



The Deen of Islam is complete and perfect. Hence Islam recognizes and caters for all the needs of a human being by showing him the Islamic way of attending to and fulfilling these various needs. Eating is a basic human need. Thus Islam not only allows us to eat but also gives us guidelines and teaches us the Islamic way of eating.

Among our basic, human needs is the need to occasionally 'take a break'. Islam is not a 'dry' Deen and thus allows us to take a break when needed. However, just as we adhere to the guidelines laid down by Deen when fulfilling our other needs, we should also adhere to the laws and injunctions of Deen when fulfilling this need and ensure that it is done in a manner that is approved of in Islam.

Guidelines

In essence, there are two guidelines which we should strive to adhere to. The first is that we do not 'take a break' which lives up to its name by 'breaking' our Deen. Rather, we should remember that we are always Muslims, whether at home or on holiday. We can take a break from work but there is never a break from Deen. Hence, when on holiday, our dressing, eating, travelling, interacting and every other aspect of our lives should conform to the pristine teachings of Islam. Remember, the purpose of a "break" is to relax the body and mind – NOT to relax our Deeni standards.

The second guideline is to bear in mind that 'taking a break' is a need and is not the object of our existence. It is thus imperative that moderation be exercised. In this regard, taking a break is similar to salt. When found in moderation, it enhances the enjoyment which one experiences, but if found in excess, it spoils the entire dish and causes it to become inedible.

Goal in Life

A Muslim never loses sight of his ultimate destination – Jannah. If he takes a break, it is with the intention of recharging his batteries so that on his return, he once again feels motivated to strive for Jannah.

On the other hand, a disbeliever has no Jannah to look forward to and thus seeks to make this world into his Jannah. On account of the disbeliever's desperation to enjoy Jannah in this very world, before the first holiday can even terminate he already begins planning his second holiday and he feels depressed when the holiday comes to an end. Furthermore, he spends all his energy and wealth in preparing for what he considers to be the "ultimate holiday". If one has to examine the mindset of this disbeliever, one will realize that it is almost as if he 'worships' this holiday and considers it to be the object of his existence.

If a believer takes a break with the correct intention and mindset, without breaking or compromising any law of Deen, in an environment that is conducive to Deen and far away from any fitnah, it will become a means of him 'making' his Jannah. He will enjoy a holiday in which his salaah will not be neglected and in which he will remember Allah Ta'ala in abundance. As a result, he will enjoy the "break" and also enjoy the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala, a pleasure to which no other pleasure can compare.