

The Little Green Book

Volume II Chapter 17

On Fasting

Sexual intercourse is a breaking of the fast, even if the penis enters the vagina only as far as the circumcision ring, and even if no ejaculation results.

If the penis enters less deeply into the vagina and there is no ejaculation, the fast has not been broken.

If the man cannot determine with certainty what length of his penis entered into the vagina, and if he has gone in beyond the circumcision ring, his fast has not been broken.

If a man has intercourse because he has forgotten that he is in a fasting period, or if someone forces him to have intercourse, his fast has not been broken. But if he remembers the fast while the sex act is taking place, or if he is no longer forcibly constrained to complete the coitus, he must interrupt it immediately.

If a man during a fasting period masturbates and brings himself to ejaculation, his fast has been broken.

If a man ejaculates involuntarily, his fast remains valid, but if he himself does anything whatsoever to help along his involuntary ejaculation, the fast is considered to be null and void.

Taking an enema, even for medically therapeutic reasons, breaks the fast; but the use of suppositories is not forbidden; however, it is preferable to abstain from using opium suppositories.

The fast of one who, in thought, or word, or deed, bears false witness against Allah, or His Prophet or his successors, is immediately invalidated, even though he may confess on the spot to having lied and proclaim his repentance. In all likelihood, Saint Fatima [daughter of Muhammad and wife of Ali], as well as the other prophets and their successors, are also included among those against whom one may not blaspheme.

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If, during the fast, one attributes in all good faith some statement to Allah or to His Prophet, and one afterward learns that his is in error, the fast remains valid. If one intentionally attributes some false quotation to Allah or to His Prophet or his successors, the fast loses its value' but if one is only repeating such a quotation heard from a third party, the fast remains valid.

The fast is invalidated if one plunges his entire head under water, but if one immerses only the right side and then the left side, the value of the fast remains intact. One's head must not be immersed in rose water; however, it may be immersed in other waters in solution, or in other liquids.

If, in order to rescue a person from drowning, one's head becomes immersed during a period of fasting, one's fast is invalidated, even if there was no other way of saving the drowning person's life.

If one has ejaculated and abstains from performing the prescribed ablutions during the vigil of the month of Ramadan, the fast loses its value.

If a person believes he will have sufficient time, before a Ramadan vigil, to complete his ablutions after ejaculation, but discovers afterward that he does not have time enough, he may postpone his ablutions in order to begin the fast.

If a fly enters the mouth of a person during a period of fasting, he is not forced to take it out, if it has not gone too far into the throat; if it has remained in the mouth, he must take it out even if that causes vomiting which invalidates the fast.

If by inadvertence one eats something during the fast, and then one realizes it, one must not attempt to retrieve the part of it which has already been swallowed.

The following practices are inadvisable during fasts; putting drops in one's eyes; having a blood transfusion or taking a bath; pinching snuff or smelling aromatic plants; taking sitz baths (applies to women only); taking suppositories; getting one's clothes wet; having teeth pulled or undergoing any other surgery which might cause blood to flow into the mouth brushing one's teeth with moist wood; becoming intimate with one's wife, even without the intention of coming to ejaculation, or deliberately arousing oneself (if ejaculation is deliberately brought about, the fast is invalidated).