

Qada' and fidyah — making up a fast

A missed fast is a debt. Most are repaid day for day; a few are repaid in food. Which, how much, and when.



★ A ransom of feeding the poor

وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ

“And upon those who are able to fast, but with hardship — a ransom of feeding a poor person.”

Qur'an 2:184

★ Qada' — day for day

Whoever was ill or travelling repays an equal number of other days. Most scholars: the days need not run consecutively.

Qur'an 2:184-185

★ Before the next Ramadan

‘A’ishah would miss days of Ramadan and find no time to repay them except in Sha‘ban. The window is the year between the two months.

Sahih al-Bukhari 1950

★ If Ramadan comes round first

The days are still owed and still fasted. Shafi‘i: whoever delayed them without excuse also feeds a poor person for each day of delay.

an-Nawawi, al-Majmu‘ (Kitab al-Siyam)

★ Who pays fidyah instead

Those who will never be able: the very old, and the chronically ill with no hope of recovery. They feed a poor person per day and owe no fast.

Qur'an 2:184

★ What fidyah is

Food, not a fine: a mudd of the local staple per day for the Shafi‘is, half a sa‘ for the Hanafis. Zakat authorities collect its price.

Qur'an 2:184 · an-Nawawi, al-Majmu‘

★ Kaffarah is heavier

For intercourse in a day of Ramadan: free a slave, or fast two months in succession, or feed sixty poor people — in that order.

Sahih al-Bukhari 1936, 1937

★ Fasting for the dead

“Whoever died owing fasts, his guardian fasts on his behalf.”
Asked about a mother’s missed month: “Allah’s debt has more right to be paid.”

Sahih al-Bukhari 1952, 1953

★ Keep a count

Write the day down on the day you break it. A debt you cannot number is a debt you will not clear.

Sahih al-Bukhari 1950, 1953