106458 - Can a traveller break his fast so that he will have the strength to do ‘umrah?

the question

If a traveller reaches Makkah when he is fasting, can he break his fast so that he will have the strength to perform ‘umrah?.

Detailed answer

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) entered Makkah in the year of the conquest on the twentieth of Ramadaan, and he (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) was not fasting. He led the people of Makkah in praying two rak’ahs, then he said to them: “O people of Makkah, offer the prayer in full, for we are people who are travelling.” Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah and Ibn Katheer (may Allaah have mercy on them) stated that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) was not fasting that year, i.e., he broke the fast for ten days in Makkah during the conquest. In Saheeh al-Bukhaari it is narrated that Ibn ‘Abbaas (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: He remained not fasting until the month ended. Narrated by al-Bukhaari (144). Undoubtedly he prayed two rak’ahs during this period because he was travelling, and the fact that a pilgrim doing ‘umrah is a traveller does not cease when he reaches Makkah, so he does not have to refrain from eating and drinking if he arrives not fasting. Rather we say to him: If that will give you more strength to perform ‘umrah then it is better for you not to fast, so long as doing ‘umrah will exhaust you. Some people may be able to carry on fasting even when travelling, because fasting whilst travelling nowadays does not cause a great deal of hardship. So a person carries on fasting whilst travelling, then when he reaches Makkah feeling tired he says to himself: Shall I carry on fasting or shall I delay doing ‘umrah until after I break my fast? i.e., until night time, or is it better for me to break my fast so that I can perform ‘umrah as soon as I arrive in Makkah? We say to him in this case: It is better for you to break your fast; even if you are fasting, break your fast so that you can perform ‘umrah as soon as you arrive, because when the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) entered Makkah in ihraam, he hastened to the mosque. He made his mount kneel beside

the mosque and entered it so as to perform the rituals for which he was in a state of ihraam. Breaking your fast so that you can have the energy to perform the rituals during the day is better than continuing to fast and then making up your ‘umrah at night when you have broken your fast. It is proven that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) was fasting during his journey to conquer Makkah, but some people came to him and said: O Messenger of Allaah, fasting is too hard for the people and they are looking to see what you will do. That was after ‘Asr, and the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) called for water and drank it whilst the people were looking on. He (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) broke the fast during the journey, and he even broke the fast at the end of the day, all so that people would not cause hardship for themselves by fasting. Some people burden themselves with fasting whilst travelling despite the hardship, which is undoubtedly contrary to the Sunnah. The words of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) apply to them: “It is not righteousness to fast when travelling.” End quote.