

Fasting Series | Shaykh ‘Abdul-‘Azīz ibn Bāz Eating or Drinking Forgetfully While Fasting

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «مَنْ نَسِيَ وَهُوَ صَائِمٌ، فَأَكَلَ أَوْ شَرِبَ، فَلْيَتِمَّ صَوْمَهُ، فَإِنَّمَا أَطْعَمَهُ اللَّهُ وَسَقَاهُ»

Abū Hurayrah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) narrated that Allāh’s Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

Whoever forgets that he is fasting and eats or drinks [as a result], then let him complete his fast for, verily, it was Allāh who fed him and gave him something to drink.¹

¹ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī (no. 1933) and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim (no. 1155)

Explanation of Shaykh ‘Abdul-‘Azīz ibn Bāz (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ):²

This is from Allāh’s blessings upon us. Humans are affected by forgetfulness, as the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

«إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُكُمْ، أَنْسَى كَمَا تَنْسَوْنَ»

“I am a human like you, I forget as you forget.”³

Thus, it is from the nature of humans that they forget. So, if a person sexual intercourse, eats, drinks, performs hijāmah, or any other thing that breaks the fast out of forgetfulness, then their fasting is valid, and they do not have to expiate, free a slave or make up the day- due to this authentic ḥadīth.

In another wording reported by al-Ḥākim, the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

«مَنْ أَفْطَرَ فِي رَمَضَانَ نَاسِيًا، فَلَا قِضَاءَ عَلَيْهِ وَلَا كَفَّارَةَ»

² Explanation of Shaykh Ibn Bāz, Dār al-Riyādah (pgs. 243-244)

³ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī (no. 401) and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim (no. 572)

“Whoever breaks his fast during Ramaḍān forgetfully then he does not need to make up the day nor expiate.”⁴

As for if a person is lying about forgetting, then his affair is to Allāh, and a fatwá (verdict) from a shaykh will not benefit him. And if a person has sexual intercourse intentionally while fasting then they must expiate.

⁴ Mustadrak al-Ḥākim (no.1569)