

MUHAMMAD *ibn*
ML. HAROON ABASOOMAR



MUHARRAM

CONTEMPORARY Q&A IN LIGHT *of*
PROPHETIC TRADITION

أَسْأَلُ اللَّهَ بِحَبْلِ جِبْرَائِيلَ
عَلَى رَأْسِ الْوَدَّاعِ أَنْ يَكْفُرَ
بِإِسْمِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

MUḤARRAM

CONTEMPORY Q&A IN LIGHT of
PROPHETIC TRADITION

Compiled by
MUHAMMAD IBN ML. HAROON ABASOOMAR



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TRANSLITERATION KEY

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

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Introduction

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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

أما بعد:

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

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

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

Muhammad ibn Ml. Haroon Abasoomar

29th September 2017 | 9th Muharram 1439

Why is Muḥarram called the ‘Month of Allah’

Question

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

Answer

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

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

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

And Allah Ta‘ālā knows best.

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

The four sacred months

Question

Is there any ḥadīth which name the four sacred months?

Answer

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

عن أبي بكرة، عن النبي صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قال: «إِنَّ الزَّمانَ قد استدارَ كهيئته يوم خلق اللهُ السَّموات والأرض، السَّنة اثنا عشرَ شهرًا، منها أربعة حرم، ثلاث متواليات: ذو القعدة، وذو الحجَّة، والمحرم، وربَّج، مضر الَّذي بين جمادى، وشعبان».

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "...The year consists of twelve months, four of which are sacred. Three from them are consecutive, Dhul Qa‘dah, Dhul Ḥijjah and Muḥarram. And [the fourth sacred month] is Rajab..."¹

And Allah Ta‘ālā knows best.

¹ Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ l-Bukhārī* 4662, Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1679.

Events on ‘Āshūrā’

Question

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

Answer

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

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

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

The Prophet ﷺ came to Madinah and saw the Jews fasting on the day of ‘Āshūrā’. He asked them about that. They said, “This is a good day, this is the day on which Allah rescued Banū Isrā’īl from their enemy. Thus, Mūsā ﷺ fasted [on this] day.” The Prophet ﷺ said, “We have more right over Mūsā ﷺ than you.” So he ﷺ fasted [on this] day and ordered [the Muslims] to fast [on that] day.¹

¹ Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ l- Bukhārī* 2004.

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

عن أبي هريرة، قال: مرّ النبيّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِأَنَاسٍ مِنَ الْيَهُودِ قَدْ صَامُوا يَوْمَ عَاشُورَاءَ، فَقَالَ: «مَا هَذَا مِنَ الصَّوْمِ؟» قَالُوا: هَذَا الْيَوْمَ الَّذِي نَجَّى اللهُ مُوسَى وَبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ مِنَ الْغَرَقِ، وَغَرَّقَ فِيهِ فِرْعَوْنَ، وَهَذَا يَوْمَ اسْتَوْت فِيهِ السَّفِينَةُ عَلَى الْجُودِيِّ، فَصَامَ نُوحٌ وَمُوسَى شُكْرًا لِلَّهِ، فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «أَنَا أَحَقُّ بِمُوسَى، وَأَحَقُّ بِصَوْمِ هَذَا الْيَوْمِ»، فَأَمَرَ أَصْحَابَهُ بِالصَّوْمِ.

The Prophet ﷺ passed by a group of Jews who were fasting on the day of ‘Āshūrā’. He asked them about that. They said, “This is the day on which Allah rescued Mūsā ﷺ and Banū Isrā’īl from drowning. And it is the day in which Pharaoh drowned. And it is the day in which the ship mounted on Moun Jūdī. So Nūḥ ﷺ and Mūsā ﷺ fasted as gratitude for Allah. The Prophet ﷺ said, “I have more right over Mūsā ﷺ and I have more right to fast on this day.” Thus, he ﷺ ordered his companions to fast.²

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

And Allah Ta‘ālā knows best.

² Aḥmad, *Musnad Aḥmad* 8717.

Fasting in the month of Muḥarram

Question

Is the following narration reliable:

عن ابن عباس قال: قال رسول الله صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «من صام يوم عرفة كان له كفارة سنتين، ومن صام يوماً من المحرم فله بكل يوم ثلاثون يوماً».

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

Answer

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

However, this particular ḥadīth is recorded by Imām aṭ-Ṭabarānī ؒ with a very weak chain.¹

The first part of the ḥadīth is well supported.

And Allah Ta‘ālā knows best.

¹ Aṭ-Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu‘jam ‘ṣ-Ṣaghīr* 2:71.

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

Fasting during the entire ten days of Muḥarram

Question

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

Answer

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

1. A ḥadīth in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim explains:

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

Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrates, the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “The most virtuous fasts after the fasts of Ramaḍān are those of the month of Muḥarram.”¹

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

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

¹ Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1163.

² Ibn Rajab, *Laṭā'if l-Ma'ārif* pg. 163.

³ Ibn Rajab, *Laṭā'if l-Ma'ārif* pg. 79.

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

And Allah Taʿālā knows best.

⁴ Ibn Rajab, *Laṭāʾif l-Maʿārif* pg. 79.

Why would the Quraysh observe the fast of ‘Āshūrā’

Question

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

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

‘A’ishah ؓ reported that the Quraysh used to fast on the day of ‘Āshūrā’ in the pre-Islamic days and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ also observed it. When he ﷺ migrated to Medina, he ﷺ himself observed this fast and commanded (others) to observe it. But when fasting during the month of Ramaḍān was made obligatory he ﷺ said, “He who wishes to observe this fast may do so, and he who wishes to abandon it may do so.”¹

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

Answer

‘Allāmah al-Qurṭubī ؓ states that it is possible that they (the Quraysh) believed this to be a part of the teaching of the Prophet Ibrāhīm ؑ and

¹ Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 2637.

the Prophet Ismāʿīl ؑ, since they always claimed to be followers of the creed of these two *Anbiyāʾ* (Prophets) ؑ.²

And Allah Taʿālā knows best.

² Al-Qurṭubī, *al-Muḥḥim* ḥadīth 993, Ibn Ḥajar, *Fathīʿl-Bārī* ḥadīth 2004.

The virtue of fasting on ‘Āshūrā’

Question

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

Answer

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ is reported to have said,

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

“...I hope from Allah that fasting on the day of ‘Āshurah may atone for the sins of the preceding year.”³

The commentators of ḥadīth explain that the minor sins are forgiven. A person will have to make *tawbah* (repentance) for his major sins.⁴

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

And Allah Ta‘ālā knows best.

³ Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 2738.

⁴ An-Nawawī, *al-Minhāj*.

Fasting a day before or after ʿĀshūrāʾ

Question

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

Answer

1. Sayyidunā ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās ؓ reports that when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was informed that the Jews and Christians revere and honour the 10th of Muḥarram (ʿĀshūrāʾ), he ﷺ said, “Next year, we will fast on the ninth as well if Allah wills.”⁵
2. Sayyidunā ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās ؓ reports that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “If I am alive next year, I will fast on the ninth as well.”⁶
3. Sayyidunā ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās ؓ reports that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Fast on the day of ʿĀshūrāʾ (10th of Muḥarram) and oppose the Jews. Fast one day before it or one day after it.”⁷

In light of the above, it is virtuous to fast on the 9th and 10th or the 10th and 11th of Muḥarram. In fact, Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar ؒ states, “Fasting on the 9th, 10th and 11th of Muḥarram is on the highest level of preference.”⁸

And Allah Taʿālā knows best.

⁵ Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 2661.

⁶ Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 2662.

⁷ Ibn Khuzaymah, *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Khuzaymah* 2095, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad Aḥmad* 1:241, aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī, *Sharḥ Maʿāni ʿl-Āthār* 2:78, al-Bayhaqī, *as-Sunan ʿl-Kubrā* 4:287.

⁸ Ibn Ḥajar, *Fath ʿl-Bārī*, under ḥadīth 2000.

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

Imām Abū Dāwūd and at-Tirmidhī (rahimahumallah) have reported from Sayyidatunā Ṣammā’ ؓ,

عن أخته - وقال يزيد: الصّماء -: أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: «لا تصوموا يوم السبت إلا فيما افترض عليكم، وإن لم يجد أحدكم إلا لحاء عنب أو عود شجرة فاليمضته».

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said **“Don’t fast on Saturdays unless it’s an obligatory fast...” i.e., like Ramaḍān.**⁹

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

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

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

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

⁹ Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* 2413, at-Tirmidhī, *Sunan at-Tirmidhī* 744 and others.

Correct interpretation

1. Imām al-Bukhārī and Muslim ﷺ have reported via Sayyidunā Abū Hurayrah ﷺ,

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

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “None of you should fast on a Friday, unless he fasts with it one day before or after.”¹⁰

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

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

2. Sayyidatunā Ummu Salamah ﷺ – the honourable wife of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ – reports,

أَنَّ كَرِيْبًا مَوْلَى ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ أَخْبَرَهُ أَنَّ ابْنَ عَبَّاسٍ وَنَا سَا مِنْ أَصْحَابِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بَعَثُونِي إِلَى أُمِّ سَلْمَةَ أَسْأَلُهَا عَنْ أَيِّ الْأَيَّامِ كَانَ أَكْثَرَ لَصِيَامِهَا... فَقَالَتْ: ... إِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَكْثَرَ مَا كَانَ يَصُومُ مِنَ الْأَيَّامِ يَوْمَ السَّبْتِ وَالْأَحَدِ...

“...The Messenger of Allah ﷺ would fast on Saturdays and Sundays more than any other days...”¹¹

Interestingly both Imām's; Ibn Khuzaymah and Ibn Ḥibbān ﷺ have

¹⁰ Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ l-Bukhārī* 1985, Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 2678.

¹¹ Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad Aḥmad* 6:324. This ḥadīth is classified *ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic) by Imām Ibn Khuzaymah and Imām Ibn Ḥibbān. See *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Khuzaymah* 2167 and *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān* 3616.

recorded this ḥadīth in the ‘**Chapter which explains the permissibility of fasting on a Saturday coupled with another day.**’

3. Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī ؒ says: “In light of this, we will interpret the narration that prohibits fasting on Saturdays to mean fasting on a **Saturday alone.**”¹²

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

In other words, Imām al-Bayhaqī has also concurred with the conclusion that the ḥadīth doesn’t stop one from fasting on a Saturday as long as one fasts a day before or after as well. For this reason al-Bayhaqī ؒ ends the chapter with the ḥadīth of Umm Salamah ؓ – cited above - that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would often fast on Saturdays and Sundays.¹³

Note: There are many scholars who have adopted the above interpretation. I have not quoted them to avoid monotony. In fact, even Imām at-Tirmidhī ؒ – after recording this ḥadīth – states: “The meaning of this prohibition is when a man **singles out the day of Saturday for fasting**, since the Jews revere this day only.”¹⁴

5. Imām at-Ṭaḥāwī ؒ writes: “It’s possible that the prohibition applies to those who do so solely to replicate the Jews. If someone fasts on Saturday without the intention of emulating of the Jews, then it will **not be makrūh** (disliked).”¹⁵

Those who claimed abrogation

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

¹² Ibn Rajab, *Laṭāʾif ʿl-Maʾārif* pg.112.

¹³ Al-Bayhaqī, *as-Sunan ʿl-Kubrā* 4:302-303.

¹⁴ At-Tirmidhī, *Sunan at-Tirmidhī* 744.

¹⁵ At-Ṭaḥāwī, *Sharḥ Maʾānī ʿl-Āthār* 2:81.

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

عن جويرية بنت الحارث: أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم دخل عليها يوم الجمعة وهو صائمة، فقال: « صمت أمس؟ » قالت: لا، قال: « تريدن أن تصومي غدا؟ » قالت: لا، قال: « فأفطري ».

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ visited her on a Friday and discovered she was fasting. He enquired: “did you fast yesterday?” She replied: “no.” He asked further: “do you intend to fast tomorrow (Saturday)?” She said: “no.” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Then don’t fast today.”¹⁶

By quoting this Imām Abū Dāwūd (rahimahullah) is emphasising that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saw nothing wrong with fasting on a Saturday.¹⁷

7. Like Imām Abū Dāwūd ؓ has done, **Imām al-Bayhaqī** ؓ also quoted the ḥadīth of Sayyidatunā Juwayriyah ؓ in answer to the ḥadīth of prohibition.¹⁸

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

Those who deemed it as a weak narration

9. Imām Abū Dāwūd ؓ quotes **Imām Mālik** ؓ to have said: “This is a mistake.”¹⁹

10. He also quotes that whenever the narration that prohibits fasting on Saturdays was mentioned before **Imām Zuhri** ؓ he would say that it’s unreliable.²⁰

¹⁶ Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ l-Bukhārī* 1986, Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* 2414.

¹⁷ See an interesting discussion on the details of this abrogation by Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar (rahimahullah) in *Talkhees l-Ḥabir* 2:480.

¹⁸ Al-Bayhaqī, *as-Sunan l-Kubrā* 4:303.

¹⁹ Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* 2416.

²⁰ Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* 2415.

Imām aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī ؒ has also said that Imām Zuhri ؒ discredited this ḥadīth.²¹

11. Imām an-Nasāʿī ؒ after reporting this ḥadīth comments: “This ḥadīth is very contradictory.”²²

12. Imām aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī ؒ says: “The aḥādīth that permit fasting on a Saturday are more popular and acceptable to the ‘*ulamāʿ*’ in comparison to this (ḥadīth of prohibition) which is *shādh* (unacceptable due to contradiction).²³

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

14. Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar ؒ says: “Such contradiction in a narration like this one is sufficient to weaken it.”²⁴

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

15. Imām aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī ؒ writes in his unique aḥādīth collection entitled: ‘*Sharḥ Maʿānī ʿl-Āthār*,’ “Indeed Rasullullah ﷺ permitted and encouraged fasting on ‘Āshūrā’, and he never said: “Don’t fast ‘Āshūrā’) if it falls on a Saturday.” Aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī ؒ writes further, “**That’s a proof to show that the (‘Āshūrā’) fast can be observed on any day.**”²⁵

Summary

In light of the above, one will be allowed to fast on ‘Āshūrā’ if it falls on a Saturday as long as it’s not done in emulation of the Jews and/or one

See Shaykh Muḥammad ‘Awwāmāh’s footnotes explaining Zuhri’s statement.

²¹ Aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī, *Sharḥ Maʿānī ʿl-Āthār* 2:81.

²² Ibn Ḥajar, *Talkhees ʿl-Ḥabīr* 2:470.

²³ Aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī, *Sharḥ Maʿānī ʿl-Āthār* 2:80.

²⁴ Ibn Ḥajar, *Talkhees ʿl-Ḥabīr* 2:470.

²⁵ Aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī, *Sharḥ Maʿānī ʿl-Āthār* 2:80.

adds a day before or after it. This is supported by authentic aḥādīth. As for the aḥādīth that apparently prohibits fasting on a Saturday other than for the obligatory fast; together with it being classified as either abrogated or weak by the senior scholars of the *ummah*, it also has a different interpretation.

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

And Allah Taʿālā knows best.

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

Question

What was Sayyidunā Mu‘āwiyah ﷺ referring to when he said ‘ayna ‘ulamā’ukum’ (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Kitāb ṣ-Ṣawm)?

Answer

The full ḥadīth is as follows,

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

Ḥumayd ibn ‘Abd ṛ-Raḥmān narrates that he heard Mu‘āwiyah ibn Abī Ṣufyān ﷺ say on the *minbar* (pulpit) on the day of ‘Āshūrā’ in the year he went on Ḥajj, ‘Oh people of Madinah! Where are your men of knowledge (‘ulamā’)? I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say, “This is the day of ‘Āshūrah, Allah has not made fasting obligatory, but I am fasting. Whoever wishes can fast and whoever wishes need not fast.”²⁶

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

²⁶ Al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ l-Bukhārī 2003, Muslim, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 1129.

‘Allāmah an-Nawawī ﷺ explains, “It seems that Sayyidunā Mu‘āwiyah ﷺ heard some people regarding fasting on ‘Āshūrā’ as *wājib*, *ḥarām* or disliked. He therefore clarified the issue that it is not *wājib* or *ḥarām*, rather it is a *sunnah*.²⁷

Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar ﷺ says, “The context of the narration seems to indicate that Sayyidunā Mu‘āwiyah (radiyAllahu Anhu) felt that the people were not showing this fast due to importance. He therefore inquired as to where were the scholars? [They should be encouraging you to fast].²⁸

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

And Allah Ta‘ālā knows best.

²⁷ An-Nawawī, *al-Minhāj* ḥadīth 2648.

²⁸ Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥḥ̣ al-Bārī*, ḥadīth 2003.

Seeking repentance on the day of ‘Āshūrā’

Question

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

Answer

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

عن عليّ قال: سأله رجل فقال: أيّ شهر تأمرني أن أصوم بعد شهر رمضان؟ فقال له: ما سمعت أحدا يسأل عن هذا إلا رجلا سمعته يسأل رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلّم وأنا قاعد عنده، فقال: يا رسول الله! أيّ شهر تأمرني أن أصوم بعد شهر رمضان؟ قال: «إن كنت صائما بعد شهر رمضان فصم المحرمّ فإنه شهر الله، فيه على قوم، ويتوب فيه على قوم آخرين».

“...If you wish to fast after the month of Ramaḍān, then fast in Muḥarram, for indeed it is the month of Allah. [In this month] is a day in which Allah Ta‘ālā accepted the repentance of a nation, and in which He will accept the repentance of other people.”²⁹

This narration has been declared sound by Imām at-Tirmidhī ؒ.

²⁹ At-Tirmidhī, *Sunan at-Tirmidhī* 741.

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

Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Rajab رحمته has cited a few narration which specify this day to be the 10th of Muḥarram, the day of ʿĀshūrā³⁰.

And Allah Taʿālā knows best.

³⁰ Ibn Rajab, *Laṭāʾif l-Maʿārif* pg.104.

Additional spending on the day of ‘Āshūrā’

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

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ is reported to have said,

قال النبي صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «من وسَّع على عياله يوم عاشوراء، وسَّع اللهُ عليه في سائر سنته».

“Whoever expands his expenditure on his family on the day of ‘Āshūrā’, Allah Ta‘ālā will inflate his sustenance for the rest of that year.”

Source and Authenticity of this narration

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

1. Sayyidunā Jābir ﷺ.³¹

Ḥāfiẓ al-‘Irāqī ﷺ has declared this chain as the most authentic one that exists for this narration. He has also confirmed it to be in par in authenticity with the standards of Imām Muslim ﷺ.³²

³¹ Ibn ‘Abd ʿl-Barr, *al-Istidhkār* 10:140.

³² As-Sakhāwī, *al-Maqāṣid ʿl-Ḥasanah* 1193.

2. Sayyidunā Abū Hurayrah ؓ.³³

This has been classified as *ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic) by: Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Nāṣir ؓ.³⁴

3. Sayyidunā Abū Saʿīd al-Kuḍrī ؓ.³⁵

4. Sayyidunā ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd ؓ.³⁶

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

This statement of Imām al-Bayhaqī ؓ has been quoted with acceptance by several expert Muḥaddithūn, the likes of Imām al-Mundhirī ؓ, Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar ؓ, ʿAllāmah as-Sakhāwī ؓ and ʿAllāmah as-Suyūṭī ؓ.³⁷

5. Sayyidunā ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar ؓ.³⁸

This has also been reported with a good chain as the statement of Sayyidunā ʿUmar ؓ.³⁹

Tried and Tested

Furthermore, several narrators of this ḥadīth have been reported to have echoed the following testimony, “We have tried this and have found it to be accurate.”⁴⁰

This further strengthens the credibility of the narration.

In fact, one narrator of this ḥadīth, a great Muḥaddith and Faqīh, Ṣufyān ibn ʿUyaynah ؓ said, “I have been doing this for fifty to sixty years and have always seen its benefit.”⁴¹

³³ Al-Bayhaqī, *ash-Shuʿab ʿl-Īmān* 3515, Al-Mundhirī, *at-Targhib* 2:115-116.

³⁴ As-Sakhāwī, *al-Maqāṣid ʿl-Ḥasanah* 1193.

³⁵ Al-Bayhaqī, *ash-Shuʿab ʿl-Īmān* 3514.

³⁶ Al-Bayhaqī, *ash-Shuʿab ʿl-Īmān* 3513.

³⁷ Al-Mundhirī, *at-Targhib* 2:116, Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Amālī ʿl-Muṭlaqah* pg.30, As-Sakhāwī, *al-Maqāṣid ʿl-Ḥasanah* 1193, as-Suyūṭī, *al-Laʿālī ʿl-Maṣnūʿah* 2:95.

³⁸ Ad-Dāraquṭnī, al-Afrād, Ibn ʿArāq, *Tanzihu ʿsh-Sharīʿah* 2:158.

³⁹ Ad-Dāraquṭnī, al-Afrād, As-Sakhāwī, *al-Maqāṣid ʿl-Ḥasanah* 1193, Ibn ʿArāq, *Tanzihu ʿsh-Sharīʿah* 2:158.

⁴⁰ Ibn ʿAbd ʿl-Barr, *al-Istidhkār* 10:140.

⁴¹ Ibn Rajab, *Laṭāʿif ʿl-Maʿārif* pg.113.

Imām al-Bājūrī ؒ has written, “When the chains of this narration are all gathered, they acquire credibility.”⁴²

‘Allāmah al-‘Irāqī ؒ has authored a detailed treatise on this ḥadīth, in which he has proven its acceptability beyond a shadow of doubt. He has also vehemently rebutted the assumption of Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah ؒ that this ḥadīth has no basis. Al-‘Irāqī ؒ – like many others – has expressed his amazement at such irrational assertion!⁴³

Conclusion

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

Lastly, this ḥadīth provides an ideal solution during these times of global financial constraint. This is not restricted to food only. One can spend in the form that is deemed as most appropriate.⁴⁴

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

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

And Allah Ta‘ālā knows best.

⁴² Al-Qaṣṭalānī, *al-Mawāhib ‘l-Ladunniyyah* pg.492.

⁴³ Ibn ‘Arāq, *Tanzīhu ‘sh-Sharī‘ah* 2:158, An-Nabhānī, *Shawāhid ‘l-Ḥaqq* pg.192-195.

⁴⁴ ‘Alā ‘d-Dīn ibn ‘Ābidīn, *al-Hadiyyat ‘l-‘Alā‘iyyah* pg.311.

Further verification for spending on ‘Āshūrā’

Question

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

Answer

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

Another example would be the ḥadīth of *Ṣalāt ‘t-Tasbīh*.⁴⁵

In fact, my honorable teacher, al-Muḥaddith Shaykh Muḥammad ‘Awwāmah (may Allah protect him) has provided several examples of this kind in his masterpiece *Āthār ‘l-Ḥadīth*.⁴⁶

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

من علم حجة على من لا يعلم

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

And Allah Ta‘ālā knows best.

⁴⁵ See Ibn Ḥajar, *Nukat* 2:848.

⁴⁶ Muḥammad ‘Awwāmah, *Āthār ‘l-Ḥadīth* pgs. 182-186.

Applying Kuḥl on the day of ‘Āshūrā’

Question

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

Answer

Imām al-Bayhaqī ؒ and others have written that the practice of applying *kuḥl* (*surmah*, antimony) on the day of ‘Āshūrā’ has been reported in an extremely weak narration.⁴⁷

عن ابن عباس قال: قال رسول الله صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «من اكتحل بالإنثمد يوم عاشوراء، لم يرمد عينه أبداً».

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

Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Rajab ؒ, ‘Allāmah al-‘Aynī ؒ and ‘Allāmah as-Sakhāwī ؒ have in fact classified this as a fabrication.⁴⁸

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

And Allah Ta‘ālā knows best.

⁴⁷ Al-Bayhaqī, *Shu‘ab ‘l-Īman* 5:334, as-Sakhāwī, *al-Maqāsid ‘l-Ḥasanah* 1085.

⁴⁸ Ibn Rajab, *Laṭā‘if ‘l-Ma‘ārif* pg. 112, al-‘Aynī, *‘Umdat ‘l-Qāri* ḥadīth 2000, as-Sakhāwī, *al-Maqāsid ‘l-Ḥasanah* 1085.