Putting Things in Perspective: Benefits of Fasting & Etiquettes of Eating in Islam

If done right, fasting in the month of Ramadan has many benefits for us, spiritually as well as health wise. Also, for most of us, during the month of fasting, we will naturally appreciate the bounties that Allah provides us year in and out. Below are some nice reminders for us all to reflect on regarding the benefits of fasting and etiquettes of eating from Qur’an, sunnah and science.

Fasting is Good for You

"... But to fast is best for you, if you only knew." [Al-Qur’an 2:184]

If done right, there can be many medical benefits to fasting including: weight management, resting of the digestive tract, lowering of blood sugar levels, lowering of cholesterol and systolic blood pressure, and causing concentration of all fluids within the body (due to slight dehydration) which can lead to longevity. (Dr. Shahid Athar, M.D.)

Do Not Waste & Eat with Moderation

Allah (SWT) says, “O children of Adam, take your adornment at every masjid, and eat and drink, but be not excessive. Indeed, He likes not those who commit excess.” [Al-Qur’an, 7:31]

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “No human ever filled a vessel worse than the stomach. Sufficient for any son of Adam are some morsels to keep his back straight. But if it must be, then one third for his food, one third for his drink and one third for his breath.” (Ahmad, At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasaa’i, Ibn Majah – Hadith Sahih)

Eat and Drink from What is Lawful

“O you who believe! Eat of the lawful things that We have provided you with, and be grateful to Allah, if it is indeed He Whom you worship.” [Al-Qur’an, 2:172]

Recognize that Allah has Produced the Food, and be Thankful for it

"And it is He who sends down rain from the sky, and We produce thereby the growth of all things. We produce from it greenery from which We produce grains arranged in layers. And from the palm trees - of its emerging fruit are clusters hanging low. And [We produce] gardens of grapevines and olives and pomegranates, similar yet varied. Look at [each of] its fruit when it yields and [at] its ripening. Indeed in that are signs for a people who believe.” [Al-Qur’an, 6:99]

"And [remember] when your Lord proclaimed, ‘If you are grateful, I will surely increase you [in favor]; but if you deny, indeed, My punishment is severe’.” [Al-Qur’an, 14:7]

Never Complain About Your Food

Messenger of Allah (pbuh) never found fault with food. If he had inclination to eating it, he would eat; and if he disliked it, he would leave it. (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Share Your Food and Pronounce Allah’s Name Over it for Blessings

Some of the Companions of Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said: “Perhaps you eat separately.” The Companions replied in affirmative. He then said: “Eat together and mention the Name of Allah over your food. It will be blessed for you.” (Abu Dawud)

Share Your Food and Pronounce Allah’s Name Over it for Blessings

Some of the Companions of Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said: “We eat but are not satisfied.” He (pbuh) said, “Perhaps you eat separately.” The Companions replied in affirmative. He then said: “Eat together and mention the Name of Allah over your food. It will be blessed for you.” (Abu Dawud)

Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was sitting while a man was eating food. That man did not mention the Name of Allah (before commencing to eat) till only a morsel of food was left. When he raised it to his mouth, he said: “Bismillah awwalahu wa akhirahu (With the Name of Allah, in the beginning and in the end).” Messenger of Allah (pbuh) smiled at this and said, “Satan had been eating with him but when he mentioned the Name of Allah, Satan vomited all that was in his stomach.” (Abu Dawud and An-Nasa’i)
Ramadan Featured Projects - Feeding the Poor

This Ramadan, Hidaya is Providing Cooked Meals for Iftar for Over 3,000 People Daily
Donate zakat or sadaqah towards feeding the poor at the time of iftar, and may Allah (swt) give you the rewards of their fasting.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "Whoever feeds the person who is breaking his fast, he will have his reward (for his fasting) without decreasing anything from the reward of the fasting person." [Al-Tirmidhi 807, Ibn Maajah 1746, Classed as Sahih by Shaykh al-Albaani in Sahih al-Tirmidhi 647]

One Million Meals - Cooked Food
Al-hamdulillah, this Ramadan, Hidaya Foundation is distributing over 1.3 metric tons (over 1,300 kg) of chicken biryani daily to the poor at the time of iftar in Pakistan. Each day, 38 pots filled with 35kg of chicken biryani each are cooked and distributed in the form of over 1,000 bags (1 kg each bag) to the poor. A 1 kg bag of chicken biryani is enough to feed 2 adults, or 4 children - so each day over 3,000 people are benefiting from this effort!

It costs approximately $50 to cook each pot of chicken biryani, which is enough to feed over 100 people insha'Allah.

One Million Meals - Dry Ration
This Ramadan, Hidaya Foundation is distributing dry ration meals to tens of thousands of people throughout Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Cameroon, Guinea, and Sierra Leone. Due to buying in bulk, it costs on average just 50 cents per meal. Please donate to partake in the effort of feeding the poor this Ramadan.

Fidya (Compensation for not fasting during Ramadan)
Each year, Hidaya accepts Fidya donations from elderly or sick Muslims who can not fast. These Fidya donations are distributed among poor Muslims who are qualified to receive Zakat in the form of dry ration food. The price for Fidya in the USA is $3.50 by the Hanafi school of thought, and $7.00 according to the Shaafi and other schools of thought.

Sadaqat-ul-Fitr
Hidaya Foundation uses Sadaqat-ul-Fitr donations to provide food in the form of wheat, barley, grain, etc. for the less fortunate. Sadaqat-ul-Fitr is $3.50 according to Hanafi school of thought or $7.00 according to other major schools of thought for each person in the family.
Your Donations at Work

Currently, Hidaya is Supporting Over 8,270 Orphans and 3,700 of their Widowed Mothers Each Month

Project Updates - No Orphan without Education & Widow Orphan Support
In the past few months, Hidaya has added nearly 2,000 more orphans and nearly 500 more widows to its monthly support projects. Please donate to help us continue to provide help to the weakest of society, so they may in time become assets to those around them.

Under Widow/Orphan Support, widowed mothers are provided a monthly stipend to cover household needs. Also, food, clothing, toys, shoes, and other items are given to these families.

Under No Orphan without Education, widowed mothers or caregivers of orphans are provided with a stipend for the ongoing education of each orphan. The stipend continues for as long as the child continues to attend school. After the age of 18, orphans who want to continue their studies are given support via the Spread Education project.

Currently, Hidaya is Operating 55 Schools with Nearly 4,400 Students

Project Update - Support Hidaya Schools
Hidaya Foundation adopts and operates schools which have been shut down (mostly under a government initiative in Pakistan called “Adopt a School”), and opens schools in rural areas which have none to begin with. Hidaya Team members regularly monitor the schools to check on the teachers and students to make sure everyone is doing well. In the past few months, Hidaya has added 17 more schools under this effort.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th># Students</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Grade</td>
<td>1,721</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd Grade</td>
<td>476</td>
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<td>3rd Grade</td>
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<td>4th Grade</td>
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<td>253</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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*It costs about $120 to run a classroom of approximately 40 students for each month.*

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*It costs $20 per month to support a household of widows/orphans and $10 per month to support each orphan for their education.*
Donation Form

www.hidaya.org

Hidaya Foundation is a non-profit 501(C)(3) charitable organization with US Tax ID # 77-0502583.

Name ______________________________________________
Email _______________________________________________
Address_____________________________________________
City ________________________________________________
State ________________________ ZIP ___________________
Phone ______________________________________________
Signature ________________________ Date ______________

Card No: ___________________________________________
Expiry Date: (mm/yy) ___________________________________________

Name on the card: ___________________________________________

Zakat
Zakat (Obligatory Charity) $ ______
One Million Meals ($50 for 100 meals) $ ______
Fidya ($3.50 Hanafi or $7 other madhab per missed day of fasting) $ ______
Sadaqat-ul Fitr ($3.50 or $7 per person) $ ______
No Orphan without Education ($10 per month) $ ______
Widow/Orphan Support ($20 per month) $ ______
Support Hidaya Schools ($120 per month for classroom) $ ______
Other: ______________________________ $ ______

Total $ ______

Watch Zakat Videos (Part 1 - Part 13), explaining in detail about Zakat at: www.hidaya.org/publications/zakat-videos/

Help the Poor by Educating Fellow Muslims about Zakat

Each year, Hidaya Foundation publishes documents about Zakat with the goal of helping Muslims understand the concept and how to give the proper due amount so they may fulfill their religious obligations and the rights of the poor.

Join us in this Effort of Teaching Muslims, and be part of Sadaqah Jariah

Enclosed along with this newsletter, you should find a copy of Hidaya Foundation’s latest document called “A Practical Guide for Calculating Zakat.” Hidaya is asking that you join us in this effort of spreading knowledge about Zakat to other Muslims by distributing the extra copy to friends or family to read. Please contact us if you are interested in receiving more copies.

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