

Islam Question & Answer

General Supervisor:
Shaykh Muhammad Saalih al-Munajjid

69781 - Is it better to fast on Mondays and Thursdays or on three days of each month?

the question

Which is better in fasting – fasting three days of each month or fasting on Mondays and Thursdays? What are the ahaadeeth which have been narrated concerning these fasts? When are the three days of each month – is it the 13th, 14th and 15th of each month? What is the hadeeth?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allaah.

If we want to discover which is better, fasting on Mondays and Thursdays or fasting three days of each month, we find that fasting on Mondays and Thursdays is better than fasting on three days of each month, because if a person fasts on Mondays and Thursdays each week, that means that he is fasting eight days each month, so he will have done both: fasted on Mondays and Thursdays and fasted three days of the month.

The three days of each month may be fasted at the beginning of the month, in the middle or at the end, and may be done separately or consecutively, but it is better to fast on the ayaam al-beed, which are the days on which the moon is full, namely the 13th, 14th and 15th of each lunar month.

There follow a number of ahaadeeth which encourage fasting on Mondays and Thursdays:

1 – It was narrated from Abu Qataadah al-Ansaari that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) was asked about fasting on Mondays. He said: “On that day I was born, and on it the Revelation came to me.” Narrated by Muslim, 1162.

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2 - It was narrated that 'Aa'ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) said: The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) was keen to fast on Mondays and Thursdays. Narrated by al-Tirmidhi, 745; al-Nasaa'i, 2361; Ibn Maajah, 1739; classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Targheeb, 1044.

3 - It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Deeds are shown (to Allaah) on Mondays and Thursdays, and I like my deeds to be shown when I am fasting." Narrated by al-Tirmidhi, 747; classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Targheeb, 1041.

The following ahaadeeth encourage fasting on three days of each month:

1 - It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: "My close friend [the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him)] advised me to do three things which I will not give up until I die: fasting three days of each month, praying Duha, and sleeping after Witr. Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 1124; Muslim, 721.

2 - It was narrated from Mu'aadhah al-'Adawiyah that she asked 'Aa'ishah, the wife of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), "Did the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) fast three days of every month?" She said, "Yes." She said to her: "Which days of the month did he fast?" She said, "He did not mind which days of the month he would fast." Narrated by Muslim, 1160.

3 - It was narrated from Jareer ibn 'Abd-Allaah (may Allaah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Fasting three days of each month is fasting for a lifetime, and ayaam al-beed are the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth." Narrated by al-Nasaa'i, 2420; classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Targheeb, 1040.

4 - It was narrated that Abu Dharr (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allaah

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(peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said to me: "If you fast any part of the month, then fast the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth." Narrated by al-Tirmidhi, 761; al-Nasaa'i, 2424; classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Targheeb, 1038.

There is broad scope in the command to fast three days, as it says in the hadeeth of 'Aa'ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her), but the best days of the month for fasting are the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth, as it says in the other saheeh ahaadeeth.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) was asked: When fasting three days of every month, is it essential that it be only on the ayyaam al-beed? Or is it permissible to fast any three days of the month?

He replied:

It is permissible to fast at the beginning of the month, in the middle or at the end, on consecutive days or separately. But it is better if it is done on the three ayyaam al-beed, which are the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth. 'Aa'ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) said: The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) used to fast on three days of every month, and he did not mind whether he fasted at the beginning or at the end of the month. End quote.

Majmoo' Fataawa al-Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen, 20/question no. 376

And Allaah knows best.