

I'TIKAF

**Virtues & Laws pertaining to
the Sunnah I'tikaf of Ramadan**



DARUL IHSAN
HUMANITARIAN CENTRE
GUIDANCE • UBUNTU • EMPOWERMENT

I'TIKAF - Virtues & Laws

I'tikaf means to seclude oneself in the Masjid with the intention of Ibadat (worship). The Sunnah I'tikaf of Ramadan takes place in the last 10 days of this blessed month. This I'tikaf entails secluding oneself in the Masjid from sunset on the 21st Ramadan (i.e. the eve after the 20th fast) until the Eid moon is sighted or the sunset of the 30th Ramadan.

Virtues & rewards of I'tikaf

It is related by Hazrat Abu Hurayra ؓ that “Nabi ﷺ observed I'tikaf for ten days every year in the month of Ramadan. In the year he passed away he observed it for twenty days.” (Bukhari)

Nabi ﷺ always observed I'tikaf which is a special feature of the month of Ramadan. Hazrat Ayesha ؓ relates that Nabi ﷺ regularly observed I'tikaf during the last ten days of Ramadan till the end of his life...” (Bukhari)

Hazrat Ibn 'Abbas ؓ narrates that Nabi ﷺ said regarding the person performing I'tikaf, “He refrains from sins and is rewarded for all the good deeds (that he cannot do due to being in I'tikaf e.g. visiting the sick or participating in a janazah) just as a person who performs these good deeds.” (Ibn Majah)

Importance of the correct intention

Acceptance deeds are premised on their intentions. Multiple intentions can be made for one deed which will multiply the rewards. The primary intention for I'tikaf is that it is a fulfilment of a beloved Sunnah. Other intentions that can and should be made include are: to spend time in the company of the pious; self-reformation; to acquire knowledge and recognition and love of Allah Ta'ala; to attain Laylatul Qadr; to save others from one's harm through seclusion; to obtain the spiritual benefits of time in seclusion.

Laws and Rulings of Itikaf

Niyat (intention), place and time for I'tikaf

The Sunnah I'tikaf of Ramadan takes place in the last 10 day of Ramadan. The Sunnah I'tikaf must be observed in the Masjid. Females will observe this I'tikaf in their homes.

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It is necessary to make the intention for Sunnah I'tikaf that one chooses to remain secluded in the specified Masjid for the duration of Sunnah I'tikaf for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. Niyat should be made before sunset.

The Sunnah I'tikaf of Ramadan commences from sunset on the 21st Ramadan (i.e. the eve after the 20th fast) until the moon for Eid is sighted or the sunset of the 30th fast. It is important for a person to be in the masjid before sunset to avoid missing the I'tikaf commencement time.

Valid reasons for leaving the Masjid

1. To answer the call of nature
2. To take a Fardh Ghusl
3. To perform Wuzu
4. To call the Azan
5. To obtain meals if there is no one to bring it to the Masjid
6. To go to another Masjid for Jumu'ah, if Jumu'ah is not performed at this Masjid
7. To move over to another Masjid if one is compelled to do so due to necessity (e.g. destruction of the Masjid).

Acts that nullify the I'tikaf

1. Besides the above-mentioned reasons, if one leaves the Masjid for even one moment be it intentionally, forgetfully or in error.
2. If one left the Masjid for a valid reason and unduly prolongs he stay outside the Masjid.
3. Breaking the fast or not fasting irrespective of the reason.

Permissible acts in I'tikaf

1. To eat, drink, sleep and speak what is necessary
2. To change one's clothing, comb the hair, apply perfume and to put oil in the head
3. To engage in learning and teaching religious knowledge
4. To make Nikah
5. To transact for one's necessities on condition that the goods are not brought into the Masjid
6. To attend to a sick person in the Masjid

Makrooh (undesirable) acts in I'tikaf

1. To adopt complete silence. In I'tikaf one should speak when there is necessity to but avoid futile, vain and sinful speech
2. To look down upon others and consider oneself better than others in Ibadat and piety. This could lead to pride and other maladies
3. Causing inconvenience and disturbance to others and violating the sanctity of the Masjid

Thus whatever does not render the I'tikaf null and void, nor is it makrooh in I'tikaf and is itself permissible is also permissible during the state of I'tikaf. Makrooh acts should be avoided although they do not break the I'tikaf.

The consequences of breaking I'tikaf

If the Sunnah I'tikaf is rendered void for any of the reasons mentioned, then it is Wajib (compulsory) to make Qaza only of that day in which the I'tikaf became void. It is not Wajib to make Qaza of the full ten days. The Qaza of one day will be made with same conditions of the Sunnah I'tikaf.

Masjid boundary

It is imperative for the person intending I'tikaf to ascertain the boundaries of the Masjid. Generally, the Wuzu area, courtyard of the Masjid, etc., do not form part of the Masjid. If one leaves the Masjid for even one moment without a valid reason, the I'tikaf will be nullified.

General Advices to those in I'tikaf

- Ensure that the sanctity of the Masjid is maintained at all times. Avoid noise and disturbance in the Masjid and be mindful of others
- Special care should be taken at meal times to uphold the cleanliness of the Masjid
- If one is in need of a compulsory Ghusl (bath), this should be done as soon as possible. Impure clothing or bedding should be removed from the Masjid.
- Spend your time profitably. Try not to waste a single moment. Engage yourself in Salah, seeking knowledge, Quran recitation, Zikrullah, Dua, Muraqabah (contemplation) and Taubah (repentance), etc. To achieve this, it is important to strictly follow the timetable. See our publication 'I'tikaf - How to spend the time profitably' for this.



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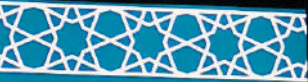
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About Darul Ihsan

Darul Ihsan Humanitarian Centre provides education, guidance, social, empowerment and welfare services to the community. In providing this service, we adopt a holistic approach, that gives due importance to basic needs as well as human rights and dignity of those that we serve.

Founding Philosophy

Darul Ihsan Humanitarian Centre is a multi-purpose, humanitarian-services providing organisation. 'Ihsan' means compassion towards mankind and to act with excellence. The Centre was established in the year 2000 with the primary objective of serving humanity and alleviating poverty and hardship locally and abroad. Since its inception, it has developed and established many humanitarian projects and provides a variety of free services to the community.

Key Objectives

One of the key objectives of the Centre is to promote a better understanding of humanity and peace, thereby serving as a bridge-builder between faiths and communities. Through guidance, Ubuntu and empowerment, the organisation hopes to train and develop the youth to become torch bearers of hope, peace and compassion to humanity.

