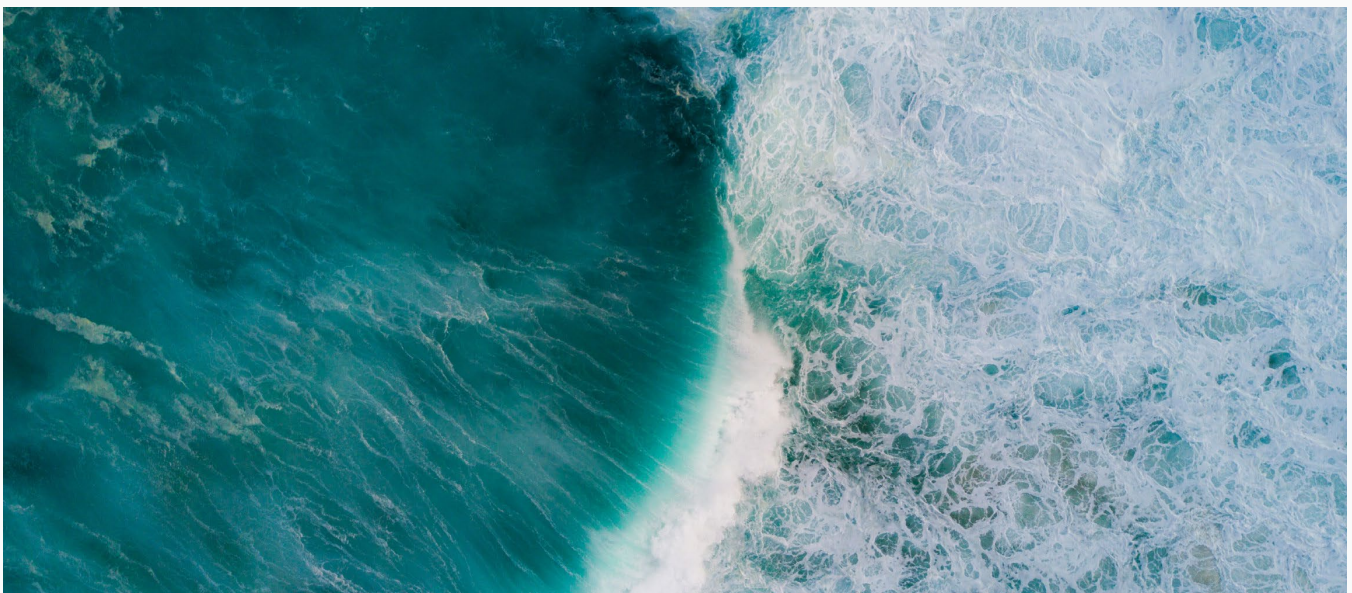


What to Do on Ashura and When

By Mudassir Mayet

IOK Seminary Graduate & Part-Time Seminary Instructor



With the Name of God, The Infinitely Loving, Eternally Caring. We sincerely praise and thank God, and ask Him to bless, protect, and honor our Prophet and Messenger Muḥammad.

Thursday, August 20th is our Islamic New Year, and it will be the year 1442 - the date marked by the arrival of Our Beloved Messenger ﷺ to al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah, The Illuminated City. The first month in the calendar is Muḥarram. It is a great time to fast, specifically on the 10th day (‘Āshūrā’)

We should all try to fast on ‘Āshūrā’, the 10th of Muḥarram, which is **Saturday, August 29th**. If possible, fast the day before or after as well.

Muḥarram

This is the 1st month of the Islamic Lunar Calendar. The Messenger of God ﷺ referred to it as “The Month of God (Shahr Allāh),” and it has certain virtues. It is also possibly a month of increased forgiveness¹.

The Messenger of God ﷺ said: “Aside from Ramaḍān, the best fasts are the fasts of The Month of God, Al-Muḥarram.”²

‘Āshūrā’

This is the 10th day of Muḥarram. It falls on Saturday, August 29th. Everyone should try to fast this day.

Reward: The Messenger of God ﷺ said: “Fast on ‘Āshūrā’. Doing so will forgive your sins of the previous year.”³

Encouragement: Ibn Abbās رضي الله عنه said: “I never saw The Prophet ﷺ wanting to fast a day more than ‘Āshūrā’...”⁴ In regards to ‘Āshūrā’, The Messenger of God ﷺ said: “Fast!”⁵

1. Al-Tirmidhī, Jāmi’: Kitāb al-Ṣawm ‘an Rasūl Allāh ﷺ Bāb mā jā’a fī ṣawm al-Muḥarram. The other narrations mentioned here should be given preference in terms of reliability for proving the month’s virtues.

2. Muslim, Ṣaḥīḥ #1163 a,b,c. Al-Tirmidhī, Jāmi’: Kitāb al-Ṣawm ‘an Rasūl Allāh ﷺ Bāb mā jā’a fī ṣawm al-Muḥarram. Abū Dāwūd, Sunan: Kitāb al-Ṣawm Bāb fī Ṣawm al-Muḥarram.

3. Al-Tirmidhī, Jāmi’: Kitāb al-Ṣawm ‘an Rasūl Allāh ﷺ Bāb mā jā’a fī al-ḥathth ‘alā ṣawm yawm ‘Āshūrā’. Ibn Mājah, Sunan: Kitāb al-Ṣawm #1810.

4. Al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ: Kitāb al-Ṣawm Bāb ṣiyām yawm ‘Āshūrā’. Muslim, Ṣaḥīḥ #1132 a.

5. Muslim, Ṣaḥīḥ #1131 a.

Reasoning: Ibn ‘Abbās (raḍīya Allāh ‘anhu) mentioned that the Jews of Al-Madīnah used to fast on ‘Āshūrā’ because The Exodus — the day Moses ﷺ escaped with the Israelites from the reign of the Pharaoh — occurred on that day. The Messenger of God ﷺ responded saying: “We have more right to Moses (alayhi al-salām), so fast (on this day).”⁶

Fasting The 9th As Well: The Messenger of God ﷺ said: “If I am still alive next year, I will definitely fast the 9th as well. (Meaning, in addition to the 10th.)”⁷ The Messenger of God ﷺ also said: “Differ from the Jews, fast the day before or after as well.”⁸ Based on that, it would be okay to fast on the 11th instead of on the 9th. There are different opinions as to which set of days to fast. To list them in brief:

- The 10th (Saturday, August 29th only). Everyone is in agreement that this day should be fasted.⁹
- The 9th and 10th (Friday and Saturday)
- The 10th and 11th (Saturday and Sunday)¹⁰
- The 9th, 10th, and 11th (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday)¹¹

Spending on One’s Family

There are a few narrations attributed to the Prophet ﷺ stating, “If someone is extra generous with their family¹² on the day of ‘Āshūrā’, Allāh ﷻ will be extra generous with him or her throughout the following year.”¹³ It should be mentioned that the vast majority of scholars have considered the attribution of that statement to the Prophet ﷺ, albeit through many companions and chains, to be weak (ḍa‘īf). However, there have been great scholars who have acted upon this statement by spending extra on their family, and found extra blessings in the following year. For example, the great Companion (ṣaḥābī) Jābir ibn ‘Abd Allāh (raḍīya Allāhu ‘anhu) has been quoted saying, “We have experienced that, and have found it to be true.”¹⁴ Abū Al-Zubayr

6. Al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ: Kitāb al-Tafsīr Sūrah Yūnus Bāb Wa Jāwaznā bi Banī Isrā’īl ... Muslim, Ṣaḥīḥ #1130 c.

7. Muslim, Ṣaḥīḥ #1134b. Ibn Mājah, Sunan: Kitāb al-Ṣawm #1808.

8. Aḥmad, Musnad #2155. There is a discussion about this ḥadīth, as to whether The Messenger of God ﷺ actually said “after it” or even “and the day after it.” There are other narrations wherein The Prophet ﷺ just said the 9th and 10th.

9. However, it has been narrated that after the mandate to fast Ramaḍān, Ibn ‘Umar (raḍīya Allāhu ‘anhu) would not fast on ‘Āshūrā’ unless it coincided with his normal fasting routine. Al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ: Kitāb al-Ṣawm Bāb Wujūb Ṣawm Ramaḍān.

10. Some scholars opined that there is no virtue in adding the 11th.

11. Some scholars opined that no one should fast all three: 9th, 10th, and 11th, referring to it as an innovation (bid‘ah).

12. Some reports add “and on themselves.”

13. This has been narrated by Abū Sa‘īd Al-Khudrī, Ibn Ma‘ūd, Ibn ‘Umar, Abū Hurayrah, and Jābir (raḍīya Allāh ‘anhum). Al-Ṭabarānī, Al-Awsaṭ, v. 9 p. 121 #9302; Al-Ṭabarānī, Al-Kabīr, v. 10 p. 77 #10007; Al-Bayhaqī, Shu‘ab Al-Īmān, v. 7 p. 375-9 and v. 8 p. 377; Ibn Ḥibbān, Kitāb Al-Majrūhīn, v. 3 p. 97; Abū Nu‘aym, Akbār Aṣbahān, v. 1 p. 163 and p. 198; Ibn Ma‘īn, Tārīkh, #2223; Al-Khaṭīb, Muwaḍḍiḥ al-Jam‘ wa al-Tafrīq, v. 2 p. 307; Al-Ḥakīm Al-Tirmidhī, Nawādir Al-Uṣūl v. 3 p.14

and Shu‘bah ﷺ have also been quoted with similar statements.¹⁵ Sufyān ibn ‘Uyaynah (raḥimahu Allāh) is famous¹⁶ for this statement, saying that he found this extra generosity for “50 or 60 years.” Ibn Ḥabīb Al-Mālikī (raḥimahu Allāh) composed a few lines of poetry highlighting this.¹⁷

In summary, despite a weak attribution to the Prophet ﷺ, there are numerous quotes, statements, and testimonies that indicate that receiving extra generosity from Allāh the year following having spent on one’s family has some basis.¹⁸ So anyone who is able to, and chooses to act upon this¹⁹, should go ahead and be extra generous with his or her family on ‘Āshūrā’, and hope and pray for extra generosity and blessings from Allāh. — Allāh knows best.

May Allāh — Al-Razzāq, The Sustainer — provide for us all, bless us in what He Alone has provided us with, make us grateful and content, and free us from any and all forms of debt. May Allāh accepting our fasting on ‘Āshūrā’, and forgive us for our previous years’ worth of sins. Āmīn.

14. Ibn ‘Abd Al-Barr, *Al-Istidhkār*, v. 10 p. 140.

15. Ibn ‘Abd Al-Barr, *Al-Istidhkār*, v. 10 p. 140.

16. However, *Al-Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (raḥimahu Allāh) said in response to this, “(Well, obviously...) He (Ibn Uyaynah) would be obsequious and groveling to Ibn Al-Muntashir. May Allāh have mercy on Ibn Uyaynah. He lived with the kings.” Masā’il Ibn Hāni’ li Al-Imām Aḥmad*, v. 1 p. 136-7.

17. *Al-Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ, Tartīb al-Madārik wa Taqrīb al-Masālik*, v. 4 p. 140.

18. *Al-Bayhaqī, Shu‘ab Al-Īmān*, v. 7 p. 379; *Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar Al-‘Asqalānī, Al-Amālī Al-Muṭlaqaḥ* p. 27-30; *Ibn Ḥajar, Mukhtaṣar Al-Tarḡhib*, p. 82; *Ibn ‘Ābidīn, Ḥāshiyah*, v. 2 p. 419; *Al-Ṣāwī Al-Mālikī, Ḥāshiyah Al-Ṣāwī ‘alā Al-Sharḥ Al-Ṣaḡhīr*, v. 1 p. 691; *The recommendation has also been mentioned by Sulaymān Al-Jamal in his Ḥāshiyah, and by Al-Bahūtī Al-Ḥanbalī in his Sharḥ Muntahā Al-Irādāt.*

19. *If someone refrains from acting on this due to precaution and/or in following those scholars that considered this action to be incorrect or an innovation (like Al-Imām Ibn Bāz raḥimahu Allāh in his Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā*, v. 26 p. 252), then, God-willing, they will be rewarded for their caution.