**1- Honoring the Sacred Months**

Allah the Al-Mighty said: "The number of months in the sight of Allah is twelve (in a year)- so ordained by Him the day He created the heavens and the earth; of them four are sacred: that is the straight usage. So wrong not yourselves therein."

Ibn Abbas said: "Allah's saying, 'therein' refers to the all twelve months. Then Allah specialized four months amongst them; He has made them sacred, made their rites sacred, made sins during them greater, and made righteous deeds and reward during them greater." (Narrated by Ibn Jarir and others)

**2- Fasting during the Sacred Months**

It was reported that Ibn 'Umar may Allah be pleased with them used to fast during the sacred months. (Narrated by Abdelrazeq)

Mojibah Al-Bahiliah reported on the authority of her father or her uncle that the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him said: "Fast during the sacred months and then stop; fast during the sacred months and then stop; fast during the sacred months and then stop." (Narrated by Ahmed, Abu Dawood and Ibn Majah) The transmitted chain of this Hadith is weak.

**3- Favor of Fasting on Al-Muharram**

Abu Hurairah may Allah be pleased with him reported that the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him said: "The best month for observing Saum (fasting) after Ramadan is the month of Allah Al-Muharram, and the best prayer after the prescribed prayer is prayer at night." (Narrated by Muslim)

This Hadith refers to the favor of Al-Muharram; it was added to the Name of Allah and this gives it honor and glorification. In addition, supererogatory fasting during it is greater than fasting during any other month. But it was disagreed about which is more preferred: Muharram or Sha'ban?

**4- Beginning of Hijri Calendar**

Al-Hakem narrated from Al-Sha'bi that Abu Musa wrote to 'Umar: "Messages reach us from you undated." Then 'Umar gathered people to consult them about this matter. Some suggested beginning the calendar according to the time of sending Muhammad as the Messenger. Others suggested beginning the calendar according to the Hijrah (from Makkah to Madinah). Thereupon 'Umar said: "Hijrah has differentiated between right and wrong." And so they set the calendar according to it. This was in the seventeenth year. When they agreed on this, some said, "Begin the calendar with the month of Ramadan." But 'Umar said: "It will begin with Muharram, when people went away after their Hajj." And so they agreed on it.

**5- What sins 'Ashoora (the tenth day of Muharram) expiate?**

Abu Qatadah may Allah be pleased with him reported that the Prophet peace be upon him said: "I seek from Allah that fasting on the day of 'Arafat may atone for the sins of the preceding and the coming year, and I seek from Allah that fasting on the day of ‘Ashoora may atone for the sins of the preceding year." (Narrated by Muslim)

Ibn Taimiah said: Expiation for sins through purification, prayer, and fasting on Ramadan, 'Arafat and 'Ashoora is for the minor sins.

This means that major sins are expiated by repentance and abstaining from them.

**6- Fasting the Day of 'Ashoora is Sunnah**

'Aisha may Allah be pleased with her reported that Quraish used to fast on the day of 'Ashoora in the pre-Islamic days and the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him also observed it. When he migrated to Medina, he himself observed this fast and commanded (others) to observe it. But when fasting during the month of Ramadan was made obligatory, he said: "He who wishes to observe this fast (of 'Ashoora) may do so, and he who wishes to abandon it may do so." (Agreed upon)

Al-Qady 'Iyad said: Scholars unanimously agreed that fasting on the day of 'Ashoora is recommended, for Hadith which refer to this. And regarding the saying of Ibn Masood, "We were fasting on it, and then it was abandoned", it means that it has not become obligatory as it was.

**7- 'Ashoora is not an 'Id**

Abu Musa may Allah be pleased with him reported: The people of Khaibar (most of them were Jews) observed fast on the day of 'Ashoora and they treated it as 'Id and gave their women ornaments and beautiful dresses to wear. Thereupon the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him said: "You (only) observe fast on this day." (Agreed upon and the word is for Muslim)

It is not permissible to imitate the Jews in taking the day of 'Ashoora as 'Id, by observing what is observed on the 'Id; such as using ornaments and so on.

**8- Ranks of Fasting on the Day of 'Ashoora**

Ibn Abbas reported that the Prophet peace be upon him said: "Fast on the day of 'Ashoora and differ with the Jews; fast the day before it and the day after it." This Hadith was narrated by Ahmed through a weak transmitted chain, for weakness of Muhammad bin Abu Laila.

Many scholars, including Ibn Al-Qayem, said that there are three ranks for fasting the day o 'Ashoora:

**The best of them:** Fasting the tenth day, the day before it and the day after it.

**The one that follows it:** Fasting the ninth and the tenth days.

**The third one:** Fasting the tenth day only.

**9- Favor of Fasting the Day of 'Ashoora**

Ibn Abbas reported: "I never saw the Prophet peace be upon him singling out any day’s fast and considering it more excellent than another, except this day, the day of ‘Ashoora, and this month, meaning the month of Ramadan." (Agreed upon)

Ibn Hajar said: This Hadith refers that the day of 'Ashoora is the best day for the fasting person after Ramadan. But this is understood from knowledge of Ibn Abbas. Muslim narrated that Abu Qatada reported that the Prophet said: "Fasting the day of 'Ashoora expiates (sins) of one year, and fasting the day of 'Arafat expiates (sins) of two years." The apparent words of this Hadith refer that fasting on the day of 'Arafat is better that fasting on the day of 'Ashoora.

**10- The Favor of 'Ashoora and 'Arafat**

Abu Qatadah may Allah be pleased with him reported that the Prophet peace be upon him said: "I seek from Allah that fasting on the day of 'Arafat may atone for the sins of the preceding and the coming year, and I seek from Allah that fasting on the day of ‘Ashoora may atone for the sins of the preceding year." (Narrated by Muslim)

Ibn Al-Qayem said: There are two reasons for giving more preference to the day of 'Arafat:

**The first:** The day of 'Arafat is on a sacred month, preceded by a sacred month, and followed by a sacred month. And the day of 'Ashoora is not so.

**The second:** Fasting the day of 'Arafat is a characteristic of our religion.

**11- 'Ashoora is the Tenth Day**

Al-Hasan narrated that Ibn Abbas reported: "The Messenger of Allah ordered fasting the tenth day for the Day of Ashoora." (Narrated by At-Tirmidhi) At-Tirmidhi said: "This Hadith of Ibn Abbas is graded as good and sound." Al-Mubarakfury said: "This Hadith is disconnected, for disconnection between Al-Hasan and Ibn Abbas."

At-Tirmidhi said: Scholars disagreed about the day of 'Ashoora. Some said that it is the ninth day (of Muharram), and others said that it is the tenth day. It was reported that Ibn Abbas said: "Fast on the ninth and the tenth day (of Muharram) and disagree with the Jews." Al-Shaf'i, Ahmed and Ishaq agree with this tradition.

**12- Fasting on the Tenth and the Eleventh Days**

Ibn Abbas reported that the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him said: "Fast on the day of 'Ashoora and disagree with the Jews in fasting it; fast the day before it or the day after it." Al-Haithamy said: This Hadith was narrated by Ahmed and Al-Bazar. Its transmitted chain included Muhammad bin Abu Laila about whom there is disagreement.

Al-Haithamy also said in 'Al-Lam'at': "There are three ranks for fasting on 'Ashoora: The best is to fast the tenth day, the day before it and the day after it, as was reported in Hadith narrated by Ahmed. The second is to fast the ninth and the tenth days. And the third is to fast the tenth day alone. There are Hadith reported about fasting on the ninth and the tenth days; and so scholars did not consider fasting on the tenth and the eleventh among ranks; however this rank disagrees with the Jews too."

**13- Fasting on the Tenth Day Alone**

Ibn Abbas may Allah be pleased with them said: "Fast on the ninth and the tenth days (of Muharram); disagree with the Jews." (Narrated by Abdelrazeq, Al-Baihaqi and At-Tahawy, graded as authentic by Ibn Rajab)

Fasting on the day of 'Ashoora alone is permissible, but the best is to fast the ninth day with it; for this is the Prophetic Sunnah.

Al-Hanafiah said that it is disapproved to fast on the day of 'Ashoora alone.

Ibn Taimiah said: The saying of Ahmed refers that he hates fasting the tenth day alone … He based on tradition of Ibn Abbas; for Ibn Abbas was disapproving fasting the tenth day alone as it is well-known about him.

**14- The Meaning of Expiation when Fasting on 'Ashoora**

Abu Qatadah may Allah be pleased with him reported that the Prophet peace be upon him said: "I seek from Allah that fasting on the day of 'Arafat may atone for the sins of the preceding and the coming year, and I seek from Allah that fasting on the day of ‘Ashoora may atone for the sins of the preceding year." (Narrated by Muslim)

Al-Nawawi may Allah show mercy on him said: "Expiation here is for all sins, except the major ones. If there are minor sins, this fasting will expiate for them. And if there are no minor or major sins, it will be recorded as good deeds for the fasting and his degrees will be raised. And if there are one or more major sins with no minor ones, we hope that this fating will reduce them."

The power of expiation is based on the strength of devotion, truthfulness of hope, keeping fasting and other acts of worshipping related to fasting.

**15- Fasting on 'Ashoora as Gratitude**

Ibn Abbas may Allah be pleased with them reported: Allah's messenger came to Medina and found the Jews observing the fast on the day of ‘Ashoora, so he asked them what was the significance of that day which they were observing. They replied: "It is a great day on which God delivered Moses and his people and drowned Pharaoh and his people; so Moses observed it as a fast out of gratitude, and we do so also." He (the Messenger) said: "We have more right, and we have a closer connection with Moses than you have," so Allah's Messenger observed it as a fast himself and gave orders that it should be observed. (Agreed upon, the word is for Muslim)

Ibn Al-Qayem said: The Prophet peace be upon him told that he and his Ummah have more right and closer to Moses than the Jews. And so as Moses fasted on it as gratitude, we are worthier than the Jews to imitate him.

**16- A Misconception and Replying on it**

Ibn Abbas may Allah be pleased with them reported: Allah's messenger came to Medina and found the Jews observing the fast on the day of ‘Ashoora … (Agreed upon)

The Messenger of Allah peace be upon him came to Medina on Rabi' al-Awwal.

It is replied, as Ibn Al-Qayem, said: The first time the Prophet peace be upon him knew about this matter was in the second year after coming to Medina, if People of the Book were counting fasting according to the moon months. And if they were counting it according to the sun months, there would be no misconception; for the day on which Allah saved Moses would be the day of 'Ashoora in Al-Muharram.

**17- Rank of the Day of 'Ashoora**

'Aisha may Allah be pleased with her reported: Quraish used to fast on the day of 'Ashoora in the pre-Islamic days and the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him also observed it. When he migrated to Medina, he himself observed this fast and commanded (others) to observe it. But when fasting during the month of Ramadan was made obligatory, he said: "He who wishes to observe this fast (of 'Ashoora) may do so, and he who wishes to abandon it may do so." (Agreed upon)

This Hadith refers to the great rank of 'Ashoora, for the Prophet peace be upon him was already fasting it, and after immigration, he stressed fasting it with his deed and saying.

In addition, People of the Book and Quraish used to fast and honor it. They were also dressing Ka'ba (i.e. Qiblah to which Muslims are directed in prayer) during it.

In assemblies of Al-Baghandy, 'Ikrema said: "During the pre-Islamic period, Quraish committed a great sin, which was so hard for them. It was said to them that fasting on 'Ashoora expiates for this (sin)."

**18- Provision of Expiation for Minor Sins**

Abu Qatada may Allah be pleased with him reported that the Prophet peace be upon him said: "I seek from Allah that fasting on the day of ‘Ashoora may atone for the sins of the preceding year." (Narrated by Muslim)

It was said that this Hadith refers to minor sins. It was also said that major sins are included in the expiation. A third saying was that expiation for minor sins is provided by avoiding major ones; for Hadith of Abu Hurairah that the Prophet said: "The five daily (prescribed) prayer, and Friday (prayer) to the next Friday (prayer), and the fasting of Ramadan to the next Ramadan, is expiation of the sins committed in between them, so long as major sins are avoided." (Narrated by Muslim)

**19- Fasting of the traveler on 'Ashoora**

Abu Isma'il Al-Saksaky reported: I heard Abu Burda who accompanied Yazeed bin Abi Kabshah on a journey. Yazeed used to observe fasting on journeys. Abu Burda said to him: "I heard Abu Musa several times saying that Allah's Apostle said, 'When a slave falls ill or travels, then he will get reward similar to that he gets for good deeds practiced at home when in good health'." (Agreed upon)

Ibn Rajab said: "A group among the antecedents used to fast on 'Ashoora during travelling. Among them were Ibn Abbas, Abu Ishaq and Al-Zuhari." He added: "Ramadan can be made up on other days, but 'Ashoora cannot. Ahmed said that it is permissible to fast 'Ashoora while travelling."

Ibn Hajar said: This Hadith refers that when the patient or traveler observed a (righteous) deed, this would be better than observing it when he is sound and resident.

**20- Beautifying and Giving Charity on the Day of 'Ashoora**

'Aisha may Allah be pleased with her reported that the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him said: "If anyone introduces in our matter something which does not belong to it, will be rejected." (Agreed upon)

In the narration of Muslim which was suspended by Al-Bukhari: "If anybody introduces a practice which is not authenticated by me, it is to be rejected."

Ibn Rajab said: All Hadith reported about the favor of putting Kohl and Henna and taking a bath on the day of 'Ashoora are rejected. But regarding giving charities, it is permissible for there are Hadith reported about it: "He who observes fasting on the day of 'Ashoora is like fasting on the whole year, and he who gives a charity during it is like giving a charity of the whole year." (Narrated by Abu Musa Al-Madini)

**21- A Misconception and Replying on it**

Ibn Al-Qayem said: The fourth misconception: The Messenger of Allah peace be upon him said: "If I remain alive till the next year, I shall also observe fast on the ninth (of Muharram)." But he died before the coming year. And Ibn Abbas said: "The Messenger of Allah peace be upon him used to fast on the ninth (day of Muharram)." Ibn Abbas reported both Hadith, and both of them are authentic. It may be explained that the Prophet peace be upon him fasted the ninth and told that he would also fast it on the coming year. It may also be explained that Ibn Abbas told about the Prophet's deed basing on what he intended to do.

**22- Repentance on the Day of 'Ashoora**

At-Tirmidhi narrated through a weak transmitted chain that Ali reported that the Prophet peace be upon him said: "Muharram is the month of Allah. It includes a day on which Allah accepted repentance of some people, and on which He will accept repentance of another people."

Ibn Rajab said: Allah's Messenger's saying, "and on which He will accept repentance of another people", urges people to renew sincere repentance on the day of 'Ashoora, and gives hope that this repentance would be accepted. He who turns to Allah Glory be to Him with repentance from his sins, Allah will accept it as He did with previous people.

**23- Taking 'Ashoora as a Funeral Ceremony**

Jabir reported that the Prophet said: "Beware of newly-invented matters, for every newly-invented matter is an innovation, and every innovation is a going-stray, and every stray will be in Fire." (Narrated by Muslim and Al-Nesai)

Ibn Rajab said: And regarding what the Rafidites do of taking the day of 'Ashoora as a funeral ceremony for the murder of Al-Husain bin Ali may Allah be pleased with him on that day, it is a deed of those whose efforts have been wasted in this life, while they thought that they were acquiring good by their deeds. Neither Allah nor His Messenger commanded to take days of the Prophets' afflictions and death as funeral ceremonies. Then how about those who are less than them?!

**24- Spending in Abundance on Children on 'Ashoora**

Al-'Irbad bin Sariah reported that the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him said: "So hold fast to my Sunnah and the examples of the Rightly- Guided Caliphs who will come after me. Adhere to them and hold to it fast. Beware of new things (in Deen) because every innovation is a misguidance." (Narrated by Ahmed, Abu Dawood and Ibn Majah, graded as authentic by At-Tirmidhi and Abu Nu'aim)

Ibn Rajab said: As for spending in abundance on children on the day of 'Ashoora, Harb said: I asked Ahmed about this Hadith, "He who spends in abundance on his family on 'Ashoora", and he did not consider it a Hadith.

Al-'Uqaily said: This Hadith is not memorized. It was reported as a saying of 'Umar. And its transmitted chain includes an unknown narrator.

**25- Leaving the Command of Fasting on 'Ashoora**

It was reported in 'As-Sahihain': When Al-Ash'ath bin Qais entered the house of Abdullah bin Masood who was having his breakfast. He ('Abdullah) said: "Abd Muhammad (Al-Ash'ath), come near to the breakfast." Thereupon he said: "Is not today the day of 'Ashoora?" He (Abdullah) said: "Do you know what the day of 'Ashoora is?" He said: "What is it?" He (Abdullah) said: "It is a day on which the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him used to observe fast before the (fasting) in the month of Ramadan (became) obligatory. But when it became obligatory, he (the Holy Prophet) abandoned it."

Ibn Al-Qayem said: It was the obligatory of fasting on 'Ashoora that was abandoned, not recommendation.

**26- Opinion of Ibn Abbas about the Tenth Day**

Al-Hakam bin Al-A'rag reported: I went to Ibn 'Abbas may Allah be pleased with them and he was reclining using his mantle as a pillow near the fountain of Zamzam. I said to him: "Tell me about fasting on 'Ashoora." He said: "When you see the new moon of Muharram, then count the (days) and observe fast on the 9th." I said to him: "Is it how the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him observed the fast?" He said: "Yes." (Narrated by Muslim)

Ibn Al-Qayem said: He who observed narrations of Ibn Abbas, he would realize his wide knowledge … He asked the questioner to fast on the ninth day, and made it sufficient that the questioner knows that 'Ashoora is the tenth day.

**27- The Reason behind Fasting the Ninth Day**

Al-Baihaqi narrated through the transmitted chain of Abu Dhi'b that Shu'bah, the slave of Ibn Abbas, said: "Ibn Abbas used to fast two days for 'Ashoora, fearing that he may miss it."

Al-Shaf'i said: Sufyan told us that he heard 'Ubaidellah bin Abu Yazeed saying: I heard Ibn Abbas saying: "Fast on the ninth and the tenth, in order not to be imitating the Jews."

And so fasting of Ibn Abbas on the ninth day was for caution and disagreement with the Jews.

**28- Honoring the Day of 'Ashoora**

Abdullah bin Abbas reported: When the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him fasted on the day of 'Ashoora and commanded that it should he observed as a fast, they (his Companions) said to him: "Messenger of Allah, it is a day which the Jews and Christians hold in high esteem." Thereupon the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him said: "When the next year comes, God willing, we would observe fast on the 9th." But the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him died before the advent of the next year. (Narrated by Muslim)

This Hadith refers to honoring the day of 'Ashoora by fasting it as what was reported, not by following traditions of People of the Book, idolaters, or people of innovations. We were prohibited from imitating them and were commanded to disagree with them. And so it is approved to fast the ninth and the tenth days. Ibn Taimiah said: "It is not disapproved to fast on 'Ashoora alone."

**29- A Misconception and Replying on it**

Muslim narrated in his 'Sahih' that Ibn Abbas reported: When the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him fasted on the day of 'Ashoora and commanded that it should he observed as a fast, they (his Companions) said to him: "Messenger of Allah, it is a day which the Jews and Christians hold in high esteem." Thereupon the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him said: "When the next year comes, God willing, we would observe fast on the 9th." But the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him died before the advent of the next year.

This Hadith refers that fasting the day and commanding others to fast it was the Prophet's death with one year. And in the other Hadith, it was reported that this was when the Prophet peace be upon him came to Medina. It was replied that the Hadith that was before his death with one year was the intention to disagree with People of the Book by fasting the ninth day (with the tenth).

**30- Taking Caution for 'Ashoora**

Abu Hurairah may Allah be pleased with him reported that the Messenger of Allah peace be upon him said: "Observe fast on sighting it (the new moon) and break it on sighting it. But if (due to clouds) the actual position of the month is concealed from you, you should then count thirty (days)." (Agreed upon)

Some antecedents used to fast on the day of 'Ashoora, the day before it and the day after it, taking caution when it is disagreed about seeing crescent of the month. This was reported about Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Sireen and Imam Ahmed.

**\*\*\***