
THE MOSLEM WORLD: THEORETICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEMS

YURY ZININ. THE HOLY MONTH OF RAMADAN IN ARAB
COUNTRIES: TRADITION AND MODERNITY

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Abstract. The article examines the key provisions and guidelines of the annual fast that takes place during the lunar month of Holy Ramadan, the observance of which is obligatory for every Muslim believer worldwide. The author describes its course in the countries of the modern Arab world, relying on both original sources and literature, and his personal observations during business trips to different parts of this region. It is emphasized that throughout its vast territory, the fast is observed according to centuries-old spiritual regulations and traditions. However, cultural, ethnic and other realities in individual countries of this region leave their mark on this religious event, adding uniqueness.

The annual fasting (sawm in Arabic) during Ramadan is one of the five pillars of Islam. A believer must refrain from food and drink in the daytime, and break the fast after dark, "until the white thread of dawn becomes distinct to you from the black thread." The main reason for the sawm is spiritual purification, the readiness to humbly endure the hardships of hunger and thirst, and to do pious deeds.

Fasting lasts for a month, which is called Ramadan in the Islamic lunar calendar. Muslims use the lunar or Hijri calendar in their religious life. Ramadan is the ninth month of the year and is considered the most important one, since it was then that the Quran, the Holy Book of Islam, was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. Since the length of the Hijri year is 354 days and 8 hours, this month, if compared with the solar-based Gregorian calendar, tends to 'migrate' throughout the seasons. It falls on the same date every 36 years.

To determine the beginning of Ramadan fasting, Arab and Islamic countries rely on the observations of the Moon's disk conducted in astronomical observatories, which is why Ramadan does not start at the same time in different Muslim countries. The date varying by one or two days is acceptable, although in recent years, there has been growing agreement among imams that the start and end dates for Ramadan should to be unified. According to preliminary data, in Russia, Ramadan 1446 AH/2025 is expected to start on Saturday, March 1, and last 29 or 30 days.

Fasting is obligatory for all healthy adult Muslims. The sick, the elderly, pregnant women, children, and those who cannot observe fasting due to circumstances (traveling, staying abroad, feeling unwell, etc.) are exempt from it. One must also refrain from smoking, inhaling perfume and incense, fulfilling marital duties, that is, from everything that is distracting a Muslim from religious practices. If the fast cannot be observed for some reason, it is possible to postpone it and perform it later [1, p. 208].

As for small children and minors, and there is a large proportion of them in the Arab world, there is a practice of easing