

**SACRED
MONTH OF
MUHARRAM**

- ◉ Alhamdulillah, the month of Muharram is upon us and we begin another Hijri year, bi idhnillah.
- ◉ Just as the devout Muslim eagerly awaits any chance to earn good deeds and gain Allah's Good Pleasure, and is careful not to transgress any boundaries, we too, should prepare ourselves for the coming of the month of Muharram.
- ◉ This is because Muharram is one of the four months that are SACRED in the eyes of Allah.
- ◉ “Verily, the number of months with Allah is twelve (in a year): It was so ordained, by Allah on the Day when He created the heavens and the earth; of them, four are sacred. That is the right religion, so wrong not yourselves therein...” [al-Tawbah 9:36]
- ◉ These four months, according to the Prophet (Sal Allahu Alaihi wa sallam) are Dhul-Qa'dah, Dhul-Hijjah, Muharram and Rajab. (Bukhari)

DO A LOT OF EXTRA GOOD DEEDS THIS MONTH

- ◉ Good deeds during this month bring a greater reward than in other months. They are weightier in the sight of Allah and bigger in ajr, out of the Mercy and Generosity of al-Rahmaan, al-Kareem.
- ◉ Ibn 'Abbaas said: "Good deeds done during the four sacred months bring a greater reward." (Tafseer Ibn Katheer)
- ◉ So pay extra attention to all good deeds you can do. Take advantage of every opportunity you find in your way and don't let it go. Do your best and pay extra attention to Salah, reciting Qur'an, giving charity, keeping up ties of kinship, helping someone out or simply just being nice to your family.
- ◉ Included in the good deeds is also fasting.

- Fasting during the month of Muharram has a very special meaning and reward, known only to Allah and thus the Prophet (Sal Allahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) has highly encouraged it. In fact, it's the most beloved of fasting to Allah after the fasting of Ramadhan.
- Abu Hurayrah RA said: “The Messenger of Allah (Sal Allahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) said: ‘The best of fasting after Ramadhan is fasting in Allah’s month of Muharram.’ (Muslim).
- So fast much in this special month if you are able. Or do the best you can, as fasting this month is indeed special and the best after the fardh fasting of Ramadhan.



FAST AS MUCH AS YOU'RE ABLE TO:

FAST ON THE DAY OF 'AASHOORAA (10TH OF MUHARRAM)

- ◉ Ibn 'Abbaas said: “The Prophet (Sal Allahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) came to Madinah and saw the Jews fasting on the day of 'Aashooraa'. He said, 'What is this?' They said, 'This is a righteous day, it is the day when Allah saved the Children of Israel from their enemies, so Musa fasted on this day.' He (Sal Allahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) said, 'We have more right to Musa than you,' so he fasted on that day and commanded (the Muslims) to fast on that day.” (Bukhaari)
- ◉ If one fasts on the 10th of Muharram, Allah will forgive all the (minor) sins of the previous year. Subhaan Allah! What a blessing!
- ◉ The Prophet (Sal Allahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) said: “For fasting the day of 'Aashooraa', I hope that Allah will accept it as expiation for the year that went before.” (Muslim)
- ◉ And Ibn 'Abbaas RA said: “I never saw the Messenger of Allah (Sal Allahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) so keen to fast any day and give it priority over any other than this day, the day of 'Aashooraa'.” (Bukhaari).

IT IS MUSTAHABB TO FAST THE 9TH OF MUHARRAM AS WELL

- It is good to fast on both the ninth and the tenth day, because the Prophet (Sal Allahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) fasted on the tenth, and he intended to fast on the ninth as well, the coming year.
- Ibn ‘Abbas RA said: “When the Messenger of Allah (Sal Allahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) fasted on ‘Aashooraa’ and commanded the Muslims to fast as well, they said, ‘O Messenger of Allah, it is a day that is venerated by the Jews and Christians.’ The Messenger of Allah (Sal Allahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) said, ‘If I live to see the next year, in’sha Allah, we will fast on the ninth day too.’ But it so happened that the Messenger of Allah (Sal Allahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) passed away before the next year came.” (Muslim).
- You can also fast on the 11th of Muharram, in addition to fasting on the 10th, if for some reason you couldn't fast on the 9th. (islamqa.com)

WHAT IF I CAN FAST ON THE 10TH ONLY.....IS THAT OK?

- ◉ If you can fast on the 10th only and for some reason, cannot add the fast on the ninth or eleventh, the Ulama say that it is also permissible.
- ◉ Ibn Taymiyyah said: "Fasting the day of 'Aashooraa' is expiation for one year, and it is not makrooh to single out this day for fasting." (Fatawa al-Kubra)
- ◉ Whoever fasts on the day of 'Arafah or 'Ashoora', and still owes some days from Ramadan, his fast is valid.
- ◉ But if he has the intention of fasting this day to make up for a missed Ramadan fast, he will have two rewards - one for the day of 'Arafah' or 'Ashoora' and another for making up the missed fast.
- ◉ This applies to all voluntary fasts that are not connected to Ramadan.

SOME MISCONCEPTIONS AND BASELESS TRADITIONS IN MUHARRAM

1. Some other people attribute the sanctity of Aashooraa to the martyrdom of Hussain, RA. There is no doubt, that the story of Hussain, RA is one of the most tragic episodes of our history. Yet, the sanctity of 'Aashooraa' cannot be ascribed to this event because this was established during the days of the Prophet (Sal Allahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) by the Prophet Sal Allahu Alayhi Wa Sallam himself, much earlier than the birth of his grandson Hussain RA.
2. Some people consider Muharram an evil or unlucky month, because Hussain, RA was killed in it. So they don't hold weddings, and other celebrations during this month. Thinking that one cannot do so, is again a baseless concept, which is contrary to the teachings of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. The month of Muharram is neither unlucky or lucky. Believing such things is superstition and is committing a kind of shirk
3. Some people think it is Sunnah to prepare a particular type of meal on the 10th, (such a Khitchra, haleem, etc.) and distribute it to the poor people. And they hold big gatherings for this purpose, thinking there is special reward for doing so. This, again has no basis in the Sharee'ah. since one is associating a particular event or month with having power to harm or do good and only Allah is the One Who has power over all things.

SOME MISCONCEPTIONS AND BASELESS TRADITIONS IN MUHARRAM

1. Some people mourn and lament over the death of Hussain RA and hold special ceremonies for this very purpose. However, the Prophet (Sal Allahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) never held 'mourning ceremonies' for any of his dear family members or his beloved Sahabah after they had passed away. In fact he (Sal Allahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) forbade us from holding mourning ceremonies on the death of any He (Sal Allahu Alaiyhi wa sallam) said: "He is not from our group who slaps his checks, tears his clothes and cries in the manner of the people of jahiliyyah." (Bukhaari)
2. Some people go to the other extreme and dress up and cook special dishes, etc. as a kind of celebration for this Day and that is ALSO against the Qur'an and Sunnah.
3. Others hold special prayers or offer sacrifice or visit the graves, specifically on the 10th of Muharram, thinking that there is special reward or meaning for doing so in the Sharee'ah and this is also a kind of bid'ah that one should stay away from.

SHOULD WE CONGRATULATE EACH OTHER ON THE NEW HIJRI YEAR?

- ◉ Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-‘Uthaymeen said: "If someone offers you congratulations, then respond to him, but do not initiate such greetings. This is the correct view concerning this matter...I do not know of any report that the early generations of Islam congratulated one another on the occasion of the new year, rather they did not regard the first of Muharram as the first day of the new year until the caliphate of ‘Umar ibn al-Khattaab (may Allaah be pleased with him).
- ◉ And Imaam Ahmad said: “I do not initiate the greeting but if someone greets me I return the greeting, because responding to the greeting is obligatory. But being the first to offer congratulations is neither Sunnah nor forbidden.

IN CONCLUSION:

- Our behavior during this month should be like the behavior of the Sahaabah, not one of mourning, neither one of celebration.
- Rather, we should value Muharram as one of Allaah's sacred months in which we should strive to do good deeds and be extra careful of sinning. We should try and fast as much as we can in this month, especially the 9th and 10th.
- We should not be superstitious about it (or for anything else, for that matter) and if someone wants to get married during it, they may. We should not cook special meals on the 10th and if someone invites us for such a meal, we should not go.