



WHEN MUST WE READ THE DUA FOR IFTAAR



Today many people at the time of breaking fast (Iftaar), read the Dua for Iftaar before they break their fast. In the time of A'la Hazrat Imam Ahle Sunnat Imam Ahmad Raza Khan (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) there was also confusion regarding this matter and he was asked a question with regard to the correct time for reading the Dua for Iftaar as there were some people that wrote that it is Sunnat to read it before breaking the fast, some that wrote that it must be read at the time of Iftaar and some that wrote that it must be read after breaking the fast.

A'la Hazrat (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) wrote a detailed and beautiful answer explaining the correct time for the Dua of Iftaar to be read. Some of his arguments are being presented here so that we may understand and practice on the correct ruling and on the Sunnat of Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and earn greater reward in the Hereafter In Sha Allah.

It is narrated from Hazrat Mu'aaz bin Zahra (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) that when Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) used to make Iftaar, then he used to read this, "All praise be to Allah who helped me that I kept fast and granted me sustenance (Rizq) that I made Iftaar." [Abu Dawood; Shu'ab-ul-Imaan]

It is narrated from Hazrat Ibn Abbas (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) that when Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) used to make Iftaar, then he used to make Dua like this, "Oh Allah! We kept fast for you and made Iftaar with Your sustenance; accept it from us, You are the All-Hearing and All-Knowing." [Tibraani]

It is narrated from Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) that when Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) used to make Iftaar, then he used to say, "The thirst went away, the veins have become refreshed, and if Allah Ta'ala Wills then reward has been established." [Abu Dawood; Nisai]

In the above narrations the Arabic words '*Aftartu*' (I made Iftaar), '*Aftarna*' (we made Iftaar) and '*Zahabaz Zamaa*' (the thirst went away) are all in the past tense, which means that Iftaar would have already been made in order to use the past tense in the Dua. If the Dua was read by Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) before Iftaar then the Dua would need to be in the future tense as in, "I will make Iftaar." The wording of his Dua therefore shows us that he had already made Iftaar and thereafter made the Dua.

Secondly, in the first narration above, Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) used the word '*Alhamdulillah*' (All praise be to Allah), which is normally used after eating just like how '*Bismillah*' is recited before eating.

Thirdly, if after the setting of the sun Amr decides to read the Dua for Iftaar and then make Iftaar and Zaid on the other hand decides to make Iftaar immediately after the sun sets and then read the Dua, it needs to be determined whose action between Zaid and Amr is more beloved to Allah Ta'ala. The Hadith bears testament that the action of Zaid is more beloved to Allah Ta'ala because Allah Ta'ala states, "From My servants the one who is most beloved to Me is the one who makes Iftaar the promptest." This is a Hadith-e-Qudsi which has been narrated by Hazrat Abu Huraira (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) from Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). [Tirmizi Shareef]

From the above example of Zaid and Amr, there is no doubt that Zaid's Iftaar was performed more promptly by reading the Dua after Iftaar, and this manner is more beloved to Allah Ta'ala.

Even when we look at the blessed actions of our Beloved Rasool (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), then it also reinforces the point of reading the Dua after making Iftaar. The blessed habit of Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was that when it was close to the time of sunset, then he would order someone to go to an elevated point and look at the sun. He would keep looking at the sun and Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) would be waiting for his word. As soon as he would say that the sun has set then Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) would break his fast. [*Al Mustadrak lil Haakim*]

Hazrat Aisha Siddiqah (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) has also narrated as follows, "I have seen Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) in a state of fasting. He was holding a date in his hand and waiting for the sun to set. As soon as the sun set Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) put the date in his mouth." [*Kashful Ghummah*]

Both the above narrations point out that between the news of sunset and Iftaar there was no separation or delay. As soon as Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) would receive the news of sunset he would immediately break his fast. It is further confirmed by the Hadith in which it is stated that when Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) would make Iftaar, then he would say; meaning he would make Dua. Ibn Malik (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) has also mentioned that Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) would read the words of the Dua after Iftaar. [*Mirqaat Sharah Mishkaat*]

From the above narration it is also proven that the words mentioned in the Hadith, '*Allahumma Laka Sumtu...*' are in fact a Dua. The meaning of Dua is to call out and what better way is there to call out to Allah Ta'ala than '*Allahumma*'. In fact it is mentioned that, "Every Zikr is Dua and every Dua is Zikr." [*Mirqaat Sharah Mishkaat*]. And Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has stated that the best Zikr is '*La Ilaaha Illallah*' and the best Dua is '*Alhamdulillah*'. [*Tirmizi Shareef; Nisai; Ibn Majah*]

From the above explanations it is clear that the words that Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) read at the time of Iftaar are in fact a Dua. It is also clear that the Sunnat way of making Iftaar is not to have any delay between the setting of the sun and the breaking of the fast. The Dua for Iftaar is to be read after breaking the fast and this is the action which is more beloved to Allah Ta'ala.

May Allah Ta'ala grant us the Taufeeq to act upon the Sunnah of Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and to seek the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala at the time of Iftaar, Ameen.

[*Compiled from Al Uroosul Mu'taar Fi Zamane Da'watil Iftaar by A'la Hazrat Imam Ahle Sunnat Imam Ahmad Raza Khan Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh*]