

Fasting, *fidya* and abrogation: Quran 2:184 analysis

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A. Introduction

Fasting is an important pillar of faith for believers of God. Quran 2:184 says:

أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ ۚ فَمَن كَانَ مِنكُم مَّرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۗ وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ
يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ۚ فَمَن تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّهُ ۗ وَأَن تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن
كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

(Fasting) for a fixed number of 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, 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. 2:184

Important points from the above ayah are:

- Two kinds of people are exempted from fasting:
 1. Those who are ill / patient.
 2. Those who are on a journey.
- These people (who have missed fast because of either of the two reasons mentioned above) have two options with them:
 1. Either they should complete fast later.
 2. OR they should feed one needy person (for each missed fast). This is called *fidya*. If they feed more than one person for each missed fast, then it is better.
- However out of two options FASTING is better.

Everything is fine till here. However, majority of Islamic scholars believe that the option of feeding a needy person in place of fasting is no more valid!! They say that this permission – of feeding a person – is abrogated; it does not hold any more. They say that next ayah i.e. 2:185 abrogates this ayah; i.e. 2:184.

Note: Abrogation is an anti-Quranic and illogical concept. Neither a single ayah nor a single word of Quran has been abrogated. To say that Quran contains abrogated ayah means Quran is not God's word. Kindly read [THIS](#) article for details on this subject.

B. This is NOT example of abrogation

وَمَنْ كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۗ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَاكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

...but if anyone is ill, or on a journey, the prescribed period (Should be made up) by days later. Allah 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. 2:185

The next ayah – quoted above – is ayah number 185 which allegedly abrogates the command given in ayah number 184. Ayah 185 says:

- If someone is ill OR on a journey, then he / she should compensate later on.
- Allah intends to make things easier for you.
- Allah does not want to make things difficult for you.
- He wants you to complete the period and glorify him.

People say that “Ayah 185 abrogates 184 and that the final verdict is: *one who misses fast should compulsorily complete it later on; there is no option of feeding the needy instead of fasting.* It is because ayah 185 is not talking about feeding a person; it is only talking about making up of prescribed period later on.”

This argument is very weak. When ayah 184 has already given two options for those who have missed fast then why it’s necessary that every time this should be repeated? We should understand Quran as a whole otherwise we are bound to arrive at wrong conclusion. For example, if a person reads 3-118; 4-89, 139, 144; 5-51; 58-14, 22; superficially then he will think that Islam prohibits making friendship with all non-Muslims. However, when you read 60-8, 9 then you will understand WHAT kinds of non-Muslims are prohibited to be befriended. These two ayah 60:8-9- elaborate qualities of those people whom we should not befriend and rest of other ayah only refers to them.

So it’s important to understand Quran as a whole. Ayah 184 has elaborated all options for those who have missed the fast. When Ayah 2:184 has told very clearly that feeding a needy person is one of the options for those who have missed fast then there is no reason to doubt this permission of Allah.

C. Things are very simple; no need to complicate

Let us analyze these two ayah closely then we will find some more points that support our argument. Comparing these two ayah in table:

	2: 184 says	2: 185 says
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1	(Fasting) for a fixed number of days;	<i>Ramadhan</i> is the (month) in which was sent down the Qur'an, as a guide to mankind, also clear (Signs) for guidance and judgment (Between right and wrong). So every one of you who is present (at his home) during that month should spend it in fasting,
2	but if any of you is ill, or on a journey, the prescribed number (Should be made up) from days later	but if anyone is ill, or on a journey, the prescribed period (Should be made up) by days later.
3	For those who can do it is a ransom, the feeding of one that is indigent.	Allah intends every facility for you; He does not want to put to difficulties.
4	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.	

Column 2 on both sides is giving the same command: If you could not fast during *Ramadhan* then complete it later.

Look at column 3; see the beauty of Quran here.

- 184 is saying that even though you can fast yet Allah has given you one more option: you can feed to needy person.
- 185 is saying that Allah wants to make things easier for you; he does not want to put you into difficulties.

Column 3 beautifully explains that **you are given option of feeding person because Allah is giving you every facility; Allah does not want to put you into difficulty and Allah wants to make things easier for you.**

This is the beauty of Quran that though reader thinks that same ayah / part of ayah is repeated at many places, but in each instance of so called repetition there is far more information than reader thinks. If one ponders more and connect dots, then far more knowledge can be gained.

D. Conclusion

1. Many people believe in the concept of abrogation in Quran. They say some ayah of Quran are abrogated by other ayah; it means that one ayah is cancelled / repealed by other ayah. This concept is completely against Quran and common sense.

2. People present 2:184 one of the examples of abrogation in Quran.

3. In 2:184 Allah gives option to those who have missed fast in Ramadhan, either they can fast later OR they can feed a poor. However, fasting is better. Those who believe in abrogation say, "This complete ayah is abrogated by the next ayah i.e. 185. As per 2:185 – those who missed fast have to mandatorily fast later on and they don't have option to give *fidya*."

4. There is no abrogation as claimed by scholars. Ayah 184 and Ayah 185 beautifully tell us that those who have missed fast can either fast later on OR they can feed to poor. This second option

is given because Allah is giving you every facility; Allah does not want to put you into difficulty and Allah wants to make things easier for you.

5. Not a single word, ayah of Quran has been abrogated.
