh*) before the *rukū'*
- 12 The *qunūt* to be recited begins with *Allahumma innā nasta'inuka....'* to the end.
- 13 Placing of both the hands on the knees in the *rukū'*

- 14 Placing of both the hands by the side of the ears in the *sujūd* (prostration).
- 15 Sitting down (j *julūs*) by placing the left side of the leg on the floor.
- 16 In the *julūs* (sitting posture) the right leg should be placed on the left leg (as a result of no and the ankles should touch the ground).
- 17 The devotees should wear clothes.
- 18 The devotee should keep his hands down while praying according to the Maliki School.
- 19 Keeping hands in front of knees while in Prostration.
- 20 Keeping the hands down for a moment while raising the knees from the prostration.
- 21 Closing the right palm during the recitation of the *tashahhud* in the *julūs* (sitting posture)
- 22 Raising the fore finger while reciting the *tashahhud*.
- 23 Moving the finger sideways (while reciting the *tashahhud*).
- 24 Saying the *salām* turning the face to the right.
- 25 Saying of the *du‘ā’* after the second *tashahhud*.

Self Assessment Exercise

Mention twelve things that are meritorious acts in *Ṣalāt*

3.4. The *Mubṭilāt* of *Ṣalāt*

The *Mubṭilāt* of *Ṣalāts* (prayers) are those acts which will render a prayer void as earlier mentioned.. They are as follows:

1. Everything that spoils the ablution spoils the prayer.
2. Eating and drinking while offering prayers.
3. Speaking during the prayers.
4. Laughing during the prayers.
5. Appearing naked while offering the prayers.
6. Making any noise while offering the prayers.
7. Blowing air on the praying ground with the mouth.
8. Increasing a *rak‘ah* or a prostration intentionally during the prayer.

9. Finding dirty things (*najāsah*) on the body, cloth or the place where devotee performs his prayer.
10. Vomiting intentionally even though it may be very little.
11. Too frequent movements of body intentionally or by mistake.

Self Assessment Exercise

Enumerate the actions that render *Ṣalāt* void.

4.0. Conclusion.

Full concentration is a desirable part of *Ṣalāt* to avoid omission of an aspect of the devotion or commission of error. Focusing on the point of prostration from the beginning of the prayer to its end may help achieve this goal. But in case error of omission or addition occurs, the exercise is not to be cancelled but corrected by observing *sujūd sahw* – prostration of forgetfulness.

Literally, *sahw* means “to forget or to be heedless”. In *Ṣalāt* - prayer, it means error of omission or commission which takes place due to forgetfulness or absent mindedness. The prostration is done *sahw* prostration is done after completing *tashahhud* in the final sitting position. One turns face only to the right with salutation. Then the *takbīr* is uttered, two *sajdahs* are performed one after the other. After the second *sajdah* one has to repeat *tashahhud* and terminate the prayer in the usual way. If the *Imām* has made a mistake during the course of *Ṣalāt* he, along with the congregation will perform *sujūd sahw*. According to some schools *sujūd sahw* is of two kinds: *qablī* and *ba’dī*. The *qablī* is the prostration of error done before the *taslīm* to atone for error of omission while the *ba’dī* is performed after the *taslīm* to atone for error of addition.

5.0. SUMMARY

The Muslim Jurists (*Fuqahā’*) have divided the activities required in the observance of *Ṣalāt* into four categories, viz:

1. *Farā’id*; i.e. Obligatory acts that must be performed.
2. *Sunnan*; i.e. the Prophet’s practices which are highly meritorious and should be emulated.

3. *Mustahabbāt*; i. e. worthy practices which, if observed, will be rewarded and their omission will not be punished.
4. *The Mubtilāt*; Vitiations of prayers are those acts which will render a prayer void. In case a mistake of addition or omission of any act in any of the *farā'id* and *sunnan* categories, the consensus of scholars is that the *Ṣalāt* should not be annulled but corrected either with *qablī* or *ba'dī* prostration as the case may be.

3.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. The activities of *Ṣalāts* are divided into four categories. Mention two of them and enumerate their activities.
2. Explain with illustration what you understand by prostration of forgetfulness.

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Module 3

Unit 1. Fasting Across Religions and Culture

2. Fasting in Islam

3. The Rules of Fasting in Islam

4. The Beginning and the End of *Ramadān*

UNIT 1: FASTING ACROSS RELIGIONS AND CULTURE

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Body

3.1 Fasting in Hinduism

3.2 Fasting in Bhudism, Zoroastrianism and Jainism

3.3 Fasting in Judaism and Christianity

3.4 Fasting in Some Cultures, Medical and Political Fasting

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Fasting means abstinence from food, drinks, sexual intercourse with the opposite sex or the same sex or animals etc. Or in some religions or some cultures, it means at least to abstain from certain kinds of food and drink behaviors etc for a limited period of time.

Fasting is an ancient practice found in many cultures and religions.

Allah makes it abundantly clear in the *Qur'ān* that fasting is not peculiar to the Muslims.

It was prescribed for the people of earlier faiths when Allah says. Q 2: 183

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become pious. (Or learn self-restraint)

Its purpose however is not the same in all the cultures and religions. In some religions, fasting is used to gain clarity of vision and mystical insight. It is perceived in many as a means of cleansing, preparation for the reception of angels and other spirits. Some fast to honor the sun and the moon. With some, fasting is done as a form of penance, as a means of appeasing an angry or indignant God, as expiation for sin. Fasting is found in Judaism, Hinduism, Christianity, Buddhism, Egyptian culture etc. Therefore an attempt is made in this unit to discuss fasting briefly in some of these religions and cultures.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Digest various meanings attached to fasting.
- Assimilate when, how and why fasting is observed in some religions.
- Know the people for whom fasting is compulsory in some culture and religions

3.0 MAIN BODY

3.1. Fasting In Hinduism

One of the ancient religions in the world is Hinduism. When a Hindu intends or determines to pay a visit to a holy place, he has his head shaved two days preceding the commencement of his journey, and fasts the next day. He also fasts on the last day of his journey. Upon reaching the sacred place, he has his whole body shaved after which he takes his bath. The Hindus do these acts because of their belief that a fasting person will get to the heaven of that god in whose name the fast is observed.

It is also the culture of the Hindus to fast three days after the death of a parent; and a wife the same period after the death of her husband. In fact, mourners in general fast during three days and if they are unable to do so, they shall subsist on food bought in the market or given unasked. Other different kinds of fasting are sometimes observed by individuals based on personal beliefs and local customs e.g. some fast on Mondays while others fast on Fridays. The Hindus of Northern India are fond of Thursday fasting.

Fasting is commonly practiced on new moon days and during some festivals.

Depending on the individual, fasting may involve 24 hours of complete abstinence from any food or drink, but is more often an elimination of solid foods, with an occasional drink of milk or water. It is taken as a way to enhance concentration during meditation or worship.

Self Assessment Exercise

When, why and how do the Hindus fast?

3.2. Fasting in Buddhism, Zoroastrianism and Jainism

In Buddhism

Buddhism which was established by Gautam Buddha (563 B.C.) is another old religion of the world. In Buddhism, fasting is recognized as one of the methods for practicing self control. All the main branches of Buddhism practice some periods of fasting, usually on full-moon days and other holidays. Depending on the Buddhist tradition, fasting usually means abstaining from solid food with some liquids permitted. It is regarded as a method of purification by some and a means of freeing the mind by others. Some Tibetan Buddhist monks fast to aid yogic feats, like generating inner heat.

In Zoroastrianism

Zoroastrianism, established by a man called Zoroaster, is a religion practiced in Persia. . In this religion it is a must for only the priest to fast for five years. Zoroastrianism, among the western religions prohibits fasting. In fact Zoroastrians do not give any value to fasting. It is considered crime and offence to fast oneself on purpose. Therefore, its followers do not fast.

In Jainism

Jainism is based in India established since the 6th century B. C. It is one of the ancient Indian religious traditions that still exist.

There are many types of fasting in Jainism. Among the Janis, a single fast lasts for many weeks. In one type of their fasts a person doing it must not eat or drink anything until sunrise of the next day. In another type a Janis should not eat at all but may drink boiled water. In Jainism, there are eight days fasting, one month fasting and voluntary death by fasting i.e. a person continue fasting till he dies as a result of pangs of hunger and thirst. This is embarked upon when a Janis believes that he has achieved the purpose of his life. He will abandon desires in order to purify the body

Self Assessment Exercise

What is Buddhism, Zoroastrianism and Jainism?. Give the position of fasting among the three religious cultures.

3.3. Fasting in Judaism and Christianity

Judaism is a religion of the Jews. The Jews fast during the time of mourning or when there is a danger or a seer is about to receive a divine revelation. At times, the whole community may be fasting when they believe that they are under divine wrath or a great calamity is about to fall on their land like drought, diseases etc.

In the Old Testament, the only fast day prescribed by Mosaic Law is that of the day of atonement (Exodus 34:38). Moses was believed to fast for 40 days prior to his receiving the Ten Commandments. (Deut. 9:9). There are many other special fasts mentioned in the old testament which were done to show repentance and remorse; (Sam. 12 to 15, Sam 31:31, chr. 20 : 1-4) etc.

The Jews start their fast at sunrise and break it with the appearance of the first start of the evening except those fasts of the Day of Atonement which hold from eve to eve.

Yom Kippur, the day of Atonement is the best known fast day. The Jewish calendar has six other fast days as well, including Tisha B'Av, the day on which the destruction of the Jewish temple took place. On Yom Kippur, eating and drinking are forbidden for a 25-hour period, from sundown to sundown. On the other fast days eating and drinking are forbidden only from sunrise to sun down

Fasting in Christianity is a rite of purification. It was usual for communicants to prepare themselves with fasting before communicating to god. In fact to this day Roman Catholic considers it unlawful to partake of receiving the Eucharist after food or drink. That is why the lent fast was regarded as a purifying preparation for the holy table. It is also part of the customs for Christians to fast before baptism.

Although he (Christ) himself fasted for 40 days before the beginning of his ministry, and probably as a devout Jew, kept the one fast day of atonement fast that was obligatory at the time. He left no regulations for fasting. He gave the principles and left his church to make rules for carrying them out.

Moreover when ye fast be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance

but thou when thou fastest anoint your head and wash thy face (matt. 6: 16, 17).

Then shall they fast in those days (Luke 5:38).

Some Christians when fasting need only to abstain from things that have life. Some eat fish only; some take fish and fowl, some avoid eating eggs fruits, some are allowed to take dry bread only etc.; this shows that there are no fixed rules on how fasting is observed in Christianity.

Catholics fast and abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, and abstain from meat on all Fridays in lent. For many centuries Catholics were forbidden to eat meat on all Fridays but since the mid-1960, abstaining from meat on Fridays out side of lent has been a matter of local discretion.

On Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, two small meals and one regular meal are allowed; meat is forbidden, on Fridays meat is allowed for the optional Friday fast.

From the view point of the Catholics, fasting teaches control of fleshy desires, penance for sins, and solidarity with the poor. The Lenten fast prepares the soul for a great feast by practicing austerity. The Good Friday fast commemorates the day Christ suffered.

Among the Eastern Orthodox there are several fast periods, including lent, apostles' fast, Nativity fast etc etc, and several one-day fasts. Every Wednesday and Friday is considered a fast day, except those that fall during designated fast free weeks. Meat, dairy products and eggs are prohibited on some fast days and allowed on others.

With the Protestants fasting is at the discretion of individuals, churches, organizations, or communities. Though some people abstain from food or drink entirely others drink only water or juice, eat only certain foods, skip certain meals, or abstain from temptations edible or not. Campaign of prayer, fasting and vigils may be undertaken for spiritual improvement or to advance a political or social-justice agenda.

Self Assessment Exercise.

When, why and how is fasting undertaking among the Jews and the Christians?

3.4. Fasting in Some Cultures, of the Pagans, Medical and for Political Purposes.

In the ancient Egyptian cultures fasting was present. But it was compulsory for only common people. It is the culture of Najadis of Malabar that the relations of a dead person must fast from the time of the death until the funeral is over.

The practice of three days fasts is also noted in the culture of the Bogos of Eastern Africa. The close relatives of a dead person must perform a long and painful fast. Dahomey people must also fast during mourning. The Brazilian Paresis must stay at the grave of dead person without taking any food i.e. they fast for six days there.

It is the custom of the Salish of British Columbia, the Indian tribes of North America and a host of others in many parts of the world to spend some days or months in fasting after the death of a person till the end of a funeral feast.

Many reasons have been suggested for this act. Among which is to give dead his due so as not to keep him waiting longer than is necessary and, therefore, make him favor them with good things. Some believe the dead body is regarded as a seat of infection that pollutes the environment. The pollution is regarded dangerous to enter into the bowels and thus fast to keep them safe against the infection.

Pagans: No organized fast days in paganism, but some members undertake Ostra fasting to cleanse themselves from heavier winter foods. The mode is at the discretion of the individual. Some totally abstain from food and drink from sunrise till sunset; others reduce how much they eat. It is intended to purify a person energetically; often used to raise vibration levels as preparation for magical work.

3.5. Medical and Political Fasting

Fasting is done at time for medical reasons such as testing for cholesterol. People fast with the aim of getting better or healed from their ailments. Scientific studies have shown that fasting can improve health and help to eliminate variety of disease.

If fasting is used to make a political demand or to protest or to bring awareness to a cause it is called a political fasting. Some human rights activists use fasting to call on attention of the government to an important issue or to pressure authority to act. They may go on hunger strike.

Self Assessment Exercise

Discuss fasting in some world cultures.

What is the pagans attitude to fasting?

Say what you know about medical and political fasting.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism and Christianity and virtually all religions in the world prescribe fasting for its adherent. The mode and reason for fasting are similar in some of the religions while they defer in others. In some of the religions, total abstinence from all kinds of food, drinks etc are prescribed while in others a fasting person needs only to abstain partially from some foods and drinks. Fasting at times is done for medical reason and hunger strike which is a kind of fasting is sometimes undertaken for political or other demands.

5.0. SUMMARY

This unit highlights fasting across religions, cultures and other circles where fasting is done. It discussed when how and why fasting is done in some major religions of the world.

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

State when how and why fasting is observed in some 5 major religions of the world.

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UNIT 2: FASTING IN ISLAM

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main body

3.1 Significance of Fasting in Islam

3.2 Kinds of fasting

3.3 The obligatory fasting

a) The *Ramadhān* fast

b) The fasting of atonement

c) The fasting of vowing

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

7.0 References / Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Having discussed fasting in other religions in the previous unit, an attempt is made in this unit to discuss fasting in Islam which is divided into two: the obligatory or compulsory and the supererogatory or voluntary. The obligatory and compulsory consists of three kinds. It is important for you to know them; and they are hereby presented to you in the following paragraphs.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

It is hoped that by the end of this unit you should be able to:

- Account for the derivation of the term *Sawm* and give its literary meaning
- Define *Sawm* which is fasting in Islam.
- Recognize the importance of fasting in Islam
- Assimilate the three types of compulsory fasting in Islam
- Give the relevant *Qur'ān* verses and *Hadīth* relating to fasting.

3.0 MAIN BODY

3.1 Significance of Fasting in Islam

The *Qurānic* words for Fasting are *Ṣawm* or *Ṣiyām* which both have many meanings some of which are: to keep back, to refrain from doing something, to refrain from eating, drinking, talking, walking, going into wives etc.

As an Islamic ritual terminology, fasting signifies total abstinence from all kinds of food (without an exception), all kinds of drinks (without an exception) and sexual intercourse, foul talks, lying etc from dawn to dusk.

It is the fourth pillar of Islam and the third method by which a Muslim devotes to God.

Fasting is primarily a spiritual discipline. It brings nearer to God because it is due to the consciousness of Him that food, drink and other pleasures of life are given up.

Like other devotional acts in Islam, fasting puts faith to test. There is no worldly power to compel the devotee to fast. Eating and drinking can be in secrecy but these are not done because of faith in God who has prescribed fasting.

Fasting is a means to attain salvation:-the act of saving from sin and its consequence.

Prophet Muhammad says whoever fasts during the month of *Ramādān*, having faith in God and taking an account of all his deeds will have his sins forgiven. If one commits sins, and feels ashamed of himself he can fast to atone for his sins and at the same time resolve not to go back to the sins.

Fasting is important in the sense that it can suppress evil in man and improve the tendency to do good always. According to the above definition, fasting is not only to refrain from food and drinks but also to do away from all vices.

Fasting in Islam is so important that, in an *Hadīth* Qudsi Allah says "Fasting is Mine and it is Me who will reward it". This means it is only for the sake of Allah that fasting is done and Allah alone who can vouchsafe who really fasts; because a person who is not fasting can come out and declare that he is fasting whereas he may not be fasting. Nobody can know except Allah.

Self Assessment Exercise

Discuss the significance of fasting in Islam.

3.3 KINDS OF FASTING IN ISLAM

There are two main kinds of fasting in Islam

- The Obligatory, compulsory fasting (*Fardu*)
- The Suprerogatory, voluntary fasting (*Tatawwu*)

3.3.1. THE COMPULSORY FASTING

The compulsory fasting is of three types.

- The *Ramādān* fast
- The fasting of atonement (*Kafarah*)
- The fasting of vowing (*Nadhr*)

The *Ramādān* fast.

Ramaḍān is the name of the ninth month in the Islamic lunar calendar. It was in the month that Allah gave to humanity the joyful tidings of a new dawn which are to liberate man and bring him out of his predicaments. Able Muslims should fast throughout the whole of the month every year, abstaining from eating, drinking, sexual intercourse, foul talk etc from dawn to dusk. In Islam, *Ramaḍān* is a very unique occasion. Allah ordained every Muslim who is hale and hearty to fast in the month.

An intimate association is between fasting and the *Qur'ān*. It is the intimacy that made the prophet to increase the recitation of the Holy Book and his good deeds during the month.

He also encouraged the Muslims to increase their reading of the Glorious Book and their good deeds during the month.

It is compulsory for able Muslims to fast the month because it is in it that the *Qur'ān* was revealed to the prophet. The *Qur'ān* says: 2: 184-185

أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَّرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ
مِسْكِينٍ فَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَهُ وَأَنْ تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ {البقرة/184} شَهْرُ
رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَى وَالْفُرْقَانِ فَمَنْ شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ
وَمَنْ كَانَ مَّرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ وَلِتُكْمِلُوا
الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَى مَا هَدَاكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ {البقرة/185}

(Fasting) for a fixed number of days but if any of you is ill or on a journey the same number (should be made up) from other days. And as for those who can fast with difficulty, (e.g. an old man etc), they have (a choice either to fast or) to feed a poor person (for every day). But whoever does good of his own accord, it is better for him. And that you fast, it is better for you if only you know.

The month of *Ramaḍān* in which was revealed the *Qur'ān*, a guidance for mankind and clear proofs for the guidance and the criterion (between right and wrong). so whoever of you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the month (of *Ramaḍān* i.e. is present at his home), he must fast that month, and whoever is ill or on a journey the same number (of days which one did not fast must be made up) from other days. Allah intends for you ease and he does not want to make things difficult for you. (he wants that you) must complete the same number magnify Allah (i.e. to say takbir i.e. Allahu-Akbar; Allah is the most great on seeing the crescent of the months of *Ramaḍān* and shawwal for having guided you so that you may be grateful to him).

Self Assessment Exercise

Analyse Q.2:84-85.

Show the relationship between *Ramādān* fast and revelation of the *Qur'ān*

The Fasting of Atonement. (*kafārah*)

Another compulsory fast in Islam is the fast of atonement. If one breaks one's fasting in the month of *Ramādān* intentionally or refuses to fast in *Ramādān* without a genuine reason one has committed a great sin. To atone for the committed sin and save oneself from the punishment of the hereafter, one has to choose any one of the following acts:

If one breaks one's fast for a day one has to feed 60 poor or destitute Muslims at the rate of one *Muddu `n-Nabiyy* (about 708 grams of food stuffs like rice, beans, barley wheat etc) per indigent person.

The second option is to free a slave for each day that is broken or that he failed to fast.

The third option is to fast continuously for two lunar months for each day that he failed to fast. But if a person who should fast continuously cannot maintain the continuity on account of some excuses e.g. menses or a journey which one is obliged to perform, it is not obligatory for him to maintain the continuity. After the excuse stops or ceases to exist one should resume his fasting i.e. one should then observe the remaining fasts.

These atonements are for the breaking of *Ramādān* fast only.

In addition to *kafārah*, a Muslim who is to perform any of the *kafārah* must also do *qadā* i.e. he has to refund the fast he broke or failed to fast for each day.

Abu Hurayrah transmits: We were sitting with the Messenger of Allah (PBOH) when a companion arrived and said: Oh *Messenger* of Allah (PBOH) I am ruined. The Messenger of Allah (PBOH) enquired: what is the matter? He said I had sexual intercourse with my wife in the state of fasting. The *Messenger* of Allah (PBOH) asked. Can you free a slave? He said: No. the Messenger of Allah (PBOH) then asked: can you fast continuously for two months? The person said: No. the Messenger of Allah (PBOH) again questioned. Can you feed sixty needy persons? He said: No. the Messenger of Allah (PBOH) stated: you may sit down. The Messenger of Allah (PBOH) was silent for some time. We were all sitting in the condition

when an “*araq*” of dates was brought for the Messenger of Allah (PBOH) *araq* means a big container. The Messenger of Allah (PBOH) enquired. Where is the questioner of the precept? He said. I am present. The *Messenger* of Allah (PBOH) stated. Take these dates and distribute them by way of charity. . The person then asked: Oh Messenger of Allah (PBOH) should I give these dates in charity to people who are more needy than myself? By Allah there is no house in the entire Madinah poorer than my house. The Messenger of Allah (PBOH) laughed so much so that his teeth were visible. The *Messenger* of Allah (PBOH) stated: Give these dates to the members of your household.

(Bukhar and Muslim)

***Nadhr* (The fast of Vowing)**

The third compulsory fasting in Islam is fast of vowing (*nadhr*). When one vows to fast, the fast becomes compulsory for him. One may say that; if I achieve my target, I will fast. If he achieves it, the fast of vowing must be performed. It is obligatory to fast in the time designated. It must not be delayed without a genuine reason. The judgment of *Ramaḍān* is applicable to the two other compulsory fasts.

Self Assessment Exercise

Discuss fasting of *kafārah* and *Nadhr*

4. CONCLUSION

Fasting in Islam is quite different from fasting in other religions. It is a total abstinence from all kinds of food, drinks, and cohabitation from dawn till sunset. It is a must for all adults who are able unless they have genuine excuses. It is so important that only Allah knows the extent of its rewards.

5.0 SUMMARY

Ramaḍān is the main fasting month in Islam chosen among others because it was in it that the *Qur’ān* was revealed as the last and most authentic Scripture for the guidance of humanity. It is compulsory for all adult Muslims to fast throughout the month. The *kafārah* (Attonemnt) and *nadhr* (vowing) are two other compulsory fasts to be observed to atone certain defaults during *Ramaḍān* fast or to fulfill vows or pledges.

6. TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Discuss the three compulsory fasts in Islam.
2. Define fasting in relation to *Qur'ān*

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UNIT 3 THE PREREQUISITES AND MERITORIOUS ACTS OF FASTING IN ISLAM

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main body
 - 3.1 The pre-requisites of fasting in Islam
 - 3.2 Meritorious acts of fasting
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References / Further Reading.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Fasting in Islam has some rules and pre-requisites for its validity; as it also has some meritorious acts which a fasting person must observe or perform. If the rules are not

observed the rewards may be denied. In this unit, the rules governing the fasting devotion will be well explained with quotations from the *Qur'ān* and *Hadīth*. This will help you to know the dos and don'ts of fasting.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you should be able to

- State the pre-requisite for the validity of fasting particularly, the *Ramādān* fast
- Explain meritorious acts expected of a fasting person.
- Cite relevant quotations from the *Qur'ān* to support both the pre-requisites and the meritorious acts .

3.0 MAIN BODY

3.1 THE PRE-REQUISITES OF FASTING IN ISLAM

(i) Puberty.

Fasting is for those that have reached the age of maturity. Encourage can only be given to children to practice fasting it is not compulsory that they should fast.

(ii) Ability / Capability

The rule of fasting is that he who wants to fast must be able to do so i.e. he must not suffer from a serious ailment which fasting can aggravate. He must be able to bear the pangs of hunger and thirst; a serious; ulcer patient is exempted from fasting.

(iii) Islam

Fasting in the month of *Ramādān* is not for non-Muslims. Islam is a pre requisite to fasting in this month i.e. the fasting person must be a Muslim who has firm faith in the oneness of Allah.

(iv) From dawn till sunset

Another rule of fasting is that it should be from dawn till sunset. It is against the rule to fast after sunset till some time before dawn. It is also against the rule to eat, drink and

have sexual intercourse any time between dawn and sunset. Eating drinking and sexual intercourse are allowed between sunset and dawn.

(v) **Sanity**

A fasting person must be sane. An insane (i.e. mad) person is not to fast in Islam until he regains his sanity. It is when he is mentally up-right that he can fast.

(vi) **Freedom from Menses, Child-birth blood or Breast-feeding.**

The rule of fasting is that women in Haydah (menstruation) and Nifas (childbirth blood) are excepted from fasting. After the month of *Ramadān* they will count the number of fasts missed and make up for them.

(vii) **The month of *Ramadān***

The compulsory fast in Islam is only done in the month of *Ramadān*. It is not done before or after the month. If it is done it is regarded as a voluntary fast. But one has to refund the number of days of fasting one missed during *Ramadān* soon after the month and before another *Ramadān*..

Self Assessment Exercise

Enumerate seven rules for the validity of fasting.

3.2. Meritorious Acts of Fasting

(i) ***Taking of Sahur : pre-dawn meal***

It is *sunnah* to take *Sahur* (pre-dawn meal) in order not to miss the blessings of Allah attached to it. One should not intentionally avoid taking meal before dawn. Anas reported the Prophet of Allah as saying: "take your meal before dawn as there is blessing in it. This is contained in the \bar{i} collections of *Bukhārī* & Muslim. Another *Hadīth* relates the matter through Zayd ibn Thabit's narration:

We used to take meal before dawn with the Messenger of Allah (PBOH) and then stood up for dawn prayer. I asked what was the interval of time between taking meal before dawn and establishing the congregational prayer? He said; Equivalent to the recital of fifty verses. (Muslim)

(ii) ***Iftar: breaking of fast***

At the time of breaking fast it is expected of a fasting person to break it with fruits such as dates, oranges etc or water. One should avoid over-eating. Some people over-eat with the aim of making up for the day-long starvation. This is bad. One should eat only as much in the evening as it is done on normal days. Anas relates that:

The *Messenger* of Allah (PBOH) broke the fast before the evening (Maghrib) prayer by eating fresh dates. If they were not available by eating dried dates.

If there are no dried dates available then by drinking few sips of water

(Abu Dawud Tirmidhī)

When breaking one's fast at sunset the prophet is reported to have recommended this prayer: *اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ صُئِمْتُ وَعَلَى رِزْقِكَ أَفْطَرْتُ* . "Oh Allah? I observed the fast for You and I am breaking it with the sustenance provided by You.

It is expected of a fasten person to hasten in breaking the fast according to the advice of the Prophet "people will be in welfare so long as they hasten in breaking fast."

(*Bukhārī & Muslim*)

Delaying of Iftar and eating of Sahur early have been condemned by the prophet. All the sayings and actions of the prophet testify to the fact that Sahur should be delayed to some extent while Iftar should be taken very early; immediately the sun sets. Caution must be taken that we don't go beyond the limit.

(iii) Observance of *Tarāwīh* Prayer

It is expected of a fasting person to observe *Tarāwīh* prayers after Isha'i or in the night. This is part of the blessings of Allah for Muslims. They fast during the day and pray during the night. The rewards of both cannot be quantified. The prophet observed *Tarāwīh* for three days in congregationally for fear of making it compulsory i.e. he did not want his Ummah to consider it obligatory. It may be two or more in odd numbers, Shaf'i and Witri inclusive.

(iv) Abundance in Prayer and Recitation of the *Qur'ān*

A fasting person must increase his prayers for himself, his family and the generality of Muslims all over the world. He should pray for good things in this world and the best

things in the hereafter. No fasting person is expected to be indolent during the blessed month of *Ramādān* in order not to miss great rewards in it.

(v) Increase in virtues.

During the month of *Ramādān*, a fasting person should struggle to overcome his vices and increase his virtues. He should try to suppress the evil inclinations and adhere strictly to good conducts as contained in the *Qur'ān* and *Hadīth*. If one can bear the intensive heat of the summer and the sharp pangs of hunger and thirst and observe fasting' it behooves the person not to spoil his fasting with little vices. Instead, he should increase his rewards exponentially by doing good. The prophet is reported to have said, if in it (i.e. the month of *Ramādān*) a person will seek the propitiation of God by doing anything it will be treated as equal in recompense to the fulfillment of an obligatory duty in the other days of the year and if he will fulfill an obligatory duty in it, it will be treated as equal (in recompense) to the fulfillment of seventy obligatory duties in the other days of the year. It is the month of patient perseverance, and the reward on patient perseverance is paradise and it is the month of compassion (Baihaqi).

(vi) Uprightness of Purpose

It is important for a fasting person to bear in mind the purpose for which fasting is undertaken. A Muslim should not fast for fear of social censure or out of habit. If it is done for these sakes, the spirit of fasting is totally lost. Fasting in Islam is to show obedience to Allah alone. Other benefits are secondary. Thus the prophet is reported to have said; "he who fasted with Iman (faith) and Ihtisab (keeping to the rule and with trust in divine recompense) all his previous sins will be forgiven". Fasting people must avoid every thing that is detrimental to the purpose of fasting.

(vii) Good Words

A fasting person is expected to utter good words. He should not get angry or abuse others. If he is abused or indecent word is thrown to him, he should not pick up quarrel but he should say: "I am fasting". The Prophet Muhammad said: "God has no need for him to go without food and drink who cannot shun evil and false-hood even during a fast". He also

said: “many are there among you who fast and gain nothing from it except hunger and thirst; and many are there who pray (throughout the night) and gain nothing from it except wakefulness.

Self Assessment Exercise

Mention seven acts that will enhance and guarantee full rewards of fasting.

4.0 CONCLUSION

It is essential to know and understand the rules of a game if the game is to be played very well and if the good results are to be achieved. Otherwise the rewards will be lost. This is true of fasting though it is not a game. Muslims should follow the rules of fasting otherwise they lose its rewards.

This unit therefore highlights the pre-requisites and rules for the validity of fasting in Islam, particularly during *Ramaḍān*. The unit also highlights conditions for the validity of fasting and meritorious acts which can increase a faster’s rewards are enumerated with copious quotations from the *Qur’ān* and *Hadīth* .

5.0 SUMMARY

Fasting in Islam, particularly during the month of *Ramaḍān*, is obligatory only on a Muslim who has attained the age of puberty, free from permanent or temporary ailments or old age, sane and not on a journey. A woman undergoing her monthly menses, or who is still experiencing child birth blood or breast-feeding is temporarily exempted from the devotional exercise.

Meritorious Acts Expected of a Fasting Person include taking of *Sahur* (pre-dawn meal), *Iftar* (breaking of fast) with fruits such as dates, oranges etc or water and avoiding over-eating. It also includes observance of *Tarāwīh* prayers, recitation of *Qur’ān*, increase in virtuous conducts, uprightness of purpose etc, etc.

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

State and explain 6 of the rules of fasting in Islam.

What are other good acts expected of a good fasting Muslim?

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UNIT 4: BEGINNING AND ENDING OF RAMAḌĀN

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main content
 - 3.1 The beginning and the end of *RamaḌān*
 - 3.1.1 Methods of ascertaining its first day and last day
 - 3.2 *Laylatu `l-Qadr*
 - 3.3 *I'tikāf*
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References / further readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The starting and the ending of *Ramādān* have been a thing of concern for every Muslim. An understanding of methods of ascertaining when to begin and when to end the fasting of the month is highly desirable and will go a long way in removing the confusion and discrepancies usually encountered every year. In this unit therefore attention will be paid on those two issues. The *Laylatu `l-Qadr* and *I'tikāf* which are important events usually observed towards the end of the *Ramādān* fast will also be discussed.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- State the methods of ascertaining the beginning of *Ramādān* and its end
- Highlight the significance of the *Laylatu `l-Qadri*
- Discuss the relationship between *Laylatu `l-Qadri* and *I'tikaf*.

3.0 MAIN BODY

3.1 The Beginning and the Ending of *Ramādān*

Unlike in some of the ancient faiths in which fasting was observed based on solar system, the main fasting period in Islam takes place in the month of *Ramādān*. It is based on lunar system and sighting of moon. Q2:185 gives the directive on when to begin *Ramādān* fast and when to end it as follows:

فَمَنْ شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ

So every one of you who is present (or sights the moon at his home) during the month should spend it in fasting.

This implies that fasting should be commenced after sighting the *Ramādān* moon.

The prophet is also reported to have said:

لَا تَصُومُوا حَتَّى تَرَوْا الْهَيْلَالَ وَلَا تُقْطِرُوا حَتَّى تَرَوْهُ فَإِنْ غَمَّ عَلَيْكُمْ فَأَقْدِرُوا لَهُ (متفق عليه)

"Do not commence fast without sighting the moon; and do not end it without sighting it. In case the atmosphere is cloudy then resort to calculation (of thirty days) for the month. (Bukhārī & Muslim)

The *Hadīth* is saying that if at the end of Sha‘bān, the sky is cloudy, then thirty days should be reckoned completed for the month of Sha‘bān. If at the end of *Ramādān* the atmosphere is cloudy then thirty days should be counted for the month of *Ramādān*. Thus Muslims do not need to have astronomical skill before they begin and end the *Ramādān* fast.

As a result of this lunar arrangement, *Ramādān* is not permanent in one season. It falls in different seasons. Sometimes it falls in the cold weather and sometimes in the hot weather. They are made to accustom to the differences of variations of the weather.

3.1.1 Methods of ascertaining the first date and the last date of the *Ramādān* fasts.

A person can know the first date of the *Ramādān* fasts by sighting the moon himself. Another method is if thirty days pass from the first day of the moon of Sha‘ban, the first day of *Ramādān* is established. In the same vein, if thirty days pass from the first of *Ramādān*, the first day of Shawwal is established; and that marks the end of the *Ramādān* fast. The third method is if one or two just (*‘adl*) persons say that they have sighted the moon, the beginning and the ending of the *Ramādān* fasts are confirmed.

Ibn Umar narrated the following incident which occurred during the time of the Prophet:

I took part in the sighting of the moon along with other people and informed the Messenger of Allah, (PBOH), that I had sighted the moon. Accordingly, the Messenger of Allah (PBOH) commenced the fast and commanded others to do likewise.

(Abu Dawud)

Of all these methods, the second option ((i. e. counting 30 days of Sha‘bān and 30 days of *Ramādān* to know the beginning and the end of *Ramādān* respectively) may be relied upon in a situation where the weather is bad, and constitutes an obstruction for sighting the moon.

Self Assessment Exercise

Examine the issues involved in beginning Ramadan fast and the sighting of the moon for the exercise

3.2 *Laylatu `l-Qadr and I'tikaf*

Laylatu `l-Qadr means the Night of Power. It is stressed in the *Qur`ān* , Chapter 97, Verse 1-5 thus

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ {1} وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ {2} لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أَلْفِ
شَهْرٍ {3} تَنْزَلُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ {4} سَلَامٌ هِيَ حَتَّى
مَطْلَعِ الْفَجْرِ {5}

We have indeed revealed it (the *Qur`ān*) in the Night of Power. And what will explain to you what the Night of Power is? The Night of Power is better than a thousand months. Therein come down the Angels and the Spirit. By God's permission, on every errand. Peace it is until the rise of dawn.

The Night of Power occurs during the month of *Ramādān*. It comes only once in a year. During this time the Angels descend down and the devils run away. The night is looked for in one of the odd nights of the last ten days of *Ramādān*. It is so important that all sins are forgiven therein provided one has a firm faith in Allah. The reward attached to devotional activities and deeds of righteousness this night is so great that nobody knows the extent of it. Because of this, Muslims engage themselves heavily in good deeds to get innumerable benefits.

Abu Hurayrah transmits that the Messenger of Allah stated: whoever with faith and intention to earn the reward, worshipped in the night of Power, all his previous sins are forgiven. (Bukhar & Muslim)

One should not miss the rewards therein. The Prophet advised Muslims to strive to acquire the rewards. He even considered any Muslim who missed the rewards as an unfortunate Muslim.

Anas b. Malik relates: when *Ramādān* commenced the Messenger of Allah (PBOH) stated: this month which has befallen on you there is

a night which (from the point of dignity and honour) is better than one thousand months. Whoever deprives himself of acquiring its felicity deprive himself of all goodness. He further stated: only an unfortunate person is deprived of its felicity.

Muslims are urged to search for the night by the Prophet according to an *Hadīth* related by Aishah that the Messenger of Allah (PBOH) stated: "Search for *Laylatu 'l-Qadr* in the odd-nights of the last ten nights of *Ramaḍān* (Bukhārī).

The Prophet worshipped heavily and induced his family to do same during the last ten nights of *Ramaḍān* in order to get the benefits attached to the Night.

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا قَالَتْ: كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا دَخَلَ الْعَشْرَ الْأَوَّلَ شَدَّ
مِنْزَرَهُ وَأَحَى لَيْلَهُ وَأَيَّفَظَ أَهْلَهُ (مُنْتَقَى عَلَيْهِ)

Aishah, may Allah be pleased with her, relates that the Messenger of God (PBOH) when the last ten days of *Ramaḍān* commenced, used to buckle up for worship. He used to keep vigil for (worship) during its nights; and would also wake up the people of his household. Bukhārī and Muslim agree on this *Hadīth* .

3.3 *I'tikāf*

It is the staying in the mosque praying and observing various kinds of Ibadat (devotional activities) during the month of *Ramaḍān*, particularly the last ten days. The purpose of *I'tikāf* is to reap the benefits attached to *Laylatu 'l-Qadr* and to increase one's 'ibādah. The prophet observed *I'tikāf* when he was alive. *I'tikāf* gives muslims the opportunity to cut off themselves from worldly affairs during the last ten days of the month, spending day and night in a mosque for the purpose of seeking Allah's pleasure through their 'ibādah.

Al Mu'takif (i.e. the person doing *I'tikāf*) must be a Muslim who believes in the oneness of Allah. Therefore, *I'tikāf* is not for non-Muslims. It is only done in a mosque particularly where Friday prayer is observed, and should not be done in one's house or place of work. A *Mu'takif* must fast. You cannot do i'tikaf if you are exempted from fasting. Sexual intercourse, committing of sins, madness, fainting, breaking of fast and leaving the mosque for unnecessary affairs spoil i'tikaf. Therefore, a *mu'takif* must avoid all of them.

The following *Hadīths* are relevant to the rules of *I'tikāf*

Abu Hurayrah relates that during *Ramadhān Qur'ān* was recited once completely before the Messenger of Allah (PBOH). In the last year of his life it was recited twice completely. In a similar manner the Messenger of Allah (PBOH) observed *I'tikāf* for ten days; but in the last year of his life he observed it for twenty days (Bukhārī)

Aishah relates: When the Messenger of Allah (PBOH) intended to observe *I'tikāf*, he entered the mosque or the place of *I'tikāf* after the dawn prayer.

Abu Dawud and Ibn Majah.

It is allowed for women to observe *I'tikāf*. According to the *Hadīth* related by *Bukhārī* and Muslim: Along with the Messenger of Allah (PBOH) his consorts (wives) also observed *I'tikāf* (Bukhārī and Muslim)

If during *I'tikāf*, a mu'takif falls ill, he should suspend it and go back to his house. If a woman menstruates during her *I'tikāf* she should go back to her home. If a person whose *I'tikāf* was interrupted by illness or menstruation recovers from illness or regains purity respectively before the end of *Ramadhān*, the person can go back to the mosque immediately and resume his or her *I'tikāf*.

Self Assessment Exercise

How do the Muslims spiritual devotions reach its peak during the last ten days of *Ramadhān*?

4.0 CONCLUSION

As could be seen from the forgoing, it is very important for Muslims to follow the teachings of the *Qur'ān* and *Hadīth* in relation to the beginning as well as the ending of the *Ramadhān* fast. If the three methods of beginning and ending it are followed the embarrassing situation that yearly occur when determining the beginning and ending of the month such that Muslims world over are divided among themselves into four groups will be reduced if not completely eliminated. The last ten days of the month of *Ramadhān* must not be wasted by any Muslim because of the rewards of *Laylatu 'l-Qadr* therein.

Efforts should be made to stay in the mosque to do *I'tikāf* if it is possible or to increase one's Ibadah activities.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit we have explained that the *Ramādān* fast should start when the moon is sighted and stop when the moon of Shawwal is sighted. We can rely on our own efforts or one or more just men who proclaimed that they have sighted the moon. The last method of ascertaining the beginning of *Ramādān* is to count Sha'ban to 30th, and we can end it even if the moon is not sighted provided we have fasted for 30days.

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT

What are the methods of ascertaining the beginning and the end of the *Ramādān* Fasts? Write notes on *Laylatu 'l-Qadrand I'tikāf* with relevant quotations from the *Qur'ān* and *Hadīth* .

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MODULE 4

Unit 1: Exemption from and Spoiling of Fasting

Unit 2: Voluntary and Unlawful Fasts in Islam

Unit 3: The Benefits of Fasting

UNIT 1: EXEMPTION FROM AND SPOILING OF FASTING

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Body

3.1. People exempted from fasting

3.1.1. People exempted from fasting permanently.

3.1.2. People exempted from fasting temporarily

3.2 Spoiling of Fasting

3.2.1 Things Which Spoil Fast.

3.2.2 Things Which Do Not Spoil Fast

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

7.0 References/ Further Reading.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

There is the need to know people that are exempted altogether from fasting and those that are to postpone their fasts. This is in order that people will not act negatively to the injunction of Allah through the ignorance of the rules. Some acts do render fast void while fasting is spoiled by some others. What are those things that can render fasting void and what are those things that cannot? Who are those exempted either totally or temporarily? Answers to these questions are the focus of this unit.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

It is expected that at the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- Identify people exempted from fasting altogether
- Identify people exempted from fasting temporarily
- Enumerate things that render fasting void
- Enumerate things that do not render fasting void.

3.0 MAIN BODY

3.1 People Exempted from Fasting

In every rule there is always an exemption. Allah exempts some categories of people from fasting in the month of *Ramādān*. Some of them will make up for the number of days they miss while others will not. Reasons for the exemption may be permanent or temporary.

3.1.1 People exempted from fasting permanently.

These are the people who should not fast totally. This is part of the mercy of Allah:.

- The sick person whose sickness is permanent is exempted from fasting altogether. But he can do *it-'ām* (i.e. feeding of indigent person) if he is able for every fast he misses.
- The very old people who can no more withstand the pangs of hunger and thirst. He can give *it-'ām* in lieu of each fast missed provided he can afford it. Quran Chapter 2 verse 184 says: وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيفُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ

Those who may find it (fasting) difficult will redeem (the number of days they missed) by feeding the needy.

The Messenger of Allah was reported by Ibn Abbass as saying:

رُخِّصَ لِلشَّيْخِ الكَبِيرِ أَنْ يُفِطَرَ وَيُطْعَمَ عَنْ كُلِّ يَوْمٍ مِسْكِينًا وَلَا قَضَاءَ عَلَيْهِ .

An old person has been granted concession not to fast, but he should feed one needy person for every omitted fast ; and he needs not make up for the omitted fast.

The young children are also exempted from the *Ramaḍān* fast. They don't do *it-'ām* or refund the missed fasts. However, they can be practicing fasting so as to get used to it before they are old enough to fast.

3.1.2 People exempted from fasting temporarily but who will refund the missed fasts when the condition for exemption them is no more there i.e. it ceases to exist.

- The sick person whose sickness is curable and there is hope of recovering from the illness. He will make up for the missed ones later after the month of *Ramaḍān* but before the next *Ramaḍān*.
- Women in menstruation should stop fasting but resume after they are free of menses. After the month of *Ramaḍān* they will make up for the missed fasts. Abu Sa'īd al-Khudrī reported the Prophet (PBUN) as saying:

إِذَا خَاضَتْ لَمْ تُصَلِّ وَلَمْ تُصُمْ فَذَلِكَ مِنْ نُقْصَانِ دِينِهَا

"when a woman is in menses she can neither pray nor fast. This is relaxation for them, in the religion (*Bukhārī*)

- Nursing mothers suckling babies are exempted from fasting if it can affect them and the babies. They should make up for the lapsed fasts when they are able.

- A traveler may break his fast if it is difficult for him to continue. He should make up for the missed fasts after the month of *Ramādān*. However a traveler by profession or on a journey allowed to break his fast while traveling

Anas b. Malik al-Ka'bī narrates that the Messenger of Allah stated: Allah has bestowed indulgence on a traveler to delay the observing of fast and shorten his prayer by half; but has given leave to an expecting mother or a nursing woman to delay the observing of fast.

- A person whose work is very tedious may postpone his fast. This is implied in Q.2: 184

Self Assessment Exercise

Who are the people exempted from fasting permanently and who are those exempted temporarily?

3.2 Spoiling of Fasting

3.2.1 Things Which Render Fasting Void.

- **Sexual intercourse:** Fasting is rendered void if a fasting person is intentionally involved in sexual intercourse. The sexual intercourse may be with the opposite sex or the same sex. It may be with human or non-human. Which ever it may be it renders fasting void. A fasting Muslim must avoid it.
- **Drinking and Eating:** The two acts, if done intentionally, render fast void. It is immaterial whether they are small or big. However, if it was done unintentionally, he should stop eating and drinking immediately he remembers that he is fasting.
- **Masturbation. (Istimna):** A fasting person should not masturbate. But if he or she does it, it renders his or her fasting void. Masturbation means performing an act upon oneself or upon someone else or other thing other than sexual intercourse as a result of which semen is discharged.
- **Shirk** (Associating partners with Allah): If a fasting person associates partners with Allah, his fast is rendered useless. He has to take a ritual bath of entering into the fold of Islam afresh. (Ghuslu dukhuulu `l- Islam)

- **Menstruation** : If a woman or a lady is fasting and her menses begin, her fast is spoiled. She has to stop fasting immediately and make up for the missed fasts after the month of *Ramaḍān*.
- Vomiting. If a person vomits intentionally, his fast is rendered void even if he is forced to do so on account of ailment. However, if a person unintentionally vomits, or by mistake, his fasts remained valid. He only needs to clean his mouth.

3.2.2 Things Which Do Not Vitiating Fast.

- Wet dream: if one sleeps and has a wet dream i.e. one dreams that one has had sexual intercourse with the opposite sex whether one releases semen or not one's fast is still valid. What one needs to do if one releases semen is to take a ritual bath called Janabah.
- Eating and Drinking. If one forgetfully eats or drinks when fasting, he should stop the moment he remembers and pour out the food or the drink in his mouth immediately. If he swallows it afterwards, his fast is spoiled. Otherwise, his fast is still valid. It is Allah who wants to feed him and give him drinks. The prophet said:"

إِذَا نَسِيَ فَأَكَلَ وَشَرِبَ فَلَيْتَمَّ صَوْمَهُ فَإِنَّمَا أَطْعَمَهُ وَسَقَاهُ (البخارى)

" when one eats or drinks by forgetfulness while fasting, he should complete his fast because Allah made him eat and drink (*Bukhārī*).

- Taking bath during *Ramaḍān*: It is allowed to take bath anytime during the month of *Ramaḍān*. If one takes bath during the day one's fast is still valid. However, caution must be taken to ensure water does not enter one's throat through one's mouth.

Self Assessment Exercise

Discuss prohibitions and permissibilities of fasting.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, a permanent sickness and old age are two reasons that may warrant exemption from fasting permanently. Underage is another reason for exemption.

Curable ailment, menstruation, breast feeding, child birth blood, hard labour and traveling are reasons for temporary exemption from fasting.

Sex, eating and drinking, masturbation, menstruation, apostacy and induced vomiting spoil fasting. Wet-dreaming, eating and drinking forgetfully, bathing and brushing, hugging and non-amorous kissing do not render fasting void and attract nopenalties.

5.0 SUMMARY

A person with permanent sickness and the aged will be compensating for his inability to fast by feeding the poor (*it'ām*) if he is able for every fasting days of Ramadan he is missing.

People exempted from fasting temporarily will redeem the number of days they missed during Ramadan as soon as condition for exemption is over.

Sexual intercourse during the fasting period in the month of Ramadan, deliberate eating and drinking must be atoned for through *kafārah* i.e. fasting for two consecutive months or feeding sixty poor people or setting slaves free.

Eating and drinking forgetfully, wet-dreaming, hugging and non-amorous kissing

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

Who are those people that will not fast but refund the missed fasts?

Some will postpone their fasts: who are they?

Fasting cannot be spoilt with certain acts. Explain.

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UNIT 2: VOLUNTRY AND UNLAWFUL FASTS IN ISLAM

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main body
 - 3.1 The voluntary fasting in Islam
 - 3.2 Unlawful fasts.
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References / Further Readings.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The acts in Islam are either compulsory or voluntary. The compulsory ones are tagged *fard* (i.e. obligatory acts). On the other hand there are voluntary acts which a Muslim has the option to do or leave. If they do the voluntary acts they will be rewarded but if they leave them they will not be punished for not doing them. The reverse is the case of the obligatory acts. You should remember that the obligatory fasts of *Ramaḍān*, *Kafārah* and *Nadhr* have earlier on been extensively dealt with. This unit is therefore devoted to the discussion on the voluntary fasting and unlawful fasts in Islam.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Enumerate and explain the voluntary fasts in Islam.
- Identify the days when fasting is prohibited in Islam.

3.0 MAIN BODY

3.1 The Voluntary Fasts in Islam

- Fasting is recommended at anytime of the year except on days when it is prohibited
- It is recommended to fast on Mondays and Thursdays.

Abu Hurayrah narrated the report that the Messenger of Allah (PBOH) stated: deeds of people are presented before Allah on Monday and Thursday. I would like to be in a state of fasting when my deeds are presented before Allah.

- It is recommended to fast on all days of Rajab and Sha‘bān or as many days as it is possible even if it is for one day only.

مَا رَأَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِسْتَكْمَلَ صِيَامَ

شَهْرٍ قَطُّ إِلَّا رَمَضَانَ وَمَا رَأَيْتُهُ فِي شَهْرِ أَكْثَرِ مِنْهُ صِيَامًا مِنْ شَعْبَانَ (متفق عليه)

Aishah states: I have not seen the Messenger of Allah (PBOH) fasting the whole month except in *Ramaḍān*. Nor did I see the Messenger

of Allah (PBOH) fasting excessively in any other month other than Sha‘bān.

- It is recommended to fast six days during the month of Shawwal.

Abu Ayyūb al-Anṣārī transmits a report that the Messenger of Allah (PBOH) stated:

مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ ثُمَّ أَتْبَعَهُ سِتًّا مِنْ شَوَّالٍ كَانَ كَصِيَامِ الدَّهْرِ.

whoever, after completing the fast of Ramaḍān (every year), fasts for six days in Shawwāl, he will be rewarded as if he has been fasting for his entire life.

- Fasting is recommended on the day of Arafat for non-pilgrims.
- Fasting is also recommended on the day of Ashura (i.e. the tenth day of Muharram).

Ibn Abbas said: “when the Prophet came to Medina, he found the Jews observed the fast of Aashuraa. He enquired about it from them and was told that it was the day on which God had delivered the children of Israel from their enemy and Moses used to keep a fast on it as an expression of gratitude to God. The Prophet, there upon remarked that Moses has a great claim upon me than upon you. He fasted on that day and instructed his followers to do the same.

Abu Qatādah transmits a report that the Messenger of Allah (PBOH) stated: fasting on the day of Arafah is expiation of sins committed during two years (the past year and the next year), and fasting on the day of Āshūrā is expiation of sins

committed in the past one year.

- * Fasting the *Ayamu `l-Biid* (three bright days), 13th, 14th and 15th of every lunar month

Abu Qatādah transmits that the Messenger of Allah (PBOH) stated: from one *Ramaḍān* to another fasting for the three bright days 13th, 14th and 15th in every lunar month is equivalent to fasting for the entire life.

- It is considered best to fast every other day.

Abdullah b. Umar transmits that the Messenger of Allah (PBOH) stated: fast for three days in a month. I said: I am stronger than that. The Messenger of Allah (PBOH) continue to raise the number the number of fasts, so much so that he said: fast every other day. This is the most excellent of the (voluntary) fasts. This was the practice of my brother Dawud. (Bukhārī & Muslim)

3.2 UNLAWFUL FASTS

- It is unlawful to fast on the day of Eidu `l-Fitri and Eidu `l-Adha.
Abu Ubayd relates: I performed id prayer with Umar b. Khattab Umar stated: the Messenger of Allah (PBOH) prohibited us from fasting on these two days.
First when you eat the meat of sacrificed animals (Bukhārī)
- It is unlawful for Muslims to fast on the day of doubt (*Yawmu sh-Shakk*) in order that there might be a coincidence that the day is the first day of *Ramadān*.
Abu Hurayrah transmits that the Messenger of Allah (PBOH) stated:
No person should fast a day or two before *Ramadān*. However a person who according to his practice fasts he may do so. (*Bukhārī & Muslim*)
- It is forbidden for pilgrims to fast on the day of Assembly at Mount Arafat.
Umar Fadl relates: people thought that the Messenger of Allah (PBOH) was fasting on the day of arafah so I sent some milk for him which he drank. At that time he was delivering sermon at Arafah (Bukhārī & Muslim)
- Fasting everyday of the year is prohibited
- Fasting two days or more without breaking the fasts during the night between them is prohibited.
Abdullah b. Amr b. Anas relates: the Messenger of Allah (PBOH) asked me: Oh Abdullah? I am informed that you always fast during the day and stay awake in the night. I said: yes Oh Messenger of Allah I do. He said. Do not fast like this. Observe fast and give it up. Stay awake in the night and also sleep. Your body has its rights over you. Your eyes have rights over you. Your wife has rights over you. Your guest has rights over you. Whoever fasts continuously cannot be considered to have been fasting (Bukhārī & Muslim)
- It is not allowed for a woman to fast voluntarily without informing her husband.
Abu Hurayrah transmits that the Messenger of Allah (PBOH) stated:no woman, while her husband is present should observe supererogatory fast without his

permission. (Bukhārī).

- Fasting two days after *Eidu`l-Adhā*. However pilgrims observing Tamattu (performing Umrah and Hajj in pleasure) are not prohibited.

Aishah and Ibn Umar transmits that no person was permitted to fast during during the days of Tashreeq except the pilgrim, who was unable to sacrifice an animal (Bukhārī)

4.0 CONCLUSION

From the fore-going, it has been established that in addition to the obligatory fasting, there are supererogatory ones having their bases from both the *Qur`ān* and *Hadīth* . Fasting is also prohibited on certain occasions as could also be deduced from the above discussion. Thus as Islam specifies the details of when, why and how fasting should be observed, it also classifies them into compulsory, supererogatory and prohibited.

5.0 SUMMARY

Voluntary fasts may be undertaken in Islam:

- (i) Every Mondays and Thursdays
- (ii) As many days as possible in the months of Rajab and Sha'bān.
- (iii) Six days in the month of Shawwāl.
- (iv) Day of Arafah for non-pilgrims.
- (v) 13th, 14th and 15th days of the lunar months
- (vi) Every other day.

Fasting is prohibited on

- (i) Eid Days
- (ii) Day of Doubt during Ramadān.
- (iii) Day of Assembly at Arafah (for pilgrims).
- (iv) Fasting every day of the year.
- (v) Continuous fast without break.

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- Enumerate the voluntary and the unlawful fasting in Islam supporting your points with *Hadīth* as much as possible. .

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UNIT 3: THE BENEFITS OF FASTING

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main body
 - 3.1 The Spiritual Benefits of Fasting
 - 3.2 Moral and Social Benefits of Fasting
 - 3.3 Health Benefit
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References / Further Readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Module 4 opens with a discussion of people exempted from fasting and acts that vitiate fasting. The subject-matter of Unit 2 of the Module was an examination of the voluntary and unlawful fasts. In this unit, we shall treat the spiritual, moral, social and health benefits of fasting in Islam.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

It is hoped that by the end of this unit you should be able to:

- Explain the spiritual benefits of fasting
- List and discuss the moral and social benefits of fasting in Islam
- Explain the impact of fasting on one's health.

3.0 MAIN BODY

3.1 **The Spiritual Benefits of Fasting.**

(i) Patience in Obedience to Allah:

A fasting person exercises a great patience in obedience to Allah's command through the sufferings of the pangs of hunger and thirst he experiences. This also transfers to the subjugation of his physical desires, his carnal appetites and of the longings of his heart to the will of Allah.

(ii) *Taqwa* (God – Consciousness)

The injunction to fast gives the purpose for the fasting as attainment of *taqwa* (consciousness of Allah). A fasting person is conscious of Allah wherever he is because there is no policeman who can arrest him if he does not fast, and he tells lie that he is fasting. But because of his consciousness of Allah (i.e. that Allah is fully aware of all his affairs) he fasts wholeheartedly whether he is seen by anybody or not. He believes that Allah is watching him.

(iii) *Al-Ikhlās* (Sincerity).

Allah asks Muslims to worship him sincerely: (Q. 98: 4). Fasting is one of the ways by which sincerity of a Muslim is tested. This is because it is only Allah who can know if a person is really fasting or he is eating, drinking, having sexual intercourse etc secretly. People cannot see the secret of a fasting person. Only Allah has the power to know his condition.

(iv) Cultivating Sense of Appreciation

One appreciates the value of something when he loses it. This is true in relation to foods and drinks that are temporarily abandoned between dusk and sunset during fasting. He learns to be truly grateful to Allah and appreciates His provisions which he has taken for granted before.

(v) Unquantifiable divine reward

Abu Huayrah reports that the Messenger of Allah stated: the reward for every good deed of a person is increased by ten to seven hundred times (depending on intention and sincerity). But in respect of the reward for fasting Allah proclaims. Fasting is for me and I myself shall bestow the reward. The person who fasts forgoes his desires, eating and drinking for my sake. He will be entitled to two kinds of delights. One will be at the time of breaking the fast and the second will be at the time of meeting his Lord.

(vi) Prestige (of entering Paradise through the gate of Rayyān).

Sahl b. Said reports that the Messenger of Allah stated: there are eight gates of Paradise. One of them is called Rayyan. Only those who fast will enter Paradise through this gate (Bukhārī & Muslim)

In actual fact, the doors to heaven are opened and doors of hell are closed during the month of Ramadān. Abu Hurayrah reports that the Messenger of Allah stated:

إِذَا دَخَلَ رَمَضَانَ فَتُفْتَحُ أَبْوَابُ الْجَنَّةِ وَغُلِّقَتْ أَبْوَابُ جَهَنَّمَ وَسُلْسِلَتِ الشَّيَاطِينُ

when Ramadān commences the gates of paradise are opened and the gates of hell are closed, and the evil ones are chained. (Bukhārī & Muslim)

This is because many people aspire to please and do Allah's will and avoid following the Satan's way.

(vii) Shield against Satan and its Agents.

Fasting is one of the major tool believers have against Satan. Ghazali explains this and says: it is when we eat that Satan enters our blood stream. Fasting is therefore, a fortress and safe place for the friends of God who has put the guile and trickery of Satan in shackles.

(viii) Quick Answer to Prayers.

Allah accepts prayers in Ramadān quickly because the fasting people observe the dos and don'ts of Allah more than any other time in their lives. This makes a fasting person feels nearer to Allah and enjoy great spiritual development and satisfaction.

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي
وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْتَدُونَ

And when my slaves ask you (O Muhammad PBOH) concerning me, then (answer them), I am indeed near (to them by my knowledge). I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on me (without any mediator or intercessor) so let them obey me and believe in me, so that they may be led alright. (Q2: 186)

3.2 Moral and Social Benefits of Fasting.

(i) Cultivation of Good Behaviors:

Fasting helps Muslims to behave well and control their bad attitudes. A fasting person must neither pick up quarrel nor tell a lie nor back-bite. Fasting is not only to abstain from food and drinks, it also includes avoiding all the sinful deeds and the use of foul and filthy language. The Prophet is reported to have said:

مَنْ لَمْ يَدَعْ قَوْلَ الزُّورِ وَالْعَمَلَ بِهِ فَلَيْسَ لِلَّهِ حَاجَةٌ فِي أَنْ يَدَعَ طَعَامَهُ وَشَرَابَهُ (البخارى)

Any person (while fasting) who tells lies and does not desist from them, Allah is not in need of that person not eating or drinking (Bukhārī)

Abu Hurayrah relates that the Messenger of Allah (PBOH) stated:

الصِّيَامُ جُنَّةٌ وَإِذَا كَانَ يَوْمَ صَوْمِ أَحَدِكُمْ فَلَا يَرْفُتْ وَلَا يَصْنَعُ فَايْنَ سَابَّهُ أَحَدٌ
أَوْ قَاتَلَهُ فَلْيَقُلْ إِنِّي امْرُءٌ صَائِمٌ. البخارى

fast is a shield, therefore, whoever is fasting should not resort to obscene language and immoral behavior. if any other person quarrels or abuses a person who is fasting, then the one who is fasting should say: I am fasting (Bukhārī)

(ii) Sympathy and Kindness.

One of the aims of fasting is to experience what it is to be hungry so that one can have a greater understanding of what it is like to be poor and not have enough to eat. Giving *Sadaqat al-Fitr* is the practical demonstration of this objective. It is believed that ones fasting will be hanging in the balance until he has given out the *Sadaqat al-Fitr*.

(iii) Fasting generates Friendship, Brotherhood and Unity

In some places, Muslims pay visits and join one another in breaking their fasts at sunset during Ramadān; they gather together to listen to Tafsir (explanations of the *Qur'ān*); they observe *Tarāwīh* and sometimes tahajjud prayers together; they give charity to the less privilege members of the society. Some mosques provide food during Maghrib and fajr times for the benefit of the poor. All these acts lead to friendship and promote the sense of brotherhood. Thus, enmity, hatred and the likes are removed from the society.

(iv) Prevention of Anti-Social Evils

Fasting prevents anti-social evils such as illicit sexual relations, Fasting can be regarded as a form of castration. It is well known that there is a nexus intercourse. It is when one eats his fill that one will have a sexual urge. It is rare for a person who is hungry to have urge for sexual intercourse. This is why the Prophet recommended fasting for those who are unable to marry so as to curb them from fornicating. The hunger and thirst will reduce the libido, and this protects him from committing *zinā*.

3.3 Physical and Health Benefit

Health wise, the benefits derivable from fasting are many. Organs are rested; blood is purified and stomach troubles cured. An over-weight person sheds some of his weight. The health of the diabetic patients is improved as fasting reduces the level of sugar in his body.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the fact that certain spiritual, moral, social and health benefits are to accrue to a Muslim who observes fasting in the true spirit have been established in this unit. The benefits are summarized below in the next paragraph.

5.0 SUMMARY

The spiritual benefits that will accrue to a person from his fasting includes: Patience in obedience to Allah, Taqwa (God – Consciousness), Al-Ikhlās (Sincerity), cultivating sense of appreciation, prestige (of entering Paradise through the gate of Rayyan). Shield against Satan and its agents, quick answer to supplications,

Moral and Social Benefits of Fasting include Cultivation of Good Behaviors, Sympathy with an kindness to the poor, generation of friendship, brotherhood and sense of belonging to the global Muslim family and prevention of anti-social evils like adultery.

Health benefits also derivable from fasting are many.

6.0 TUTOR- MARKED ASSIGNMENT

List and explain the benefits of fasting in Islam

Mention and discuss the moral and social gains of fasting in Islam.

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