

Fasting as a group

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

Question: Noble Shaykh what is the ruling on fasting as a group? For example a group of people gather and agree to fast specific days such as Mondays and Thursdays for the purpose of cooperation upon righteousness and Taqwaa. This is because the person is weak by himself and his brothers will strengthen him. What is the ruling upon this; may Allaah benefit us by way of you.

Shaykh Uthaymeen (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ)¹: My view is that this is not from the Sunnah and it is a type of innovation; if the people agree upon this. This is because if we disapprove of making the takbeer as a group or remembering Allaah as a group, for example, then (we also disapprove) of fasting as a group. And fasting is worship, thus it is not befitting that it be performed as a group; but if it is done without agreeing to it then there is no problem.

For example, coincidentally we happen to be fasting on Monday thus some of us say to others, 'whoever is fasting then we shall break our fast at so and so's house'; for example, and we agree to have Iftaar at this person's house then there is nothing wrong with this because this affair was not premeditated and it was not worship performed as a group.

And gathering for worship or worshipping as an individual is from the affairs of the legislation. For this reason if Allaah did not prescribe for us to pray in congregation we would not have prayed in congregation, and prayer in congregation would have been an innovation, but Allaah prescribed for us prayer in congregation. Similarly, fasting as a group and agreeing upon it ahead of time is a type of innovation.

Someone may respond to us by mentioning the fast of the month of Ramadhan. Do we not fast as a group (during the month of Ramadhan)? Of course; but this is how it has been prescribed. It has been prescribed for all of the people to fast during this month. Thus it is my view that this method should be refrained from and the person should seek help from Allaah (سُبْحَانَهُ)² and count on himself.

And if the individual cannot perform acts of worship except when leaning on a stick, meaning except when others are performing acts of worship then his resolve and determination is weak.

¹ (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) (rahimahullaah) May Allaah the Most High have mercy on him

² (سُبْحَانَهُ) (Subhanahu) The Exalted