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20) Never in the Koran is fasting the whole month of Ramadan prescribed, but only a few days of fasting in that month.

Here is the first three pages of my article about this subject. To read the whole article in farsi, go to www.christianmuslim.org. To read it in English you can access it in this web site.

Article:

MUSLIMS' BELIEF REGARDING FASTING

A common belief among the Muslims is that they should fast for thirty days from sunrise to sunset during the month of Ramadan. They define their fasting as no food or fluid during the daylight fasting hours.

THE KORAN'S TEACHING ABOUT FASTING

The Koran never commands thirty days of fasting in the month of Ramadan, but rather a few days during this month. This article will attempt to show the real message of the Koran, unaltered by man.

LATEST RESEARCH ON EFFECTS OF THIRTY DAYS OF FASTING

A well documented article (<http://www.alanaragon.com/an-objective-look-at-intermittent-fasting.html>) reports the following:

Ramadan is considered by practicing Muslims to be the most important period of religious observation in the Islamic calendar. In its strictest version, a complete food and fluid fast is undergone from sunrise to sunset (12-16 hours). This routine is carried out daily for a month. Unsurprisingly, traffic accidents peak during this time, alongside a reduction in working hours [Roki, R., et al., 2004]. Traffic injuries are the second major cause of death in the United Arab Emirates, with the

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bulk of the accidents occurring between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m. [Bener, A., et al, 1992]. Research consistently shows a decrease in daytime alertness, mood, and wakefulness during the fasting month of Ramadan [Roki 2004, Bener 1992, Roki 2000, and Roki 2003]. Physical performance – as measured by speed, agility, and endurance - declined in professional soccer players observing Ramadan [Zerguini, Y., 2007]. Their performance remained low for two weeks post-Ramadan.

Some vital effects of fasting include the following:

- 1) Lower level of activities
- 2) Lower mental output
- 3) High rate of illness
- 4) Weight gain due to overeating at sunset

The above list is much longer than the few examples listed above. However, if fasting for thirty days in the month of Ramadan were prescribed by God in the Koran, then I would not dare say anything against God's commandments.

The Koran has never subscribed to such a law. However, some Muslims blindly follow many rules that have been completely twisted by religious leaders and passed on to the next generation. This fact can be verified easily because the Koran's words are, as it claims, "very easy to understand" (54:22, 44:58), "very clear" (41:3, 43:2, 44:2)," and contain "no ambiguity about its message of guidance" (18:1).

Muslims should note that God wants them to use their minds rather than act blindly in regards to anything:

Koran 8:22 The worst creatures in the sight of God are the deaf and dumb, who do not use their minds.

Furthermore, the Koran adamantly urges Muslims not to follow their fathers' ideologies blindly:

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Koran 5:104 When they are told, "Come to what God has revealed, and to the messenger," they say, "What we found our fathers doing is sufficient for us." What if their fathers knew nothing, and were not guided?

MANMADE LAWS HAVE ALWAYS REPLACED GOD'S COMMANDMENTS, CAUSING CHAOS AND TENSION IN THE ABRAHAMIC RELIGIONS

Jesus' encounter with religious leaders regarding their traditions as replacing God's commandment is well documented in all four Gospels.

Matthew 15:3 He (Jesus) answered and said to them, "Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition? ... **6** ... Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition.

Mark 7:8 For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men- the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do." **9** He said to them, "All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition.

Moreover, Jesus warns that these religious leaders often create harsh rules and force them on men, but these rules are not from God (similar to changing God's words from a few days' fast to a thirty days' fast in today's world of Islam).

Luke 11:46 And He said, "Woe to you also, lawyers (religious leaders)! For you load men with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers. ... **52** "Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not enter in yourselves, and those who were entering in you hindered."

Prophet Mohammad also encountered Jews and Christians regarding this matter, and God warns them about terrible consequences of this act:

Koran 2:78 Among them are illiterates who do not know the scripture, except through hearsay, then assume that they know it. **79** Therefore, woe to those who write the scripture with their own hands, then say, "This is what God has revealed," seeking a cheap material gain. Woe to them for what their hands do write, and woe to them for their illicit gains.

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Koran 3:78 Among them are those who twist their tongues to imitate the scripture, that you may think it is from the scripture, when it is not from the scripture, and they claim that it is

With the above danger of what religious leaders are capable of doing to God's commandment, let us now examine the verses of the Koran regarding fasting.

Here are all the verses of the Koran that prescribe fasting:

Koran 2:183 O you who believe, fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may attain salvation. **184**(Fasting) for a few days; but if any of you is ill, or on a journey, the prescribed number (Should be made up) from days later. For those who can do it (With hardship), is a ransom, the feeding of one that is indigent. But he that will give more, of his own free will,- it is better for him. And it is better for you that ye fast, if ye only knew. **185** Ramadhan is the (month) in which was sent down the Koran, as a guide to mankind, also clear (Signs) for guidance and judgment (Between right and wrong). Those of you who witness this month shall fast therein, but if anyone is ill, or on a journey, the prescribed period (Should be made up) by days later. God intends every facility for you; He does not want to put to difficulties. (He wants you) to complete the prescribed period, and to glorify Him in that He has guided you; and perchance ye shall be grateful.