

I'TIKAAF – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. What is the Meaning of I'tikaaf ?

The meaning of I'tikaaf' is to seclude oneself in the Masjid, with the express intention of I'tikaaf (seclusion), for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. A person observing I'tikaaf is termed a Mu'takif.

Q. When is it Permissible to Leave the Boundary of the Masjid in I'tikaaf?

- ✓ To answer the call of nature - to go to the toilet.
- ✓ To take an obligatory bath.
- ✓ To make wudhu when wudhu breaks.
- ✓ For Jumua'h Salat, if Jumua'h Salaat is not performed in the Masjid where the I'tikaaf is being observed.
- ✓ To bring food if there is no one to tend to this need of his.

Q. Which Acts Break the I'tikaaf?

- × Only Wajib and Sunnat I'tikaaf are rendered invalid. I'tikaaf is rendered invalid by engaging in an act which is not permitted for the Mu'takif. Nafil I'tikaaf is not rendered void by any act.
- × Unnecessarily leaving the Masjid **for even a moment whether intentionally, unintentionally or under compulsion will invalidate the I'tikaaf.**
- × All acts and reasons besides the valid reasons (mentioned above) will be regarded as **'unnecessary'** in the context of I'tikaaf.
- × Leaving the Masjid due to illness, although permissible, will invalidate the I'tikaaf.
- × I'tikaaf will become void if the Mu'takif's fast breaks.
- × To leave the Masjid for **the sole purpose** of Janazah Salaah, visiting the sick or for any other activity besides the **valid reasons**, will render the I'tikaaf null and void.

NB. If a Mu'takif participates in an activity, which would generally break I'tikaaf e.g. (Janazah salaah), during the course of him leaving the Masjid for a necessity e.g. (toilet), the I'tikaaf will **not** be invalidated. One should consult with a Mufti or Aalim for further clarity on this ruling.

Q. What Acts are Permitted During I'tikaaf in the Masjid?

- ✓ To eat, drink, sleep and engage in necessary conversation.
- ✓ To change clothes, sew clothing, apply perfume, surma oil.
- ✓ To cut hair and nails. These should not be allowed to fall in the Masjid.
- ✓ To walk or sit anywhere inside the Masjid.
- ✓ To tend to a sick person inside the Masjid.
- ✓ If necessary, to buy and sell goods provided that the goods are not brought into the Masjid nor is payment made inside the Masjid.
- ✓ To teach Deeni lessons and to study Deeni books.
- ✓ To get married and to perform a Nikah.
- ✓ All such acts which are lawful and allowed in the Masjid.

Q. What acts are NOT permitted during I'tikaaf in the Masjid?

- × To maintain total silence and consider it as Ibadah (act of worship).
- × To talk about worldly affairs, backbite or tell lies.
- × To engage in any occupation for a fee.
- × To erect the mu'takaf in a way which inconveniences the Musallees. (Mu'takaf is the area, which is enclosed for the sleeping and eating of the one who observes I'tikaaf).
- × To disturb and inconvenience others.

Q. What acts are undesirable during I'tikaaf?

- × To sleep excessively, wile away the time & engage in worldly activity unnecessarily.
- × To unnecessarily pass wind inside the Masjid.
- × To read books and magazines which are not of a Deeni nature.
- × To do any act that is contrary to the etiquette of the Masjid.