

One Who Eats or Drinks by Mistake

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One who eats or drinks by mistake in Ramadan

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Whoever forgets he is fasting and eats or drinks, let him complete his fast for it is Allah Who has fed him and given him to drink.” (Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 1933; Muslim 1155)

This hadeeth indicates that [whoever eats or drinks by mistake](#), his fast is still valid and is not affected, nor is there any sin on him, because he did not do that deliberately, rather is it a provision that Allah granted to him.

Hence his being fed and given to drink is attributed to Allah.

And whatever is attributed to Allah, a person cannot be taken to task for that, because he was only forbidden to do it, but he is not accountable for actions that are beyond his control. No distinction is made between eating and drinking, or whether it is a little or a lot, because of the general meaning of the hadeeth.

He does not have to make up that day because he is commanded to complete the fast and that which is completed is regarded as a fast.

The fact that the fast of one [who eats or drinks by mistake](#) is still valid and that he does not have to make it up is something on which there is (scholarly) consensus, although Imam Maalik and Ibn Abi Layla disagreed.

An analogy is drawn between eating and drinking and other things that invalidate the fast, because of the hadeeth of Abu Salamah ibn ‘Abd al-Rahmaan, narrating from Abu Hurayrah

(may Allah be pleased with him), who said that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Whoever breaks the fast in Ramadaan by mistake does not have to make up that day or offer any expiation.” Narrated by Ibn Hibaan, 8/288; al-Haakim, 1/430; classed as hasan by al-Albaani in *Saheeh al-Jaami’*, 6070.

This ruling concerning the fasting person is one of the great principles mentioned in the verse (interpretation of the meaning):

“Our Lord! Punish us not if we forget or fall into error” [al-Baqarah 2:286]

According to a saheeh hadeeth, Allah says, in answer to this du’aa’: “I have done that”; according to another report: “Yes.”

This is by the kindness of Allah towards His slaves, to make it easier for them and to relieve them of hardship and difficulty.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Allah has forgiven my ummah for mistakes, forgetfulness and what they are forced to do.”

What if I see a fasting person eating or drinking by mistake - do I have to remind him?

Whoever sees a fasting person eating or drinking during the day in Ramadaan by mistake is obliged to tell him and remind him, because this comes under the heading of enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil.

Eating and drinking during the day in Ramadaan is a wrong action but the one who does it by mistake because he forgot is excused, but he must be told immediately.

If a person does ghusl or rinses his mouth or nose and water enters his throat by accident, that does not invalidate his fast. The same applies if a fly or gnat flies into one’s mouth, or if gasoline reaches his throat without him intending it to; that does not invalidate his fast, because it is not possible to avoid that, and because he did not intend that or want it to happen. This is like the person who forgets and does not do such things deliberately or by

choice. Hence al-Bukhaari (may Allah have mercy on him) said in his *Saheeh*: “Chapter on a fasting person if he eats or drinks because he forgets.”

Then he said:

‘Ata’ said: If a person rinses his nose and water enters his throat, then is no sin on him because he did not intend to do that. But if he can prevent the water from entering his throat, but he does not try to stop it and instead swallows it, then he breaks his fast.

And Allah knows best.

Source: *Ahkaam al-Siyaam by al-Fawzaan*, p. 39.

Other Hadiths on Ramadan:

1. Read the Qur’aan, for it will come on the Day of Resurrection and intercede for its companions
2. Those who break the fast before it is time to do so
3. ‘Umrah in Ramadaan is equivalent to Hajj
4. Whoever gives iftaar to a fasting person will have a reward like his
5. Eat suhoor, for in suhoor there is blessing
6. There are three whose du’aa’s are not rejected... including the fasting person when he breaks his fast
7. Break the fast with fresh dates
8. “The people will continue to do well so long as they hasten to break the fast.”
9. He would stay awake at night, wake his family and tie his izaar tight
10. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to observe i’tikaaf during the last ten days of Ramadan
11. Whoever spends the night of Laylat al-Qadr in prayer out of faith and in the hope of reward, his previous sins will be forgiven