



Muharram is a blessed and important month. It is the first month of the Hijri calendar and it is one of the four sacred months concerning which Allah says:

Indeed, the number of months with Allah is twelve [lunar] months in the register of Allah [from] the day He created the heavens and the earth; of these, four are sacred. That is the correct religion, so do not wrong yourselves during them... (At-Tawbah 9:36)

Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "(The division of time has turned to its original form which was current when Allah created the Heavens and the Earths. The year is of twelve months, out of which four months are sacred: Three are in succession Dhul-Qi`dah, Dhul-Hijjah and Muharram, and (the fourth is) Rajab of (the tribe of) Mudar which comes between Jumada Thani and Sha`ban." (Al-Bukhari)

Why is it called Muharram?

Muharram is so called because it is a sacred month and to confirm its sanctity. Almighty Allah says:

"... so do not wrong yourselves during them..." (At-Tawbah 9:36)

The verse urges us not to wrong ourselves in these sacred months, because sin in these months is worse than in other months. It was reported that Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) said that this phrase referred to all the months, then these four were singled out and made sacred, so that sin in these months is more serious and good deeds bring a greater reward.

Ibn Rajab said: "The Prophet (peace be upon him) has tagged Muharram 'Allah's Month', and attributing it to Allah grants it honor, because only the best of Allah's creation is attributed in that manner to Him, just as He attributed Muhammad, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the other prophets to his worship as well as His House (Ka`bah) and His camel.

The Virtues of Muharram

Ibn Rajab said: "The scholars differed in the issue of which of the sacred months is best? Al-Hasan Al-Basri and others said: "The best month is the month of Muharram." This



view is favored by the later scholars. Wahb ibn Jarir reported from Qurrah ibn Khalid that Al-Hasan Al-Basri (may Allah have mercy upon him) said: "Allah began the year with a sacred month and ended it with another sacred month, there is no month in the year after the month of Ramadan that is greater than the month of Muharram. For this reason it was called the 'Deaf Month' for the severity of its sanctity."

History of `Ashura`

Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them) narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) came to Madinah and saw the Jews fasting on the day of `Ashura`. He asked them about that. They replied, "This is a good day, the day on which Allah rescued Bani Israel from their enemy. So, Moses (peace be upon him) fasted this day." The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "We have more claim over Moses than you." So, the Prophet fasted on that day and ordered (the Muslims) to fast (on that day).

Virtues of Fasting on `Ashura`

Ibn `Abbas (may be pleased with them) narrated: "I never saw the Prophet





(peace be upon him) seeking to fast on a day more (preferable to him) than this day, the day of `Ashura`, or this month, i.e. the month of Ramadan." (Al-Bukhari)

It was narrated from Abu Qatadah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: "Fasting the day of `Ashura`, I hope, will expiate for the sins of the previous year." (Ibn Majah and At-Tirmidhi)

Fasting the 9th and 10th of Muharram

Ibn `Abbas (may be pleased with them) reported that when the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) fasted on the day of `Ashura` and commanded that it should be observed as a fast, they (his Companions) said to him: "O Messenger of Allah, it is a day which the Jews and Christians hold in high esteem. Thereupon the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: "When the next year comes, Allah willing, we would observe fast on the ninth. But the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) died before the advent of the next year." (Muslim)

Ash-Shafi`i and his companions, Ahmad, Ishaq and others, said: "It is recommended to fast on both the ninth and

tenth days, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) fasted on the tenth, and intended to fast on the ninth."

Ruling of fasting only the day of `Ashura`

Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "Fasting on the day of `Ashura` is expiation for a year, and it is not condemned to fast only that day..." (Al-Fatawa Al-Kubra)

Ibn Hajar says: "There is nothing wrong with fasting only on `Ashura`." (Tuhfat Al-Muhtaj)

Virtue of observing more voluntary Fasting during Muharram

Abu Hurayrah (Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allah said, "The most excellent fast after (fasting) in the month of Ramadan is the fast in Allah's month Al-Muharram." (Muslim)

It is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) never fasted an entire month except Ramadan. We understand from this hadith that fasting during the month of Muharram is recommendable, but not the entire month.



شَهْرُ الْمُحَرَّمِ



**Virtues of the Month
of Muharram**
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