13999 - The Sunnah is to hasten to break one’s fast

the question

I would like to know if breaking fast (iftar) is fard (obligatory)or? When a person apporching to the Masjid for Salatul Maghrib, during the time of iftar, should he/she break the fast and join in the prayer or pray first and then break the fast. I hope my question is clear enough. Please, answer me in details and may Allah bless you with His mercy.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The Sunnah is to hasten to break one’s fast. This is what is indicated by the ahaadeeth. It was narrated from Sahl ibn Sa’d that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “The people will still be fine so long as they hasten to break their fast.” (Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 1821; Muslim, 1838)

What one should do is to hasten to break the fast by eating small morsels that will calm one’s hunger, then get up to pray, then if one wishes, one may come back and eat more.

This is what the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) used to do. It was narrated that Anas ibn Maalik said: “The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) used to break his fast before praying by eating fresh dates, and if there were no fresh dates he would eat dried dates; if there were no dried dates, he would have a few sips of water.” (al-Sawm, 632; classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh Abi Dawood, no. 560)

Al-Mubaarakfoori said in his commentary on the hadeeth: “This indicates the lengths to which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) in order to hasten to break his fast.”