

The Prohibition of Continuous Fasting (al-Wisaal)

On the authority of Abdullah ibn Umar—(Radiya-llaahu 'an-humaa), who said: 'The Messenger of Allah (Salla-llaahu alayhi wa Sallam) prohibited **al-Wisaal** (continuous fasting).' They said: 'O Messenger of Allah (Salla-llaahu alayhi wa Sallam), but **you** perform continuous fasting.' He said: '**Verily, I am not like you; I am given food and drink** [i.e. sufficed by Allah].' Abu Hurairah, Aa'ishah and Anas ibn Maalik (Radiya-llahu 'an-hum) also reported it. [al-Bukhaaree, no. 1962; Muslim, no. 2426, 2427 (see also: 2429)]

In a narration of al-Bukhaaree: On the authority of Abu Sa'eed al-Khudree (Radiya-llahu 'an-hu), from the Prophet (Salla-llaahu alayhi wa Sallam) that he said: '**Do not perform continuous fasting (al-Wisaal)**, and anyone of you who desires to do *continuous fasting (al-Wisaal)*, then continue (fasting, only) **up until as-Sahar** (the time of taking the pre-dawn meal)... [al-Bukhaaree, no. 1963]

Rulings Derived from this Hadeeth

1. The **prohibition** (*Tah-reem*) of **continuous fasting** (*al-Wisaal*).
2. The **permissibility** (*Jawaaz*) of **continuous fasting** (*al-Wisaal*) - *up until* the time of the **pre-dawn meal** (*as-Sahar*) - for one who is able [without harming himself], though it is more right that one not do it.
3. The **mercy** (*Rahmah*) of the Merciful, All-Wise Legislator (Allah) to this *Ummah* (World-Wide Community of Muslims) in that He has *prohibited* them from that which will *harm* them.
4. The **prohibition** (*an-Nahy*) of **exaggeration** and **extremism** in the religion (*al-Ghuloo fid-Deen*). Indeed, the Divine Law (*Sharee'ah*) is noble and just. It gives *ar-Rabb* (Allah) His Right, and the body its right. Indeed, the **purpose** for which religious obligations (*al-Waajibaat*) have been made obligatory is to achieve **benefits** (*Masaalih*) which will come back to the person in his religious and worldly life. Indeed, the *consideration* of these benefits by the Legislator (Allah) is the very **reason why** obligations have been placed upon the people.
5. Continuous fasting (*al-Wisaal*) is one of the **exclusive characteristics** or **rights** (*Khasaa'is*) of the **Prophet** (Salla-llaahu alayhi wa Sallam), because he is the only one **able** to do it [without harm]. And no one can join him in this matter.
6. The meaning of **Ta'aam** (Food) and **Sharaab** (Drink) in relation to the Prophet (Salla-llaahu alayhi wa Sallam) in this Hadeeth, is the **sweetness of communion** (*al-Manaajaah*), and the great **joy of the soul** (*Suroor an-Nafs*) in **meeting** with its **Beloved** (i.e. communion with Allah), [through fasting, prayer and worship]. This (joyous experience from worship) is something even experienced among the people [though to a lesser extent].

However, *this* meaning [of being '*fed and given drink*', while fasting] which was experienced by the **Beloved and Close Friend of the Beneficent** (*Khaleel ar-Rahmaan wa Habeebu-hu*), i.e. the **Prophet Muhammad** (Salla-llaahu alayhi wa Sallam) - is something that *no one* has a share in [i.e. it is *exclusive* to the Prophet (Salla-llaahu alayhi wa Sallam) alone].

7. The **setting of the sun** (*Ghuroob as-Shams*) is the **time** for breaking the fast. However, the fast is not broken simply by the *entry of the time* - as has been previously mentioned. Otherwise, there would be no meaning to *continuous* fasting (*al-Wisaal*), if the person's fast is (automatically) broken at sunset (*Ghuroob as-Shams*).

8. In this Hadeeth is the *confirmation* of **exclusive characteristics or rights** (*al-Khasaa'is*) for the **Prophet** (Salla-llaahu alayhi wa Sallam). And these *exclusive* characteristics and rights are **Mu-khas-si-sah** (*special* and therefore *excluded* from) the saying of Allah, the Most High: '*Indeed you have in the Messenger of Allah a good model (to be followed)...*' [Soorah al-Ahzaab 33:21]

'*Umdah al-Ahkaam*', by al-Imaam Abdul-Ghaneey ibn Abdul-Waahid al-Maqdisee, along with its *Sharh* (Explanation) '*Tayseer al-'Allaam*', by Shaykh Abdullah ibn Abdur-Rahmaan ibn Saalih Aali Bassaam. Hadeeth No. 191 [p. 440]