

WEEK ONE
200 LEVEL SECOND SEMESTER
QURANIC REFLECTION
A BRIEF TRIP TO HELL FIRE

Islam teaches that Hell is a real place prepared by Allah for those who do not believe in Him, rebel against His laws, and reject His messengers. Hell is an actual place, not a mere state of mind or a spiritual entity. The horrors, pain, anguish, and punishment are all real, but different in nature than their earthly counterparts. Hell is the ultimate humiliation and loss, and nothing is worse than it:

"Our Lord! Surely, whom You admit to the Fire, indeed You have disgraced him, and never will the wrongdoers find any helpers." (Quran 3:192)

"Know they not that whoever opposes Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad), certainly for him will be the Fire of Hell to abide therein? That is the extreme disgrace." (Quran 9:63)

THE NAMES OF HELL

Hell Fire has different names in Islamic texts. Each name gives a separate description. Some of its names are:

Jaheem— fire - because of its blazing fire.

Jahannam- Hell - because of the depth of its pit.

Ladthaa- blazing fire - because of its flames.

Sa'eer - blazing flame - because it is kindled and ignited.

Saqar- because of the intensity of its heat.

Hatamah - broken pieces or debris - because it breaks and crushes everything that is thrown into it.

Haawiyah - chasm or abyss - because the one who is thrown into it is thrown from top to bottom.

Allah says in Holy Quran:

"Surely, those who disbelieve and did wrong; Allah will not forgive them, nor will He guide them to any way except the way of Hell, to dwell therein forever." (Quran 4:168-169)

"Surely, Allah has cursed the disbelievers, and has prepared for them a flaming Fire wherein they will abide for ever." (Quran 33:64)

"And whosoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger, then surely, for him is the fire of Hell, he shall dwell therein forever." (Quran 72:23)

Over it are nineteen (angels as keepers of Hell)." (Quran 74:26-30)

One should not think that the inhabitants of Hell will be able to overcome the keepers of Hell because there are just nineteen of them. Everyone of them has the strength to subdue all humanity by himself. These angels are called the Guards of Hell by Allah in the Quran:

"And those in the Fire will say to the Guards of Hell, 'Call upon your Lord to lighten for us the torment for a day!'" (Quran 40:49)

The name of the chief angel guarding over Hell is Malik, as mentioned in the Quran:

"Surely, the disbelievers will be in the torment of Hell to abide therein forever. (The torment) will not be lightened for them, and they will be plunged into destruction with deep regrets, sorrows and in despair therein. We wronged them not, but they were the wrongdoers. And they will cry: 'O Malik! Let your Lord make an end of us' He will say: 'Surely, you shall abide forever.' Indeed We have brought the truth to you, but most of you have a hatred for the truth" (Quran 43:74-78)

Hell will house all the unbelievers and sinners from the beginning of time and there will still be room for more. Allah says:

"On the Day when We will say to Hell: 'Are you filled?' It will say, 'Are there any more (to come)?'" (Quran 50:30)

The Fire of Hell is likened to a mill that grinds thousands and thousands of tons of grain and then waits for more to come.

ITS FUEL

Stones and stubborn unbelievers make the fuel of Hell as Allah says:

"O you who have believed, protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones..." (Quran 66:6)

"...then fear the Fire, whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for the disbelievers." (Quran 2:24)

THE CLOTHING OF ITS INHABITANTS

Allah tells us that the dress of the people of Hell will be garments of fire tailored for them:

"And you will see the criminals that Day bound together in shackles, their garments of liquid pitch (melted copper) and their faces covered by the Fire." (Quran 14:49-50)

THE FOOD OF ITS INHABITANTS

The food of the people of Hell is described in the Quran. Allah says:

"No food will there be for them except from a bitter, thorny plant which neither nourishes nor avails against hunger." (Quran 88:6-7)

The food will neither nourish nor taste good. It will only serve as a punishment to the people of Hell. In other passages, Allah describes the tree of *zaqqum*, a special food of Hell. *Zaqqum* is a repulsive tree, its roots go deep into the bottom of Hell, its branches stretching all over. Its ugly fruit is like the heads of the devils. He says:

"Indeed, the tree of zaqqum is food for the sinful, like murky oil, it boils within bellies, like the boiling of scalding water." (Quran 44:43-46)

The thorny bushes and zaqqum will choke them and stick in their throats because of their foulness:

ITS DRINK

Allah tells in the Quran about the drink of people of Hell:

"They will be given to drink boiling water, so that it cuts up their bowels (to pieces)." (Quran 47:15)

"...And if they call for relief, they will be relieved with water like murky oil, which scalds (their) faces. Wretched is the drink, and evil is the resting place." (Quran 18:29)

"Before him is Hell, and he will be given a drink of purulent water. He will gulp it but will hardly (be able to) swallow it. And death will come to him from everywhere, but he is not to die. And before him is a massive punishment." (Quran 14:16-17)

"A boiling fluid and fluid dark, murky, intensely cold." (Quran 38:57)

The types of drink people of Hell will get to drink are as follows:

1- Extremely hot water as Allah says:

"They will go around between it and scalding water, heated (to the utmost degree)." (Quran 55:44)

"They will be given drink from a boiling spring." (Quran 88:5)

2- Flowing puss from the flesh and skin of an unbeliever. The Prophet said:

"Anyone who drinks intoxicants will be made to drink the mud of khabal. They asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, what is the mud of khabal?' He said, 'The sweat of the people of Hell' or the 'juice of the people of Hell.'" (Saheeh Muslim)

· A drink like boiling oil described by the Prophet as:

"It is like boiling oil, when it is brought near a person's face, the skin of the face falls off into it."

(Musnad Ahmad, Tirmidhi)

The horror and intensity of the Fire is enough to make a man lose his mind. He would be willing to give up everything he holds dear to saved from it, but he never will be. Allah says:

"The criminal will wish that he could be ransomed from the punishment of that Day by his children, and his wife and his brother, and his nearest kindred who shelter him, and all – all that is on earth – so it could save him. No! Indeed, it is the Flame (of Hell), plucking out (his being) tight to the skull!" (Quran 70:11-16)

The punishments of Hell will vary in degree. The torment of some levels of Hell will be greater than others. People will be put in a level according to their deeds. The Prophet of Islam said:

"There are some whom the Fire will reach their ankles, others up to their knees, others up to their waists, and yet others up to their necks."[*1*](#)

He spoke of the lightest punishment in Hell:

"The person who will receive the least punishment among the people of Hell on the Day Resurrection will be a man, a smoldering ember will be placed under the arch of his foot. His brains will boil because of it."

As you have seen, the descriptions of Hell in the Islamic scripture are clear and graphic, as are the descriptions of the people who deserve their fate therein. Such is the clarity that any person who believes in Judgment Day and the eternal destinies of the Hereafter must be motivated to at least try not to be of the people thrown inside. The best, and really only, way of avoiding this fate is to seriously search into the true religion Allah has mandated for humanity. A person should never follow a religion merely because it was that which he was "born into", nor should they take religion to be a new age fashion. Rather, they should look into the truth about this world and the life to come, and be sure that they have prepared for that judgment from which there is no return, by living a life and system of belief revealed and unchanged from the One High Above.

WEEK TWO 2ND SEMESTER

PURNISHMENT AND REWARD IN THE HEREAFTER

Both Paradise and Hell have levels that correspond to one's deeds in this dunya (earthly life). Before listing some of the verses that speak about the rewards and punishments, it is worth noting that Almighty God is The Most Merciful and He is never unjust.

Generally, bad deeds are not viewed in Islam equally; those who make small faults are not like others who commit great sins. The following Quran evidences are just few verses that show how the reward and punishment will be on the day of accountability.

Allah says:

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ أَسَاءَ فَعَلَيْهَا وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِلْعَبِيدِ

Whoever does righteousness - it is for his [own] soul; and whoever does evil [does so] against it. And your Lord is not ever unjust to [His] servants. 41:46

قُلْ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يَغْفِرُوا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ أَيَّامَ اللَّهِ لِيَجْزِيَ قَوْمًا بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

Say, [O Muhammad], to those who have believed that they [should] forgive those who expect not the days of Allah so that He may recompense a people for what they used to earn.45:14

مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ عَشْرُ أَمْثَالِهَا وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ فَلَا يُجْزَى إِلَّا مِثْلُهَا وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ

Whoever comes [on the Day of Judgement] with a good deed will have ten times the like thereof [to his credit], and whoever comes with an evil deed will not be recompensed except the like thereof; and they will not be wronged. 6:160

Allah says in SuratuNabai on both rewards and punishment:

إِنَّ يَوْمَ الْفَصْلِ كَانَ مِيقَاتًا

Indeed, the Day of Judgement is an appointed time 78:17

يَوْمَ يُنْفَخُ فِي الصُّورِ فَتَأْتُونَ أَفْوَاجًا

The Day the Horn is blown and you will come forth in multitudes 78:18

وَفُتِحَتِ السَّمَاءُ فَكَانَتْ أَبْوَابًا

And the heaven is opened and will become gateways 78:19

وَسُيِّرَتِ الْجِبَالُ فَكَانَتْ سَرَابًا

And the mountains are removed and will be [but] a mirage. 78:20

إِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ كَانَتْ مِرْصَادًا

Indeed, Hell has been lying in wait 78:21

وَكَوَاعِبُ أَتْرَابًا

And full-breasted [companions] of equal age 78:22

وَكَأْسًا دِهَاقًا

And a full cup. 78:34

لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا وَلَا كِدَابًا

No ill speech will they hear therein or any falsehood - 78:35

جَزَاءً مِّن رَّبِّكَ عَطَاءً حِسَابًا

[As] reward from your Lord, [a generous] gift [made due by] account, 78:36

رَبِّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا الرَّحْمَنُ ۖ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِنْهُ خِطَابًا

[From] the Lord of the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them, the Most Merciful. They possess not from Him [authority for] speech. 78:37

يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الرُّوحُ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ صَفًّا لَا يَتَكَلَّمُونَ إِلَّا مَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ الرَّحْمَنُ وَقَالَ صَوَابًا

The Day that the Spirit and the angels will stand in rows, they will not speak except for one whom the Most Merciful permits, and he will say what is correct. 78:38

ذَٰلِكَ الْيَوْمُ الْحَقُّ فَمَنْ شَاءَ اتَّخَذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ مَآبًا

That is the True Day; so he who wills may take to his Lord a [way of] return. 78:39

إِنَّا أَنْذَرْنَاكُمْ عَذَابًا قَرِيبًا يَوْمَ يَنْظُرُ الْمَرْءُ مَا قَدَّمَتْ يَدَاهُ وَيَقُولُ الْكَافِرُ يَا لَيْتَنِي كُنْتُ تُرَابًا

Indeed, We have warned you of a near punishment on the Day when a man will observe what his hands have put forth and the disbeliever will say, "Oh, I wish that I were dust!" 78:40

Lastly, Allah says in SuratuFaatir:

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَهُمْ نَارُ جَهَنَّمَ لَا يُقْضَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ فَيَمُوتُوا وَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ مِنْ عَذَابِهَا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي كُلَّ كَافِرٍ

And for those who disbelieve will be the fire of Hell. [Death] is not decreed for them so they may die, nor will its torment be lightened for them. Thus do we recompense every ungrateful one. 35:36

وَهُمْ يَصْطَرِخُونَ فِيهَا رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا نَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا غَيْرَ الَّذِي كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ ۖ أَوَلَمْ نُعَمِّرْكُم مَّا يَتَذَكَّرُ فِيهِ مَنْ تَذَكَّرَ وَجَاءَكُمُ النَّذِيرُ فَتَدُونُوا فَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ نَاصِرٍ

And they will cry out therein, "Our Lord, remove us; we will do righteousness - other than what we were doing!" But did We not grant you life enough for whoever would remember therein to remember, and the warner had come to you? So taste [the punishment], for there is not for the wrongdoers any helper. 35:37

WEEK THREE

2ND SEMESTER

SHAYTAN AND HIS PLOTS

Shaytan- sometimes spelled *Shaitan* or *Shaytaan*. It is the word used in Islam and the Arabic language to denote the devil or Satan, the personification of evil.

- *Jinn* - A creation of Allah that was created before humankind from smokeless flame. They are referred to at times as spirit beings, banshees, poltergeists, phantoms and so forth.

- *Shirk* - a word that implies ascribing partners to Allah, or ascribing divine attributes to other than Allah, or believing that the source of power, harm and blessings comes from another besides Allah.
- *Khushoo* - the act of being completely solemn, submissive and humble towards Allah during the prayer.

Unlike the descriptions of the devil in Christian doctrine, *Shaytan* is not a fallen angel; rather he is a *Jinn* who can think, reason and has free will. Allah allowed him to reside amongst the Angels, but because of his pride and arrogance that you can read about in the story of Prophet Adam on the website he despairs of ever knowing Allah's mercy and has vowed not to inhabit the depths of Hell alone. Satan's wish is to take as many human beings with him to the Hellfire as he can. Make no mistake about it; Satan is humankind's mortal enemy. He is cunning, crafty and supremely arrogant. Quran warns us of his enmity over and over.

"O children of Adam. Let not *Shaytan* deceive you..." (Quran 7:27)

"Surely *Shaytan* is an enemy to you so take him as an enemy..." (Quran 35:6)

"...And whoever takes *Shaytan* as a protector or helper instead of Allah, has surely suffered a manifest loss." (Quran 4:119)

It is important to understand that even Satan himself recognises the Oneness of Allah and His right to be worshipped. Allah has informed us that the promises of Satan are nothing but deceptions and lies, and Satan concurs, for he can offer nothing.

"And *Shaytan* will say when the matter has been decided: "Verily, Allah promised you a promise of truth. And I too promised you, but I betrayed you. I had no authority over you except that I called you, and you responded to me. So do not blame me, but blame yourselves..." (Quran 14:22)

Every act of disobedience that is hated by Allah is loved by *Shaytan*, he loves immorality and sin. He whispers into the ears of the believers, he disrupts prayer and the remembrance of Allah. One of Islam's greatest scholars, Ibn ulQayyim, may God have mercy on him, said: "One of his (Satan's) plots is that he always bewitches people's minds until they are deceived, he makes attractive to the mind that which will harm it".

Satan has wide-ranging experience in the field of deception; he has tricks and temptations and he whispers relentlessly. Satan is able to pinch and poke, implanting thoughts and desires. However Allah has not left humankind defenseless. He has provided us with weapons and one of the greatest is information. Satan is

our mortal enemy and in order to combat his tricks and illusions we need to know him well. The long term goal of Satan is to deprive as many people as possible of Paradise and to lead them to Hell. To achieve this aim he has set many short term goals. Being aware of these goals means we are able to arm ourselves with weapons of defence.

Short Term Goals

1. To cause people to commit the great sin of *shirk*. Everyone who worships something other than Allah, be it an idol, a statue, the sun, the moon, a person or a principle, is in essence worshipping Satan.
2. To encourage people to commit sins and acts of disobedience. When Satan despairs of ever being worshipped he is content with being obeyed in matters that seem insignificant. He loves immorality and sin because it has a direct effect on a person's religious commitment.
3. To prevent people from doing good deeds. Satan not only causes people to commit sin and acts of disobedience, he is also content with preventing them from doing acts of good. Satan is patient; he lays in wait, filling our minds with doubts, and superstitions. When a person is planning on doing a good deed or action, he whispers to them to avoid it and plants small nagging doubts in their mind.
4. To damage acts of worship. If Satan is not able to prevent people from obeying Allah and performing righteous actions, he strives to corrupt their acts of worship. When a person is praying he whispers and distracts him. Satan's desire is to prevent a person from taking their reward for praying with *khushoo* and eventually to lead him or her away from Allah altogether.
5. To cause mental and physical harm. In addition to causing believers to commit acts of *shirk*, Satan also aims to cause physical and mental harm. For instance he sends bad dreams to cause a person distress and fear. He disturbs people from the time they are born right up until the moment of death. In their final moments, he continues his whispering and harassment to prevent a person from calling on Allah and confirming their belief in God alone.

2ND SEMESTER

WEEK 4

Period 4

IS PILGRIMAGE (HAJJ) NOT A PRE-ISLAMIC (JAHILIYYAH) PRACTICE CARRIED OVER INTO ISLAM SO AS TO APPEASE PAGANS IN MAKKAH?

The Ka'bah was the first house or monument of worship of One God for mankind (Qur'an 3:96). It was built according to Qur'an 2:125-127 at the time of Prophet Abraham (P). After the time of Abraham, the idol worshippers gradually polluted this sacred sanctuary with their numerous idols.

With the coming of the last Prophet (Qur'an 33:40), Muhammad (ﷺ) purified the adulterated pilgrimage to the Ka'bah and restored it to its original purpose (Qur'an 2:135). In summary what the Prophet (ﷺ) did was to cleanse the whole form of pilgrimage as was practiced by the idol worshippers and return it to the pure pilgrimage as Allah had willed it to be since the time of Abraham (P).

DO MUSLIMS WORSHIP THE "BLACK STONE"? OTHERWISE WHY DO THEY KISS AND TOUCH (OR POINT TO) IT? IS IT NOT SOMETHING LEFT OVER FROM THE JAHILIYYAH (PERIOD OF IGNORANCE)?

Muslims do not worship the "Black Stone". Such worship of an object would be regarded as a major sin in Islam.

According to tradition, the stone fell from heaven and Adam (P) placed it in the original Ka'bah. When Ibrahim (P) rebuilt the Ka'bah, the Angel Jibril brought the stone and gave it to him. It certainly appears to have been part of the original structure of the Ka'bah.

It was not (and still is not) an idol or an image even during the Jahiliyyah (Period of Ignorance). Kissing, touching or pointing is simply an act of the pilgrim in identifying with Abraham (P) by showing attachment to this ancient relic of the establishment of monotheism.

Moreover you kiss your children out of love (not worship). This matter was clarified by Umar (RA) when he went for pilgrimage. He said (when kissing the stone), "***... I know that you are merely a stone, incapable of any good or harm, and had I not seen the Prophet (ﷺ) kiss you, I would not have even touched you***".

Islam prohibits all forms of shirk i.e. associating partners with God. Likewise in the Bible: Jacob - Genesis 35:14 "God then left him, and Jacob erected a sacred pillar where God spoke to him... a pillar of stone.. and he offered a drink ..over it and poured oil over it.. "***] This was also a memorial stone for Jacob, and consecrated it. This however is not idol-worship, but a similar act of symbolism. The Ka'bah is also just a memorial object in commemoration of worship to God.]

IS IT THE DEVIL THAT MUSLIMS STONE DURING HAJJ (PILGRIMAGE)? AND IS THAT REALLY WHERE SATAN IS?

On the tenth day of Dhul-Hijjah, there is the symbolic stoning (in Mina) of three stone pillars representing Shaitan's temptation to evil and Prophet Ibrahim's victory over it.

Stoning is symbolic of hatred of evil or a desire for disassociation from it and its influence. It is also an act of commemorating the event that occurred when Ibrahim (P), was ready to sacrifice his beloved son Isma'il (P) in obedience to Allah's command. Shaitan tempted him three times to disobey Allah, and Ibrahim (P) rejected him. The event is commemorated every year during Hajj.

The pillars are symbolic of Satan or evil, and not an image. A national flag is a symbol of a country.

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It is saluted and respected as something that stands for or represents the nation and what the nation stands for. So also with religious symbols that are not considered as images of what they stand for, but merely symbols. These symbols are not worshipped nor considered to have any power in themselves.

So also are the stone pillars that represent Satan. They are mere symbols with no power to harm or benefit anyone. (the same symbolic nature applies to "the Black stone").

Some ignorant non-Muslims attributed the occurrence of deaths during pilgrimage to the presence of the devil in Makkah! This is a wrong assumption, based on wrong data, because the number of deaths is no different from anywhere else in the world with such population, which runs into millions during the Hajj and the second half of Ramadan.

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Period 5

IS THE RAM SACRIFICE (DURING THE EID AL-AD'HA) NOT DONE AS ATONEMENT FOR SIN AS SOME HAVE CLAIMED? OTHERWISE WHY IS ALLAH INTERESTED IN ANYONE SLAUGHTERING AN ANIMAL?

- ◆ The Islamic concept of atonement is simple and straightforward. The offender is required to regret sincerely having sinned, resolve to do his best not to repeat the offence and to ask forgiveness from Allah. If the offence is done to others, their pardon should be sought and if there is anything to retribute, this should be done. One is also encouraged to do good deeds.
- ◆ The sacrifice of any animal in Islam has nothing to do with atonement, nor is there anything special about its blood flowing. It is done usually in gratitude to Allah, or when one is supplicating Allah for His favours. The Qur'an (22:36) explains that part of the meat should be consumed by the owner and the rest given out as charity.
- ◆ Given the strict requirements of kind treatment to animals and kindness when even slaughtering an animal in Islam (FOOTNOTE: see Question XX for details on age requirements for the animal, prohibition of psychological torture, and method of slaughter so as to minimise pain), there is no question of animal cruelty involved. [***Note,

also hygienic

methods of halal slaughter*** Hadith "When you come to slaughter, .. See an-Nawawi Forty Hadith, and Riyadh as-Saliheen]

◆ Qur'an 22:37 also makes it clear that the blood and meat (or flesh) are unimportant to Allah, and that it is our God-consciousness and obedience that is required.

◆ The sacrifice done on Eid al-Adha is merely in remembrance of the God-consciousness and obedience shown by Prophet Abraham (P) when Allah tested him with the command to sacrifice his son Ishmael (P).

◆ Even the Bible (Hosea 6:6) says, "I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice..."

◆ ***[God does not want human sacrifice.. lesson of change from the practices of pagans]***

New form of sacrifice instituted by Islam is a rejection of barbaric and wasteful forms of pagan sacrificial rites. Islam rejects human sacrifice and any form of callous shedding of blood of animals. Animals are only to be killed for food. Q.22:34-37***]

IS THERE ANYTHING WRONG WITH MOSQUE EMBELLISHMENT?

It is observed in many parts of the world that some mosques are of magnificent and elegant structure with expensive decorations to beautify them. However, the Prophet (ﷺ) cautioned against this development. Ibn 'Abbas reports that the Messenger of Allah said: "I have not been ordered to build high and lofty mosques". Abu Dawud's version adds "Ibn Abbas said: 'You will certainly embellish them (mosques) as the Jews and Christians embellished (their places of worship).'" The preceding hadith was related by Abu Dawud and by Ibn Hibban who calls it sahih.

'Umar ordered mosques to be built and would say: "Protect the people from the rain. Beware of red and yellow decorations for they distract people". (Related by Ibn Khuzaimah in his Sahih and by al-Bukhari in Mu'alaq.)

From the aforementioned ahadith it is clear that mosques should not be excessively decorated. The lesson in this is not only the economic implication in terms of unnecessary spending of funds that could be used for other things like education, poverty alleviation, provision of clean water etc. but also its spiritual implication such as distraction of worshippers during their prayers and the restriction of functions of mosques to only performance of Salat.

Believers in some mosques are hurried up to leave the mosque after Salat for fear losing the objects of decoration to theft, thereby depriving the sincere worshippers of other benefits from the use of the mosque such as for studying, meditation, meetings, etc.

DID THE PROPHET (SAW) RECOMMEND THAT THE TROUSERS OF A MUSLIM MAN SHOULD NOT GO BELOW THE ANKLE?

Some people cause unnecessary controversy over the matter of the length of men's trousers or dress. According to the Prophet (ﷺ) they should reach the ankle (Muwatta Malik). They should not be allowed to trail on the ground as a sign of pride or extravagance.

When Abu Bakr (RA) observed that his own dress tended to fall below the ankle the Prophet (ﷺ) excused him because of his personal knowledge of Abu Bakr's modesty. [***Add the hadith***] The length of ones trouser/dress therefore depends on ones intentions. It is forbidden for the length (long or short), colour, design, etc. of a Muslim's

dress/clothing to be a sign of pride, show-off or extravagance (Bukhari) in Riyadh-us-Saliheen No.794. Allah will judge our actions by our intentions, and each individual should be ready to meet Allah with his or her personal choice.

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Period 6

WHAT IS PURDAH AND DOES ISLAM REQUIRE SEGREGATION OF MEN AND WOMEN?

Purdah is an Indian word which is sometimes translated as “seclusion”. It refers to the practice of some Muslim women of staying at home so as to avoid mixing with men, other than the husband, family members and close friends.

The practice is traced to a verse of the Qur'an which is directed specifically to the Prophet's wives:

“O wives of the Prophet! You are not like any of the (other) women: If you do fear (Allah) be not too complaisant in speech, lest one in whose heart is a disease should be moved with desire: but speak in a way (that is) just. And stay quietly in your houses, and make not a dazzling display, like that of the former Times of ignorance...” (Qur'an

33:32- 33)

The wives of the Prophet were in a unique situation: since

- a) he was a prophet and
- b) he was also Head of State.

In their capacity as wives of the Prophet they were given the title “Mothers of the Believers”, and they had responsibilities of teaching Islam to other women and of answering questions about Islam from people in general. The Prophet (ﷺ) said of his wife Aisha: “You can get that half your religion from this rosy-cheeked girl”. Therefore the wives were directed to be careful in the way they conversed with other men so as not to awaken unlawful desires. In their capacity as wives of a Head of State, they might also be tempted to show off. The verses direct them to live modestly, not to go out unnecessarily and not to make a parade of beauty or adornment as was done by women in the period before Islam, called “the Times of Ignorance”.

Nevertheless, the Prophet's wives were not forbidden to go out. When one of his wives asked him, he affirmed “Women are allowed to go out for their needs”. (Hadith from Aisha in Bukhari)

One does not have to be a genius to comprehend that human needs are vast in substance. Hence, it would not be justifiable on the basis of this Hadith to only permit women to leave home to go to market, visit their family and see the doctor. Furthermore, women in the Prophet's time saw fit to work, attend gatherings, pray in the mosques, travel in caravanserais and on other long journeys including the Hijrah from Makkah to Madinah, and even fight battles alongside men – all outside their homes. The Caliph Umar appointed a woman, Shaffa bint Abdullah bin AbdushShams, as chief administrator of the market place, and the Prophet (ﷺ) even prayed for a woman, at her request, to be one of those of his Ummah who would eventually embark on great sea expeditions.

Despite all this, many held the view that confining oneself to one's house would constitute greater piety for a woman, and later generations of Muslims in some parts of the world made seclusion into a widespread practice for nearly all women, or at least for the wealthy classes.

In other places however women have continued to have economic and social roles outside the home. In modern times, Muslim girls go out to schools and universities, in accordance with the Prophet's (ﷺ) saying: "The search for knowledge is a compulsory duty for every Muslim, male and female". Muslim women also have resumed the role they used to play in the early days of Islam in teaching, nursing, medicine, social work and other necessary services to the community, particularly services to other women and children.

If any woman has the desire and the means to practice seclusion in emulation of the Prophet's wives, she is free to do so. However, the generality of Muslim women with the consent of their husbands, can and do go out according to their individual needs. However, they are required to dress modestly in accordance with the requirements of Hijab and not to mix unnecessarily with men. These practices, as earlier mentioned, are designed to help preserve morality in the society and to protect family life.

Apart from the issue of dress, both men and women are urged in the Qur'an (24:30-31) to lower their gaze and avoid looking at the opposite sex. They should avoid flirtatious manners and ways of talking (Q33:32-33). They should also avoid intermingling with the opposite sex in such way that their bodies come in contact, for example in university classrooms, buses and other public places.

However, provided these conditions are observed and there is no immoral intent, it is not forbidden for men and women to be present at the same occasion. (See al-Qaradawi: The Lawful and the Prohibited in Islam, pp. 164-168.) If Islam had prescribed strict segregation of the sexes, it would have surely been prescribed for the great gathering of Hajj. Instead both sexes perform the Hajj together and it is even prohibited for a woman to cover her face during Hajj.

WHY ARE MEN AND WOMEN NOT ALLOWED TO INTERMINGLE IN ISLAM?

The assumption of this question is that there is no room for social interaction in Islam, which is not true. However, Islam does not approve of unlimited intermingling or of absolute segregation of sexes. What Islam teaches is that the mixing should be done in a good Islamic atmosphere. Individuals concerned should respect rules guiding morality and decency. Life in Islam is oriented towards God. If it allows men to come into contact with women that is indeed a test. A Muslim should make such association an opportunity for furthering the aims of worship, gratitude to Allah and moral strengthening. Those involved should observe the limits of what is permissible. Public life is not a stage where men alone can play. There is no segregation of sexes in those public domains, which call for joint efforts. The interactions between sexes in Islam can even go as far as the housewife or bride serving the guests as seen in this Hadith: *"Sahal bin Sa'ad Al-Ansari stated that Abu Saeed invited the Prophet (ﷺ) to his wedding feast. His bride Umm-Saeed was the one who prepared the meal and served the guests too. She put some dates in a stone vessel to soak in water. When the Prophet (ﷺ) had finished the meal she crushed the dates with her own hand and gave the*

Prophet (ﷺ) to drink, as a special favour.” (Bukhari and Muslim)

From the aforementioned Hadith it is clear that it is permissible for men and women to intermingle as long the women are in their Islamic dress, men well behaved and the activities Islamic.

It was also the tradition of the Prophet to visit Muslim women, take a midday nap in their houses and perform salat with them. According to Al-Tabarani, Ibn Harith heard Ilhulah bint Qais say: “The Prophet (ﷺ) and I took meals in the same dish” (Al-Isabah). Al-Shafta bint Abdullah was one of the wise and prominent ladies of Madinah. The Prophet (ﷺ) used to visit her and took his midday nap in her house. She arranged a bed and a sheet for him to sleep on (Al-Isabah). Ansa reported that Prophet (ﷺ) offered his prayers in their house with his grandmother. Anas said: “An orphan and I would stand behind him, and the old lady behind us” (Al-Isabah).

WEEK 5

PERIOD 7

COURTSHIP IN ISLAM

Before we talk about the position of Islam on courtship, it is important to consult a dictionary for a concise definition of the term “courtship”.

Collins Dictionary defines courtship as “the act, period, or art of seeking the love of someone with intent to marry”.

The Oxford Advanced Dictionary defines it as “the process of developing a close relationship with a person of the opposite sex, especially with the idea of marrying”. The Oxford Dictionary in a bid to bring home the meaning of courtship defined this close relationship as a loving or sexual association between two people.

What “courtship” consists of depends on the moral climate of a given society at a given time.

It may consist of giving and receiving of small gifts, going out together and exchanging letters or words of love, including a proposal of marriage. As the relationship develops it may in some societies include kissing and fondling, which in the modern permissive moral climate could lead to a full sexual relationship, even before marriage. In fact in the modern West the word “courtship” is now seen as a rather old-fashioned word, since many young men and women enter into sexual relationships without any intention of marriage, while “courtship” was definitely in the past seen as a preliminary to winning a girl’s love and hand in marriage.

It is clear that most of what is described above as acts of “courtship” are unlawful in Islam. A boy and girl, or man and woman, are not permitted to touch one another or be alone together before marriage, let alone to engage in any kissing or sexual relationship.

However this does not mean that a man and woman are not allowed to see one another before marriage or engagement.

Jabir Ibn Abdullah said, “I heard the Prophet (P) saying: ‘When one of you has decided to propose to a woman, if he is able to look at what would encourage him to marry her he should do so.’”

Muhammad Ibn Maslema said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) saying "When Almighty Allah casts it into the heart of someone to propose to a woman, there is nothing wrong with his looking at her."

From the above traditions of the Prophet, it is clear that Islam permits looking at a proposed wife or husband. These looks are restricted to the face and hands and should not be protracted.

The looks are allowed if there is no fear of temptation. This is because the face is not one of the private parts.

Almighty Allah in Qur'an 24:31 says "*They should not show their adornments except for that which ordinarily appears.*" A Hadith indicates that this means the face and the hands.

Islam forbids the man to touch any part of his prospective wife's body and vice versa. This is why a man and woman are prohibited until the marriage contract is concluded from being alone together to avoid the danger of temptation. If they meet, it should be in the presence of one of her relations such as her brother or her father.

Considering the strict rules of the Shari'ah on how a man and woman should see each other before marriage and the lofty position which modesty occupies, there is no doubt that courtship as understood in the world today as a potentially sexual relationship is unlawful in Islam.

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Period 8

Why is the marriage of a Muslim female to a non-Muslim male prohibited in Islam? Is this not an unfair restriction on her choice for marriage? Especially when it is permissible for a Muslim male to marry a non-Muslim female from among the People of the Book (i.e. Jews and Christians)!

Firstly, marriage in Islam, apart from making life more comfortable for the partners concerned, is supposed to be an institution in which both husband and wife help improve each other spiritually for success in the hereafter. How could this major objective be realised if those concerned hold significantly different and fundamentally opposing world views and perspectives of truth and reality, and when each partner views the other as being astray and misguided? For this reason (among others), it is disliked even for a Muslim man to marry a non-Muslim woman, and prohibited for him to marry a pagan woman. The situation is even worse (and therefore prohibited) in the case of a Muslim woman married to a non-Muslim husband since more often than not the husband is regarded as the head of the family.

Under the Shari'ah the protected rights of the wife (whether Muslim or non-Muslim) include (among others) her right to proper feeding, clothing, shelter, medication, visits, good treatment, religious freedom, inheritance and other financial and non-financial rights. (Qur'an 4:34; 2:233, 240; 4:4-5, 24, etc.) A Muslim husband is not allowed to hinder his non-Muslim wife from practicing her religion.

Some of these rights are not guaranteed under other religious legal systems. A non-Muslim husband cannot be compelled to guarantee those rights to his wife because he (being a non Muslim) is not bound by the Shari'ah. The Muslim wife may be put under pressure to renounce or be negligent of Islam. The husband may also insist on their children being brought up as non Muslims.

Also how can a true Muslim woman live happily with one who feels free to consider her Prophet as an imposter while she respects the Prophet (ﷺ) of his own religion? Not only may the husband interfere with her religious duties (for example prayer, fasting, Hajj and da'wah) but he may expect his wife to adapt to an unIslamic life style in respect of serving alcohol and pork, abandoning hijab and attending un-Islamic gatherings, parties etc. He would naturally encourage their children to enjoy these things too, and the wife would have no legal right to resist, since the "husband" would not be accountable to the Shari'ah or to a Shari'ah court.

To avoid such a situation Allah (who has no bias towards male or female) prohibits such a marriage.

SINCE PARENTS GENERALLY HAVE THE GREATEST CARE AND CONCERN FOR THE WELFARE OF THEIR CHILDREN, IS IT ISLAMICALLY NECESSARY TO GET A WOMAN'S CONSENT BEFORE SHE IS MARRIED TO SOMEONE?

Since marriage is a contract, the free consent of parties is necessary. A virgin girl coming to the Prophet (ﷺ) to complain against her father in this respect was given the option to repudiate the marriage (Abu Daud, 12:25). Again, the Prophet (ﷺ) ordered "*Do not marry a non-virgin except on her instruction, nor marry a virgin except with her permission, and her silence goes for her permission*" (Al-Bukhari, Al-Muwatta 28:2, No.4 related by Ibn Abbas, agreed as to its authenticity, cited in Bidayatul Mujtahid (Vol.2, p.11).

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From this it is clear that a woman should not be married against her will. Only the Maliki School of Islamic Jurisprudence allows a father some power of *Ijbar* (compulsion under certain circumstances). However, Ibn Rushd (himself a Maliki jurist) reported that it is not the unanimous position of the School (Bidayatul Mujtahid, Vol.2, pp.10-14).

Nevertheless it is equally wrong for a virgin girl to arrange to get married without the consent of her parents, since her inexperience may lead her to be deceived or to be a victim of infatuation. Such a marriage is generally considered invalid, in accordance with a Hadith. The right approach is through mutual consultation between the girl and her parents.

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Period 9

WHY SHOULD WOMEN'S INHERITANCE BE HALF THAT OF MEN?

Inheritance is defined as property of a deceased person, which is transferred to his/her heirs under the laws of inheritance, or by bequest through a will. Inheritable property consists of movable and immovable objects, as well as intangible assets such as shares, debt claims and rights to compensation. Inheritance may be understood further as the practice whereby the property of a deceased person goes to his/her heirs.

The practice of inheritance is universal and it is regulated by various laws and customs around the world. These laws are believed to be closely in line with and indicative of the society's normative system, social structure and principles

of family organization.

Islamic law of Inheritance may be described as revolutionary to the laws of inheritance in Pre Islamic Arabia, where the original sources of Islamic law were established. In Pre-Islamic Arabia, the basis for inheritance was partly the eligibility to attend war. Because they could not go to war and secure booty, the right of females and minors to inherit their relations was circumscribed.

The chief criterion of eligibility was the ability to contribute to the strength of the individual tribe through effective participation in the popular sport of tribal warfare. It is important to note that it is only Islam that has guaranteed women a share of inheritance. In some religions or cultures a woman as a wife is counted as part of the inheritance, and if not married she is automatically ignored. Qur'an 4:7 says:

Unto the men belongs a share of that which parents and near kindred leave, and unto the women, a share of that which parents and near kindred leave; whether it be little or much, a determinate share.

However, some people have picked on Islam on the issue of the ratio of a woman's share, which is sometimes half that of a man, and attributed this to injustice, and a mark of inferior status.

First of all the method of division of inheritance is clearly given in the Qur'an by Allah, the All Wise, Who gains nothing from oppressing anyone. Secondly, it is not in all cases that a woman gets half the share of man, in some cases 'Daughters' inherit more than 'Sons', while in some other cases Females inherit equally with Males.

The injunction only appears unfair when taken in isolation from other legislation. In particular, Qur'an 4:34 says:

"Men are maintainers of women with the bounties which Allah has bestowed more abundantly on some of them than on others; and with what they may spend out of their possessions".

In this context, men are charged with the maintenance of all the women and children in their family, and therefore their necessary obligations of expenditure are far higher than those of women. The half share that a woman inherits may therefore be considered a generous one since it is for her alone.

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WHAT IS ISLAM'S POSITION CONCERNING MUSIC AND SINGING? IS ISLAM REALLY AGAINST EVERY TYPE OF MUSIC, INCLUDING THAT WHICH DOES NOT INTERFERE WITH ONE'S RELIGIOUS OR MORAL OBLIGATIONS?

There are different types of music and singing and different opinions by various scholars. However, there is no controversy over the lawfulness of the following forms of music/singing in Islam such as chanting the Qur'an, call to prayer, pilgrimage chants, chanted poetry with noble themes, family and ceremonial music, occupational music, military band music. They are all regarded as Halal (legitimate). Also there is no controversy over sensuous music (immoral music) being Haram (prohibited). The only area of controversy is with regard to vocal/instrumental improvisations, and songs or music related to pre-Islamic or non-Islamic origins, e.g. romantic poems. To this, the principle of avoidance of doubt is to be applied, i.e. avoid what you are in doubt of for what you

are sure of and the judgement is left to an individual. Generally, over the permissibility of music and singing, scholars such as Ibn Hazm and Abu Bakr al-Arabi say that no sound Hadith is available concerning the prohibition of singing. We should then note that it is not music itself that is Haram, just like poetry (26:224-227) but like any other activity, it can become haram if it is conducive to haram (principle of Shari'ah). For example, if the subject matter of the song is unIslamic, if the manner of playing it disturbs the peace (e.g. volume), if indulged in excessively at the expense of more important things (e.g. salat, fulfilling a promise, seeking knowledge, etc.) and lastly, if it is associated with haram activities (e.g. alcohol consumption, mixed or raunchy dancing, etc.), it is to be condemned, in accordance with a Hadith where the Prophet (p) says: ***"Some people of my Ummah will drink wine, calling it by another name, while they listen to singers accompanied by musical instruments. Allah will cause the earth to swallow them and will turn some of them into monkeys and swine"*** (Ibn Majah).

This does not imply physical transformation but rather transformation in soul and heart to a monkey's character in human bodies.

Therefore differences of opinion should be respected, tolerated and not allowed to affect brotherhood (which is compulsory).

WEEK 6

PERIOD 10

"HALF-WITNESS FOR WOMEN: DOES IT IMPLY LOW INTELLIGENCE?"

Qur'an chapter 2 verse 282 dwells on principles and rules of business transactions. The emphasis has been on writing down whatever business is transacted and getting witness to back up the transaction. This is to ensure commercial morality. However in the middle of the verse Allah speaks of getting two witnesses out of your men, and if there are not two men, then a man and two women. It reads thus:

"... and get two witnesses out of your men, and if there are not two men, then a man and two women, such as ye choose for witnesses, so that if one of them errs, the other can remind her ..." (Qur'an 2:282)

The misconception of some Muslims is that women are lower in intelligence than men, that is why two women are required in place of one man. It is important to note that Allah in many places in the Qur'an says He created us equal and has endowed us (male and female) with the faculties of reasoning with no distinction. If this is so, then the issue of women being less intelligent than men does not arise.

The said verse is concerned with Business transactions at a time when there were only few women in that field. This implies there were few women who had enough knowledge of business transactions. It is therefore natural for one not engaged in certain activity to make a mistake, thus the need for two women.

Jamal Badawi also highlighted that the issue of two women witnesses per one male witness is restricted to business transactions; it does not involve other legal matters. For instance in the case of an accusation of adultery, the Qur'an says four witnesses but is silent about the witnesses being male or female (Qur'an 24:5). Jeffrey Lang (Struggling to

Surrender, 2nd edition, p.165-166) expounds that of the 8 references in the Qur'an that instruct on taking oaths and giving testimony (2:282; 4:6; 4:15; 5:109; 5:110; 24:4; 24:6-9; 65:2), only 2:282 mentions the sex of the witnesses. One may also note that much of the traditions we have today in canonized hadith collections were accepted as authentic in spite of the fact that they have only a single woman (Aisha) as their source.

[***Muslims who hold the view that women are of lower intelligence than men and that the requirement of two women witnesses extends to matters other than business transactions base their views on Hadith 1.301 in Sahih al-Bukhari, narrated by Abu Said al-Khudri, which is commonly translated as follows:

Once Allah's Apostle went out to the Musalla (to offer the prayer) of 'Id-al-Adha or Al-Fitr prayer. Then he passed by the women and said, "O women! Give alms, as I have seen that the majority of the dwellers of Hell-fire were you (women)." They asked, "Why is it so, O Allah's Apostle?" He replied, "You curse frequently and are ungrateful to your husbands. I have not seen anyone more deficient in intelligence and religion than you. A cautious sensible man could be led astray by some of you." The women asked, "O Allah's Apostle! What is deficient in our intelligence and religion?" He said, "Is not the evidence of two women equal to the witness of one man?" They replied in the affirmative. He said, "This is the deficiency in her intelligence. Isn't it true that a woman can neither pray nor fast during her menses?" The women replied in the affirmative. He said, "This is the deficiency in her religion."

However, some scholars have cogently argued that the key word in the Hadith, which is 'Aql is wrongly translated. Its real meaning in the Hadith, as in nearly all the places it is used in the Qur'an (22:46; 2:164; 2:170-171; 5:58; etc.) refers to the active use of one's God-given reason and wisdom for deciding a course of action. The reference in the Hadith therefore cannot be regarded as attributing a lack of basic or innate intelligence to women.

Otherwise, if one is to follow the manner in which the Hadith is misinterpreted it will not be in harmony with the Qur'anic references to the equal potential of both men and women for righteousness and intelligent understanding. The Hadith should thus be considered as a way of challenging women to be more proactive in the use of their reason as well as wisdom, whereby they could become more grateful to Allah and worship Him steadfastly.

It may also be observed that the salat and fasting which women miss during menstruation is not due to their own fault or negligence. Moreover they refund the missed days of fasting after menstruation has ended, and would no doubt have refunded the missed prayers if they had been asked by Allah to do so. Allah would hardly blame or punish a woman for deficiency in religion because she complies with the teachings of the same religion! Nor would He place her in hell for any natural deficiency in intelligence if indeed He had created her to be of lesser intelligence (as the mistaken translation of the Hadith implies). Nowhere in the Qur'an is it stated that women are of lesser innate intelligence than men.

* Finally, with regard to the issue of women as witnesses, the following evidence is to be noted:

The Qur'an has issued instructions relating to the giving of witness or testimony in 8 different places (2:282; 4:6; 4:15; 5:109; 5:110; 24:4; 24:6-9; and 65:2). In all cases, no specification of the gender of the witness is made, with the sole exception of 2:282.

* There are many examples in the hadith collections in which women's testimony is accepted without corroboration, and sometimes where the testimony of a single female witness overrides the witness of several men (see Afzalur Rahman, Role of Muslim Women in Society, pp.226-270). Additionally, many hadith are accepted in the canonical

collections (e.g. Bukhari, Muslim, etc.) as authentic in spite of the fact that they have only a single woman as their source.

- * From these observations, some scholars have concluded that 2:282 was never meant to be a general stipulation.

- * Various reasons have been presented for the male to female ratio of witnesses presented in 2:282 as a requirement in the case of business transactions. These include notions of a woman's greater temperamentality, emotional instability caused by the menstrual cycle and a man's greater familiarity with business and mathematics. If however one accepts that 2:282 should not be generalised to non-financial matters, then only the last explanation - men's greater familiarity with business and mathematics - is worth consideration, since the other explanations, if valid, would argue more strongly against a woman's testimony in other situations such as criminal hearings.

- * What one observes immediately from 2:282 is that the principle objective of the passage is the protection of business agreements and the avoidance of later contention or injustice. In a society facing widespread illiteracy, Islam set strict standards to guarantee the terms of a business contract, and in so doing, reduced the possibility of deception and misunderstanding that often, at least in the past, would have been settled violently. At that time, and for centuries to come, in almost all societies, women were and in some cases still are in general less educated in and less exposed to financial dealings than men and, consequently, the Qur'an required the witness of two men or a man and two women.

- * It also seems clear from the verse that these testimonies of one woman and one man are sufficient for a business contract so long as there is no disagreement. The second female witness is therefore legally required just in case one of the women errs or forgets: "so that if one of them errs, the other will remind her." (2:282).

- * But why does there seem to be an implication that there is a greater likelihood that it is the woman who will "err" or forget and not the man?

- * If the objective of the ratio of witness is the protection of the contract, the principle in this case seems to imply the need for two reasonably qualified witnesses or one qualified and two less-qualified witnesses, such that if the less qualified one were to err or forget, the other would remind him/her. By way of analogy, some contemporary scholars have concluded that where there are women with greater qualifications than men in areas of financial or legal matters, it would be against the principles and spirit of Islam to have one ignorant *layman*'s witness equated with that of two well-qualified female professionals.

- * There is the need to be aware that "advances in technology have made possible a greater intersection of male and female roles and have also produced a society whose financial structures are more complex than those of seventh century Arabia. As the business world grows in complexity, more ingenious methods of deception are continually discovered, and financial and legal institutions are forced to impose ever stricter standards to safeguard their dealings" than those required by 2:282. In some countries, "if the purchase of a house, long term loans, or the making of a will, are to have legal force, they must almost always pass the review of a number of departments of several institutions and then usually become a matter of public record. Since the Qur'an attaches so much importance to the making and protection of contracts, one may contend that existing legal safeguards of financial transactions which surpass the requirements of the verse 2:282 in question are often in the public interest" and are necessary for achieving Islamic

Period 12

WHY FOLLOW THE SUNNAH WHEN THE QUR'AN IS COMPLETE, PERFECT AND ETERNALLY RELEVANT?

The Sunnah or Hadith is the second and undoubtedly the secondary source from which the teachings of Islam are drawn. "Sunnah" literally means "a way" or "rule" or "manner of acting" or "mode of life". "Hadith" is "a saying of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) or a narrative about his actions as passed down by his companions. Sunnah of the Prophet refers to what he said, his actions and things others did which he approved of or was silent over.

Muslim scholars are unanimous on the fact that the Prophet's role was to convey the Divine Message revealed to him, explain it to the people and act upon it. His sayings, actions, practices and explanations are a source of light and guidance for Muslims in every age.

The Qur'an 33:31 – Allah says:

"And verily in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example for him who looks unto Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah much".

This verse makes it clear that in the Prophet himself and not just the message he brought, is a good example for any Muslim. Understanding the life of the Prophet (in His Sunnah) is therefore an essential source of Islamic teachings. Other verses commanding Muslims to also follow the Prophet (ﷺ) include, Qur'an 4:59, 24:51, 4:65, 59:7, 33:36, 4:110 etc.

The Qur'an (Nahl) 16:44 says *"And We have sent down unto you the message that you may explain (tubayyina) clearly to men what is sent to them."*

Allah from this verse makes it clear that the Prophet's role is not merely to convey the Qur'an but also to explain (tubayyina) it clearly to the people. That explanation is needed if the Qur'an is to be understood correctly and to avoid mistaken interpretations. Many of these "explanations" are what we see reported in the authentic narrations of the Hadith.

For those who would want to reject all the Hadith, one might note the following questions;

The answers to all these questions can only come from the same sources as the authentic hadith and other historically accepted information about early Islam.

- ◆ How was the Qur'an compiled?
- ◆ When was it compiled and how was it preserved?
- ◆ What do we know about the Prophet's family and companions?
- ◆ What do we know about the Jahiliyya or pre-Islamic society?
- ◆ When the Qur'an (4:34) says a husband can "beat" his wife, what does that mean? Beating with a whip, hand, club or stick? Which one? Can you beat her face? (It is only the Hadith that answers these questions.)
- ◆ The Qur'an says *"as for the male thief and the female thief, cut off their hands..."* (Qur'an 5:38). Is the verse saying

cut both hands of the male and female thief or just one hand each?

Can you cut the hand of your wife or child if he/she steals from you? Can you cut the hand of someone who steals your pencil or your food? What if the thief was desperately in need?

What if the thing that was stolen was not guarded or protected?

♦ What are the times for prayers and fasting in Polar Regions where the period from sunrise to sunset may be equivalent to 3 months or more?

♦ Are Harut and Marut in Qur'an 2:102 angels or humans?

♦ What is the difference in meaning between "Rahman" and Raheem"?

♦ What in Islam is understood by "ribah"?

♦ What were the circumstances when various verses of the Qur'an were revealed?

♦ Was any prohibition gradual or not? If so how do you know in which order the verses were revealed?

♦ How and why did the Qur'an get divided into chapters and verses?

♦ Other than the Qur'an's self-claim to authenticity (which other religious scriptures may claim), how are you sure that the Qur'an we have today is exactly what was read at the time of the Prophet and his companions?

♦ What in the Qur'an was revealed in Mecca or Madina or elsewhere?

♦ How are the chapters and verses of the Qur'an arranged?

♦ What is or are the sources of the history of the Arabs or the history of any other people?

♦ Who were the Prophet's companions? What do we know about them?

♦ What happened to the Qur'an after the death of the Prophet?

Christians criticizing hadith for any reason have a greater problem to contend with when it comes to the authenticity of the whole Bible, Christian doctrines and the Christ of faith versus the real Jesus of history.

The Anti-Hadith movement has attributed its rejection of Hadith to the difficulty encountered in knowing which hadith is authentic and which is fabricated. They also based their reason on the fact that some Muslims quote weak hadith to justify their argument, and hold to hadith that contradict Qur'anic texts. For example, the Prophet on one occasion stood on a grave and spoke, appearing to address himself to the dead. Observers took him to be saying that the dead could hear him. In actual fact, according to Aisha, the Prophet was simply saying that these people now knew that his message was true (Daniel Brown, 1996). Muslims are therefore advised to be sure of the hadith they use in explaining Islam. They should also avoid literal interpretation of hadith without understanding the purpose or context of the hadith which may result in distortion the religion itself.

It is true some Hadith were fabricated, but these have been identified as such by competent Muslim scholars of Hadith. The criteria of considering Hadith as authentic or unauthentic have been summarized in books such as:

1) The Religion of Islam by Muhammad Ali

2) Struggling to Surrender by Jeffrey Lang

Train the Trainers Course in Islam and Dialogue Primer - NHC SS1, Term 2 (TTCP SS1 T2)

Train the Trainers Course in Da'wah and Dialogue Primer (TTCP) 109

3) The Place of Hadith in Islam (Muslim Students Association of U.S. & Canada)

4) Hadith and Sunnah – Ideals and Realities, Ed. P.K. Koya (Islamic Book Trust, Kuala Lumpur).

Simply put, the chain of narrators (isnad) of the Hadith and the actual text or contents (matn) of the Hadith are critically assessed before a Hadith is classified and accepted.

Train the Trainers Course in Islam and Dialogue Primer - NHC SS1, Term 2 (TTCP SS1 T2)

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It was the habit of the Prophet (ﷺ) to receive non-Muslims guests in his Mosque, as some came to make enquires about Islam. For example in the years 8 - 10 A.H., the year of deputation, the Prophet received about 60 Christian delegates from Najran. They were even permitted to pray in the Mosque. Some others came to negotiate treaties or as envoys of other countries. There is no explicit provision in the Qur'an or Sunnah prohibiting non-Muslims from entering mosques except the Haram of Makkah. However, permission to enter is subject to genuine/legitimate reasons and also readiness to comply with the rules and regulations laid down by the Islamic authorities responsible for the administration of the mosque. **Muslims permitted to destroy churches, synagogues, and other places of worship of** Allah says in Qur'an 2:114;

"(Is there) any who is more unjust than he who forbids that in places for the worship of God, God's name should be celebrated?"

Likewise Qur'an 22:40, referring to "monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques" contains similar provisions. Both Yusuf Ali and Muhammad Asad are of the opinion that Muslims are under obligation, by virtue of these verses, to protect any place of worship, whether it be a mosque, church or synagogue. The Prophet (ﷺ) gave a stern warning to anyone who persecutes a Dhimmi or usurps his right. The rights of Dhimmis naturally include protection of their places of worship.

It is very wrong to blame Islam for the handiwork of some ignorant Muslims. We should rather judge a religion by its teachings. It would be equally unfair to blame Christianity for the destruction of mosques in Bosnia by Serbian Christians.

If all the past prophets of God came from among the Israelites (Children of Isaac), is it

First it is important to note that the Qur'an (10:47 and 16:36) makes it clear that Prophets were sent to every nation, not just to the Israelites. The Qur'an makes it clear in 19:54, 56, 58; 3:33; 7:59; 14:9 and 3:67-68 that Adam, Noah, Idris (i.e. Enoch), Abraham and Ishmael were all Prophets, and it is known that they were not Jews (i.e. descendants of Isaac/Ishaq).

The Qur'an in 3:144 also makes it clear that Muhammad (ﷺ) was a Prophet. With regard to the choice of the Prophets, Allah makes it abundantly clear in Qur'an 6:83-90 that He bestows prophet hood on whom He wills.

WEEK 7

THE ISLAMIC CONCEPT OF TRUST

The importance of trustworthiness and the severe warning against treachery in the Islam.

In the article entitled *Honesty*, we discussed how important the concept of honesty is to Islam and

how it incorporates truthfulness and reliability. Another dimension of honesty is trustworthiness, or in Arabic, *amanah*. The meaning of amanah is trustworthiness, or, it is something or someone left to someone to protect or keep. The opposite of amanah is betrayal or even treason. That is, to *fail* to keep the trust or amanah in the way the person who left it expected or wanted.

Trustworthiness further enhances the integrity and sound moral conduct that is inherent in the notion of honesty. Being trustworthy implies being honest, fair in dealings and punctual (in terms of both regularity and timeliness) as well as honouring trusts and keeping promises and commitments. An important part of the noble Islamic character is being trustworthy. Prophet Muhammad was known, even before his Prophethood to be *Al Amin* (the trustworthy one).

While the qualities of honesty and trustworthiness are inextricably entwined, there are slight differences. Honesty implies a lack of deceit while trustworthiness entails honouring and fulfilling commitments, promises, trusts and covenants. It covers moral, social, legal and religious obligations. Being truthful in promises and covenants is one of the characteristics by which the believers are known. Both promises and covenants involve saying something about an issue to confirm that you will uphold the trust. This is especially so with regard to one's duties towards God. God praises the believers by promising them Paradise,

“Those who are faithfully true to their amanah (all the duties which God has ordained, honesty, moral responsibility and trusts, etc.) and to their covenants...these indeed are the inheritors. Who shall inherit Paradise. And dwell therein forever” (Quran 23:8, 23:10-11)

Trust, and being worthy of another's trust, is inherent in being one who is submitted to the will of God. When God appointed Adam (the father of mankind) as successor on earth, it was a trust incumbent upon all of mankind. When God created us as individuals for worshipping Him, it became a trust incumbent upon us to nourish ^[1] ourselves and our families in a way that enables worship.

In Islam, every believer is a brother or sister to the other; we are one body, one nation. The right hand must be able to trust the left hand. The commands and rules from God are designed for our benefit and Islam holds people's rights in high esteem. The systematic arrangement of guidelines and regulations is intended to uphold the rights Islam gives to the believers and to minimize vice and corruption. Islam strongly condemns the violation of God-given rights. When God commands us to keep the trust, to be trustworthy, it is not a matter to be taken lightly.

Prophet Muhammad explained the seriousness of upholding the rights due to others when he said,

“God says, ‘There are three people whom I shall be their opponent on the Day of Judgment: A man who

was given something in My Name and then betrays; A man who sells-off a free man (as a slave) and consumes the price; and A man who hires a labourer, makes use of his service then does not give him his wages.” (Saheeh Al-Bukhari). God says in the Quran,

“Verily, God does command you to render back your Trusts to whom they are due.” (Quran 4:58)

In the past God dealt severely with people who were dishonest and did not honour their trusts. The people of **Madyana** had developed unfair and corrupt business practices and Prophet Shuaib was instructed to warn them of God’s displeasure.

“He said, “O my people! Worship God, you have no other god but Him, and give not short measure or weight, I see you in prosperity; and verily I fear for you the torment of a Day encompassing. And O my people! Give full measure and weight in justice and reduce not the things that are due to the people, and do not commit mischief in the land, causing corruption. That which is left by God for you (after giving the rights of the people) is better for you, if you are believers.” (Quran 11:85-86)

After Prophet Shuaib issued his warning and the people chose to belittle and ignore him the promise of God was shown to be true. God is the most Just, the Most Wise and He is the Ultimate Trustee, the One who can be relied upon to fulfill His promises.

“And when Our Commandment came, We saved Shuaib and those who believed with him by a Mercy from Us. And a torment (or awful cry) seized the wrongdoers, and they lay (dead) prostrate in their homes.”
(Quran 11:94)

Reliability, honesty and trustworthiness are characteristics that must be present in anyone who claims to be a believer. The sayings of Prophet Muhammad indicate that dishonesty and betrayal are completely at odds with the Islamic faith. Prophet Muhammad informed us **that**

“A hypocrite is known by three traits: When he speaks, he lies; when he promises, he reneges; when he is entrusted, he cheats (or embezzles).” (Saheeh Al-Bukhari, Saheeh Muslim)

When Abu Ubayda was the commander of the Muslim armies in Syria, the Emperor of Byzantium set out with a large army to recapture Hims. Abu ‘Ubaida decided to evacuate the city because he had only a handful of soldiers. He gathered the people of Hims in the middle of the city and announced, ***“We collected the protection tax from you because we planned to defend you. Now we are too weak. In this case, we return the tax we collected.”***

All the taxes collected were returned to the non-Muslim people of Hims. Such was the depth of feeling and understanding displayed by the early Muslims. They were constantly aware of their obligations

towards God, their brothers and sisters and those who were under the protection of the Muslim armies.

Trustworthiness is a quality that is essential if a society is to function as one unit, bearing in mind the needs and aspirations of all its citizens. The Muslim nation should be one unit, one nation. All members of this brotherhood should be able to stand before God knowing that he is safe and secure in the company of one who is trustworthy. From the lowliest peasant to the mightiest king all are equal the only thing that makes one member of the unit better than the other is his piety or righteousness. Amongst the many qualities that blend together to make righteousness, is trustworthiness.

WEEK 8

ETIQUETTES OF VISITATION IN ISLAM

Guests indeed are among Allah's (s.w.t) blessings, but we can see from the Prophet's (s.a.w) example that there is certain etiquette of visitation, which one must follow in order to fulfill the Sunnah. In our society, there are plenty of people like my neighbour, who make their hosts wary of guests instead of welcoming them.

The Prophet (s.a.w.) said:

"A man visited a brother in another town. Allah (swt) sent an angel to lie in wait for him along his way. When he came upon the angel, he asked him: 'Where are you going?' He answered: 'I am going to visit a brother of mine in this town?' The angel asked further: 'Is there any favour that you want to get from him?' The man said: 'No, it is only that I love him for Allah's (swt) sake.' The angel then said: 'I am a messenger of Allah to you (to tell you) that Allah (swt) loves you, as you love your brother for His sake.'"

(Muslim)

The aforementioned Hadeeth makes it clear that visiting somebody for Allah's (swt) sake alone and not for some personal reason is what Allah (swt) wants from us.

Keeping in mind the importance that Allah (swt) and His Prophet (s.a.w.) have placed on visiting, we should certainly take some time out of our busy schedules for our family, neighbours and friends. This, however, should be done keeping in mind some important reminders.

Choose a suitable time...

...and day. Don't pay a late night visit to someone, who is known to go to bed early or has school-going children. Don't visit at mealtimes, unless you have been invited by your hosts.

Call before you go

It is better to give your hosts time to tidy up their place and be prepared. Also, it will save you time and unnecessary hassle, if your hosts are not at home or have other plans.

Do not grumble

If your hosts could not be contacted earlier and you had to return home, do not complain.

Take a gift

This does not have to be very extravagant or formal. You can take a home-cooked dish, a small box of biscuits or anything thoughtful that is likely to cheer up your hosts or their children.

Don't stay too long

Respect the fact that your hosts might also have other commitments. If you're visiting someone who's staying at your host's place, be extra careful.

Avoid indulging in gossip

Don't pry about people's lives. Everyone is entitled to privacy. Ask about their well-being, without being nosy.

Visit the sick

Visit the sick to help their attendants with some chores. This relieves them for a while and earns you Allah's (swt) pleasure.

Appreciate

It is good manners to appreciate the effort your hosts put in for you, no matter how big or small. Anas Ibn Malik (rtam) narrated:

"The Prophet (s.a.w.) visited some of the Anaar in their house and ate some food there. When he wanted to leave, he ordered that a place be prepared for him where he could pray. He then prayed there and supplicated for his hosts." (Bukhari)

Good etiquettes go a long way in maintaining healthy relationships. A smile here and a kind word there are sure shot recipes for winning hearts.

The invocation of a guest for his host, as taught by Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.)

"O Allah, bless them in what You have provided for them, and forgive them and have mercy on them." (Muslim)

WEEK 9

WHO IS AN IDEAL AND RESPONSIBLE MUSLIM/MUSLIMAH?

WEEK 10

PURIFICATION (TAHARA) AND ITS TYPES IN ISLAM

Islam requires physical and spiritual purification. On the physical side, Islam requires Muslims to clean their bodies, clothes, houses, and community, and they are rewarded by God for doing so. While people generally consider cleanliness desirable, Islam insists upon it and makes it an indispensable fundamental of religious life. In fact, books on Islamic jurisprudence often contain a whole chapter on this very requirement.

Prophet Muhammad, upon him be God's blessings and peace, advised Muslims to appear neat and tidy in private and in public. Once when returning home from battle he advised his army: ***"Soon you will meet your brothers, so tidy your saddles and clothes"*** (Abu Dawud, "Libas," 25). On another occasion he said: ***"If I had not been afraid of overburdening my community, I would have ordered them to use a miswaq (to brush and clean their teeth) for every prayer"*** (Bukhari, "Iman," 26).

Moral hygiene also was emphasized, for the Prophet, upon him be God's blessings and peace, encouraged Muslims to make a special prayer upon seeing themselves in the mirror: ***"God, You have endowed me with a good form; like-wise bless me with an immaculate character"*** (Ibn Hanbal, Musnad, 1:34, 6:155).

He advised modest clothing, for men as well as for women, on the grounds that it helps one maintain purity of thought.

The Purity of Water

Pure water is used essentially in matters of purification or *wudu'* (minor ablution) and *ghusl* (major ablution). Hence the necessity to investigate water's purity. Water has four essential attributes: smell, color, taste, and fluidity. Any pure and purifying water is judged according to whether it retains these attributes or not.


There are three types of purification:

1- Purification of bodily organs from sins and disobedience:

Allah Almighty described the polytheists with being unclean. This means that they adopt impure belief, which is polytheism. Allah says (what means):

“O you who have believed, indeed the polytheists are unclean” [Quran 9: 28]

“Those are the ones for whom Allah does not intend to purify their hearts” [Quran 5: 41]

The Prophet ﷺ, used to ask Allah to purify him of sins and disobedience. ‘Abdullaahi bnAbi Awfa  narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, used to recite (this supplication):

O Allah! All praise is due to you, filling the heavens, filling the earth, and filling whatever else You Wish. O Allah! Purify me with snow, (water of) hail and cold water; O Allah, purify me from sins and misdeeds just as a white garment is cleansed from dirt. [Muslim]

2- Purification from filth:

This includes urine, excrement, blood, liquid alcohol as well as other types of tangible filth. According to the majority of scholars, such filth is purified only by pure water. They must be washed with water until the color, taste and smell of impurity disappear. In case of a dog, a swine as well as what comes from them, this must be washed seven times, including once with dust. The scholars provided different views regarding some details.

3- Purification from ritual impurity:

There are two types:

First: the major impurity:

It is a state of impurity which requires Ghusl, as when one releases semen or inserts the tip of the penis into a woman's vagina or a man or woman's anus. Even if there is no ejaculation, both parties are required to perform Ghusl. Also, the woman is required to perform Ghusl at the end of menstruation or post-partum bleeding.

Second: minor impurity: it is a state of impurity which requires Wudhoo' (ablution), as when something other than semen comes out from the two excretory organs whether it is urine, pre-ejaculatory fluid, excrement, a stone, and so on. This also includes touching one of the two excretory organs with the palm of the hand, whether for himself or for others, unconsciousness due to sleeping, fainting, intoxication, and so on. Touching a sexually desired non-Mahram (permanently unmarriageable) woman (who has attained the

age when she is desired by those of sound nature) requires Wudhoo' according to some scholars. Eating camel flesh also requires Wudhoo' according to some scholars.

Making Ghusl for Janaabah (state of major impurity due to a wet dream, sexual relations, losing consciousness ...) requires one's intention as well as covering the whole body with water. Making Wudhoo' requires one's intention and washing the face, the hands up to the elbows, wiping the head and washing the feet up to the ankles.

What is Najasah and types of impurities.?

Najasah means defilement, including bodily, material and discernible impurities.

Types of impurities:

1. **Al-Maita (Carrion)** – It means an animal or bird that has died in any way other than the Islamic manner of slaughter. It also includes anything that is cut or torn from the limbs of a live animal.
2. **The Hide** – It is impure unless it is tanned. Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) said, ***"Tanning removes its impurity; and if the hide is tanned, it is purified."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari)
3. **Blood** – Whether it is of man or animal, menstrual or post-natal, it is unclean.
4. **The Swine**, living or dead, and what is begotten of it. The flesh of swine is forbidden.
5. **The Dog** – It is unclean. Dogs render food impure which they lick.
6. **Al-Khamr** – Wine, literally al-Khamr, is what obscures the intellect. Every drink which causes intoxication is forbidden. Allah's Messenger said, ***"Wine is the key to all evils."*** (Ahmed)
7. **Urine and Excrement**- These objects are unclean. It is obligatory to purify garments, body, or place defiled by them.

WEEK 11

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 ghushl a must are:

1. **The emission of semen**, because the Prophet (s.a.w.) said: ***"What requires water (ghushl) 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.

WEEK 12

Types of the bath

- I. Obligatory ritual bath
- II. Voluntary ritual bath