**Fasting Six Days of Shawwal**

Shawwal is the tenth month in the lunar calendar. The first of Shawwal is Eidul Fitr. After the festivity of Eid it is recommended to observe six days of fast. This fast may be observed continuously non-break, or it may be observed one day at a time. If you observe it continuously, you may start on the fourth day and end on the ninth of day Shawwal, or you may select days at random, provided you complete six days before the end of Shawwal. For instance, you may observe the third, fifth, seventh, ninth, 14th and 15th days. Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari (raa) related the Messenger of Allah, (saas), said:

"Whoever observes the Ramadan fast and follows it with six days of fast in Shawwal, it is as if he has fasted Dahr (the whole year)." (Bukhari) It has been mentioned earlier that Dahr means the whole year. Possibly it may also mean forever, or for life.

Analyzing this hadith, our jurists (`Ulama) explained how according to this hadith, a Muslim who fasts during Ramadan every year and follows it with six days fast of Shawwal, will be credited for fasting a whole lifetime. The Jurists correctly said: a good deed (hasanah) is rewarded a minimum of ten times its equivalent. It follows, then, that one Ramadan is equivalent to ten months of fasting, and the clincher, six days, is equal to two months, (6x10=60). That undoubtedly completes the year's twelve months. Thus, we see the wisdom and the reason why the Prophet (saas) mentioned six days after Ramadan in Shawwal, not five or seven.

The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) said**, “Fasting Ramadan and following it with six days from Shawwal is like continual fasting.**” [Muslim, on the authority of Abu Ayyub (Allah be pleased with him)]

 ﻿This is because the reward of actions is multiplied (at least) ten-fold. So Ramadan is like fasting 300 days, and the six days of Shawwal like fasting 60 days. The Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) himself stated this explictly: “Fasting Ramadan is like fasting ten months, and fasting six days [of Shawwal] is like fasting two months. That is like fasting a full year.” [Ahmad & Nasa'i]

1. **Religiously recommended.** Based on the outward purport of this hadith, the majority of the scholars–including Imam Shafi`i, Imam Ahmad, and Imam Abu Hanifa consider it a recommended sunna to fast six days in Shawwal. There are narrations from Abu Hanifa indicating its dislikedness, but these are understood to relate to considering it a duty to fast these days. [Nawawi, Majmu`; Ibn Qudama, Mughni; Ibn al-Humam/Marghinani, Fath al-Qadir `ala al-Hidaya; Ibn Abidin, Radd al-Muhtar]

 **2. Consecutive or not?** Some of the scholars considered it recommended to fast these days consecutively after Eid al-Fitr, including Imam Shafi`i. They based this on a hadith related by Tabarani and others in which the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) is reported to have said, “Fasting six consecutive days after Eid al-Fitr is like fasting the entire year.”

Other scholars, including both the Hanbalis and Hanafis, considered it the same to fast consecutively or not–because they deemed the above hadith to be excessively weak. However, they caution that one shouldn’t put it off such that one ends up missing the great reward of fasting six days. It is also a consideration that avoiding difference of opinion is religiously recommended–so trying to fast the six days consecutively would appear to be superior.

 **3. Combining intentions with missed fasts**. It is valid to combine the intention of the sunna of fasting the six days of Shawwal with the intention of fasting on Mondays, Tuesdays or the three white days but not with the intention of making up missed days of Ramadan. It is better to have the intention before Fajr.

 **4. The wisdom of fasting these six days**. Among the benefits of fasting the six days of Shawwal is:

[i] **Sign of acceptance**. It is a sign of the acceptance of one’s Ramadan fasts. This is because a sign of Allah’s accepting a good deed is to be granted the success to perform similar good deeds, with consistency.

[ii] **Consistency itself is beloved.** The actions most beloved to Allah and the Messenger (peace and blessings be upon him) are those done most consistently.

[iii] **Sign of thankfulness**. Fasting these six days is an expression of thankfulness for the reward of fasting that Allah grants on the day of Eid. Continuing to fast is a sign of being, as the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) described himself, “A truly thankful servant.” Thankfulness is the key to increase, and a means of securing one’s blessings and good.

[iv] **Sign of commitment to continue.** Fasting these six days is a sign of one’s commitment to continue in worship and submission to Allah, willingly–and not merely out of obligation.

 **5. Some of the scholars say If unable to fast the six days of Shawwal** due to some genuine excuse as sickness or traveling or because of birth then they can make up what they missed in Ramadan and the six days of Shawwal–by Divine Grace– they will have the full reward of fasting these days, because, “Actions are by their intentions, and each person shall have whatever they intended,” as the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) explained. [Muslim] The signs of being true in one’s intention are that if one’s excuse is lifted, one hastens to fulfill the intended matter.

**The virtue of fasting six days of Shawwaal - 7859**

What is the ruling on fasting six days of Shawwaal? Is it waajib (obligatory)?

Praise be to Allaah.

Fasting six days of Shawwaal after the obligatory fast of Ramadaan is Sunnah Mustahabbah, not waajib. It is recommended for the Muslim to fast six days of Shawwaal, and in this there is great virtue and an immense reward. Whoever fasts these six days will have recorded for him a reward as if he had fasted a whole year, as was reported in a saheeh hadeeth from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him). Abu Ayyoob (may Allaah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Whoever fasts Ramadaan and follows it with six days of Shawwaal, it will be as if he fasted for a lifetime.” (Narrated by Muslim, Abu Dawood, al-Tirmidhi, al-Nisaa’i and Ibn Maajah).

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) explained this when he said: “Whoever fasts for six days after (Eid) al-Fitr has completed the year: (whoever does a good deed (hasanah) will have ten hasanah like it).” According to another report: “Allaah has made for each hasanah ten like it, so a month is like fasting ten months, and fasting six days completes the year.” (al-Nisaa’i and Ibn Maajah. See also Saheeh al-Targheeb wa’l-Tarheeb, 1/421). It was also narrated by Ibn Khuzaymah with the wording: “Fasting for the month of Ramadaan brings the reward of ten like it, and fasting for six days brings the reward of two months, and that is the fasting of the whole year.”

The Hanbali and Shaafa’i fuqaha’ explained that fasting six days of Shawwaal after fasting Ramadaan makes it as if one has fasted for an entire year of obligatory fasts, because the multiplication of the reward applies even to naafil fasts, because each hasanah brings the reward of ten like it.

Another of the important benefits of fasting six days of Shawwaal is that is makes up for any shortfall in a person\'s obligatory Ramadaan fasts, because no one is free of shortcomings or sins that have a negative effect on his fasting. On the Day of Resurrection, some of his naafil deeds will be taken to make up the shortcomings in his obligatory deeds, as the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “The first thing for which people will be brought to account on the Day of Resurrection will be their salaah (prayer). Our Lord, may He be glorified and exalted, will say to His angels – although He knows best – ‘Look at the salaah of My slave, whether it is complete or incomplete.’ If it is perfect, it will be recorded as perfect, and if something is lacking, He will say, ‘Look and see whether My slave did any voluntary (naafil) prayers.’ If he did some voluntary prayers, [Allaah] will say, Complete the obligatory actions of My slave from his voluntary actions.’ Then all his actions will be dealt with in a similar manner.” (Narrated by Abu Dawood).

And Allaah knows best. Sheikh Muhammed Salih Al-Munajjid

**How can he make up missed fasts?**

How can he make up missed fasts?.

Praise be to Allaah. If he did not fast for a reason, such as sickness or travelling, or menstruation in the case of women, then he must make it up after Ramadaan, and he must make up the number of days that he did not fast, because Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):“and whoever is ill or on a journey, the same number [of days which one did not observe Sawm (fasts) must be made up] from other days”[al-Baqarah 2:185].

‘Aa’ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) said: That (i.e., menstruation) would happen to us and we would be told to make up the fasts, but we were not told to make up the prayers. Narrated by al-Bukhaari (321) and Muslim (335). The time for making up the fasts lasts until the next Ramadaan begins; he can make them up at any time during this period, on consecutive days or separately. It is not permissible for him to delay making them up after the following Ramadaan, unless he has an excuse. See the answer to question no. [26865](http://www.islam-qa.com/index.php?ln=eng&QR=26865).

But if he did not fast deliberately, with no excuse, then one of two scenarios must apply: 1 – He did not decide not to fast from the night before, and he did not intend to fast. In this case making up the fast is not valid, because fasting is an act of worship that is linked to a specific time, and if a person fails to do it, it is not valid after that time, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Whoever does an action that is not in accordance with this matter of ours will have it rejected. Narrated by al-Bukhaari (2697) and Muslim (1718).

2 – He did intend to fast from the night before, and he started the day fasting, then he broke his fast during the day with no excuse. He has to make up this day, because he started to do it, which makes it like a vow that he must fulfil. Hence the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) commanded the one who had intercourse during the day in Ramadaan to make up that day, and he said to him: “Fast one day in its place.” Narrated by Ibn Majaah (1671), classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh Sunan Ibn Majaah. In addition to that, if he broke the fast during the day without any excuse by having intercourse, he must make it up and also offer expiation. For information on this expiation and the rulings thereon, please see the answer to question no. [49614](http://www.islam-qa.com/index.php?ln=eng&QR=49614).

The one who breaks his fast with no excuse also has to repent to Allaah, regret what he has done, resolve never to do it again, and do a lot of righteous deeds such as observing naafil fasts and so on. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):“And verily, I am indeed forgiving to him who repents, believes (in My Oneness, and associates none in worship with Me) and does righteous good deeds, and then remains constant in doing them (till his death)”[Ta-Ha 20:82]. And Allaah knows best. Islam Q&A

**How can he make up missed fasts?** - 112102

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Delaying making up Ramadaan fasts until the next Ramadaan begins

{ I did not fast some days in Ramadaan because of my period. This happened a few years ago, and I have not fasted these days until now. What do I have to do?

Praise be to Allaah.   The imams are agreed that whoever does not fast some days of Ramadaan has to make up those days before the next Ramadaan comes. They quoted as evidence for that the hadeeth narrated by al-Bukhaari (1950) and Muslim (1146) from ‘Aa’ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) who said: “I used to have fasts that I still owed from Ramadaan, and I could not make them up until Sha’baan, and that was because of the position of the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) [as a husband].” Al-Haafiz said:

It may be understood from her keenness to fast them in Sha’baan that it is not permissible to delay making up fasts until the next Ramadaan begins. If a person delays making up fasts until Ramadaan begins, one of the following two scenarios must apply.

1 – The delay is for a reason, such as being sick and the sickness lasting until the following Ramadaan begins. There is no sin on a person for delaying in this case, because he has an excuse, and he only has to make up the days missed. So he should make up the number of days that he did not fast.

2 – There is no reason for the delay, such as when a person was able to make up the fasts but he did not do so before the following Ramadaan began.

This person is sinning by failing to make up the fasts with no excuse. The imams are agreed that he must make up the fasts, but they differed as to whether along with making up the fasts he must also feed one poor person for each day or not. Maalik, al-Shaafa’i and Ahmad said that he must feed a poor person, and they quoted as evidence for that the reports narrated from some of the Sahaabah such as Abu Hurayrah and Ibn ‘Abbaas (may Allaah be pleased with them).

Imam Abu Haneefah (may Allaah have mercy on him) was of the view that he does not have to feed a poor person as well as making up the fasts. He quoted as evidence the fact that Allaah commands the one who does not fast in Ramadaan only to make up the missed fasts, and He did not mention feeding a poor person. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): “and whoever is ill or on a journey, the same number [of days which one did not observe Sawm (fasts) must be made up] from other days”[al-Baqarah 2:185] See al-Majmoo’, 6/366; al-Mughni, 4/400

This second view was also favoured by Imam al-Bukhaari (may Allaah have mercy on him). He said in his Saheeh: Ibraaheem (i.e., al-Nakha’i) said: If a person neglects (to make up missed fasts) until the next Ramadaan comes, he should fast the missed days of both months. But he did not think that he has to feed a poor person. There was also a mursal report from Abu Hurayrah and Ibn ‘Abbaas which says that he should also feed a poor person. Then al-Bukhaari said: But Allaah does not mention feeding a poor person, rather He says (interpretation of the meaning): “…the same number [of days which one did not observe Sawm (fasts) must be made up] from other days”[al-Baqarah 2:185] Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) said, when noting that it is not obligatory to feed a poor person:

With regard to the words of the Sahaabah, their use as evidence is subject to further discussion if it goes against the apparent meaning of the Qur’aan. In this case, saying that it is obligatory to feed a poor person goes against the apparent meaning of the Qur’aan, because Allaah only enjoined making up the same number from other days, and He did not mention more than that. Based on this, we should not oblige the slaves of Allaah to do any more than they need to fulfil their duty. But what was narrated from Ibn ‘Abbaas and Abu Hurayrah may be interpreted as referring to what is mustahabb, not what is obligatory. The correct view with regard to this issue is that a person does not have to do anything more than making up the missed fasts, but he is sinning if he delays doing so. Al-Sharh al-Mumti’, 6/451. Based on this, then what is obligatory is to make up the fasts only, but if a person wants to be on the safe side and feed one poor person for each day missed, then that is good. The woman who asked this question – if she delayed making up the fasts with no excuse, has to repent to Allaah and resolve not to repeat this mistake in the future. And Allaah is the One Whom we ask to help us to do that which He loves and which pleases Him. And Allaah knows best.Islam Q&A}

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1 – He did not decide not to fast from the night before, and he did not intend to fast. In this case making up the fast is not valid, because fasting is an act of worship that is linked to a specific time, and if a person fails to do it, it is not valid after that time, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Whoever does an action that is not in accordance with this matter of ours will have it rejected. Narrated by al-Bukhaari (2697) and Muslim (1718).

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In addition to that, if he broke the fast during the day without any excuse by having intercourse, he must make it up and also offer expiation. For information on this expiation and the rulings thereon, please see the answer to question no. [49614](file:///D%3A%5Cindex.php%3Fln%3Deng%26QR%3D49614). The one who breaks his fast with no excuse also has to repent to Allaah, regret what he has done, resolve never to do it again, and do a lot of righteous deeds such as observing naafil fasts and so on. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And verily, I am indeed forgiving to him who repents, believes (in My Oneness, and associates none in worship with Me) and does righteous good deeds, and then remains constant in doing them (till his death)”

[Ta-Ha 20:82]. And Allaah knows best. Islam Q&A

**Should a woman start with making up missed fasts from Ramadaan or with the six days of Shawwaal?**

 What should a woman do first: fast the six recommended days of Shawwal ( Alayam Alsetta Albeed) or fast equivalent to the days she missed in Ramadan due to her monthly period? Praise be to Allaah. If she wants to earn the reward mentioned in the hadeeth of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), “Whoever fasts Ramadaan then follows it with six days of Shawwaal, it will be as if he fasted for a lifetime” (reported by Muslim, no. 1984), then she should complete her Ramadaan fasts first, then follow it with six days of Shawwaal, so that the hadeeth with be applicable to her too, and she will gain the reward mentioned in it. As regards the matter of permissibility, it is permissible for her to delay making up her Ramadaan fasts, provided that she makes them up before the next Ramadaan comes along. Sheikh Muhammed Salih Al-Munajjid. For more info and Q go to Islam Q&A