**FOUNTAIN UNIVERSITY FIQH CLASS FOR 300 LEVEL**
**FIRST SEMESTER:**
**FUC 301**
**QURANIC REFLECTIONS**

**WEEK ONE**

**THE INEVITABLE JOURNEY TO *AL'KHIRAH***

Unless we wake up to the fact that we are all travelers on this world with an inescapable journey lying ahead and a destination towards which we must move, we will not muster the resolution necessary to reach our goal. It is enough to say that our biggest obstacle in the way of awakening from our slumber leads us to forget our ultimate destination and we neglect to prepare for that ultimate journey. We deaden our will and resolution with our egos and with the attitude that we are going to live forever.

We have the tendency of assuring ourselves that there is still plenty of time for preparing for the trip, that if we do not prepare for it today we may do so tomorrow, if not this month then the next and so on. To adopt such an attitude means that we would be building castles in the air and living in a fool's paradise. Such a state of extended and outstretched hope, together with a false assurance of unlimited life and unbounded availability of time, makes us oblivious of our ultimate goal, the Heaven.

May Almighty *Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala* save us from such thinking. We have such a long and terrifying journey awaiting us and we have been given a limited time in which to procure and prepare the provisions and dire necessities for the trip, but do not possess anything because we do not pay heed to the inevitable journey. It is obvious that if such a state of neglect befalls us, we will fail to procure the necessary provisions for the long trip, being totally helpless and at a loss at the time of our departure. Such a person will perish on the journey and will not reach the desired destination. We must not loose sight of the fact that our journey is a perilous one, for which the provisions of sound knowledge and fruitful action are needed.

The time of our departure from this World is known only to Almighty *Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala*. None of us know for certain whether we will be here next week. In short, we have no guarantee whatsoever that we will be alive tomorrow. The dawning of each new day draws us another day closer to our Qabir. If what I say makes any sense than may I humbly suggest that we should all declare very sincerely that today is the first day of the beginning of the rest of our lives.
This prolonging of hope by you and me arises from our inflated egos and self-love and is the most masterly of the vile and filthy tricks of *Shaythaan Lanatullahi Alay*. Through it he distracts our attention from the Heaven and diverts us from attending to its affairs. With the perils of the long journey and the obstacles in

the way of preparing for it, if we fail to repent or to return to Almighty *Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala.* The appointed call shall come unexpectedly and send us totally unprepared on our way without any provisions for the very long journey lying in wait.

Even if we have performed good deeds, what guarantees do we have that those deeds are pure and untainted? If we acquired any knowledge, we should ask ourselves whether such knowledge was futile and fruitless or whether our learning was nonsensical and absurd or whether it was an impediment on the long and perilous journey to our meeting with our Glorious Creator and Sustainer. Had the deeds that we have done and the knowledge that we have learnt been beneficial, they should have left some mark on us who have been in their pursuit for years and should have transformed our habits and morals. What went wrong that our past few years' labour has produced an opposite result and has hardened our hearts?

What have we achieved from performing regular Salaat, which is the Me'raj of a Mu'min? Where is the fear of Almighty Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala which is the outcome of true knowledge? Allah forbid, if we are called to depart from this World right now in our present state, are we sufficiently secured by assuming that we will not encounter any lasting disappointments and that there will be no remorse in store for us? If obliviousness of the caused by endless hope is something on account of which the greatest man who ever walked on the face of this earth was concerned about, he was justified; for he knew about the perilous journey awaiting all of us. He taught us not to be complacent and to remember that:

***"The grave is the first stage of the many stages of the Heaven."***

At all times, we should be busy in gathering all our provisions for that ultimate trip because this is the only chance we have. As Muslims, we must never ever separate our lives from AlmightyAllah's Deen nor from our beliefs, our social, our political and our commercial activities because they all form an integral part of the Muslim way of life. A wonderful example of what this means is given to us in verse 201 of Surah Al-Baqara which we recite every day after every prayer:

"***O Allah! Give us good in this world and good in the Akhirah, and save us from the torments of Jahannum."***

The earthly life of a true Muhmin is built on the premise that we were created and then brought into this world for the Pleasure (Ridho) of Almighty Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala. This means that we live and we die for the Pleasure of our Glorious Creator and we yearn for our meeting with Almighty *Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala*. Out of His Great love for humanity, Almighty Allah tells us in verse 208 of Surah Al-Baqara:

***"O you who believe! Enter whole-heartedly into Islam, and follow not the footsteps of Shaythaan for he is to you and avowed enemy."***

We must awaken our hearts and inform it of the truth as narrated by our prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.)

***"This World is the farmland of the Heaven."***

That is, if we do not sow the seeds of righteous deeds in the few days of our life here on this World, the opportunity will be lost forever. When we reach the threshold of the other world and death seizes us, deeds come to an end and all hopes are extinguished. If, Allah forbid, we continue to remain in the slavery of lusts and the captivity of various carnal desires until the Angel of Death arrives, it is possible that Shaythaan may achieve his ultimate objective of wresting away our faith. Let us clear our hearts and turn our attention to the focal point of absolute perfection and try to ponder on verse 17 of Surah Sajda where Almighty Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala's promise has been made very clear:

***"I have prepared a reward for My righteous servants what no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what the mind of man has not conceived."***

Could we really ask for and achieve any greater reward than to enjoy the Pleasure and the Company of our Glorious Creator and Sustainer Who created us - to be enveloped in the Light of His Majestic Glory, and dwelling in the warmth and security of His love, His blessing and His Eternal Abode? Can we deny ourselves what Almighty Allah Azza Wajjal offers us? Our eyes for the brilliance of His Glory, our ears for the words of His Welcome, and our hearts for the contentment of His Divine Company?

If Almighty All5ah gave us free and easy access to Janna'h we would not appreciate it as we had not fully earned it or done very little to deserve it. But if through all our trials and tribulations we can Insha'Allah earn the Pleasure and the Company of Rahmathul Liel Ala'meen and become worthy and fit for our final and ultimate journey for our reunion with Him, then Alhumdoelillah, our lives have not been in vain because Almighty Allah reminds us in verse 156 of Surah Al-Baqara:

***".....Surely we are Allah's, and to Him shall we return."***

Allah says,

**يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَا تَعْتَذِرُوا الْيَوْمَ ۖ إِنَّمَا تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ**

**O you who have disbelieved, make no excuses that Day. You will only be recompensed for what you used to do.** Quran 66 verse 7

Allah says,

الْيَوْمَ نَخْتِمُ عَلَىٰ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَتُكَلِّمُنَا أَيْدِيهِمْ وَتَشْهَدُ أَرْجُلُهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

**That Day, We will seal over their mouths, and their hands will speak to Us, and their feet will testify about what they used to earn.** Quran 36 verse 65

Allah says,

وَكُلَّ إِنسَانٍ أَلْزَمْنَاهُ طَائِرَهُ فِي عُنُقِهِ ۖ وَنُخْرِجُ لَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ كِتَابًا يَلْقَاهُ مَنشُورًا

**And [for] every person We have imposed his fate upon his neck, and We will produce for him on the Day of Resurrection a record which he will encounter spread open**. Quran 17 : 13

اقْرَأْ كِتَابَكَ كَفَىٰ بِنَفْسِكَ الْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكَ حَسِيبًا

**[It will be said], "Read your record. Sufficient is yourself against you this Day as accountant."**Quran 17:14

Allah says,

فَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ

**So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it,** Quran 99 Verse 7

Allah says,

وَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ

**And whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it.** Quran 99 Verse 8

**WEEK TWO**

**GOODNESS TO PARENTS**

Islam builds a family in which prevails mutual respect and care. Parents and children in Islam are bound together by mutual obligations and reciprocal arrangements. Allah Says (what means):

***"…No mother should be harmed through her child, and no father through his child…"*** [Quran 2: 233]

The Quran has made it compulsory for the child to treat his parents with all goodness and mercy.

Every Muslim must show goodness and mercy to his parents throughout their lives. There is only one exception to this, and that is, if the parents ask their children to associate anything with Allah and to commit sins, then the children must not obey their parents. In all cases, the children must show love and gratitude to their parents. They must always speak to them gently and respectfully. They must try their best to make them happy, provided they do not disobey Allah in the process.

Allah says,

***"But if they (both) strive with you to make you join in worship with me others of which you have no knowledge, then obey them not; but behave with them in the world kindly…"***[Quran 31:15]

**Being patient and tolerant with parents:**

The children must take great care not to react to what their parents have to say. If they say or do anything which is not liked or approved of by the children, then they must show patience and tolerance instead of giving vent to their anger. The children must scrupulously try to refrain from disobeying their parents since the Prophet ﷺ regarded this as one of the grave sins.

**Supplicating for them:**

Far from showing signs of displeasure, the children must pray for them saying, as Allah teaches *us in the verse:*

***"…My Lord and Sustainer! Be kind and have mercy on them as they cherished, nurtured and sustained me in childhood."***[Quran 17: 24]

We must continue praying for them even after they die. Such prayer will be regarded as continuous charity as the Prophet, sallallaahu alayhi wa salllam, told us.

**The greater right of the mother:**

The children must be kinder and more grateful to their mothers since they took greater pains in their upbringing. That is why the Prophet ﷺ emphasized that it is the mother who has the first claim on the child's care and attention.

Once a companion, may Allah be pleased with him, asked the Prophet ﷺ as to whom he should show more kindness. The Prophet ﷺ replied: "Your mother." He, may Allah be pleased with him, asked who comes next and the Prophet ﷺ again replied: "Your mother." He, may Allah be pleased with him, asked the Prophet ﷺ yet again who comes next. The Prophet ﷺ replied: "Your mother." When the companion, may Allah be pleased with him, asked for the fourth time, only then did the Prophet ﷺ reply: "Your father."

**Recognizing their great status:**

The Muslim should recognize the status of the parent and know his duties towards them. The status of parents in Islam is a status which mankind had not known before. Allah Has placed the respect for the parents just one step below the belief in Allah and true worship of Him.

Allah says:

***"And your Lord has decreed that you not worship except Him, and to parents, good treatment. Whether one or both of them reach old age [while] with you, say not to them [so much as], "uff," and do not repel them but speak to them a noble word."***[Quran 17: 23]

The Prophet ﷺ placed kindness and respect towards parents just after the prayer offered on time as the prayer is the foundation of Islam.

'Abdullaah Ibn Mas'ood, may Allah be pleased with him, said: ***"I asked the Prophet ﷺ which deed is most liked by Allah? He ﷺ said: 'Prayer offered on time.' I asked him: 'Then what? He ﷺ said: 'Kindness and respect towards parents.'…***" [Al-Bukhari and Muslim]/EA2

**<u>Knowing the duties towards them:</u>**

It is also the duty of the child to provide for his parents, if he is able to do so. The Quran sums up the whole matter in a master concept called Ihsaan, which denotes what is right, good and beautiful (i.e. showing to them kindness, compassion, gratitude, reverence and respect, praying for them and supporting them financially if they are in need.)

In conclusion, we mention a verse that shows the significance of obedience and gratitude due to parents: Allah says:

***"And We have enjoined upon man [care] for his parents. His mother carried him, [increasing her] in weakness upon weakness, and his weaning is in two years. Be grateful to Me and to your parents; to Me is the [final] destination."*** [Quran 31:14]

## WEEK THREE

### <u>GENERAL KINDNESS IN GLORIOUS QUR'AN</u>

This word from the Quran and Hadith shows well how Kindness is very highly regarded in Islam.Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) was reported to have said that:

***"Do you know what is better than charity and fasting and prayer? It is keeping peace and good relations between people, as quarrels and bad feelings destroy mankind."***

(Muslims & Bukhari)

***"Kindness is a mark of faith, and whoever is not kind has no faith."*** (Muslim)

***"Whoever is kind, Allah will be kind to him; therefore be kind to man on the earth. He who is in heaven will show mercy on you."***

(Abu Dawud and Tirmidhi)

***"By Him in whose hand my soul is, you will not enter paradise unless you believe, and you will not truly believe unless you love each other."***

(Bukhari and Muslim)

"…***Try to pass your mornings and evenings in a state where your heart is free from all ill-feelings, jealousy and hatred for everyone, and remember that this is my Sunnah, and he who loves my Sunnah will be with me in paradise."***

(Tirmidhi)

***"Those in whose hearts is no mercy for others will not attain the mercy of Allah."***

(Bukhari and Muslim)

***"One who lacks kindness of heart lacks all good."***

(Muslim)

Islam is the religion of kindness. This does not contradict your right to feel angry when Muslims are oppressed, poor, suffering and have a lot of injustices.

Kindness does not mean you give away you rights. For creating a kind society Islam believes much to have the best of people are the one who to serve in the government

Allah says:

**وَلَا تَجْعَلْ يَدَكَ مَغْلُولَةً إِلَىٰ عُنُقِكَ وَلَا تَبْسُطْهَا كُلَّ الْبَسْطِ فَتَقْعُدَ مَلُومًا مَّحْسُورًا**

**And do not make your hand [as] chained to your neck or extend it completely and [thereby] become blamed and insolvent.** Qur'an 17:29

He says:

**لَّا يَنْهَاكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُم مِّن دِيَارِكُمْ أَن تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ**

**Allah does not forbid you from those who do not fight you because of religion and do not expel you from your homes - from being righteous toward them and acting justly toward them. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly.** Qur'an 60: 8

He says:

وَاعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا ۖ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَبِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْجَنبِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَن كَانَ مُخْتَالًا فَخُورًا

**Worship Allah and associate nothing with Him, and to parents do good, and to relatives, orphans, the needy, the near neighbor, the neighbor farther away, the companion at your side, the traveler, and those whom your right hands possess. Indeed, Allah does not like those who are self-deluding and boastful.**Qur'an 4: 36

**TRAIN-THE-TRAINERS COURSE PRIMER (TTCP) IN ISLAM AND DIALOGUE**
**300 LEVEL 1ST SEMESTER**

**WEEK 4 (TTCP 4)**

**1. Period 1**

| **Period 1** |
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| **Christ came with Christianity, Buddha with Buddhism. Why should Islam not be called "Muhammedanism?** |

All true revelation comes from God, and all the true Prophets preached willing surrender to the will of God (i.e. Islam), including Jesus (AS) (See in the bible Matt. 7:21; Lk. 8:21; Lk. 22:42) Therefore Islam did not originate with Muhammad (ρ), as the name "Muhammadanism" implies. It was only given its final form through him.

Other religions were given names associated with a particular place, race, people, prophet or event, such as Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity, the Bahai faith, etc.

Acts 11:26 in the Bible says, "*the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch*", i.e. after the time of Jesus (P).

Islam, on the other hand, is the only religion that was given its name by the Creator (Qur'an 5:3).

Muslims have objections to being called "Muhammadans" or their religion being called"Muhammadanism" because:

(a) that is not its correct name ("Islam") nor was Muhammad its founder

(b) it implies that as Christians worship Christ, and as many Buddhists worship the Buddha, so Muslims worship Muhammad (ρ). This is not only untrue but in Islam it would be regarded as a great sin. God alone is worthy of worship.

| **According to the Qur'an (2:6-7), Allah guides and misguides whom He wills, and seals the hearts of some people from truth. Does this not imply that it is God who produces bad and misguided people? That misguided people are exactly what God wanted them to be?** |
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There are two types of guidance - one is to show the way and the other is to lead the person along the way. The first type is given to everyone by Allah, by sending messengers and revealed scriptures to give us guidance or how to achieve the objectives of this life and the Hereafter (Q.16:36).

However, there is a condition attached to the second type of guidance: it is earned by making use of the first. Abuse or rejection of the first leads to loss of the second and sealed hearts. In the Qur'an 2:6-7, Allah says:

"***As to those who are bent on denying the truth (rejecting the first offer), it is the same to them whether you warn them or do not warn them. They will not believe. Allah has set a seal on their hearts and on their hearing, and on their eyes is a veil; great is the penalty they (incur).***"

But the seal is not a random act of Allah but a consequence of their own choice, as Allah says in Qur'an 30:59,

"***Allah seals the hearts of those who do not (want to) know (the trut h).*" "...He causes many to stray, and many He leads into the right path; and He causes none to stray except those who forsake (the path).***" (Qur'an 2:26)

Yusuf Ali in his translation of the Qur'an writes "When an attitude of obstinate resistance to Truth is adopted, the natural consequence (by Allah's Law) is that the heart and mind get moreand more hardened with every act of deliberate rejection. It becomes more and more impervious to the rejection of Truth, just as a sealed envelope is unable to receive any further letter or message after it is sealed."

Who instituted the law whereby goodness and obedience to the first type of guidance lead to the second type of guidance, while arrogance and defiance lead to sealed hearts and misguidance? Allah, of course.According to the Bible Rm. 9:18**, "*God hardens the heart of whomever He wills.***"

Is the law described above good, equitable and just? Yes! Good begets good and viceversa, and God grants man the free will to choose to be guided or misguided. Each person is responsible for the consequence of his decision (Qur'an 4:115):

"***If anyone contends with the Messenger even after guidance has been plainly conveyed to him, and follows a path other than that becoming to people of faith, We shall leave him in the path he has chosen, and cause him to endure Hell - what an evil refuge!***"

**Period 5**

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| **Period 5**<br>**Some Muslims have been involved in various forms of violence, aggression and terrorism Does this not reflect on the Islamic teachings of Jihad and could imply that Islam by its nature undermines peaceful co-existence especially in multi-religious societies?** |

The basis for this kind of judgement would not be fair, whether applied to Islam or to Christianity. A way of life or religion is not to be judged by those of its followers who may disobey or be ignorant of its teachings. It should be judged by the actual teachings of its scriptures. It is therefore more reasonable to assess Islam by the teachings of the Qur'an and the sayings and deeds (Sunnah) of the Prophet Muhammad (ρ).

The same principle should be used in evaluating any religion. Otherwise, Christians forexample fought each other in the First World War (about 18 million people killed), and the Second World War (about 32 million killed). They also carried out the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (in Japan) killing thousands of innocent civilians. For centuries they organised the Crusades, the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade from Africa to America, the colonization and exploitation of African and Asian countries and the genocide of the native Americans and Australians. In our own time we have witnessed bombing and killing between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland, the Mafia criminal organizations of Italy and America, the Colombia drug wars, the "ethnic cleansing", murder and rape of the Bosnian Muslims, and the Apartheid system of South Africa. Christians are also involved in the ever-growing crime and violence in parts of the world with Christian majorities such as America, Europe and even southern parts of West Africa. Would we be right to conclude that this violence by some Christians is a reflection of some of the teachings of Christianity? That Joseph Stalin, who was an orthodox Christian, and Adolf Hitler, who was Roman Catholic, were representative of their respective faiths? Christians would certainly find that unfair, even if the perpetrators of some of these actions claimed to act in the name of Christ. It is not just violence in the name of religion or God, but also in the name of “national security”, “national interest”, “communism”, “Marxism”, “freedom fighting”, “social order”, “ethnic purity”, “neo-colonialism”, “peace”, etc.

As with any other religion or way of life therefore, Islam is not to be judged by what some socalled Muslims do, when it is clear they are going against the teachings of Islam.

The Qur'an teaches: "*Let there be no compulsion in religion*" (Q.2:256), and "*Invite (all) to the way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching*" (Q. 16:125). Islam therefore does not teach aggression.

But what about Jihad? Firstly, let us understand the meaning of the Arabic word "Jihad" in the Islamic context. Jihad on its own simply means "to struggle", "to exert effort" or "to strive". Jihad in Islam basically refers to the unceasing effort that an individual must make towards self-improvement and self-purification. It also refers to the duty of Muslims both at the individual and collective level tostruggle against all forms of evil, corruption, injustice, tyranny and oppression, whether this injustice is committed against Muslims or non-Muslims. In this context it may include peaceful struggle or if necessary armed struggle. "Jihad" is sometimes translated as "Holy War", but this is not correct. "Holy

War" translated into Arabic would be "Harb muqaddasah" which appears nowhere in the Qur'an or Hadith. "Holy War" is a purely Western mistranslation of the term "Jihad".

Muslims are not to commit aggression or to initiate violence. "*For God does not love theaggressors.*" (Q.2:190). If however they are attacked, they have the right to resist and if necessary to fight to overthrow tyranny and oppression, so that people can live in freedom and with their basic human rights. The conditions under which it is permissible to revert to armed force in Islam are:

a) when all attempts at reconciliation have been exhausted;

b) preventing imminent attack;

c) defense (of self or others) (Qur'an 22:39);

d) against oppression and tyranny Qur'an 4:75, 2:190-193 *"Fight...those who fight you, but do not transgress limits...*"

Even if war or armed struggle becomes unavoidable, there are conditions to be observed. The Prophet (ρ) forbade the killing of non-combatants (women, children, old people, monks etc.) and destruction of properties, farms etc. (Qur’an

60:8).

Some Christians believe in pacifism, that is, non-resistance to aggression, but the mainstream of Christianity has always upheld the right of self-defense and the concept of a "just war", which is why the Christian churches train and post Chaplains to the armed forces. (See also Jn. 2:15, Heb. 11:32-34 on militancy and fighting respectively.)

There is therefore agreement in principle between Christianity and Islam on the need to resist evil and aggression. And if it comes to the actual track record of the oppression and violence committed by "Christians" and "Muslims", the actions of "Christians" as listed above over the past 1,000 years indicate a far worse record of aggression than anything done by "Muslims". Therefore let us all be fair and judge a religion by its teachings and not by the behaviour of human beings whose actions are in defiance or ignorance of the religions they claim to follow.

Lastly some people have questioned the promise of God in the Qur'an that those who killed while engaged in military jihad will go to Paradise. Given the above conditions for a just war in Islam, one may ask where else should God put a person who has died fighting to protect truth and justice? One notes the double standards in popular media presentation of violence by “fundamentalist Muslim”, “fanatics” and “extremists”. Whereas, in contrast, other acts of violence such as bombings ofinnocent people by IRA Christian fundamentalists are portrayed simply as IRA Bombings without the “Christian” tag.

## WEEK FIVE

**2. Period 6**

**Period 6**

**WAS ISLAM NOT REALLY SPREAD BY THE SWORD? AND DOES ISLAM NOT IN SOME WAYS PRESCRIBE FORCED CONVERSION TO IT BY NON-MUSLIMS?**

The Qur'an itself makes it clear how its message is to be spread. The Prophet (ρ) was told by Allah "O*ur duty is only to proclaim...*" (Qur'an 36:17). "*Invite all to the way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching...*" (Qur'an 16:125) and **...** "*Let there be no compulsion in religion...*" (2:256). In fact, Islam itself (besides peace) *means "Conscious and willing submission to the will of Allah*". If someone is forced to become a "Muslim" he is submitting to the will of the one who forced him and not to Allah.

Prophet Muhammad (ρ) was a man of peace and preached peaceful co-existencebetween the Muslims and non-Muslims throughout his life. The Qur'an condemns violence and aggression in any form. (See Qur'an 21:107; 16:125-128; 33:21; 49:9-10; 2:190, etc.) All these references admonish believers about peace.

The battles fought during the lifetime of the Prophet were in defense of the young Islamic State against the pagan forces of Arabia who tried to destroy it.

But for those who insist that Islam was spread by the sword (i.e. by forced conversion), we would like to ask:

***a.*** How comes it that there are estimated to be up to 14 million indigenous non-Muslims (mainly Christians and Jews) in the Middle East, living in the predominantly Muslim countries? If Islam was spread by the sword, such a number could not have still existed. (By contrast, when the Christians conquered Spain after 8 centuries of Muslim rule, not a single Muslim or Jew was allowed to survive and live there.)

***b.*** What explains the historical fact that Islam spread faster during times of peace than of war (e.g. after the Treaty of

Hudaibiyyah)?

***c.*** What explains the fact that people who conquered Muslims' lands themselves converted to Islam after coming to know it (e.g. the Mongols)?

***d.*** What explains the fact that the majority of Muslims live in places where not a single Muslimsoldier went (e.g. Indonesia, which has the highest Muslim population in the world – more than 150 million)? Ref. see Indonesia in Islam: A Challenge for Christianity (Eds. Küng H. and Mottmann J. 1994) p.23.

***e.*** Which "Sword" is it that has made Islam presently the fastest growing religion in the world (especially in the West where Muslims are a minority with no military strength)? While there may be instances where Muslims failed to follow the teachings of Islam and attempted to convert by force, the historical records show that Christianity has a far worse history of religious violence and forced conversions for example, the Spanish Inquisition (see (a) above), the Crusades and the conquest of the Americas. Islam spread with the "sword of truth" and not the "sword of steel".

**Period 7**

**WHY DID MUHAMMAD (ρ) ENGAGE IN FIGHTING BATTLES IF HIS MISSION WAS FOR PEACE?**

If it is right to resist evil, and all the battles in which the Muslims were involved at the time of the Prophet (ρ) were defensive and in the cause of truth and justice, it is only reasonable that he should participate and lead by example. Should he ask people to do what he himself would not do?

But if engaging in fighting or resisting evil by force in the cause of God is considered inappropriate for Muhammad (ρ), as a religious leader, what of other Prophets and religious leaders?

According to the Bible people like Abraham (Heb. 7:1-3), Moses (Num. 31:3), Joshua (Josh 11:6-14), and David (1 Sam 17:48-51, 19:8) engaged in fighting battles and wars. Christians who don't believe David (AS) was a Prophet should look up Acts 2:30 where it says he was a Prophet. Even Jesus (AS) resisted evil by force when according to John 2:13-15, he used a whip to drive out of the temple the traders and moneychangers.

The early battles between the Muslims and the pagan Quraysh were clearly defensive, as the Makkans were determined to stamp out the young Muslim State in Madina. At Badr near Madina, the Muslims were faced with a pagan army 3 times their numbers. The Battle of Uhud was fought on the outskirts of Madina, and at the Battle of the Trench, the Muslims were besieged by the pagans who surrounded the City of Madina. It is quite clear that the pagans sent out their armies to attack the Muslims, not vice versa. Wherever possible the Prophet (ρ) made peace treaties. By the time of the Conquest of Makkah, Islam had spread so widely by peaceful preaching and the Islamic State had become so strong that Makkah surrendered without a fight. The Prophet's former enemies were spared while the Ka'bah was cleansed of its idols.

**31. General Q&A regarding the Concept of Jihad in Islam**

## WEEK SIX

**3. Periods 9, 10 & 11**

**THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE QUR'AN**

The basis for the beliefs of most religions is their scriptures. Most of these scriptures are believed to be inspired or revealed by Almighty God, and are therefore sacred and perfectly suited to guide the human race. In a world where there are many competing claims for possession of "the word of God", objective and reasonable evidence must

therefore be put forward to convince anyone (including oneself!) of why one believes in any particular scripture. Therefore, ascertaining the authenticity of a scripture is of fundamental importance in our search for the truth in a reasonable, honest and objective way. For Muslims, proving that our conviction in the Qur'an as the authentic word of God is not blind belief but in fact the most reasonable conclusion of all alternatives also serves as a confirmation and strengthening of faith for every sincere seeker of Truth.

Let us therefore examine the authenticity of the Qur'an.

## THE QUR'AN

### HOW DO WE KNOW THAT THE QUR'AN OF TODAY IS TRULY THE WORD OF GOD?

To answer this question, we first need to establish that the Qur'an we have today is the same Qur'an as that which was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (ρ), and that no corruption has taken place in the transmission of that message. In other words, we first need to prove the fact that the Qur'an has survived history perfectly preserved. Secondly, we need to establish who the author of the Qur'an really is. This may be done by examining all possible authors, and eliminating all that are unacceptable to reason, given all the evidence available. That is, we may reasonably deduce the definite author by eliminating all unlikely authors. This two-step process is outlined below under the following headings:

i) The recording and perfect preservation of the Qur'an, and

ii) The source or authority of the Qur'an.

### I. THE RECORDING AND PERFECT PRESERVATION OF THE QUR'AN:

The Glorious Qur'an was revealed in Arabic to the Prophet Muhammad (ρ) through the angel Gabriel (peace be upon him). The revelation occurred piecemeal, over a period of twenty-three years, sometimes in brief verses and sometimes in longer chapters.

The Qur'an (literally, a "reading" or "recitation") is distinct from the recorded sayings and deeds (*Sunnah*) of the Prophet Muhammad (ρ), which are also preserved in a separate set of literature collectively called the "*Hadith*" (lit. "news"; "report"; or "narration").

### DURING THE LIFETIME OF THE PROPHET (ρ)

Upon receiving revelation, the Prophet (ρ) engaged himself in the duty of conveying the message to his Companions through reciting the exact words he heard in their exact order. This is evident in his inclusion of even the words of Allah which were directed specifically to him, for example: "*Qul*" ("*Say* [to the people, O Muhammad]"). The Qur'an's rhythmic style and eloquent expression make it easy to memorize, just as nursery rhymes are easy to remember due to their rhythm, rhyme and vivid description. Indeed, Allah describes this as one of its essential qualitiesfor preservation and remembrance, particularly in an Arab society which prided itself on orations of lengthy pieces of poetry. Michael Zwettler notes that "in ancient times, when writing was scarcely used, memory and oral transmission was exercised and strengthened to a degree now almost unknown." Large portions of the revelation were thus easily memorized by a large number of people in the community of the Prophet (ρ). The Prophet (ρ) encouraged his Companions to learn each verse that was revealed and transmit it to others. The Qur'an was also required to be recited regularly as an act of worship, especially during the daily meditative prayers (*salat*). Through these means, many repeatedly heard passages from the revelation recited to them, memorized them and used them in prayer.

The entire Qur'an was memorized verbatim (word for word) by some of the Prophet's Companions. Among them were Zaid ibn Thabit, Ubayy ibn Ka'b, Mu'adh ibn Jabal, and Abu Zaid.

**AFTER THE LIFETIME OF THE PROPHET (ρ)**

As the Companions spread out to various provinces with different populations, they took their memorizations (and recitations) with them in order to instruct others.18 In this way, the same Qur'an became widely retained in the memories of many people across vast and diverse areas of land.

Indeed, the memorization of the Qur'an emerged into a continuous tradition across the centuries, with centers/schools for memorization being established across the Muslim world. The Qur'an is perhaps the only book, religious or secular, that has been memorized completely by millions of people.

The **compilation of the Qur'an** into a book form was done soon after the Battle of Yamama (11A.H/633C.E.), after the Prophet's death, during the Caliphate of Abu Bakr. Many companions became martyrs at that battle and it was feared that unless a written copy of the entire revelation was produced, large parts of the Qur'an might be lost with the death of those who had memorized it (the *huffaz*). Therefore, at the suggestion of Umar to collect the Qur'an in the form of writing, Zaid ibn Thabit was requested by Abu Bakr to head a committee which would gathertogether the scattered recordings of the Qur'an and prepare a *suhuf* - loose sheets which collectively bore the entire revelation on them.19

To safeguard the compilation from errors, the committee accepted only material which had been written down in the presence of the Prophet (ρ) himself, and which could be verified by at least two reliable witnesses who had actually heard the Prophet (ρ) recite the passage in question.20 Once completed and unanimously approved of by the Prophet's Companions, these sheets were kept with the Caliph Abu Bakr (d.13A.H./634C.E.), then passed on to the Caliph Umar (13-23A.H./634-644C.E.), and then Umar's daughter, the Prophet's widow, Hafsah. 16 Q.44:58; 54:17, 22, 32, 40 17 *Sahih al-Bukhari*, vol.6, no.546, in *Alim 6.0*

## 4. ACKNOWLEDGMENT BY ORIENTALISTS

Despite such defective theories, many orientalists themselves have admitted, like H.A.R. Gibb (1969), that, "It seems reasonably well established that no material changes were introduced and that the original form of Mohammed's discourses were preserved with scrupulous precision."21 John Burton (1977), despite staunch skepticism of all hadith, still writes at the end of his substantial work on the Qur'an's compilation that:

No major differences of doctrines can be constructed on the basis of the parallel readings based on the Uthmanic consonantal outline, yet ascribed to *mushaf*s other than his. All the rival readings unquestionably represent one and the same text. They are substantialagreed in what they transmit…22

He further states that the Qur'an as we have it today is "the text which has come down to us in the form in which it was organized and approved by the Prophet…. What we have today in our hands is the *mushaf* of Muhammad."23

Kenneth Cragg (1973) describes the transmission of the Qur'an from the time of revelation to today as occurring in "an unbroken living sequence of devotion,"24 while Schwally concurs that "As far as the various pieces of revelation are concerned, we may be confident that their text has been generally transmitted exactly as it was found in the Prophet's legacy.

**OLDEST MANUSCRIPTS OF THE QUR'AN**

The historical credibility of the Qur'an is further established by the fact that several first century *mushaf*s still exist today, including some attributed to the time of Caliph Uthman.25

**II. SOURCE OR AUTHORSHIP OF THE QUR'AN**

It is a foundational doctrine of Islam that the Qur'an was revealed verbatim (i.e. word for word) by God, to Muhammad (ρ). Non-Muslims, however, who do not support this view can have differences with Muslims concerning the fact that the Qur'an was at least first witnessed to be uttered by Muhammad (ρ), a Makkan Arab in the 7th century C. E.

A Muslims' claim of **"internal evidence"** for the divine authorship of the Qur'an from Qur'an itself (e.g. Q.4:82; 6:19; 6:92; 27:6; 45:2, etc.) is understandably looked upon with skepticism, as nearly anyone can quote passages from his or her scripture that claim that it is revelation from God. We are therefore forced by reason and objectivity to look outside textual claims of divine origin for **"external evidence"** of the Qur'an's divine source or authority.

The simple proposed structure for the presentation of this "external evidence" is an **"elimination process"**, whereby we discover the answer to the question — "Who is the author of the Qur'an?" — by eliminating all alternative answers which are definitely implausible. In otherwords, the definite or (at least) most probable author or source of the Qur'an is identified by eliminating unacceptable alternative candidates.

There are various contradictory views and opinions held by some Non-Muslims as to the source of the Qur'an. The following list of "possible" authors reflects the main theories:

- **Muhammad (ρ)**
- Some other Arab poet(s), scholars, etc.
- Some non-Arab scholars, or poets or religious personalities
- Monks or Rabbis (i.e. the theory that the Qur'an was developed from the Bible or Judeo-Christian sources)
- Satan (or other deceitful "spirits" or "aliens", etc.)
- God/Allah

We may now proceed to examine from a closer study of the Qur'an and history how plausible these theories are.

**1. Muhammad** (ρ)**: unlettered and uneducated**

The fact that Muhammad (ρ) could neither read nor write (Q.29:48) is well known and uncontested by even his Non-Muslim contemporaries and present day historians. He had no schooling or teacher of any kind, and he had never been known to compose oral poetry or prose. The Qur'an, with its all-embracing laws and freedom from all inconsistencies, has its greatness acknowledged even by Non-Muslim scholars.26 Its contents treat social, economic, political and religious legislation, history, views of the universe, living things, thought, psychology, interpersonal transactions, war, peace, marriage, worship, business, and everything relating to life - with no contradicting principles. The Qur'an has never been edited or revised as it was never in need of any revision or correction.

***2. Muhammad's known Integrity***

Muhammad's sincerity, truthfulness and integrity were so well known that he was even nicknamed "*Al-Ameen*" (The Trustworthy) by his pre-Islamic community. Not a single lie is recorded against him, and many modern Western orientalists have themselves admitted that contrary to any deliberate deception, the fact that the Prophet (ρ) had a profoundly sincere conviction that it was revealed to him by God Himself is undeniable.27

In addition, how reasonable is it to believe that unlettered Muhammad (ρ) would author the Qur'an for personal benefit and then within the Qur'an correct and reprove himself? For example:

**"*He frowned and turned away when the blind man came to him…*" (Q.80:1-2),**

**"*…And you did fear men, though God is more deserving that you should fear Him*"**

(Q.33:37. See also Q.18:23-24, etc).

Why would he embarrass himself when he could simply omit or favorably modify such verses in the Qur'an? They were certainly not to his advantage if his goals were power and prestige. The existence of such verses only proves that Muhammad (ρ) was indeed a truthful and sincere Messenger of God.

5.

**3. The Style of the Qur'an**

There is a world of difference between the style of the Qur'an and Muhammad's own style as recorded in the books of *Ahadith*. These differences are immediately evident. The sayings of Muhammad (*ahadith*) are conversational, oratorical, and expository, of a kind the Arabs were already familiar with. By contrast, the style of the Qur'an is authoritative ("*We created the heavens and the earth…*"; "*Say!...*") and challenging ("*…had it (the Qur'an) been from any other than God, they would have found therein much discrepancies*" *(Q.4:82);* ***"…Say then: "Bring a chapter like it and call, if you can, on other than God…*** **(Q.10:38); "*…then bring a chapter like unto it… and if you cannot — for surely you cannot, then…*"** (Q.2:23-24)).28

What fallible human being would write a book and challenge humanity to find discrepancies in it, as does the author of the Qur'an (Q.4:82)? Would any sensible student after writing an exam paper add a note to the lecturer saying "Read my answers with care and find any discrepancies or mistakes in it if you can!"? The bold and self-assured style of the Qur'an is simply that of the All-Knowing Creator.

**4. SIMILARITIES AND DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN THE QUR'AN AND THE BIBLE**

The mere existence of similarities between any two books is insufficient to prove that one must have been copied from the other. Both could have drawn information from a third common source, thus accounting for some similarities between them. This, in fact, is theargument of the Qur'an – that Allah is the Source of all authentic revelation (Q.4:47). Some scholars have noted that the only Christians that the Prophet (ρ) is recorded to have personally met prior to his mission did not spend enough time with him to teach him oftheir scripture, and no other historical record mentions that anyone taught the Prophet (ρ) from among the Jews or Christians.

Furthermore, could the Qur'an have been copied from the Bible if serious creedal differences exist between both scriptures? Regarding doctrines such as the concepts of God and prophet hood, sin and forgiveness, the Qur'an differs significantly with the Bible. The Qur'an in fact addresses Jews and Christians directly when correcting what it declares are corruptions in their own beliefs and scriptures. Interestingly, Qur'anic revelations of doctrinal problems with Christianity were revealed largely in the Makkan period, prior to the Prophet's migration to Madinah, where he would have encountered many more Jewish and Christian scholars, and prior to his marriages to wives of Jewish and Christian backgrounds.

28

The unique style of the Qur'an has been extensively analyzed by Neal Robinson, *Discovering the Qur'an: A Contemporary Approach to a Veiled Text* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1996). Robinson writes that while the Qur'an at first glance may appear to be jumbled and disordered in its series of discourses, especially when reading its passages in a continuum, closer examination reveals a remarkable structure and logic behind its expressions and arrangement. For example, the Qur'an's frequent interchanging of pronouns for Allah (within the same verse) follows a distinct pattern to enhance the purpose of those passages where this occurs.

Even in the cases of narrations common to both scriptures, vital discrepancies can be observed. For example, unlike the Bible, the Qur'an does not blame women for the mistake committed by Adam and Eve (peace be upon them) in disobeying God in the Garden of Eden. (Compare Genesis 3:12-13 to Q.91:7-8 and 2:35-37).

The Qur'an also emphasizes that Adam and Eve repented to God (Q.7:23) and were forgiven by Him (Q.2:37), contrary to the Bible's account that they were not forgiven and their "original sin" carried on to all succeeding generations of humankind. (Genesis 3:14-17).

It further mentions that the eventual dwelling of Adam and Eve on Earth was already part of God's plan even before He created them (Q.2:30). It does not necessarily consider man's dwelling on earth as a sort of punishment, as does the Bible (Genesis 3:17-19).

Other significant variations can be seen in the stories of Solomon30, Abraham31, Ishmael and Isaac, Lot, Noah32, Moses and Jesus33 (peace be upon them all).

The Qur'an also mentions a good amount of historical information about which the Bible is completely silent. From which portion of the Bible could the following have been copied?

ϖ The stories of the people of 'Ad and Thamud (Q.29:38), and their Prophets, Hud (p)34(Q.7:65) and Salih (p) (Q.11:61-68).

ϖ The dialogue between Prophet Noah (p) and his son before the flood (Q.11:42-43).

ϖ The dialogue between Abraham (p) and his father (Q.6:74), as well as between him and a king (Q.2:258), and between him and his people (Q.22:70-102; 29:16-18; 37:83-98; 21:57).

ϖ The mention of the city of Iram (Q.89:7).

ϖ The Pharaoh of the Exodus having drowned, with his body preserved as a sign for people of future generations (Q.10:90-92).

ϖ Jesus' miracles of speaking from the cradle (Q.3:46), and his producing (by God's will) a bird from clay (Q.3:49), etc.

For further examples, see the following references from the Qur'an: 21:69, 2:260, and 3:37.

**5. QUR'ANIC TEACHINGS ABOUT SATAN AND ABOUT MORALITY**

Some claim that the Qur'an was the work of the devil.35 Those who make this claim believe the devil to be evil and deceptive, and therefore believe the Qur'an was devised to mislead people away from Truth and the 'glory of God.' Let us examine how much sense, rather, non-sense this allegation makes.

If he authored or inspired the Qur'an, why would Satan, within his message, curse himself and call himself an open enemy of man (Q.2:168, 208; 6:142; 7:22; 17:53; 35:6; 36:60; 43:62), a deceiver (Q.35:5), man's deserter (Q.25:29), and an arrogant (Q.38:74-75) sneaking whisperer (Q.114:4-5)? Why would he discourage people from associating with

him using words as compelling as:

***And the one who takes Satan as a patron instead of Allah has surely incurred a great loss. He makes promises to them and arouses desires in them, but Satan's promises are nothing but deception.***(Q.4:119-120; 17:64)

And why would Satan command that before reciting the Qur'an, one must first **say "*I seekrefuge in God from Satan the accursed*"** (Q.16:98)? Which of his aims would be furthered by Satan so vehemently condemning and sabotaging himself?

Also, is it acceptable to reason to hold the view that Satan would compel people towards personal and societal spiritual and moral growth, ask people to do good, to be virtuous, to worship none but God, to not follow Satan or his whispers36, and to avoid and struggle against evil, especially through the doing of good? And does it make sense to think that Satan would tell others in the Qur'an that he really has no power over them (Q.16:99) and that everyone is accountable for their own choices (Q.3:25; 17:15; 40:17, 45:22, 75:14; 81:14); that God is Most Forgiving (Q.15.49; 39:53; 85:14) and rewards all those who are patient and sincerely repent to Him (Q.5:74, 16:119, 42:25); and that God will not do the least injustice to anyone (Q.17:71, 23:62)? Which of these attributes of the Qur'an is at all deceptive or responsible for leading people away from truth? Which of the Qur'an's teachings has ever been proven false, so that the Qur'an may be considered as not promoting truth?

If it is agreed that Satan is evil and promotes vice, whereas the attitude of the Qur'an is an overwhelming condemnation for evil and the ultimate ambition of the Qur'an for a human being is the eradication of vice, how can the Qur'an be or satanic authorship?

To hold such a view is clearly repugnant to reason, as Satan would only have undermined himself and his objectives, furthered the cause of God, and instilled more hope in true believers of God through this means. Even the Bible attests, "*And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end.*" (Mark 3:26).37 This argument applies to any "Satanic forces", be they "evil spirits", "deceitful aliens", or other similar sources.

The argument that the Qur'an must be the work of Satan because it contradicts some beliefs held by Non-Muslims assumes that those (non-Qur'anic) beliefs are true. Unless suchan assumption is founded on reasonable evidence (as we are attempting to establish for the Qur'an), the allegation rests on shaky foundations. Clear and verifiable criteria need to be established for a scripture to be accepted as absolutely true. Otherwise, the same doubt and allegation of Satan's intervention may be applied to any other scripture, including the Bible, and indeed, any other oral or written composition of knowledge in existence today.

Some misinterpret the Qur'anic verse 22:52: "*Never did We send a Messenger or a Prophet before you but that when he framed a desire Satan threw something into his desire but God will cancel anything Satan throws in and God will establish His signs for He is full of knowledge and wisdom*" to mean that the Prophet (p) mistakenly recited words whispered to him by Satan when he was conveying the Revelation to some idol-worshippers. These whispers have been called by some the "Satanic verses" which were supposedly later abrogated by Allah in subsequent revelations. This story has been discredited with authoritative proofs by M. Mohar Ali, *Sirat al-Nabi and the Orientalists,* Vol.1A. (Madina: King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'an, 1997), pp.683-702.

Hence, the allegation of Satan having authored the Qur'an is not based on any reasonable or empirical evidence.

Rather, the allegation is based only on the suspicion of ulterior motives, and serves to justify 'blind disbelief'.

**6. The Qur'an's factual contents and scientific information**

Within the Qur'an are recorded facts about ancient times that were unknown to Muhammad's contemporaries and even to historians in the first half of the 20th century. In scores of verses, we also find references to scientific wonders, some only recently discovered, regarding the universe, biology, embryology, astronomy, physics, geography, climatology, medicine, history, oceanography, etc. Below are some examples of modern scientific discoveries that are mentioned in the Qur'an.

**ϖThe Lost City of Iram (Qur'an 89:7)**

The existence of the city of Iram was unknown to any historian in the world prior to an excavation in Syria (in 1973) at the site of the ancient city of Ebla38 where clay tablets found there confirmed that the people of Ebla used to have business relations with the people of Iram. Details of this can be found in the National Geographic magazine of December, 1978, which also notes that the only mention of Iram archaeologists and historians have ever otherwise come across is in the Holy Qur'an.39 So unknown was the city of Iram until recently that even some Muslim commentators commented on the mention of the city in the Qur'an as being perhaps figurative, saying that Iram was possibly a tall man and not a city! How did the author of the Qur'an know of the existence of the city of Iram (Q.89:7) when no one else knew it?

**♦WORKER BEES BEING FEMALE (QUR'AN 16:68)**

A subtle yet extraordinary precision in describing a natural phenomenon occurs in Q.16:68: "*And your Lord inspired the bee, (saying), 'Take for yourself dwellings in hills, on trees and in what they (mankind) build.'*" The imperative "take" above is the translation of the Arabic word "*ittakhidhiy*", which is a feminine form (since Arabic expressions, unlike English ones, differentiate between the sexes). In Arabic, the feminine is used when all those to whom a word refers are female, whereas themasculine is used when a group contains at least one male. Therefore the Qur'an is in fact saying: ***"Take for yourself, you female bee, dwellings…"***

Science has gradually discovered that a swarm of bees comprises three types: aqueen, the worker bees that collect pollen, produce honey and build the hive, and the male drones, whose sole purpose is to impregnate the queen and are then killed off by the worker bees. These worker bees are all females with underdeveloped sex organs.40

Thus the phrasing of this command in the Qur'an is in perfect correspondence with the fact that male bees do not participate in the construction of the hive or bees' "dwellings", which is the sole work of the females. This is an example of the sort of precision in the Qur'an which refutes the idea of it having been produced by guesswork, for probability dictates that the masculine form should have been used.41

**♦MOUNTAINS AS "PEGS" AND STABILIZERS**

In his co-authored book entitled "Earth,"42 Professor Emeritus Frank Press (1982) says that mountains are not just high above ground but have underlying roots. These roots are deeply embedded in the ground. Thus, mountains are shaped like pegs.43

This is just how the Qur'an has described mountains. The Creator is recorded in the Qur'an as saying**: "*Have We not made the earth as a resting place (for you), and the mountains as (its) pegs*?**" (Q.78:6-7)

Modern earth sciences document that, like icebergs, underground mountain roots can reach several times their

elevations above the surface of the ground.44 On the basis of this information, then, the most suitable word to describe mountains is the word "pegs", since most of a properly set (tent) peg is hidden underground and the term would be most familiar to the seventh century desert community that received the revelation.

How did the author of the Qur'an know such a precise description when the theory of mountains having deep roots was introduced only in the latter half of the nineteenth century

**♦THE SPHERICAL SHAPE OF THE EARTH**

In several places (Q.7:54; 36:37; 31:29), the Qur'an directs us to consider thealternation of night and day as another sign from the Almighty. For example, the verse 39:5 states: "…*He wraps (kawwiru) the night around the day and He wraps the day around the night.*" The Arabic verb "*kawwiru*" means "to coil or wrap around" and has the connotation of wrapping or winding something around a spherical object, such aswinding a strand of yarn around its ball, or a turban cloth around a person's head.

From the perspective of the planet Earth, this is exactly what takes place in that a half sphere of night followed by a half sphere of day is continually being wound aroundits surface. An observer from space, looking at Earth from a distance, would see in fact what appears to be the winding of day and night around the planet in a circular motion. When observing from a stationary angle, the light of the day appears to merge into the night and vice versa. This is due to the earth's rotation and the sun's relativelyIf one had no prior knowledge about bees and gender or role-differentiation, the bees being addressed in the verse could either consist of: some males and some females, all males, or all females. All things being equal, if the feminine may only be used if the bees addressed were all female, the probability of guessing correctly out of all possible combinations of genders among the bees are as follows: masculine - ⅔, feminine - ⅓ This conservative figure does not acknowledge socio-cultural and historical biases which would favor the view that male animals would most likely be involved in any serious labor, and thus increase the probability even more of opting for the masculine form.

**♦DEVELOPMENT OF THE HUMAN EMBRYO**

The Qur'an (23:12-14) describes the development of the embryo at a microscopic level inside the womb in the following manner:

**"*Man did We fashion from a quintessence of clay. Then We placed him as (a drop of) seminal fluid in a place of rest firmly fixed. Then We fashioned the seminal fluid into a leech-like thing that clings.*46 *Then We fashioned that leech-like thing that clings into a chewed-like lump. Then We fashioned the chewed-like lump into bones and We clothed the bones with flesh. Then We developed it into another creature. So hallowed be Allah, the Best of creators*";**

Q.96:1-2: ***"...who fashioned man from a leech-like thing that clings***"

and Q.22:5:**"*We fashioned you out of dust, then out of a drop of fluid, then out of a leech-like thing that clings, then out of a morsel of flesh - partly formed and partly unformed...*"**

**♦The Expanding Universe (Qur'an 51:47)**

By studying the galactic spectrum, scientists have recently established that the universe is expanding. In the Qur'an (51:47), we read: "*The firmament have We built with power, and verily, We are expanding it.*" The word "*samaa'a*"

means firmament or heaven in the sense of the extra-terrestrial world, and the word "*musi'un*" is the present plural participle of the verb "*awsa'a*", which means "to widen, to extend, to expand." This scientific fact is explained further in Stephen Hawking's classic, *A Brief History of Time*.47

**♦An Original Explosion of Mass (Qur'an 21:30)**

In Qur'an 21:30 we read: "*Have not those who disbelieve seen that the heavens and the earth were fused (ratq) and then We clove them asunder (fataqnaa), and We made every living thing out of water. Will they then not believe?*" Scientists have postulated for some time now that the universe was originally a single primary mass of nearly infinite density that subsequently split into multiple fragments after a tremendous explosion, commonly known as the "Big Bang." While the Qur'an does not elaborate whether the entire Big Bang Theory as we know it is true or false, it does corroborate with scientific observations that the universe expanded from an explosion of initial primary mass.48

**♦That the whole universe was once nothing but a cloud of "smoke" (Q.41:11)**

The Qur'an's description of the universe as having been shaped out of a cloud of smoke: "*And He who turned [His design] to the skies when it had been smoke (dukhaan)...*" (Q.41:11) is now an undisputed principle of modern cosmology. The term "smoke" is most befitting to explain the opaque, highly dense and hot gaseous composition that existed prior to the universe's expansion. New stars are in fact still forming, as astronomers explain, from the remnants of that primary "smoke."49 It is virtually inconceivable that a person of seventh century Arabia could have known such information about the beginnings of the universe.

These are just a few of the numerous scientific revelations in the Qur'an. 50 How many well trained modern scientists and geniuses with the aid of hi-tech equipment, satellites, telescopes, microscopes and computers were required to discover the above facts, and over what time span? Is it even conceivable that any human being over 1,400 years ago could have produced a scripture with such information in it, let alone a person who had never been educated?

**The Elimination Process:**

In examining the various claimed sources of the Qur'an, the following points have beendiscussed:

1) Muhammad's being unlettered,

2) Muhammad's integrity,

3) The Style of the Qur'an,

4) Discrepancies between the Qur'an and the Bible,

5) Qur'anic teachings about Satan and about morality, and

6) The Qur'an's factual contents and scientific information.

This numbering serves as a key to the "elimination" table below, which illustrates what points may be used to eliminate unacceptable candidates for authorship of the Qur'an:

| **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Muhammad (ρ) | X | X | X | X | X |
| Other Arab poets | X | X | X | | |
| Non-Arab contemporaries of | X | X | X | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Muhammad (ρ) | | | | | |
| Christian or Jewish learned men | X | X | X | X | X |
| Satan or other deceitful non humans | X | X | | | |
| Allah | | | | | |

The following points were presented to aid us in our "elimination process" of unacceptable authors of the Qur'an:

♦**Muhammad (ρ):** It would be reasonable to start by eliminating Muhammad (ρ) from the list of possible authors of the Qur'an. There is no conceivable way he could have self-composed the Qur'an in view of points 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 presented, at least.

49 Stephen Weinberg, *The First Three Minutes: A Modern View of the Origin of the Universe*, 5th printing (New York: Bantam Books, 1984), pp.94-105. See also I.A. Ibrahim, *A Brief Illustrated Guide to Understanding Islam*, 2nd edition. (Houston, USA:
Darussalam Publishers, 1997), p.14

♦**Other Arab Poet(s), Scholar(s), etc.:** We may also eliminate any other Arab from the list of ossible authors in view of points 2, 3 and 6 (at least).

♦**Some non-Arab:** The reasons for the elimination of any Arab from the list also eliminate any non-Arab scholar, poet or religious personality.

♦**Christian Monks or Jewish Rabbis (i.e. Judeo-Christian sources):** To consider this as an alternative source of the Qur'an is unreasonable in view of points 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6.

♦**Satan (or deceitful spirits, aliens, or any devil-inspired source):** This option is also unacceptable in view of the points discussed, especially under 5.

♦**God (i.e. Allah):** In the absence of any acceptable alternative as source and author of the Qur'an, one is more or less compelled by reason to accept the Qur'an for what it claims to be — revelation from God through His Prophet Muhammad (ρ). This position seems reasonable not just because it is the only option that cannot be objectively eliminated, but because it is only reasonable to expect that a book with such qualities and contents would come from man's Creator and Guide. Of all the arguable sources for the Qur'an, it is only God, the inevitable alternative, that even makes a claim to the scripture's authorship.

**Conclusion**

The position, therefore, which holds that Allah is the author of the Qur'an remains valid in view of all available information. However, having undertaken this task ourselves, the Muslim's assertion that the Qur'an is the Word of God is not just a product of blind faith, but, in fact, the result of very sound and reasoned judgment in the light of the above analysis. Indeed, after having assessed the evidence, it may be considered 'blind disbelief' to contend otherwise. The Qur'an's challenge (or falsification test51) remains open to anyone to disprove this claim.

**The evidence for the Divine Authorship of the Qur'an is also evidence for the existence of the Divine. Allah must**

**exist, unless a more reasonably acceptable author of the Qur'an can be produced. The challenge remains!**

51 Q.4:82: ***"…had it been from any other than Allah, they would have found therein much discrepancy***

## WEEK SEVEN

## THEME: MORALITY (AKHLAQ) TOPICS

**ISLAM AND SOCIAL VICES:**
**BACKBITING; GAMBLING; TELLING LIES; TERRORISM & ARROGANCE.**

## WEEK EIGHT

## ISLAM AND TRANSACTION ( AL-BAY')

**The Linguistic and Technical Meanings of Transaction (*Bay'*)**

*Bay'*, the Arabic word used for business transactions, comes from the Arabic word for an outstretched arm (*al-baa'u*), since each of the participants in the sale extends his hand to give and take. Thus the linguistic meaning of the word *bay'* is: ***"To receive something and to give something."***

The technical definition of bay' (business transactions) in Islam is:

The exchange of a specified form of property or permissible service for its likes or for a debt to be paid, entailing the change of future ownership, not based on usury, and not a loan."

**THE BASE RULING ON BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS**

Buying and selling is halaal (permissible) in Islam due to textual evidences from the Quran and the Sunnah, and due to scholarly consensus and logical reasoning as well.

The Quran:Allah says:

**" وأحلّاللهالبيع ....."**

***"And Allah has made business transactions permissible" (2):275***

**" وأشهدواإذاتبايعتم ....."**

***"And take witnesses when you buy and sell" (2):282***

**"إلاّأنتكونتجارةعنتراضمنكم..."**

***"Except transactions done basedon mutual agreement between you" an-Nisaa' (4):29***

**" ليسعليكمجناحأنتبتغوافضلامنربكم...."**

***"There is no harm upon you to seek after the bounties from your Lord" al-Baqarah (2):198***

**THE SUNNAH**

***"The two participants in a sale have khiyaar (the option to opt out) so long as they do not separate…"***

***"Verily business transactions are (done) upon mutual agreement."***

***"When you sell (something), weigh it; And if you buy(something), have it weighed."***

**SCHOLARLY CONSENSUS**

Due to the clear evidences of the Book and the Sunnah, the scholars of Islam have unanimously agreed that buying and selling is permissible.

**LOGICAL REASONING**

ShaykhSaalih al-Fawzaan stated,

***"As for logical reasoning, then from the angle that people's needs require the existence of buying and selling, since mankind needs what others own, either their money or their products, and they will not give up what they have without trading it for something. So then logic has necessitated the permissibility of business transactions for the sake of attaining what is needed."***

The Holy Prophet (Allah's peace and grace be upon him) has said that:

***"anyone who earns Haram wealth if he spends it in the way of Allah (sadaqah), it will not be accepted and if he spends for his benefit, it will carry no blessing and whatever he leaves in the world on his death, will be his assets to go to Hell.***'

It is the well-known fact to which we are all witnesses that the most common source of earning income (wealth) is through the commerce business or in simple words, through buying and selling things of all kinds, from the very small things to things of huge descriptions and denominations.

But in this chapter we are concerned with transaction in things which are of common needs for almost all classes of people, among which are the earnings through honest manual labour. The Prophets of Allah and the great men in the sight of Allah have set examples for others to follow and emulate. In this respect the following few tradition (Hadeeth) will serve as guidelines of inspiration which will induce and en course the common peoples for setting their life patterns in the most profitable pursuits nor from the mundane points of view but also for earning rewards in the Hereafter.

The Holy Prophet (Allah's grace and pleasure be upon him) has said:

***"There is no food better than that which has been secured through honest and hard manual labour. Surely, HazaratDawood (May Allah's peace be on him) earned his subsistence through labour by hand."***

One who earns (his living) through honest labour is dear to Allah as a Friend.

On being asked as to what work/source of earning is the best. He replied: ***"The work done by man with his hand, and the honest transaction."***

***"The honest trader and businessman shall be in the company of apostles (Ambia), The Righteous and the Truthful (Siddiqeen) and Martyrs" (the Shaheeds who lay down their life for the Cause of Allah).***

It is for these reasons that the learned scholars (Ulama) has advised and warned people that unless they attain reasonable true and finer knowledge of business transaction, they should not venture to enter this field.

**Conditions of a Seller and a Buyer**

In this deal of buying - selling, there are certain conditions which must be fulfilled before any transaction will be accepted as fair and equitable.

(**1)** Both the `buyer and seller' should be sensible (of common wisdom or senses), Note: the deal done by lunatics and minor children will not be reed valid.

**(2)**Transactors / dealers must be different persons. A man can not be a buyer (purchaser) and seller at one and the same time. However the father or the guardian of the minor child (ren) can do so in that he may sell the goods of the minor child/war on his behalf and purchase it for himself. Or the Qazi may sell the goods on behalf some orphan and purchase the same goods on behalf of other orphan, with a profit. Similarly, a man can be a messenger / agent of both the parties to do the dealing on agreed terms.

**(3)** The terms of offer (Eejab) and acceptance (Qubool) in respect of goods and price must accord with another. Any variation in this behalf should be agreed mutually.

**(4)** The transaction of offer (Eejab) and acceptance (Qubool) should take place at the same place and at the same time.

**(5)** The terms of transaction should be announced and heard by both the buyer and the seller clearly so as to avoid any misunderstanding afterwards.

**(6)** The things offered for sale should be present/available physically at the time of offer, it should be

agreeable and durable (Muta'qaw'wim) in the possession of the seller (mamlok), and transferable and worthy of being given in trust (Maqdoor-ul-Tasleem). For example, the sale of fruits before their appearance is not valid. In the same way the grass in the field cannot be sold and the water of the canal or will or the animal of game or funtcannot be sold unless they are given possession of physically or materially.

**(7)** The sale should not be time conditioned ( athing cannot be sold for only a given period of time).

**(8)** The goods offered for sale and the price thereof should be definite and beyond dispute and controversy.

## WEEK NINE

## UNACCEPTABLE BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS IN ISLAM

So far we have focused on one aspect of the business ethics – guidelines prescribed by Islam for conducting business transactions. Another aspect of business ethics is the various forms of unethical business practices a Muslim businessman must avoid in his business dealings. Some of these prohibited and undesirable business practices are as follows:

### DEALING IN PROHIBITED (*HARAM*) ITEMS

Dealing in unlawful items such as carrion (dead meat), pigs and idols is strongly prohibited in Islam. Dead meat would mean the flesh of any bird or animal dead from natural causes, without being properly slaughtered in an Islamic way. A Muslim, therefore, will not eat the flesh of such an animal or bird. Flesh of an electrocuted animal, or of an animal killed by the blow of a blunt weapon, and of the strangled one is also proscribed in Islam. Also proscribed is the flesh of the animal that has been killed or slaughtered in ways other than Islamic. It is, therefore, not permissible for a Muslim to trade in dead meat. Likewise, trading in pork or intoxicants and sale of idols and statues is not permitted in Islam. A verse of the Holy *Qur'an* says:

***"Forbidden to you [for food] are: dead meat, the blood, the flesh of swine and that on which name of other than Allah has been mentioned."***(5:1)

The Holy *Qur'an* also says:

***"O you who believe!intoxicants and gambling [dedication of] stones and [divination by] arrows are an abomination of Satan's handiwork: so avoid it in order that you may prosper."*** (5:90)

The Prophet (saw) is also reported to have said;

"***Allah and His Messenger made illegal the trade of alcoholic liquors, dead animals, pigs and idols"***(*Bukhari*, No: 2082)

The Prophet (saw) also said;

***"If Allah makes something unlawful, he makes its price also unlawful"*** (*Ahmad*, No: 2546)

**Sale of *Al-Gharar* (Uncertainty, Risks, Speculation)**

In Islamic terminology, this refers to the sale of a commodity or good which is not present at hand; or the sale of an article or good, the consequences or outcome of which is not yet known; or a sale involving risks or hazards where one does not know whether at all the commodity will later come into existence. Such a sale is strictly prohibited in Islam because the quality, whether good or bad, is not known to the buyer at the time of the deal and there is every possibility that the contract may give rise to disputes and disagreements between the concerned parties. The Prophet (saw), therefore, prohibited the sale of what is still in the loins of the male; or sale of whatever is in the womb of a she–camel; or sale of birds in the air; or the sale of fish in the water, and any transaction which involves *Gharar.* (i.e. anything that involves deception). He also forbade the sale of fruits before they look healthy and also the sale of crops until the grain hardens. Nevertheless, such advance sales would be acceptable if the element of *Gharar*does notexistandthe quality and the quantity of the goods are pretty well known and predictable.

**ARBITRARILY FIXING THE PRICES**

Islam grants absolute freedom to traders provided they adhere to the code of lawfulness. It does not, therefore, encourage the practice of price–fixing and leaves the traders to earn the profits from each other within the lawful limits. As a matter of principle public authorities are not allowed to fix the prices of commodities by force. This is because rise and fall in the prices are linked to various factors other than the greediness of the traders and fixing the prices may endanger both public and private interests.

It is reported that once the prices shot up during the period of the Prophet (saw). The people said:

***"O Messenger of Allah! Prices have shot up, so fix them for us. Thereupon the Messenger of Allah said: 'Allah is the One Who fixes prices, withholds, gives lavishly, and provides, and I hope that when I meet Allah, none of you will have any claim on me for an injustice regarding blood or property.'***(*Tirmidhi*, No: 1235)

However, the role of public authorities comes into play if it becomes absolutely essential to do so, especially in order to prevent exploitation and other unjust practices in the market. Thus, if a trader adopts unfair means, charges unjust prices and indulges in undercutting with a view to doing harm to the smaller traders, public authorities have the right to intervene in the market. They can and should take steps to fix or control the prices so as to eliminate injustice from the market and allow the trader to earn reasonable profit and the buyer to pay a just and equitable price.

**HOARDING OF FOODSTUFF**

TheArabicword for hoarding is*Ihtikar.*It means storing foodstuffs or withholding them in expectation of rise in their prices. Sometimes, a handful of traders operating in the market buy the entire quantity of an item, rice for example, and store it up with the object of selling it later at the time of scarcity to draw maximum profit out of it and to dictate the prices. The consumers are left with no choice but to purchase the article concerned from the one who hoards, as he is the only one in the market who holds it. Sometimes, a trader hobnobs with the suppliers who will only sell their merchandise to him. As a result, he holds the entire stock of the essential items that other traders do not possess. He is, therefore, in a position to dictate his terms in the market and sell them at an exorbitantly high price to the needy people. This is an unjust practice and a clear case of exploitation and deservedly condemned by Islam. The Prophet (saw) is reported to have condemned the hoarders when he said:

***"No one hoards but the traitors (i.e. the sinners)."*** (*Abu Da'ud*, No. 2990)

He (saw) also said:

The importer [of an essential commodity] into the town will be fed [by Allah], and the hoarder will have [Allah's] curse upon him. (*IbnMajah*, No: 2144)

**EXPLOITATION OF ONE'S IGNORANCE OF MARKET CONDITIONS**

Oneof the most common unethical practices in modern business is to exploit one's ignorance of market conditions. Sometimes it may happen that a buyer arrives in a town with objects of prime and general necessity for selling them in the market. A local trader may persuade the new-comer to transfer all of the goods to him so that he will sell them on his behalf in the market. He obtains the commodities on a price that is lower than market price and then sells them at a high or exorbitant price. Islam condemns this act of intermediary intervention which involves exploitation of one's ignorance of market conditions. The practice was prevalent in pre-Islamic society. The Prophet (sws) has prohibited this practice through a number of instructions. A tradition reads:

***"A town dweller should not sell the goods of a desert dweller."*** (*Bukhari*, No: 2006)

***AL-NAJSH* (TRICKERY)**

The term *Al-Najsh* means an action in which a person offers a high price for something, without intending to buy it, but just to cheat or defraud another person who really means to buy it. The person practising it may collaborate with the seller to offer high prices in front of the buyers merely as a means to

cheat them. This type of fraudulent transaction is totally prohibited in Islam. The Prophet (saw) is reported to have said:

***"Do not harbour envy against one another; do not outbid one another [with a view to raising the price]; do not bear aversion against one another; do not bear enmity against one another; one of you should not enter into a transaction when the other has already entered into it; and be fellow brothers and true servants of Allah."*** (*Muslim*, No: 4650)

As is clear from the above, Islam also forbids the practice of sale over sale and purchase over purchase. This means that it forbids someone to offer a higher price for a commodity after the deal has been accomplished between the parties. Obviously he is offering a higher price in order to spoil the agreement reached between the parties. As a result of this offer the buyer may feel tempted to cancel his contract to sell it at a higher price. It may give rise to disputes and disagreements between brothers. Hence it is strictly prohibited in Islam.

**CHEATING AND FRAUD IN BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS**

The traders and businessmen generally have a tendency to motivate the customers by adopting fraudulent business practices. Islam strongly condemns all such practices in business transactions (*Al-Ghashsh*). The Messenger of Allah has commanded the believers not to indulge in cheating and fraudulent practices in business transactions. Sale of dead animal, dubious and vague transactions, manipulating the prices, selling the items belonging to a desert dweller by a townsman *Al-Najsh* (trickery), false eulogy and concealment of defects are all examples of cheating and fraud i.e. *Al-Gashsh*. The Prophet (saw) has strongly condemned all such practices in a number of traditions and the believer to abstain from them.

The Prophet (saw) is reported to have said:

***"The seller and the buyer have the right to keep the goods or return them as long as they have not parted. He also said that if both the parties have spoken the truth and described the defects as well as the merits thereof (the goods), they would be blessed in their deal. If they have told lies or concealed something, then blessings of their transaction would be lost".*** (*Bukhari*, No: 1937)

**SWEARING**

The traders often take recourse to swearing to emphasize that their items are of good quality. They claim qualities in the merchandise, which don't exist. They try to persuade the buyers to purchase their commodity by invoking Allah's name. Swearing in business for such purposes is forbidden in Islam, be it false or true. False swearing is an act of sin punishable by hellfire. Swearing by Almighty Allah is too great a thing to be used as a means to sell a commodity. The desirable thing in business transaction is that both the buyer and the

seller remain straightforward and truthful in their dealings, so that no one will feel the need to swear by Allah in order to create conviction in the mind of the other party. The Prophet (saw) is reported to have said:

***"Swearing [by the seller] may persuade the customer to purchase the goods but the deal will be deprived of Allah's blessing."*** (*Bukhari*, No: 1945)

**GIVING SHORT MEASURES**

Another form of deceit is to manipulate weights and measures. It refers to the act of taking full measures from others and giving them short measures in your turn. Giving short measures was a common malaise plaguing the pre-Islamic days. The community of the Prophet *Shu'ayb* (saw) was known for practising it with impunity. Consequently, they were destroyed for their persistence in deceit and disbelief in Allah and His Messenger. Allah the Almighty has repeatedly commanded exactitude in weights and measures. One of the verses says:

***"And give full measure when you measure, and weigh with a just balance. That is good and better in the end."***(17:35)

**DEALING IN STOLEN GOODS**

Almighty Allah has declared thievery unlawful and warned of severe punishment such as cutting the hand of the thief from the wrist joint if the necessary legal conditions for the award of punishment are met. Even if the thief escapes worldly punishment and gets away with stolen goods, it is not permissible for a Muslim to knowingly purchase or sell these items. The stolen items are neither to be bought nor sold by those who know the reality. The Prophet (saw) made the person knowingly buying a stolen commodity a partner to the crime. He said:

***"The one, who knowingly purchases a stolen good, is a partner to the act of sin and the shame."***

(*Kanz Al-'Ammal*, No: 9258)

In modern times business ethics has become a major topic of discussion among business communities and other related organizations. Each and every society has evolved ethical and moral codes of conduct for business transactions. However, the Western secular ethical values are by and large supposed to be utilitarian, relative, situational and devoid of any spiritual sanctioning power. The Islamic ethical codes, on the contrary, are humane rather than utilitarian or relative. They are good for all times and absolute. Ethical and moral codes in Islam are part of the overall Islamic faith and observing them will not only lead to a happy state of affairs in this world but also holds the promise of manifold returns in the Hereafter.

Islamic ethical and moral codes thus create a sense of responsibility and accountability in the minds of the believers, theethical code of Islam is multidimensional, far reaching and comprehensive. Islamic ethical

framework is repeatedly stressed throughout the Holy*Qur'an*,and the teachings of the Prophet and encompass all spheres oflife including business financial dealings and obligations.

The fundamentalcodes of moral behaviour such as truthfulness, trustworthiness, generosityand leniency, adherence to business commitments and contracts, fairtreatment of workers, avoidance of evil practices (such as fraud, cheating, deceit, hoarding of foodstuff, exploitations, giving short measures etc.) provide, to a large extent, the general background of Islamic businessethics. The writer believes that there is a pressing need to study andimplement Islamic moral values in the context of the present day businesssituations.

## THEME: ISLAMIC JURISPRUDENCE TOPICS

## FUC 301 FIRST SEMESTER

## WEEK 10

### RITUAL BATH (GHUSL) IN ISLAM

Before making Ghusl one should make Niyyah (intention) and without Niyyah, there is no Thawaab (reward) although Ghusl will be valid. Ghusl should be made in a place of total privacy and one should not face towards the Qiblah while making Ghusl. Ghusl may be performed standing or seated. Use sufficient water, don't skimp nor be wasteful. One should abstain from speaking while performing Ghusl. It is better not to read any Kalimah or Aayah while bathing. Be aware of these rules whilst making Ghusl.

**The causes that make ghusl a must are:**

1. **The emission of semen**, because the Prophet (s.a.w.) said: ***"What requires water (ghusl) is if you see water (i.e., semen) coming out of you."***(Reported by Muslim, no. 1/269)

2. **Contact between the genitals,** because the Prophet (s.a.w.) said: ***"If one part enters the other part (in another report: if one part touches the other part), then ghusl becomes obligatory."*** (Reported by Ahmad and Muslim, no. 526)

This ghusl is obligatory whether or not fluid (semen) is released. "touching" here refers to the entry of the tip of the penis into the vagina, not mere touching.

3. **Menstruation and nifaas (post-natal bleeding**), because the Prophet (s.a.w.) said to Fatimah bint Hubaysh, may Allah be pleased with her: ***"When your period starts, stop praying, and when your period ends, perform ghusl then start praying again***." (Reported by al-Bukhari, Fath, 309)

4. **Death:** the dead - apart from a martyr slain in battle - must be washed (ghusl), because when his daughter Zaynab died, the Prophet (s.a.w.) said: ***"Wash her with water three or five times, or as many times as you***

***see fit"****(Reported by al-Bukhaari, al-Fath, 1175*); and when a man who was in a state of ihraam was killed by his riding-beast, he said: ***"Wash him with water and lotus leaves and wrap him in his two garments, but do not embalm him or cover his head, for he will be raised on the Day of Resurrection pronouncing the Talbiyah."*** (Reported by al-Bukhaari, Fath, 1186)

There are other types of ghusl about which the scholars differed as to whether they are obligatory, such as performing ghusl on Fridays, or whether a person who becomes Muslim needs to perform ghusl upon entering the Faith.

There are types of ghusl which are encouraged, such as: ghusl on the two Eids; ghusl after washing a dead body; ghusl before entering the state of ihraam or entering Makkah; ghusl for a woman who is suffering from istihaadah (abnormal non-menstrual bleeding) before every prayer; ghusl after being unconscious; and ghusl after burying a mushrik. *(Tamaam al-Minnah by al-Albaani, p. 120).*

**Procedure for performing ghusl:**

1. Wash both hands up to and including wrists.
2. Wash the private parts. The hands and private parts should be washed even if one is not in the state of Janaabat or Najaasat (impurity)
3. If there is Najaasat (impurity) elsewhere on the body, it should now be washed off.
4. Perform Wudhu (Read separate pamphlet for Wudhu according to Sunnah). If making Ghusl on a stool or platform where water will rapidly flow away, and then perform the complete Wudhu. If there is fear of the feet being immersed in waste water during the Ghusl then postpone the washing of the feet to the end of the Ghusl.
5. Ensure that the mouth and nostrils are thoroughly rinsed thrice.
6. After performing Wudhu, pour water over the head thrice;
7. Then pour thrice over right shoulder and;
8. Thrice again over left shoulder.
9. Now pour water over entire body and rub.
10. If the hair of the head is not plaited, it is compulsory to wet all the hair up to the very base. If a single hair is left dry, Ghusl will not be valid. If the hair of a woman is plaited, she is excused from loosening her plaited hair, but it is compulsory for her to wet the base of each and every hair. If one fails to do this then the Ghusl will not be valid. As for men who grow long hair and plait them, they are NOT excused from leaving their hair dry. If a woman experiences difficulty or is unable to wet the very bottom of her plaited hair, then it is necessary for her to unplaite her hair and wash her entire head.
11. It is Mustahab (preferable) to clean the body by rubbing it.

12. All parts of the body should be rubbed with the hand so as to ensure that water has reached all parts of the body, and that no portion is left dry.
13. Rings and earrings, etc. should be moved so as to ensure that no portion covered by them is left dry. Ensure that the navel and the ears are all wetted. If they are not wet Ghusl will be incomplete.
14. On completion one should confine oneself to a clean place. If, while performing Wudhu, the feet had been washed, it is not necessary to wash them again.
15. Dry the body with a clean towel, and dress as hastily as possible.

If, after Ghusl, one recalls that a certain portion of the body is left dry, it is not necessary to repeat the Ghusl, but merely wash the dry portion. It is not sufficient to pass a wet hand over the dry place. If one has forgotten to rinse the mouth or the nostrils, these too could be rinsed when recalled after Ghusl has been performed.

**The three Faraa'ids (compulsory acts) of Ghusl are**:

1. To rinse the mouth in such a manner that water reaches the entire mouth.
2. To rinse the nostrils up to the ending of the fleshy part.
3. To completely wet the whole body. When one performs these Faraa'id intentionally or unintentionally Ghusl will be valid.

***NOTE:*** ALL YOUR PRAYERS ARE INVALID IF YOUR GHUSL IS NOT CORRECT.

**FUC 301 FIRST SEMESTER**

**WEEK 10**

**SALAT (PRAYER) IN ISLAM: DEFINITION, TYPES,**

**TIMES AND ITS IMPORTANCE.**

Prayer is one of the central elements of Islamic practice and worship. Indeed, it is the second of the Five Pillars of Islam and, along with the testimony of faith, the pilgrimage to Mecca, fasting the month of Ramadan and paying the poor tax, forms the essential framework of religious life for Muslims. More than that, the observance of the ritual prayer forms the framework of each Muslim's day, from the pre-dawn morning prayer to the night prayer that precedes sleep.

**Salat in Shari'ah**

Ritual prayer is bound by detailed obligations and structure. It encompasses both obligatory (fard) prayers, which are observed five times daily at specified intervals, as well as voluntary prayers, which are performed by the worshipper before or after the obligatory prayers as well as at other times.

**Salat's Importance in Islam**

Prayer, in the ritual sense, is an obligation of the faith, to be performed five times a day by adult Muslims. According to Islamic law, prayers have a variety of obligations and conditions of observance. However, beyond the level of practice, there are spiritual conditions and aspects of prayer which represent its essence.

In the Holy Qur'ān, Allah says:

***وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ***

***"I created the jinn and humankind only that they might worship Me."***

***<u>Salat</u>* <u>in Quran:</u>**

**1. Establishing *Salat* Develops Taqwa (Fear and Awareness of Allah)**

***"This is the Book in which there is no doubt, a guidance for those who have taqwa; who believe in the unseen, and who establish Salat, and spend out of what we have provided for them"*** (2: 2-3)

**2. *Salat* Is the Sign of a Believer**

***"The believers, men and women, are protecting friends of one another; they enjoin good and forbid evil, and they establish Salat, and give Zakah, and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah will have His Mercy on them, and surely, Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise."*** (9: 71)

**3. Establishing *Salat* Leads to Allah's Eternal Blessings**

***"So whatever you have been given is but (a passing) enjoyment for this worldly life, but that which is with Allah is better and more lasting for those who believe and put their trust in their Lord. And those who avoid the great sins and lewdness, and when they are angry, they forgive. And those who answer the Call of their Lord, and perform the Salat, and who conduct their affairs by mutual consultation, and who spend of what We have bestowed on them."*** **(**42:36-38)

**4. Those Who Pray Shall Have Nothing to Fear on the Day of Judgment**

***"Truly, those who believe and do righteous deeds, and perform Salat, and give Zakah, they will have their reward with their Lord. On them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve."*** (2:277)

**5. Command to Pray with Congregation**

***"And establish Salat and give Zakah, and bow down (in worship) along with those who bow down (in worship)"*** (2:43)

**6. Special Command Regarding Punctuality of Prayer**

***"Guard strictly the Salat, especially the middle Salat. And stand before Allah with obedience."*** (2:238)

**7. Allah's Help Comes Through *Salat***

***"Seek help through patience and Salat; truly it is extremely difficult except for the humble true believers."*** (2:45)

***"Oh you who believe! Seek help through patience and Salat. Truly, Allah is with those who are patient."*** (2:153)

**8. Prayer Protects Against Evils**

***"Recite that which has been revealed to you of the Book, and perform Salat. Verily, Salat prevents from lewdness and evils. And indeed, the remembrance of Allah (by you) is greatest. AndAllah knows what you do."*** (29:45)

**Salat in Hadith**

Abu Huraira RadiyAllahu `anhu narrates that once Muhammad asked his companions, ***'Do you think that dirt can remain on a person bathing five times a day in a brook running in front of his door?' 'No', replied the companions, 'No dirt can remain on his body.' Muhammad remarked: 'So, exactly similar is the effect of salat offered five times a day. With the grace of Allah, it washes away all the sins'***.(Bukhari, Muslim)

Sabrah bin Ma'bad Al-Juhani reported: Muhammad said***, "Teach a boy Salat when he attains the age of seven years, and punish him (if he does not offer it) at ten."*** (Abu Dawood)

Abu Huraira narrated: Muhammad said, ***"The angels keep on asking Allah's forgiveness for anyone of you, as long as he is at his Mu,salla (praying place) and he does not pass wind (Hadath). They say, 'O Allah! Forgive him, O Allah! be Merciful to him."*** (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Volume 1, Book 8, Hadith #436)

**TIMES OF SALAT**

Muslims observe five formal prayers each day. The timings of these prayers are spaced fairly evenly throughout the day, so that one is constantly reminded of God and given opportunities to seek His guidance and forgiveness.

Muslims observe the formal prayers at the following times:

***Fajr*** (pre-dawn): This prayer starts off the day with the remembrance of God; it is performed before sunrise.

***Dhuhr*** (noon): After the day's work has begun, one breaks shortly after noon to again remember God and seek His guidance.

***'Asr*** (afternoon): In the late afternoon, people are usually busy wrapping up the day's work, getting kids home from school, etc. It is an important time to take a few minutes to remember God and the greater meaning of our lives.

***Maghrib*** (sunset): Just after the sun goes down, Muslims remember God again as the day begins to come to a close.

***'Isha*** (evening): Before retiring for the night, Muslims again take time to remember God's presence, guidance, mercy, and forgiveness.

**TYPES OF SALAT**

**a) Fard or obligatory Salat:**Every believer is ordered by Allah to offer five obligatory prayers in a day. Failure to observe any one of the five obligatory prayers is a serious and punishable sin.

**b) Nafl prayer or voluntary prayer**Is the one Prophet (pbuh) observed before or after Fard at special and isolated occasions. It also includes those which he encouraged Muslims to pray. The Nafl prayer can be divided into three categories:

**(i) Sunnat Muakkadah (compulsory).** That is those which are emphasized by the holy Prophet (pbuh) and offered regularly by him before or after the Fard prayer but not praying this type of *Salat* doesnot invalidate (Fard)Obligatory Prayer

**(ii) Sunnat Ghair Muakkadah (optional).** That is those offered only occasionally by Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

**(iii) Nafl Prayer (extra).** This is an extra prayer. There is a reward for praying it an no sin for leaving it. It can be offered

at any isolated instance according to the time and capacity of the believer. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) encouraged the believers to pray Nafl to help make up for any minor omissions or other defects in the obligatory prayer.

**NUMBER OF RAKAT FOR THE FIVE OBLIGATORY PRAYERS**

**(i) Fajr prayer:** 2 Rakaat Sunnat Muakkadah, 2 Rakaat Fard

**(ii) Dhuhr prayer:** 2 or 4 Rakaat Sunnat Muakkadah , 4 Rakaat Fard, 2 Rakaat Sunnat Muakkadah and an unspecified number of Nafl as time and capacity allows.

Ibn Umar said ***"I prayed alone with Allah's Messenger (pbuh) 2 Rakaat before and 2 Rakaat after the Dhuhr prayer***. (Bukhari and Muslim)

It is a familiar practice to offer 4 Rakaat Sunnat before Thuhr prayer, but this Hadith proves that 2 Rakaat Sunnat before the Dhuhr prayer is also allowed.

**(iii) Asr Prayer:** 2 or 4 Rakaat Sunnat Ghair Muakkaadah , 4 Rakaat Fard. Ali said***, "Allah's Messenger (pbuh) used to pray 4 Rakaat before Asr prayer separating them with a salutation..."*** (Tirmidhi)

Another Hadith narrated by Ali says, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) used to pray two Rakaat before Asr prayer. (Abu Dawud)

**(iv) Maghrib prayer.:** 2 Rakat Nafl, 3 Rakat Fard, 2 Rakat Sunnat Muakadah and an unspecified number of Nafl as time and capacity allows.

Abdullah bin Mughaffal reported the Prophet ((pbuh) as saying, ***"Pray before the Maghrib prayer"***, adding when saying it the third time,

That was because he did not wish people to treat it as a compulsory Sunnat.

2 Rakaat Nafl after sunset and before the Maghrib prayer are allowed for those who wish to do so. For this the above Hadith is a sure proof. However, some people forbid this and others find it very strange if they see a person offer 2 Rakaat Nafl before Maghrib.

**(v) Isha prayer:** An unspecified number of Nafl Rakaat according to the time and capacity, 4 Rakaat Fard, 2 Rakaat Sunnat Muakkadah, unspecified number of Nafl as time and capacity allows and 3 Witr.

Some people insist very emphatically upon the offering of 4 Rakaat optional Sunnat before the Isha prayer but during our entire research we could not find a single proof, any practice or order from Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) or his companions to justify this claim. Certainly, it is allowed to pray Nafl while waiting for Jamaat.

Some people offer 2 Rakat Nafl after the Witr Prayer. However, there is an authentic Hadith which states that the Witr prayer should be offered after all the Nafl, which a person wishes to pray, have been offered.

Ibn Umar reported that Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said ***"Make Witr as the last prayer of your night prayer."*** (mishkat)

**WEEK 12**

*Qasri* (shortening) and combination of prayers.

**THE CONCEPT OF AL-IHSAN IN ISLAM**

**Al-Ihsan** is an Arabic word and also spelled **(Ehsan)** it means **"perfection"** or **"excellence"**

It is a matter of taking one's inner faith **(*Iman*)** and showing it in both deed and action, a sense of social responsibility borne from religious convictions. In Islam, Ihsan is the Muslim responsibility to obtain perfection, or excellence, in worship, such that Muslims try to worship God as if they see him, and although they cannot see him, they undoubtedly believe that he is constantly watching over them.

That definition comes from the Hadith of Gabriel in which Muhammad states, ***"Ihsan is to worship God as though you see Him, and if you cannot see Him, then indeed He sees you".*** (Al-Bukhari and Al-Muslim)

***Ihsan,*** meaning "to do beautiful things", is one of the three dimensions of the Islamic religion (Ara. *ad-din*): ***Islam,Iman*** and ***Ihsan***. In contrast to the emphases of ***Islam*** (what one should do) and *Iman* (why one should do), the concept of ***Ihsan*** is primarily associated with intention. One who "does what is beautiful" is called a ***Muhsin.*** It is generally held that a person can only achieve true ***Ihsan*** with the

help and guidance of God, who governs all things. While traditionally Islamic jurists have concentrated on Islam and theologians on ***Iman***, the Sufis have focused their attention on ***Ihsan***.

Some Islamic scholars explain ***Ihsan*** as being the *inner* dimension of Islam whereas Shariah is often described as the *outer* dimension:

From the preceding discussion it should be clear that not every Muslim is a man or woman of faith (***mu'min),*** but every person of faith is a ***muslim***. Furthermore, a Muslim who believes in all the principles of Islam may not necessarily be a righteous person, a doer of good (***muhsin),*** but a truly good and righteous person is both a ***muslim*** and a true person of faith.

***Ihsan*** "constitutes the highest form of worship" (*ibadah*). It is excellence in work and in social interactions. For example, ***Ihsan*** includes sincerity during Muslim prayers and being grateful to parents, family, and God.

**The best reference to Al-Ihsan is found in the Holy Qur'an.**

Allah Almighty says:

***"Allah is with those who fear Him and are dutiful to Him; and He is with those who are people of ihsan."*** (Qur'an, 16:128) The ayah proves that Allah is with the people of ihsan. They are those who worship Allah as if they were seeing Him, so Allah is with them in a specific sense of ***Ma'iyyah*** — the ***Ma'iyyah*** with regard to aiding, helping, and ***tawfeeq*** (guiding them to and granting them attainment of correctness).

He says:

***"And place your reliance upon the Almighty, the Bestower of mercy. He who sees you when you stand to pray. And who sees your movements along with those who pray along with you. Indeed! He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing."***(Qur'an, 26:217-220)

He also says:

***"And you are not (O Muhammad) engaged in any matter nor do you recite the Book of Allah, nor do you do any action (O people), except that We are witness in your deeds when you do them. And not even that which is of the weight of the tiniest ant is hidden from your Lord on the earth or in***

***the heavens. Nor is there anything smaller than that or greater than it except that it is written in a clear Book."*** (Qur'an, 10:61)

# THE MEANING OF JUSTICE

In the Islamic worldview, justice denotes placing things in their rightful place. It also means giving others equal treatment. In Islam, justice is also a moral virtue and an attribute of human personality, as it is in the Western tradition. Justice is close to equality in the sense that it creates a state of equilibrium in the distribution of rights and duties, but they are not identical. Sometimes, justice is achieved through inequality, like in unequal distribution of wealth. The Prophet of Islam declared:

**"There are seven categories of people whom God will shelter under His shade on the Day when there will be no shade except His. [One is] the just leader."(*SaheehMuslim*)**

God spoke to His Messenger in this manner:

**"O My slaves, I have forbidden injustice for Myself and forbade it also for you. So avoid being unjust to one another." (*Saheeh Muslim*)**

Thus, justice represents moral rectitude and fairness, since it means things should be where they belong.

## The Importance of Justice

The Quran, the sacred scripture of Islam, considers justice to be a supreme virtue. It is a basic objective of Islam to the degree that it stands next in order of priority to belief in God's exclusive right to worship (*Tawheed*) and the truth of Muhammad's prophethood. God declares in the Quran:

> **"God commands justice and fair dealing..." (Quran 16:90)**

And in another passage:

> **"O you who believe, be upright for God, and (be) bearers of witness with justice!..." (Quran 5:8)**

Therefore, one may conclude that justice is an obligation of Islam and injustice is forbidden. The centrality of justice to the Quranic value system is displayed by the following verse:

> **"We sent Our Messengers with clear signs and sent down with them the Book and the Measure in order to establish justice among the people…" (Quran 57:25)**

The phrase **'Our Messengers'** shows that justice has been the goal of all revelation and scriptures sent to humanity. The verse also shows that justice must be measured and implemented by the standards and guidelines set by revelation. Islam's approach to justice is comprehensive and all-embracing. Any path that leads to justice is deemed to be in harmony with Islamic Law. God has demanded justice and, although He has not prescribed a specific route, has provided general guidelines, on how to achieve it. He has neither prescribed a fixed means by which it can be obtained, nor has He declared invalid any particular means or methods that can lead to justice. Therefore, all means, procedures, and methods that facilitate, refine, and advance the cause of justice, and do not violate the Islamic Law are valid.[1]

## Equality in Justice

The Quranic standards of justice transcend considerations of race, religion, color, and creed, as Muslims are commanded to be just to their friends and foes alike, and to be just at all levels, as the Quran puts it:

**"O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even if it be against yourselves, your parents, and your relatives, or whether it is against the rich or the poor..." (Quran 4:135)**

According to another Quranic passage:

**"Let not the hatred of a people swerve you away from justice. Be just, for this is closest to righteousness…" (Quran 5:8)**

With regards to relations with non-Muslims, the Quran further states:

**"God does not forbid you from doing good and being just to those who have neither fought you over your faith nor evicted you from your homes..." (Quran 60:8)**

The scholars of the Quran have concluded that these rulings apply to all nations, followers of all faiths, as a matter of fact to all humanity.[2] In the view of the Quran, justice is an obligation. That is why the Prophet was told:

**"…If you judge, judge between them with justice…" (Quran 5:42)**

**"We have revealed to you the scripture with the truth that you may judge between people by what God has taught you." (Quran 4:105)**

Furthermore, the Prophet was sent as a judge between peoples, and told:

**"…Say: I believe in the Scripture, which God has sent down, and I am commanded to judge justly between you..." (Quran 42:15)**

The Quran views itself as a scripture devoted mainly to laying down the principles of faith and justice. The Quran demands that justice be met for all, and that it is an inherent right of all human beings under Islamic Law.[3] The timeless commitment of the Quran to the basic standards of justice is found in its declaration:

**"And the Word of your Lord has been fulfilled in truth and in justice. None can change His Words." (Quran 6:115)**

To render justice is a trust that God has conferred on the human being and, like all other trusts, its fulfillment must be guided by a sense of responsibility beyond mere conformity to set rules. Thus, the Quran states:

**"God commands you to render trusts to whom they are due, and when you judge between people, judge with justice…" (Quran 4:58)**

The reference to justice which immediately follows a reference to fulfillment of trusts indicates that it is one of the most important of all trusts.[4]

## Justice and the Self

The Quranic concept of justice also extends justice to being a personal virtue, and one of the standards of moral excellence that a believer is encouraged to attain as part of his God-consciousness. God says:

**"…Be just, for it is closest to God-consciousness…" (Quran 5:8)**

The Prophet himself instructed:

**"Be conscious of God and be just to your children."[5]**

The Quran tells the believers:

**"…When you speak, speak with justice, even if it is against someone close to you…" (Quran 6:152)**

## Specific Examples of Justice Encouraged in the Quran

The Quran also refers to particular instances and contexts of justice. One such instance is the requirement of just treatment of orphans. God says:

**"And approach not the property of the orphan except in the fairest way, until he [or she] attains the age of full strength, and give measurement and weight with justice…" (Quran 6:152, also see 89:17, 93:9, and 107:2)**

Fair dealings in measurements and weights, as mentioned in the above verse, is also mentioned in other passages where justice in the buying, selling, and by extension, to business transactions in general, is emphasized. There is an entire chapter of the Quran, Surah al-Mutaffifeen ('The Detractors in Giving Weights,' 83) where fraudulent dealers are threatened with divine wrath.

References to justice also occur in the context to polygamy. The Quran demands equitable treatment of all wives. The verse of polygamy begins by reference to orphaned girls who may be exposed to depravation and injustice. When they reach marriageable age, they should be married off, even if it be into a polygamous relationship, especially when there is inequality in the number of men and women, as was the case after the Battle of Uhud when this verse was revealed. But, as the Quran states:

**"If you fear that you can not be just, then marry only one…" (Quran 4:3)**

In conclusion, 'to render justice', in the words of Sarkhasi, a noted classical Islamic jurist, 'ranks as the most noble of acts of devotion next to belief in God. It is the greatest of all the duties entrusted to the prophets…and it is the strongest justification for man's stewardship of earth.'[6]

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**Footnotes:**

[1] Qaradawi, Yusuf, 'Madkhal li-Darasah al-Sharia al-Islamiyya,' p. 177

[2] Kamali, Mohammad, 'Freedom, Equality, And Justice In Islam,' p. 111

[3] Qutb, Sayyid, *'Fi Zilal al-Quran,'* vol 2, p. 689

[4] Razi, Fakhr al-Din, *'al-Tafsir al-Kabir,'* vol 3, p. 353

[5] *Riyad us-Saliheen*

[6] Sarkhasi, Shams al-Din, *'al-Mabsut,'* vol. 14, p. 59-60

**The Qur'an and Homosexuality:**

There are five references in the Qur'an which have been cited as referring to gay and lesbian behavior. Some obviously deal with *effeminate men and "masculine women*." The two main references to homosexual behavior are:

***We also (sent) Lut: he said to his people:"Do you commit lewdness such as no people in creation (ever) committed before you?"For you practice your lusts on men in preference to women: you are indeed a people transgressing beyond bounds." -Quran 7:80-81***

***"Of all the creatures in the world will ye approach males". "And leave those whom Allah has created for you to be your mates? Nay ye are a people transgressing (all limits)!"*** Quran 26:165-166

The end result for not giving up homosexuality was the destruction of entire cities

***"When Our decree issued We turned (the cities) upside down and rained down on them brimstones hard as baked clay spread layer on layer Marked as from thy Lord: nor are they ever far from those who do wrong!*** Quran 11:82-83

The Quran forbids any sexual relationship other than in a marriage between a man and a woman. Many homosexual men and women claim that they are born with their sexual preferences and that they have no choice. Although this point is very much in dispute in the medical world, it has no support in the Quran. Even then, irrespective of the nature of homosexuality, this matter would not affect the laws spelled out clearly in the Quran

Both references relate to gay sexual activities; lesbian practices are not mentioned in the Qur'an.

Lut is referred to as "Lot" in the Hebrew Scriptures. This passage is an apparent reference to the activities at Sodom and Gamorah. It seems to imply that there was no homosexual behavior before it first appeared in Sodom. This is a uniquely Islamic concept; it does not appear in Jewish or Christian beliefs. The passage also links the sin of Sodom (the reason for its destruction) to homosexuality.That linkage is contradicted by other verses in the Hebrew Scriptures.

The Hadith and homosexuality: The Hadith are collections of sayings attributed to Muhammad. Many Hadiths (ahadith) discuss *liwat* (sexual intercourse between males). Two examples are:

***"When a man mounts another man, the throne of God shakes."***

***"Kill the one that is doing it and also kill the one that it is being done to***." (in reference to the active and passive partners in gay sexual intercourse)

There is at least one mention of lesbian behavior mentioned in the Hadith: *"Sihaq* (lesbian sexual activity) of women is ***zina*** (illegitimate sexual intercourse) among them."

Traditionalist orthodox Muslims generally claim that the Hadith literature contains the authentic sayings of Muhammad. Many liberal Muslims doubt their authenticity. The latter might point out that during the times of the first Caliphs, Muslims did not know what to do with individuals guilty of ***"liwat/lutiyya".*** No sahabi (companion) of Muhammad could quote a saying or decision of Muhammad relating to this question.

**Treatment of homosexuals within Islam:**

According to a pamphlet produced by Al-Fatiha, there is a consensus among Islamic scholars that all humans are naturally heterosexual. 5 Homosexuality is seen by scholars to be a sinful and perverted deviation from the norm. All Islamic schools of thought and jurisprudence consider gay acts to be unlawful. They differ in terms of penalty:

The Hanafite school (currently seen mainly in South and Eastern Asia) teaches that no physical punishment is warranted.

The Hanabalites, (widely followed in the Arab world) teach that severe punishment is warranted.

The Sha'fi school of thought (also seen in the Arab world) requires a minimum of 4 adult male witnesses before a person can be found guilty of a homosexual act. Al-Fatiha estimates that 4,000 homosexuals have been executed in Iran since their revolution in 1979. 10 public executions of homosexuals have been performed in Afghanistan by the Taliban army.

**Hadeeth (saying of prophet Muhammad) regarding homosexuality:**

Narrated AbuSa'id al-Khudri: The Prophet (saws) said: A man should not look at the private parts of another man, and a woman should not look at the private parts of another woman. A man should not lie with another man without wearing lower garment under one cover; and a woman should not be lie with another woman without wearing lower garment under one cover. (Abu Dawood)

Narrated AbuHurayrah: The Prophet (saws) said: A man should not lie with another man and a woman should not lie with another woman without covering their private parts except a child or a father. He also mentioned a third thing which I forgot. (Abu Dawood)

Lastly, the spouses that God have made from among ourselves are those that aid in producing children. Since the spouses in homosexual relationship would not produce children they are not the spouses God made from among ourselves.

***"And Allah has made for you mates (and companions) of your own nature. And made for you out of them sons and daughters and grandchildren and provided for you sustenance of the best: will they then believe in vain things and be ungrateful for Allah's favors?"*** - Holy Quran 16:72

# SAME SEX MARRIAGE and MARRIAGE IN ISLAM

**Marriage** is a socially sanctioned union, typically of one man and one woman, in this connection called **husband** and **wife**. Typically they form a family, socially, through forming a household, which is often subsequently extended biologically, through children. It is found in all societies, but in widely varying forms.

## History of same-sex marriage [1]

Same-sex marriage has been documented in many societies that were not subject to Christian influence. In North American, among the Native American societies, it has taken the form of two-spirit type relationships, in which some members of the tribe elect to take on female gender with all its responsibilities. They are prized as wives by the other men in the tribe, who enter into formal marriages with these two-spirit men.
In China, especially in the southern province of Fujian where male love was especially cultivated, men would marry youths in elaborate ceremonies. The marriages would last a number of years, at the end of which the elder partner would help the younger find a (female) wife and settle down to raise a family.
In Africa, among the Azande of the Congo, men would marry youths for whom they had to pay a bride-price to the father. These marriages likewise were understood to be of a temporary nature.
Finally, in Europe during Hellenic times, the relationships between Greek men and youths who had come of age were analogous to marriage in several aspects. The age of the youth was similar to the age at which women married (the mid-teens), and the relationship could only be undertaken with the consent of the father. This consent, just as in the case of a daughter's marriage, was contingent on the suitor's social standing. The relationship, just like a marriage, consisted of very specific social and religious responsibilities, and also had an erotic component.

## ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE [2]

`Nikah is an Arabic term used for marriage. It means "contract". ("Aqd in Arabic). The Quran specifically refers to marriage as "mithaqun Ghalithun,".Which means "a strong agreement".

"and they have taken a strong pledge (Mithaqun Ghalithun) from you?" (Quran 4:21)

The seriousness of this covenant becomes very obvious when one finds the same term i.e., Mithaqun Ghalithun, being used for the agreement made between Allah and the Prophet before granting them the responsibility of the Prophethood. (Quran 33:7)

The Quran also uses the Arabic word "Hisn", suggesting "fortress" for marriage. Marriage is considered the fortress of chastity.

**The Definition of Marriage (*Nikah*)**

The original meaning of the work *nikah* is the ***physical relationship between man and woman.*** It is also used secondarily to refer to the contract of marriage, which makes that relationship lawful. Which of the two meanings is intended can be determined by the context in which it is used.
As for the definition of marriage in fiqh, the simple definition would go something like this:

> "A contract that results in the two parties physically enjoying each other in the manner allowed by the Shari'a."

Since this only focuses on one aspect of the marriage contract, Muhammad Abu Zahrah (a modern scholar) defines it like this:

> "A contract that results in the man and woman living with each other and supporting each other within the limits of what has been laid down for them in terms of rights and obligations."

Ibn Uthaimeen takes an even more comprehensive view of the institution of marriage in his definition of it as:

> "It is a mutual contract between a man and a woman whose goal is for each to enjoy the other, become a pious family and a sound society."

**The Purpose and Goals of Marriage**

Like anything a Muslim does, marriage should only be undertaken after gaining an understanding of all that Allah has prescribed in terms of rights and obligations as well as gaining an understanding of the wisdom behind this institution. Nearly all peoples and all societies practice marriage in some form, just as they practice business (buying and selling). Umar ibn Al-Khattab used to expel people from the market place in Medina who were not knowledgeable of the fiqh of buying and selling. Likewise, a Muslim should not engage in something as important as marriage without having understanding of the purpose of marriage in Islam as well as a comprehensive understanding of the rights and obligations, which it brings about.
One of the principles of Islamic Jurisprudence says that: "The default state of all things is lawfulness until some evidence shows otherwise." Based on this, if new foods are discovered, they are considered lawful, unless there is some specific reason or attribute which would make it forbidden for example if it is causes

intoxication. Relations between men and women do not follow this general principle and in fact are opposite to it. The principle is that: "Relations between men and women are forbidden until some evidence shows otherwise."

**Procreation (Children)**

One of the most important purposes of marriage is to continue and increase the population of the Muslims. Clearly, this goal could be achieved without marriage, but when actions are undertaken in disobedience to Allah, they do not receive the blessing of Allah and the whole society is corrupted. The Prophet (sas) said:

***"Ankihoo fa inniy mukaathirun bikum al umam yaum al-Qiyama"***

**"Marry, for I will outnumber the other nations by you on Qiyama." (***Ibn Majah - Sahih*)

It should be stressed that the goal is not simply to produce any child that will live in the next generation. It is to produce righteous children who will be obedient to Allah and who will be a source of reward for their parents after they die. The Prophet (sas) will NOT be boasting before the other nations on the day of Qiyama with children of Muslim parents who left the path of Islam. Thus it is the responsibility of Muslim parents to seek the means of giving their children the training and education they need not just to grow, but to succeed as Muslims worshipping and obeying Allah. This obligation may include migration (*hijrah*), establishing of Muslim communities and schools and other obligations. As the scholars have said in another principle of fiqh:

***"Maa laa yutimmu al-wajibu illa bihi fa huwa wajib."***

***"That without which an obligation cannot be fulfilled is itself obligatory."***

**Pleasure**

Islam is the religion of the *fitrah* - the religion which is consistent with the natural instincts and needs of mankind. It is not like the man-made (of modified) religions which set unnatural constraints on people whether self-inflicted prohibition of marriage (nuns and monks, etc.), prohibition of divorce or monogamy. Men are inclined toward women and women are inclined toward men. Marriage is the institution, which fulfills this desire and channels it in ways pleasing to Allah Most High. Allah mentions this attraction:

*{Zuyyina li an-naasi hubbu ash-shahawaati min an-nisaa'i wa al-baneen...}*

**{The love of the desires for women, sons, ... has been made attractive to people.} The Qur'an,** *Aal-'Imraan 3:14*

The Messenger of Allah himself made clear that the attraction between the sexes is something natural and not something to be denied or suppressed - only channeled in the ways pleasing to Allah Most High, saying:

> "*Hubbiba ilayya min worldakum an-nisaa'u wa at-teebu wa ju'ilat qurratu 'ainiy fiy as-salat."*
> **"Women and perfume have been made beloved to me of this world of yours and my peace of mind is in the prayer."** *(Ahmad & others - Sahih)*

The desire of men and women for each other is an urge, which needs to be fulfilled. If it is left unfulfilled, it will be a source of discord and disruption in society. For this reason, the Prophet (sas) ordered all men who are capable of meeting the responsibilities of marriage to do it:

> *"Man kana minkum dhaa tawlin, falyatazawwaj fa innahu aghadhdh lilbasari wa ahsanu lilfarji wa man laa fa as-saumu lahu wijaa."*
> **"Whichever of you is capable should marry for it will aid him in lowering his gaze and guarding his body (from sin). As for the one who is not capable, fasting is his protection."** *(An-Nasaa'i - Sahih)*

## HOMOSEXUALITY

Homosexuality and Lesbianism have no place in Islam. This issue is clear from the primary source of Islam, The Holy Quran. No Muslim scholar, Imam or a leader of a Muslim community can alter this injunction. A person committing such an act is in violation of God's Law and should seek repentence before God gives up on him or her. As the following verses tell us, it was the people of prophet Lot (peace be on him) who started this evil act and were severly punished by God.

We also (sent) Lut: he said to his people: "Do ye commit lewdness such as no people in creation (ever) committed before you? "For ye practice your lusts on men in preference to women: ye are indeed a people transgressing beyond bounds." And his people gave no answer but this: they said, "drive them out of your city: these are indeed men who want to be clean and pure!" But We saved him and his family, except his wife: she was of those who lagged behind. And We rained down on them a shower (of brimstone): then see what was the end of those who indulged in sin and crime! (The Holy Quran, 7:80-84)

Let us all pray that God will spare us from His wrath. Let us pray that we will be among those to whom He has favored and not among those who have gone astray. Ameen.

**The Ruling Concerning Marriage**

**Different Rulings for Different Cases?**

What is the status of marriage in the Shari'a? Is it obligatory or merely allowed? Some of the Hanafi scholars have broken this question down into different cases:

1. If a person feels certain that he will commit something forbidden if he does not marry and he has the financial ability to marry, then marriage is in his case **fardh** (the highest level of the obligatory in Hanafi terminology).
2. If a person has the ability to marry and treat his wife properly and fears (strong probability) that he will engage in unlawful acts if he doesn't, then marriage in his case is **wajib**(obligatory).
3. If a person does not have the financial or physical means to marry or feels certain that he will not treat his wife properly then marriage in his case is **haram** (forbidden).
4. If a person has the means to marry, but feels strongly that he will not treat his wife properly, marriage in his case is **makrooh**(disliked).
5. If a person has the means to marry and has no fear of mistreating his wife or of committing the unlawful if he doesn't marry, then marriage in his case is **mustahabb** (preferred).

This last opinion is widely regarded as the "default" (*al-asl*) ruling in this question i.e., marriage, generally speaking is the preferred but not obligatory way and only becomes obligatory, forbidden, etc. in the exceptional cases.
Since the man is normally the one who goes looking for a spouse and proposes to her family, etc., these discussions normally focus on him. Every point in the above discussion, however, applies to women equally as it does to men.

**The *Dhaahiri* (Literalist) Opinion**

In the Literalist school of thought, marriage is considered *fardh 'ain* - an absolute and individual obligation. Among the evidence they cite are the following verse from the Qur'an and hadith of the Prophet (sas):

> *{Wa ankihoo al-ayaamaa minkum wa as-saliheena min 'ibaadikum wa imaa'ikum in yakunoo fuqara'a yughnihimu Allahu min fadhlihi wa Allahu wasi'un 'aleem (22) Wa lyasta'fif illadhina laa yajiduna nikahan hatta yughniahumu Alahu min fadhlihi}*
>
> **{And marry off the single among you and among the righteous of your male and female slaves. If they are poor then Allah will supply their needs from His generosity. And Allah is expansive, knowing. (22) And let those who do not find marriage hold back until Allah grants them of His generosity.}** *An-Noor 24:32-33*

The following hadith of the Prophet (sas) seems to be a blanket "order" to all those with the capability to get married:

> *"Yaa ma'shara ash-shabaab man istataa'a minkum al-ba'a falyatazawwaj."*
> **"O young men, whoever among you has the ability, let him marry."** *Bukhari & Muslim*

***Conclusion Concerning the Ruling of Marriage***

The opinion that marriage is - overall - preferred (**mustahabb**) seems to be the strongest opinion. Ibn Uthaimeen further points out that if a person desires to be married, it becomes even more important. He said: "Marriage in the case of desire for such is preferred over superogatory acts of worship, due to the many good results and praiseworthy effects it has."

Also, it is clear that there is a collective obligation (**fardh kifaya**) on the Ummah as a whole to promote, defend and facilitate the institution of marriage. If marriage suffers from neglect or, for example, unreasonably high dowries which force people to postpone marriage too long, it is a collective obligation on the Ummah to come to its aid and to ensure that as many people as possible live within the context of a marriage. Also, if a the Muslims come to have too many single women because of the abandonment of polygamy, it become a collective obligation on the Muslims to address and correct this situation. This is all clearly based on the command of Allah in the verse previously cited which starts out:
**{And marry off the single among you...}**

**Review Questions**

1. True or False: Marriage is the sunnah of the Messengers of Allah and everyone must get married.

2. What is the ruling of marriage according to the Literalist school of thought? What is their evidence?

3. Give a Shari'a definition of marriage.

4. What are some of the main goals and purposes of marriage in Islam?

5. Under what circumstances could marriage be considered forbidden for a specific individual?

6. Under what circumstances could marriage be considered obligatory for a specific individual?

# ***MARRIAGE IN ISLAM.***

The Holy Quran says:

***"And marry those among you who are single and those who are fit among your male slaves and your female slaves; if they are needy, Allah will make them free from want out of His grace; and Allah is Ample-giving, Knowing."*** (Surah an-Nur, 24:32)

Islam, unlike other religions is a strong advocate of marriage. There is no place for celibacy like, for example the Roman Catholic priests and nuns. The prophet (pbuh) has said:

***"There is no celibacy in Islam***".

Marriage by definition is a voluntary union of two people with the intention of becoming husband and wife according to the commandment of Allah and sunnah of Prophet Muhammad.

Marriage is a religious duty and is consequently a moral safeguard as well as a social necessity. Islam does not equal celibacy with high ***"taqwa" / "Iman".*** The prophet has also said:

***"Marriage is my tradition who so ever keeps away there from is not from amongst me".***

Marriage acts as an outlet for sexual needs and regulates it so one does not become a slave to his/ her desires.

It is a social necessity because through marriage, families are established and the family is the fundamental unit of our society. Furthermore, marriage is the only legitimate or halal way to indulge in intimacy between a man and a woman.

Islam takes a middle of the road position to sexual relations, it neither condemns it like certain religions, nor does it allow it freely. Islam urges us to control and regulate our desires, whatever they may be so that we remain dignified and not become like animals.

## ***The purpose of Marriage.***

The word ***"zawj"*** is used in the Qur'an to mean a pair or a mate. In general it usage refers to marriage. The general purpose of marriage is that the sexes can provide company to one another, love to one another, procreate children and live in peace and tranquility to the commandments of Allah.

* Marriage serves as a means to emotional and sexual gratification and as a means of tension reduction. It is also a form of Ibadah because it is obeying Allah and his messenger - i.e. Marriage is seen as the only possible way for the sexes to unite. One could choose to live in sin, however by choosing marriage one is displaying obedience to Allah.

Marriage is ***"mithaq"*** - a solemn covenant (agreement). It is not a matter which can be taken lightly. It should be entered into with total commitment and full knowledge of what it involves. It is not like buying a new dress where you can exchange it if you don't like it. Your partner should be your choice for life. One should be mature enough to understand the demands of marriage so that the union can be a lasting one. For a marriage to be valid certain conditions must be met.

1) Consent of both parties.

2) ***" Mahr"*** a gift from the groom to his bride.

3) Witnesses- 2 male or female.

4) The marriage should be publicized; it should never be kept secret as it leads to suspicion and troubles within the community.

***Is Marriage obligatory?***

According to Imams Abu Hanifah, Ahmad ibn Hanbal and Malik ibn Anas, marriage is recommendatory; however in certain individuals it becomes ***wajib***/obligatory. Imam Shaafi'i considers it to be ***nafl or mubah*** (preferable). The general opinion is that if a person, male or female fears that if he/she does not marry they will commit fornication, then marriage becomes "***wajib"***. If a person has strong sexual urges then it becomes ***"wajib"*** for that person to marry. Marriage should not be put off or delayed especially if one has the means to do so.

A man, however should not marry if he or she does not possess the means to maintain a wife and future family, or if he has no sex drive or if dislikes children, or if he feels marriage will seriously affect his religious obligation.

The general principle is that prophet (pbuh) enjoined up in the followers to marry.

He said:

***"When a man marries, he has fulfilled half of his religion , so let him fear Allah regarding the remaining half."***

This hadith is narrated by Anas. Islam greatly encourages marriage because it shields one from and upholds the family unit which Islam places great importance.

**Selection of a partner:**

The choice of a partner should be the one with the most ***"taqwa"*** (piety). The prophet recommended the suitors see each other before going through with marriage. It is unreasonable for two people to be thrown together and be expected to relate and be intimate when they know nothing of each other. The couples are permitted to look at each other with a critical eye and not a lustful one. This ruling does not contradict the ayah which says that believing men and women should lower their gaze.

- The couple, however are not permitted to be alone in a closed room or go out together alone. As the hadith says "when a man and a woman are together alone, there is a third presence i.e. shaitan.

# CONCEPT OF MARRIAGE IN ISLAM

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- The couple, however are not permitted to be alone in a closed room or go out together alone. As the hadith says "when a man and a woman are together alone, there is a third presence i.e. shaitan.

- There is no concept of courtship in Islam as it is practised in the west. There is no dating or living in defacto relationship or trying each other out before they commit to each other seriously. There is to be no physical relationship what so ever before marriage. The romantic notions that young people often have, have proven in most cases to be unrealistic and harmful to those involved. We only have to look at the alarming divorce rate in the west to understand this point. e.g. the couple know each other for years, are intimate, live together and so on yet somehow this does not guarantee the success of the future marriage. Romance and love simply do not equal a everlasting bond between two people.

Fact: Romance and love die out very quickly when we have to deal in the real world. The unrealistic expectations that young people have is what often contributes to the failure of their relationship.

- The west make fun of the Islamic way of marriage in particular arranged marriage, yet the irony is

that statistically arranged marriages prove to be more successful and lasting than romantic types of courtship.

This is because people are blinded by the physical attraction and thus do not choose the compatible partner.

Love blinds people to potential problems in the relationship. There is an Arabic saying: which says "the mirror of love is blind, it makes zucchini into okra". Arranged marriages on the other hand, are based not on physical attraction or romantic notions but rather on critical evaluation of the compatibility of the couple.

This is why they often prove successful.

Consent of parties.

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There is a halal arranged marriage and a haram one. It is OK to arrange marriages by suggestion and recommendation as long as both parties are agreeable. The other arranged marriage is when parents choose the future spouse and the couple concerned are forced or have no choice in the matter.

One of the conditions of a valid marriage is consent of the couple.

Marriage by definition is a voluntary union of two people.

The choice of a partner by a Muslim virgin girl is subject to the approval of the father or guardian under Maliki school. This is to safeguard her welfare and interests. The prophet said "the widow and the divorced woman shall not be married until she has consented and the virgin shall not be married until her consent is obtained. The prophet did revoke the marriage of a girl who complained to him that her father had married her against her wishes.

The husband/wife relationship.

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-The wifes rights - the Husbands obligations.

(1) Maintenance

The husband is responsible for the wifes maintenance. This right is established by authority of the Qur'an and the sunnah. It is inconsequen tial whether the wife is a Muslim , non-Muslim, rich, poor, healthy or sick. A component of his role as "qawam" (leader) is to bear the financial responsibility of the family in a generous way so that his wife may be assured security and thus perform her role devotedly.

The wifes maintenance entails her right to lodging, clothing, food and general care, like medication, hospital bills etc. He must lodge her where he resides himself according to his means. The wifes lodge must be adequate so as to ensure her privacy, comfort and independence.

If a wife has been used to a maid or is unable to attend to her household duties, it is the

husbandsduty to provide her with a maid if he can afford to do so. The prophet is reported to have said: The best Muslim is one who is the best husband.

(2) "Mahr "

The wife is entitled to a marriage gift that is her own. This may be prompt or deferred depending on the agreement between the parties. A marriage is not valid without mahr. It does not have to be money or gold. It can be non-material like teaching her to read the Qur'an. " Mahr" is a gift from the groom to the bride. This is the Islamic law, unlike some cultures whereby the brides parents pay the future husband to marry the daughter. This practice degrades women and is contrary to the spirit of Islam. There is no specification in the Qur'an as to what or how much the Mahr has to be. It depends on the parties involved.

(3) Non-material rights.

A husband is commanded by the law of Allah to treat his wife with equity, respect her feelings and show kindness and consideration, especially if he has another wife. The prophet last sermon stresses kindness to women.

The wife obligations - the Husbands rights.

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One of the main duties of the wife is to contribute to the success and blissfulness of the marriage. She must be attentive to the comfort and wellbeing of her husband. The Qur'anic ayah which illustrates this point is:

"Our lord, grant us wives and offspring who will be the apples of our eyes and guide us to be models for the righteous"

The wife must be faithful, trustworthy and honest she must not deceive her husband by deliberately avoiding contraception. She must not allow any other person to have access to that which is exclusively the husband right i.e. sexual intimacy. She must not receive or entertain strange males in the house without his knowledge and consent. She should not be alone with a strange male. She should not accept gifts from other men without his approval. This is meant to avoid jealousy, suspicion and gossip. The husband possessions are her trust. She may not dispose of his belongings without his permission.

A wife should make herself sexually attractive to her husband and be responsive to his advances. The wife must not refuse her husband sexually as this can lead to marital problems and worse still - tempt the man to adultery. The husband of course should take into account the wifes health and general consideration should be given.

Obedience.

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The purpose of obedience in the relationship is to keep the family unit running as smoothly as possible. The man has been given the right to be obeyed because he is the leader and not because he is superior. If a leader is not obeyed , his leadership will become invalid -Imagine a king or a

teacher or a parent without the necessary authority which has been entrusted to them.

Obedience does not mean blind obedience. It is subject to conditions:

(a) It is required only if what is asked from the wife is within the permissible categories of action.

(b) It must be maintained only with regard to matters that fall under the husband rights.

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## Importance of Marriage in Islam

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The Holy Quran says,
***"And marry those among you who are single and those who are fit among your male slaves and your female slaves; if they are needy, Allah will make them free from want out of His grace; and Allah is Ample-giving, Knowing." (Surah an-Nur, 24:32)***

The above *ayat* begins with the words ***Wa Ankehoo* (*And marry…*)**. The imperative form of the word '*nikah*' implies that either it is obligatory or highly recommended.1 According to scholars, though marriage is a highly recommended act, it becomes obligatory when there is a chance of falling into sin.

The Prophet (S) says, *"No house has been built in Islam more beloved in the sight of Allah than through marriage."* 2
On another occasion the Prophet (S) said,
*"The best people of my nation (Ummat) are those who get married and have chosen their wives, and the worst people of my nation are those who have kept away from marriage and are passing their lives as bachelors."* 3
Imam 'Ali (A.S.) exhorts, *"Marry, because marriage is the tradition of the Prophet (S)."* The Prophet (S) also said, "*Whosoever likes to follow my tradition, then he should know that marriage is from my tradition."* 4

### A. Importance of Sex in Marriage

In Islam, marriage is not restricted to a platonic relationship between husband and wife, nor is it solely for procreation. The Islamic term for marriage, "*nikah*" literally means sexual intercourse.5
So why has Islam provided extensive rules and regulation regarding sex? This was because Islam has fully understood that sexual instincts cannot and must not be repressed. They can only be regulated for the well being of human beings in this life and for their success in the hereafter.
Sex in married life has been openly recommended in Qur'an,
***"…when they [i.e., the wives] have cleansed themselves [after menstruation], you go into them as Allah has commanded…" (Surah al-Baqarah, 2:222)***

### B. Fulfillment of Sexual Urge

The Holy Prophet (S) and the Holy Imams (A.S.) also encouraged their followers to marry and to fulfill their sexual urges in lawful ways as can be seen from the following: The Prophet (S) said, *"O you young men! I*

*recommend marriage to you.*" 6

Imam Reza (A.S.) said, *"Three things are from the traditions of the Messengers of God (A.S.): using perfume, removing the [excessive] hair and visiting one's wife."*7

### C. Celibacy and Monasticism is Forbidden

Islamic is totally opposed to monasticism and celibacy. 'Uthman bin Maz'un was a close companion of the Prophet (S). One day his wife came to the Prophet (S) and complained, "O Messenger of God (S)! 'Uthman fasts during the day and stands for prayers during the night." In other words, she meant to say that her husband was avoiding sexual relations during the night as well as the day. The Prophet (S) was angered. He did not even wait to put on his slippers. He went to 'Uthman's house and found him praying. When 'Uthman finished his prayers and turned towards the Prophet (S), he said, *"O 'Uthman! Allah did not send me for monasticism, rather He sent me with a simple and straight [Shariah]. I fast, pray and also have intimate relations with my wife. So whosoever likes my tradition, then he should follow it; and marriage is one of my traditions."* 8

### D. Beneficial Effects of a Married Life

Various studies prove that married people remain healthier, physically and mentally. Islam has always maintained that marriage is beneficial for us in many ways.

Islam also regards marriage as a way to acquire spiritual perfection.

The Prophet (S) said, *"One who marries, has already guarded half of his religion, therefore he should fear Allah for the other half."* 9How true! A person who fulfills his sexual urges lawfully would rarely be distracted in spiritual pursuits.

### E. Marriage Enhances the Value of Prayers

The Prophet (S) said, *"Two rak'ats (cycles) prayed by a married person are better than the night-vigil and the fast of a single person."* 10

A woman came to the Prophet (S) and said that she had tried everything to attract her husband but in vain; he does not leave his meditation to pay any attention to her.

The Prophet (S) told her to inform her husband about the reward of sexual intercourse which he described as follows: *"When a man approaches his wife, he is guarded by two angels and [at that moment in Allah's views] he is like a warrior fighting for the cause of Allah. When he has intercourse with her, his sins fall like the leaves of the tree [in fall season]. When he performs the major ablution, he is cleansed from sins."* 11

### F. Marriage increases Sustenance

The Holy Prophet (S) remarked, *"Give spouses to your single ones, because Allah makes their morality better (improves it) (under the shadow of marriage) and expands their sustenance and increases their generosity (human values)."* 12

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- 1. Marriage and Morals in Islam, Sayyid Muhammad Rizvi

- 2. Wasa’il ul-Shi’a, vol. 14, p. 3
- 3. Mustadrakul Wasael, Muhaddith Noori, vol. 2, p. 531 quoted in A Gift for the Youth, Shabeeb Rizvi
- 4. Wasa’il ul-Shi’a, vol. 14, p. 3-4, 6
- 5. Marriage and Morals in Islam, Sayyid Muhammad Rizvi
- 6. Wasa’il ul-Shi’a, vol. 14, p. 25
- 7. Wasa’il ul-Shi’a, Vol. 14, p. 4
- 8. Wasa’il ul-Shi’a, Vol. 14, p. 10
- 9. Wasa’il ul-Shi’a, Vol. 14, p. 5
- 10. Wasa’il ul-Shi’a, Vol. 14, p. 7
- 11. Wasa’il ul-Shi’a, Vol. 14, p. 74
- 12. Nawadir al Rawandi, p. 36

## WHOM ONE IS NOT ALLOWED TO MARRY

**Marriage is the most essential social bond that maintains human society. It is the key step to establishing a family, which is the nucleus of society. Since the ultimate goal of creating human beings is to worship Allah Almighty, a Muslim has to look at marriage as a means of 'producing' human beings who will be future worshippers of Allah, which is a religious commitment, apart from being a physical, social and psychological need.**

**When planning for marriage, one has to ask himself who he should marry. Allah mentions most of the categories of women involved in this question in the following verses:**

***"And do not marry those [women] whom your fathers married, except what has already occurred. Indeed, it was an immorality and hateful [to Allah] and was evil as a way. Prohibited to you [for marriage] are your mothers, your daughters, your sisters, your father's sisters, your mother's sisters, your brother's daughters, your sister's daughters, your [milk] mothers who nursed you, your sisters through nursing, your wives' mothers, and your step daughters under your guardianship [born] of your wives unto whom you have gone in. But if you have not gone in unto them, there is no sin upon you. And [also prohibited are] the wives of your sons who are from your [own] loins, and that you take [in marriage] two sisters simultaneously, except for what has already occurred. Indeed, Allah is ever Forgiving and Merciful. And [also prohibited to you are all] married women except those your right hands possess [i.e., slaves or war-captives who had polytheistic husbands]. [This is] the decree of Allah upon you. And lawful to you are [all others] beyond these, [provided] that you seek them [in marriage] with [gifts from] your property, desiring chastity, not unlawful sexual intercourse..." [Quran 4:22-24]***

## THOSE WHO ARE PERMANENTLY FORBIDDEN IN MARRIAGE

This category includes those whom one is forbidden to marry due to a blood relationship as well as those who are forbidden due to marital relations:

### Those Permanently Forbidden due to Blood Relations

1. Descendants due to a relationship with a woman, regardless of how far (a man's daughter, granddaughter, etc.).
2. Ascendants of women, regardless of how far (mother, maternal and paternal grandmother, etc.).

3. Descendants from a man's parents, regardless of how far (sisters, half-sisters, sister's children, etc.)
4. Siblings of male and female ascendants, regardless of how far (paternal and maternal aunts, great aunts, etc.).

One may notice that of these, the grandmother was not explicitly mentioned in the verse. This is because frequently in Arabic and in the Quran (as in some of the verses on inheritance), the term 'mother' includes the grandmother and all her ascendants.

**Those Permanently Forbidden due to Marital Relations**

1. Wives of ascendants, regardless of how far (the father's wife, grandfather's wife, etc.). Consummation is not a condition; the mere completion of the marriage contract makes this marriage forbidden forever.
2. Wives of descendants, regardless of how far. Again, the mere marriage contract is what is considered here with or without consummation.
3. Ascendants of wives (such as the mother-in-law), regardless of whether the marriage was consummated or not.
4. Descendants of wives (step-daughters and their children) only if the man consummated the marriage with the wife in question. The phrase (which means) '…Under your guardianship…' was mentioned here only to portray the usual case and not as a condition. The ruling holds whether the step-daughter was ever under his care or not. This is the opinion of the majority of scholars.

**Those Permanently Forbidden due to Breast Feeding**

The verse actually mentions 'mothers' and 'sisters' by breast feeding. From these two, others can be derived based on the Hadeeth (narration) of the Prophet ﷺ: "***Breast feeding makes forbidden what is forbidden through blood relations***." [Muslim]

The Prophet ﷺ was asked to marry the daughter of his uncle Hamzah رضي الله عنه but his response was to say: ***"She is not permissible for me. She is the daughter of my brother through breastfeeding. And breastfeeding forbids what is forbidden through blood relations***." [Al-Bukhari & Muslim]

The brother of a woman who had breastfed 'Aa'ishah رضي الله عنها came to visit her. She refused to let him in until she asked the Prophet ﷺ if it was permissible to do so, and he said: "***Give him permission, for he is our uncle.***" [Al-Bukhari & Muslim]\

**The Minimum Requirement for Breast Feeding**

There is a wide variety of opinions on how many 'sessions' of breastfeeding create the prohibition including one, three, five, seven and ten sessions. A common opinion is that the child must have nursed on three separate occasions; this is based on the Hadeeth: "The prohibition is not established by one suck or two."

The strongest opinion is that of Imaams Maalik and Abu Haneefah رحمهما الله and 'Ali bin Abu Taalib, 'Abdullaah bin 'Umar, and 'Abdullaah bin 'Abbaas رضي الله عنهم and others, which is that a single session is sufficient. This is the strongest opinion because it is consistent with the apparent meaning of the word Ridhaa'ah (breastfeeding) in the above-mentioned verses as well as the related Hadeeths; also, the above Hadeeth could be easily taken to refer to 'sucks' and not 'sessions.' So, in other words, if the baby merely sucks once or twice, it does not count unless the baby completes the 'session', drinking to satisfaction.

**Women Included in this Category**

1. One's female ascendants through nursing. This includes the woman who nursed him and her mother, etc. The husband of the wet nurse is considered the 'cause' of the milk involved. So, for example, if a girl is nursed by a woman, that woman's husband becomes forbidden to her just as her own biological father is.
2. Descendants through nursing. The man who is the 'cause' of the milk is forbidden from marrying the one his wife nursed or their children, etc.
3. Descendants of 'parents' through nursing, (i.e., the 'sisters'). One cannot marry any of the children (either by blood or nursing) of the wet nurse or her husband.
4. Siblings of ascendants by nursing (i.e., brothers and sisters of the wet nurse or her husband). This does not include their children ('cousins' by nursing).

Note the following important point as stated by Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen رحمه الله: ***"The relatives of the child that is nursed, except for his/her children, have no relation to the breastfeeding mother [or her husband] and there is no effect on them from that nursing. So, it is allowed for a boy's blood brother to marry his brother's wet nurse or her daughters. However, the children of the child who was nursed will become like the children of the wet nurse and her husband in the same way that their father (the one originally nursed) was a 'child' (by nursing) to those two."***

**Those Forbidden for Temporary Reasons**

The second category of women a man is forbidden to marry consists of those forbidden for temporary reasons. If the reason ceases to exist, marriage between them becomes lawful. They include the following:

1. While being married to a woman, a man cannot marry her sister or any of her aunts (paternal or maternal). The first was mentioned in the verses previously mentioned and the second is mentioned in the following Hadeeth:

   ***"The Prophet ﷺ prohibited joining (in marriage at the same time) a woman and her paternal aunt or a woman and her maternal aunt."*** [Al-Bukhari & Muslim]

2. If a person divorces his wife three times, it is not allowed for him to marry her again until and unless she marries someone else (but not as a trick in order to marry him again), consummates that marriage and that marriage is subsequently legally ended.
3. Any woman if a man already has four wives.
4. Marrying a slave girl when one is already married to a free woman.
5. Marrying a woman who is already married or who is in 'Iddah (waiting period). A woman in 'Iddah due either to her husband's death or divorce is not allowed to marry until it is finished.
6. A woman upon whom a man has made Li'aan, unless he confesses to having made it up. Al-Li'aan in Arabic is when the husband accuses the wife of adultery but cannot bring witnesses, so he swears that it occurred and the two are separated after the wife swears that she is innocent. He can never marry her again unless he confesses that he was lying about it.

7. A woman who is neither Muslim nor Jewish nor Christian.