

Husband-Wife Relationship in Ramadan

Q & A



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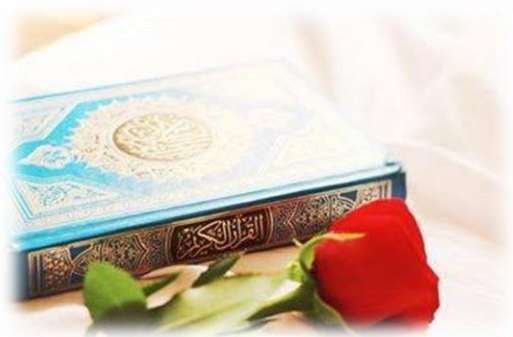
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Introduction

**In the name of Allah,
Most Gracious, Most
Merciful**

Islam pays due attention to the husband-wife relationship so as to establish healthy, stable, and happy



families. Emotional and physical rights and duties of married spouses are elaborated in *Shari`ah*. Main objectives of *Shari`ah* include preserving the family institution and lineage.

Ramadan is a blessed month in which people, including married spouses of course, look for God's forgiveness, mercy, and Paradise. All people wish to lead a happy life in this world and in the next life.

Married spouses usually raise significant questions about intimate relations in the month of Ramadan. It is important for a husband and wife to understand how to cater for each other's needs and how to seek the blessings of Ramadan too.

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This e-book, therefore, will answer various questions related to the husband-wife relationship. For example, it will reply questions about intimate relations during Ramadan, cooking for a non-fasting husband, paying *zakat al-fitr* for a non-Muslim wife, etc.

May Allah help every Muslim practice Islam and be blessed with the Islamic guidance. Ameen!

OnIslam Shari`ah Team



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Kissing One's Spouse while Fasting

Question:

Dear scholars, as-salamu `alaykum. Can a husband and wife kiss during the fast? Jazakum Allah khayran



Answers by Sheikh Sayyed Sabiq and Sheikh Ahmad Kutty

Wa`alaykum as-salamu wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh.

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

All praise and thanks are due to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon His Messenger.

Kissing one's wife while fasting is permissible. However, it is better to avoid kissing during the daytime of Ramadan, as it may lead to further actions which nullify the fast, such as sexual intercourse.

In his well-known book, *Fiqh As-Sunnah*, **Sheikh Sayyed Sabiq** states:

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It is confirmed that `A'ishah said: The Prophet would kiss and embrace while he was fasting, for he had the most control of all of you over his desires.

`Umar said: I was excited one time and I kissed [my wife] while I was fasting. I went to the Prophet and said: 'Today I committed a horrendous act—I kissed while I was fasting.' The Prophet asked: **'What do you think of rinsing your mouth with water while fasting?'** I said: 'There is nothing wrong with that.' The Prophet said: **'Then, why do you question about it!'**

Ibn al-Mundhir says: "Umar, Ibn `Abbas, Abu Hurairah, `A'ishah, `Ata, al-Sha`bi, al-Hassan, Ahmad, and Ishaq permit kissing. The Hanafi and Shafi`i scholars say that it is disliked if it incites one's desires. If it does not do so, it is not disliked although it is better to avoid it.'

There is no difference between an old man and a young man in this matter. The question is whether or not the kiss excites one's desires. If it does, it is disliked. If it does not, it is not disliked although it is best to avoid it. It does not matter if the kiss was on the cheek or on the lips, and so on.

Touching with the hand or embracing follow the same ruling as kissing."

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Elaborating on the issue, **Sheikh Ahmad Kutty**, a senior lecturer and Islamic scholar at the Islamic Institute of Toronto, Ontario, Canada, states:

In optional fasts, kissing, light touching, etc. are permitted so long as one does not engage in sexual intercourse. In obligatory fasts, one is allowed to do these only if one can control himself or herself. Breaking an obligatory fast through sexual intercourse is a serious offence, and it entails strict form of *kaffarah* (expiation), which includes fasting two months consecutively; if one cannot do this, one must feed sixty poor persons for a single day of fast thus invalidated.

Therefore, no one who is fasting should do such things if there is a genuine risk of overstepping the boundaries. If there is no such fear then light touching, or kissing, etc., when not accompanied by sexual desire, is permissible. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) was asked by a young man whether he can kiss his wife while fasting, he replied no, but when an elderly person came and asked him the same question, he replied yes.

Reasons for this are clear: While it may be easier for an elderly person to control himself, that may not be the case with regard to a young person.

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As far as the Prophet's own example is concerned, his beloved wife 'A'ishah reported that he used to kiss his wife while he was fasting. But then she added the following comment: 'Who among you can control his sexual desire as the Prophet himself was able to do?'

In conclusion, since each person knows his own weaknesses better than anyone else, he should be his own judge in this matter and he is better advised to take necessary precautions when dealing with obligatory fasts. In case of optional fasts, however, because it does not entail any serious consequences if one were to break it because of uncontrollable sexual desire, the issue is far more flexible.

Allah Almighty knows best.

Excerpted, with slight modifications, from: www.muslims.ca

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Hugging One's Spouse While Fasting

Question:

*As-Salamu
`alaykum. Are a
husband and wife
allowed to hug
while fasting?*

Jazakum Allah khayran.

Answer by Sheikh Ahmad Kutty

Wa`alaykum as-salamu wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh.

All praise and thanks are due to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon His Messenger.

In obligatory fasts, one is allowed to do these only if one can control oneself. Therefore, no one who is fasting should do such things if there is a genuine risk of overstepping the



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boundaries. If there is no such fear, then light touching, or kissing, etc, when not accompanied by sexual desire, is permissible.

In his response to your question, **Sheikh Ahmad Kutty**, a senior lecturer and Islamic scholar at the Islamic Institute of Toronto, Ontario, Canada, states,

Hugging your spouse in itself does not invalidate the fast; we read in the sources that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) used to kiss his wife while fasting. We also read that once a person asked the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) "Am I allowed to kiss my wife while fasting?" He replied, "**Yes.**" Hugging is comparable to kissing.

Having said this, however, I must caution you to abstain from such acts if you find yourself unable to control your desire, for as Muslims we must keep away from all such acts that may inadvertently lead to invalidating our fasts. This is why we read in another hadith that the Prophet told another person not to kiss his spouse.

In explaining the discrepancy between the two reports, Ibn `Abbas said, "The man he permitted was an older person, while the man he prohibited was a young man." Therefore, if you have any doubt or fear of being unable to control yourself, then you should

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simply abstain from such actions altogether in order to save your fast. This is why the Prophet's wife `A'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) asked a person, 'Who among you is capable of restraining himself as the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) had been?'

Allah Almighty knows best.



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Having Intercourse with One's Spouse during Ramadan

Question:

Respected scholars, as-salamu `alaykum.

Is it permissible to have intercourse (sex) with husband during Ramadan time?

Jazakum Allahu khayran.



Answer by Sheikh Ahmad Kutty

Wa`alaykum as-salamu wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh.

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

All praise and thanks are due to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon His Messenger.

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A Muslim is allowed to have intercourse with his or her spouse after breaking the fast and until dawn (the time of abstention from food, drink, and gratifications). However, one who is fasting should never overstep the boundaries of fasting by having intercourse with his or her spouse while fasting.

In his response to your question, **Sheikh Ahmad Kutty**, a senior lecturer and Islamic scholar at the Islamic Institute of Toronto, Ontario, Canada, states the following:

While it is forbidden to establish any conjugal relations with one's spouse while one is fasting during the day, one is certainly allowed to do so during the night until the arrival of dawn (i.e., *fajr*).

Allah says:

{It is made lawful for you to go to your wives (in sexual relations) on the night of the fast. They are a garment for you and you are a garment for them. Allah knows that you were deceiving yourself in this respect and He has turned in mercy towards you and pardoned you. Therefore you may now have intercourse with them and seek what Allah has ordained for you. Eat and drink until the white thread (of dawn) becomes distinct to you from the black thread (of night)} (Al-Baqarah 2:187).

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In short, we are allowed to enjoy intimate sexual relations after breaking the fast throughout the night until the time of abstention from food, drink, and gratifications (i.e. when the time of *fajr* arrives).

Allah Almighty knows best.

Excerpted, with slight modifications, from: www.islam.ca.



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Forcing One's Wife to Make Love during the Day of Ramadan

Question:



Dear scholars, as-salamu `alaykum. I read in a book written on Ramadan that if a man has forced his wife to make love to him during the day of Ramadan, she is not sinful and her fasting remains valid and that the husband incurs the whole sin. Is that correct? Jazakum Allah khayran.

Answer by Sheikh Husam al-Din Ibn Musa `Afana

Wa`alaykum as-salamu wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh.

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

All praise and thanks are due to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon His Messenger.

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Islam does not give a man the right to make his wife break her fast before its due time during Ramadan.

So, if the husband exceeds his limits and wants to have sexual intercourse with his wife during the day of Ramadan, she should not obey him; if he forces her to do so, she is not sinful, and thus is not required to expiate for such a deed.

However, she is to make up for that day later, as her fasting has been nullified by sexual intercourse.

It is the husband who is sinful in that case and is required to repent and expiate for the sin he has committed.

In his response to your question, **Dr. Husam al-Din ibn Musa `Afana**, a professor of Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence at Al-Quds University, Palestine, states:

It is unanimously agreed upon that sexual intercourse is one of the causes that nullify fasting. Allah Almighty says:

{Permitted to you, on the night of the fasts, is the approach to your wives. They are your garments and ye are their garments. Allah knoweth what ye used to do secretly among yourselves; but He turned to you and forgave you; so now associate with them, and seek what Allah Hath ordained for you, and eat and

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drink, until the white thread of dawn appear to you distinct from its black thread; then complete your fast Till the night appears; but do not associate with your wives while ye are in retreat in the mosques. Those are Limits (set by) Allah: Approach not nigh thereto. Thus doth Allah make clear His Signs to men: that they may learn self-restraint.} (Al-Baqarah 2: 187)

Allah Most High says in a hadith *qudsi*:

"All the deeds of Adam's sons (people) are for them, except fasting which is for Me, and I will give the reward for it. He (the fasting person) has left his food, drink and desires for My sake."(It is an authentic hadith reported by Ibn Khuzaymah.)

It is forbidden for a Muslim to nullify his fast or another's fast without justification; he who does this intentionally incurs a grave sin.

There is a scholarly difference as to the legal rulings concerning forcing a person to break his fast before its due time. Let's narrow down this point to forcing one's wife to nullify her fast by performing sexual intercourse.

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The majority of jurists from the Hanafi and Maliki schools are of the opinion that if a man has forced his wife to make love to him during the day-time of a day in Ramadan, [she is not sinful, yet] she is to make up for that day later, for her fasting has been nullified by sexual intercourse. The husband is to make up for that day later and he is also to expiate such a deed. [The expiation consists of freeing a sound Muslim slave; if this is not possible, then the expiation is to fast the days of two consecutive months. If this is not possible, then the expiation is to feed sixty needy people]. This view is adopted also by a group of the Shafi`i school and a group of the Hanbali scholars.

Other groups of the Shafi`i and Hanbali scholars believe that the fast of the wife in that case remains valid, for she has broken her fast under coercion. They quote as evidence of their view the hadith in which the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said: **"Allah Almighty will not call my nation to account for what they have done by (unintentional) mistake, or out of forgetfulness or under coercion."** (Reported by Ibn Majah and Al-Hakim)

I am most inclined to adopting the opinion that the wife forced to nullify her fast during the Day of Ramadan by sexual intercourse is to make up for that day later. This is because I believe that a wife in that

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case is not one hundred percent forced; her response to making love often implies some kind of agreement and sexual desire too. Besides, the concept of coercion is controversial to many people.

Allah Almighty knows best.



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Sexual
Intercourse
while
Observing
Optional Fast



Question:

**As-salamu
`alaykum.**

If someone fasted Sunnah and had sexual intercourse with his spouse at the daytime, is he obliged to make kaffarah or is there any expiation for that? Thank you.

Answer by Dr. Wael Shihab

Wa `alaykum as-salamu wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh.

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

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All praise and thanks are due to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon His Messenger.

A Muslim is highly recommended to observe optional fasts to draw himself closer to God. If a fasting person breaks his optional fast, he is neither required to pay an expiation nor to make up for it later. It makes no difference here how he breaks his optional fast.

Responding to your question, **Dr. Wael Shihab**, PhD in Islamic Studies, Al-Azhar University, and the Head of the *Shari`ah* Dept. of Onislam.net website, stated,

Thank you for your question.

A Muslim is recommended to fast on some days—such as Mondays, Thursdays, the day of `Arafah, etc.—in order to bring himself closer to Allah Almighty.

If a Muslim breaks an optional fast—with food, drinks, or sexual intercourse with one's spouse—he is not liable to make any *kaffarah* (expiation). Also, he is not required to make up for it later.

In this context, the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said, **"A person who observes an optional fast has the authority to either complete or break his fast."** (At-Tirmidhi)

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However, it may be better for a fasting person not to break his optional fast to gain its great rewards.

May Allah accept your and our good deeds!

Allah Almighty knows best.



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Having
Premarital
Relationship
during
Ramadan



Question:

Respected scholars, as-salamu `alaykum.

Is it ok to make love with my boyfriend during Ramadan; that is after we break the fast? Jazakum Allahu khayran.

Answer by Sheikh Ahmad Kutty

Wa `alaykum as-salam wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh.

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

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All praise and thanks are due to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon His Messenger.

It should be stressed that having a premarital relationship is definitely prohibited whether during Ramadan or after it. So, it is our advice, dear sister, to fear Allah, come back to Him, make use of this blessed month to change your lifestyle for better in a way that pleases Allah, and to have your sins forgiven.

In his response to your question, **Sheikh Ahmad Kutty**, a senior lecturer and Islamic scholar at the Islamic Institute of Toronto, Ontario, Canada, states,

If you mean to ask whether you are allowed to have premarital sexual relations, the answer is definitely an emphatic no, regardless of whether one is fasting or after breaking the fast. Fornication is a most grievous sin in Islam; the sin is even graver in the month of Ramadan. Ramadan is the month given to us to break free of all our sins and bad habits. Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) said, **"When Ramadan arrives, the doors of Heaven are opened and the doors of Hell are shut down, and the devils are chained, and an announcer will say, 'O doer of good, come forward! O doer of bad, restrain yourself!'"**

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So you are best advised to use this blessed month as a time to repent and change. This is a golden opportunity, and it could be the only one you have, for who knows whether Allah will give us another chance; we never know whether we will live to see another Ramadan. We see all around us people are being called back to Allah. Death knows neither age nor status. Therefore, let us heed the warning of Allah's Messenger, **"Woe to those who witnessed Ramadan and yet failed to get their sins pardoned (by failing to utilize the month properly)."**

If, however, you are married, then of course you are allowed to have intimate spousal relations after breaking the fast. Allah says,

{It is lawful for you to go in unto your wives during the night preceding the [day's] fast: They are as a garment for you, and you are as a garment for them} (Al-Baqarah 2:187).

Allah Almighty knows best.

Excerpted, with slight modifications, from: www.islam.ca.

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Husband and Wife Sleeping in One Bed While Fasting

Question:

*Dear
scholars,*

*as-salamu
`alaykum.*

*Is a fasting
wife allowed
to sleep next
to her fasting*

*husband without the intention of sexual intercourse?
Jazakum Allah khayran.*



Answer by Sheikh Ahmad Kutty

Wa`alaykum as-salamu wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh.

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

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All praise and thanks are due to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon His Messenger.

There is nothing wrong for husband and wife to share a bed while both of them are fasting if they have no fear of being carried away by their desires to invalidate their fast.

In his response to your question, **Sheikh Ahmad Kutty**, a senior lecturer and Islamic scholar at the Islamic Institute of Toronto, Ontario, Canada, states:

There is nothing wrong for you to share the bed with your wife while both of you are fasting unless, of course, you fear that by doing so you will find yourself unable to control your desires and thus be led to invalidate your fast by engaging in sexual intercourse, in which case you are best advised against it.

We read in the traditions that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) was once asked by a man whether he could kiss his wife while fasting, to which he replied, no, but when another man asked him the same question he told him, yes. Explaining the reason for the divergent responses, Ibn `Abbas, one of the eminent Companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said:

"The first was a young man (and the Prophet presumed that he would be carried away by

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his desires and thus may end up invalidating his fast by engaging in sexual intercourse), while the second was an elderly person (who he thought was in a better position to restrain himself).”

Similarly, we also read the statement of `A'ishah, the beloved wife of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him), that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) was wont to kiss his wife while fasting, but she further added, **“But who among you is able to restrain his desire as the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) was wont to?”**

Based on the above considerations, if you are sure of yourself and have no fear of being carried away by your desires to invalidate your fast, then you are definitely allowed to sleep in the same bed with your wife while fasting.

Allah Almighty knows best.

Excerpted, with slight modifications, from: www.islam.ca.

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Menstruating Wife Sleeping with Fasting Husband



Question:

Dear scholars, as-salamu `alaykum. Is a wife allowed to sleep next to her fasting husband when she has her menstrual period? Jazakum Allah khayran.

Answer by Sheikh Ahmad Kuty

Wa `alaykum As-Salamu wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

All praise and thanks are due to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon His Messenger.

There is nothing wrong with a husband and menstruating wife sharing a bed and having physical contact so long as they stay away from conjugal relations while the husband is

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fasting. So, a wife in her menses is allowed to sleep beside her fasting husband. Her menses do not affect the validity of his fast.

In his response to your question, **Sheikh Ahmad Kutty**, a senior lecturer and Islamic scholar at the Islamic Institute of Toronto, Ontario, Canada, states:

There is absolutely nothing wrong for a menstruating wife to sleep next to her fasting husband. The only thing we must observe is to stay away from intimate relations while fasting. It should be a matter of common knowledge that we are not allowed to have sexual intercourse with our wives while they are in a state of menstruation.

As opposed to the practice of certain communities who had strict taboos against physical contacts with their wives during menstruation, Islam taught us that there is nothing wrong with physical contact. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) told us that we are allowed to have all normal contacts with our wives in their state of menstruation except, of course, sexual intercourse. In this regard, he never drew a distinction whether we are fasting or not. In other words, physical contacts and sleeping in the same bed are all permissible while fasting so long as we stay away from conjugal relations while fasting.

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In conclusion: there is nothing wrong for your wife in sleeping beside you while she is menstruating, even though you may be fasting. Her menses do not affect the validity of your fast in any way.

Allah Almighty knows best.

Excerpted, with slight modifications, from: www.islam.ca



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My Husband Does Not Fast: Should I Cook for Him?

Question:

Dear scholars, as-salamu `alaykum.

My questions are these: Is it my duty to cook and serve food for my husband during

Ramadan when he doesn't fast during the day?

He takes medication that is not prescribed by the doctor, and I am sure he does not need to take it

three times a day. He doesn't even pray. I am not happy about the situation, and repeated efforts to make him understand that he must pray do not yield



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any results. He says it's not haram not to pray. He uses this non-prescribed medication as an excuse not to fast. He doesn't make up for it in other ways, though he knows they exist. Jazakum Allah khayran.

Answer by Sheikh Ahmad Kutty

Wa`alaykum as-salamu wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh.

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

All praise and thanks are due to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon His Messenger.

Fasting during the month of Ramadan is one of the five pillars of Islam which is obligatory upon every Muslim, male or female, who is adult (i.e. has reached puberty) and sane and who is not sick or on a journey. The Qur'an says,

{The month of Ramadhan [is that] in which was revealed the Qur'an, a guidance for the people and clear proofs of guidance and criterion [between right and wrong]. So whoever sights [the new moon of] the month, let him fast it; and whoever is ill or on a journey - then an equal number of other days. Allah intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship and [wants] for you to complete the period

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and to glorify Allah for that [to] which He has guided you; and perhaps you will be grateful. } (Al-Baqarah 2:185)

Responding to the question, **Sheikh Ahmad Kutty**, a senior lecturer and Islamic scholar at the Islamic Institute of Toronto, Ontario, Canada, states the following:

You do not owe the duty of cooking for or serving food and drink to your husband who does not fast during the days of Ramadan, if he does so without having any valid reason of sickness, travel, or old age that would exempt him from fasting. Since we are not allowed to condone or aid and abet someone who is doing a sin, if you do serve food or drink to him [during the hours of fast], your actions are considered sinful.

It is common knowledge in Islam that skipping fasts without valid reason of sickness, travel or old age, etc. is considered a major sin. From the way you have described your husband, it does not seem that he has any valid excuses not to fast.

Your husband is guilty of a another major offence by not praying; even greater than all of these is his denial of his obligation to pray while still considering himself to be a Muslim. If a Muslim denies his obligation to pray or fast, etc., he automatically goes out of the

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fold of Islam by such denial. There is a general consensus of scholars in Islam on this issue.

Allah Almighty knows best.



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Wife Not Fasting or Praying: Is She Disbeliever?

Question:

*Respected scholars,
as-salamu `alaykum.*

My wife thinks that because of her school she is not able to fast this coming Ramadan. She cannot concentrate in class because she is hungry. What is the Islamic ruling for those who seek excuses to eat in Ramadan? Is it haram for me to be with her?



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I can add that my wife doesn't pray at all and she also doesn't think she will one day. But is she a Muslim? Please help, as I'm not comfortable in sharing life with a kafir (disbeliever); I don't want my future kids to grow like her.

Answer by Sheikh Ahmad Kutty

Wa`alaykum as-salamu wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh.

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

All praise and thanks are due to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon His Messenger.

Islam, as a divine religion, pays great attention to the importance of conviction for those who embrace it. Therefore, it lays down the principle that *there is no compulsion in religion*. In the same vein, it doesn't accept conversion for other objectives such as marriage.

Concerning the legal excuses that allow one not to observe the fast of Ramadan, Allah the Exalted says:

{And whoever of you is sick or on a journey, (let him fast the same) number of other days; He desires not hardship for you} (Al-Baqarah 2:185).

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As for students, they are not obliged to study during the daytime; they can strike a balance between their assignments and the available time. They may study their lessons at night. They are not allowed to break the fast days of Ramadan for the sole reason that they prefer studying during the daytime.

In his response to your question, **Sheikh Ahmad Kutty**, a senior lecturer and Islamic scholar at the Islamic Institute of Toronto, Ontario, Canada, states,

You made a choice of marrying your wife who, it seems to me, never converted to Islam except for the purpose of marriage; Islam has not entered her heart. You have placed yourself in this situation, so now the only choice left to you is to give her a chance to be convinced and thus persuaded to practice Islam. This is the best choice if you have reasons to believe that she is sincere in her desire to accept Islam; otherwise, you may part company with her honorably.

In Islam, Prayer is far more important than fasting, for it is the first and foremost requirement. Therefore, if she claims to be a Muslimah, it is important for her to establish the connection with Allah by performing her Prayers as diligently as possible, for *salah* is the only sure link that we humans can have with God. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said

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about the five daily prayers, **“Whoever establishes them diligently, it will serve for him as a light, evidence of faith, source of salvation on the day of resurrection; whoever neglects them, he will be deprived of the light, evidence of faith, and means of salvation”** (Ahmad and At-Tabarani).

The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) also said that the thing that sets apart a believer from a non-believer is neglect of Prayer. (Muslim)

Now coming to fasting, let me state this: Fasting is an obligatory duty on every male or female who is healthy. Only the following are exempt from fasting: the sick, the elderly, those who are traveling, women in menstruation or undergoing the postpartum period of bleeding; women who are pregnant or nursing their infants [if fasting may pose a risk for them, their babies, and/or fetuses]. If your wife is included in any of these categories she is definitely excused from fasting, but she must make up for the missed fasts later unless of course she is terminally ill or in advanced age. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) clearly warned us against deliberately skipping fast: **“Whoever skips a single day of Ramadan without valid reason or sickness, he [or she] will not be able to make up for it by fasting for a lifetime”** (Al-Bukhari)

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The fact that a person is studying is not a valid excuse for skipping fast unless he or she is suffering from health complications. Students throughout the ages have been studying while fasting without any problem. Study alone cannot be used as an excuse for skipping fast.

So consider your options carefully and make a decision, while trusting in Allah, the Most Exalted and Glorious.

May Allah guide us to the straight path and may He cover us all with His infinite mercy, which is always with those who excel in their good works. Ameen.

Allah Almighty knows best.

Excerpted, with slight modifications, from: www.islam.ca.

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Taking Birth Control Pills in the Daytime of Ramadan

Question:

Respected scholars, as-salamu `alaykum.

I am an unmarried female with some medical condition for which my doctors have ordered me to be on birth control pills. I have been taking them for the past 3 months and their timing is very strict; in other words, I have to take them at the exact time every day! I have been taking them at 4 p.m. and with Ramadan starting I do not know what to do. Please advise!



Answer by Sheikh Ahmad Kutty

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Wa`alaykum as-salamu wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh.

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

All praise and thanks are due to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon His Messenger.

Fasting in Ramadan is one of the pillars of Islam. Failing to fast during the blessed month with no valid reason is a serious sin that a Muslim must avoid. So, you are advised to discuss with your doctor possible ways to safely delay the pills time until after breaking the fast (*iftar*).

In his response to your question, **Sheikh Ahmad Kutty**, a senior lecturer and Islamic scholar at the Islamic Institute of Toronto, Ontario, Canada, states the following:

It is my understanding that the timings for the pills are not inflexible, as people have a tendency to forget or skip a day altogether.

Nevertheless, speak to your doctor or pharmacist about delaying the timing of taking the pill and continuing on a post-*iftar* or pre-*sahur* schedule until the end of Ramadan [that is, after breaking the fast at sunset or before dawn].

It is important for us to remember that fasting of Ramadan is a fundamental religious obligation that

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we ought to observe unless we have genuine reasons to skip it. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said, **"Whoever breaks a single day of Ramadan fast without valid reason will not be able to make up for the same by fasting for a lifetime"** (Ahmad and An-Nasa'i)

May Allah grant us steadfastness in obedience to Him and may He accept our fasts, prayers, and good works. Ameen.

Allah Almighty knows best.

Excerpted, with slight modifications, from: www.islam.ca.

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Should a Muslim Pay Zakat Al-Fitr for His Christian or Jewish Wife?

Question:

*Dear scholars,
as-salamu
`alaykum.*

If a Muslim man is married to a Christian woman and they have children, should he pay Zakat Al-Fitr for her? Jazakum Allah khayran.



Answer by Sheikh `Atiyyah Saqr

Wa `alaykum as-salamu wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh.

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

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All praise and thanks are due to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon His Messenger.

A Muslim husband does not need to pay Zakat Al-Fitr on behalf of his non-Muslim wife, according to the majority of Muslim scholars, whereas on the other hand, Abu Hanifah and his followers see that a man in this case is obliged to pay Zakat Al-Fitr on behalf on his non-Muslim wife.

Regarding this question, **Sheikh `Atiyyah Saqr**, former head of Al-Azhar Fatwa Committee, states the following:

Zakat Al-Fitr is to be paid by the head of the household for himself and for those he is obliged to maintain, i.e. his family members including his wife. Although all Muslim scholars agree that a man is obliged to sustain his non-Muslim wife, they differ concerning paying Zakat Al-Fitr for her.

The majority of scholars including Malik, Ash-Shafi`e and Ahmad maintain that a man is not obliged to pay Zakat Al-Fitr for his non-Muslim wife, because she is not herself required to pay it because she is outside the boundaries of Islam. They base their opinion on the view suggesting that a non-Muslim is not charged for the branches of Shari`ah.

It is, moreover, reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) prescribed Zakat Al-Fitr on all

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Muslims, free and enslaved; male and female; young and old.

Also, Zakat Al-Fitr is considered a way to purify the fasting person from lewdness and abuse, as reported by Abu Dawud with a sound chain of transmitters, on the authority of Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both). Hence, it is meaningless to demand non-Muslims to pay Zakat Al-Fitr, as they are not required to observe fasting like Muslims.

The fore-mentioned hadith restricts prescribing Zakat Al-Fitr to Muslims. In the hadith, the word 'Muslims' refers to the persons on whose behalf Zakah is paid, not the person who pays it. Therefore, it is not necessary for a man to pay Zakat Al-Fitr on behalf of his non-Muslim slave even though he is obliged to maintain him. The same ruling applies to a non-Muslim wife. (Ibn Qudamah; *Al-Mughni*; vol. 2, pp. 646-647)

Abu Hanifah and other scholars of *Ashab Ar-Ra'i* maintain that a Muslim has to pay Zakat Al-Fitr on behalf of his young son who apostatizes from Islam, because one is not accounted for apostasy unless he fulfills the conditions of legal accountability including adulthood. They also maintain that a man should pay Zakat Al-Fitr on behalf of his Christian or Jewish slave. They base their view on the fact that a father is

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obliged to maintain his young son and a master his slave. They cite a hadith from the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) in which he says: **“Pay half a Sa` of barley (one Sa`= 2.176 kilograms) on behalf of everyone, free or slave; young or old; Jew, Christian or pagan.”** However, the majority of scholars have refuted this hadith saying that it is not reported in the well-known books of tradition.

Some argue that Zakat Al-Fitr purifies the fasting person from committing any lewdness or abuse, and is, thus, not paid on behalf of non-Muslim family members due to the fact that they do not fast. However, it is paid in favor of the needy on behalf of those who are excused from fasting. Hence, a non-Muslim wife or slave is in the same position as the excused.

This claim is also refuted by the fact that if a Muslim does not observe fasting in Ramadan without a valid excuse, he will be charged with two things; to make up fasting and to pay Zakah. Neither of the two replaces the other.

Allah Almighty knows best.