The Spiritual Retreat

Fiqh and rulings of I'tikaf and Laylatul Qadr

Muhammad Nabeel Musharraf

ICAN SAMA-O-BASR HADITH SERIES
NO RESTRICTIONS FROM THE AUTHOR AND PUBLISHER
ON ANY USE OF THIS PRODUCT FOR DAWAH
AND EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES

لَوْ جَهَتْ اللَّهِ
لَا نُريدُ مِنكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شَكُورًا

FOR THE SAKE OF ALLAH ALONE! WE SEEK
FROM YOU NEITHER REWARD NOR THANKS

QURAN 76:9

SAMA O BASR
A PROJECT OF ICAN
With the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Always Merciful
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreword</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Meaning of I’tikaf</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.1 Linguistic definition:</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.2 Shara’i definition:</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.3 Difference between I’tikaf and Jiwar:</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.4 I’tikaf in earlier generations:</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Purpose of I’tikaf</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.1 A time for the purification of soul:</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.2 An extension to the concept of fasting</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.3 A time for reflection:</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.4 An opportunity to gain forgiveness</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.5 A time to excel in worship and goodness:</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>The virtue of I’tikaf</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.1 Opportunity to spend time at the most beloved place:</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.2 Closeness and friendship with Allah swt</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.3 Allah’s love for those who settle in the masjid:</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.4 Glad tidings for the one who makes Masjid his home</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.5 Preparedness for the mission of Iqamat Ad-Deen:</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.6 Other benefits:</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.7 Some Daif ahadith on Fadhail of I’tikaf</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.7.1 Forgiveness of Sins:</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.7.2 Distancing from the hell-fire</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.7.3  Reward equivalent to all acts of goodness: ................................. 35
3.7.4  Reward of 2 hajjs and 2 umrahs ............................................. 37
3.7.5  The reward of a hajj every day: .................................................. 38

4.  Some Rulings regarding I’tikaf ........................................................... 40
    4.1  I’tikaf is Sunnah muakaddah: ..................................................... 40
    4.2  Is it Sunnah Ala Al-Kifayyah? .................................................... 40
    4.3  When would this Sunnah become obligatory? ................................ 41
    4.4  Types of I’tikaf ........................................................................... 44
    4.5  Conditions for acceptance of I’tikaf: ........................................... 45
    4.6  Is fasting a condition for I’tikaf .................................................. 45
        4.6.1  The opinion that fasting is a requirement for I’tikaf: ............... 45
        4.6.2  The opinion that fasting is not a requirement for I’tikaf: ........... 48
        4.6.3  Reconciliation between the two opinions: ............................... 51
    4.7  Can one define certain conditions for his I’tikaf when making his intention
        for it .................................................................................................. 55

5.  I’tikaf of women: .............................................................................. 58
    5.1  Can women perform I’tikaf .......................................................... 58
    5.2  Where should a woman do I’tikaf ............................................... 59
    5.3  What should women in I’tikaf do in case of menses? ..................... 59
    5.4  I’tikaf for the recently divorced or widows .................................... 61

6.  When can one perform I’tikaf: ......................................................... 63

7.  The duration of I’tikaf: ................................................................. 64
    7.1  I’tikaf for 10 days: ...................................................................... 64
    7.2  I’tikaf for 20 days: ...................................................................... 66
    7.3  I’tikaf for 30 days: ...................................................................... 69
    7.4  I’tikaf for less than 10 days: ....................................................... 71
7.4.1 Within Ramadan: .................................................................71
7.4.2 Outside Ramadan: ...............................................................72
7.5 I’tikaf when entering the masjid ..............................................75
7.6 Analysis of the traditions to determine the minimum time for I’tikaf.....76
7.7 Conclusion:.............................................................................77

8. Where to do Sunnah I’tikaf ......................................................78
   8.1 I’tikaf is in a congregational masjid:....................................78
   8.2 I’tikaf in Masjid An-Nabawi:..............................................83
   8.3 Can I’tikaf only be done in the three most blessed masajid ..........87
   8.4 I’tikaf in your local masjid ..................................................90
   8.5 I’tikaf in Fina Al-Masjid:.................................................91
   8.6 Can obligatory I’tikaf be done in any masjid? .........................94
   8.7 Where should women do I’tikaf .........................................96
      8.7.1 Women’s I’tikaf in masjid: .........................................97
      8.7.2 Women’s I’tikaf in their houses: ..................................99

9. Putting a tent for Sunnah I’tikaf .............................................104
   9.1 Purpose of putting the tent:..............................................104
   9.2 It is a Sunnah: ..................................................................104
   9.3 How was the tent of the Prophet ﷺ? ...................................106
   9.4 Is it required for each Mutakif to have his own tent? ...............106
   9.5 Is putting a tent a mandatory requirement? .........................107
   9.6 What should one do with the tent when it is not being used? ...107

10. When should one get to the masjid to begin the Sunnah I’tikaf ........108
    10.1 Before the sunset: ..........................................................108
    10.2 After Asr prayer on the preceding day: ..............................110
    10.3 After the Fajr prayer on the preceding day: .........................111
11. What to do in I’tikaf .......................................................................................................................... 115

11.1 Allow yourself to earn more reward than doing a month of I’tikaf in the masjid of the Prophet ﷺ! ........................................................................................................................................... 115

11.2 Share your food with others ............................................................................................................. 117

11.3 Strive hard in worship ....................................................................................................................... 119

11.4 Enhance Dhikr ................................................................................................................................... 121

11.5 Connection with the Quran: ............................................................................................................. 122

11.6 Khushoo in Salah: .............................................................................................................................. 123

11.7 Keep waiting for the next prayer ....................................................................................................... 124

11.8 Complete the tarawih with the Imam ............................................................................................... 125

11.9 Pray Qiyam ul Layl in Addition to Taraweeh .................................................................................. 126

11.10 Strive for Dua in the last part of the night .................................................................................... 128

11.11 Make benefit of the Laylatul Qadr ................................................................................................. 130

11.1.1 The meaning of Al-Qadr: ............................................................................................................... 130

11.1.2 Virtues of Laylatul Qadr ............................................................................................................... 131

Past sins forgiven: ....................................................................................................................................... 131

Reward of worship: More than a 1000 years ......................................................................................... 132

A Daif hadith regarding the virtue of this night ..................................................................................... 133

11.1.3 Make a dua that you are not deprived of it .................................................................................. 134

11.1.4 When is Laylatul Qadr ............................................................................................................... 135

The exact date is not known .................................................................................................................... 135

The wisdom behind the exact date not being known ............................................................................ 137

Opinion: It could be any night in Ramadan ......................................................................................... 138

Opinion: It is in the last 10 nights ............................................................................................................ 139

Opinion: It is in the first few nights in the last Ashara ......................................................................... 139

Opinion: It is in the odd nights in the last 10 days .............................................................................. 140
Opinion: It is the 21st night ................................................................. 140
Opinion: It is the 22nd or 23rd night ............................................... 142
Opinion: It is in the last seven nights ............................................. 143
Opinion: It is the twenty third night: ............................................. 144
Opinion: It is the 24th night of Ramadan .......................................... 145
Opinion: It is the 27th night .............................................................. 146
Opinion: It keeps moving among the last ten nights ....................... 148
A summary of various opinions about Laylatul Qadr: ...................... 149
A sample checklist for the minimum set of activities for each of the last ten nights in Ramadan: ..................................................... 152
Was the Prophet ﷺ reminded about the date of Laylatul Qadr later on? 152

11.1.5 Signs of Laylatul Qadr .................................................................. 153
The night is neither too hot nor too cold .......................................... 153
The characteristics of the Sun on the day after Laylatul Qadr .......... 154
Possibility of rain: ............................................................................ 155
There are no meteors on that night .................................................. 156
The moon on that night is brighter: ................................................. 156
The moon on this night is like a half plate ...................................... 157
Some signs that people look for but they have no basis: .................. 157

11.1.6 What happens on Laylatul Qadr: ............................................. 158
Angles descend on earth: ................................................................. 158
Angels shake hands with the worshippers ..................................... 159
The matters for the coming year are written in that night .............. 161

11.1.7 Some recommended practices for Laylatul Qadr: ..................... 161
Perform ghusl: .................................................................................. 161
Put on perfume: ................................................................................ 162
Have milk in Iftar: ................................................................. 162
Have a light Iftar: ........................................................................... 162
Make lots of dua: ........................................................................... 163
Do the Qiyam ................................................................................. 164
Do not be among these four .......................................................... 164
11.2 Sadaqa every day: ................................................................. 165
11.3 Ibadah on the last night of Ramadan .......................................... 166

12 What can or cannot be done during Sunnah I’tikaf ......................... 167

12.1 What a mutakif CAN do: ......................................................... 168
  12.1.1 Going out to relieve oneself: ................................................ 168
  12.1.2 Sleeping in the masjid .......................................................... 170
  12.1.3 Going out to bring food: ....................................................... 170
  12.1.4 Eating ................................................................................. 171
  12.1.5 Talking to others .................................................................. 171
  12.1.6 Teaching and Learning.......................................................... 173
  12.1.7 Washing or sewing one’s clothes: ......................................... 177
  12.1.8 Taking bath ........................................................................ 177
  12.1.9 Putting Perfume .................................................................. 179
  12.1.10 Delegating some responsibilities of business or trade ....... 180
  12.1.11 Inquiring about someone’s health: ...................................... 181
  12.1.12 Doing Nikah ...................................................................... 182
  12.1.13 Meeting his wife in the masjid during I’tikaf: ...................... 184
  12.1.14 One’s wife touching him for a need while he is in I’tikaf: .... 185

12.2 What a mutakif cannot do: ...................................................... 188
  12.2.1 Going outside of the masjid without any valid reason ............ 188
12.2.2 Passing underneath a room with a roof outside the masjid ..............189
12.2.3 Attending the funeral while in I’tikaf ..............................................191
12.2.4 Going to someone’s house to inquire about their health ..................192
12.2.5 Buying and selling ...........................................................................193
12.2.6 Consuming a substance that impacts sanity ....................................194
12.2.7 Sexual relation with spouse .............................................................194
12.2.8 Not talking to anyone during I’tikaf ...............................................195
12.2.9 Excessive socialization with other people in I’tikaf ..........................195
12.2.10 Do not be angry or misbehaving: ...................................................197
12.2.11 Bad thoughts and bad feelings .......................................................197

13 Etiquettes of residing in the masjid .......................................................199
13.1 Do not be loud ....................................................................................199
13.2 Avoid bad smells ..............................................................................201
13.2.1 Our Prophet ﷺ loved fragrance: .....................................................201
13.2.2 Avoid burping: ................................................................................202
13.2.3 Do not eat bad-smelling food: ..........................................................203
13.3 Ensure personal hygiene .................................................................205
13.4 Ensure cleanliness of the masjid: ....................................................208
13.5 Follow the Sunnahs of entering and leaving the masjid: ....................208

14 If one is unable to continue I’tikaf or breaks it ..................................210
14.1 Reasons because of which the I’tikaf can be left incomplete .............210
14.1.1 Traveling .......................................................................................210
14.1.2 Sickness or menstrual cycle: .........................................................210
14.1.3 Due to change of mind: ..................................................................212
14.1.4 Other reasons: ..............................................................................213
14.2 How to make up for the missed I’tikaf .............................................214
14.2.1  If broken or missed because of change of mind, or sickness, or other valid reasons:

14.2.2  If the I’tikaf is broken due to sexual relationship with the wife:

14.2.3  If someone made a vow for I’tikaf and dies before it:

15  After the I’tikaf

15.1  Worship on the night you come out of I’tikaf:

15.2  Spending the night of Eid in the Masjid:

15.3  The payment of Reward when you finish I’tikaf:

16  Did you miss the I’tikaf? Here is what you can do

16.1  Some Saheeh or Hassan ahadith or athar on this topic:

16.1.1  Dedicate a portion of your time every week for the Deen of Allah swt

16.1.2  Make an effort to solve the problem of your brother

16.1.3  Be the one on security duty when there is a fear

16.1.4  Four rakat after Isha:

16.2  Some weak or fabricated ahadith on this topic:

16.2.1  Better than I’tikaf for ten years

16.2.2  Fasting and Qiyam in Dhul Hijja:

16.2.3  Four Rakat before Dhuhr:

16.2.4  Six Rakat after Maghreb:

16.2.5  Four rakat after Maghreb:

16.2.6  Fadhail of Surah Mulk and Surah Sajdah:
I praise and thank Allah swt for blessing one of His humble servants with an opportunity to compile this book. It is indeed a favour from Allah swt which this faqeer\(^1\) is very much grateful for.

\[
\text{رَبِّ إِنِّي لِمَآ أَنزَلْتَ إِلَََّ مِّنْ خَيٍْْ فَقِّيْر}
\]

\textit{O Rabb! Surely, I am in desperate need of whatever good that You may send down to me. (Surah Qasas 24:28)}

**Why is this book written?**

There are four main aims for writing this book.

1. Millions of Muslims acquire the blessings of sitting in I’
\textit{tikaf}\(^2\) every year. However, there is very little literature available in the English language that explains, at a reasonable level of detail, the topic of I’tikaf based on the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ. Accordingly, a need was felt to compile a resource that could fill this gap and become a source of Sadaqa Jariyyah\(^3\) for the author, reviewers, and publisher.

2. During the review of existing literature in English and Urdu languages, it was identified that some of the available books make use of several weak or even fabricated narrations without

---

\(^1\) F\textit{a}qe\textit{e}r means someone who is desperate need of something. This meaning is evident in the ayah quoted above

\(^2\) I’tikaf is a term used for the Sunnah of retreating to masjid during Ramadan or outside of it in order to seek closeness to Allah swt. The detailed meaning and definition of the term can be seen in chapter one.

\(^3\) S\textit{a}daqa Jariyyah means ‘a charity that continues, even after a person’s death’
explaining the classification of narrations. Moreover, a lot of books that we came across contain information that is not proven from the authentic Sunnah. Therefore, we decided to explain the fiqh of I’tikaf based on the ahadith and the opinions of the early generations only while explaining their classification where possible and applicable. In doing so, we have tried our best to provide information about the authenticity and classification of narrations.

3. Another intention for writing this book was to compile all the relevant ahadith and athar⁴ regarding the topic of I’tikaf in a single book. The books of hadith are taught in the Madaris⁵ in a ‘series’ manner, i.e. one book is completed in full, and then the next one is started. It means two things for the learners. One, a lot of the content is repeated (as the same ahadith, often with different chains of narrators, appear in multiple books). Though it is good as a means of reminder, however, the same time can be spent on additional analysis and deeper interpretation. Two, because of this approach, a comparative analysis of all the relevant ahadith or a holistic view of the complete hadith literature on a particular topic is not possible. Though there are benefits in this existing approach, we believe that if all the relevant ahadith from various books of hadith are gathered under the relevant topics and studied together, it would be a much more productive way of studying these topics and covering them with more depth and breadth. iCAN Sama-O-Basr publication has therefore started working on this project and is in the process of creating and publishing books of this genre. The present book is a collection of ahadith on I’tikaf and Laylatul Qadr from numerous books of hadith. However, it is to be noted that though we set out to write this book with the above-mentioned intention, this has not been fully achieved considering the very large volume of ahadith and athar available. However, we feel pleased that the relevant

---

⁴ The word ‘Athar’ means the ‘signs that remain’. In the field of Usool Al-Hadith, it refers to the sayings, actions and approvals of the companions, their successors (i.e. tabi’een) and sometimes the successors of successors (e.g. taba-tabi’een).

⁵ Islamic Seminaries
ahadith from 20+ famous books of hadith been fully reviewed during the compilation. By the time you would finish reading this book, you would have fully covered the contents of the following hadith literature.

i. The book of I’tikaf from Saheeh Muslim
ii. The book of I’tikaf from Saheeh Bukhari
iii. The book of Virtues of Laylatul Qadr from Saheeh Bukhari
iv. Book of I’tikaf from Riyad us Saliheen
v. Book of I’tikaf from Muntaqal Akhbar of Imam Ibn Taymiyyah
vi. The book of I’tikaf from Muwatta Imam Malik
vii. The abwab of I’tikaf and Laylatul Qadr the book of fasting from Muwatta Imam Muhammad
viii. The ba’ab of I’tikaf from the book of fasting of Almam of Imam Ibn Daqeeq
ix. The abwab related to I’tikaf from the Book of Fasting of Sunan Abu Dawud
x. The abwab related to Laylatul Qadr from the Book of Ramadan from Sunan Abu Dawud
xi. The hadith related to I’tikaf from the Book of Fasting of Bulugh ul Maram
xii. The hadith related to I’tikaf and Laylatul Qadr from the Book of Fasting of Mustadrak Hakim
xiii. The abwab related to I’tikaf from the Book of Fasting of Shub ul Iman
xiv. The abwab related to I’tikaf from the Book of Fasting of Sunan Ibn Majah
xv. The abwab related to I’tikaf from the Book of Fasting of Mishkat Al-Masabheh
xvi. The abwab related to I’tikaf and Laylatul Qadr from Sunan Darimi
xvii. The abwab related to Laylatul Qadr from the Book of Ramadan of Sunan Abu Dawud
xviii. The Ba’ab of I’tikaf the book of fasting of Sunan Dar Al-Qutni
The Ba’ab of I’tikaf the book of fasting of Saheeh Ibn Hibban

Ahadith related to I’tikaf from Muajjam As-Shagheer Li Tabarani

In addition to these, numerous other classical hadith collections have also been consulted and relevant ahadith from them have been included in the book.

Finally, I wrote this book for my own benefit. Whenever my friends need some information from me, I consider this a gift from Allah swt and try to provide them with a resource that would be beneficial for them. In doing so, I enhance my own learning and understanding through research with an aim to attain Sadaqa Jariyyah through this. My key drive and motivation behind this effort is the hadith of the Prophetﷺ which explains that once a person departs this world, one of the forms of continued charity that he can leave behind is the useful knowledge that people continue to benefit from. May Allah swt enable me and iCAN to create a legacy that would benefit many generations to come inshaAllah.

Please Note:

- An attempt has been made that the ahadith are not repeated where they convey the same message. However, in certain cases, it was required to mention them again in order to present them as evidence for certain rulings.
- When the same or a very similar hadith occurs in multiple books, only a few references are mentioned under the hadith rather than the complete list of all the books and chapters in which it occurs.
- I am very grateful to my brothers in Islam, Br. Ikram Khan Muhammadi and Br. Abdul Azeem Haqqani for proofreading the manuscript, providing their valuable inputs for improving the contents, and identifying the grades of ahadith where they were missing in the initial draft of the manuscript.

A request to the readers:
If you find anything incorrect or in need of improvement in this book, you are requested to inform the author. He will try his best to action the recommendations inshaAllah. The author can be contacted at:

admin@australianislamiclibrary.org

You are also requested to remember the author’s parents, his family, and himself in your Duas.

A note to any publishers interested in publishing this book:

We do not hold any copyrights for the book. You are given full permission to print this book for free distribution or sale at a reasonable price. The author does not require any share in the income from the sale. You are also given the right to improve the contents and update as required. However, if any changes are made to the original content, the book should not be attributed to the author.

Dua:

In the end, I make a dua to Allah swt to accept this humble effort and forgive any mistakes in this work. May Allah swt make this book a source of forgiveness of the very many sins of the author and become a source of sadaqa jariyyah for him and his family who enabled him to make this effort. Ameen

Muhammad Nabeel Musharraf - Ramadan 1442 / May 2021
1. Meaning of I’tikaf

1.1 Linguistic definition:

Linguistically the word I’tikaf means ‘to stay’ as interpreted from the ayah below:

It is made lawful for you to approach your wives during the night of the fast; they are an apparel for you and you for them. Allah knows that you were committing dishonesty to your souls. So, He has relented towards you and pardoned you. Now, you may approach your wives and seek what Allah has written for you. Eat and drink until the white thread of dawn appears to you distinct from the black thread of night, then complete your fast till nightfall.

Do not approach your wives while you are doing I’tikaf (retreat in the masjids in the last ten days of Ramadan) in the masajid. These are the limits set by Allah: do not ever violate them. Thus, Allah makes His revelations clear to mankind so that they may guard themselves against evil.

Surah Baqarah 2:187
The word *Aakif* (from the same root as *I’tikaf*) is used in the ayah below to convey the meaning of a ‘permanent resident’.

Indeed, those who persist in disbelief and hinder ‘others’ from the Way of Allah and from the Sacred Masjid — which We have appointed for all people, residents and visitors alike—along with whoever intends to deviate by doing wrong in it, We will cause them to taste a painful punishment.

**Surah Al-Hajj 22:25**

The word also means to prevent something and to not let it happen:

They are the ones who disbelieved and obstructed you from the Masjid-al-Haram (Sacred Masjid - Kaaba) and *prevented* your offerings from reaching their destination. Had there not been believing men and believing women in the city of Makkah, whom you did not know, and their possibility of being trampled under your feet and thus incurred unwitting guilt on their account.

Allah would have allowed you to fight, but He held back your hands, so that He may admit to His mercy whom He will. Had the believers stood apart from them, We would certainly have punished the disbelievers among them with a painful punishment.

**Surah Fath 48:25**
Another meaning of this word is to devote one’s self or stay firm upon something as interpreted from the following ayah:

Surah Taha 20:97

The meaning of devotion or being strongly attached to something can also be interpreted from the ayah below:

Surah Anbia 21:52

1.2 Shara’i definition:

As far as the shara’i definition of the word I’tikaf is concerned, the scholars define it as:

Confining oneself to the masjid in the obedience and worship of Allah swt

The brief definition above can be expanded as follows:
I’tikaf refers to confining oneself to the masjid for the worship of Allah swt and to attain his pleasure while refraining from certain worldly matters and having an intention of attaining the reward by following the Sunnah of I’tikaf.

I’tikaf is a proven Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ.

1.3 Difference between I’tikaf and Jiwar:

Another word mentioned in ahadith that carries the same connotation as above is ‘Jiwar’. According to some scholars, it is a synonym as indicated from the narration below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.</th>
<th>Ibn Juraij⁶ said: Amr Ibn Dinar⁷ said that Al-Jiwar and I’tikaf are the same thing.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

عِبَد الرَّزَاق عَنِ بْنِ جَرِيِّجَ قَالَ وَقَالَ عُمَّارُ بْنُ دِينَارِ الْجِوَارُ وَالْعَتَّكَافُ وَاحِد

بن دينار الجووار والاعتكاف واحد

Mussanaf Abdul Razzaq 8004 - Saheeh

⁶ Abd al-Malik ibn Abd al-Aziz ibn Jurayj was an eighth-century faqeeh, exegete and hadith transmitter from the Taba' at-Tabi'een. Ibn Jurayj was born in Mecca in 70 AH/699 CE. His father Abd al-Aziz was reportedly a faqih, while his grandfather Jurayj was of Byzantine origin. At the age of 15, he was accepted to the study circle of Meccan jurist Ata ibn Abi Rabah after previously being rejected for lacking knowledge on Quran recitation and Islamic inheritance laws. The expected standards from the students at that time used to be very high to ensure that it is the top individuals who hold the knowledge of the Deen and become its transmitters. After remaining with Ata for around 18 years, he left to study under Amr ibn Dinar. During this period, he also attended the lectures of Mujahid ibn Jabr, Ibn Abi Mulayka and Nafi, the mawla of Abdullah ibn Umar. He eventually took on students of his own, most notably the historian Al-Waqidi and jurist Sufyan ibn 'Uaynah. Hadith transmitted by Ibn Jurayj are present in all six of the canonical Sunni hadith collections. During his stay in Yemen, Ibn Jurayj's lectures were attended by 'Abd al-Razzaq al-San'ani (the author of Musannaf Abdul Razzaq) who included 5,000 of the traditions taught in his Musannaf.

From the above, we understand that the chains in Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah which mention Ibn Juraij narrating from Atta or Amr ibn Dinar or Mujahid or Nafi are authentic as all these are connected to each other in a connected manner (may Allah be pleased with them all).

⁷ Amr ibn Dinar R.A. was a senior Tabi’i from Makkah who studied under a lot of companions including Abdullah ibn Abbas, Jabir ibn Abdallah, Abdullah ibn Umar, Anas ibn Malik, Abdullah ibn Jafar ibn Abi Talib, Abdullah ibn Zubair, Abu Saeed Khudi, Al-Barra ibn Aazib, Abdullah ibn Amr and many others. His students include Ibn Juraij, Sufyan Ath-Thauri, Jafar Sadiq, Shuba ibn Hajjaj, Sufyan Ath-Thauri and many other great early scholars.
On the other hand, some scholars consider them to be different. Consider the opinion below from Atta R.A.

2. Ibn Juraij mentions that he asked Atta about his opinion regarding I’tikaf and Jiwar and whether they are the same or different. He said: No, they are different. The houses of the Prophet were next to the masjid. When he used to do I’tikaf for Ramadan, he used to come out of his houses into the masjid and used to do the I’tikaf there.

(Ibn Juraij said) I asked him, what if someone says that ‘upon me is the I’tikaf for a few days’, then would it be obligatory for him to come to Masjid? He said: Yes, if he says that ‘upon me is the Jiwar for a few days’ then he can either stay at the door of his house or he can come in

---

Ata ibn Abi Rabah (عطاء بن أبي رباح) was a prominent early Muslim jurist and hadith transmitter who served as the mufti of Makkah in the seventh and eighth centuries. He was a tabi’i who, while in Mecca, met with and transmitted hadith from several companions of Prophet Muhammad , including Ibn Abbas, Abu Hurairah and Jabir ibn Abdullah. His most prominent students were Ibn Jurayj and Qays ibn Sa’d. It is to be noted that there was another senior Tabi’i with the same name Atta; however, he was from Madinah and his full name was Atta ibn Yasar. When the chains just mention the first name (i.e. Atta), the books of Ilm ur Rijal (i.e. knowledge of narrators of hadith) are to be consulted in order to see there students and teachers, in order to distinguish between these two.
In this book, we have used the words I’tikaf and Jiwar interchangeably.

1.4 I’tikaf in earlier generations:

Allah swt says in the Quran:

And (remember) when We made the House (the Ka’abah at Makkah) a place of resort for mankind and a place of safety. And take you (people) the Maqam (place) of Ibrahim (or the stone on which Ibrahim as a place).

And We commanded Ibrahim (Abraham) and Isma`il (Ishmael) that they should purify My House (the Ka`bah at Makkah) for those who are circumambulating it, or staying (I’tikaf), or bowing or prostrating themselves (there, in prayer).

Do not approach your wives while you are doing I’tikaf ([retreat in the masjids](#) in the last ten days of Ramadan) in the masjid. These are the limits set by Allah: do not ever violate them.

Thus, Allah makes His revelations clear to mankind so that they may guard themselves against evil.

Surah Baqarah 2:125

From the above, we come to know that I’tikaf was an act of devotion practiced by Muslims in those times too. However, as time progressed, certain practices of shirk made their way in this act of worship. The people
of Makkah put certain idols in the Kaaba and started doing I’tikaf in front of them⁹.

They also developed certain superstitions because of which they used to do I’tikaf around some trees considering them to be blessed as explained in the narration below.

| 3. | Abu Waqid Al-Laithi¹⁰ narrated: We (i.e. some companions who had recently accepted Islam, as mentioned in a narration) went out with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ for Hunayn when we passed by a tree.

We said to the Prophet ﷺ: O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, designate for us a Dhat Al-Anwat (it was the name of that large green tree that they passed by) as the non-believers have it (and they believe that it is a source of blessings for them) and they hang their weapons on it and does I’tikaf around it.

---

⁹ Rijal ul Quran 3/120

¹⁰ Abu Waqid R.A. was one of the companions of the Prophet ﷺ who took part in various ghazwat. According to Imam Bukhari and Imam Hakim, he participated in the battle of Badr. He witnessed the conquest of Makkah and resided there afterwards. He is considered to be among the second tier in the Fuqaha As-Sahaba. His real name was Harith Ibn Auf (though there are some other names being reported too). The tabi’is who narrated from him include Atta Ibn Yasar, Saeed Ibn Musayyab, Urwa Ibn Zubair, Obaidullah Ibn Utbah, Busr Ibn Saeed, Abu Marrah, and others.
The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: Allahu Akbar! It is the same (demand) as what the people of Musa A.S. said: ‘Make for us a god as they have their gods’. You shall follow the way of those who were before you!

Musnad Ahmed 20895 – Saheeh

(A similar message can also be seen in Musnad Ahmed 20892, 20896; Jami Tirmidhi 2180, and so on).

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ eliminated the practices of shirk and restored the purity of I’tikaf. The I’tikaf cannot be done for anyone other than Allah swt. It has to be done in the houses of Allah swt to attain His pleasure alone.

In this chapter, we have discussed the linguistic and shara‘i definitions of I’tikaf and Jiwar. In the next chapter, we will ponder upon the purpose of I’tikaf.
2. Purpose of I’tikaf

2.1 A time for the purification of soul:

If we see around, we see some very different approaches to spirituality being practiced in the world. Some completely abandon the world and move away from society to live a life of seclusion and minimalism. On the other hand, we see some people who have such indulgence in worldly pleasures that they completely abandon the idea of the purification of soul. Islam, the Deen of the middle path, does not want its adherents to follow any form of extremity. It, therefore, wants the Muslims to not only remain a part of the society but also to play an active role in its betterment. At the same time, it provides numerous opportunities to its followers to make a focused effort to nourish their souls. I’tikaf is one of such opportunities in the overall package of spiritual growth. During this focussed time for healing our hearts and souls, we temporarily move away from the day-to-day pursuits and forget everything else but our Creator. It is a time to mend our hearts and to renew our relationship with our Lord. This is temporary and partial seclusion that is provided to us to make a concentrated effort to repair our inner self through attachment with the Quran. It enables us to undergo various spiritual experiences in an angelic atmosphere of the blessed month of Ramadan when the doors of Jannah are open, and the doors of hellfire are closed. It is the season to sow the seeds of love in the hearts through remembrance and Dhikr.

2.2 An extension to the concept of fasting

The scholars consider I’tikaf to be an extension of the concept of fasting. In fasting, we prevent ourselves from certain halal things such as eating, drinking, and having intimacy with the spouses during the day; however, during the night these aspects become permissible for us. In I’tikaf, we
give ourselves opportunities to practice self-restraint during the nights as well and train ourselves to be able to control our nafs outside of Ramadan too. We reiterate to ourselves about The One worthy of our utmost and undivided devotion.

It is as if we go to His door, put ourselves in front of it and say that we will not go anywhere unless we attain Your love and forgiveness. This is what is granted as a result at the end of the month of devotion and love if we observe it with Imaan and Muhasabah\(^\text{11}\) (self-accountability) of our nafs.

2.3 A time for reflection:

The objective of I’tikaf is to respond to this call:

\[
\begin{array}{|c|}
\hline
فَفِّرُّوٓا إِلَّا إِلَّا للَّّلّّٰ
\hline
\end{array}
\]

And so, flee unto God [from all that is false and evil]!

Surah Zariat 50:51

Our aim in I’tikaf is to run towards Allah and rush towards Him after cutting away from everything else. Imam Ibn Rajab Hanbali\(^\text{12}\) R.A. explains:

\[\text{11} \text{ Muhasabah or muhasabat al-nafs} \text{ (محاسبة النفس) is one’s observation of his actions and inspection of his good and bad actions, behaviours, choices, thoughts and feelings. Imam Al-Ghazali writes: O seeker, you will never be able to establish the commands of Allah Almighty unless you are mindful of your heart, your limbs, your every moment, and your every breath. (Bidayat al-Hidayah 1/28)}\]

\[\text{12} \text{ Imam Ibn Rajab was born in Baghdad in 1335AD (736AH). Some of the scholars he studied under were Ibn an-Naqeeb, as-Subki, al-Iraqi, and Muhammad Ibn Ismail al-Khabbaz. He also studied with Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah up to Ibn al-Qayyim’s death. Ibn Rajab’s commentary on the forty hadith of Imam Nawawi (Jami’ al-Ulum wa al-Hikam) is one of the largest and is generally considered the best commentary available. Near the end of his life, Imam Ibn Rajab began composing a commentary on Saheeh Bukhari, but unfortunately only reached till the chapter on the funeral prayers before he died. He had named his work Fath al-Bari and what he did write has been published by Dar Ibn al-Jawzi in seven volumes. This amounts to less than a sixth of Saheeh Bukhari. Twenty years after Ibn Rajab’s death, Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani began his commentary on Saheeh Bukhari and gave his own work the same title in honour of Ibn Rajab. Imam Ibn Rajab was considered to be a master of the sciences of hadith. His numerous books cover a wide span of Islamic sciences.}\]
4. The reality of I’tikaf is that one should cut off its relationship with the created beings for the devoted Khidmah (service) of the Creator. 

| فحقيق العتكاف قطع العلاقة عن الخلق للاتصال بخدمة الخالق |

Lataif Al-Ma’arif13 P. 255

All of us get so busy with day-to-day activities that we lose sight of our real mission and our role as the khalifa of Allah swt on earth. We forget that we have to make an effort on our soul too. We forget that our success in the hereafter is dependent on the purity of this very soul. That is why He swt calls us in His court five times a day to let us take a break from whatever trivial things we are busy with so that we can disconnect from worldly pursuits and reconnect with our real task and goal.

The next level of that disconnection from the deviations of the world is what is gifted to us in the form of I’tikaf. After spending 345 days for other chores and matters of the world, the Abd comes back to his Lord for 10 days with nothing else on his mind but Him. The objective of I’tikaf is to cut off the love for the Created beings and devote oneself to the Creator and develop an association and love for Him. If attained, this love would then become a guiding light for this life and the next.

I’tikaf not only provides us an opportunity to reflect and ponder but also infuses in us a spirit of giving up our desires. It gives us the courage and capability to control our raging nafs. For the ten days and nights, we prevent ourselves from not only the haram but also many halal things so that we can ensure that we can govern and control our desires, rather than the other way around. We should therefore utilize this opportunity in dhikr and fikr (remembrance and reflection) to the best of our ability.

---

13 Lataif Al-Ma’arif is a book explaining virtues of Islamic months and the acts of worship that one should aim to do in them.
2.4 An opportunity to gain forgiveness

Our aim from the I’tikaf should be to come out of it with a certificate of forgiveness from our Rabb. This aim should never be out of our sight.

5. Uthman Ibn Atta narrated from his father that he said: Indeed, the example of a *mutakif* is like a person in Ihram who gives his life in the hands of Ar-Rahman (or throws himself in front of Ar-Rahman) and says that I will not go away from here unless You give me Your mercy.

6. Hisham Ibn Urwah

(This message can also be seen in Al-Kamil Li Hafidh Ibn Ady, 7/69)

2.5 A time to excel in worship and goodness:

In the hadith below, Ayesha R.A. has mentioned the Sunnah of the I’tikaf of the Prophetﷺ along with his saying about the search for *Laylatul Qadr*, the night of decree and power. This indicates the relation between the two. From this, we can understand that one of the purposes of I’tikaf is to search for and benefit from the blessed night of *Al-Qadr*.

---

14 Uthman Ibn Atta died in 155AH. He is classified as Daif by Imam Dar Al-Qutni and others.

15 Hisham ibn ʿUrwah R.A. was a prominent Tabiʿi and a well-known narrator of hadith. He was the son of Urwah ibn al-Zubayr, and the grandson of Zubayr ibn al-Awwam and Asma bint Abu Bakr R.A. (may Allah be pleased with them). He was born in the year 61 AH and died in the year 146 AH. He was brought up in the company of companions of the Prophet ﷺ. Ibn Umar R.A. is reported to have made
narrated from his father that `Ayesha R.A. said: Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) used to practice I’tikaf in the last ten nights of Ramadan and used to say, "Look for the Night of Qadr in the last ten nights of the month of Ramadan."

Further details about Laylatul Qadr can be found in chapter 11.

In this chapter, we have covered some of the objectives and inner dimensions of I’tikaf. In the next chapter, we will ponder upon some of its virtues.

---

dua for him and rubbed his head with love. In Madinah, his pupils included many great scholars, including Imam Malik ibn Anas, Imam Sufyan Ath-Thauri and others. The mohaditheen considered him to be a Hujjah (proof – i.e. what came from him was considered as highly reliable).
3. The virtue of I’tikaf:

I’tikaf is a regular Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ and previous generations. This reason in itself is enough for us to do I’tikaf that our beloved did so. Anyone who has the capability to do so should strive to attain blessings for himself through this beautiful Sunnah of beloved master ﷺ.

Ibn Sa’id ibn Muslim ibn Ubaydullah ibn Shihab al-Zuhri (محمد بن مسلم بن عبد الله بن شهاب الزهرى), also referred to as Ibn Shihab or al-Zuhri, was a tabi’i (born 58 AH) who was known as a top jurist and traditionist. Raised in Madinah, he studied hadith and maghazi under Madni jurists and traditionists. He transmitted several thousand ahadith that are present in major hadith collections. He studied under the great scholars such as Said ibn al-Musayyib, Urwah ibn Zubayr, Ubayd-Allah ibn Abd-Allah and Abu Salamah, the son of ‘Abd al-Rahman ibn ‘Awf. He referred to them as four "oceans of knowledge". Alongside a large number of casual attendees of his lectures, Imam Zuhri taught at least two dozen regular students. These include: Ibn Ishaq (the famous biographer of the Prophet ﷺ), Imam Malik ibn Anas (the Madinan scholar and founder of the Maliki school), Imam Sufyan ibn ‘Umayyah, Uqail ibn Khalid, Ma'mar ibn Rashid, Yunus ibn Yazid al-Aili, Muhammad ibn al-Walid al-Zubaidi, and Shu'aib ibn Dinar.
3.1 Opportunity to spend time at the most beloved place:

*Masajid* are the most beloved places to Allah swt on this earth. We should try to maximize taking benefit from these blessed places for nothing else but to seek the pleasure of Allah swt.

What an excellent opportunity it is to be at a place that Allah swt loves the most in the month that is most blessed while you are engaged in following the Sunnah of the most beloved ﷺ.

Abu Huraira R.A. reported:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, peace, and blessings be upon him, said:

“The most beloved of places to Allah are the masjids, and the most hated of places to Allah are the markets.”

Saheeh Muslim 671

3.2 Closeness and friendship with Allah swt

I’tikaf is a voluntary act of worship. Voluntary acts of worship, in general, are highly praised in Islam as they result in the attainment of closeness to Allah swt as we learn from the hadith below.

Allah's Apostle said, "Allah said, 'I will declare war against him who shows hostility to a pious worshipper of Mine. And the most beloved things with which My slave comes nearer to Me, is what I have
enjoined upon him; and My slave keeps on coming closer to Me through performing Nawafil (praying or doing extra deeds besides what is obligatory) till I love him, so I become his sense of hearing with which he hears, and his sense of sight with which he sees, and his hand with which he grips, and his leg with which he walks; and if he asks Me, I will give him, and if he asks My protection (Refuge), I will protect him; (i.e. give him My Refuge) and I do not hesitate to do anything as I hesitate to take the soul of the believer, for he hates death, and I hate to disappoint him."

This is certainly the virtue a Mutakif would acquire.

### 3.3 Allah’s love for those who settle in the masajid:

One of the biggest benefits that you will get out of I’tikaf is that it will provide you with an opportunity to earn the love of Allah swt.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10.</th>
<th>Abu Huraira R.A. reported: The Prophet ﷺ, peace, and blessings be upon him, said:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;A Muslim man does not settle into the masjid for</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Saheeh Bukhari 6581**
prayer and remembrance, but that Allah is delighted for him, just as a family is delighted when their absent (or the lost one) returns to them.”

Sunan Ibn Majah 800 – Saheeh

3.4 Glad tidings for the one who makes Masjid his home

The hadith below explains the virtue of the one who frequents the masjid as if it is his home and he goes out of it only in case of need. A Mutakif17 does exactly that in the last ten days of Ramadan by confining himself to the masjid only in the love of Allah swt and not setting his foot out of the masjid at all except for human needs and in that too, he returns as soon as the need is met. Accordingly, the reward promised in the hadith below is also hoped for the Mutakif.

11. Salman wrote to Abu Darda18, O my brother, make masjid your home, for I have heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying: Masjid is the house of every person of Taqwa.

Allah has given the assurance of serenity, mercy, passing from the bridge, and

17 The person doing the I’tikaf is called Mutakif. Its plural is Mutafikeen.

18 Abu Darda R.A. was a Ansari companion of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ who converted to Islam after the Battle of Badr. He was declared the brother of Salman Al-Farisi R.A. He was a person of Fuqr and his teachings focussed on this aspect of the religion. In the later years, he served as the Governor of Syria during the reign of caliph Uthman. He died in Damascus before the assassination of the third Rashidun Caliph, Uthman R.A.
3.5 Preparedness for the mission of Iqamat Ad-Deen:

Also, when we analyze this Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ from a psychological point of view, we observe that I’tikaf is one of the forms of preparation that enable us to fulfill our responsibility of the Iqamat Ad-Deen. We have to prepare ourselves to contribute to the mission of the Prophet ﷺ.

He is the One Who has sent His Messenger with ‘true’ guidance and the religion of truth, making it prevail over all others, even to the dismay of the polytheists.

This mission is not easy. During the course of this mission, one has to pass through the valley of Taif. One has to witness Badr and Hunayn. One has to tie stones on his stomach. One has to patiently bear being ridiculed and made fun of. There would be times when one would be cut off from his family. There would be times when one will have to cycle between tiring days and sleepless nights.

I’tikaf is a message and a wake-up call for all of us to come out of our comfort zones and be ready to take up the prophetic mission that we have been entrusted with. It is a reminder for a call that we all are required to respond to in order to succeed in this world and the next. It is the responsibility upon us by fulfilling which we can show our love to our beloved ﷺ from whose blessed hands we yearn to drink water at the haudh of Al-Kawthar.
My heart yearns for him overflowing with longing for him

I do not need anything but a drink from his hands

Blessings be upon him, peace be upon him

3.6 Other benefits:

Some of the above-mentioned and other benefits and virtues of I’tikaf are summarized below:

- A time for personal reflection, self-accountability
- A devoted time for Dhikr and connecting with the Quran
- An opportunity for focused learning (the Quran, hadith, fiqh, and other essential knowledge)
- Opportunity to utilize Laylatul Qadr in worship
- Development of an attachment with the masjid
- Development of an attachment and brotherhood with the people of the masjid
- Opportunity to offer all prayers with Jama’ah and develop a habit to do so regularly
- Opportunity to avoid sins of eyes, limbs, and other parts of our physical being as we would be in the masjid and away from the sinful people and places
- Preparation to sacrifice one’s time and efforts for the Deen of Allah swt; and so on.

3.7 Some Daif ahadith on Fadhail of I’tikaf

Please note that the above authentic virtues and fadhail are enough for a
believer to strive in I’tikaf and attain the spiritual benefits from it. In addition to the above, however, there are some weak narrations too that point out the quantity of reward attained from I’tikaf. Consider the statement below from Imam Abu Dawud.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>12.</th>
<th>Abu Dawud said: I asked Imam Ahmed, “Are you aware of anything (i.e. any hadith) about the virtues of I’tikaf (specifically)?” He said: “No, except what is weak” (i.e. only the weak narrations).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>قال أبو داود : قلت لأحمد ( يعني الإمام أحمد بن حنبل ) : تعرف في فضل الاعتكاف شيئا ؟ قال : لا ، إلا شيئا ضعفا</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masail Abi Dawud (P. 96)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the above context, consider the narrations below.

### 3.7.1 Forgiveness of Sins:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>13.</th>
<th>For the one who did I’tikaf with Iman and self-accountability (and Muhasabah of his nafs), all his previous sins get forgiven.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>من اعتكف إيمانا واحتسابا غفر له ما تقدم من ذنبي</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daif ul Jami 5442 – Daif</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(This narration is found in the Shia hadith text Kanzul Ummal, no. 24007)

Though the above narration concerning I’tikaf is Daif, the same virtue, however, is authentically proven regarding Qiyam in Ramadan as well as Laylatul Qadr. A mutakif will certainly have an opportunity to do the Qiyam in the blessed nights and attain this virtue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>14.</th>
<th>Abu Darda R.A. mentioned in a Marfu tradition (i.e. the</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>روى أبو الدرداء مرفوعًا : من اعتكف</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
one whose chain is raised up to the Prophet ﷺ: Whoever did I’tikaf for one night, it is as if he did an Umrah.

Whoever did the I’tikaf for two nights, it is as he did two Umrahs.

Sharh Al-Umdah Li Ibn Taymiyyah 2/712 - Daif

3.7.2 Distancing from the hell-fire

According to the Daif narration below, the distance between the Mutakif and the hellfire is increased to such an extent that he can feel protected from it.

15. Atta narrated about Ibn Abbas R.A. that he was doing I’tikaf in the masjid of the Prophet ﷺ when a man came in; He greeted him (with salam) and sat down. Ibn Abbas said to him: O man, I see you being sad and stressed. He said: Yes, O son of the uncle of the Prophet ﷺ! I have a debt to pay to someone and by the honour of the blessed resident of this grave (ﷺ), I do not have means for it (i.e. to pay it off). Ibn Abbas asked him: Should I talk to him (i.e. the lender) about you? He said: Yes if you consider it...
appropriate. He (the narrator) said: Ibn Abbas R.A. got up and walked out of the masjid. A man said to him: Did you forget (O Ibn Abbas) what you were in? (i.e. the state of I’tikaf). He said: No, but I have heard from the blessed resident of this grave not too long ago, his eyes filled up with tears (as he said this), that if one walks to fulfil a need of his brother and acquires it, it is better than I’tikaf for ten years, and who does I’tikaf for one day for the pleasure of Allah swt, Allah swt puts between him and the hellfire three trenches whose span is more than the distance between the east and the west.

3.7.3 Reward equivalent to all acts of goodness:

The narration below explains the reward of virtues done during I’tikaf is multiplied manifolds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>16.</th>
<th>Saeed Ibn Jubayr(^{19}) reported</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>خدَّنَا عَبْدُ اللهِ بْنُ عَبْدِ الْكَرِيمِ، خدَّنَا</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{19}\)Saeed Ibn Jubayr was a senior Tabi’i from Kufa who was born during the caliphate of Ali R.A. and grew up with the thirst for knowledge. He narrated hadiths from Ibn Abbas, Ibn Al-Zubayr, Ibn Umar, Ibn Maqal, Udayy Ibn Hatim, Abu Mas’ uod al-Ansari, Abu Sa’ id al-Khudri, Abu Huraira, Abu Musa al-Ash’ari, al-Dahhak ibn Qays al-Fihri, Anas, `Amr Ibn Maymun, Abu `Abdulrahman al-Sulami and
from Ibn Abbas R.A. that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said concerning the person observing I’tikaf. “He is refraining from sin and he will be given a reward like that of one who does all kinds of good deeds.”

مََُمَّدُ بْنُ أُمَيَّةَ، حَدَّثَنَا عِيسَى بْنُ مُوسَى الْبُخَارِّيُّ، عَنْ عَبِّيدَةَ الْعَمِِّيِِّ، عَنْ فِرْقَدٍ السَّبَخِّيِِّ، عَنْ سَعِّيدِّ بْنِّ جُبَيٍْْ، عَنِّ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَِّّّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ لِّلْمُعْتَكِّفِّ " هُوَ يَعْكِفُ الذُّنُوبَ وَيُُْرَى لَهُ مِّنَ الَْْسَنَاتِّ كَعَامِّلِّ الَْْسَنَاتِّ كُلِِّهَا " .

Sunan Ibn Majah 1781 – Daif

(This message can also be seen in Shub ul Iman 3678; Mishkat al-Masabih 2108)

When in I’tikaf, one gets deprived of some of the good deeds that he might have otherwise done, e.g., going to visit the sick and doing certain tasks for them, going to funerals, and other acts of goodness. In the light of the above hadith, the scholars explain that if someone is missing any such acts of goodness that he regularly used to do, he would still be rewarded for such good deeds. In addition, being in the masjid and in the company of our mother `A’isha R.A. (may Allah swt be pleased with them all). It is said that he used to read the Quran to Ibn Abbas R.A. and used to learn the tafseer and fiqh from him. Ibn Abi Mughira said that when people of Kufa visit Ibn `Abbas they used to ask him for Fatwa, he used to say them: "Isn't Saeed Ibn Jubayr among you?" Saeed is held in the highest esteem by scholars of the Sunni as well as Shia tradition and was considered one of the leading jurists of the time. From him are recorded traditions by the renowned mohaditheen including Bukhari, Muslim, al-Tirmidhi, al-Nasa’i, Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah, Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal, and Imam Malik ibn Anas. Saeed narrates 147 traditions in Saheeh Bukhari and 78 in Saheeh Muslim. He was martyred in 95AH by the tyrant Hajjaj Ibn Yusuf. Before his martyrdom, he made a dua for the protection of the Muslims from Hajjaj:

اللهم لا تسلط على قتل أحد من بعدي

O Allah, Do not let his kill anyone after me.

It is reported that after that, Hajjaj died without being able to kill any other Muslims. One of the companions of Ibn Abbas R.A. said that the students of Ibn Abbas R.A. developed expertise in various fields. However, Saeed Ibn Jubayr was the one in whom the expertise of all those fields gathered.
the people of the masjid who are there just for the pleasure of Allah swt will leave a long-lasting impact on one’s heart if all the requirements of I’tikaf are completed in a befitting manner and for seeking only the pleasure of Allah swt.

3.7.4 **Reward of 2 hajjs and 2 umrah**s

The tradition below is classified as *Mawdoo* (fabricated) and does not constitute any sharia evidence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>17.</th>
<th>Abu Bakr Al-Qadhi and Abu Saeed Ibn Abi Amr said: Abu Abbas Muhammad Ibn Yaqoob reported to us, Muhammad Ibn Ishaq As-Saghani reported to us, Saeed Ibn Suleiman reported to us, Hayyaj Ibn Bistam reported to us, Anbasa Ibn Abdur Rahman reported to us, Muhammad Ibn Sulaym reported to us, from Ali Ibn Hussain from his father that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whoever did I’tikaf for ten days in Ramadan, it is as if he did two <em>hajj</em>s and two <em>umrah</em>s, i.e. the reward is as much as these pilgrimages. This is what Muhammad Ibn Sulaym said. He and Muhammad Ibn Zadan are Daif and rejected narrators. Imam Bukhari said: His</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This narration can be found in other Sunni (e.g. Shub ul Iman 3681; Majma Az-Zawaiid 4422) as well as Shia (e.g. Mustadrah Al-Wasail 7/559) texts. Imam Albani has classified it as *Mawdoo*.

### 3.7.5 The reward of a hajj every day:

The narration below equates every day in *I’tikaf* as equivalent to a hajj.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Saeed ibn Abdul Aziz said that he was informed about Al-Hasan Al-Basri(^{20}) that he said: For the <em>mutakif</em>, there is a reward of hajj for each day. The is the saying that is narrated from Al-Hasan and it is more beloved to me than the narration of Ibn Zadan(^{21}). Hassan did not say this except that it would have been communicated to him (i.e. this virtue would have been informed to him by a reliable narrator).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

\(^{20}\) Abu Saeed Ibn Abi Al-Hasan Yasaar al-Basri, often referred to as Imam Hasan al-Basri was a *tabi’i* that was born in Madinah in 642 AD. His mother, Khayra, is said to have been a maidservant of one of the Prophet Muhammad’s ﷺ wives, Umm Salama R.A. According to some biographers, he was nursed by Umm Salama R.A. too. In that manner, he had a very close association with the Prophet ﷺ. According to some reports, after his birth, his mother took him to the Umar Ibn Khattab R.A. who is related to have blessed him with the prayer: "O God! Please make him wise in faith and beloved to all people." He was a man of Zuhd and preached it through his impactful sermons during the Ummayad rule. He had a close association with several blessed companions of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

\(^{21}\) As mentioned previously, Ibn Zadan was a rejected narrator about whom the hadithiine said that his narrations are not written by them.
In his research of the above narration, Dr. Abdul Aliy Abdul Hameed Hamid comments about its chain of narrators that (i.e. its narrators are reliable). However, there is a disconnection in this narration due to which it is classified as Daif.
4. Some Rulings regarding I’tikaf

4.1 I’tikaf is Sunnah muakaddah:

The narration below shows that the Prophet ﷺ never missed I’tikaf except for one year. For the year when it was missed, he made up for the missed I’tikaf in the next year.

| 19. | It was narrated from Ubayy bin Ka’b R.A. that: The Prophet (ﷺ) used to spend the last ten days of Ramadan in I’tikaf. One year he was traveling, so the following year he spent twenty days in I’tikaf. |
| Sunan Ibn Majah 1770 – Saheeh |

(This message can also be seen in Sunan Abi Dawud 2463, 2466; Jami` at-Tirmidhi 803; Sunan Darimi 1817; Sunan Al-Kubra Li Bayhaqi 8564, 8565)

4.2 Is it Sunnah Ala Al-Kifayah?

It is also important to clarify here that some scholars have got an opinion that at least some community members must sit in I’tikaf. If they do so, others will not be considered liable for not sitting in I’tikaf (i.e., they consider I’'tikaf to be Sunnah Ala Al-Kifayah). This opinion can be seen in the books of fiqh of the Hanafi school of thought.
However, scholars from other schools do not agree with this. According to them, it is not a requirement from Shariah as no textual evidence is found from which such a ruling could be derived. Those who have the time and resources to seclude themselves for worship in Masajid for a period can go ahead and fulfill this Sunnah. However, if no one in the community can do it, this is acceptable too and there is no sin on the community as a whole or individuals.  

4.3 When would this Sunnah become obligatory?

The general ruling concerning I’tikaf is that it is a Sunnah and not a wajib\(^\text{23}\). It remains so, i.e. not being obligatory, unless it is in fulfillment of a vow (which in the Arabic language is known as Nadhar). If a person has made a vow to observe I’tikaf, then it is obligatory to fulfill it (just like the vows for any other good deeds). This principle is taken from the hadith below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Hadith</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>It was narrated from Muhammad bin Az-Zubair, from his father, from a man from the inhabitants of Al-Basrah, who said: &quot;I accompanied 'Imran bin Husain, who said: 'I heard the Messenger of Allah say: Vows are of two types: A vow that is made to do an act of obedience to Allah; that is for Allah and must be fulfilled, and a vow that is...&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{22}\) It is important to note that many scholars in the Indian sub-continent consider it a requirement that at least some people should do the I’tikaf in every neighbourhood. In their opinion, if no one is available to do I’tikaf in a neighbourhood, people from other neighbourhoods should be brought to do I’tikaf in their masjid (Reference: Fatawa Darul Uloom Deoband, 6/512).

\(^{23}\) Wajib is the ruling given for obligatory matters
made to do an act of disobedience to Allah; that is for Shaitan and should not be fulfilled, and its expiation is the expiation for an oath."

Yahya related to me from Malik that Humayd ibn Qays and Thawr ibn Zayd ad-Deeli both informed him that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, (and one of them gave more detail than the other) saw a man standing in the sun. The Messenger asked, "What's wrong with him?" The people said, "He has vowed not to speak or to seek shade from the sun or to sit and to fast." The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "Go and tell him to speak, seek shade, and sit, but let him complete his fast." Malik said, "I have not heard that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, ordered the man in question to do any kaffara. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and
grant him peace, only ordered him to complete that in which there was obedience to Allah and to abandon that in which there was disobedience to Allah."

Muwatta Imam Malik Book 22, Hadith 1018

Numerous other traditions also indicate the obligation of fulfilling a vow for an act of obedience to Allah swt. If one does not fulfill it in his life, it has to be fulfilled by others on his behalf as we learn from the following hadith and many others on the topic.

22. Saeed Ibn Jubair reported that Ibn 'Abbas R.A. said: If a man falls ill during Ramadan and he dies, while he could not keep the fast, food will be provided (for the poor men) on his behalf (as *fidya*); there is no atonement (for his fasts) due from him (in the form of fasts). If there is some vow which he could not fulfil, his heirs must atone on his behalf.

Sunan Abi Dawud 2401 – Saheeh

Similarly, if a vow was made to do I’tikaf, it has to be fulfilled too. Imam Ibn al-Mundhir said in his book al-Ijmaa’(the book of explaining the consensus of scholars on various matters):

23. “They are unanimously
agreed that I’tikaf is Sunnah and is not obligatory upon people unless a person has committed himself to it by way of a vow, in which case it is obligatory for him”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Al-Ijma (P. 53)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

4.4 **Types of I’tikaf**

From the above and other pieces of evidence, we come to know of three types of I’tikaf (as mentioned in several books of fiqh).

**Obligatory I’tikaf:**

It is the one that a person makes obligatory for himself by making a vow.

Its conditions are what one defines for himself in his vow (i.e., one can make a condition that he would fast with the I’tikaf or would not do so, or that he would go out of masjid for certain reasons; and so on).

**Sunnah Muakkada I’tikaf:**

It was regular Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ. This type of I’tikaf is done in Ramadan (or outside of it in case it was missed due to any reason) and goes on for ten or more days (further details regarding durations can be seen in chapter 7).

There have been very specific guidelines and conditions that are required to be met. One of the main guidelines and conditions is that one should not leave the masjid unless there is a valid reason. If one goes out, one should aim to come back in the minimum possible time.

**Mustahab / Nafil I’tikaf:**

This is the I’tikaf of any duration that can be done any time of the year. One of the examples of this type of I’tikaf is the one that one intends for when entering the masjid etc. Further details can be seen in the relevant sections of chapter 7.
4.5 Conditions for acceptance of I’tikaf:

The scholars explain the following conditions for the acceptance of an I’tikaf:

a) Islam, sanity, and maturity.
b) State of purity, free from major ritual impurities of janabah, menses, and postpartum bleeding.
c) Intention to conduct I’tikaf
d) Fasting - according to some jurists (a detailed discussion on this topic has been included in section 4.6)
e) A married woman requires mutual agreement with her husband.
f) Staying confined in the masjid [or place of prayer] for the duration of I’tikaf except for valid reasons for which one would need to go out of the masjid

4.6 Is fasting a condition for I’tikaf

There is a difference of opinion among the scholars regarding whether fasting is a condition for I’tikaf or not.

4.6.1 The opinion that fasting is a requirement for I’tikaf:

Consider the tradition below:

| 24. | Yahya R.A. related to me from Imam Malik that he had heard that al-Qasim ibn Muhammad and Nafi, the mawla of Abdullah ibn Umar R.A. said: |
| "You cannot do I’tikaf unless you are fasting, because of what Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, says in His Book, 'And eat and drink until the white thread becomes clear |

خَدْتُ نِيْكَبي، عَنْ مَالِكٍ، أَنَّهُ بَلَغَهُ أَنَّ الْقَاسِمَ بْنَ مُحَمَّدٍ، وَنَافِعًا، مَوْلََ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عُمَرَ قَالَاَ لَّا اعْتَكَفُ إِلَّا يَصِيَامُ يَقُولُ اللَّهُ ﴿وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّى يَتَّبَعَنَّ لَكُمُ الْحَيْثَّ الأَبْصَرُ مِنَ الْحَيْثَ الأَبْصَرِ ﴾ وَلَّا تَبِشَّرُونَ وَلَا عَاصِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ ﴿وَأَنْتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ إِلَى
to you from the black thread of dawn, then complete the fast until night-time, and do not have intercourse with them while you are doing I’titkaf in masjids,' (Sura 2 ayat 187). Allah only mentions I’tikaf together with fasting." Malik said, "That is what we go by here."

Muwatta Imam Malik Book 19, Hadith 696

The ayah mention in the tradition above was revealed in relation to Ramadan.

The opinion of Ayesha R.A. that is reported in several hadith also supports the fatwa of Imam Malik.

From Ayesha R.A., Ummul Momineen: The Sunnah for one who is observing I’titkaf (in a masjid) is not to visit a patient, or to attend a funeral, or to touch or embrace one's wife, or go out for anything but necessary purposes. There is no I’tikaf without fasting, and there is no I’tikaf except in a congregational masjid.

الصِِّيَامَ. قَالَ مَالِّ كَر وَعَلَى ذَلِّكَ الَْمْرُ عِّنْدَنَا أَنَّهُ لََ اعْتِكَافٌ إِّلََّ بِصِّيَامٍ.

عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَّنِ، يَعْنِی ابْنُ إِسْحَاقَ عَنْ الزُّهْرِّيِِّ، عَنْ عُرْوَةَ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، أَنَََّّا قَالَتِّ

السُّنَّةُ عَلَى الْمُعْتَكِّفِّ أَنْ لََ يَعْقُبَ مُرَيَّضًا وَلَا يَشْهَدَ جَنازةً وَلَا يَمْسَ امْرَأَةً وَلَا يَيْبَشَرْهَا وَلَا يَتَّجِرَ لِحَاجَةٍ إِلَّا لِّمَا لََ بُدَّ مِّنْهُ وَلََ اعْتِكَافَ إِّلََّ بِصَوْمٍ وَلََ اعْتِكَافَ إِّلََّ فيِّ مَسْجِّدٍ جَامِّعٍ.

قَالَ أَبُو دَاوُدَ غَيُْْ عَبْدِّ الرَّحْمَّنِ بْنِّ إِسْحَاقَ لََ يَقُولُ فِّ

25. The opinion of Ayesha R.A. that is reported in several hadith also supports the fatwa of Imam Malik.
Some versions of the narration above contain weak narrators in them. However, the scholars consider the overall status of the narration to be Hasan Mawqoof. Some scholars consider the above to be the saying of Ayesha R.A. and some (e.g. Imam Bayhaqi, as mentioned in Shub ul Iman 3676) even attribute it to Urwah R.A.

It can be said that the above ahadith are related to the Sunnah I’tikaf in Ramadan. However, consider the hadith below in which there is a mention of the command of the Prophet ﷺ to Umar R.A. to do I’tikaf outside of Ramadan along with fasting. However, it is to be noted that the version of the hadith below is Daif. The authentic versions (as presented later in the book) do not mention the requirement to fast along with the I’tikaf.

**26. Umar Ibn Khattab R.A. mentions:** I said to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ at Ji’rana: O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, there is an I’tikaf due upon me (which I made obligatory through a vow). He ﷺ said: Go and observe the I’tikaf and also keep fast (with it).
In the very next narration in Sunan Al-Kubra (no. 8578), Imam Bayhaqi explains that Ibn Badeel (one of the narrators in the above version) was a weak narrator. The students of Amr ibn Dinar R.A. (from whom Ibn Badeel has mentioned that he took the hadith) have not mentioned such a hadith. The students of Amr include great scholars like Ibn Juraij, Ibn Uyaiynah, Hammad Ibn Salamah, Hammad Ibn Zayd, and others; no such report is proven from them. This version of the hadith is accordingly considered as Munkar (rejected).

When we look into other books of hadith to find guidance on this matter, we find that Sunan Al-Kubra Li Bayhaqi contains several narrations that mention Ibn Umar and Ibn Abbas used to consider it a requirement for the *mutakif* to fast (narration no. 8582, 8583, 8584, and 8585).

However, in the next section, we have presented a different opinion narrated from Ibn Abbas R.A. The reconciliation between these views is presented in the section that follows it.

**4.6.2 The opinion that fasting is not a requirement for I’tikaf:**

The narration below from Ibn Abbas R.A. has a chain that goes up to the Prophet ﷺ, however, there is a *majhool* (unknown) narrator in the chain and it is accordingly considered Daif.

In the very next narration in Sunan Al-Kubra Li Bayhaqi 8577 – Daif.
| 27. | From Ibn Abbas R.A.: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: It is not mandatory for the *mutakif* to fast unless he makes it obligatory upon himself. The chain of narrators for this hadith is strong [as per the assessment of Imam Hakim]. |

| 28. | From Ibn Abbas R.A.: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: It is not obligatory upon the *Mutakif* to fast except if he made it obligatory upon himself (e.g. through a vow). |
Though the above narrations attributed to the Prophet ﷺ are Daif, Imam Dar Al-Qutni, Imam Bayhaqi, and Imam Hakim consider it to be authentically attributed to Ibn Abbas R.A. as his saying. Consider the following part of the narration from Sunan Dar Al-Qutni which is considered to be Saheeh.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Ibn Abbas R.A. did not consider it obligatory upon the <em>Mutakif</em> to fast except if he made it obligatory upon himself (e.g. through a vow).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sunan Dar Al Qutni 2064 – Saheeh Mawqoof

(This message can also be seen in Sunan Al-Kubra 8074, Sunan As-Sughra 1150; Mushkil Al-Athar 3517; and others)

This same was the opinion of Atta R.A. too:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>Tawus said: Ibn Abbas R.A. did not consider it obligatory upon the <em>Mutakif</em> to fast except if he made it obligatory upon himself (e.g. through a vow). Atta said: That is also my opinion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sunan Al-Kubra Li Bayhaqi 8587 – Saheeh

The above is also mentioned in a long discussion on the topic in Mushkil Al-Athar of Imam Tahawi (no. 3517) in which the Imam mentions a
conversation between Abu Suhail Ibn Malik, Ibn Shihab, and Umar Ibn Abdul Aziz. Umar R.A. was on a three-day I’tikaf in masjid Al-Haram. Abu Suhail said to him that there is no I’tikaf without fasting. Umar asked him a series of questions. He asked if it was reported authentically from the Prophet, or Abu Bakr R.A., or Umar R.A., or Uthman R.A. On all of these questions, the reply of Abu Suhail was, ‘no’. He then went off and came across Tawus and Atta. As mentioned above, they both said that they also do not consider fasting to be a mandatory requirement for I’tikaf (and hence they were also aligned with the opinion of Umar Ibn Abdul Aziz R.A. on this matter which he mentioned while doing his voluntary I’tikaf).

Also, consider the narration below:

| 31. | Ibn Mundhir said: It is reported from Ali and Ibn Masood that they said: If the mutakif wants, he can fast, if he does not, he has the option to do so. |
| Sunan As-Shagheer Li Bahaqi 1448 |

In Al-Muhalla (3/414), Ibn Hazm R.A. has mentioned a similar tradition as above and also presented its isnad. The above quotation can also be found in several other compilations. The following opinions are also important to be noted in this regard:

| 32. | Ibn Daqeeq said: Fasting is not a condition (for I’tikaf). |

24 He was the uncle of Imam Malik Ibn Anas. Imam Malik was also one of his students.
Ibn Abdul Birr said: Imam Shafi, Imam Ahmed, Dawood Ibn Ali, and Ibn Ulayyah said: The I’tikaf is valid even without fasting. This is the saying of Al-Hasan Al-Basri, Saeed Ibn Musayyab, Atta Ibn Rabah and Umar Ibn Abdul Aziz.

Shaykh Ibn Baaz also held the view the fasting is not a condition for I’tikaf; however, he considered it to be Mustahabb. A large number of other scholars also hold this opinion as we learn from Al-Umm Li Imam Shafi’i (2/118), Al-Hawi Lil-Kabeer Li Al-Mawardi (3/486), Al-Mughni Li Ibn Qudamah (3/188), Al-Muhalla (5/186), Majmu Al-Fatawa Li Ibn Baaz (15/442), and so on.

4.6.3 Reconciliation between the two opinions:

Several opinions have also been mentioned in Musannaf Abdul Razzaq (narration no. 8033 to 8041) and Musannaf Ibn Abi Shayba (narration no. 9711 to 9723) concerning this topic. Some of these opinions are in the favour of the ruling that ‘there is no I’tikaf without fasting’, whereas others mention that fasting is only obligatory if one makes it obligatory upon himself. There have also been reports of different opinions of companions on this issue, for example, the two reported opinions of Ibn Abbas R.A. in this regard (as we have mentioned previously). Let us now try to understand the reason for these different opinions and how to reconcile between them.

We have already learned that there are different types of I’tikaf. The Sunnah I’tikaf is in Ramadan and it has certain associated conditions (as explained in section 12). However, there is also another form of I’tikaf which is the Mustahab I’tikaf and there is no minimum or maximum time
limits defined for that in the texts. The conditions applicable for that are, accordingly, not the same as those applied for the Sunnah I’tikaf. One of the ways how the above opinions can be interpreted is that for the Sunnah I’tikaf in Ramadan, fasting is a condition. If one is in such a condition that he or she cannot fast in Ramadan (e.g., in the menstrual cycle), one cannot do I’tikaf. That is why numerous traditions mention that if a woman gets into her menstrual cycle, she should leave her I’tikaf and complete it later; there is no I’tikaf in that condition. As far as the I’tikaf outside of Ramadan is considered, the following opinion of Imam Shafi’i explains the matter in a very conclusive manner:

| 34. | Imam Shafi’i did not consider fasting to be a condition for I’tikaf but he considered it Mustahab. He said: “It is better if one is fasting (during I’tikaf) however it is not a condition for its acceptance.” According to the majority of scholars, the Prophet ﷺ never performed I’tikaf in Ramadan except when fasting. They said: (However,) he performed I’tikaf in Shawal (as we learn from the narrations on that matter that explain about several tents being pitched for I’tikaf) in the first 10 days. From these first 10 days is also the day of Eid which is not a day for fasting. |
In addition, Imam Bayhaqi has also mentioned the hadith of Umar R.A. (which mentions that Umar R.A. did I’tikaf to fulfill his vow outside of Ramadan) in the chapter ‘Chapter: Those who opined that there is I’tikaf without the fast’. It is because he considered this narration to be a piece of evidence for the opinion that fasting is not a condition for I’tikaf; Umar R.A. did I’tikaf for one night only and there is no fasting during the night. Imam Ibn Hajr has explained this matter in Fathul Bari and said that Umar R.A. did not add anything on top of his vow and did I’tikaf for a night (and hence it is understood that his voluntary fasting was not accompanied by fasting).

Another interesting manner in which the two opinions can be reconciled is the opinion of Atta R.A. in which he is reported to have said the following:

| 35. | From Atta R.A., he said: Whoever from the people of Makkah does I’tikaf in this masjid, i.e. Masjid Al-Haram, fasting is obligatory upon him. And if a person who is not a resident of Makkah does I’tikaf in here, fasting is not obligatory upon him except when he himself makes it so. This is what Ibn Umar and Ibn Abbas R.A. said. |

---

Akbhar Al-Makkah Li Fakihi 2/149 - Saheeh

Further details on this matter can be seen in section 7.5 which explains that the I’tikaf can also be done for short durations, e.g. when one enters the masjid for prayer and so on.

4.7 Can one define certain conditions for his I’tikaf when making his intention for it

There are clear guidelines regarding the I’tikaf that is Sunnah *muakadda* that one cannot go out of masjid without a valid reason. However, regarding the I’tikaf that one makes obligatory upon himself or the Mustahab I’tikaf that one does during Ramadan for shorter durations or outside of it, one can set conditions for himself as we understand from the traditions below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>36.</th>
<th>Qatadah(^26) R.A. said: For the <em>mutakif</em> are the conditions that he set at the start of I’tikaf (in his intention).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Atta R.A. said: His (i.e. the <em>mutakif</em>) conditions (for I’tikaf) is what he set for himself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ali R.A. and Ibn Abbas R.A. said that for the <em>mujawir</em> (person doing jiwar / I’tikaf) is his intention (i.e. what he intended to do or not do in his I’tikaf) [Daif]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|  | Ibn Juraij narrated that he  

\(^26\) Qatada (d. 735 AH) was a blind scholar from Busrah who was known for his exceptional memory. He is considered a tabi’i as there are reported of him studying under Anas Ibn Malik R.A. He also studied under several other senior tabi’ieen including Hasan Al-Basri, Saeed Ibn Musayyab and others. Imam Ahmed is reported to have said: “He was the most strong in memory among the people of Busrah. I once recited to him the Saheefa of Jabir R.A. and he was able to memorize it straight away’.
said to Atta: Have you seen the man who made a vow for a Jiwar for himself with an intention that he would not fast during it (i.e. he vowed to do an I’tikaf outside of Ramadan and would not fast along with it) or that he would do buying and selling during it or he will go to the market, or he will go to visit the sick, or he would go with a funeral, or if it would rain, he would go to his house, or he would go to his house to relieve himself, or he would do the Jiwar in multiple segments (rather than in one go). He replied: According to whatever intention he has (he can act upon it).

Ibrahim Nakhai\(^27\) said: (If he intends to), the mutakif can make a condition in his intention that he will go for Jumuah, Janazah or in case of sickness and also that he will leave in case of a need. [Daif]

Atta said that if one makes an intention that he will only

\(^27\) Abu Imran Ibrahim ibn Yazid al-Nakhai was a Tabi’i/ He met many companions of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ including, Anas ibn Malik and Aisha bint Abu Bakr.
do I’tikaf in the daytime and will go to his home at night, he has got this right.

Abu Mijliz (who holds a different opinion in this regard) said: This is not I’tikaf

Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 8042 to 8048

Our understanding of the above traditions is that these opinions are regarding the Mustahab I’tikaf (i.e. voluntary I’tikaf) which can be performed during as well as outside Ramadan (as explained later in this book) and the I’tikaf that one makes mandatory upon himself through a vow.
5. I’tikaf of women:

5.1 Can women perform I’tikaf

Several narrations indicate that the women used to do I’tikaf too.

37. Ayesha R.A. (Allah be pleased with her) reported that the Messenger of Allah \( \text{may peace be upon him} \) used to observe I’tikaf in the last ten days of Ramadan till Allah called him back (to his heavenly home).

Then his wives observed I’tikaf after him.

Saheeh Muslim 1172c

Scholars mention certain conditions associated with the I’tikaf of women. This includes:

- The women should only do I’tikaf with the permission of their husbands, fathers, or guardians (depending on what applies to them). This is understood from the hadith in which the Ayesha R.A. asked permission from the Prophet \( \text{may peace be upon him} \) to put up her tent for I’tikaf. Imam Ibn Hajr Al-Asqalani said that if a husband permits her and takes it back, then it is allowed for him. However, some people of opinion (Ahl Ar-Raye) say that the husband would be sinful if he takes back the permission.

- The I’tikaf should be done at a place where there are arrangements for hijab and proper separation from males. In the case where there
is a possibility of fitnah, women should avoid doing the I’tikaf in the masjid.

5.2 Where should a woman do I’tikaf

This topic is covered in detail in chapter 8.

5.3 What should women in I’tikaf do in case of menses?

Imam Malik explains that the women used to do I’tikaf in masajid and when one of them would start to menstruate, she would leave the masjid and go home. She would return to masjid after purification.

| 38. | Malik said, that if a woman did I’tikaf and then menstruated during her I’tikaf, she went back to her house, and, when she was pure again she returned to the masjid, at whatever time it was that she became pure. She then continued her I’tikaf from where she left off. This was the same situation as with a woman who had to fast two consecutive months, and who menstruated and then became pure. She then continued the fast from where she had left off and did not delay doing so. |

Muwatta Imam Malik 1131
Also, note the hadith below:

| 39. | Ayesha (may Allah be pleased with her) said “One of the wives of the Apostle of Allah (ﷺ) observed I’tikaf along with him (in the masjid). She would see yellowness and redness. Sometimes we would place a washbasin (a tray) while she prayed.” |

Sunan Abi Dawud 2476 – Saheeh

(This message can also be seen in Saheeh al-Bukhari 2037; Muntaqal Akhbar 1769; and numerous other narrations)

The hadith above indicates that women in Istihadhah can also do I’tikaf (just like how they can offer the prayers and perform other acts of worship). There is a difference between Haidh and Istihadhah. Haidh is the monthly menstrual cycle whereas Istihadhah is the irregular duration for the discharge of fluids. Because of an illness or other factors, the menstrual periods can get extended beyond 10 days. Whatever is beyond 10 days, it is called Istihadhah. The term also includes a few days of discharges that happen outside of menstrual cycles.

The women were allowed to continue their I’tikaf in this condition with certain precautions as mentioned in the hadith above. On the other hand, the hadith mentioned earlier in this section explain that during the regular menstrual cycle, the women are required to go out of the masjid. There are many social, psychological, and hygienic factors behind this command.

I’tikaf - The Spiritual Retreat | 60
Other important considerations:

With regards to the women whose menstruation starts during the I’tikaf, the following points are important to note:

- She should not count the day on which the menses started (Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 8100).
- When the menses start, she should go back to her home (Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 8098).
- While she is in her home due to the menstrual cycle during the I’tikaf, her husband should not touch her or kiss her. Otherwise, it would nullify her I’tikaf (Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 8099, 8102, 8103).
- It is recommended that she should put a curtain around her when she is spending her days at home due to menses (Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 8101). According to various fatwa, she can go out of this place for fulfilling her basic needs such as relieving herself, or to bring food, and so on.
- When she gets purified, she should return back to the masjid (Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 8097, 8098, 8103).
- She will need to do Qadha (i.e. make up for what she missed) for the days of the I’tikaf that she missed due to menses (Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 8101).

5.4 I’tikaf for the recently divorced or widows

The guidance on this matter is available from the hadith below.

| 40. | Abu Zubair R.A. said that I asked Jabir R.A. about [the recently] divorced woman if she could do an I’tikaf or not. He said: No, and the same is the case for the one whose husband has died unless she completes her Iddah. | أَخْبَََ أَبُو نَصْرِّ بْنُ عَبْدِ الْعَزِّيْزِّ بْنِ قَتَادَةَ, ثَنا أَبُو الْعَبَّاسِّ مََُُمَّدُ بْنُ إِّسْحَاقَ بْنِ أَيُّوبَ الضُّبَعِّيُّ, ثَنا الَّسَنُ بْنُ عَلِّيِّ بْنِ زِيَادٍ, حَدَّثَنِِّ ابْنُ أَبِِّ أُوَيْسٍ, عَنْ مُوسَى بْنِ عُقْبَةَ, عَنْ أَبِِّ الْزُّبَيِّْْ |
المطلقة تعتكف، قال: لا وَلَا العُثْوَّبَةَ
عَنْهَا زَوْجُها حَتَّى نَجَلَّ

Sunan Al-Kubra Al-Bayhaqi 8604 – Daif
6. When can one perform I’tikaf:

From the narrations in the next section, we learn that the I’tikaf can be done within as well as outside of Ramadan. The table below summarizes the relevant requirements for each type of I’tikaf.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of I’tikaf</th>
<th>When can it be done?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Obligatory I’tikaf</td>
<td>It depends on the conditions described in the vow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunnah I’tikaf</td>
<td>It is to be observed in Ramadan for 10, 20, or 30 days while meeting its specific requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mustahabb I’tikaf</td>
<td>It can be done any time in the year for any duration of time. However, some scholars opine that its minimum duration is 1 day. Whereas other scholars from the early generations disagree and consider spending even a few moments in the masjid with the intention to do I’tikaf as a valid I’tikaf. Some traditions in this regard have been included in chapter 7.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. The duration of I’tikaf:

In this section, we will present:

- Ahadith and athar that indicate different durations of I’tikaf as mentioned in the books of hadith
- An analysis of scholarly opinions regarding the minimum duration of I’tikaf in the light of textual references on the topic

7.1 I’tikaf for 10 days:

The tradition below shows the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ to do I’tikaf for ten days:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hadith Number</th>
<th>Transmitter</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>41.</td>
<td>Ayesha R.A.</td>
<td>Sunan Abi Dawud 2462 – Saheeh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ayesha R.A. said: The Prophet ﷺ used to observe retirement (I’tikaf) to the masjid during the last ten days of Ramadan till Allah took him, and then his wives observed retirement to the masjid after his death.

Other points that we learn from this hadith are:

- Performing I’tikaf was not specific to the Prophet ﷺ as his wives also used to do it.
- This Sunnah was not abrogated as his wives continued to do so after his soul departed. Accordingly, we can continue to benefit from this beautiful Sunnah too.
The tradition below shows that these 10 days of I’tikaf can also be done outside of Ramadan if one was not able to complete them in Ramadan.

42. Narrated `Amra bint `Abdur-Rahman from `Ayesha: Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) used to practice I’tikaf every year in the month of Ramadan. And after offering the morning prayer, he used to enter the place of his I’tikaf. `Ayesha asked his permission to let her practice I’tikaf and he allowed her, and so she pitched a tent in the masjid. When Hafsa heard of that, she also pitched a tent (for herself), and when Zainab heard of that, she too pitched another tent. When, in the morning, Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) had finished the morning prayer, he saw four tents and asked, "What is this?" He was informed about it.

He then said, "What made them do this? Is it righteousness? Remove the tents, for I do not want to see them." So, the tents were removed. The Prophet (ﷺ) did not perform I’tikaf that year in the month of Ramadan.
but did it in the last ten days of Shawwal.

7.2 *I’tikaf for 20 days:*

The following hadith shows that if one wishes, one can do I’tikaf for 20 days.

**43.** Narrated Abu Huraira: The Prophet (ﷺ) used to perform I’tikaf every year in the month of Ramadan for ten days, and when it was the year of his death, he stayed in I’tikaf for twenty days.

**(This message can also be seen in Shub ul Iman 3675; Riyad as-Salihin 1270; Sunan Abi Dawud 2466; and so on).**

Scholars provide various reasons for the 20 days I’tikaf of the Prophet (ﷺ). Some of them say that it was to obtain additional reward as the worldly life of the Prophet (ﷺ) was coming to end. Some of them explain that it was because Jibril did the *Dawra* of Quran with him twice in that Ramadan. Others say that it was to make up for the missed I’tikaf in the previous year. From the above, we can conclude that one can perform the I’tikaf of 20 days to either fulfill a vow, or to make up for any missed Sunnah I’tikaf that one intended to perform, or only to seek additional reward. All these are valid reasons.

**44.** Anas bin Malik narrated: "The Prophet (ﷺ) would perform
I’tikaf during the last ten (nights) of Ramadan. One year he did not perform I’tikaf, so he performed I’tikaf for twenty (nights) in the following year."

Imam Tirmidhi says that this hadith which is reported from Anas R.A. is Hasan Saheeh. The people of knowledge have differed regarding the ruling for the person who made an intention to do I’tikaf and then left it before completion. A group of the learned opine that if someone breaks his I’tikaf, he has to offer Qadha (recompense) for that (i.e., he has to do it again). As a piece of evidence, they quote the hadith in which it is mentioned that one year the Prophet ﷺ abandoned the I’tikaf; he made up for the missed I’tikaf in Shawal. Imam Malik holds this opinion. The other group of the people of knowledge says that if the man had not made a vow for this I’tikaf or there was nothing else because of which the I’tikaf was mandatory for him, then he does not have to recompense
for this missed I’tikaf if he leaves early before finishing it. However, if he made it obligatory upon him due to a vow, then he has to offer the Qadha. Imam Shafi’i holds this opinion. Any [voluntary] good deed that you start, you can leave it incomplete if there is a need; however, the matter of Hajj and Umrah is different. There are narrations on this topic from Abu Hurairah R.A. too.

Jami` at-Tirmidhi 803 – Saheeh

The narration below also shows that the Prophet ﷺ did I’tikaf for 20 days.

45. Yahya related to me from Malik from Yazid ibn Abdullah ibn al- Hadi from Muhammad ibn Ibrahim al-Harith at-Taymi from Abu Salama ibn Abd ar-Rahman that Abu Said al-Khudri said, "The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, used to do I’tikaf in the middle ten days of Ramadan. One year he was doing I’tikaf and then when it came to the night of the twenty-first, which was the night before the morning when he would
normally have finished his I’tikaf, he said, 'Whoever has done I’tikaf with me should continue doing I’tikaf for the last ten days. I saw a certain night and then I was made to forget it. I saw myself prostrating the following morning in water and clay. Look for it in the last ten days, and look for it on the odd days.' " Abu Said continued, "The sky poured with rain that night and the masjid had a roof (made of palm fronds) and the masjid was soaked. With my own eyes I saw the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, leave with traces of water and clay on his forehead and nose, in the morning after the night of the twenty-first."

Muwatta Imam Malik Book 19, Hadith 700

(This message can also be seen in Saheeh al-Bukhari 2036, 2040; Sunan Abi Dawud 1382; Sunan an-Nasa’i 1356; and many other traditions)

7.3 I’tikaf for 30 days:

In the narration above, we learned that the Prophet ﷺ used to do I’tikaf in the middle ten days of Ramadan. In a particular year, he extended it to the last ten days too. Therefore, from the above and other similar narrations, we learn that the I’tikaf was done for twenty days in that year. However, consider the hadith below in which further details have also
been provided. According to this hadith, the Prophet ﷺ also did I’tikaf in the first ten days and hence the I’tikaf in that particular year was for the whole month. Accordingly, we can say that there is nothing wrong if someone offers I’tikaf during the whole month of Ramadan as we learn from the tradition below:

46. Abu Saeed al-Khudri (Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ (may peace be upon him) observed I’tikaf (confined himself for devotion and prayer) in the first ten (days) of Ramadan; he then observed I’tikaf in the middle ten (days) in a Turkish tent with a mat hanging at its door. He (the Holy Prophet) took hold of that mat and placed it in the nook of the tent. He then put his head out and talked with people and they came near him, and he (the Holy Prophet) said: I observed I’tikaf in the first ten (nights and days) in order to seek that night (Laylat-ul-Qadr). I then observed I’tikaf in the middle ten days. Then (an angel) was sent to me and I was told that this (night) is among the last ten (nights). He who among you like to
observe I’tikaf should do so; and the people observed it along with him, and he (the Holy Prophet) said: That (Laylat-ul-Qadr) was shown to me on an odd (night) and I (saw in the dream) that I was prostrating in the morning in clay and water. So in the morning of the twenty-first night when he (the Holy Prophet) got up for dawn (prayer), there was rainfall and the masjid dripped, and I saw clay and water. When he came out after completing the morning prayer (I saw) that his forehead and the tip of his nose had (traces) of clay and water, and that was the twenty-first night among the last ten (nights).

**Saheeh Muslim 1167c**

(This message can also be seen in Mishkat al-Masabih 2086, 2087; and so on)

An additional point that we learn from the above hadith, we also learn that the mutakif can talk to people about a matter of religion. Also, we can learn that the tent or a part of it can be folded up as required.

7.4 I’tikaf for less than 10 days:

7.4.1 Within Ramadan:

The Prophet of Allah ﷺ is reported to have permitted I’tikaf for less than
10 days in Ramadan. Accordingly, if one wishes to spend any duration of time in I’tikaf in Ramadan, it is permitted inshaAllah.

47.Narrated Abdullah ibn Unays al-Juhani: I said to the Messenger of Allah: I have a place in the desert where I live and in which I pray, with the praise of Allah; but give me command about a night when I come to this masjid. He replied: Come on the twenty-third night. I (a sub-narrator, Muhammad ibn Ibrahim) said to his son (i.e., Abdullah ibn Unays's son): How would your father act? He replied: He used to enter the masjid when he had offered the afternoon prayer and did not leave it for any purpose till he prayed the morning prayer. Then when he had prayed the morning prayer, he found his riding beast at the door of the masjid, mounted it, and got back to his desert.

Sunan Abi Dawud 1380 – Saheeh

(This message can also be seen in Muwatta Imam Malik Book 19, Hadith 703; Mishkat al-Masabih 2094)

Those brothers who are unable to do the I’tikaf for the full ten days can choose a duration convenient for them and do I’tikaf in that.

7.4.2 Outside Ramadan:
Shorter durations of I’tikaf are permitted outside of Ramadan too. Consider the traditions below.

| 48. | 'Abdullah b. 'Umar reported that 'Umar b. Khattab asked the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) as he was at Ji'rana (a town near Mecca) on his way back from Ta'if (after the battle of Hunain): Messenger of Allah, I had taken a vow during the days of Ignorance that I would observe I’tikaf for one day in the Sacred Masjid. So, what is your opinion? He said: Go and observe I’tikaf for a day. And Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) gave him a slave girl out of the one-fifth (of the spoils of war meant for the Holy Prophet). And when Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) set the war prisoners free, 'Umar b. Khattab heard their voice as they were saying: Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) has set free... | 'وَحَدَّثَنَا أَبُو الطَّلَّاطِرِ، أَخْبَرَنَا عَبْدُ اللهُ بِنْ وَهْبٍ، حَدَّثَنَا حَبْرُ بْنُ حَارِمٍ، أَنَّ أَبُو، حَدَّثَهُ أنَّ نَافِعًا حَدَّثَهُ أنَّ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ بْنَ عُمَّرُ حَدَّثَهُ أنَّ عُمَّرَ بْنَ الْحَطَابَ سَأَلَ رَسُولًا اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَهُوَ بِالجَٰحِلِّيَّةِ بَعْدَ أَنْ رَجَعَ مِنْ الطَّائِفِ فَقَالَ بِاِنْفَكَءُ اللَّهُ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَهُوَ بِالجَٰحِلِّيَّةِ أَنَّ أَعْتَكَفَ يُؤُومًا فِي الْمَسْجِدِ الْرَّامِيَ فَكَيْفَ تَرَى قَالَ أَذْهَبْ فَأَعْتَكِفْ يُؤُومًا قَالَ وَكَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَدْ أَعْطَاهُ جَارِيَةً مِّنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ فَلَمَّا أَعْتَقَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم سَبَاياَ النَّاسِ قَالَ عُمَّرُ يَا عَبْدَ اللَّهِ اذْهَبْ إِلَيْ تِلْكَ الْجَارِيَةِ فَخَلَلْ سَبِيلَهَا. |
fallen to the lot of people). Thereupon he ('Umar) said: Abdullah, go to that slave-girl and set her free.

Saheeh Muslim 1656c

(This message can also be seen in Saheeh al-Bukhari 2032, 2042, 2043, 3144, 4320; Saheeh Muslim 1656a,d,e; Jami` at-Tirmidhi 805, 1539; Sunan Ibn Majah 1772; Sunan Abi Dawud 2474, 2475, 3325; Bulugh al-Maram 1396)

Also, consider the tradition below:

49. Ziyad Ibn Sakan narrates that Zubaid Al-Yami and a group with him used to do I’tikaf in their masajid when the days of Nayroz and Maharjan used to come.

With that they used to say: Indeed they did I’tikaf in their disbelief (or they ‘devoted themselves’ to their disbelief), and we do I’tikaf in our belief, so forgive us (O our Lord).

Shub ul Iman 3683 – Hasan

28 Zubaid Ibn Harith Al-Yami was a highly learned scholar from Kufa about whom Shu’ba (a great hadith scholar who is abundantly found in the narrations of Saheeh Muslim and other books of hadith) said: “I have not seen a better scholar in Kufa then Zubaid”. Zubaid is considered to be Taba-Tabi’i.

29 Nayroz is the day of the start of the Coptic Christian new year which is celebrated on September 11. This is the day when they celebrate their martyrs who were killed by Romans in 280 AD. A similar name is used for the start of the Persian New Year which starts on March 21.

30 Mehrjan, also written as Mehragon was a religious festival of Zoroastrians. It is still celebrated in Persia in the present age.
For the above narrations, the scholars mention about its chain of narrations that there is no anomaly in it (إسناده: لا باس به)

Based on the above, many scholars and Islamic centers in the west organize I’tikaf night for youth on the new year night so that when there is sin and immorality prevalent out there, the youth can take refuge in the masajid in order to protect themselves and develop spirituality.

### 7.5 I’tikaf when entering the masjid

There are opinions of tabi’een that indicate that if one does the intention for doing I’tikaf, within or outside Ramadan, when being in the masjid, it will be considered as I’tikaf and one will get the reward for that insha'Allah.

| 50. | From Suwaid Ibn Ghafala, he said: Whoever enters the masjid in the state of purity, he remains in the state of I’tikaf as long as he is there unless he goes out or breaks his wudhu. |
| Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah 4064 |

| 51. | Ibn Juraij mentions that he heard Atta who informed him from Ya’ala ibn Umyah who said: I spend a few moments in Masajid, and I do not do that except for I’tikaf. The narrator said that in his opinion, this narration was narrated to him by Sufyan Ibn Ya’ala. |
| Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 8006 - Saheeh |

The tradition below emphasizes the same point:
Ibn Juraij mentioned that Atta said: It would be considered as I’tikaf as long as a person stays in there (i.e. in the masjid). If one sits in the masjid to achieve good deeds, he is a Mutakif, if (that is) not (the intention), then (the person is) not (considered as a Mutakif).

In alignment with the above traditions, Shaykh Ibn Baaz held the following opinion on this matter: “I’tikaf means staying in the masjid to worship Allah, whether that is for a longer or shorter period; because there is no report – as far as I know – to indicate a specific length of time, whether one day, two days or more.” (Fatawa al-Shaykh Ibn Baaz, 15/441)

7.6 Analysis of the traditions to determine the minimum time for I’tikaf

The word I’tikaf in Arabic means staying, and this word can be used for a long period as well as a short one. There is no report in texts that defines it as being a specific length of time. Accordingly, The majority of scholars are of the view that the minimum length of time is a moment (as mentioned in Al-Durr al-Mukhtaar 1/445; Al-Majmoo’ 6/489, 514; Al-Insaaf, 7/566). Ibn Hazm said: Any stay in the masjid for the sake of Allah with the intention of drawing closer to Him is considered I’tikaf whether that is for a short time or a long time because the Qur'an and Sunnah do not specify any number or length of time (Al-Muhalla 5/179).

The above is the opinion of the majority of scholars. However, some scholars believe that the minimum length of I’tikaf is one day (as explained in Majmoo’ al-Fataawa 15/441). Some of them specify this condition as they believe that there is no I’tikaf without fasting.
7.7 Conclusion:

If you wish to do the Sunnah Ḥaqqī I’tikaf in Ramadan, the minimum duration that you should spend in the masjid is the time from the beginning of 21st Ramadan till the end of the Ramadan (while adhering to the relevant requirements and conditions). One can also do the Sunnah Ḥaqqī I’tikaf in the middle ten days of Ramadan or the whole month. One can also make up for a missed Sunnah Ḥaqqī I’tikaf outside of Ramadan. For the Mustahabb I’tikaf, on the other hand, any duration is fine provided that the intention is there.
8. Where to do Sunnah I’tikaf

8.1 I’тикaf is in a congregational masjid:

According to the hadith of Ayesha R.A, the I’tikaf should be done in congregational masjids.

| 53. | Narrated Ayesha, Ummul Mu'minin: The Sunnah for one who is observing I’tikaf (in a masjid) is not to visit a patient, or to attend a funeral, or touch or embrace one's wife, or go out for anything but necessary purposes. There is no I’tikaf without fasting, and there is no I’tikaf except in a congregational masjid. [In another chain, the words ‘it is Sunnah’ are not there; this statement represents the opinion of Ayesha R.A.] |

Sunan Abi Dawud 2473 – Hassan

(This message can also be seen in Bulugh ul Maram, Book 5, Hadith 702)

The narration below puts the condition of the presence of Imam and a Muadhin (the person who calls adhan) for a masjid to be eligible to be done the I’tikaf in:
Huzaifa R.A narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: ‘I’tikaf is valid in any masjid that has a person who calls for prayer (i.e. the Muadhin) and the person who leads people in prayer (i.e. the Imam).

Also, consider the tradition below. It indicates that Imam Malik considered it acceptable to do I’tikaf in any masjid but not doing it in Jami Masjid was considered disliked as the person would have to leave the masjid to go for I’tikaf in another masjid.

Yahya related to me from Malik that he had asked Ibn Shihab whether someone doing I’tikaf could go into a house to relieve himself; he said, "Yes, there is no harm in that." Malik said, "The situation that we are all agreed upon here is that there is no disapproval of anyone doing I’tikaf in a masjid where jumuaah is not held. The only reason I see for disapproving (i.e. considering it makrooh31) of doing I’tikaf in a masjid where jumuaah is not held is that the man doing I’tikaf

---

31 Makrooh means something that is disliked however, it is not a sin to do so.
would have to leave the masjid where he was doing I’tikaf in order to go to jumuah, or else not go there at all. If, however, he is doing I’tikaf in a masjid where jumuah is not held, and he does not have to go to jumuah in any other masjid, then I see no harm in him doing I’tikaf there, because Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, says, 'While you are doing I’tikaf in masjid, and refers to all masjids in general, without specifying any particular kind." Malik continued, "Accordingly, it is permissible for a man to do I’tikaf in a masjid where jumuah is not held if he does not have to leave it to go to a masjid where jumuah is held." Malik said, "A person doing I’tikaf should spend the night only in the masjid where he is doing I’tikaf, except if his tent is in one of the courtyards of the masjid. I have never heard that

This indicates that going out of the masjid during I’tikaf even for good acts is not liked. This is the time to confine oneself in masjid for the pleasure of Allah swt.

One of such situations could be that he is in an area where there are not enough Muslims that the Jumuah could be offered or he is exempt from Jumuah due to any other valid Shara’i reason.
someone doing I’tikaf can put up a shelter anywhere except in the masjid itself or in one of the courtyards of the masjid. Part of what shows that he must spend the night in the masjid is the saying of Ayesha, 'When the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was doing I’itikaf, he would only go into the house to relieve himself.' Nor should he do I’tikaf on the roof of the masjid or in the minaret." Malik said, "The person who is going to do I’tikaf should enter the place where he wishes to do I’tikaf before the sun sets on the night when he wishes to begin his I’tikaf so that he is ready to begin the I’tikaf at the beginning of the night when he is going to start his I’tikaf. A person doing I’tikaf should be occupied with his I’tikaf, and not turn his attention to other things which might occupy him, such as trading or whatever. There is no harm, however, if someone doing I’tikaf tells someone to do something for
him regarding his estate, or the affairs of his family, or tells someone to sell some property of his or something else that does not occupy him directly. There is no harm in him arranging for someone else to do that for him if it is a simple matter."

Malik said, "I have never heard any of the people of knowledge mentioning any modification as far as how to do I’tikaf is concerned. I’tikaf is an act of *ibadah* like the prayer, fasting, the hajj, and other such acts, whether they are obligatory or voluntary. Anyone who begins doing any of these acts should do them according to what has come down in the Sunnah. He should not start doing anything in them that the Muslims have not done, whether it is a modification that he imposes on others or one that he begins doing himself. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, practiced I’tikaf, and the Muslims know what the
We know the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ that he used to do I’tikaf in Masjid An-Nabawi which was the main place for the congregational prayer of the Muslims during the time of the Prophet ﷺ. May Allah protect and preserve this beautiful place of love.

56. Abdullah b. Umar (Allah be pleased with both of them) reported that the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) used to observe I’tikaf in the last ten days of Ramadan. Nafi’ said: Abdullah (Allah be pleased with him) showed me the place in the masjid where the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) used to observe I’tikaf.

Saheeh Muslim 1171b

(This message can also be found in Sunan Abi Dawud 2465 and numerous other reports)

8.2 I’tikaf in Masjid An-Nabawi:

It is highly virtuous to do I’tikaf in masjid An-Nabawi for many reasons. I take this as an opportunity to do Umrah in Ramadan and do I’tikaf in the blessed masjid of the Prophet ﷺ. Let us go through some of the virtues
of doing I’tikaf in Masjid An-Nabawi. Consider the narrations below. Firstly, the reward of good deeds in Ramadan is multiplied a thousand times according to the following report from Imam Az-Zuhri.

57. Ibrahim An-Nakha'i R.A. said: A fast in Ramadan is better than fasting in a thousand other days; The *tasbeeh* (i.e. saying Subhan Allah) in it is better than a thousand other *tasbeeh* (outside of it), And a Rak’ah in this is better than a thousand rak’ahs outside of it.

A similar saying about the *Tasbeeh* in Ramadan is also reported from Imam Zuhri and other learned and pious predecessors (aslaf).

This reward would be multiplied further by a thousand when such *tasbeeh* and *raka’at* are offered in the *haramain*.

58. Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said:

“Prayer in this masjid of mine is better than a thousand prayers in any other masjid, except the Sacred Masjid (i.e. masjid al-Haram in Makkah).
Prayer in the Sacred Masjid is one hundred times better than prayer in this masjid of mine.”

Now imagine: With this uncountable reward, there would also be barakah of doing the I’tikaf in that very masjid where the most beloved Prophet, our master and our lifeline, our Muhammad ﷺ, did the I’tikaf in. You can visit those very blessed places where he ﷺ put his mubarak feet and you can have the blessing of putting your head at those very places where he put his mubarak head. You would be able to breathe in that very air in which the beloved breathed.

59. It was narrated from ‘Abdullah bin ‘Umar that: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to spend the last ten days of Ramadan in I’tikaf. Nafi’ said: "Abdullah bin ‘Umar showed me the place where the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to observe I’tikaf."

60. It was narrated from Ibn ‘Umar that: When the Prophet (ﷺ) observed I’tikaf, his bedding would be spread for him, or his bed would be placed there for him, behind
It is certainly a matter of reward to travel to the blessed Masjid for I’tikaf in Ramadan.

61. Abu Sa’eed Al-Khudri narrated that: Allah's Messenger said: "A mount is not saddled (for a journey) except to three Masajid: Al-
Masjid Al-Haram, this Masjid of mine, and Masjid Al-Aqsa."
[Abu `Eisa said:] This Hadith is Hasan Saheeh.

رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم "لا تُشَدُّ الرِّحَالُ إِلَّا إِلَّ ثَلََاثَةِ مَسَاجِدِّ الْهَرَامِ وَمَسْجِدِّي هَذَا وَمَسْجِدِّ الْأَقْصَى". قَالَ أَبُو عِيسَى هَذَا حَدِيثٌ حَسَنر صَحِّيحر.

Jami` at-Tirmidhi 326 – Saheeh

Therefore, if one can do so, it is very virtuous to plan for I’tikaf in the Masjid of the Prophet ﷺ in Ramadan along with an umrah.

Figure: The Pillar of Repentance in Riyad ul Jannah

8.3 Can I’tikaf only be done in the three most blessed masajid

Though it is highly virtuous to do I’tikaf in the three holiest masajid, however, neither Quran, nor Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ place any restriction that the I’tikaf is only valid in the Masjid Al-Haram, Masjid An-Nabawi, or Masjid Al-Aqsa. Therefore, we must also not restrict that which Allah swt and his Prophet ﷺ did not restrict. This is the opinion that seems to be held by the majority of early scholars. It is also in alignment with the verse of the Quran that does not specify any particular
masajid where I’tikaf is to be held (and accordingly it is permissible to perform it in all masjid.)

Having said that, there used to be a difference of opinion among the companions, the Tabi’een, and other scholars from the early generations regarding the permissibility of I’tikaf at the masajid other than the three holy masajid. The following table summarizes various opinions of the early generation of scholars.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinion: I’tikaf can only be done at the three holy masajid</th>
<th>Opinion: It can be done in other masajid too</th>
<th>The opinion that it can be done outside of Masajid as well (e.g. in houses or other areas)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ibn Musayyab – Masjid An-Nabawi only (No. 8008)</td>
<td>Ali Ibn Abi Talib (No. 8009)</td>
<td>Ayesha R.A. (No. 8021, 8022 – did ‘Jiwar’ in the mountains of Hira and Thabeer; companions used to visit her there. It is mentioned that Abdur Rahman Ibn Abi Bakr requested her not to do this from the fear that people would start to do this too but she said that she already had made up her mind; this was because of a vow that she made)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huzaifa R.A. (No. 8014, 8016 – had a discussion with Abdullah Ibn Masood R.A. about people doing I’tikaf in Kufa (i.e. Huzaifa considered it invalid). Ibn Masood R.A. responded back to him and said: It is possible that he might have forgotten and they might be right)</td>
<td>Urwah ibn Zubayr (No. 8010)</td>
<td>Ash-sha’bi (8024 – allowed I’tikaf at a prayer place in one’s house)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atta (No. 8019, 8020 – Only in Masjid Al-Haram and Masjid An-Nabawi)</td>
<td>Hasan Basri and Abu Salama (No. 8011 – allowed I’tikaf in the masajid of tribes where Salah used to be established)</td>
<td>Ibrahim An-Nakhai (No. 8023 – mentioned about what a woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saeed Ibn Jubair (No. 8012 – used to do I’tikaf in the masjid of his people)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinion: I’tikaf can only be done at the three holy masajid</td>
<td>Opinion: It can be done in other masajid too</td>
<td>The opinion that it can be done outside of Masajid as well (e.g. in houses or other areas)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abdullah Ibn Masood (No. 8015 – A man did I’tikaf in a masjid in a tent and he appreciated him and protected him when people were trying to rebuke him)</td>
<td>Az-Zuhri (No. 8017)</td>
<td>doing I’tikaf in her house can or cannot do)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amr Ibn Dinar (No. 8018 – Ibn Dinar consider I’tikaf in Masajid of Basra and Kufa to be valid too)</td>
<td>Atta (No. 8019)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Musannaf Ibn Abi Shayba**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Huzaifa (No. 9762)</th>
<th>Abu Qilabah (No. 9753, 9754)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ibn Musayyab – Masjid An-Nabawi only (No. 9765)</td>
<td>Saeed Ibn Jubayr (No. 9755, 9756)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hammam Ibn Harith (No. 9777)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ibrahim Nakhai (No. 9758)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abu Salamah (No. 9759)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abul Ahwas (9760)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From the above, we see that majority of the tabi’een and scholars allow I’tikaf in any Jami masjid. There can be various interpretations and possibilities for the opinions of tabi’een and companions who believed that it can only be done in the Haramayn and Al-Aqsa. It is also to be noted that some of the reports above indicate that some of the pious predecessors believed that I’tikaf/ Jiwar can also be done at places other than the masajid. Accordingly, we should have acceptability for the Hanafi brothers and sisters who hold this opinion too considering the fact that some of the great and learned aslaf also held this opinion. The author of this book, however, humbly agrees with the opinion that I’tikaf should only be done in the masajid where Jumuhah is held (i.e. Jami Masajid) in line with the opinion of Imam Malik (as explained earlier) and the majority of early scholars.

8.4 I’tikaf in your local masjid

In the time of the companions, the Jumuhah prayer used to happen at the
Jami *masjid* so that people from different neighborhoods could come together to offer the Friday prayer. Accordingly, the *Jumuah* prayer was not established in the local *masjid* in the neighborhoods. The following narration has to be read in this context. It conveys the message that it is not allowed to offer I’*tikaf* in the local *masjid as Jumuah* is not established there. However, it is also to be noted that the narration below is Daif and cannot be taken as a piece of evidence in deriving any rulings.

62. **Ibn Abbas R.A.** said: The most disliked matters in the sight of Allah swt are innovations in religion. One of the innovations is doing I’*tikaf* in the *masjid* of one’s neighborhood.

---

Sunan Al-Kubra Li Bayhaqi 8573 – Daif

8.5 **I’*tikaf in Fina Al-Masjid:**

It is important to note that the rooms adjacent to the masajid as well as the areas that are linked to the Masjid (including the courtyards, the place where the shoes are stacked, the place of wudhu, etc.) are called ‘*Fina Al-Masjid*’. There are two opinions regarding whether the I’*tikaf* can be done in them or not.

**Opinion 1:**

According to some scholars, these areas are also classified as Masjid and the I’*tikaf* in them is valid. Consider an excerpt from a long narration from Muwatta Imam Malik which explains that the tents can also be put in the courtyards of the *masajid*. However, I’*tikaf* should not be done on the roofs of the *masajid* or in the minarets.

---

63. **Malik** said, "A person doing I’*tikaf* should spend the
night only in the masjid where he is doing I’tikaf, except if his tent is in one of the courtyards of the masjid. I have never heard that someone doing I’tikaf can put up a shelter anywhere except in the masjid itself or in one of the courtyards of the masjid. Part of what shows that he must spend the night in the masjid is the saying of Ayesha, 'When the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was doing I’tikaf, he would only go into the house to relieve himself.' Nor should he do I’tikaf on the roof of the masjid or in the minaret (if it is outside the masjid boundary).

Some scholars put the condition that the I’tikaf is valid in Fina Al-Masjid only if people pray in there. Consider the opinion below from Imam Nawawi.

Imam Nawawi said: The wall of the masjid from the inside and outside comes under the ruling of Masjid due to the obligation to ensure its upkeep, and
respect. The same is the ruling for the roof of the masjid or a well that is inside it. The same is the case with the courtyards (or the areas within the boundary walls of the masjid). Al-Shafi’i and his companions, may God have mercy on them, stipulated that the I’tikaf is valid in the courtyards, and on roofs of the masjid as well as the salah in congregation in them is valid while following the one in the masjid (i.e. the Imam who is leading the prayer while being).

Al-Majmu 2/207

Moreover, there are narrations about people asking Atta R.A. if the I’tikaf of the person who has put a tent on the door of the masjid valid or not; he affirmed its validity (Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 8090).

In many cases, madaris are also made just adjacent to the masjid. With regards to them, some scholars leave it to the intention of the person(s) who established the masjid that whether they intended to include such adjacent areas and buildings in the masjid or not, and whether the prayers are offered in them with the congregation in the masjid or not. If the prayer is established there with the congregation and their doors open in the masjid (or if there is not a door that separates them from the masjid), then many scholars permit it to do I’tikaf there.

Opinion 2:

According to other groups of scholars, the Fina Al-Masjid are not actually
a part of the masjid as it is not prohibited for the menstruating women or *junub* to visit such areas (e.g. the parking areas in the masjid, the shower rooms whose doors open from the parking or the places where the shoes are kept and so on). Based on numerous ahadith and the injunction of the Quran which mention ‘*masajid*’ as the places of I’tikaf, this group of scholars does not permit doing I’tikaf in the Fina Al-Masjid.

**Can a mutakif residing in the masjid take bath or spend time in Fina Al-Masjid:**

Though most Hanafi scholars adhere to the second opinion (as mentioned above), some of them allow for the mutakif to go in the Fina Al-Masjid (e.g. adjacent washrooms) and have a bath if one feels that he has a need (even if it is for other than a shara’i need). This group of Hanafi scholars, who are a minority in their madhab, believe that the I’tikaf will not break even if one takes bath for leisure in these adjacent areas (even though the general position in their school of thought is that the *mutakif* can only go out for bath in case of a shara’i need e.g. after a wet dream and so on).34

**Our preferred position:**

In our opinion, the second opinion (as mentioned above) seems stronger. Therefore, a *Mutakif* should neither put his tent in the Fina Al-Masjid nor should he visit these areas without a need or spend excessive time there. However, the rooms that are adjacent to the masjid with their doors opening in the masjid itself, and if they are regularly used for joining the prayer offered by the Imam in the main masjid hall (provided that they are not the designated places of residence such as those for the Imam and Muadhin as available in many masajid), we consider them an acceptable location for I’tikaf. Wallahu Aalam.

**8.6 Can obligatory I’tikaf be done in any masjid?**

There are various opinions reported in this regard. According to some

---

34 This opinion, i.e. that Fina Al-Masjid are a part of the masjid and going there does not nullify the I’tikaf, is mentioned in Fatawa Radhaviyyah Jadeed 7/354, 3/576; Fatawa Amjadiyyah 1/399; Fatawa Faizur Rasool 1/535; Radd ul Mukhtar 3/434; and so on.
scholars of the early generations, if a person makes a vow to do I’tikaf at a particular masjid, it is mandatory for him to do the I’tikaf there. Another group of scholars from the early generation believes that if he does I’tikaf at a masjid more virtuous than the masjid he made a vow for, it would also result in the fulfilment of the vow. Consider the reports below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>65.</th>
<th>From Ibn Musayyab, he said: The one who made a vow to do I’tikaf in Masjid I’iliya (i.e. Baytul Muqaddas) and does I’tikaf (to fulfil this vow) in the Masjid of the Prophet ☪ and then did it in Masjid Al-Haram in Makkah, it is valid. Muammar said: If someone made a vow that he would do I’tikaf at the head of a mountain, (he should not do it there as) it is not appropriate to do so; the I’tikaf is only in the masjid where congregational prayers are established.</th>
<th>من نَذَرَ أَنْ يَعْتَكِفَ فِي مَسْجِدِ إِّيلِيَاءَ، فَاعْتَكَفَ فِي مَسْجِدِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم بِالْمَدِينَةِّ، أَجْزَأَ عَنْهُ، وَمَنْ نَذَرَ أَنْ يَعْتَكِفَ عَلَى رَأْسِ جَبَلٍ، فَإِّنَّهُ لَيَبْغِي لَهُ أَنْ يَعْتَكِفَ فِيهِّ، وَأَنْ يَعْتَكِفَ فِي مَسْجِدِ جَمََاعَةٍ.</th>
<th>عَنْ مَعْمَرٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِّ الْكَرِّيمِّ الجَْزَرِّيِِّ، عَنْ ابْنِّ الْمُسَيِِّبِّ قَالَ: مَنْ نَذَرَ أَنْ يَعْكَتِّفَ في مَسْجِدِ إِّيلِيَاءَ، فَاعْتَكَفَ فِي مَسْجِدِ النَّابِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم بِالْمَدِينَةِّ، أَجْزَأَ عَنْهُ، وَمَنْ نَذَرَ أَنْ يَعْتَكِفَ فِي مَسْجِدِ النَّابِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم بِالْمَدِينَةِّ، أَجْزَأَ عَنْهُ.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>66.</td>
<td>Ibn Juraij said that he asked Atta: Would the I’tikaf of person who made a vow to do I’tikaf in Baytul Muqaddas and did it in Masjid of the Prophet ☪ in Madinah fulfil</td>
<td>عَنْ ابنِ جُرَيْجٍ قَالَ: قُلْتُ لِّعَطَاءٍ: أَرَأَيْتَ لَوْ أَنَّ إِنْسَانًَ نَذَرَ جَوارًا في بَيْتِ الْمُقَدَّسِ، أَيَبْضَعُ غَيْبًا مَسْجَدُ النَّابِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم بِالْمَدِينَةِّ؟ قَالَ: نَعَمَّ. قَالَ</td>
<td>عَنْ ابنِ جُرَيْجٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِّ الْكَرِّيمِّ الجَْزَرِّيِِّ، عَنْ ابْنِّ الْمُسَيِِّبِّ قَالَ: مَنْ نَذَرَ أَنْ يَعْكَتِّفَ في مَسْجِدِ إِّيلِيَاءَ، فَاعْتَكَفَ فِي مَسْجِدِ النَّابِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم بِالْمَدِينَةِّ، أَجْزَأَ عَنْهُ.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 8025 - Saheeh | Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 8025 - Saheeh | Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 8025 - Saheeh | Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 8025 - Saheeh |
his vow? He (Atta) said: Yes. Ibn Juraij said: Amr Ibn Dinar did not consider so (i.e. he was of the opinion that the I’tikaf can only be done in the masjid at which the person made the vow for).

The same opinion is also expressed in Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 8027 and 8028 which explain the I’tikaf of a person would be valid in a masjid that is more virtuous than the one he made a vow for. However, the opposite is not accepted (i.e. one made a vow for Masjid An-Nabawi and did the I’tikaf in his local masjid to fulfil his vow).

8.7 Where should women do I’tikaf

With regards to where the women should do I’tikaf, there are two opinions among the scholars:

- According to one group, the women can only do I’tikaf in Masajid. This opinion is backed by several narrations that mention about women doing I’tikaf in the masjid. One of such traditions is the hadith of Ayesha R.A. in which she said that the I’tikaf can only be done in congregational masajid. In that hadith, she did not make an exception for women that they were permitted to do I’tikaf in their houses. Some of the Fuqaha who hold this opinion (i.e. the women should also do the I’tikaf in masajid) still consider it Makrooh for women to do this voluntary act of worship in the masajid in the present situations where proper areas for I’tikaf for women are not available and the privacy can be compromised due to the presence of mobile phones with cameras and so on.

- The Hanafi fuqaha, on the other hand, allow the women to do I’tikaf at the prayer places in their houses. Such an opinion was also held by some of the learned scholars in the early generations as pointed out earlier in this section. The fuqaha adhering to this opinion...
advise women to do I’тикaf in the places of their houses where they offer their prayers, i.e. the masjид in their houses. The scholars who do not consider this opinion to be valid believe that the place where she prays in her house is not called a masjid except by way of metaphor, and it is not really a masjid; so it does not come under the rulings on masjid. For example, it is permissible for the junub and menstruating to enter it, unlike the other masjид where such permission is not given except for quickly passing through to meet the need. Imam An-Nawawi said: “It is not valid for men or women to observe I’тикaf anywhere but in the masjid. It is not valid in the masjid of a woman’s house or the masjid of a man’s house, which is a space that is set aside for prayer.” (Al-Majmoo - 6/505). On the other hand, the scholars who hold this opinion defend it by mentioning the narrations according to which a woman’s prayers are better in her house than in the masjid. Also, Ayesha R.A. is reported to have said that had the Prophet ﷺ seen the condition of women in the later periods, he would have prohibited them from going to the masjid. On the basis of that, they allow the women to do I’тикaf at the places of prayer in their houses.

Though both the opinions have a rationale and textual basis, the author humbly follows the first opinion at the time of writing this book and believes that if a fully separate and private area is available for women where no males can enter, women can do I’тикaf in masjid. However, in case of any possibility of fitnah, it is better for them to not do I’тикaf. This is in accordance with one of the very important principles of fiqh proposed by Imam Malik based on authentic evidence from Sunnah: Sadd Ad-Dirai (blocking of means that can lead to sin or evil outcomes).

After an analysis of this topic, let us now review some pieces of evidence for each opinion.

8.7.1 Women’s I’тикaf in masjid:

Some of the pieces of evidence of the opinion that women can only do I’тикaf in masjid are as follows.
In the narration below, Ayesha R.A. is explaining what is permissible during the I’tikaf and what is not through two separate events.

- Firstly, she explains about when she herself was doing the I’tikaf and had to enter the house for a need. The text indicates that she was not already in the house during the I’tikaf and had to enter it for a need. Therefore, it indicates that she used to do I’tikaf in the masjid.

- She then explains, as a second point, that she used to comb the hair of the Prophet ﷺ when he used to be in I’tikaf. At that time, she used to be in her Hujrah which is adjacent to the Prophet’s ﷺ masjid. This means that at those times, she herself was not in I’tikaf. This was to indicate the permissibility of touching the husband while he is in I’tikaf.

| 67. | 'Amra daughter of 'Abd al-Rahman reported: Ayesha, wife of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) observed: When I was (in I’tikaf), I entered the house for the call of nature, and while passing I inquired after the health of the sick (in the family), and when the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was (in I’tikaf), he put out his head towards me, while he himself was in the masjid, and I combed his hair, and he did not enter the house except for the call of nature so long as he was In I’tikaf; and Ibn Rumh stated: As long as they (the Prophet and his wives) were | وَخَطَّتْنَا فَتْنِيَةً ابْنُ سَعِيدٍ، حَدَّثَنَا لَيْثٌ، حَدَّثَنَا عُرْوَةَ، حَدَّثَنَا عُمْرَةَ بِّنْتِّ عَبْدِ الرَّحَْْنِّ، أَ نَّ عَائِشَةَ، زَوْجَ النَّبيِِِّّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَتْ إِّنْ كُنْتُ لَْدْخُلُ الْب َيْتَ لِّلْحَاجَةِّ وَالْ مَرِّيضُ فِّيهِّ فَمَا أَسْأَلُ عَنْهُ إِّلََّ وَأَنََ مَارَّةر وَإِنْ كَانَ رَسُولُ الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قا |
The hadith below also indicates that one of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ observed I’tikaf with him. The Prophet ﷺ always used to do I’tikaf in masjid as Ibn Umer R.A. mentioned and also pointed out the exact location where his bed used to be placed. If she was with him, she would have been in the masjid too. Also, the hadith below mentions that when she used to be in the state of Istihadhja, a tray used to be placed under her so that she could pray on that. This protection is considered to have been put in place to ensure that the cleanliness and hygiene of the masjid are preserved. Such a precaution is not practiced for women having Istihadhja in their houses.

68. Ayesha R.A. (may Allah be pleased with her) said “One of the wives of the Apostle of Allah(ﷺ) observed I’tikaf along with him (in the masjid). She would see yellowness and redness. Sometimes we would place a washbasin while she prayed.”

In addition, we have already studied the opinion of Imam Malik regarding what the women have to do (i.e. going back to their homes) in case their menstrual cycle starts while they are in I’tikaf. This also indicates that they did not already use to be in their homes; that is why they were asked to go there at the start of their menstrual cycles.

8.7.2 Women’s I’tikaf in their houses:

The opinion that the women are allowed to do I’tikaf in their houses is
based on an interpretive analysis of the texts and opinions of some *tabi’een* and companions. Some of the interpreters of hadith have explained that the wives of the Prophet ﷺ used to observe I’tikaf in their houses; however, it is not explicitly mentioned in any ahadith as per our study.

At the beginning of this section, we have already explained some of the pieces of evidence presented by the scholars who permit women to do I’tikaf in their houses. Some of the following opinions can also be taken as evidence in this regard. Imam Ibn Hajr explains the position of Imam Shafi’i on this matter as follows:

| 69. | Imam Shafi’i held the opinion that it was *makrooh* (disliked) for them (i.e. the women) to do I’tikaf in the masjid where the prayers used to be established.

He took evidence from the hadith in this *ba’ab* (i.e. the hadith in which the Prophet abandoned his I’tikaf when his wives also put tents in the masjid); he took this hadith as a piece of evidence to show that the I’tikaf of women was *makrooh* except in the masjid of her house.

Otherwise (in the absence of that), she would be seen by a lot of people (and that could compromise her privacy).

---

Fathul Bari 4/275

He continues and explains the position of Imam Abu Haneefa and Imam
Ahmed:

70. The Hanafi scholars have put a condition for the validity of I’tikaf of women that it should be done in the masjid of her house. In another report from them, it is allowed for her to do I’tikaf in masjid along with her husband. This is also the opinion of Imam Ahmed.

Fathul Bari 4/275

With regards to Harem (the sanctuary), the opinion of Mujahid indicates that it is permissible to do I’tikaf in houses too.

71. Laith reported that Mujahid said: The whole Haram is a masjid. A person can stay wherever he is in it. If he wishes, he can also do it at his house.

However, he should not offer the prayer except in a congregation (Jama’ah).

Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 8005 - Daif

35 Mujahid Ibn Jabr R.A. was a student of Ali R.A. and Ibn Abbas R.A. and is known for his great contributions to the field of tafseer of the Quran.

36 Laith Ibn Abu Sulaym Al-Kufi is considered to be a weak narrator due to his mistakes in transmission. This is the opinion of Imam Nasai and many other scholars of hadith. However, they did not completely abandon him and mentioned that many people have taken narrations from him. His narrations based on what he had in the written form are considered acceptable.
Another evidence presented in this regard is the hadith below:

72. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) mentioned that he would practice I’tikaf in the last ten days of Ramadan. ‘Ayesha asked his permission to perform I’tikaf and he permitted her. Hafsa asked ‘Ayesha to take his permission for her, and she did so. When Zainab bint Jahsh saw that, she ordered a tent to be pitched for her and it was pitched for her. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) used to proceed to his tent after the prayer. So, he saw the tents and asked, "What is this?" He was told that those were the tents of Ayesha, Hafsa, and Zainab. Allah's Apostle said, "Is it righteousness which they intended by doing so? I am not going to perform I’tikaf." So he returned home. When the fasting month was over, he performed I’tikaf for ten days in the month of Shawwal.

(His message can also be seen in Muwatta Imam Malik Book 19, Hadith 698, and numerous other reports)
The above hadith is interpreted differently by different scholars.

- Some scholars, including Imam Shafi’i, interpret it to mean that as it was not liked for the women to put their tents in the masjid (and hence better for them to do I’tikaf in their homes); the Prophet ﷺ, and consequently the Umahat ul Momineen, abandoned the I’tikaf in that Ramadan.

- However, the other scholars mention that the decision of the Prophet ﷺ might be impacted because of other factors, e.g. competition between his wives in being close to him and be with him during I’tikaf and so on.

- According to another interpretation, he disliked it as it was not solely for the love of Allah swt but to attain closeness to him ﷺ.

As Ayesha R.A. asked the permission of Prophet ﷺ before intending to do I’tikaf, the scholars derive the ruling from this that it is required for a woman to take permission from her husband or guardian when doing I’tikaf. Also, when the Umahat made the intention to do I’tikaf, their blessed husband, Rasool Allah ﷺ was with them. Though it is not a condition, it is preferred that when a woman does I’tikaf in a masjid, her husband or a guardian should be with her.
9. Putting a tent for Sunnah I’tikaf

9.1 Purpose of putting the tent:

The purpose of putting a tent (which is called Mutakaf, i.e. the place for I’tikaf) is to provide an environment where one can focus on his or her worship and prevent unnecessary interactions with others. It can also be used to eat in seclusion so that others are not disturbed because of that.

9.2 It is a Sunnah:

Consider the traditions below:

| 73. | Abu Saeed al-Khudri (Allah be pleasing with him) reported that the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) observed I’tikaf (confined himself for devotion and prayer) in the first ten (days) of Ramadan; he then observed I’tikaf in the middle ten (days) in a Turkish tent with a mat hanging at its door. He (the Holy Prophet) took hold of that mat and placed it in the nook of the tent. He then put his head out and talked with people and they came near him, and he (the Holy Prophet) said: I observed... |

وَمَعْتَمَرَ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الأَلْخَلِى، حَدَّنَا الْمُعْتَمِرُ، حَدَّنَا عُمَارَةُ بْنُ عُفْوٍ الأَنْصَارِيُّ، قَالَ سَمَّعْتُ مُحَمَّدًا بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ يُحْدِثُ عَنْ أَبِي سَلَمةَ، عَنْ أَبِي سَعْيَدِ الْخَدْرِيِّ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ - قَالَ إِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلِيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ اعْتَكَفَ الْعَشْرَ الأَوْسَطَ فِي قَبْةِ تُرْكِيَّةٍ عَلَى سُدَّةٍ حَصِيْرٍ - قَالَ فَأَخَذَ الخَصْيِرَ يَبْلُدُهُ فَنَحَاهَا فِي نَاحِيَةِ القَبْةِ ثُمَّ أَطَلَعَ رَأْسَهُ فَكَلَّمَ النَّاسَ فَذَقْنَاهَا مِنْهُ قَالَ " إِنِّي اعْتَكَفْتُ الْعَشْرَ الأَوْسَطَةُ هَذِهِ الْلِّيْلَةُ...
I’itikaf in the first ten (nights and days) in order to seek that night (Laylat-ul-Qadr). I then observed I’itikaf in the middle ten days. Then (an angel) was sent to me and I was told that this (night) is among the last ten (nights). He who among you like to observe I’itikaf should do so; and the people observed it along with him, and he (the Holy Prophet) said: That (Laylat-ul-Qadr) was shown to me on an odd (night) and I (saw in the dream) that I was prostrating in the morning in clay and water. So, in the morning of the twenty-first night when he (the Holy Prophet) got up for dawn (prayer), there was rainfall and the masjid dripped, and I saw clay and water. When he came out after completing the morning prayer (I saw) that his forehead and the tip of his nose had (traces) of clay and water, and that was the twenty-first night among the last ten (nights).

(The point about the tent can also be seen in Sunan Ibn Majah 1775 and numerous other traditions)
9.3 How was the tent of the Prophet ﷺ?

The tradition below mentions that a *Khiba* was placed for the Prophet ﷺ. *Khiba* used to be the name of one of the types of tents of the Bedouins which used to be made of *Wabir* (camel or goat fur) or wool, not of hair (from other furs). And it would have two or three posts.

| 74. | It was narrated that Ayesha R.A. said: "When the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) wanted to observe I’tikaf, he would pray Fajr then enter the place where he wanted to observe I’tikaf. He wanted to observe I’tikaf during the last ten days of Ramadan, so he commanded that a *Khiba* (tent) be pitched for him. Then Hafsah ordered that a *Khiba* be pitched for her, and when Zainab saw her tent she ordered that a *Khiba* be pitched for her too. When the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) saw that he said: 'Is it righteousness that you seek?' And he did not observe I’tikaf in Ramadan and observed I’tikaf for ten days in Shawwal (instead)."

9.4 Is it required for each Mutakif to have his own tent?

From the above hadith, we learn that a separate tent is required for each *mutakif*. 
9.5 Is putting a tent a mandatory requirement?

It is to be noted that the scholars explain that it is mustahabb to have a tent; however, it is not a mandatory condition. The masjid management can decide as required. That is the reason that though thousands of people do I’tikaf in Masjid An-Nabawi each year, tents are not put for them as doing so will constrict the place for the worshipper that come to the masjid in large numbers.

9.6 What should one do with the tent when it is not being used?

It is better to fold the tent or the curtains when there is not a need for them. Consider the tradition below.

| 75. | Umar R.A. saw some people doing I’tikaf in the masjid and they had put curtains for that. Umar R.A. disliked it and asked: What is this? They said: We put the curtains for eating our food. He said: Put the curtains when eating food, and once you are done, fold them. |
| Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah 9654 - Saheeh | حَدَّثَنَا وَكِيلَعَانُ، عَنْ سُفْيَانَ، عَنْ زِيَادِ بْنِ عَلِيَّةَ، عَنْ عُمَرَ بْنِ مَالِكٍ، أَنَّ عُمَرَ رَأَى قَوْمًا اعْتَكَفُوا فيِّ الْمَسْجِّدِ، وَقَدْ سِتَّرُوا فَانْتَكَشُوا، فَقَالَ أَيُّهَا النَّسَأُهُ عَلَى طَعَامِنَا، قَالَ: فَاسْتُثْبِرُوا فَإِذَا طَعِّمْتُمُ فَاهْتِّكُوهُ. |
10. When should one get to the masjid to begin the Sunnah I’tikaf

10.1 Before the sunset:

The time for Sunnah I’tikaf begins from the start of the 21\textsuperscript{st} night. One should therefore reach the masjid before sunset on the 20\textsuperscript{th} day of Ramadan.

Malik said, "A person doing I’tikaf should spend the night only in the masjid where he is doing I’tikaf, except if his tent is in one of the courtyards of the masjid. I have never heard that someone doing I’tikaf can put up a shelter anywhere except in the masjid itself or in one of the courtyards of the masjid. Part of what shows that he must spend the night in the masjid is the saying of Ayesha, 'When the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was doing I’tikaf, he would only go into the house to relieve himself.' Nor should he do I’tikaf on the roof of the masjid or in..."
the minaret." Malik said, "The person who is going to do I’tikaf should enter the place where he wishes to do I’tikaf before the sun sets on the night when he wishes to begin his I’tikaf so that he is ready to begin the I’tikaf at the beginning of the night when he is going to start his I’tikaf. A person doing I’tikaf should be occupied with his I’tikaf, and not turn his attention to other things which might occupy him, such as trading or whatever. There is no harm, however, if someone doing I’tikaf tells someone to do something for him regarding his estate, or the affairs of his family, or tells someone to sell some property of his or something else that does not occupy him directly. There is no harm in him arranging for someone else to do that for him if it is a simple matter." Malik said, "I have never heard any of the people of knowledge mentioning any modification as far as how to do I’tikaf is concerned. I’tikaf is an act of ibadah like the prayer and the fast and the pilgrimage and whatever is equal to them in the acts of worship."

I’tikaf - The Spiritual Retreat | 109
prayer, fasting, the hajj, and such like acts, whether they are obligatory or voluntary. Anyone who begins doing any of these acts should do them according to what has come down in the Sunnah. He should not start doing anything in them that the Muslims have not done, whether it is a modification that he imposes on others or one that he begins doing himself. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, practiced I’tikaf, and the Muslims know what the Sunnah of I’tikaf is." Malik said, "I’tikaf and jiwar are the same, and I’tikaf is the same for a village-dweller as it is for a nomad."

Muwatta Book 19, Hadith 695

10.2 After Asr prayer on the preceding day:

The hadith below indicates the acceptability of the practice of entering for I’tikaf after Asr prayer.

| 77. | Narrated Abdullah ibn Unays al-Juhani: I said to the Messenger of Allah: I have a place in the desert where I live and in which I pray, | حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ يُونُسَ، حَدَّثَنَا رَهْبَرُ، أَخْبَََنََ مََُمَّدُ بْنُ إِّسْحَاقَ، حَدَّثَنَا مََُمَّدُ بْنُ إِّبَّرَاهِيْمَ، عَنِّ ابْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ أُنْسِيِّ |
with the praise of Allah; but give me command about a night when I come to this masjid. He replied: Come on the twenty-third night. I (a sub-narrator, Muhammad ibn Ibrahim) said to his (Abdullah ibn Unays's) son: How would your father act? He replied: He used to enter the masjid when he had offered the Asr prayer and did not leave it for any purpose till he prayed the morning prayer. Then when he had prayed the morning prayer, he found his riding beast at the door of the masjid, mounted it, and got back to his desert.

Sunan Abi Dawud 1380 - Hasan

10.3 After the Fajr prayer on the preceding day:

The narration below indicates what the Prophet ﷺ did himself.

78. Ayesha (Allah be pleased with her) reported that when the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) decided to observe I’tikaf, he prayed in the morning and then went to the place of his I’tikaf, and he commanded that a tent should be pitched

I’tikaf - The Spiritual Retreat | 111
for him, and it was pitched.

He (once) decided to observe I’tikaf in the last ten days of Ramadan. Zainab (the wife of the Holy Prophet) commanded that a tent should be pitched for her. It was pitched accordingly.

And some other wives of Allah's Apostle (may peace be upon him) commanded that tents should be pitched for them too. And they were pitched.

When the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) offered the morning prayer, he looked and found (so many) tents. Thereupon he said: What is this virtue that these (ladies) have decided to acquire? He commanded his tent to be struck and abandoned I’tikaf in the month of Ramadan and postponed it to the first ten days of Shawwal.

(This message can also be seen in Sunan Abi Dawud 2464; Musannaf Ibn Abi Shayba 9740; and many other narrations)

The following hadith from Jami Tirmidhi also sheds light on how the
people of knowledge practiced on the above Sunnah.

| 79. | Ayesha narrated: "When the Messenger of Allah wanted to perform I'tikaf, he would perform Fajr prayer and then he would enter his place of I'tikaf." [Imam Tirmidhi has included an analysis of various paths of this tradition.] Some people of knowledge have acted on this practice that if one intends to do I’tikaf, he should offer the Fajr prayer and then enter the tent set up for him for I’tikaf. This is the saying of Ahmed and Ishaq Ibn Ibrahim. The other group of scholars says that when a person intends to do I’tikaf, he should be in his tent at the time when the sun of the day whose next morning he is going to be in I’tikaf sets. This is the saying of Sufyan Ath-Thawri and Malik Ibn Anas. |

Jami` at-Tirmidhi 791 – Saheeh

(This message can also be seen in Bulugh ul Maram Book 5, Hadith 700;
Sunan Abu Dawud 2465; and many other narrations)

With regards to entering the place of I’tikaf after Fajr, the scholars have offered different interpretations.

- According to one of the interpretations, which is offered by al-Qaadi Abu Ya’la, the above *ahadith* talk about the Fajr prayer of the 20th day. The Prophet ﷺ used to spend the twentieth day in the masjid too. This opinion is also mentioned by Imam Ibn Hajr in Fathul Bari.
- The other scholars, including Imam Malik, Imam Abu Haneefa, Imam al-Shafi’i, and Imam Ahmad said: he can enter (I’tikaf) any time before the sun sets if he wants to observe I’tikaf for a month or ten days. The Prophet ﷺ used to have entered the masjid any time before the start of the 21st night. He would spend the 21st night in the masjid doing worship and would go to his *mutakaf* only after the dawn of the following day (i.e. the 21st day). It is not as if he started the I’tikaf after Fajr on the 21st day; rather he was in I’tikaf from before Maghrib on the 20th day and stayed in the masjid.
11. What to do in I’tikaf

According to Shaykh Ibn Uthaymeen, the actions of a Mutakif can be divided into three categories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>80.</th>
<th>The actions of Mutakif can be divided into three types:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1) Permissible,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2) What is enjoined by Shariah and what is liked,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3) What is impermissible.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In accordance with the above, this chapter is written to provide guidance about some of the aspects related to the second type mentioned above. Other types of activities will be expanded upon in chapters 12 and 13 inshaAllah.

11.1 Allow yourself to earn more reward than doing a month of I’tikaf in the masjid of the Prophet ﷺ!

Yes, that is possible.

What you need to do in order to achieve this is to be in Khidmah and service of others. You can do this during as well as outside of I’tikaf. This is the virtue that is more beloved to Allah swt and his Messenger ﷺ then the I’tikaf. Commit yourself that you will not leave any opportunity to serve others doing I’tikaf with you and never to get angry at them. There will be opportunities when it would be easier to get angry. But control your impulses and be in the service of the people of the masjid while never
letting go of your sincere worship.

The following hadith indicates what you will get if you do so.

81. Ibn Umar reported: The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

“The most beloved people to Allah are those who are most beneficial to people. The most beloved deed to Allah is to make a Muslim happy, or to remove one of his troubles, or to forgive his debt, or to feed his hunger.

That I walk with a brother regarding a need is more beloved to me than that I seclude myself in this masjid in Medina for a month.

Whoever swallows his anger, then Allah will conceal his faults. Whoever suppresses his rage, even though he could fulfil his anger if he wished, then Allah will secure his heart on the Day of Resurrection.

Whoever walks with his brother regarding a need until he secures it for him,
then Allah Almighty will make his footing firm across the bridge on the day when the footings are shaken.”

Al-Mu‘jam al-Awsat 6192 – Saheeh

This requirement to serve others is not dependant on one’s age, stature, knowledge, or status. The more knowledge and status Allah swt has given you, the more you should be in the service of others. This is the way of the companions and the people of knowledge.

82. Ibn Asakir reported: Mujahid said: “I accompanied Ibn Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, on a journey so that I might serve him, yet it was he who served me.”

Tareekh Dimashq 57/33

11.2 Share your food with others

Imam Zuhri explains that his two main commitments in the month of Ramadan used to be the following:

83. When Ramadan used to enter, Imam Zuhri used to say: It is for the recitation of the Quran and for ‘feeding the food’ (to others from one’s acquaintances as well as those in need).

Lataif Al-Ma‘arif P. 171

If you can provide some dates to the fellow Mutakifeen with which they
can do the Iftar, it will be an additional reward for you during the I’tikaf. Consider its virtue in the hadith below:

| 84. | Zaid bin Khalid Al-Juhani narrated that: The Messenger of Allah saidﷺ: "Whoever provides the food for a fasting person to break his fast with, then for him is the same reward as his (the fasting person's), without anything being diminished from the reward of the fasting person."

| 85. | Whoever feeds a fasting person for Iftar with something to eat or drink that is earned from halal means, angels send blessings on him during Ramadan and Jibril shakes hands with him on the night of Al-Qadr.

This message can also be seen in Kashaf ul Khifa 2/352 as well as other traditions)

It is to be noted that there are different opinions among the mohaditheen regarding the authenticity of the above narration. According to some scholars, it is Daif or extremely Daif. However, Shaykh Al-Hatami Al-
Makki has classified its mention in Az-Zawajir as Hasan. Considering the generic virtue of the act of feeding others and the endorsement of this practice through authentic ahadith presented above, we should strive to act on this by feeding the fasting and hope for the reward from Allah swt and pray for it.

Scholars mention that this breaking of fast could even be with a date (as explained by Shaykh Saleh Al-Uthaymeen in his Sharh of Riyad us Salihien) or a sip of water (as mentioned in Daleel ul Faliheen 4/69 and Nuzhatul Mutaqeen 2/890).

### 11.3 Strive hard in worship

I’tikaf is a time for increasing devotion and worship. It is the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ that he used to significantly enhance his striving during the last ten days. During the I’tikaf, it should be your prime focus and objective too. I’tikaf is not a time to have excessive sleep and excessive food. One should never forget its real objective and purpose.

| 86. | It was narrated that Ayesha R.A. said: “The Prophet (ﷺ) used to strive so much hard (in worship) in the last ten nights of Ramadan as he never did at any other time (of the year).” |

Sunan Ibn Majah 1767 – Saheeh

Another version of this hadith refers to this striving as tightening one’s waistband, i.e. getting ready to embark on a mission.
87. With the start of the last ten days of Ramadan, the Prophet (ﷺ) used to tighten his waist belt (i.e., used to strive very hard) and used to pray all night, and used to keep his family awake for the prayers.

حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانٌ، عَنْ أَبِي بَعْقِيرٍ، عَنْ أَبِي الصُّحْبَةِ، عَنْ مَسْرُوقٍ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رضي الله عنها، قَالَتْ كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم إِذَا دَخَلَ الْعَشْرُ شَدَّ مِئَْزَرَهُ، وَأَيْقَظَ أَهْلَهُ.

Saheeh al-Bukhari 2024

(This message can also be seen in Saheeh Muslim 1174, 1175; Sunan Ibn Majah 1768; and numerous other traditions).

According to Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah 9544, the tightening of the waistbelt meant striving so hard in worship that he didn’t even use to go to his wives in closeness.

It is also important to note that you should also remind your family about worship on these nights and when you are not in I’tikaf and are at home, you should wake them up too as we learn from numerous traditions (e.g. Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah 9545, 9546; and so on).

According to a narration, even if there remained some slackness in the first few nights, the last seven nights should be very diligently spent in worship.

88. Ibn Umar (Allah be pleased with them) reported Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) as saying: Seek it (Laylat-ul-Qadr) in the last (ten nights). If one among you shows slackness and weakness (in the earlier...
part of Ramadan), it should not be allowed to prevail upon him in the last week.

الْعَشْرِ الأَوَّلَهَ - يَغْنِي مَلَأَةُ الْقُدُرُ - فَإِنّ
ضَعَفَ أَحَدُكُمْ أَوْ عَجَزَ فَلَا يُغْلِبَّ عَلَى
السَّبْعِ الْبَوَاقِيِّ "

Saheeh Muslim 1165e

(This message can also be seen in Musnad Ahmad 5651; Saheeh Ibn Hibban 3676; Saheeh ul Jami 1242; and so on)

11.4 Enhance Dhikr

Your remembrance of Allah swt in the solitude of I’tikaf will result in your burdens being lifted.

89. Abu Huraira reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, peace, and blessings be upon him, said: “Those in solitude have raced ahead, who are absorbed in the remembrance of Allah. Remembrance has lifted their burdens and they will come on the Day of Resurrection weightless.”

عَنْ أَبِِّ هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيهِ وَسَلَّمَ سَبَقَ الْمُفْرِّدُونَ
الْمُسْتَهْتَُّونَ فِيِّ ذِّكْرِ اللَّهِ يَضَعُ الذِِّ
عَنْهُمْ أَنْفَاقَهُمْ قِيَامُونَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ خِفَافًا

Jami` at-Tirmidhi 3596 - Hasan

If you wish to be remembered by Allah swt, engage in dhikr. When you would remember Him in seclusion, He will remember you in seclusion. When you remember Him in a gathering, He will remember you in a gathering better than yours.

90. Ibn Abbas reported: The Prophet ﷺ, peace, and blessings be upon him, said,

عَنْ ابنِ عَبَّاسِ عَنْ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ ﷺ قَالَ اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى يَا ابْنٌ
“Allah Almighty said: O son of Adam if you remember Me in solitude, I will remember you in solitude.
If you remember Me in a gathering, I will remember you in a gathering greater than the one in which you remembered Me.”

When going to I’tikaf, you can take along a book containing authentic Adhkar from the Quran and Sunnah such as Hisn ul Muslim or access it electronically for reading during I’tikaf. One should try to remember the relevant Duas and establish a connection and understanding of their meanings so that when one utters them from his tongue, his heart understands what those blessed words mean.

11.5 Connection with the Quran:
Several hadith explain an inseparable connection between the Quran and I’tikaf.

91. It was narrated that Abu Hurairah R.A. said: “The Prophet (ﷺ) used to observe I’tikaf for ten days every year. In the year in which he passed away, he observed I’tikaf for twenty days. And the Qur’an would be reviewed with him once every year.
But in the year in which he...”
passed away, it was reviewed with him twice.”

Sunan Ibn Majah 1769 – Saheeh

(This message can also be seen in Mishkat al-Masabih 2099 and numerous other traditions)

It was the practice of the aslaf to devote themselves fully to the Quran in the blessed month.

92. Imam Abdur Razzaq said: When Ramadan used to enter, Sufyan Ath-Thauri used to stop all other acts of worship and focus devotedly to the tilawah of the Quran.

قال عبد الرزاق: كان سفيان الثوري إذا دخل رمضان ترك جميع العبادة وأقبل على قراءة القرآن

Lataif Al-Ma’arif P. 171

One should therefore strive to enhance his connection and relationship during Ramadan. It is indeed Adh-Dhikr.

Dr. Israr Ahmed R.A., an extraordinary scholar of the Quran, started an excellent practice to revive this connection through Dawrat of Quran during the Ramadan in which the whole Quran is read and explained with brief commentary during the month of Ramadan. These sessions now happen in hundreds of masajid across the globe. If one has an option to do I’tikaf in a masjid where one of such Dawrat is happening, one should strive to utilize this opportunity and do the I’tikaf there.

11.6 Khushoo in Salah:

One should do the Qiyam Al-layl and offer as many voluntary prayers as possible. However, special attention should be paid to the obligatory prayers.

According to various reports, offering the Isha prayer on the Laylatul Qadr
also earns a share in the great reward of the night.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>93.</th>
<th>Ziyad related to me from Malik that he had heard that Said ibn al-Musayyab used to say, &quot;Whoever is present at isha on Laylat al-Qadr has taken his portion from it.&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Therefore, one should try, especially in the last 10 nights, to offer the prayers with an increased level of Khushoo, sincerity, and understanding. We should strive to make these prayers a spiritual exercise rather than just a ritual. We should try to ponder on the meanings of the words we utter or hear and try to let them seep in deep into our hearts.

### 11.7 Keep waiting for the next prayer

During I’tikaf, as you will be in the masjid, if you keep waiting for the next prayer, you will get the reward of being in the state of prayer as we learn from the hadith below. Therefore, after every prayer, make an intention that you are waiting for the next prayer and keep a track of time and utilize it in worship as much as possible.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>94.</th>
<th>Sahl As-Saeedi, may Allah be pleased with him, said: &quot;I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say: 'Whoever is in the Masjid waiting for the prayer, he is in a state of prayer.'&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
11.8 Complete the tarawih with the Imam

There is a great virtue in starting and finishing the tarawih with the Imam. If one does so, it is as if he has prayed the whole night. If you do it on Laylatul Qadr, it would be as if you spent the whole Laylatul Qadr in prayer. It is certainly a treasure that we cannot afford to miss.

95. It was narrated that Abu Dharr R.A. said: "We fasted with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) in Ramadan, and he did not lead us in praying Qiyam until there were seven days left in the month, when he led us in praying Qiyam until one-third of the night had passed. Then he did not lead us in praying Qiyam when there were six days left. Then he led us praying Qiyam when there were five days left until one-half of the night had passed. I said: 'O Messenger of Allah! What if we spend the rest of this night praying Nafl?'" He said: "Whoever prays Qiyam with the Imam until he finishes, Allah (SWT) will record for him the Qiyam of a (whole) night." Then he did not lead us in prayer or pray Qiyam until there were three days of the month left. Then he led us in praying Qiyam..."
when there were three days left. He gathered his family and wives (and led us in prayer) until we feared that we would miss Al-Falah. I (one of the narrators) said: "What is Al-Falah?" He said: "The suhur".

Sunan an-Nasa’i 1605 – Saheeh

In addition to the above, a mutakif should try to be in the first row for Isha and Fajr and not miss any rakah from jama’ah. There are special virtues of being in the first row. Also, note the virtue of offering Isha and Fajr prayer in the congregation.

96. It was narrated from ‘Uthman bin `Affan (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Whoever prays ‘Isha in congregation is like one who spent half the night in prayer, and whoever prays Fajr in congregation is like one who spent the entire night in prayer.”

Musnad Ahmad 409 – Saheeh

11.9 Pray Qiyam ul Layl in Addition to Taraweeh

In some masajid, additional Qiyam ul Layl (in addition to tarawih) is organized in the latter parts of the night. If this opportunity is available in your masjid, take benefit from it as the Qiyam at that time is more virtuous and highly rewarded.
97. Jabir reported Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) as saying: If anyone is afraid that he may not get up in the latter part of the night, he should observe Witr in the first part of it; and if anyone is eager to get up in the last part of it, he should observe Witr at the end of the night, for prayer at the end of the night is witnessed (by the angels) and **that is preferable**.

98. Abu Huraira reported Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) as saying: Our Lord, the Blessed and the Exalted, descends every night to the lowest heaven when one-third of the latter part of the night is left and says:

> Who supplicates Me so that I may answer him? Who asks Me so that I may give to him? Who asks Me forgiveness so that I may forgive him?

Recite the dua mentioned in the hadith below after the Qiyam or when
you go to offer the congregation for the Fajr prayer:

99. 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas R.A. said, "When the Prophet ﷺ, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, prayed the night prayer, and finished his prayer, glorifying Allah as he deserves, he said at the end of it, 'O Allah, give me a light in my heart and give me a light in my hearing and give me a light in my sight. Give me a light on my right and a light on my left and give me a light in front of me and a light behind me and increase me in light. Increase me in light, and increase me in light.'"

11.10 Strive for Dua in the last part of the night

As we mentioned above, I’tikaf is the time to strive in worship; and worship’s real essence is the dua as reported by Anas ibn Malik R.A.: The Prophet ﷺ, peace and blessings be upon him, said, “Supplication is the essence of worship.” (Jami Tirmidhi 3371). You should, therefore, make as much dua as possible during I’tikaf. It can be done at any time; however,
the depth of the night is the time of acceptance and you should not miss this opportunity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>100.</th>
<th>Abu Huraira reported Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) as saying: Our Lord, the Blessed and the Exalted, descends every night to the lowest heaven when one-third of the latter part of the night is left and says: Who supplicates Me so that I may answer him? Who asks Me so that I may give to him? Who asks Me forgiveness so that I may forgive him?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Saheeh Muslim 758a** | حَدَّثَ نَّا يََْيََ بْنُ يََْيََ، قَالَ قَرَأْتُ عَلَى مَالِّكٍ عَنِّ ابْنِ شِّهَابٍ، عَنْ أَبِِّ عَبْدِ اللَِّّّ اللَّّْ، وَعَنْ أَبِِّ سَلَمْةٍ بْنِ عَبْدِ الرَّحَْْنِّ، عَنْ أَبِِّ هُرَي ْرَةَ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَِّّّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ: “يُنْزِّلُ رَبُّنَا تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالََ كُلَّ لَي ْلَةٍ إِِّلََ السَّمَاءِ الدُّن ْيَا حِّيََّ ي َب ْقَى ثُلُثُ اللَّيْلِّ الأَخِّرُ فَأَسْتَجِّيبَ لَهُ وَمَنْ يَسْأَلُنِِّ فَأُعْطِيَهُ وَمَنْ يَسْتَغْفَرُنِِّ فَأَغْفِلَهُ”.

101. | Abu Umamah narrated: It was said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, which supplication is most likely to be listened to?’ He said: ‘(During) the last part of the night, and at the end of the obligatory prayers.’” He (Imam Tirmidhi) said that this hadith is Hasan. It is narrated from Abu R.A. and Ibn Umar R.A. from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: Dua |
| **Saheeh Muslim 758a** | حَدَّثَ نَا مََُمَّدُ بْنُ يََْيََ الث َّقَفِّيُّ ا لْمَرْوَزِّيُّ، حَدَّثَ نَا حَفْصُ بْنُ غِّيَاثٍ، عَنِّ ابْنِ جُرَيْجٍ، عَنْ ابْنِ سَابِّطٍ، عَنْ أَبِِّ أُمَامَةَ، قَالَ قِّيلَ ياَ رَسُولَ اللَِّّّ أَىُّ الدُّعَاءِّ أَسَْْعُ قَالَ "جَوْفُ اللَّيْلِّ الآخِرُ وَذُبُرُ الصَّلَوَاتِ المُكْتُوبَاتِ." قَالَ هَذَا حَدِيثٌ مَحَمَّدٌ بْنُ يََْيََ التَّقَفِّيُّ الْمُرْؤُيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا حَفْصُ بْنُ غِيَاثٍ، عَنِّ ابْنِ جُرَيْجٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ سَبِيطٍ، عَنْ أَبِِّ أُمَامَةَ، قَالَ قِيلَ فِيَّ نَا رَسُولُ اللَّهُ أَيْ الدُّعَاءُ أَصْمَعَ قَالَ "جَوْفُ اللَّيْلِّ الآخِرُ وَذُبُرُ الصَّلَوَاتِ المُكْتُوبَاتِ." قَالَ هَذَا حَدِيْيثٌ حَسَنٌ. وَقَدْ رَوَى عَنْ أَبِِّ ذَرٍِ وَابْنِّ عُمَرَ عَنِّ النَّبِيِِِّّ صلى الله عليه}
in the later part of the night is better and more preferred (or a wording similar to this).

وسلم أَنَّهُ قَالَ "جَوْفُ اللَّيْلِ الآخِرُ الدُّعَاءُ فِيهِ أَفْضَلُ أوَّلَهُ أوَّلَهُ " أوُّرَ حَََهُ.  

Jami` at-Tirmidhi 3499 – Daif

11.11 Make benefit of the Laylatul Qadr

One of the beautiful aspects about I’tikaf is that one of the nights during your stay in I’tikaf would be Laylatul Qadr. You should therefore strive to take the most benefit from it and obey the following command from the Prophet ﷺ.

102. Narrated `Ayesha: Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) used to practice I’tikaf in the last ten nights of Ramadan and used to say, "Look for the Night of Qadr in the last ten nights of the month of Ramadan."

(This message can also be seen in Saheeh Bukhari 2017; Muwatta Imam Malik Book 19, Hadith 701; Saheeh Muslim 1169; Jami Tirmidhi 792; and so on)

In this section, we have summarized some of the ahadith concerning Layltul Qadr.

11.1.1 The meaning of Al-Qadr:

The scholars explain various meanings for the word Qadr and its relation with this night:
- The word Qadr conveys the meaning of virtue or superiority. In this night, the people attain virtue and reward due to their obedience and hence is called the night of virtue. Also, the angels of high superiority, including Jibril A.S. come down on earth, and hence it is called the night of Qadr.
- Another meaning of the word Qadr is constriction or tightness. This happens on the night of Al-Qadr because of the very high number of angels on earth.
- The word Qadr has the same root as the word ‘taqdeer’ which means ‘fate’. It is this night in which the matters of what is going to happen in the coming year are informed to the angels who are made responsible for their execution.
- The word Qadr and the word Qudrah have the same root too. Qudrah means capability. It is this night in which Allah swt shows His immense capability through the descent of angels, mercy, and barakah.

11.1.2 Virtues of laylatul qadr

Past sins are forgiven:

Laylatul Qadr is an opportunity to get past sins forgiven. It is the time when the earth gets filled with the blessed angels. What better opportunity could be there to exert an effort to attain forgiveness than to be in one of the houses of Allah swt for nothing but devotion to Him alone.

| 103. | Narrated Abu Huraira R.A.: I heard Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) saying regarding Ramadan, "Whoever prayed at night in it (the month of Ramadan) out of sincere Faith and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his previous sins will be... |

— *Hadith from Sahih Bukhari*
Narrated Abu Huraira: The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Whoever fasted the month of Ramadan out of sincere Faith (i.e. belief) and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his past sins will be forgiven, and whoever stood for the prayers in the night of Qadr out of sincere Faith and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his previous sins will be forgiven."

(The above message about the sins being forgiven because of fasting, qiyam or Laylatul Qadr can be seen in numerous traditions including Saheeh Bukhari 35, 37, 38, 1901, 2009; Saheeh Muslim 759a, 759b, , 760a, 760b; Sunan Nasai 1603, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2210, 5024, 5025, 5026, 5027, 5032; Sunan Ibn Majah 1326, 1328, 1641; Sunan Abu Dawud 1371, 1372; Muwatta Imam Malik Book 6 hadith 248; Jami Tirmidhi 683, 808; and so on).

The scholars mention the mutual relation between these acts as a safety net. Any weakness in fasting will be taken care of by a sincerely done Qiyam. Any weakness in Qiyam will be taken care of by the worship on Laylatul Qadr. All this is put in place for us that we do not exit the month of Ramadan without attaining forgiveness.

**The reward of worship: More than a 1000 years**

Another virtue of Laylatul Qadr is that Allah swt has made it better than a
thousand months. This is the virtue that is mentioned in Surah Al-Qadr). This night, therefore, is an opportunity for us to attain in a night the reward that the previous generations used to achieve in many decades. The following narration points out this aspect too (though Shaykh Saleem Hilali has reported an Inqita or disconnection in its isnad; the virtue, however, is proven by the Quran itself.)

105. Ziyad related to me from Malik that he had heard a man he trusted of the people of knowledge say:

"The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was shown the lifespans of the people (who had gone) before him, or what Allah willed of that, and it was as if the lives of the people of his community had become too short for them to be able to do as many good actions as others before them had been able to do with their long lives, so Allah gave him Laylat al-Qadr, which is better than a thousand months."

A Daif hadith regarding the virtue of this night

It is to be noted that there are some Daif ahadith too about the virtues of Laylatul Qadr. Due to weaknesses in their chains and contradictions with
what is proven from Saheeh ahadith, they cannot be considered as evidence.

The following is one of such Daif narrations. The above-mentioned virtues are more than enough for a believer to strive to spend this night in worship.

| 106. | The Prophet of Allah ﷺ said: Be mindful of what I (am going to) tell you; the most virtuous angel is Jibril, the most virtuous Prophet is Adam A.S., the most virtuous day is Jumuah, the most virtuous month is Ramadan, the most virtuous night is Laylatul Qadr, and the most virtuous woman is Maryam bint Imran. | حدثنا إبراهيم بن نائيلة الأصبهايني ثنا شببان بن فروخ ثنا نافع أبو هرمز عن عطاء بن أبي رباح عن بن عباس رضي الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أخبركم بأفضل الملائكة جبريل عليه السلام وأفضل النبيين آدم وأفضل الأيام يوم الجمعة وأفضل الشهور شهر رمضان وأفضل النساء مريم بنت عمران |

| 11.1.3 Make a dua that you are not deprived of it |

It is mentioned in various reports that one who is deprived of Laylatul Qadr is really deprived. Scholars explain that this can happen due to various reasons. One of the reasons could be persistence on some sin or being engaged in the acts that call upon the wrath of Allah swt. The manner in which one gets deprived can be in various forms.

- It could be because of one’s choice of worshiping in some nights only and missing others whereas Laylatul Qadr might have fallen in the nights he did not make benefit of.
- It could also be because of some unforeseen situation coming up leaving a person unable to make any benefit from this night. If the
latter happens and the situation is unavoidable, we should at least try to remain engaged in dhikr as much as possible so that we do not become from those people who are really deprived.

- One can also be deprived of the goodness of this night in a way that he remains engaged in his life of sin and remain oblivious and indifferent to these beautiful and blessed moments.

We should make sincere repentance and do dua that we should not be among those who are deprived of making benefit of this blessed night.

Note the tradition below.

| 107. | The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: The month of Ramadan has come upon you. It is the month of barakah. Allah swt has made its fasting obligatory upon you. In this, the doors of Jannah are opened and the doors of hell are closed. Every devil is chained up in this. In this, there is a night that is better than a thousand months. **Whoever is deprived of its goodness is really deprived.** |

(Qالَّ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم  أتَكم شهرٌ رمضانَ ، شهرٌ مبارکَ ، فرض اللهُ عليكم صيامه ، تفتحُ فيه أبواب الجَنَّةِ ، وتَغلَق فيه أبواب الجحيم ، وُبَّأْلَ فيه مرَّةُ الشياطين ، وفيه ليلةٌ خيرٍ من ألف شهر . فُقَد حُرْمَ خِيرَها  

Saheeh ul Jami 55 – Saheeh

(This message can also be seen in Sunan An-Nasa'i 2106; Sunan Ibn Majah 1644; and other narrations).

### 11.1.4 When is Laylatul Qadr

**The exact date is not known**

The exact date of the *Laylatul Qadr* was shown to the Prophet ﷺ in a dream. However, he was made to forget the exact date. Consider the
traditions below in this regard. We will firstly present two relevant traditions and then explain their interpretation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>108.</th>
<th>Abu Huraira (Allah be pleased with him) reported Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) as saying: I was shown Laylat-ul-Qadr; then some members of my family awoke me up, then I was caused to forget it. So seek it in the last week. Harmala said: (The Prophet did not say:&quot; I was made to forget,&quot; but he stated):&quot; But I forgot it.&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Consider the tradition below as well. This explains that the following incident happened after he woke up. It is because of this that the exact date of Laylatul Qadr is not known and that there are various opinions held by companions about it.

| 109. | Narrated 'Ubada bin As-Samit: The Prophet (ﷺ) came out to inform us about the Night of Qadr but two Muslims were quarreling with each other. So, the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "I came out to inform you about the Night of Qadr but such-and-such persons were quarreling, so the news |
The two above-mentioned *ahadith* are interpreted by scholars in the following two ways (as explained by Imam Ibn Hajr Al-Asqalani in *Fathul Bari*):

- One of the possible interpretations of the two *ahadith* above is that the *Laylatul Qadr* was shown to the Prophetﷺ twice. He forgot it once due to a quarrel between the people and the second time when his family woke him up. It shows that Allah swt did not want this matter to be disclosed.

- The other interpretation is that these are not two separate incidents but one. In one of them, more detail is provided than the other. According to this interpretation, the *Laylatul Qadr* was shown to the Prophetﷺ in his dream. His family then woke him up. Upon that, he saw an incident (as mentioned in the above hadith, i.e. a quarrel between two people) because of which he was made to forget the exact date.

**The wisdom behind the exact date not being known**

The scholars explain that there is immense wisdom and hikmah in the exact date of *Laylatul Qadr* not being known. A couple of important points in this regard are as follows:

- It is one of the pearls of wisdom of our *Deen* that for the events that we need to be always prepared for, the exact dates and time are not informed to us. There is a moment on the day of Jumuah when the duas are accepted; however, the exact time of that moment is not informed so that we can strive in worship more and more and benefit ourselves. The same is the case with death. It should never be out of our sight. It can come at any time. We should always be
prepared for it and not leave or delay that preparation to a specific time. Similarly, none of us know when the Qayamah would come. We cannot say that it or one of its major signs will not be seen by us in our lifetime. Therefore, we should expect that it can come anytime, and accordingly we should remain prepared for it. In the same manner, the exact date of Laylatul Qadr is not made known to us. That is an opportunity for us to attain the love of Allah swt through our devotion throughout Ramadan, in general, and especially the last ten nights. The number of good deeds that we can accumulate in this manner is much more than if we were to worship in only one night.

- Had the precise date being known, it would have been ungratefulness on behalf of us had we not spent this night in worship. It is accordingly a mercy from Allah swt that even if we miss one night, we can exert efforts in the other.

With this brief context, let us now review some of the opinions held by the companions about the date of Laylatul Qadr. It is to be noted that this is not a comprehensive list of all the relevant ahadith. However, it provides a fair overview of the diversity of opinions in this regard.

**Opinion: It could be any night in Ramadan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>110.</th>
<th>Narrated 'Abd Allah bin 'Amr: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was asked about Laylatul Qadr and I was hearing: He said: It is during the whole of Ramadan. Abu Dawud said: Sufyan and Shu'bah narrated this tradition from Abu Ishaq as a statement of Ibn 'Umar himself, they did not transmit it as a saying of the</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>110.</td>
<td>حدَّثَنَا حَمَّادُ بْنُ زَيْدَةَ النَّسَائِيُّ، أَخْبَََنََ سَعِيَّةَ بْنُ أَبِِّ مَرْيَمََ، حَدَّثَنَا تَمْعَدُّ بْنُ جَعْفَرِ بْنِ أَبِِّ كَثِّيٍْ، أَخْبَََنََ مُوسَى بْنُ عُقْبَةَ، عَنْ أَبِِّ إِسْحَاقَ، عَنْ سَعِيَّةَ بْنِ عُقْبَةَ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَِّّّ بْنِ عُمَرَ، قَالَ سُئِّلَ رَسُولُ اللَِّّّ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَأَنََ أَسَْْعُ عَنْ لَي ْلَةِّ الْقَدْرِّ ف َقَالَ &quot; هِّيَ فِيِّ كُلِِّ رَمَضَانَ &quot; . قَالَ أَبُو دَاوُدُ رَوَاهُ سُفْيَانُ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prophet (ﷺ)</td>
<td>وقال ابْنُ أَبِِّ إِّسْحَاقَ مَوْقُوفًا عَلَى ابْنِ عُمَرَ لَّْ ي َرْف َعَاهُ إِلََ النَّبيِِِّّ صلى الله عليه وسلم.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sunan Abi Dawud 1387 – Daif Marfu, Saheeh Mawqoof

(The classification of this hadith indicates that it is the saying of Ibn Umer R.A. which is incorrectly attributed to the Prophet ﷺ)

**Opinion: It is in the last 10 nights**

| 111. | Ayesha (Allah be pleased with her) and Ibn Numair reported Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) as saying: Look for (and in the words of Waki, seek) Laylat-ul-Qadr in the last ten nights of Ramadan. |

Saheeh Muslim 1169

**Opinion: It is in the first few nights in the last Ashara**

In the narration below, it is mentioned that the moon on the night of Laylatul Qadr appeared to be like a piece of plate. Which indicates that it would have been from the first few nights in the last ten days.

| 112. | Abu Huraira (Allah be pleased with him) reported: We were talking about Laylat-ul-Qadr in the presence of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and he said: He who amongst you... |

I’titaf - The Spiritual Retreat | 139
Opinion: It is in the odd nights in the last 10 days

113. It was narrated that Ibn `Abbas R.A. said: `Umar R.A. said: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: “Whoever among you is seeking Laylatul Qadr, let him seek it in the odd-numbered nights of the last ten days of Ramadan.

Musnad Ahmad 298 – Hasan

(This message can also be seen in Saheeh al-Bukhari 2016, and so on)

Opinion: It is the 21st night

114. Abu Salama reported: 'We discussed amongst ourselves Laylat-ul-Qadr. I came to Abu Saeed al-Khudri (Allah be pleased with him) who was a friend of mine and said to him:

Would you not go with us to the garden of date trees? He went out with a cloak over
him. I said to him: Did you hear the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) making mention of Laylat-ul-Qadr?

He said: Yes, (and added) we were observing I’tikaf with the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) in the middle ten days of Ramadan and came out on the morning of the twentieth and the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) addressed us and said:

I was shown Laylat-ul-Qadr, but I forgot (the exact night) or I was caused to forget it, so seek it in the last ten odd (nights), and I was shown that I was prostrating in water and clay. So he who wanted to observe I’tikaf with the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) should return (to the place of I’tikaf). He (Abu Saeed al-Khudri) said: And we returned and did not find any patch of cloud in the sky.

Then the cloud gathered and there was (so heavy) a downpour that the roof of the masjid converged and then rained down that the roof of the masjid converged and then rained down that the roof of the masjid converged and then rained down that the roof of the masjid converged and then rained down that the roof of the masjid converged and then rained down.
the masjid which was made of the branches of date-palms began to drip. Then there was prayer and I saw the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) prostrating in water and clay till I saw the traces of clay on his forehead.

Saheeh Muslim 1167d

(This message can also be seen in Saheeh al-Bukhari 2016, 2018, 2027; and many other narrations)

Opinion: It is the 22nd or 23rd night

115. Narrated Abdullah ibn Unays R.A.: I was present at the gathering of Banu Salamah, and I was the youngest of them. They (the people) said: Who will ask the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) for us about Laylat al-Qadr? That was the twenty-first of Ramadan. I went out and said the sunset prayer along with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). I then stood at the door of his house. He passed by me and said: Come in. I entered (the house) and dinner was brought for him. I prevented myself from taking food as it was
insufficient. When he finished his dinner, he said to me: Give me my shoes. He then stood up and I also stood up with him. He said: Perhaps you have some business with me. I said: Yes. Some people of Banu Salamah have sent me to you to ask you about Laylat al-Qadr. He asked: Which night: Is it tonight? I said: Twenty-second. He said: This is the very night. He then withdrew and said: Or the following night, referring to the twenty-third night.

Sunan Abu Dawud 1379 - Hasan

**Opinion: It is in the last seven nights**

116. Ziyad related to me from Malik from Abdullah ibn Dinar from Abdullah ibn Umar that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said:

"Search for Laylat al-Qadr in the last seven days."

Muwatta Imam Malik Book 19, Hadith 702

The last seven days and nights are extremely important as their status has been further emphasized in the hadith below.
117. Ibn Umar (Allah be pleased with them) reported Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) as saying: Seek it (Laylat-ul-Qadr) in the last (ten nights). If one among you shows slackness and weakness (in the earlier part of Ramadan), it should not be allowed to prevail upon him in the last week.

> وَحَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ يُونُسَ، حَدَّثَنَا رَهْبُورُ، أَحْمَدُ بْنُ إِسْحَاقَ، حَدَّثَنَا مَحْمُودُ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنِّ ابْنِ عُيْبَدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ أَنْسِيِّسِ الجُهَنِّ، عَنْ آيِهِ، قَالَ فَلْتُ بِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ إِنْ لَيْ بَنَادِيَةَ أَكُونَ فِيهَا وَأَنَا أُصَلِّي فِيهَا بِحَمْدِ اللَّهِ ﷺ مُثْقِلًا، يُرْفِعُهَا إِلَى هِذَا الْمَسْجِدِ. فَقَالَ " أَرْوَلُ لِيَلَّةٌ ثَلَاثٍ."

Saheeh Muslim 1165e

In this regard, the hadith of Abu Dhar R.A. is also important. In that, he mentioned that he asked a lot of questions to the Prophet ﷺ about this night. When he insisted to know the exact date, the Prophet ﷺ did not like it and advised him to search it in the last week (Saheeh Ibn Hibban 3683).

Opinion: It is the twenty-third night:

118. Narrated Abdullah ibn Unays al-Juhani: I said to the Messenger of Allah: I have a place in the desert where I live and in which I pray, with the praise of Allah; but give me command about a night when I come to this masjid. He replied: Come on the twenty-third night. I (a sub-narrator, Muhammad...
Ibn Ibrahim) said to his (Abdullah ibn Unays's) son: How would your father act? He replied: He used to enter the masjid when he had offered the afternoon prayer and did not leave it for any purpose till he prayed the morning prayer. Then when he had prayed the morning prayer, he found his riding beast at the door of the masjid, mounted it, and got back to his desert.

Sunan Abu Dawud 1380 – Hasan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinion: It is the 24th night of Ramadan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>119. Narrated Ibn <code>Abbas: Messenger (ﷺ) said, &quot;The Night of Qadr is in the last ten nights of the month (Ramadan), either on the first nine or in the last (remaining) seven nights (of Ramadan).&quot; Ibn </code>Abbas added, &quot;Search for it on the twenty-fourth (of Ramadan).”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Saheeh al-Bukhari 2022
### Opinion: It is the 27th night

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinion: It is the 27th night</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>120.</strong> Zirr (b. Hubaish) reported: heard from Ubayy b. Ka'b a statement made by 'Abdullah b. Mas'ud in which he said: He who gets up for prayer (every night) during the year will hit upon Laylat-ul-Qadr. Ubayy said: By Allah I there is no god but He, that (Laylat-ul-Qadr) is in Ramadan (He swore without reservation:) By Allah, I know the night; it is the night on which the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) commanded us to pray. It is that which precedes the morning of twenty-seventy and its indication is that the sun rises bright on that day without rays.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Saheeh Muslim 762a*

Numerous companions have been reported to have seen dreams in which the 27th night was shown as *Laylatul Qadr*.

| 121. Narrated Ibn `Umar: Some men amongst the companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) were shown in their dreams that the night of Qadr was in the last seven nights |

*Hadith*: He who gets up for prayer (every night) during the year will hit upon Laylatul Qadr.

*Saheeh Muslim 762a*
of Ramadan. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "It seems that all your dreams agree that (the Night of Qadr) is in the last seven nights, and whoever wants to search for it (i.e. the Night of Qadr) should search in the last seven (nights of Ramadan).

Saheeh al-Bukhari 2015

Also, consider the tradition below:

| 122. | Nu'am bin Ziyad Abu Talhah said: "I heard An-Nu'man bin Bashir on the minbar in Hims saying: "We prayed Qiyam with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) during Ramadan on the night of the twenty-third until one-third of the night had passed, then we prayed Qiyam with him on the night of the twenty-fifth until one-half of the night had passed, then we prayed Qiyam with him on the night of the twenty-seventh until we thought that we would miss Al-Falah- that is what they used to call suhur." |

Sunan an-Nasa'i 1606 – Hassan
According to Musannaf Abdur Razzaq 7679, Abdullah Ibn Abbas R.A. said to Umar R.A. that the Laylatul Qadr is either the seventh night of the previous Ashra or the seventh night of the coming Ashra (i.e. the 27th). The logic that he based on his opinion was the emphasis on number seven in various aspects of the creation; there are seven skies and seven earths, which have been created in seven days; man does sajdah on seven body parts; When on the spiritual journey of hajj, people do seven tawafs of the Kaaba and through seven pebbles at the pillar of satan when in Mina. Based on this, he gave preference to the 17th or 27th night. Umar R.A. is reported to have agreed with his thinking on the matter.

Opinion: It keeps moving among the last ten nights

Another group of scholars explains that the reports which mention a particular date for Laylatul Qadr explain about the laylatul Qadr in the particular year when that statement was made. They hold the opinion that this night rotates within the last ten nights. Consider the tradition below.

123. Abi Qalabah said: Laylatul Qadr rotates in the last 10 nights (i.e. it can be a different night each year)

Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah 9025

(This message can also be seen in Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 7699)

The above is the opinion of the majority of scholars including the Shafi’is (Al-Majmu 6/450), Hanbalis (Al-Insaf 3/354), Malikis (Ash-Sharh Al-Kabeer wa Hashia Ad-Dasooki 1/551), and many other people of knowledge (Fath ul Qadeer 2/389).

At this point, there can be confusion that when the Quran was revealed on a particular night, how could this night be a different night each year. The following two interpretations can help us remove this confusion:
- The *laylatul Qadr* rotates every year. In the year when the Quran was revealed, it was Laylatul Qadr for that year. It, therefore, does not mean that it cannot be a different night of Ramadan in the following years.
- The night in which the Quran was revealed is called Laylatul Qadr. However, the celebration of this night in the subsequent years varies on different nights as per the will of Allah swt.

**A summary of various opinions about Laylatul Qadr:**

As we have seen above, there are various opinions among companions and early generations regarding when the night of Al-Qadr exactly is. Various reports are attributed to the Prophet ﷺ, the companions and the early generations regarding certain dates. Some scholars have counted more than forty different opinions. It is not possible to cover all of them in this book; however, we have included a summary of the relevant opinions (including the ones that have been mentioned above as well as those which have not been) as found in some of the major books of hadith. This is followed by a brief overview of our preferred position.

(Note: If a hadith mentions multiple dates, it is mentioned multiple times)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinion</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It could be any night during Ramadan</td>
<td>Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah 9528, 34, 7707, 7708, 7709 (the last three narrations also negate those who might believe that the <em>Laylatul Qadr</em> was only occurred once in the time of the Prophet ﷺ; it keeps coming every Ramadan); Sunan Abu Dawud 1387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is the 17th night</td>
<td>Sunan Abi Dawud 1384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is a night in the last Asharah</td>
<td>Saheeh Bukhari 2020; Muntaqal Akhbar 1783, Almam 698; Jami` at-Tirmidhi 792, 794; Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah 9525; Musannaf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Night Type</td>
<td>Sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is one of the odd nights in the last Ashrah</td>
<td>Saheeh Bukhari 2021, 2022; Muntaqal Akhbar 1779, 1781, 1782, 1783, Musannaf Ibn Abi Shayba 9538, 9542; Musannaf Abdur Razzaq 7681; Sunan Abu Dawud 1375, 1381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is one of the odd nights in the last Asharah or the last night of Ramadan</td>
<td>Jami Tirmidhi 794; Saheeh al-Bukhari 2017; Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah 9527; Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah 9532, 9539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is the 17th or 27th night</td>
<td>Musannaf Abdur Razzaq 7679</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is the 17th, 21st, or 23rd night</td>
<td>Musannaf Abdur Razzaq 7697; Sunan Abu Dawud 1384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is the 19th night</td>
<td>Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah 9531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is the 19th, 21st, or 23rd night</td>
<td>Musannaf Abdur Razzaq 7696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is the 14th, 19th, 21st, or 23rd night</td>
<td>Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah 9529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is the 21st, 23rd, or 25th night</td>
<td>Almam 697; Sunan Abu Dawud 1383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is the 21st Night</td>
<td>Muntaqal Akhbar 1777, Almam 698; Saheeh Bukhari 2016, 2018; Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 7685; Sunan Abu Dawud 1382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is the 23rd Night</td>
<td>Muntaqal Akhbar 1778, Almam 699; Musnad Ahmad 793 (this narration mentioned that the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Laylatul Qadr is when the moon is like a half dish); Sunan Abi Dawud 1384; Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah 9523, 9526, 9537, 9540, 9541; Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 7686, 7687, 7688, 7689, 7690, 7691, 7692, 7693, 7694, 7695

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>It is the 24th Night</th>
<th>Saheeh al-Bukhari 2022; Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 7698 (mentions about Hasan Basri’s observation of sun in the last 10 days of Ramadan for 20 years; he concluded that the laylatul Qadr is the 24th night)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is the 22nd, 24th, or 26th night</td>
<td>Muntaqal Akhbar 1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is the 27th night</td>
<td>Muntaqal Akhbar 1773, 1774, 1775, 1776; Sunan Abi Dawud 1378, 1386; Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah 9530; Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah 9533, 9536; Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 7688, 7693, 7700, 7706; Sunan Abu Dawud 1386; Muajjam As-Shagheer Li Tabarani 374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is from the last 7 nights</td>
<td>Muntaqal Akhbar 1781, 1782; Saheeh al-Bukhari 2015 (dream of various companions); Sunan Abu Dawud 1385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It rotates every year</td>
<td>Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 7699</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above, we can see that the opinions are very diverse. There are some dates which have got a very high probability that they might be Laylatul Qadr, i.e. 21st, 23rd, and 27th.

However, as it cannot be said with certainty that which date it is, one should strive for worship in all ten nights. We should make a routine of certain acts of worship and certain good deeds that we should do in all of these ten nights and then follow them accordingly. We should not miss
**taraweeh** throughout Ramadan in general and specifically in the last ten nights. We should do some dhikr and read Quran each night. We should give something in charity each night. We should never miss the Isha and Fajr salah in the congregation as their reward is equivalent to the whole night in Ibadah. Imagine the reward of these deeds once or a few times each night being multiplied by the reward of doing them for more than a thousand months. It is something that the sinners like us cannot afford to miss. It is very much possible that this night might rotate among the last 10 nights every year and accordingly we should not leave any chances for missing it out.

A sample checklist for the minimum set of activities for each of the last ten nights in Ramadan:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>21st night</th>
<th>22nd night</th>
<th>23rd night</th>
<th>24th night</th>
<th>25th night</th>
<th>26th night</th>
<th>27th night</th>
<th>28th night</th>
<th>29th night</th>
<th>30th night</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Isha in Jama’ah</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete Tarawih with Imam</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read at least ¼ of a juz'</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read tafseer for 30 min</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donate a dollar*</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do dhikr/salawat for 30 min</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make dua</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pray 13 Rakah (including Witr) at the time of Suhoor</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* If one is not able to donate because of a financial situation, one can make up for that through Dhikr and being in the service of others.

Table: Minimum recommended routines for the last ten nights

Was the Prophet ﷺ reminded about the date of Laylatul Qadr later on?

From the tradition below, it seems as if the Prophet ﷺ might have been reminded about the exact date of Laylatul Qadr. However, he did not
disclose it for the greater benefit of the ummah. According to Imam Al-Haithami, the hadith below is classified as Hasan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hadith Number</th>
<th>Narrator</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>124.</td>
<td>Abdullah Ibn Unays R.A.</td>
<td>Abdullah Ibn Unays R.A. mentions that he asked: O Messenger of Allah? Please inform me about the night in which I should seek Laylatul Qadr. He ﷺ said: If people would not have left their salah (in qiyam) till that night, I would have informed you.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Majma Al-Zawaid 3/181 - Hasan

### 11.1.5 Signs of Laylatul Qadr

There are certain signs mentioned in the narrations by observing which one can try to find Laylatul Qadr. Several traditions indicate the scholars of early generations used to pay special attention to observing these signs.

**The night is neither too hot nor too cold**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hadith Number</th>
<th>Authority</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>125.</td>
<td>Ibn Abbas</td>
<td>On the authority of Ibn Abbas, may God be pleased with him, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: Laylat al-Qadr is a bright and peaceful night, neither hot nor cold, the sun on its morning rises without much rays.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Shub ul Iman 5475 - Saheeh
The characteristics of the Sun on the day after Laylatul Qadr

The sun on the next day of Laylatul Qadr does not come with blistering radiations as we learn from numerous traditions including the one above. Consider the following tradition as well which emphasizes this point.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>126.</th>
<th>Zir Ibn Hubaysh said that he heard his father saying: 27th night is Laylatul Qadr whose sign the Prophet ﷺ told us to be that the sun on the next day to it is whitish and bright at the time when it rises.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 127. | Zirr (b. Hubaish) reported: I heard from Ubayy b. Ka'b R.A. a statement made by 'Abdullah b. Mas'ud R.A. in which he said: He who gets up for prayer (every night) during the year will hit upon Laylat-ul-Qadr. Ubayy said: By Allah, there is no God but He, that it (Laylat-ul-Qadr) is in Ramadan. (He swore without reservation:) By Allah, I know the night; it is the night on which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ commanded us to pray. It is that which

| Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah 9533 |
|---|---|
| **126.** | حَدَّثَنَا إِبْنُ إِدْرِّيسَ، عَنِّ الْجْلَحِّ، عَنْ زِّرِِّ بْنِّ حُبَّيْشٍ، قَالَ: سَِّْعْتُ أُبََّا، يَقُولُ: لَيَلَّةُ الْقَدْرِ هِّيَ سَبْعَ وَعِشْرُونَ، هِّيَ لَيَلَّةُ أَيَّامُنَا بَيْنَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلِّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، أَنَّ الشَّمْسَ تُطْلُعُ بِضَيَاءَ تَرَقُّ رَقُّ. |
| **127.** | حَدَّثَنِِّ عَبْدَةُ، عَنْ زِّرِِّ، قَالَ سَِّْ عْتُ أُبََّ بْنَ كَعْبٍ، يَقُولُ: وَقِيلَ لَهُ إِِنَّ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ بْنَ مَسْعُودٍ يَقُولُ مَنْ قَامَ السَّنَةَ أَصَابَ لَيَلَّةَ الْقَدْرِ، فَقَالَ أُبٌَّ وَاللَّهِ الَّذِي لَآ إِلَّا هُوَ إِنَّمَا لَيَلَّةُ رَفْضِانَ، يَخْلُفُ ما يَسْتَثْنَى، وَوَلَّهَ إِيَّالَلَّهِ لَأَعْلَمُ أَيُّ لَيَلَّةٌ هِيَ. حَدَّثَنِِّ مََُمَّدُ بْنُ مِّهْرَانَ الرَّازِّيُّ، حَدَّثَنِِّ الْوَلِّيدُ بْنُ مُسْلِمٍ، حَدَّثَنِِّ الْوَلِّيدُ بْنُ مُسْلِمٍ، حَدَّثَنِِّ عَبْدَةُ، عَنْ زِّرٍِّ، قَالَ سَِّْ عْتُ أُبََّ بْنَ كَعْبٍ، يَقُولُ: أَنَّ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ بْنَ مَسْعُودٍ يَقُولُ مَنْ قَامَ السَّنَةَ أَصَابَ لَيَلَّةَ الْقَدْرِ، فَقَالَ أُبٌَّ وَاللَّهِ الَّذِي لَآ إِلَّا هُوَ إِنَّمَا لَيَلَّةُ رَفْضِانَ، يَخْلُفُ ما يَسْتَثْنَى، وَوَلَّهَ إِيَّالَلَّهِ لَأَعْلَمُ أَيُّ لَيَلَّةٌ هِيَ. حَدَّثَنِِّ مََُمَّدُ بْنُ مِّهْرَانَ الرَّازِّيُّ، حَدَّثَنِِّ الْوَلِّيدُ بْنُ مُسْلِمٍ، حَدَّثَنِِّ الْوَلِّيدُ بْنُ مُسْلِمٍ، حَدَّثَنِِّ عَبْدَةُ، عَنْ زِّرٍِّ، قَالَ سَِّْ عْتُ أُبََّ بْنَ كَعْبٍ، يَقُولُ: أَنَّ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ بْنَ مَسْعُودٍ يَقُولُ مَنْ قَامَ السَّنَةَ أَصَابَ لَيَلَّةَ الْقَدْرِ، فَقَالَ أُبٌَّ وَاللَّهِ الَّذِي لَآ إِلَّا هُوَ إِنَّمَا لَيَلَّةُ رَفْضِانَ، يَخْلُفُ ما يَسْتَثْنَى، وَوَلَّهَ إِيَّالَلَّهِ لَأَعْلَمُ أَيُّ لَيَلَّةٌ هِيَ.
The emphasized (bold text) wording in the Arabic text indicates that this sign will be seen at the time of sun-rise. The same message can be seen in Sunan Abu Dawud 1378 and other narrations.

**Possibility of rain:**

Based on several narrations that mention that the Prophetﷺ saw rain on *Layltul Qadr* in his dream and that he was doing *sujood* in the mud, some scholars consider this to be one of the signs too that there might be rain or drizzling on that night.

The following narration is also provided as evidence for this opinion. However, the last part of it is not proven authentically:

| 128. | The Prophetﷺ is reported to have said: Seek *Laylatul Qadr* in the last ten days of Ramadan during the odd nights. Indeed I was shown this night and then I was made to forget about it (i.e. its exact date). This is the night when there is rain and wind (or there was rain and wind) or, drizzling and rain. |

---

*Takhreej Al-Musnad Ahmed 20930 – Saheeh except for the last part*
There are no meteors on that night

| 129. | *Laylatul Qadr* is a bright night, which is neither too hot nor too cold, in this night the meteors are not thrown. A sign of its day (i.e. the day following it) is that the sun rises without any scorching radiance. |
| Saheeh ul Jami 5472 - Saheeh |

The moon on that night is brighter:

The scholars translate the words *ليلَةُ بلجة* which appear in several traditions to mean ‘a bright night’. They say: إنها ليلة بلجة -أي: منيرة (this night is Baljah, i.e. bright). We can, therefore, understand that one of the signs of that night would be that it would be brighter than the usual nights. The following narration comes with more explicit wording:

| 130. | The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: I was shown the *Laylatul Qadr* and was made to forget about it. It is in the last ten days of Ramadan. It is a bright and peaceful night which is neither too hot nor too cold. The moon that night is very high in brightness as compared to other stars. The demon of this night does not come out till the dawn. |
| Saheeh Ibn Hibban 3688 - Hasan Li Ghayrihi |
With regards to this last sentence, there are various wordings reported in narrations. For example, the version in Musnad Ahmed mentions لا يحل للشيطان أن يخرج معها يومئذ (it is not permitted for Satan that he come out with it at that time). In the narration of Ibn Abi Hatim, the wording mentioned is لا يرسل فيها شيطان ولا يحدث داء (the satan is not let out in this night and not allowed to spread ailment). In order to explain the mention about the absence of Shaytan of nights, consider the explanation by Imam Ibn Hajr. He explains this point by mentioning a narration from Ibn Masood R.A. that the sun rises between the horns of Satan every day (Ibn Abi Shayba 3/75-76). However, on the day following Laylatul Qadr, this is not allowed and even this Satan has no access or influence on people (Fath ul Bari 4/227). The knowledge about the exact location of this satan and its condition is not known to us from any traditions.

**The moon on this night is like a half plate**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>131.</th>
<th>Abu Huraira (Allah be pleased with him) reported: We were talking about Laylat-ul-Qadr in the presence of the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) and he said: He who amongst you remembers (the night) when the moon arose and it was like a piece of a plate (at the fag end of the month in a state of waning).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

وَحَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَبَّادٍ، وَابْنُ أَبِِّ عُمَرَ، قَالََ حَدَّثَنَا مَرْوَانُ، - وَهُوَ الْفَزَارِّيُّ عنْ يَزِّيدَ، - وَهُوَ ابْنُ كَيْسَانَ، عَنْ أَبِِّ حَازِمٍ، عَنْ أَبِِّ هُرَي ْرَةَ، رضى الله عنه قَالَ تَذَاكَرْنََ لِيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِّ عِّنْ دَ رَسُولِّ اللَِّّّ صلى الله عليه وسلم ف َقَالَ " أَيُّكُ مْ يَذْكُرُ حِّيََّ طَلَعَ الْقَمَرُ وَهُوَ مِّثْلُ شِّقِِّ جَفْنَةٍ ".

Saheeh Muslim 1170

Some signs that people look for but they have no basis:

Imam At-Tabarani and other scholars have mentioned what some people believe to be the signs of Laylatul Qadr but there is no basis for them. This
includes:

- The trees on that night bend down so much that they touch the earth and then they go back to their original position. (Some scholars who believe this to be a sign mention that this sign is not an observable sign but a hidden one. In their opinion, it can only be seen by the people of kashaf i.e. the ones upon whom the inner realities have been exposed. However, there is no clear, original, and authentic text in our knowledge that conveys such meaning or mentions such a sign)

- The seawater tastes sweet on that night. (This sign is related from some of the stories of people in which they shared their experience on these nights)

- The dogs do not bark on that night (unless provoked)

- The noor enters every house on that night, even in the places of darkness

- According to some narrations, there are no clouds, rain, or wind on this night. Imam Suyuti graded it as acceptable (Al-Jami us Sagheer 7708); however, upon a detailed investigation of the report, Imam Albani classified it as Daif and included it in Silsila Adh-Daifa no. 4404.

11.1.6 What happens on Laylatul Qadr:

Angles descend on earth:

Allah swt tells us in the Quran:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>إنّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِيِّ لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ</th>
<th>مَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ</th>
<th>لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرَ مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>إِنِّي أَنْزَلْتُهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ كُلُّ يَوْمٍ كَمِّ الْيَوْمِ ۖ فَلَا تَخْفَفْنَاءِن عِنْدَ رَبَّكُم مِّن كُلِّ شَيْءٍ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Surely, We sent it (the Qur'an) down on the Night of Honour. And what makes you know what the Night of Honour is?

The Night of Honour is better than a thousand months. The Angels and the Spirit descend therein by their Lord's leave for every affair.
Peace! It is till the rising of the dawn.

**Surah Al-Qadr 97:1-5**

The scholars explain the word ‘rooh’ in the above ayat refers to Jibril A.S.

On that night, the angels descend in extremely high number as we learn from the narration below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>132.</th>
<th><em>Laylatul Qadr</em> is the twenty-seventh or twenty-ninth night; It is a night in which the number of angels on earth is more than the number of pebbles.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Laylatul Qadr</em> is the twenty-seventh or twenty-ninth night; It is a night in which the number of angels on earth is more than the number of pebbles.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Silsila Ahadith Saheeha 2205 – Hasan

The descent of the angels is a source of blessings for the believers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>133.</th>
<th>The angels descend along with <em>barakah</em> and <em>rahmah</em>.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The angels descend along with <em>barakah</em> and <em>rahmah</em>.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tafseer Ibn Kathir (Tafseer of Surah Al-Qadr)

**Angels shake hands with the worshippers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>134.</th>
<th>Anas R.A. reported the Messenger of Allah ﷺ as saying that when <em>Laylatul Qadr</em> comes Gabriel descends with a company of angels who invoke blessings on everyone who is standing or sitting and remembering God Who is The Great and The Glorious. Then when their festival day comes, i.e.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anas R.A. reported the Messenger of Allah ﷺ as saying that when <em>Laylatul Qadr</em> comes Gabriel descends with a company of angels who invoke blessings on everyone who is standing or sitting and remembering God Who is The Great and The Glorious. Then when their festival day comes, i.e.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

وَعَنْ أَنَسَ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: "إِذَا كَانَ لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ نَزَّلَ جَبْرِيلُ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ ﷺ أَنْ يُصَلُّنَّ عَلَى كُلِّ عَبْدٍ قَائِمٍ أَوْ قَاعِدٍ يَذْكُرُ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ" فَإِذَا كَانَ يُومُ فِطْرِهِمْ بَيْعَتُهُمْ يُنْبِئُهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ مَا جَزَاءُ أَجِيٍّ
the day when they break their fast, God speaks proudly of them to His angels saying, “My angels, what is the reward of a hired servant who has fully accomplished his work?” They reply, “Our Lord, his reward is that he should be paid his wage in full.” He swt says, “My angels, My male and female servants have fulfilled what I have made obligatory for them, and then have come out raising their voices in supplication. By My might, glory, honour, high dignity, and exalted station, I will certainly answer them.” Then He says, “Return, for I have forgiven you and changed your evil deeds into good deeds.” He said that they then return having received forgiveness.

37 This shows the importance of saying takbeerat on Eid. We should teach this to our children and also let them make this supplication to Allah swt to bless them with the reward mentioned in this narration, i.e. the sins being replaced by good deeds.
The matters for the coming year are written in that night

Allah swt tells us in the Quran:

Ha'. Mim. By the Clear Book. We revealed it on a Blessed Night, for We were intent on warning. (We revealed it on the Night) wherein every matter is wisely determined by Our command. Verily, We were set to send a Messenger, as a Mercy from your Lord. Surely, He is All- Hearing, All-Knowing.

Surah Ad-Dukhan 44:1-6

Maulana Maududi explains the above ayat as follows: “[In this night,] the angels and the Spirit (Angel Gabriel) descend in it with every decree, by the leave of their Lord. This shows that it is such a night in the divine administration of Allah in which He decides the destinies of the individuals and nations and countries and entrusts His decisions to His angels, who then implement them accordingly. Some commentators among whom Ikrimah is most prominent, have been involved in the misunderstanding that this is the 15th night of Shaban, for in some traditions it has been said that the destinies of people are decided during that night. But Ibn Abbas, Ibn Umar, Mujahid, Qatadah, Hasan Basri, Saeed bin Jubair, Ibn Zaid, Abu Malik, Dahhak, and many other commentators agree that this is the same night of Ramadan, which has been called Laylat-ul-qadr, for the Quran itself has stated this, and where any Quranic statement exists, no other view can be formed based on random reports.”

11.1.7 Some recommended practices for Laylatul Qadr:

In addition to the acts described about I’tikaf in general, the following acts of worship can be emphasized during Laylatul Qadr.

Perform ghusl:
It is recommended that one should take ghusl for Ibadah on Laylatul Qadr (as per Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 7688, 7701, 7705). However, for the Mutakif it is not recommended to do so every night unless there is a valid shari’i reason (as explained in chapter 12). One can also perform ghusl before Maghrib in order to be ready for the night at the Maghrebi time.

**Put on perfume:**

One should perfume himself (as per Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 7688)

**Have milk in Iftar:**

One should include milk in Iftar in the last 10 nights (as per Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 7701) if it is possible without any hardship. We understand this recommendation to be about what one should be consuming after breaking the fast with a date or water when the time for Maghrebi prayer starts. It is because there are numerous Saheeh ahadith which mention that the fast should be broken with dates or water (e.g. Jami Tirmidhi 695).

**Have a light Iftar:**

In the last ten nights, one should only do a light Iftar so that he does not become heavy or sleepy during the night. He should then meet his requirements for food at the time of Suhoor so that he could have energy for the rest of the day. Consider the narration below:

135. Abdullah Ibn Shuraykh said: I saw Zirr bin Hubaish that when Hajjaj was standing on a minber and was talking about Laylatul Qadr that some people talk about this night, he (Zirr) wanted to assault on him (in anger over his ignorance that was apparent in his speech). People stopped him from...
doing so. Zirr said: It is the 27th night. Whoever finds it, he should take bath, his Iftar should be on milk; rather he should delay his iftar till suhoor.

Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 7701

In our interpretation of the above tradition (and others which mention about delay Iftar till Suhoor), the intended meaning is to break the fast with something light (e.g. have a glass of milk) and do not eat to one’s full. It is for the purpose of keeping oneself light so that it is easy for him to worship the whole night.

**Make lots of dua:**

The importance of dua in this night is also highlighted through the narration below:

136. Sufyan Ath-Thauri said: The Dua in this night is more beloved to me than the voluntary prayer.

Lataif Al-Ma’arif 2/337

Scholars explain that the above statement means that the dua is better than that voluntary salah that is void of a heartfelt dua. If the optional salah is offered and a lot of dua is made in it, it is considered even better.

One can make dua for all the halal and tayyib things. However, the command of the Prophet ﷺ was to strive in dua for forgiveness and peace in this world and the next as we learn from the tradition below.

137. It was narrated from Ayesha that she said: "O Messenger
of Allah ﷺ, what do you think I should say in my supplication, if I come upon Laylatul-Qadr?” He said: "Say: O Allah, You are Forgiving and You love forgiveness, so forgive me."

Sunan Ibn Majah 3850 – Saheeh

(This message can also be seen in Jami Tirmidhi 3513; Mishkat al-Masabih 2091; Takhreej Siyaru A'lam Al-Nubala'i 9/345; and several other traditions)

Do the Qiyam

138. Narrated Abu Huraira: The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Whoever fasted the month of Ramadan out of sincere Faith (i.e. belief) and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his past sins will be forgiven, and whoever stood for the prayers in the night of Qadr out of sincere Faith and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his previous sins will be forgiven."

Saheeh al-Bukhari 2014

Do not be among these four

This night is the night of forgiveness. You should make Tauba from all the sins on this night. You should sincerely repent so that your sins do not become a barrier to your forgiveness.
139. It is mentioned in the Marfu report (i.e. whose chain goes up to the Prophet ﷺ) from Ibn Abbas R.A.: On the Laylatul Qadr, Allah swt looks at the believers and gives them forgiveness and mercy except four: the one who is addicted to alcohol, the one who puts obstacles (in the path of goodness), the quarrelsome, and the one who cuts the ties of kinship.

Lataif Al-Ma’arif P. 205 - Daif

11.2 *Sadaqa* every day:

The reward of charity in Ramadan increases manifolds by the will of Allah swt. When in I’tikaf, try to give something in charity every day, even if it is a coin a day. Allah swt increases the reward of what is given in His noble cause manifolds based on the sincerity with which it is given. If one is not able to afford this, one should engage in *Dhikr* and helping others as an alternate means of getting a great reward from the blessed moments.

140. Ibn 'Abbas said (may Allah be well pleased with him and his father): ‘Allah’s Messenger (Allah bless him and give him peace) was the most generous of humankind in charity, and he was at his most charitable in the month of Ramadan until it was concluded.
Gabriel would then come to him and present the Qur’an to him, and when Gabriel met him, Allah’s Messenger (Allah bless him and give him peace) was more generous in charity than the winds sent with showering rain.”

ástَّتَّ حَي َنْسَلِّخَ، فَيَأْتِّ يهِّ جِّبَِّْلُ، فَيَعْرِّضُ عَلَيْهِّ الْقُرْآنَ، فَإِّذَا لَقِّيَهُ جِّبَِّْلُ كَانَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلِّى اللهُ عليه وسلَّم، أَجْوَدَ بَالْحَيْبِ مِنَ الرُّيحِ المُؤْسِلَةِ.

11.3 Ibadah on the last night of Ramadan

In addition to Laylatul Qadr, another night of great significance is the last night of Ramadan as it is the time for the payment of the wages for devotees.

The Messenger of Allah mentioned the virtues of Ramadan which also included: Allah swt grants forgiveness on the last night in Ramadan. It was asked from him: O Messenger of Allah, Is it Laylat al-qadr? He replied, “No, but a workman is paid his full wages only when he has finished his work.”

(This message can also be seen in Musnad Ahmed 15/41; Mishkat al-Masabih 1968; Nal Al-Awtar 6/36; Daif ut Targheeb 586; At-Targheeb Wa At-Tarheeb 2/112; Majma Az-Zawaid 3/143; and so on)
When you are in I’tikaf, you are in the companionship of the Most High. It is, therefore, very important to understand the manners of this companionship.

142. Abu al-Husayn reported: Abu al-Husayn al-Hiri⁵⁸, may Allah have mercy on him, said, “Companionship with Allah Almighty is to have good manners, to always be reverent, and to be mindful. Companionship with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, peace and blessings be upon him, is to follow his Sunnah and adhere to the outward rulings (i.e. matters of fiqh). Companionship with the allies of Allah is to respect and to serve them. Companionship with one’s family and children is to

³⁸ Abu Uthman Al-Hiri was a third century scholar from Nisabur. He was a renowned mohadith who compiled his own sunan collection of ahadith. Imam Shams ud Din Ad-Dahabi (the author of Siyar A’lam Al-Nubala) mentions him as “Al-Shaykh, Al-Imam, Al-Mohadith, an exemplary Wa’idh (preacher), and Shaykhul Islam”. Imam Hakim An-Nisaburi said about him: “Our shhuyukh have no disagreement on the matter that Abu Uthman was the one whose prayers we were always answered. He was the one with whom there always used to be an assembly of worshipers and ascetics”.

I’tikaf - The Spiritual Retreat | 167
have good character. Companionship with one’s brethren is to always be joyful and cheerful unless there is sin. Companionship with the foolish is to supplicate for them (for their guidance), to be merciful to them, and to appreciate the blessings of Allah upon you as you have been kept safe from their trials.”

Sifat al-Safwah 2/302

In accordance with the rights of companionship mentioned in the saying above, this chapter has been dedicated to the manners, ethics, recommendations, and prohibitions for I’tikaf. It is to be noted that most of the conditions specified in this section apply to the Sunnah I’tikaf. However, some of them apply to all forms of I’tikaf (e.g. sleeping in the masjid and so on).

12.1 What a mutakif CAN do:

12.1.1 Going out to relieve oneself:

143. Yahya related to me from Malik that he had asked Ibn Shihab whether someone doing I’tikaf could go into a house to relieve himself.

He said, "Yes, there is no harm in that." …

Muwatta Book 19, Hadith 695

Also, note the narration below which emphasizes the same point.
It is reported from Ayesha that she observed:

When the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) was in I’tikaf, he inclined his head towards me and I combed his hair, and he did not enter the house but for the natural calls (for relieving himself).

This remained the practice of the companions too that they never left the masjid except for relieving themselves or another unavoidable valid shara’i reason.
12.1.2 Sleeping in the masjid

Sleep is a basic human need. There is no prohibition of sleeping in the masjid during I’tikaf.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>146.</td>
<td>It was narrated from Ibn ‘Umar that: When the Prophet (ﷺ) observed I’tikaf, his bedding would be spread for him, or his bed would be placed there for him, behind the pillar of Repentance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>147.</td>
<td>It was narrated that Ibn ‘Umar R.A. said: &quot;We used to sleep in the mosque at the time of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sleeping in masajid is also permitted outside of I’tikaf:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>146.</td>
<td>حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَيْثُرٍ، حَدَّثَنَا ْعَيْمُ بْنُ نُعَيْمُ، حُدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ مُسَى، عَنْ عُمَرَ بْنِ مُوسَى، عَنْ نَافِعٍ عَنْ أَبِي عُمَرٍ، عَنْ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم، أَنَّهُ كَانَ إِذَا اعْتَكَفَ طُرِّحَ لَهُ فِرَاشُهُ أَوْ يُوضَعُ لَهُ سَرِيرٌ وَأَصْطُوَانُةٌ التَّوْبَةِ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>147.</td>
<td>حَدَّثَنَا إِسْحَاقُ بْنُ مَنْصُورٍ، حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ نُعَيْمٍ، عَنْ عُبَيْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ عُمَرَ، عَنْ نَافِعٍ عَنْ أَبِي عُمَرٍ، قَالَ كُنَّا نَامُ فيِّ الْمَسْجِدِ عَلَى عَهْدِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ صلى الله عليه وسلم.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12.1.3 Going out to bring food:

The ahadith explain that one can go out of the masjid for حاجة الإنسان (i.e. basic human needs). According to Ibn Qudamah R.A., as mentioned in Al-Mughni, one can go out to bring food for himself if there is no one else who can deliver it for him. However, one should not spend excessive time doing so.
It is also to be noted that for the people who are not doing the I’itikaf, it is highly desired that they should take of the needs of the people who are doing I’itikaf. It was a regular practice of Uthman Ibn Affan R.A. that he used to encourage I’itikaf by freeing people from the worry of arranging food\(^\text{39}\) during I’itikaf as he used to provide it for them. It would be highly virtuous if we follow this Sunnah of one of the beloved companions of our beloved Masterﷺ.

### 12.1.4 Eating

Eating inside the masjid is permitted in ordinary days as well as during the I’itikaf.

| 148. | It was narrated that ‘Abdullah bin Harith bin Jaz’ Az-Zubaidi said: “At the time of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) we used to eat bread and meat in the masjid.” |

Sunan Ibn Majah 3300 - Saheeh

### 12.1.5 Talking to others

A *mutakif* can talk to others while observing I’itikaf.

However, one should not engage in excessive talk as it would otherwise become a source of deviation from the objective and purpose of I’itikaf.

---

\(^{39}\) Al-Siyasatil Maliyyah Li Uthman Ibn Affan P. 83,84
One should take guidance from the hadiths below.

| 149. | It was narrated from Abu Hurairah that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: “Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him say something good, or else remain silent.” |
| 150. | Ibn Abbas narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Tawaf around the House is similar to Salat except that you talk during it. So whoever talks in it, then let him not say but good." Imam Tirmidhi says that this hadith has been narrated by Ibn Tawus and others from Tawus from Ibn Abbas R.A. in a mawqoof manner (i.e. its chain stops at Ibn Abbas R.A. and does not elevate up to the Prophet (ﷺ)). He said: We do not know of this hadith except the narration of Atta Ibn As-Saib. However, a lot of people of knowledge have acted upon it and they considered is Mustahabb for the person doing the tawaf to not talk except in case of... |
need or for the remembrance of Allah swt or for (seeking or sharing) knowledge.

\[
\text{Jami` at-Tirmidhi 960 - Hasan}
\]

We can therefore say that one can talk if there is a need or for participating in good things. Vain talk, however, should be absolutely avoided as it is against the very aims that fasting is prescribed for.

151. Al-Sha’bi reported: Umar ibn al-Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, said, “Fasting is not merely from food and drinks alone. Rather, it is from lies, falsehood, vain talk, and swearing.”

\[
\text{Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah 8882}
\]

12.1.6 Teaching and Learning

Some scholars of the early generations preferred to dedicate the time of I’tikaf for personal striving in Ibadah and used to stop their teaching and learning activities. For example, the Maliki scholars held the opinion that it is not permissible during I’tikaf to engage in teaching and learning just like how it is not permissible to do so during Salah and tawaf or the house of Allah swt. Other scholars, however, continued to engage in teaching and learning during I’tikaf and even considered it more virtuous than personal Ibadah. Consider the following:

152. It is permissible (for a Mutakif) to read the Quran or read other material and to teach knowledge or to learn as all of this is an increase in

\[
\text{وَيْتَحِبُّ أنْ يَقُرِّرَ الْقُرْآنَ وَيُقْرِرَ غَيْرَهُ وَيُدَرِِّسَ الْعِّلْمَ وَيُدَرِِّسَ غَيْرَهُ لَِّْنَّ ذَلِّكَ كُلَّهُ زِياَدَةُ خَيٍْْ لََ يُتَْْكُ بِّهِّ شَرْطر مِّنْ شُرُوطِّ}
\]
goodness and none of it violates the conditions of I’titkaf.

**Al-Majmu Li Imam Nawawi 6/527**

Imam Shafi’i even considered teaching and learning to be superior to voluntary prayers:

153. It is permissible for Mutakif that he reads the Quran or is read to by others, and that he teaches or is taught. There is no dislike in this during I’titkaf. Imam Shaifa’i and our companions said that this is even better than *nafil* / voluntary salah as engaging in the process of learning is a Fadh Kifayah; therefore it is more virtuous than the *nafil* prayers.

The reason for this is that it results in the correctness of salah and other acts of worship. Its benefits for the people are also many.

Many *ahadith* mention the virtues of being busy in seeking or teaching knowledge over the virtues of *nafil* salah.

**Al-Majmu Li Imam Nawawi 6/528**

In addition, consider the narrations below.
Narrated Kathir ibn Qays:
Kathir ibn Qays said: I was sitting with Abu Darda' in the masjid of Damascus. A man came to him and said: AbudDarda, I have come to you from the town of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) for a tradition that I have heard you relate from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). I have come for no other purpose. He said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say:

If anyone travels on a road in search of knowledge, Allah will cause him to travel on one of the roads of Paradise. The angels will lower their wings in their great pleasure with one who seeks knowledge, the inhabitants of the heavens and the Earth and the fish in the deep waters will ask forgiveness for the learned man. The superiority of the learned man over the devout is like that of the moon, on the night when it is full, over the rest of the stars. The learned are the heirs of the Prophets, and the Prophets leave
neither dinar nor dirham, leaving only knowledge, and he who takes it takes an abundant portion.

### Sunan Abi Dawud 3641 – Saheeh

**155. Mutrif Ibn Abdullah Said:**
The virtue of knowledge is more than the virtue of Ibadah; virtuous is your blessed *Deen*.

قال مطرف بن عبد الله الشخير: فضل العلم خير من فضل العبادة، وخير دينكم الوعر

### Manaqib Ash-Shafi’i P.97

**156. Abu Hurairah R.A. narrated:**
The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: There is no better way to worship Allah swt then to attain the deep knowledge of religion (*fiqh*). The *Faqeeh* (a person of deep knowledge) is harder (or heavier) on Shaytan than a thousand worshippers. Everything has a pillar (that withholds it and keeps its structure intact); the pillar of this religion is *fiqh*. Therefore, Abu Hurairah R.A. said: If I sit for an hour so that I learn (or gain knowledge of *fiqh*), I consider it more beloved than staying awake the whole night (in worship) till morning.

*كَذَٰلِكَ قَالَ عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَٰنِ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ - يُلَمْعِنُّ نَمَزُّهُ مُتْرِفُ الأَشْرَى، مَعْيَنُهُ سَلِيمَةُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ بْنُ غَالِبٍ، مَرْحُوُّ بْنُ هَارُوُنَ, عَنْ يَزِّيْدٍ بْنِ عِيَاضٍ، عَنْ صَفْوَانَ بْنِ سُلَيْمٍ, عَنْ سُلَيْمَانٍ بْنِ يَسَارٍ, عَنْ أَبِِّ هُرَيْرَةَ, عَنِّ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, قَالَ: مَا عُبِّدَ اللَّهُ بِشَيْءٍ أَفْضَلَ مِّنْ فِّقْهٍ فيِّ دَيْنٍ وَلَفَقِيِّهْر أَشَدُّ عَلَى الشَّيْطَانِ مِّنْ أَلْفِّ عَابِّدٍ, وَلِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِمَّادٍ, وَعِمَّادٌ هذَا الدِّينِّ الْفِقْهُ. فَقَالَ أَبُو هُرَيْرَةَ: لَنَّ أَجْلِسَ سَاعَةً فَأَفْقَهُ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْنِ مَنْ أَنْ أُحْيِيَ لِيَبْلُوُّنِي الْغَدَاءَ*
A similar opinion is also narrated from other companions including Ibn Abbas R.A. as mentioned in Al-Mudkhal Ila Al-Sunan Al-Kubra of Imam Bayhaqi (no. 459, 460), Ibn Masood R.A. (no. 461); and so on. It is also narrated about Abdullah Ibn Abbas R.A. that he used to consider seeking knowledge to be the best form of worship after the obligatory acts (Al-Madkhal 466). The same is also narrated from a number of scholars of the early generation and we, therefore, consider that there is a significant basis to hold this opinion.

Based on the above, in our humble opinion, the preferred position is that there is no prohibition for the Mutakif to engage in teaching and learning the beneficial knowledge.

12.1.7 Washing or sewing one’s clothes:

InshaAllah, there is no harm in this provided it is on a need basis and not to pass time or as a profession.

| 157. | Hajjaj mentioned about Atta that he did not see any problem in a Mutakif washing his clothes or sewing them. |

Musannaf Ibn Abi Shayba 9696

12.1.8 Taking bath

In this chapter, we have mentioned a hadith from Ayesha R.A. which explains that Ayesha R.A. used to wash the blessed head of the Prophet during I’tikaf. At that time the Prophet used to be in the masjid while she used to be in her hujrah in the state of menstruation (i.e., she could not enter the masjid). Imam Bukhari has brought that hadith (Saheeh al-Bukhari 2030, 2031) under the chapter of ‘The taking of a bath by a Mutakif’ (باب غسل المعتكف). This indicates his opinion in this regard.

The scholars have expressed various opinions regarding the mattering of taking a bath during I’tikaf.
With regards to mandatory ghusl, there is no disagreement that it is allowed to go out and take ghusl (i.e. in the case of janabah). If there is a Ghusl facility in the masjid, then the mutakif must perform Ghusl there. However, if there is no such facility in the masjid, or it is not possible to make Ghusl in the facility for some reason, or if there is extreme hardship involved in doing so (e.g. for the elderly or disabled), then one may perform Ghusl in one’s home if it is nearby (or at another suitable location).

According to the other group of scholars, the hadith about the Prophet getting his head washed is a piece of evidence that doing ghusl (for purposes other than Janabah too) in I’tikaf is not prohibited. They accordingly allow a person to go for Ghusl if the place for that is available within the broader masjid boundaries. It can become unhygienic to not have ghusl for ten days. This is as per the fatwa issued by Mufti Abdul Qayyum Hazarwi, Mufti Amjad Aazami, and others. According to Fatawa Ashab ul Hadith (p. 228) too, one can take bath during I’tikaf, put oil in his head and also put on perfume. However, scholars prohibit that there has to be some basis for it and it should not purely be for leisure.

According to the Hanafi jurists, one can go for a quick ghusl on Friday (without spending excessive time in doing so) if one is NOT in the state of wudhu. According to them, it would invalidate the I’tikaf if one was already in the state of wudhu and took ghusl - as in that case there was not a shara’i need for ghusl (except in the state of Janabah due to wet dream in which case there is an agreement that one can go out to take bath for that). This is according to the Fatawa issued by (or under the supervision of) the scholars of Jamia Islamiyyah Binori Town Pakistan; Mufti Taqi Uthmani; Moulana Yusuf Laher from South Africa; Shaykh Faraz Rabbani and others from the Hanafi school of thought. They also allow certain other means of washing oneself within the masjid boundary (e.g. by putting a large tub and sitting in it in a manner that its water does not fall in masjid; and so on).
We have explained our preferred position on this matter in chapter 13 where we have explained the importance of personal hygiene (section 13.3)

### 12.1.9 Putting Perfume

**Permissibility for men to put perfume:**

The position of Imam Malik regarding this point is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>158.</th>
<th>Imam Malik said: There is no problem in Mutakif putting perfume.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>عَنْ مَالِّكٍ قَالَ: لََ بََْسَ بًِّلطِِّيب لِلْمُعْتَكِّفِ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 8106</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Though there is a report from Muammar that he disliked for the Mutakif to put perfume (Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 8105), the above seems to be the more correct position in our humble opinion.

**Permissibility for women to put perfume:**

If women put perfume during I’tikaf, it will not break their I’tikaf; however, it is considered as disliked as we learn from the tradition below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>159.</th>
<th>Ibn Juraij R.A. reported that Atta R.A. said: There is no problem in marrying a woman who is in her I’tikaf (whoever, her husband should not kiss her or touch her with pleasure till the time she comes out of I’tikaf and vice versa). Ibn Juraij said: Atta was asked: Can she put on some perfume and decorate herself? He</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>عَنِّ ابْنِ جُرَيْجٍ، عَنْ عَطَاءٍ قَالَ: لََ بََْسَ بَُّنْ تُنْكَحَ الْمُجَاوِّرَةُ فيِّ جِّوَارِّهَا، قَالَ ابْنُ جُرَيْجٍ: وَسُئِّلَ عَطَاءَ أَتَطَيَّبُ الْمُعْتَكِّفَةُ، وَتَََشُّعَ؟ فَقَالَ: لََ، أَرَيدُ أَنْ يُقَعَ عَلَي ْهَا زَوْجُهَا؟ فَقَالَ: فَقُعُّلَتْ، أَيْقَطَعُ ذَلِّكَ جِّوَارَهَا؟ قَالَ: لََ، وَلََِّّ تَفْعَلُ ذَلِّكَ، وَهِّيَ فيِّ عِبَادَةٍ، وَتَََشُّعَ؟ إِنَّمَا طِبَّ الْمَرْأَةُ، وَزِينَتَهَا لِزَوْجِهَا</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I’tikaf - The Spiritual Retreat | 179
said: No, does she want her husband to enter upon her? He was asked: If she does so (i.e. put on perfume and decorate herself), would it break her I’tikaf. He said: No, but why would she do that when she is engaged in an act of worship and is in Khushoo? Indeed the perfume and decoration of a woman are only for her husband.

Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 8104

Numerous traditions prohibit women from perfuming in a way that the men are attracted to them because of it. Also, it is prohibited for them to come to masjid when they have put on perfume as it can become a cause of disturbance and distraction (as we learn from Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 8112, 8113, 8114, 8115; and many other narrations).

12.1.10 Delegating some responsibilities of business or trade

Directing others to do certain tasks on your behalf is considered permissible. However, one should keep in mind that it is not consistent with the purpose and objective of I’tikaf to remain indulged in worldly matters.

160. ...A person doing I’tikaf should be occupied with his I’tikaf, and not turn his attention to other things which might occupy him, such as trading or whatever. There is no harm, however, if someone doing I’tikaf tells
someone to do something for him regarding his estate, or the affairs of his family, or tells someone to sell some property of his or something else that does not occupy him directly. There is no harm in him arranging for someone else to do that for him if it is a simple matter."

\[
\text{فَلاَ تَأَسِّسْ يَدَلُّكَ إِذَا كَانَ حَقِيقًا أَنَّ يَأْمُرُ يَدَلُّكَ مِنْ يُكْفِيهِ إِبَاءَةً}
\]

Muwatta Book 19, Hadith 695

12.1.11 Inquiring about someone’s health:

According to a narration in Muwatta, Imam Malik very strongly denounced going out of masjid for inquiring about the sick or following the funerals. However, there is an exception to this general ruling which has been mentioned in several narrations. The hadith below explains how Ayesha R.A., while being in I’tikaf, used to inquire about the health of any family members who used to be sick. According to this tradition, it is permitted to inquire about their health if one passes by them without stopping over.

161. 'Amra daughter of 'Abd al-Rahman reported: Ayesha, wife of the Apostle of Allah (may peace be upon him) observed: When I was (in I’tikaf), I entered the house for the call of nature, and while passing (i.e., without stopping) I inquired after the health of the sick (in the family), and when the
Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) was (in I’tikaf), he put out his head towards me, while he himself was in the masjid, and I combed his hair, and he did not enter the house except for the call of nature so long as he was In I’tikaf; and Ibn Rumh stated: As long as they (the Prophet and his wives) were among the observers of I’tikaf.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>12.1.12 Doing Nikah</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>According to the following narration from Muwatta Imam Malik, nikah during I’tikaf is permissible as long as one does not indulge in marital contact with the spouse to take pleasure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 162. | Malik said, "There is no harm in someone who is in I’tikaf to go to a sick person to inquire about his health or whether he should go in Janazah or not as explained above. Some of the opinions in this regard can be seen in Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 8049 to 8064. Some of the scholars from the early generations permitted it while others did not. However, the safer opinion is that one should avoid going out for these purposes during the Sunnah Muakadda I’tikaf. However, one does not have any restriction in case of other forms of I’tikaf if he intends to go out of the masjid for these purposes unless one puts such a restriction on himself as a vow. |
I’tikaf entering into a marriage contract as long as there is no physical relationship. A woman in I’tikaf may also be betrothed as long as there is no physical relationship. What is haram for someone in I’tikaf concerning his womenfolk during the day is haram for him during the night."

Yahya said that Ziyad said that Malik said, "It is not halal for a man to have intercourse with his wife while he is in I’tikaf, nor for him to take pleasure in her by kissing her, or whatever. However, I have not heard anyone disapproving of a man, or woman, in I’tikaf getting married as long as there is no physical relationship. Marriage is not disapproved of for someone fasting."

"There is, however, a distinction between the marriage of someone in I’tikaf and that of someone who is *muhrim*, in that someone who is *muhrim* can eat, drink, visit the sick and attend funerals, but cannot

| I’tikaf entering into a marriage contract as long as there is no physical relationship. A woman in I’tikaf may also be betrothed as long as there is no physical relationship. What is haram for someone in I’tikaf concerning his womenfolk during the day is haram for him during the night. Yahya said that Ziyad said that Malik said, "It is not halal for a man to have intercourse with his wife while he is in I’tikaf, nor for him to take pleasure in her by kissing her, or whatever. However, I have not heard anyone disapproving of a man, or woman, in I’tikaf getting married as long as there is no physical relationship. Marriage is not disapproved of for someone fasting." "There is, however, a distinction between the marriage of someone in I’tikaf and that of someone who is *muhrim*, in that someone who is *muhrim* can eat, drink, visit the sick and attend funerals, but cannot | نِّكَاحَ الْمِّلْكِ، ما لََّْ يَكُن الْمُسِيسُ. قَالَ : وَالْمَرْأَةُ الْمُعْتَكِّفَةُ أَيْضاً تُنْكَحُ، نِّكَاحَ الْحُبْطَةِ، ما لََّْ يَكُن الْمُسِيسُ. قَالَ : وَيُحْرَمُ على الْمُعْتَكِفِ مِنْ أَهْلِهِ بَلَْ لِلْيَلِ، ما يُحْرَمُ عَلَيْهِ مَنْهَرٌ بِالْبُهْرَاء. قَالَ يََََيََ : قَالَ زِّياَدر : قَالَ مَالِّكر : وَلََ يََْلُّ لِرَجُلٍ، أن يَََسَّ عِمْرَةُ وَهُوَ مُعْتَكِّفر، وَلََ يَتَلَذَّذَ مِنْهَا بَيْبَلْهَا وَلَا غُيْرَهَا، وَلَّ أَسْتَعْنَ أَحَداً يَّكُرُهُ لِلْمُعْتَكِفَ وَلَا لِلْمُعْتَكِفَةِ، أَنْ يَنْكِحَا فِي الْمُعْتَكَافِهِمَا، ما لََّْ يَكُن الْمُسِيسُ، فَبَعْدَهُ، وَلَا يََْكُرُهُ لِلْصَّائِمِ، أَنْ يَََّكُحَ فِي صِيَامِهِ، وَقَرْقُ بَيْنِ نِّكَاحِ الْمُعْتَكِفِ، وَنِّكَاحِ الْمُحْرِّمِ، وَلََ يُكْرَهُ، وَلََ يُكْرَهُ لِلْمُحْرِّمَ أَنْ يَََّكُحَ فِي صِيَامِهِ، وَالْمُعْتَكِفَ وَالْمُعْتَكِفَةَ يَدَّهِنَانِ، وَلَّ أَسْتَعْنَانِّ الْمَرِّيضَ، وَأَصْلُبُانِّ، وَلَا يَََّكُحَا فِي الْمُعْتَكَافِهِمَا، وَذَلِّكَ الْمَاضِي مِّنَ السُّنَّةِ، فَبَعْدَهُ، وَالْمُعْتَكِفَ وَالْمُعْتَكِفَةَ يَدَّهِنَانِ، وَلَّ أَسْتَعْنَانِّ الْمَرِّيضَ، وَأَصْلُبُانِّ، وَلَا يَََّكُحَا فِي الْمُعْتَكَافِهِمَا، وَذَلِّكَ الْمَاضِي مِّنَ السُّنَّةِ، فَبَعْدَهُ، وَالْمُعْتَكِفَ وَالْمُعْتَكِفَةَ يَدَّهِنَانِ، وَلَّ أَسْتَعْنَانِّ الْمَرِّيضَ، وَأَصْلُبُانِّ, وَلَا يَََّكُحَا فِي الْمُعْتَكَافِهِمَا، وَذَلِّكَ الْمَاضِي مِّنَ السُّنَّةِ، فَبَعْدَهُ، وَالْمُعْتَكِفَ وَالْمُعْتَكِفَةَ يَدَّهِنَانِ، وَلَّ أَسْتَعْنَانِّ الْمَرِّيضَ، وَأَصْلُبُانِّ. |
put on perfume, whilst a man or woman in I’tikaf can put on oil and perfume and groom their hair, but cannot attend funerals or pray over the dead or visit the sick. Thus, their situations concerning marriage are different." "This is the Sunnah as it has come down to us regarding marriage for those who are muhrim, doing I’tikaf, or fasting.

12.1.13 Meeting his wife in the masjid during I’tikaf:

It is permitted for a wife of a person to visit him in the masjid while he is in I’tikaf.

163. It was narrated from Safiyyah bint Huyai, the wife of the Prophet (ﷺ), that she came to visit the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) when he was in I’tikaf during the last ten days of the month of Ramadan. She spoke with him for a while during the evening, then she stood up to go back. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) got up to take her home. When she reached the door of the masjid that was by the home
of Umm Salamah, the wife of the Prophet (ﷺ), two men from among the Ansar passed by them. They greeted the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) with peace, then went away. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: “Take it easy, she is Safiyyah bint Huyai.” They said: “Glorious is Allah, O Messenger of Allah!” And they were very upset by that (i.e., that he thought they may have some doubts). The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: “The Satan flows through the son of Adam like blood, and I was afraid that he might cast some doubt into your hearts.”

Sunan Ibn Majah 1779 - Saheeh

(This message can also be seen in Sunan Abi Dawud 2470, 2471; Saheeh al-Bukhari 2035, 2038, 2039; and so on – it is to be noted that some of the traditions mention about one Ansari companion rather than two)

12.1.14 One’s wife touching him for a need while he is in I’tikaf:

If one’s wife touches him without seeking pleasure from it, it does not invalidate I’tikaf.

164. From Urwa Ibn Zubair, Ayesha, the wife of the Apostle (may peace be upon him and his household, the companion of the Prophet):
him), reported: The Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) put out from the masjid his head for me as he was in I’tikaf (in the masjid – Ayesha R.A. was in her Hujrah which is next to the masjid), and I washed it in the state (and combed it) while I was menstruating.

مَدِّ بْنِّ عَبْدِّ الرَّحْنِّ بْنِّ نَوْفَلٍ، عَنْ عُرْوَةَ، عَنْ عَائِّشَةَ، زَوْجِّ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم أَنَََّّا قَالَتْ كَا

مُّرِّجُ إِلَّا رَأْسَهُ مِّنَ الْمَسْجِّدِّ وَهُوَ مَُِاوِّرر فَأَغْسِّلُهُ وَأَنََ حَائِّضر

Saheeh Muslim 297c

165. The above has also been narrated by Amra R.A. from Ayesha R.A. The people of knowledge have acted upon this that the person in I’tikaf can only go out in case of human needs. They are agreed that one can go out for relieving oneself e.g. urination and excrement. With regards to going out to visit the patients (i.e. inquiring about their health), attending Jumuah and Janazah, there is a difference of opinion among the scholars. According to some

حَدَّثَنَا بِذَلِّكَ، فَتَبَيَّنَهُ حَدَّثَنَا الْلَّيْثُ بْنُ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ، فَتَبَيَّنَهُ عَلَى هَذَا عِّنْدَ أَهْلِّ الْعِّلْمِّ إِذَا اعْتَكَفَ الرَّجُلُ فَلََ لْيََْرُجَ مِّنِّ اعْتِّكَافِهِّ إِّلََّ لَِِاجََةَِالإِنْسَانَ

حَاجَةُ الْإِنْسَانِ وَجَتمَّغَوا عَلَى هَذَا أَنَّهُ يََْرُجُ لِلْغَائِطِ وَالْبَوْلِ، لَمْ يَحْتَلَّ أَهْلُ الْعِّلْمِ فِي عِبَادَةِ الْمَريضِ وَشُهُودِ الْجُمَعَةِ وَالجَْنَازَةِ لِمُعْتَكِّفِ فَرَأَى بَعْضُ أَهْلِ الْعِلْمِ مِّنْ أُصْحَابِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَغَيْرِهِمْ أَنْ يَعَودُ الْمَرِّيضُ وَيُشَيِِّعَ الْجَْنَازَةَ
of the people of knowledge from the companions and other groups, one can go for inquiring about the health of the patient, as well as attend Jumuah and Janazah. It is permissible to do so if the mutakif intended for such a condition (at the time of starting the I’tikaf.) Sufyan Ath-Thauri and Abdullah Ibn Mubarak hold this opinion. According to other people of knowledge, one cannot do any of these things. According to these scholars, if the person intending for I’tikaf is located in a city, he would only do the I’tikaf in the Jami masjid where the Jumuah is held. These scholars consider it makrooh (disliked) for a mutakif to go out of I’tikaf for the purpose of attending Jumuah (i.e. he should only do I’tikaf in a masjid where Jumuah is held). However, they also do not consider it permissible for a mutakif to leave Jumuah. That is why they put the condition that I’tikaf should only be done in a Jami masjid.
so that he does not have to go out for anything except for relieving himself. They consider that the I’tikaf is nullified if one goes out for any other reason.

12.2 What a *mutakif* cannot do:

12.2.1 Going outside of the masjid without any valid reason

| 166. | Amra bint Abd ar-Rahman narrated that when Ayesha R.A. was doing I’tikaf she would only ask after sick people if she was walking and not if she was standing still. Malik said, "A person doing I’tikaf should not carry out obligations of his, nor leave the masjid for them, nor should he help anyone. He should only leave the masjid to human needs (e.g. to relieve himself). If he were to go out, it would be more appropriate for him (to be allowed) to do things for people, visiting the sick, praying over the dead, and following funeral processions (however, they are prohibited)". Malik said, | عَنْ مَالِّكٍ عَنِّ ابْنِّ شِّهَابٍ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَقْمًٌ ۢبِّنْتِّ عَبْدِّ الرَّحَْْنِّ : أَنَّ عَائِشَةُ كَانَتْ إِذَا اعْتَكَفَتْ، لا تَسْأَلُ عَنِّ الْمَرِّيضِ إِلَّا وَهِيَ مَتَّهَيْسُوا، لا تَتَقَفُّ. قَالَ مَالِّكٍ : لا يَُْ تَقَفُّ الْمُعْتَكِّفُ حَاجَةَهُ، وَلََ يََْرُجُ لَََّا، وَلََ يُعِّيَُّ أَحَداً، إِّلََّ أَنْ يََْرُجُ إِلَيْهِ عِيَادَةَ الْمَرِّيضِ، وَالصَّلََةُ عَلَى الْجَْنَائِزِ وَاتِِّبَاعُهَا. قَالَ مَالِّكٍ : لَكَانَ أَحَقَّ مَا يَكُونُ المُعْتَكِّفُ مُعْتَكِفًا، حَتََّّ يَُْتَنِّبَ مَا يَُْ تَنِّبُ الْمُعْتَكِّفُ، مِّنْ عِيَادَةِ الْمَرِّيضِ، وَالصَّلََةِ عَلَى الْجَْنَائِزِ، إِلَّا لََالْجَمانِيرُ إِلَّا لََالْمُعْتَكِّفُ، مُعْتَكِفًا، حَتََّّ يَُْتَنِّبَ مَا يَُْتَنِّبُ الْمُعْتَكِّفُ مِنْ عِيَادَةِ الْمَرِّيضِ، وَالصَّلاةَ عَلَى الجَْنَائِزِ، وَدُخُولِّ الْبَيْتِ، إِلَّا لََجَائِزَةَ الإِنسَانِ. |
"A person doing I’tikaf is not doing I’tikaf until he avoids what someone doing I’tikaf should avoid, namely, visiting the sick, praying over the dead, and entering houses, except to relieve himself."

Muwatta Imam Malik Book 19, Hadith 694

The above point is also emphasized in the narration below:

167. Narrated Ayesha R.A., Ummul Mu’minin: The Sunnah for one who is observing I’tikaf (in a masjid) is not to visit a patient, or to attend a funeral, or touch or embrace one’s wife, or go out for anything but necessary purposes. There is no I’tikaf without fasting, and there is no I’tikaf except in a congregational masjid.

Sunan Abi Dawud 2473 - Saheeh

12.2.2 Passing underneath a room with a roof outside the masjid

The fuqaha of early generations did not like entering in any enclosed areas (i.e. the areas which have a door or a designated entry) during the Sunnah I’tikaf. There are several narrations on this topic in Musannaf Abdul
Razzaq and Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah. A couple of narrations have been quoted below for review.

168. Atta R.A. mentioned that when Ibn Umar used to go I’tikaf, he would make a tent or a secluded place for himself and kept the things he would need within that (tent). (When doing I’tikaf,) he neither went to see his family nor entered any roof.

169. Qatadah R.A. narrated from Ikrima R.A. that he said: A mutakif should not enter the (part of a) house with the roof.

170. Ibn Juraij narrated from Atta that he said to him: Can it be said that he (i.e. the mutakif) shall not enter the house or pass under the roof that has an entry? He said: Yes. Ibn Juraij said that such an opinion was also held by Amr Ibn Dinar.

However, it is to be noted that passing under the roof for relieving oneself is permitted by Imam Malik and Imam Zuhri as reported in Muwatta Imam Muhammad 377. After mentioning this opinion of Imam Malik and
Imam Zuhri, Imam Muhammad said that the same opinion is held by Imam Abu Hanifa and other scholars from his school of thought.

**Preferred position:** Based on the above opinions, we also recommend that the person doing the Sunnah I’tikaf should avoid entering any areas outside the masjid that have a roof and a door. However, for the basic human needs, inshaAllah there will not be a problem if one has to go under a roofed area outside of masjid (e.g. nowadays, only enclosed toilets are found; etc).

### 12.2.3 Attending the funeral while in I’tikaf

Imam Malik’s opinion in this regard is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hadith Number</th>
<th>Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>171.</td>
<td>Malik said, &quot;Someone doing I’tikaf should not (even) leave for his parents' funeral or anything else.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Muwatta Imam Malik Book 19, Hadith 699*

It is to be noted that we have explained various opinions about this matter in the previous section.

The narration below is attributed to the Prophet ﷺ and it apparently permits going out to visit the sick and also attending the funerals, however, it is *Mawdoo* (fabricated) and does not constitute any *shara’i* evidence. Similar narrations have been reported from Ali R.A. (e.g. Sunan Dar Al-Qutni 2324 and 2325) but they are also unreliable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hadith Number</th>
<th>Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>172.</td>
<td>It was narrated that Anas bin Malik said: “The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: ‘The person observing I’tikaf may attend funerals and visit the sick.’”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Hadith 699 and 172*
There are some reports that mention about certain Tabi’een permitting visiting the sick and going to funerals (Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 8058, 8059). However, the stronger opinion seems to be that one should not do that as we learn from numerous authentic narrations that the only permitted reason to go out during the Sunnah I’tikaf is the Hajjatal Insan (the unavoidable human needs).

12.2.4 Going to someone’s house to inquire about their health

We have already explained in the previous section that the only permissible form of asking about the sick is to do so while passing without stopping (if one happens to pass them while being out of masjid for a valid reason). Consider the hadith below that emphasizes this point.

173. It was narrated that Ayesha said: “I used to enter the house to relieve myself, and there was a sick person there, and I only inquired after him as I was passing through.” She said: “And the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) would not enter the house except to relieve himself when they (i.e. he and his companions) used to be performing I’tikaf.

The above practice of Ayesha R.A. (i.e. inquiring about the patient while walking without stopping when outside of the masjid) is also reported
about the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. However, that attribution to the Prophet ﷺ is Daif.

174. According to the version of Al Nufaili, Ayesha said “The Prophet (ﷺ) used to pass by a patient while he was observing I’tikaf but he passed as normal (i.e. continued to walk) and did not stay (to spend some time in) asking about him.” According to the version of Ibn Isa she said: “The Prophet (ﷺ) would visit a patient while he was observing I’tikaf.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunan Abi Dawud 2472 – Daif</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللهِ بْنُ عَمْرُو النَّفَيْلِيُّ، وَمََُمَّدُ بْنُ عِّيسَى، قَالََ حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ السَّلََمِّ بْنُ حَرْبٍ، أَخْبَََنََ اللَّيْثُ بْنُ أَبِي سُلَيْمٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحَْْنِّ بْنِّ الْقَاسِّمِّ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، - قَالَ النَّفَيْلِيُّ - قَالَتْ كَانَ النَّبيُِّّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يََُرُّ بًِّلْمَرِّيضِّ وَهُوَ مُعْتَكِّف ف َيَمُرُّ كَمَا هُوَ وَلََ ي ُعَرِِّجُ يَسْأَلُ عَنْهُ. وَقَا لَ ابنِ عِيسَى قَالَتْ إنْ كَانَ النَّبيُِّّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يُعَدُّ الْمُعْتَكِّف وَهُوَ مُعْتَكِّفُ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(This message can also be seen in Mishkat al-Masabih 2105)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12.2.5 Buying and selling

A *mutakif* should not go out to buy and sell in the market.

175. Imam Zuhri R.A. said: A *mutakif* will not buy or sell a thing.

Atta R.A. said: A *mutakif* will neither buy nor sell. He should also not go out if a ruler calls him, except if this was in his intention (at the
Some of the *aslaf* have been reported to have allowed buying things in the masjid or paying off the loans and so on. However, the above is the safer opinion and this is what is reported from most of the pious predecessors including Az-Zuhri, Atta, Mujahid, Amr ibn Dinar, and others.

### 12.2.6 Consuming a substance that impacts sanity

One of the conditions of I‘tikaf is sanity. If one deliberately consumes substances that impact sanity, the I‘tikaf will be considered broken. Such substances can include alcohol, drugs, and other intoxicants.

### 12.2.7 Sexual relation with spouse

Allah swt has prohibited sexual relations with the spouse in the state of I‘tikaf.

[Verse 5:84-89](https://quran.com/5/84-89)

> It has been made permissible for you to be intimate with your wives during the nights preceding the fast. Your spouses are a garment for you as you are for them. Allah knows that you were deceiving yourselves. So, He has accepted your repentance and pardoned you. So now you may be intimate with them and seek what Allah has prescribed for you.

You may eat and drink until you see the light of dawn breaking the darkness of night, then complete the fast until nightfall. Do not be intimate with your spouses while you are meditating in the masjids.
These are the limits set by Allah, so do not exceed them. This is how Allah makes His revelations clear to people, so they may become mindful of Him.’

Surah Baqarah 2:187

The one who engages in sexual intercourse while being a *mutakif*, his *I’tikaf* gets broken.

176. Ibn Abbas R.A. said: If someone did intercourse (with his wife) during the *I’tikaf*, his *I’tikaf* has got broken and he should do it again.

Musannaf Ibn Abi Shayba 9680 - *Daif*

12.2.8 Not talking to anyone during *I’tikaf*

It is important to note that some people think that it is a requirement that one should remain absolutely silent during *I’tikaf*. The scholars consider this disliked (*Makrooh*) as it is against the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ who is reported to have talked to his companions as well as his family while he used to be in *I’tikaf*. He used to talk to his wives when they used to visit him during *I’tikaf*. Also, he used to advise his companions about certain matters of religion and there is no prohibition in that.

However, one should also not go to the other extreme in terms of talking and becoming excessive in it.

12.2.9 Excessive socialization with other people in *I’tikaf*

It is to be understood that *I’tikaf* is not just a break from your work. It is also not a rest time for some additional sleep while fasting. Similarly, its aim is not to provide a time to socialize with friends and neighbours in the masjid.

There is no sin in talking; however, excessive socialization is undesired.
Consider the tradition below:

| 177. | Ibn Juraij R.A. mentioned that he asked Atta R.A., ‘Can a *mutakif* attend any gathering in the masjid and can he talk to people? He replied, ‘Yes’. I also asked him, if his I’tikaf is inside the masjid, can he sit at the door of the masjid? He said: ‘He should not go out except when it is a necessary requirement. |

---

The purpose of I’tikaf is to give you *khalwah* (seclusion) to catalyze thinking and reflection. This opportunity should not be wasted in the useless talk about matters that do not matter. These ten days should just be dedicated solely to the Creator while remaining engaged in what attains His love. Some of the scholars of the past even prohibited teaching and learning during I’tikaf as it takes the heart away from the Creator and makes one busy with the people. It is mentioned about the great scholar like Imam Malik - to sit in whose company and learn, people used to come from near and far - that he used to cancel his classes and teaching activities in Ramadan in order to solely devote him to worship (*Lataif Al-Ma’arif* P. 171). 40

---

40 This does not mean that teaching and learning is prohibited in Ramadan. We have already explained this previously. It is a highly virtuous act in itself. However, the practice of some of the aslaf to stop teaching and learning during this time explains the relative importance of the matters in Ramadan and I’tikaf. It should also be noted that there are other scholars, as mentioned previously, who consider seeking the knowledge of the Quran and Sunnah to be of such high virtue that one should never abandon them, even during Ramadan and I’tikaf. It is mentioned about Qatadah R.A. and many other scholars that they used to conduct the circles of knowledge during Ramadan as well. If one does not have knowledge about a mandatory aspect of the religion, the scholars consider it wajib upon such a person to seek knowledge about it irrespective of whether it is Ramadan or if he is sitting in I’tikaf.

---

Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 8076
12.2.10 Do not be angry or misbehaving:

During I’tikaf, you are in the house of The Most High. Your behaviour and conduct should reflect this. We should aim to be the most well-behaved persons in the masjid.

178. Suleiman Ibn Musa said: The *mutakif* should not shout. He should not engage in a quarrel.

| عَنِّ ابْنِ جُرَيْجٍ، عَنْ سُلَيْمَانَ بْنِ مُوسَى قَالَ: لََ يُلََحِّي الْمُعْتَكِّفُ، يَقُولُ: لَا يِسَاجِحِنَ |

Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 8071

12.2.11 Bad thoughts and bad feelings

Though while being in the masjid, we can avoid many sins by the grace of Allah swt, however, there can still be some sins that one can possibly remain engaged in, such as back-biting, thinking about others, hatred, jealousy, and so on. One should clear his heart of any such feelings and thoughts so that they do not become a barrier to his good deeds being accepted. If we are doing the acts of worship but remain engaged in these sins, our days and nights would only give us tiredness and hunger.

179. It was narrated from Abu Hurairah that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: “There are people who fast and get nothing from their fast except hunger, and there are those who pray and get

| حَدَّثَنَا عُمَرُو بْنُ رَافِعٍ، حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ الْمُبَارَكِ، عَنْ أُسَامَةَ بْنِ زَيْدٍ، عَنْ سَعِيْدٍ الْمَقْبُُّيِّ، عَنْ أَبِِّ هُرَي ْرَةَ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَِّّّ صَلى الله عليه وسلم "رُبَّ |

Imam Shafi’i considered teaching and learning more virtuous than the voluntary (*nafil*) prayers as the *nawafil* are voluntary whereas seeking knowledge is *fardh* (Fathul Mun‘im 5/74). Shaykh Abdul Qadir Jeelani held the same opinion too and gave preference to teaching and learning during Ramadan and I’tikaf over personal worship as it also benefits others. The opinion of some of the *aslaf* mentioned above regarding disliking teaching was to show the relative importance of matters and to highlight the importance of connecting with the Quran rather than wasting time in excessive socialization.
We should carefully analyze every thought coming to our heart and then uproot the thoughts that are negative and useless.

180. Abu al-‘Abbas reported: I asked Ja’far ibn Nasir, may Allah have mercy on him, about mindfulness. Ja’far said, “It is to be watchful over one’s innermost being, due to awareness of the Almighty Lord, with every thought.”

Al-Risalat Al-Qushayriyah 1/331

Sunan Ibn Majah 1690 - Hasan
13 Etiquettes of residing in the masjid

As a *mutakif*, you will be residing in the house of Allah swt as His guest. It is, therefore, very important that we should understand the manners and etiquette of residing in this blessed refuge.

In this section, we have summarized some of the important etiquettes of masjid that we should aim to practice during the I’tikaf and afterward.

13.1 Do not be loud

It is very important that we should avoid becoming a source of disturbance in the masjid. Consider the manner for the *Mutakif* as explained in the tradition below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>181.</th>
<th>Suleiman Ibn Musa[^41] said: The <em>Mutakif</em> should not shout, he should not engage in a quarrel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>عَنِ ابْنِ جُرَيْجٍ، عَنْ سُلَيْمَانَ بْنِ مُوسَى</td>
<td>مَعْتَكِّفٍ قَالَ: لََ يُلََحِّي الْمُعْتَكِّفُ يُشَاحِنُ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>قال: لا يُلََحِّي الْمُعْتَكِّفُ يُقُولُ: لا يُشَاحِنَ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 8071

We should keep our voice low even in worship. Consider the important hadith below.

[^41]: Suleiman Ibn Musa is one of the trusted narrators from Damascus who was known as the Imam and the Mufti of the city. He reported from Atta, Az-Zuhri and other Tabi’een. It is reported that Atta said about Suleiman:

سيِّدُ شَبَابِ أَهْلِّ الِّْجَازِّ: ابْنُ جُرَيْجٍ، وَسيِّدُ شَبَابِ أَهْلِّ العِّرَاقِّ: الَْجَّاجُ بنُ أَرْطَاةَ، وَسيِّدُ شَبَابِ أَهْلِّ الشَّامِّ: سُلَيْمَانُ بنُ مُوْسَى.

The leader of the youth (among the scholars) of Hejaz is Ibn Juraij, and the leader of the youth (among the scholars) of Iraq is Hajjaj ibn Artat, and the leader of the youth (among the scholars) of Syria is Suleiman Ibn Musa.
182. Narrated Abu Saeed al-Khudri R.A.: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) retired to the masjid. He heard them (the people) reciting the Qur’an in a loud voice. He removed the curtain and said: Lo! every one of you is calling his Lord quietly. One should not trouble the other and one should not raise the voice in recitation or in prayer over the voice of the other.

Also, note the traditions below in which Umar R.A. did not like the voice to be raised in the masjid.

183. Saad Ibn Ibrahim R.A. narrated from his father who said: Umar Ibn Khattab R.A. heard a man raising his voice in the masjid, he said (to him): Do you have an idea where you are?

184. Narrated Al-Sa‘ib bin Yazid: I was standing in the masjid and somebody threw a small pebble towards me. I looked and found that it was `Umar bin Al-Khattab. He said to
me, "Bring those two men to me." When I did that, he said to them, "Who are you? (Or) where do you come from?" They replied, "We are from Ta'if." 'Umar said, "Had you been from this city (i.e. Medina), I would have punished you. Raising your voice in the masjid of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ)!!"

| عَنِّ السَّائِبِّ بْنِّ يَزِّيدَ، قَالَ كُنْتُ قَائِمًا فيِّ المَسْجِّدِّ فَحَصَبَنِِّ رَجُلًا، فَنَظَرْتُ إِذَا عُمَرُ بْنُ الَْْطَّابِ فَقَالَ اذْهَبْ فَأْتِّنِِّ ذَيْنِّ. فَجِّئُتُهُ بِِّّمَا قَالََ مِّنْ أَنْتَمَا. أَوْ مِّنْ أَهْلِّ الطَّائِّفِّ. قَالَ لَوْ كُنْتُمَا مِّنْ أَهْلِّ الْبَلَدِ لَْوْجَعْتُكُمَا، تَرْفَعَانِ أصْوَاتَكُمَا فيِّ مَسْجِّدِ رَسُولِ اللَِّّّ صلى الله عليه وسلم |

Saheeh al-Bukhari 470

Umar R.A. said that he would have punished them had they been from Madinah because it was the city of love and the beloved where adab and manners used to run in the blood of its dwellers. If a person from such a city would be disrespectful to the masjid of the Prophet ﷺ, he would deserve punishment.

However, Umar R.A. gave those people the margin as they were from outside and didn’t know the manners of the masjid of the Prophet ﷺ.

As a mutakif, you should also avoid being a disruption and noise. However, if someone else does that, you should give them the margin and guide them with love so that they strengthen their affiliation with the masjid and still learn the matter that they need to learn.

13.2 Avoid bad smells

13.2.1 Our Prophet ﷺ loved fragrance:

It is also very important that we should avoid all forms of bad smells.

We are from the ummah of the Prophet ﷺ who was the most fragrant of people and who loved fragrance.

Consider the tradition below:
185. Narrated `Ayesha R.A.: I used to perfume Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) with the best scent available till I saw the shine of the scent on his head and beard.

Ibn `Abdil`Aziz 'Abdul-Wahhab, Ibn `Abdul-Malik, and Ibn `Abdul-Wahhab, then `Ayesha, s.a., said: I used to perfume Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) with what was called the best perfume available till I saw its shine on his head and beard.

**Saheeh al-Bukhari 5923**

186. Narrated Thumama bin `Abdullah: Anas R.A. never used to refuse scent (being offered to him) and used to say that the Prophet (ﷺ) never used to refuse scent.

Ibn `Abdul-Wahhab, Ibn `Abdul-Malik, and Ibn `Abdul-Wahhab, then Thumama bin `Abdullah, r.a., said: Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) never used to refuse perfume.

**Saheeh al-Bukhari 5929**

We should, therefore, ensure that because of our actions, no other *mutakifeen* are disturbed.

### 13.2.2 Avoid burping:

We should be especially careful about burping. Burping is a process through which excess wind in the stomach or upper intestine is released from the mouth. This accordingly becomes a source of bad smell.

It usually happens when a person eats quickly. After fasting for the day, we should not overeat or quickly eat too much otherwise it would result in burps that would disturb everyone around us.

It is to be noted that what we need is only a few bites which would be enough to keep our backs straight. Consider the narrations below:
**187.** Miqdam bin Madikarib said: “I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say: ‘A human being fills no worse vessel than his stomach. It is sufficient for a human being to eat a few mouthfuls to keep his spine straight. But if he must (fill it), then one-third of food, one third for drink and one third for air.’”

Sunan Ibn Majah 3349 – Saheeh

**188.** It was narrated that Ibn ‘Umar said: “A man burped in the presence of the Prophet (ﷺ) and he said: ‘Withhold your burps from us! For the most hungry of you on the Day of Resurrection will be those who most ate their fill in this world.’”

Sunan Ibn Majah 3349 – Daif

The scholars explain that it is not a sin to fill up to one’s capacity, however, it is disliked.

**13.2.3 Do not eat bad-smelling food:**

It is also to be noted that we should not disturb the other *mutakifeen* with any food that leaves a distasteful smell. This can include certain uncooked vegetables and the like.
Abu Saeed R.A. reported: We made no transgression but Khaybar was conquered. We, the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), fell upon this plant, i.e., garlic, because the people were hungry. We ate it to our heart's content and then made our way towards the masjid. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) sensed its odor and he said: He who takes anything of this offensive plant must not approach us in the masjid. The people said: Its (use) has been forbidden; its (use) but been forbidden. This reached the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and he said: O people, I cannot forbid (the use of a thing) which Allah has made lawful, but (this garlic) is a plant the odour of which is repugnant to me.

Saheeh Muslim 565

Abu Saeed al-Khudri reported: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) along with his Companions happened to pass by a field in which onions were sown. The
people stopped there and ate out of that, but some of them did not eat. Then they (Prophet's Companions) went to him. He (first) called those who had not eaten the onions and kept the others (who had taken onions) waiting till its odor vanished.

| 13.3 Ensure personal hygiene |

One should also be very mindful of personal hygiene and especially try to avoid any bad smells emitting from the body. The Prophet ﷺ wanted the masajid to be the places of fragrance and commanded them to be perfumed.

| 191. Ayesha R.A. narrated: "The Prophet ﷺ ordered the construction of Masajid in all neighborhoods and that they be kept clean and scented." |

The factors of personal hygiene that can go against this command need to be avoided. Some of the hygiene factors that require consideration include:

- Cleaning of teeth to avoid bad smell from mouth

Saheeh Muslim 566

Jami` at-Tirmidhi 594
- If one has to pass wind, it is considered mustahabb to go outside of the masjid or in an open area adjacent to the masjid (called *Fina Al-Masjid*) so that the bad smell is prevented to be released inside the masjid.

- If there is a smell coming out of the body, we should take bath and perfume ourselves.

Though some scholars do not allow bath in I’tikaf except for the *Janabah* (release of semen due to a wet dream and so on); however, when a person starts to smell bad, it is then considered a condition in which bathing is necessary. As evidence for this opinion, consider the hadith below.

| 192. | 'Abdullah bin Al-'Ala narrated that: He heard Al-Qasim bin Muhammad bin Abi Bakr (say) that they mentioned Ghusl on Fridays in the presence of Ayesha R.A. and she said: "Some people used to live in Al-'Aliyah and they would come to Jumu'ah with dirt on them (because of their work). When a breeze came it would carry their smell to the people which annoyed them. Mention of that was made to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and he said: "Why don't you perform ghusl?" |

```
أخبارنا محمود بن خاليد، عن الأولياء، قال: حدثنا عبد الله بن الطالب، أنه سمع المقام بن محضيد بن أبي بكير، أنه ذكروا غسل الجمعة عند عائشة فقالت: إن الناس يعيشون العالية، فخضروا الجمعة ووجّه وسح فإذا أصابهم الروح سطعت وأتواهم فينتذّى بنا الناس فذكر ذلك لرسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال "أولا يغتسلون".
```

Sunan Nasai Book 14, Hadith 1390 – Saheeh

Numerous other traditions convey the same meaning as above and indicate that the Prophet (ﷺ) did not like any bad smell emitting from people, especially when they are assembled in the masjid.
Also, consider the fatwa below from Shaykh Saleh Al-Uthaymeen which in our humble opinion is the most balanced position on this matter:

| 193 | With regards to ghusl, if one is in the state of Janabah, it is wajib upon him that he goes out (of the masjid and purifies himself) as it is mandatory to have ghusl. However, if one is not in the state of janabah and just wants to take bath to feel cooler, then he should not exit from the masjid for this purpose as it is a matter which is not mandatory. If he wishes to have a bath to remove the bad smell that becomes difficult to ignore and for such a person exit is permissible (for taking a bath). So the ghusl (in I’tikaf) is of three types: Wajib (i.e. in the case of janabah), Permissible (i.e. in order to remove bad smell), and Impermissible (i.e. without any shara’i reason, e.g. to feel cold). |

وأما الاغتسال فإن كان من جنابة وجب عليه أن يخرج، لأنه لابد من الاغتسال، وإن كان عن غير جنابة للتبرد فلا يخرج، لأن هذا أمر له منه بد، وإن كان لإزالة رائحة يشق عليه بقاؤها فله الخروج، فصار الخروج للاغتسال ثلاثة أقسام: واجباً، وجائزاً، وممنوعاً.

Majmu Rasail wa Fatawa Sh Al-Uthaymeen Vol 11, Book of fasting
### 13.4 Ensure cleanliness of the masjid:

As a Mutakif, you should make sure that your activities do not result in any untidiness or uncleanliness in the masjid. Even you should participate in its cleaning as well.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>194.</th>
<th>Umar Ibn Al-Khattab R.A. came to Masjid Al-Quba on his horse and prayed therein. He then said (to his companion): O Yarfa, give me a broom. A broom was given to him. Umar R.A. then folded his clothes (to make the movement easy) and brushed the masjid.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>195.</td>
<td>Abu Asim Ath-Thaqafi said: I was with Sha’bi in the masjid when he started doing something with his head down. I asked: What are you doing O Abu Umar? He said: I am picking small sticks, insects, and other things from the masjid. Abu Asim R.A. was a blind man.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Mussanaf Ibn Abi Shayba 4016**

---

**Mussanaf Ibn Abi Shayba 4017**

---

### 13.5 Follow the Sunnahs of entering and leaving the masjid:

Some of the *Sunnahs* that you should aim to follow include:

- Enter the masjid with the right food and exit with left foot
- Recite the *duas* of entering and exiting the masjid and ponder on their meaning
- Offer two *rakahs* when you enter the masjid after making wudhu or after coming back if you had gone out for a valid reason.
14 If one is unable to continue I’tikaf or breaks it

14.1 Reasons because of which the I’tikaf can be left incomplete

The possibilities due to which the I’tikaf could potentially be left incomplete are as follows.

14.1.1 Traveling

It was narrated from Ubayy bin Ka’b that: The Prophet (ﷺ) used to spend the last ten days of Ramadan in I’tikaf. One year he was traveling, so the following year he spent twenty days in I’tikaf.

Sharh Bulugh Al-Maram (Attiya b. Muhammad Salem) 11/157

14.1.2 Sickness or menstrual cycle:

Malik was asked whether someone who went into a masjid to do I’tikaf for the last ten days of Ramadan and stayed there for a day or two but then became ill and left the masjid, had to do
I’tikaf for the number of days that were left from the ten, or not, and if he did have to do so, then what month should he do it in, and he replied:

"He should make up whatever he has to do of the I’tikaf when he recovers, whether in Ramadan or otherwise. I have heard that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, once wanted to do I’tikaf in Ramadan, but then came back without having done so, and then when Ramadan had gone, he did I’tikaf for ten days in Shawwal. Someone who does I’tikaf voluntarily in Ramadan and someone who has to do I’tikaf are in the same position regarding what is halal for them and what is haram.

I have not heard that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, ever did I’tikaf other than voluntarily." Malik said, that if a woman

نَقَبَ مِنْ الْعَشْرِ إِذَا صَحَّ، أَمْ لاَ يَجِبُ ذُلِكَ عَلَيْهِ، وَفِي أيْ شَهْرٍ يَعْتَكِفُ إِذَا صَحَّ عَلَيْهِ ذُلِكَ؟ فَقَالَ مَالِكُ : بَعْضُ مَا يَجِبُ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ عُكُوفٍ إِذَا صَحَّ، فِي رَمَضَانَ أَوْ غَيْرَهُ، وَقَدْ بَلَغَنِي أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهُ ﷺ أَرَادَ الْعُكُوفَ فِي رَمَضَانَ، ثُمَّ رَجَعَ. فَقَالَ زَيْدٌ: E أَرَادَ الْعُكُوفَ فِي رَمَضَانَ، ثُمَّ رَجَعَ. E كَانَ الْعُكُوفُ إِلَّاْ تَطْوُعاً. Q مَالِكُ فِي الْمَرْأَةِ إِنَّا إِذَا اعْتَكَفَتْ، ثُمَّ حَاضَتْ فِي اعْتِكَافِهَا، إِنَّا تَرْجِعُ إِلَى بَيْتِهَا، فَإِذَا طَهُرَتْ رَجَعَتْ إِلَى الْمَسْجِد، A إِنَّا تَرْجِعُ إِلَى بَيْتِهَا، فَإِذَا طَهُرَتْ رَجَعَتْ إِلَى الْمَسْجِد، A إِنَّا تَرْجِعُ إِلَى بَيْتِهَا، فَإِذَا طَهُرَتْ رَجَعَتْ إِلَى الْمَسْجِد.
did I’tikaf and then menstruated during her I’tikaf, she went back to her house, and, when she was pure again, she returned to the masjid, at whatever time it was that she became pure. She then continued her I’tikaf from where she left off.

This was the same situation as with a woman who had to fast two consecutive months, and who menstruated and then became pure. She then continued the fast from where she had left off and did not delay doing so.

Muwatta Imam Malik Book 19, Hadith 8

14.1.3 Due to change of mind:

198. Ayesha (Allah be pleased with her) reported that when the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) decided to observe I’tikaf, he prayed in the morning and then went to the place of his I’tikaf, and he commanded that a tent should be pitched for him, and it was pitched. He (once) decided to observe I’tikaf in the last ten days of Ramadan. Zainab (the wife
of the Holy Prophet) commanded that a tent should be pitched for her. It was pitched accordingly. And some other wives of Allah's Apostle (ﷺ) commanded that tents should be pitched for them too. And they were pitched. When the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) offered the morning prayer, he looked and found (so many) tents. Thereupon he said: What is this virtue that these (ladies) have decided to acquire? He commanded his tent to be struck and abandoned I’tikaf in the month of Ramadan and postponed it to the first ten days of Shawwal.

14.1.4 Other reasons:

Some scholars have also considered the following and other reasons because of which I’tikaf can be left without completion:

- If Masjid falls
- If the Mutakif is driven out of the masjid
- If there is a fear of life or wealth (in this case, one should immediately go to another masjid)
- Etc.
14.2 How to make up for the missed I’tikaf

14.2.1 If broken or missed because of change of mind, or sickness, or other valid reasons:

There are various opinions about this. Consider the tradition below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>199.</th>
<th>Anas bin Malik narrated: &quot;The Prophet ﷺ would perform I’tikaf during the last ten (nights) of Ramadan. One year he did not perform I’tikaf, so he performed I’tikaf for twenty (nights) in the following year.&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Imam Tirmidhi says that this hadith which is reported from Anas R.A. is Hasan Saheeh.

The people of knowledge have differed regarding the ruling for the person who made an intention to do I’tikaf and then left it before completion. A group of the learned opine that if someone breaks his I’tikaf, he has to do Qadha (recompense) for that (i.e he has to do it again).

As evidence, they quote the hadith in which it is mentioned that one year the

---

42 This year could be the year of the battle of Badr. Wallahu Aalam.
Prophet ﷺ abandoned the I’tikaf; he made up for the missed I’tikaf in Shawal.

Imam Malik holds this opinion. The other group of the people of knowledge says that if the man had not made a vow for this I’tikaf or there was nothing else because of which the I’tikaf was mandatory for him, then he does not have to recompense for this missed I’tikaf if he leaves early before finishing it.

However, if he made it obligatory upon him due to a vow, then he has to offer the Qadha. Imam Shafai’i holds this opinion.

Any [voluntary] good deed that you start, you can leave it incomplete if there is a need; however, the matter of Hajj and Umrah is different. There are narrations on this topic from Abu Hurairah R.A. too.

From the above, we learn the following:

- According to one group of scholars, it is mandatory to make up for the I’tikaf if one abandons it. It is done by doing I’tikaf for the number of days that could not be completed.
The other group of scholars does not consider it mandatory to offer the remaining days unless one made it mandatory upon oneself due to a vow.

In our humble opinion, we considered it preferred to make up for the missed I’tikaf if one intended for it or left it incomplete as there is evidence for that from the Sunnah. Wallahu Aalam.

14.2.2 If the I’tikaf is broken due to sexual relationship with the wife:

One should neither kiss his wife in I’tikaf nor touch her for pleasure (and vice versa). In this relation, it is also to be noted that if a woman doing the I’tikaf comes back to her house due to menstruation, her husband still cannot enter upon her after she becomes clean and is about to go back to the masjid (as we understand from Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 8103 and other narrations).

With regards to the recompense of breaking the I’tikaf due to this act, there are four opinions among the scholars. Consider the traditions below that explain the four opinions in this regard.

The first opinion is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>200.</th>
<th>Qatada R.A. narrated from Hassan regarding a person who enters upon his wife while he was in I’tikaf.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>He said: He should free a slave, and if he cannot do that, he should fast for two months continuously, and if he is not capable of this, then he should feed sixty people.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 8080

The second opinion is as follows:
201. Hasan R.A. and Az-Zuhri R.A. said: The one who does intercourse with his wife, its Kaffarah (recompense) is obligatory upon him. Mujahid R.A. said: He should give two dinars (two gold coins) in charity. With regards to other than intercourse, there is a difference of opinion. If he passionately touched her then there are three opinions in that regard. The third opinion is that if he ejaculated then the I’tikaf has got broken, otherwise it hasn’t.

Fathul Bari 4/335

The third opinion is as follows:

202. Mujahid narrated from Ibn Abbas: If a mutakif enters upon his wife, he should start his I’tikaf afresh.

Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 8081 – Saheeh Li Ghayrihi

(This message can also be seen in Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah 9680 which has been classified as Saheeh by Shaykh Zakariyyah Ibn Ghulam Qadir).

The fourth opinion is a part of the following long hadith. According to this, no recompense is due if it was not an obligatory I’tikaf:
Anas bin Malik narrated: "The Prophet ﷺ would perform I’tikaf during the last ten (nights) of Ramadan. One year he did not perform I’tikaf, so he performed I’tikaf for twenty (nights) in the following year." Imam Tirmidhi says that this hadith which is reported from Anas R.A. is Hasan Saheeh. The people of knowledge have differed regarding the ruling for the person who made an intention to do I’tikaf and then left it before completion. A group of the learned opine that if someone breaks his I’tikaf, he has to offer Qadha (recompense) for that (i.e., he has to do it again). As a piece of evidence, they quote the hadith in which it is mentioned that one year the Prophet ﷺ abandoned the I’tikaf; he made up for the missed I’tikaf in Shawal. Imam Malik holds this opinion. The other group of the people of knowledge says that if the man had not made a vow for this I’tikaf or there was nothing else because of
which the I’tikaf was mandatory for him, then he does not have to recompense for this missed I’tikaf if he leaves early before finishing it. However, if he made it obligatory upon him due to a vow, then he has to offer the Qadha. Imam Shafi’i holds this opinion. Any [voluntary] good deed that you start, you can leave it incomplete if there is a need; however, the matter of Hajj and Umrah is different. There are narrations on this topic from Abu Hurairah R.A. too.

Jami` at-Tirmidhi 803 – Saheeh

### 14.2.3 If someone made a vow for I’tikaf and dies before it:

There are two opinions in this regard.

**Opinion 1:** The dependants of the deceased should do the I’tikaf on behalf of the deceased to fulfill the responsibility.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>204.</th>
<th>Ubaidullah Ibn Abdullah’s mother died while she had made a vow to do I’tikaf for ten days. Ibn Abbas said: Do the I’tikaf for your mother.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

خَدَّنَا عُبْدُ الصَّمَدِّ بْنُ عَبْد الْوَارِثِ، عَنْ حَجَّاجٍ، عَنْ عُبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عُمَرَ، أَنَّ أُمَّهُ نَذَرَتْ أَنْ تَعْتَكِفْ عَشْرَةَ أَيَامٍ، فَمَاتَتْ وَلََّا تَعْتَكِفْ، فَقَالَ ابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ: اعْتَكِفْ عَنْ أُمُّكَ
This opinion is supported by several traditions. Consider the narrations below that emphasize the importance of offering the good deeds that the deceased had made a vow for.

| 205. | Narrated Sa`id bin 'Ubada Al-Ansari: that he consulted the Prophet (ﷺ) about a vow that had been made by his mother who died without fulfilling it. The Prophet (ﷺ) gave his verdict that he should fulfill it on her behalf. The verdict became Sunna (i.e. the Prophet's tradition). |

| 206. | It was narrated that Ibn 'Abbas said: "A woman traveled by sea and vowed to fast for a month, but she died before she could fast. Her sister came to the Prophet and told him about that, and he told her to fast on her behalf." |

(This message can also be seen in Saheeh al-Bukhari 2761; Jami Tirmidhi 1546, Sunan Nasai 3657, 3659, 3660, 3661, 3662, 3663, 3817, 3818, 3819; Sunan Abu Dawud 3317; Sunan Ibn Majah 2132 and so on).

Also consider the hadith below:
207. Narrated 'Aishah R.A.: The Prophet (ﷺ) as saying: If anyone dies when some fast is due from him (i.e. which he could not keep) his heir must fast on his behalf. Abu Dawud said: This applies to the fast which a man vows; and this is the opinion of Ahmad b. Hanbal.

Sunan an-Nasa'i 3816 - Saheeh

208. Ibn Abbas (Allah be pleased with them) reported: A woman came to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and said: Messenger of Allah, my mother has died and there is due from her a fast of vow; should I fast on her behalf? Thereupon he said: You see that if your mother had died in debt, would it not have been paid on her behalf? She said: Yes. He (the Holy Prophet) said: Then observe fast on behalf of your mother.
209. Narrated Ibn `Abbas: A woman from the tribe of Juhaina came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said, "My mother had vowed to perform Hajj but she died before performing it. May I perform Hajj on my mother's behalf?"

The Prophet (ﷺ) replied, "Perform Hajj on her behalf. Had there been a debt on your mother, would you have paid it or not? So, pay Allah's debt as He has more right to be paid."

The above narrations (and numerous others on this topic) leave no doubt that the Prophet 🕌 commanded the vows to be fulfilled. The same ruling applies in case of I’tikaf too.

Opinion 2: According to this opinion, the Qadha (making up for the missed vow for I’tikaf) is not due.

210. Hakam said: There is no qadha on behalf of the mayyit (the deceased) for his I’tikaf.
Preferred position: In the case of a vow, the I’tikaf had become obligatory. Accordingly, its recompense would be required just like a debt. We accordingly prefer the first opinion, in our humble understanding, to be applicable in case the deceased made a vow to do I’tikaf.

However, the two opinions can be reconciled when the tradition mentioned in support of the second opinion is interpreted to mean that it is in relation to the I’tikaf that was not mandatory (i.e. the deceased did not make it obligatory upon himself through a vow). A group of scholars, as already mentioned earlier, holds the opinion that the Qadha is not due for I’tikaf except in case of obligatory one. The same ruling will be applicable in case of the deceased.
15.1 Worship on the night you come out of I’tikaf:

Some scholars encourage the night of Eid to be spent in worship too as they consider it a virtuous night. We recommend that it would be beneficial to offer a few *rakat* after the Maghreb salah on the Eid night in thankfulness to Allah swt for allowing you to perform I’tikaf and complete it.

It is important to note, however, that the hadiths below are Daif. However, many people have knowledge acted upon them. This includes Imam Nawawi who is reported to have said in Al-Majmu:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>211.</th>
<th>[Most of the people of knowledge consider being awake on the night of Eid (Al-Fitr as well as Al-Adha) to be Mustahab]. Imam Nawawi said: Our companions are in agreement regarding remaining awake (for worship) on the night of Eid.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ذهب أكثر أهل العلم إلى استحباب إحياء ليلتي العليدين (الفطر والأضحى)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Al-Majmu 2/494</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Rodhatul Talitbeen (2/74), a saying of Imam Shafai’i is mentioned that the night of Eid is one of the nights in which the *Duas* are accepted. Other learned *Aslaf* including Abdur Rahman Ibn Al-Aswad, Qadhi Hussain, Abdullah As-Siddiq Al-Ghammari, Umar Ibn Abdul Aziz, and others also
considered this to be a virtuous night, as mentioned in Ruhban Al-Layl 2/199.

After this brief overview, let us now review some of the relevant narrations in this regard. As we mentioned earlier, these are classified as Daif.

### 212. It was narrated from Abu Umamah that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Whoever spends the nights of the two ‘Eid in praying voluntary prayers, seeking reward from Allah, his heart will not die on the Day when hearts will die.”

Sunan Ibn Majah 1782 – Daif

### 15.2 Spending the night of Eid in the Masjid:

It was a Sunnah of the companions to spend the night of Eid in the masjid after completing the I’tikaf.

### 213. Yahya related to me from Ziyad from Malik that he saw some of the people of knowledge who, when they did I’tikaf in the last ten days of Ramadan, would not go back to their families until they had attended the Id al-Fitr with everybody. Ziyad
said that Malik said, "I heard this from the people of excellence who have passed away, and it is what I like most out of what I have heard about the matter."

Muwatta Imam Malik Book 19, Hadith 697

Also, consider the narrations below which emphasize the *Istihbab* (likeness) of spending the night of Eid in the masjid.

214. On the day of Eid ul Fitr, a girl child (from the family) who was well-prepared (for the Eid, wearing a good-looking dress and so on) was brought to the masjid where Abu Qilabah did I’tikaf. He made the child sit in his lap and patted her head. Then they all went towards the place for Eid prayer.

Musannaf Ibn Abi Shayba 9770

215. Ibrahim Nakhai said that the *Aslaf* liked this that they would spend the night of Eid in their Masjid and then go for Eid prayers the next morning.

Musannaf Ibn Abi Shayba 9771 - Daif

Who would like to depart from the door of the beloved? The *aslaf* used to spend as much time in the masjid as they could, and their hearts were always left in there.
15.3 The payment of Reward when you finish I’tikaf

The time when the Ramadan ends and you come out of I’tikaf is the time for the payment of a great reward. At that time, we should seek forgiveness for our mistakes during the month of Ramadan and make dua to Allah swt to accept our deeds and increase them in reward in His esteemed court.

216. Anas reported God's Messenger ﷺ as saying: When Laylatul Qadr comes, Jibril descends with a company of angels who invoke blessings on everyone who is standing or sitting and remembering Allah swt Who is the Great and the Glorious. Then when their festival day comes, i.e. the day when they break their fast, Allah swt speaks proudly of them to His angels saying, “My angels, what is the reward of a hired servant who has fully accomplished his work?” They reply, “Our Lord, his reward is that he should be paid his wage in full.” He says, “My angels, my male and female servants have fulfilled what I have made obligatory for them, and then have come out raising their voices in supplication.

وَعَنْ أَنَسٍ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ عَلَيْهِ ﻭَسَلَّمَ: "إِذَا كَانَ لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ نَزلَ جِبَّرِيلُ عَلَى السَّلَامِ فِي كُبْكُةٍ مِّنَ المَلََائِكَةِ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى كُلِّ عَبْدٍ قَايِمٍ أَوْ قَاعِدٍ يَذْكُرُ اللَّه عِزَّ وَجَلَّ فَإِذَا كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ عِبْدُهُ وَيَذْكُرُ اللَّه عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَقَالَ لِمَلَائِكَةَهُمْ وَعِيَّاتِهِمْ: "أَيُّمَانَاءُ أَجِّيٍّ وَفَ عَمَلَ هُ؟ قَالُوا: رَبُّنَا جَزَاؤُهُ أنْ يُوْفَ أَجْرَهُ. قَالَ: مَلَائِكَتِي عَبِّيدِي وَإِمَائِي فِضْلُوا فَرِيضَتِهِمْ أُتُوْفَ أَجْرَهُمْ. قَالَ: وَعِيَّاتُهُمْ إِلَى الْدُعَاءِ وَعِيَّاتُهُمْ إِلَى الْدُعَاءِ وَجَلَّيٍّ وَكَرِيمٍ وَغَلْطِي وَرَفْعٍ مِّكَانِ لَأَجِيْبِهِمْ. قَالُوا: ارْجِعُوا فَقُولُوا: فِيْرُجُوهُمْ مَعْفُورُا لَهُمْ. "
By My might, glory, honour, high dignity, and exalted station, I will certainly answer them.” Then He says, “Return, for I have forgiven you and changed your evil deeds into good deeds.” He said that they then return having received forgiveness.
16 Did you miss the I’tikaf? Here is what you can still do

If you have missed the I’tikaf, here are some of the things you can still do to not miss the reward.

16.1 Some Saheeh or Hassan ahadith or athar on this topic:

16.1.1 Dedicate a portion of your time every week for the Deen of Allah swt

If you make a habit of spending some time in the way of Allah swt with sincerity, it will be better than spending the night of Laylatul Qadr in I’tikaf at Masjid Al-Haram.

217. Abu Huraira R.A. said: I have heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say that standing in the path of Allah swt is better than standing in prayer (Qiyam al-Layl) on Laylatul Qadr next to Al-Hajr Al-Aswad.

(Also seen in Shub ul Iman 4286, Arbaeen Jihad Li Ibn Asakir 18, Al-Matalib Al-Aaliya Li Ibn Hajr 1936, At-Tareekh Al-Kabir Li Imam Bukhari 3507, Musannaf Ibn Abi Shayba 19680; At-Tagheeb Li Ibn Shaheeh 443; Musannaf Abdul Razzaq 9325, Sunan Saeed Ibn Mansoor 2232, and so on).

The above report appears through multiple chains. Some scholars have
criticized some of the chains; however, Imam Albani has classified it as Saheeh in Silsila Ahadith Saheehah (no. 1068) based on other narrations that support it.

16.1.2 Make an effort to solve the problem of your brother

Be in the Khidmah and service of others and you will be able to achieve this great reward inshaAllah.

218. Ibn Umar R.A. reported: The Prophet ☪, peace and blessings be upon him, said, “The most beloved people to Allah are those who are most beneficial to people. The most beloved deed to Allah is to make a Muslim happy, or to remove one of his troubles, or to forgive his debt, or to feed his hunger. That I walk with a brother regarding a need is more beloved to me than that I seclude myself in this masjid in Medina for a month. Whoever swallows his anger, then Allah will conceal his faults. Whoever suppresses his rage, even though he could fulfil his anger if he wished, then Allah will secure his heart on the Day of Resurrection.

Whoever walks with his brother regarding a need
until he secures it for him, then Allah Almighty will make his footing firm across the bridge on the day when the footings are shaken.”

16.1.3 Be the one on security duty when there is a fear

219. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: Should I not tell you about a night that is better than Laylatul Qadr? (Night of a) guard performing his duty in the land of fear while he cannot go back to his family.

Mustadrak Hakim 2470 – Saheeh

16.1.4 Four rakat after Isha:

Though the below and other similar narrations attributed to the Prophet ﷺ, may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him, are identified as Daif, there are Athar mentioning this virtue that reach the level of acceptability in relation to offering the four rakat after Isha. Firstly, consider the ahadith below that are graded as Daif:

220. Whoever offered four rakat after Isha; and in the first four
rakat, he recited Surah Kafirun and Surah Ikhlas; while in remaining two he recited Surah Mulk and Surah Sajdah; it is as if he offered four rakat in Laylatul Qadr.

Sunan Al-Kubra 4391 - Daif

Also, consider the narration below:

221. Whoever offered the Isha prayer in the congregation and offered four rakat after that before leaving the masjid, it would be equivalent for him to offering four rakat in Laylatul Qadr.

Majma Al-Zawaid 2/234 - Daif

The following athar are considered to have an acceptable level of authenticity and can inshaAllah be acted upon with hope for the reward mentioned in them.

222. It was narrated that Ka‘b said: "Whoever performs wudu and performs wudu, well, then prays (Abdur-Rahman said: and prays Isha “after that”), and then prays after that four Rakahs and
perfects them, (Sawwar [one of the narrators] said: ‘And they are perfected’ – i.e. there is a slight difference in reported wordings) in their rukoo and sujood and understands what he is reciting, they will be equivalent for him (in reward as praying in) Laylat Al-Qadr “.

Sunan an-Nasa’i 4954 – Hasan Maqtu

223. Ibn Masood R.A. said: Who offered four Rakat after Isha and did not separate them with tasleem (i.e. offered four rakat together rather than splitting them in two and two), it would be as if he offered them on Laylatul Qadr.

Musannaf Ibn Abi Shayba 2/127

Similar narrations have also been reported from Abdullah Ibn Umar R.A. and Ayesha R.A. as found in Musannaf Ibn Abi Shayba. Other books of hadith also contain reports that explain the same virtue being described by various companions. There are athar among them which have good isnad (and hence those athar are acceptable). Shaykh Albani considers the numerous athar on this topic to be reliable and considers acting upon them...
as correct as the companions would not mention a reward like this just by themselves.

### 16.2 Some weak or fabricated ahadith on this topic

Please note that the following are weak narrations. However, those of them that are not against the proven Sunnah can be practiced and followed *inshaAllah*.

#### 16.2.1 Better than I’tikaf for ten years

| 224. | Atta R.A. narrated about Ibn Abbas R.A. that he was doing I’tikaf in the masjid of the Prophetﷺ when a man came in; He greeted him (with *salam*) and sat down. Ibn Abbas said to him: O man, I see you being sad and stressed. He said: Yes, O son of the uncle of the Prophetﷺ! I have a debt to pay to someone and by the honour of the blessed resident of this grave (ﷺ), I do not have means for it (i.e. to pay it off). Ibn Abbas R.A. asked him: Should I talk to him (i.e. the lender) about you? He said: Yes, if you consider it appropriate. He (the narrator) said: Ibn Abbas R.A. got up and walked out of the masjid. A man said to him: Did you forget (O Ibn Abbas) what you were in? |
(i.e. the state of I’tikaf). He said: No, but I have heard from the blessed resident of this grave not too long ago, his eyes filled up with tears (as he said this), that if one walks to fulfil a need of his brother and acquires it, it is better than I’tikaf for ten years, and who does I’tikaf for one day for the pleasure of Allah swt, Allah swt puts between him and the hellfire three trenches whose span is more than the distance between the east and the west.

**Shub ul Iman 3679 - Daif**

16.2.2 Fasting and Qiyam in Dhul Hijja:

The following hadith equates *qiyam* during the first ten days of Dhul Hijjah to be equivalent to *Laylatul Qadr*. However, this is Daif.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>225.</th>
<th>Abu Huraira R.A. said: Every fast in it, i.e. the ten days of <em>Dhul Hijja</em> and standing in prayer at night during each of its nights is equivalent to standing in prayer during <em>Laylatul Qadr</em>.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*Fath ul Bari 2/534 – Daif*

Though the above hadith is Daif, there are many Saheeh narrations which mention the virtues of the first ten days of *Dhul Hijjah*. Consider the
narrations below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>narration number</th>
<th>narration content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>226.</td>
<td>Narrated One of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ: Hunaydah ibn Khalid narrated from his wife on the authority of one of the wives of the Prophet (ﷺ) who said: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to fast the first nine days of Dhul-Hijjah, Ashura' and three days of every month, that is, the first Monday (of the month) and Thursday.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>227.</td>
<td>Narrated Ibn 'Abbas: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) as saying: There is no virtue more to the liking of Allah in any day than in these days, that is, the first ten days of Dhu al-Hijjah. They (the Companions) asked: Messenger of Allah, not even the struggle in the path of Allah (Jihad)? He said: (Yes), not even the struggle in the path of Allah, except a man who goes out (in the path of Allah) with his life and property and does not return with any of them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Such virtues have also been reported in numerous other *ahadith*.

However, in this relation, the following *ahadith* from *Saheeh Muslim* in the chapter ‘Fasting the (first) ten days of Dhul Hijja’ in the book of I’tikaf are also required to be considered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th><em>Ayesha</em> (Allah be pleased with her) reported:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>228.</td>
<td>I never saw the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) fasting in the ten days of Dhul-Hijja.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Saheeh Muslim 1176a*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th><em>Ayesha</em> (Allah be pleased with her) reported: The Apostle of Allah (ﷺ) did not observe fast in the ten days of Dhul-Hijja.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>229.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Saheeh Muslim 1176b*

The above two *ahadith* (and others containing this message, i.e. *Ayesha R.A. not seeing the Prophet (ﷺ) fasting in first ten days of Dhul Hijjah*) can be understood as follows:

- It is to be kept in mind that various virtues have been narrated for fasting on the Day of Arafah for the people who are not doing the *hajj* as well as virtues for worship in the first ten days of *Dhul Hijjah*. 
The above narrations can possibly mean that fasting ALL of the days in the first ten days of Dhul Hijjah was not a practice of the Prophet ﷺ. Some days can be fasted.

- It is also possible that they mean that the Prophet ﷺ did not observe the fast in these days due to travel or illness or Ayesha R.A. could not see him fasting due to other reasons.

- According to some traditions, the Qadha for any missed fasts is to be done in the first ten days of Dhul Hijjah (e.g., as mentioned in Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah 9608 to 9615). The inclusion of the above-mentioned hadith at the end of Kitab As-Saum and the chapters of I’tikaf in Saheeh Muslims is possibly to convey the more correct position regarding the Qadha of any missed fasts, i.e. they can be completed outside of Dhul Hijjah too.

16.2.3 Four Rakat before Dhuhr:

| 230. | Anas R.A. narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: Four rakat before Dhuhr are like four rakat after Isha; and four Rakat after Isha are like four rakat in Laylatul Qadr. |

(This message can also be seen in Majma Az-Zawaid 2/224 and so on).

16.2.4 Six Rakat after Maghreb:

| 231. | Whoever offered six Rakat after Maghreb, it is equivalent for to a worship of the whole year or offering prayer on the night of Laylatul Qadr. |

I’tikaf - The Spiritual Retreat | 238
Though this narration is present in the above-mentioned book, the scholars have not identified any isnad for this. A similar narration, which is found in numerous books of hadith along with its chain equates the 6 *rakahs* after Maghreb to be equivalent to 12 years of worship. However, that narration is also considered extremely *Daif*. Having said that, a lot of people of knowledge used to offer voluntary prayers after Maghreb.

### 16.2.5 Four rakat after Maghreb

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>232.</th>
<th>Whoever offers four <em>rakat nafil</em> prayers after Maghreb before talking to anyone, a place is reserved for him in the high aboves (Ili’yeen) and he is like someone who has done I’tikaf in Masjid Al-Aqsa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>من صلى أربع ركعات بعد المغرب قبل أن يكلم أحدًا وضعته له في عِلىِّيِِّ وكأن كمن أدرك ليلة القدر في المسجد الأقصى</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Takhreej Al-Ihya 1/463 – Daif |

### 16.2.6 Fadhail of Surah Mulk and Surah Sajdah:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>233.</th>
<th>Whoever recites Surah Sajdah and Surah Al-Mulk during the day and night, it would be an equivalent reward for him as Laylatul Qadr.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>من قرأ الْتَنْزِيلُ والْبَارَكَ الذِّي بِيَدِّهِّ المُلْكُ في يوم وليلة كأَحِبَّ ليلة القدر</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Al-Ajwaba Al-Maradhiyyah Li Sakhawi 2/461 - Daif |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>233.</th>
<th>Whoever recited Surah As-Sijdah and Surah Al-Mulk, it is as if he remained awake on the night of Al-Qadr.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>من قرأ سورة (الْتَنْزِيل السجدة) و(الْبَارَك الذِّي بِيَدِّهِّ المُلْكُ) فَكَأَمَّا أحِبَّ ليلة القدر</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Al-Ajwaba Al-Maradhiyyah Li Sakhawi 2/462 – Mawdoo (fabricated) |
May Allah swt accept it from us and from you.
iCAN SAMA-O-BASR PUBLICATIONS