

FOUNTAIN UNIVERSITY FIQH CLASS FUC 201
QURANIC REFLECTIONS

WEEK ONE

200 LEVEL FIRST SEMESTER

WHAT IS TAQWA?

Taqwa is the state of hyper-vigilance against falling into sin in negligence. It is the idea that a believer is always on guard and is perpetually alert of not committing any action that would earn the displeasure of the Almighty.

The term *Taqwa* is often translated as 'piety' or 'God-fearing', but a better equivalent would be 'God-consciousness'. It is considered to be the essential quality of a believer. Taqwa of a believer should illuminate through all facets of his/her life, just like a bright light would shine through all openings of an empty house in an empty field in a dark night. Taqwa, when coupled with *Imaan* (faith), makes a well-rounded believer. Taqwa goes hand in hand with Imaan; one cannot be complete without the other, and vice versa.

Taqwa is the state of hyper-vigilance against falling into sin in negligence. It is the idea that a believer is always on guard and is perpetually alert of not committing any action that would earn the displeasure of the Almighty. It is the state of preparedness of anticipating a situation where one might be coerced into doing *Haram*, and as a result of this readiness, to avoid and stay out of that *Haram*. In its higher forms, Taqwa is the fear of not of not taking the best path towards Allah's Pleasure and His Grace.

Taqwa is often translated as 'fear of God', but the real essence of Taqwa is being hyper-vigilant and the 'fear' of doing *Haram* out of neglect of Allah's orders. It is the state of consciousness to be mindful of Allah at all times and achieve His maximum pleasure at all times. Therefore, any such qualities of a person that would make him forgetful of Allah are detrimental to his/her *Taqwa*. The love of this world, greed, hatred or enmity towards a fellow human, pride, etc. are all examples of such traits that hurt a believer's Taqwa. As a result, the more cognizant a believer is, and more alert (s)he is in protecting him/herself from such

detrimental traits that would make him/her forgetful of Allah, the better his/her Taqwa or 'God-consciousness' is.

The consciousness that Taqwa implies is a reverential consciousness. The state of alertness when one is in awe and admiration of something or somebody. Imagine you met your lifelong role model, how attentive to their every need would you be? You would notice all their little quirks and nuances, their body language, behavior, what irks them, and what makes them happy. If they indicated that they want something, you would rush to get it done in the best manner possible and do it in a way that would make them most happy. You would suppress any internal resistance inside you that would keep you from doing the best job. You would be 'fearful' in becoming complacent to their need and not doing your best for their satisfaction. A parallel example is if you were in the company of someone you deeply and intensely loved. You would anticipate and plan ahead to make them feel as comfortable and at ease as possible. You will always be alert and vigilant and will think ahead so as to avoid any situations or scenarios that would make them even remotely unhappy. All your efforts will be focused in keeping them happy and comfortable as humanely as possible. If they called upon you, you would drop everything you would be doing to attend to their need immediately. Also, you would be so conscious of the surroundings and especially vigilant to how you act, what you say or do in their presence, so that they don't get turned off in any way.

Taqwa implies a similar sense of alertness, consciousness and vigilance towards the Pleasure and Mercy of Allah. To be constantly aware of what pleases or displeases Him and to ensure all our efforts are to make Him most happy and gain His maximum Pleasure. Taqwa means to rush in acting upon the orders of Allah and to suppress any inclinations that would prevent us from completing the tasks in its best form. But Taqwa goes a step further than the love for a beloved or the admiration of a role model as outlined above. To be hyper-vigilant in the presence of a beloved or a revered person may be commendable, but the essence of this endearment is measured if the level of alertness is same in their absence. Allah is not physically present and visible to our eyes: He is *Haadhir* (present) but *Gha'ib* (unseen). What makes Taqwa so challenging and rewarding is the idea of expressing this level alertness and attentiveness to Allah in His 'absence', when He is not visible.

As such, Taqwa cannot be classified simply as “piety” or “fearing God”; rather, it’s much deeper and intricate than that. A person who has Taqwa is a *Muttaqi* (pl. *muttaqin*). A Muttaqi demonstrates this constant state of endearment throughout his/her actions in every facet of his/her life. (S)he reduces all the obstacles that prevent him/her from dedicating everything to Allah. (S)he minimizes the distractions and all the ‘noise’ in his/her life that drown out his/her awareness of Allah. It is also said that God manifests Himself in the silences of the soul, and if a person has a lot of noise – desires, diseases of the soul, Haram passions, etc. – (s)he will never be able to feel the presence of Allah in his/her soul. The soul will never be awakened to the reality of the Eternal Being, because it is cluttered and clogged with all other pursuits. In order to hear His whispers, one has to be silent. If a person never stops talking, they will never be able to properly listen to Allah, as they are going to be preoccupied with their own complaints. They will never be able to reach a point of internal peace whereby they can speak to Allah. Just like the depths of a pond become invisible when the surface water is experience rough motion (waves, etc.), our own depths will remain invisible if we don’t calm the surface of the soul. That is to say, until one empties and removes all distractions of this world and cleans the diseases of the soul, (s) he will not be able to deeply connect with Allah.

As the Holy Qur’an says, “He (Allah) is with you wherever you are.” (57:4)

Allah says,

الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَّعْلُومَاتٌ ۖ فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجِّ ۚ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَعْلَمُهُ اللَّهُ ۗ وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَىٰ ۚ وَاتَّقُونِ يَا أُولِيَ الْأَلْبَابِ

Hajj is [during] well-known months, so whoever has made Hajj obligatory upon himself therein [by entering the state of ihram], there is [to be for him] no sexual relations and no disobedience and no disputing during Hajj. And whatever good you do - Allah knows it. And take provisions, but indeed, the best provision is fear of Allah. And fear Me, O you of understanding. Qur’an 2 Verse 197.

He says,

وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْفُرَىٰ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَفَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم بَرَكَاتٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَٰكِن كَذَّبُوا فَأَخَذْنَاهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

And if only the people of the cities had believed and feared Allah, We would have opened upon them blessings from the heaven and the earth; but they denied [the messengers], so We seized them for what they were earning." Qur'an 7 Verse 96

He says again,

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقَاكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

“O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted”. Qur'an 49 Verse 13

WEEK TWO

200 LEVEL FIRST SEMESTER

QURAN AND HUMAN RESURRECTION AFTER DEATH

When the son of Adam dies, his body disintegrates and vanishes apart from the tailbone, which is a bone at the base of the spine. When the Resurrection begins, Allaah will cause the bodies to grow by means of rain from the earth which will make these bones grow until each person's body is restored to the way it was before he died.

It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: ***“The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, ‘What is between the two Trumpet-blasts will be forty.’ Somebody asked, ‘Forty days?’ But I could not answer. Then he asked, ‘Forty months?’ But I could not answer. Then he asked, ‘Forty years?’ But I could not answer.” Abu Hurayrah added, “Then (after this period) Allah will send water from the sky and then the dead bodies will grow like vegetation grows. There is nothing of the human body that does not decay except one bone; that is the little bone at the end of the coccyx from which the human body will be recreated on the Day of Resurrection.”*** (Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 4651; Muslim, 2955).

When a person comes forth from his grave and is gathered and brought to account, his body will remain the same as it was before he died. Then when the people of Paradise enter Paradise and the people of Hell enter Hell, Allah will change their forms.

Description of the people of Hell:

It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: ***“The distance between the shoulders of the kaafir [in Hell] will be that of three days’ swift travelling.”*** (Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 6186; Muslim, 2852).

It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah said: The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “The molar of the kaafir – or the eyetooth of the kaafir – will be like Uhud, and his skin will be as thick as three days’ travelling.” (Narrated by Muslim, 2851).

Description of the people of Paradise:

It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “The first group to enter Paradise will look like the moon when it is full; then those who follow them will look like the brightest star in the sky. They will not urinate or defecate, spit or blow their noses. Their combs will be of gold, their sweat will be musk, their incense burners will be of aloes-wood. Their wives will be al-hoor al-‘iyn and they will all look alike, like their father Adam, sixty cubits tall.” (Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 3149; Muslim, 2834)

It was narrated from Mu’aadh ibn Jabal that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “The people of Paradise will enter Paradise hairless and beardless, with Kohl-rimmed eyes, all thirty or thirty-three years old.” (Narrated by al-Tirmidhi, 2545).

This hadeeth was classed as saheeh by Shaykh al-Albaani in *Saheeh al-Jaami’*, 8072.

See the similitude of how Allah will resurrect us back after death according to the Qur’an. Allah says,

أَوْ كَالَّذِي مَرَّ عَلَى قَرْيَةٍ وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَى عُرُوشِهَا قَالَ أَنَّى يُحْيِي هَذِهِ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا فَأَمَاتَهُ اللَّهُ مِائَةَ عَامٍ ثُمَّ بَعَثَهُ قَالَ كَمْ لَبِثْتَ قَالَ لَبِثْتُ يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ قَالَ بَلْ لَبِثْتَ مِائَةَ عَامٍ فَانْظُرْ إِلَى طَعَامِكَ وَشَرَابِكَ لَمْ يَتَسَنَّهْ وَانْظُرْ إِلَى جِمَاركَ وَلِنَجْعَلَكَ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ وَانْظُرْ إِلَى الْعِظَامِ كَيْفَ نُنشِزُهَا ثُمَّ نَكْسُوهَا لَحْمًا فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ قَالَ أَعْلَمُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

Or [consider such an example] as the one who passed by a township which had fallen into ruin. He said, "How will Allah bring this to life after its death?" So Allah caused him to die for a hundred years; then He revived him. He said, "How long have you remained?" The man said, "I have remained a day or part of a day." He said, "Rather, you have remained one hundred years. Look at your food and your drink; it has not changed with time. And look at your donkey; and We will make you a sign for the people. And look at the bones [of this donkey] - how We raise them and then We cover them with flesh." And when it became clear to him, he said, "I know that Allah is over all things competent." Qur'an 2 Verse 259

وَكَانُوا يَقُولُونَ أَإِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَعِظَامًا أَإِنَّا لَمَبْعُوثُونَ - 56:47

And they used to say, "When we die and become dust and bones, are we indeed to be resurrected?

أَوِ آبَاؤُنَا الْأَوَّلُونَ - 56:48

And our forefathers [as well]?"

قُلْ إِنَّ الْأَوَّلِينَ وَالْآخِرِينَ - 56:49

Say, [O Muhammad], "Indeed, the former and the later peoples

لَمَجْمُوعُونَ إِلَى مِيقَاتٍ يَوْمٍ مَعْلُومٍ - 56:50

Are to be gathered together for the appointment of a known Day."

WEEK THREE

200 LEVEL FIRST SEMESTER

A BRIEF TRIP TO PARADISE

Our final destination is the life of the Hereafter. Where we end up, Jannah (Paradise) or Jahannam (Hell-fire) depends on what we worked towards in this life. Paradise is the aim and the hope of every Muslim. But like trying to attain any goal, in order to achieve success, one

must have a well-defined plan, and it must be implemented to be successful.

To prepare for our journey, we need to find out what our destination is like; who are its people, and most importantly, how to get there.

The Prophet (salAllahu alayhi wasalam) told us that within Paradise are things that no eyes have ever seen, nor ears have ever heard, and that things in it are beyond our imagination and comprehension, but we all have our own personal ideas of what eternal bliss would probably be like.

Allah has also described Paradise in many places in the Qur'an, so let us now take a look at what He has in store for the believers.

Description in the Qur'an of Paradise

"The description of Paradise which the Muttaqoon (believers) have been promised is that in it are rivers of water, the taste and smell of which are never changed. Rivers of milk the taste of which will remain unchanged. Rivers of wine that will be delicious to those who drink from it and rivers of clear, pure honey. For them will be every kind of fruit and forgiveness from their Lord." [47:15]

"And their recompense shall be Paradise, and silken garments, because they were patient. Reclining on raised thrones, they will see there neither the excessive heat of the sun, nor the excessive bitter cold, (as in Paradise there is no sun and no moon). The shade will be close upon them, and bunches of fruit will hang low within their reach. Vessels of silver and cups of crystal will be passed around amongst them, crystal-clear, made of silver. They will determine the measure of them according to their wishes. They will be given a cup (of wine) mixed with Zanjabeel, and a fountain called Salsabeel. Around them will (serve) boys of perpetual youth. If you see them, you would think they are scattered pearls. When you look there (in Paradise) you will see a delight (that cannot be imagined), and a Great Dominion. Their garments will be of fine green silk and gold embroidery. They will be adorned with bracelets of silver, and their Lord will give them a pure drink." [76:12-21]

"And those foremost (In Tawheed and obedience to Allah and His Messenger in this life) will

be foremost (in Paradise). They will be those nearest to Allah in the Gardens of Delight. A multitude of those (the foremost) will be from the first generation (who embraced Islam) and a few of those (the foremost) will be from the later (generations). They will be reclining, face to face, on thrones woven with gold and precious stones. They will be served by immortal boys, with cups and jugs, and a glass from the flowing wine, from which they will have neither any headache, nor any intoxication. They will have fruit from which they may choose, and the flesh of fowls that they desire. There will be Houris with wide, lovely eyes (as wives for the pious), like preserved pearls, a reward for deeds that they used to do. They will hear no vain or sinful speech (like backbiting, etc.) but only the saying of: Salam, Salam, (greetings of peace). And those on the Right Hand, who will be those on the Right Hand? They will be among thorn-less lote-trees among Talh (banana trees) with fruits piled one above another, in long-extended shade, by constantly flowing water, and fruit in plenty, whose season is not limited, and their supply will not be cut off. They will be on couches or thrones raised high. Verily, We have created for them (maidens) of equal age, loving (their husbands only). For those on the Right Hand." [56:10-38]

"Verily, the dwellers of Paradise that Day, will be busy in joyful things. They and their wives will be in pleasant shade, reclining on thrones. They will have therein fruits (of all kinds), and all that they will ask for. (It will be said to them): "Salamun" (Peace be on you), a Word from the Lord, Most Merciful." [36:55-58]

Can you imagine?

Wearing the finest silk clothing and sitting on chairs made of gold and precious stones? Those who disbelieve in the words of Allah, say that this is all a fairy-tale, made up by a would-be prophet. But we know, that Allah is the Truthful and that His Messenger, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, spoke only what was revealed to from the Most Truthful. And even though Allah describes Paradise for us in the Qur'an, He still says,

"So no soul knows the delights of the eyes which is hidden for them; a reward for what they did." [32:17]

Who Are the People of Paradise?

We could go on and on, for the ahadith are vast in numbers, about the Prophet's descriptions of Paradise. But a place that has houses built with gold and silver bricks: where its dirt is made of rubies and sapphires and its inhabitants wear only the finest silk garments, sounds like a pretty exclusive neighborhood to me. Who are these people who will be allowed to live in this enchanting place? The Jews say the Jews. The Christians say the Christians. But Allah says,

"And they say: 'None shall enter Paradise unless he be a Jew or a Christian.' Those are their (vain) desires. Say, 'Produce your proof if you are truthful. " [2:111]

He also says,

"(Namely) those whose lives the angels take in a state of purity, saying (to them), 'Peace be on you, enter you the Garden, because of (the good) which you did (in the world).' [16:32]

Always in the Qur'an when Allah mentions those who will attain Paradise, He mentions the believers, not the Muslims. He (subhanahu wa ta'ala) says, "Indeed the Muttaqoon will be amongst the Gardens and water-springs." [15:45]

He also says,

"Verily, the Muttaqoon will be in a place of security, among Gardens and springs, dressed in fine silk and (also) in thick silk, facing each other. This is how it shall be, and We shall marry them to Houris with wide, lovely eyes. They will request therein for every kind of fruit in peace and security." [44:51-55]

So who are the believers and how do we become one of them? Allah says,

"They believe in Allah and the Last Day, and they enjoin what is right and forbid the wrong and they strive with one another in hastening to good deeds, and those are among the good." [3:114]

200 LEVEL 1ST SEMESTER

WEEK FOUR

1. Is Shari'ah not too concerned with law and punishment?

Shari'ah is sometimes translated as "Islamic Law" but it should be understood that it goes beyond what is the concern of the courts in serving justice.

The meaning of the Arabic word "Shari'ah" is a path to be followed. Shari'ah is the law regulating the way of life leading to Allah, based on the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah. It includes other aspects of commendable behaviour such as returning good for evil, assisting people even if they have no legal claim on you, and doing your moral duties as a good member of society. Likewise, it includes avoidance of doing things that are wrong, even though they may not be offences carrying punishments in a court of law. The Shari'ah looks beyond this to the Hereafter (Qur'an 99:7-8).

The opinion that the punishments in the Shari'ah are barbaric stems from viewing them in isolation, rather than within the whole context of the Shari'ah itself.

Unlike the Western concept of law which ignores certain aspects of morality (as can be seen from the legalization of homosexuality, pornography, lesbianism, interest, etc.), Shari'ah is not separable from ethics or morality. The purpose of Shari'ah is to guide both individuals and society towards peace and justice and to prevent crime and deter criminals. One of the major objectives of the spiritual and moral aspects of Shari'ah is to minimize the need for the courts.

Punishments are only a section of the legal system which itself is a section of the Shari'ah. Every legal ruling is backed up by sanctions or punishments. The laws of some Western countries also include punishments such as hanging, electric chair and so on for serious crimes such as murder.

In Shari'ah, the State is required to cater for the rights and needs of citizens (e.g. by encouraging economic activity and providing for social welfare through Zakat) and to ban whatever is conducive to crime. Only then it has the full right to give the prescribed or specific punishments. The Islamic Legal System in fact takes societal considerations into account before applying punishments.

The family is the most important social institution responsible for the upbringing of the next generation of a society. The family has the greatest influence on the morality of any generation. The Shari'ah is therefore very strict with regard to the protection of the objectives of the family. Adultery, being one of the greatest family breakers and an immorality in itself, is punishable with death. This severe punishment however serves more as a deterrent in view of the strict conditions required before it can be enforced. No less than four reliable and dependable witnesses who each saw the act taking place are required. Since adultery in the presence of up to 3 witnesses is still not punishable by the law (in this

world), it seems that the accusation that the Islamic law is too strict and "barbaric" is simply because Islam has not allowed adultery in public!

The cutting off of the hand (amputation) of a confirmed thief by the Islamic State would not be just unless the State has provided the thief with no excuse, e.g. employment and/or social welfare for the poor and needy (by the institution of the Zakat). Moreover, punishment for theft also depends on the age of the thief, the amount stolen, reasons for stealing, where the object was stolen from, etc. A thief is only punished where he has a

reasonable alternative to stealing. Whatever punishment is to be given for any crime is carried out strictly by the legal authorities concerned after a fair trial and not by just anybody who thinks he knows the law.

No other legal system has controlled crime and brought a greater degree of peace and security to citizens than that of Islam. With all the fuss and propaganda from the West, crime rates are surging. In one of such countries, statistics show that every 6 minutes a woman is being raped and every 25 minutes a person is being murdered. The law should have a seriously deterrent effect on crime, otherwise the innocent are left unprotected.

Moreover, to the Muslim the Shari'ah is the command of the Most Wise and All-Knowing Creator. How can a law by the Most Merciful be called "barbaric" when it is (as history has proven) the best realistic guarantee for the peace of His creatures?

It is interesting to note that in the Old Testament of the Bible, death for adultery (Deut. 22:22) and flogging (Deut.25:1-3) are recognised legal punishments with divine sanction.

2. Period 7

IS FOOD FROM CHRISTIANS PURE FOR MUSLIMS TO EAT?

There is a misconception with regard to Muslims eating the food of *Ahl-al-Kitab*, that is the Jews and the Christians. It is believed by some Muslims that eating their food or meat is Haram because some of them associate partners with Allah. However, in answer to that Allah came with an injunction in the Qur'an, chapter 5 verse 5. Allah says:

"This day are (all) things good and pure made lawful unto you. The food of the People of the Book is lawful unto you. And yours is lawful unto them..."

From this injunction, Allah did not prohibit Muslims from eating the food of the Jews and the Christians. According to Yusuf Al-Qaradawi in his *Halal wal-Haram Fil Islam* (The Lawful and the Prohibited in Islam), the application of the phrase "the food of those who were given the scripture" is general and

includes their meats, produce and other food, excepting what is haram in itself, eg. the flesh of a dead animal, pork, and blood.

Differences among jurists exist on the question of the lawfulness of consuming meat of the People of the Book slaughtered via crueler methods (eg. electrocution, decapitation, etc) or that which is *speculated* to have been slaughtered in the name of anyone other than Allah, or slaughtered by a non-Jew or non-Christian. While some contend that such meat is haram, several conclude otherwise. Al-*Tabari* reported someone asking Abu al-Darda whether he could eat the flesh of a lamb slaughtered for the Church of St. George that he had been given. Abu al-Darda responded in the affirmative, saying "O Allah, may You pardon us. Are they not the People of the Book, whose food is halal for us and ours for them?" Imam Malik, when asked about animals slaughtered for Christian festivals, replied "I classify it as *makruh* but not haram; *makruh* because I am afraid it may have been dedicated to someone other than Allah but not haram because perhaps with respect to the People of the Book the meaning of the phrase 'that which has been dedicated to any other than Allah' applies only to those animals which they slaughter for the purpose of seeking the pleasure of their deities and not to eat. As for what they slaughter to eat, it is their food, and Allah says 'The food of those who were given the Scripture is permitted to you'"

The famous Qadi Ibn al-Arabi further supports this permissibility for what is slaughtered by People of the Book *as food*. Responding to an enquiry about the lawfulness of partaking in the meal of a Christian who beheaded a chicken to cook it, he says: "Eat it as this is his food and the food of his priests and monks. Although this is not our way of slaughtering the animal, Allah has permitted their food to us unconditionally and also other things in their religion excepting those which Allah says they have falsified. Our scholars have said they give us their women in marriage and it is permissible to engage in sexual intercourse with them. In matters concerning halal and haram, sexual intercourse is of graver import than eating; how then does it make any sense to say that their food is not halal?" On another occasion, he declared "What they eat without intending to make it lawful for eating, as for example by strangling the animal or smashing its head, is haram." (Both citations may be found in *Qaradawi's* work mentioned above).

In the case of doubt as to how the animal was slaughtered, Imam Malik narrates a revealing incident occurring in the Madinan period of one who came to the Prophet (p) saying "***O Messenger of Allah, people from the desert bring us meat and we do not know whether they have mentioned Allah's name***

over it." The Prophet (p) replied **"Mention the name of Allah over it and then eat it."** (*Bidayatul Mujtahid*, Vol.1, Book 14, Ch.4).

SHOULD ONE SAY SALAAM TO NON-MUSLIMS?

3.

Some Muslims are of the view that one cannot initiate or say Salaam to a non-Muslim. They base their argument on the *Hadith* of the Prophet (p): "Do not initiate the Jews and the Christians with the greeting of Salaam..." Muslim.

"Assalamu Alaykum" means more than just "Good morning" or "Good afternoon". It means you are extending not only your wishes for Allah's peace to be upon the person, but also you are extending your own guarantee of peace and security, which you are expected to observe towards every Muslim. In the case of a non-Muslim you may not know whether he wishes you well or not.

Therefore according to a Hadith in Bukhari and Muslim, Anas reported God's Messenger as saying:

"When the people of the Book salute you say: 'The same to you'." This is a perfectly polite and reasonable response. A Muslim is not on the other hand to abuse a non-Muslim, even if he abuses you, in accordance with another Hadith in which Aisha related that some Jews asked permission to come in to see the Prophet (p) and said, "Death (i.e. *Sām*, not *salām*) be upon you." Aisha retorted "No, but upon you be death and a curse". The Prophet responded "God is kind, Aisha, and likes kindness in everything." She asked if he had not heard what they said, and he replied that he had responded with "and upon you". (Bukhari and Muslim) However, if there is a mixed group or even one Muslim in a group of non-Muslims, the salam may be used in accordance with another Hadith in which Usama b. Zaid related that the Messenger of God passed a mixed company of Muslims, polytheists who worshipped idols and Jews and gave them a salutation of peace (Bukhari and Muslim).

There is nevertheless another perspective on this subject, based on several verses of the Qur'an and another Hadith.

According to this Hadith in Bukhari and Muslim the Prophet (p) said: "Say Salam to those you know and those you don't know". This would imply that there is no need to enquire or guess at the religion of a person before saying salaam. (In the modern context it is not always possible to identify who is a Muslim from his dress or appearance.)

Secondly those who hold this view regard the Hadith about Aisha and the Jews as relating to a particular instance of hostility leading to Aisha's anger, which the Prophet diffused by telling her he had responded "wa alaik". This is in accordance with the Qur'anic principle that one may retaliate against injury but not

exceed the harm one has received. However this same verse which permits retaliation (Qur'an 5:45) emphasises the superiority of forgiveness. This is repeated in the words of Qur'an 42:40: ***"The recompense for any injury is an injury equal thereto (in degree): but if a person forgives and makes reconciliation, his reward is due from Allah: for (Allah) loves not those who do wrong."***

Another well-known verse says: ***"... repel (evil) with that which is better"*** (Qur'an 41:34). Surah 49:12 tells us to ***"avoid suspicion"***. Surah 25:63 says: ***"And the servants of (Allah) Most Gracious walk the earth with humility and are those who, when the ignorant address them, say 'Salaam'."***

Lastly Qur'an 45:14 refers specifically to forgiveness of those who have not understood or believed in Islam: ***"Tell those who believe to forgive those who do not look forward to the Days of Allah: It is for Him to recompense (for good or ill) each people according to what they have earned."***

All these verses of the Qur'an point in the direction of the moral superiority of openness, forbearance, forgiveness, magnanimity and good will over retaliation, whether for actual offences or for potential or imagined offences.

In conclusion, the *ahadith* specifically excluding the People of the Book from the salutations of Salaam have been understood by a group of scholars. They therefore ruled that it is unlawful to initiate salutations of salaam with non-Muslims such as Jews, Christians, Pagans, and Zoroastrians and others. Another group considers the related verses of the Qur'an, several *ahadith* and the context surrounding the specific *Hadith* on prohibition, and viewed it to be permissible to initiate greetings of Salaam with a non-Muslim. This group understands the *hadith* on prohibition to be specific to a particular instance and context. In accordance with the view of this group of scholars, therefore, it is only the presence of similar hostile conditions that warrant the prohibition of initiating salaams with non Muslims.

It is worth mentioning that some Companions saw the salutations of *Salaam* to be a right of companionship. This implies that the context may also be important.

However, virtually all scholars seem to have no problem with responding to *Salaam* from nonMuslims in consideration of the instruction of Allah in Qur'an 4:86. They only differ on the format of the reply.

Greeting in whatever form is considered by Scholars of Principles of Jurisprudence (*Usool al-Fiqh*) to be among social transactions (*Mu'amalat*) regarding which the basic principle of Jurisprudence governing it is permissibility, except otherwise prohibited by Islamic Law (*Sharia*).

Period 8

DO MUSLIMS BELIEVE IN PREDESTINATION?

The Arabic word *Qada'* is sometimes wrongly translated as "predestination". Such a translation is likely to cause misunderstanding.

What is Qada' (or Qadr)?

Qada' (or Qadr) means Allah's decree, implying His complete final control over the outcome of events.

Qada', Free Will and Moral Choice

Belief in Qada' does not mean a denial of the measure of free will and moral choice which Allah has given to man since the time He created Adam, and the moral responsibility of man for his choices, which is referred to repeatedly in the Qur'an. For example,

"By the soul and Him who inspired it with consciousness of what is wrong for it and what is right for it! Indeed he shall succeed who causes this (soul) to grow in purity and truly he is lost who buries it in darkness." (Qur'an 91:7-9)

Man indeed must strive for what is right and good. The example of the Prophet (ﷺ) and the early Muslims is a clear indication that belief in Qada' does not imply fatalism or that man should sit down and wait for things to happen. The life of a true Muslim is full of exertion and purpose, not acceptance of the status quo.

"Do men think that on their (mere) saying, 'we have believed', they will be left to themselves, and will not be put to a test?" (Qur'an 29:2)

"... man can have nothing but what he strives for..." (Qur'an 53:39)

"...Verily, Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change what is with themselves..." (Qur'an 13:11).

A Muslim, however, is to understand that although he is free to choose good or evil and will be rewarded for his good intention he cannot control the outcome of events, which is known to only Allah. For example, a man may decide to do a kind deed but be prevented from carrying it out. Or he might intend to do something good but forget. Or he may be absent-minded and does not form the wish to do the good deed in time, so that it is too late to carry it out.

The best-laid plans of men often go astray due to totally unforeseen circumstances that change the whole situation. Allah may choose to intervene in a person's plans, or He may choose to allow them to be carried out as envisioned by that person. Sometimes one person's plans may intentionally involve hindering another's. And yet, Allah also plans (Q.3:54).

In all cases, the belief in Qada' means that no circumstance is unforeseen by Allah, and that nothing happens without His knowledge and permission. His knowledge is complete while ours is limited and partial

"...it is possible that you dislike a thing which is good for you and that you love a thing that is bad for

you. Allah knows while you do not know” (Qur’an 2:216).

SIGNIFICANCE OF BELIEF IN QADA’

Belief in Qada’ is a source of peace of mind to the Muslim. It helps him to accept both good and bad fortune and respond to each in the right Islamic manner, which brings blessings on him.

There are some events in our lives, things that happen to us that despite our human effort are beyond our control, and these we are told to accept as tests, with gratitude to Allah (if they are pleasant), and with patience and endurance (sabr) if they are unpleasant. We should not give way to either over-confidence or despair, since nothing happens to us without the knowledge and permission of God. It is therefore not what happens to us that matters, but how we respond to it, and how we respond to Allah's guidance. Suhaib ibn Sinan related that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: ***“Wondrous is the case of a believer; there is good for him in everything, and it is so for him alone. If he experiences something agreeable, he is grateful to Allah, and that is good for him; and if he experiences adversity, he is steadfast and that is good for him.”*** (Muslim)

Even an outcome such as death, which must cause sorrow and sadness, is accepted by the believer with the consoling words: ***“Inna Lillahi, wa inna ilayhi raji’un”*** meaning “Indeed we are from God, and indeed to Him we shall return.”

It is this belief in Qada’ then that strengthens a Muslim’s endurance, faith, peace of mind and reliance on Allah alone.

DOES THE MUSLIM NOT LOSE HIS OR HER FREEDOM OF WILL WHEN HE/SHE IS ASKED BY ISLAM TO SUBMIT TOTALLY TO THE WILL OF ALLAH? HOW CAN ONE SUBMIT ONE'S WILL TO GOD, AND YET CLAIM TO HAVE A FREE WILL?

Does submission to the will of Allah (Islam) imply that the Muslim loses his freedom of will?

Would one say the patient has the right to accept or reject the prescription given to him by the Doctor?

His submission to the doctor's prescription is only the outcome of the carefully considered use of his freedom of will to go to the doctor in the first place by scrutinising his credentials as to whether he is qualified to give a trustworthy diagnosis and reliable remedy.

Likewise, Islam recognises that man has freedom to choose between right and wrong. Submission to the will of Allah is only using one freedom to submit willingly to the All-Wise, All-Knowing Creator. It is clear in the Qur'an 2:256 that there is no compulsion in religion and that Islam means willing submission to God and cannot be forced.

WEEK FIVE

2. Period 10

HOW COULD A MUSLIM RESPOND TO A STATEMENT THAT MUSLIMS FEAR GOD, WHILE CHRISTIANS LOVE GOD!

To address the meaning of "fear of God" objectively it is important we familiarize ourselves with similar phrases in the Bible in order to neutralize any bias. In the Book of Proverbs 1:7, it states

"The fear of God is the beginning of knowledge". In addition, Jesus stressed in Luke 1:50 that **"the Mercy of God descends on those who fear Him"**, and he himself feared God (Hebrews 5:7). Paul, who is thought of by many as the founder of Christianity, advises the Ephesians he is preaching to in the book of Ephesians 5:21 to submit one to another in fear of God. Therefore, if the fear of God means something like terror of God, how could it bring mercy and wisdom, knowledge and other blessings? And how could it have been recommended by Paul who was the prime advocate of salvation by love?

The meaning of fear of God in Islam does not suggest anything horrible. Rather it means God consciousness, reverence, being in awe of God, aware of Him, loving Him and therefore fearing to offend Him by doing the things He has forbidden and earning His displeasure or punishment.

Even between human beings - close friends or those in love - they are conscious of one another, careful not to do anything to offend or disappoint one another. How much stronger should this feeling be between a human being and his or her Creator?

Allah (SWT) is described as *Al-Wadood* (The Loving and Kind) (Qur'an 85:14) and in one of the Hadith the Prophet (p) said that Allah is more tender towards His creatures than a mother towards her infant. Love of God is a feature of all true religions, and nobody can lay exclusive claim to loving God or being loved by God.

WHY DOES ALLAH USE "WE" FOR HIMSELF IN THE QUR'AN IF HE IS ONLY ONE?

This question, though usually innocently asked, is often a reflection of one's ignorance not just of the Arabic language, but also of English.

In many languages such as Arabic, Hebrew, Hausa, Yoruba and English etc., there are two types of plurals: a plural of numbers and a plural of respect or majesty. The Advanced Learner's English Dictionary says under the word "We" that it is also used by a ruler or important person (such as Queen,

Head of State or Pope) to describe himself or herself.

Does God the Almighty Sovereign Creator not have the right to use the “plural of respect” for? The use of the word “We” and “Us” in the Qur’an has no other meaning than this, in accordance with the basic and repeated statement throughout the Qur’an that Allah is One (Qur’an 112:1-4), and not “two in One” or “three in One”.

Also, it is often observed in the Qur’an that the sudden transition within one and the same sentence, from the pronoun “We” or “I” to “He”, or from “We” to “God”, is meant to impress upon the listener or reader of the Qur’an the fact that God is not a “person” but an All-Embracing Power that cannot be defined or even adequately referred to within the limited range of any human language.

The following passages would illustrate this point:

Qur’an 7:57:

“And He it is who sends forth the winds as a glad tidings of His coming grace – so that, when they have brought heavy clouds, We may drive them towards dead land and cause thereby water to descend; and by this means do We cause all manner of fruit to come forth. Even thus shall We cause the dead to come forth: (and this) you ought to keep in mind.”

(Transition from He or His to We.)

Qur’an 21:25: ***“And We sent no messenger before thee but We revealed to him that there is no God but Me, so serve Me.”*** (Transition from We to Me.)

Period 11

IS THE ISLAMIC DRESS CODE FOR WOMEN (HIJAB) NOT OPPRESSIVE TO THEM? SHOULD MUSLIM MEN NOT ALSO HAVE A DRESS CODE?

Nearly all societies and cultures, both past and present, have had implicitly-known or explicitly stated minimum dress codes for both its men and women. With these written or unwritten codes in the collective consciousness of a society, wearing anything less is considered “indecent exposure” which is a moral or, in some communities, sometimes even a legal offence. When it comes to the question of attire, sometimes the impression given by the non-Muslim media is that the Muslim women who observe proper "Hijab" are being oppressed. Anybody who is familiar with the Qur'an (see Qur'an 33:59 and 24:30-31) and with committed Muslim, women know that they do not do so just because somebody is telling them to. They are committed to Almighty Allah and this is part of the wisdom He gave to the Muslims to keep society pure and respectable.

Apart from the outer functions of a dress, the Hijab helps to safeguard the modesty and decency of a person and safeguards the moral ideals of a society. Hijab therefore has a moral function and must be

accompanied by good behaviour.

Appropriate dress (Hijab) for both men and women is naturally important for a society where sexual relations are strictly confined to marriage. To make it easy for people to live within the bounds of morality, they are required to wear clothes that conceal and do not reveal or accentuate their bodily charms and thus reduce or eliminate temptations. Women are therefore naturally required to cover more of themselves than men.

The Hijab aids in giving identity and respect for the Muslim woman as an intellectually and morally upright human being useful to societal development and not a "pleasure object" for men's lusts. It also minimizes the unnecessary envy and jealousy among some women that goes with the competition for beauty and show off (especially among the physically less fortunate and older ones).

Islam, being a universal religion, has not prescribed any particular form, colour, fashion or style of dress. However, it should meet certain requirements of Islamic dress whatever the climate or region. These requirements apply to both man and woman.

Dress should cover a person's "awrah". A man's "awrah" extends from the navel to the knee. A woman's "awrah" is the whole body with the exception of the face, hands and feet. Dress should be loose fitting but not transparent. Dress outside the home should not be worn for the sake of showing off, whether by glamorous garments that make for pride or excite admiration, envy or lust, or whether by rough and repulsive garments that are meant to draw attention to poverty or alleged piety. Men are not allowed to wear silk or gold and women should not wear perfume outside the home.

Proper dress is one of the outer symbols of the civilizing mission and power of Islam. The curious thing is that some people find it strange that Muslim women should cover themselves from head to foot, but do not find it strange that some Catholic sisters and nuns for example wear a similar type of dress. Nor do they observe that Mary the mother of Jesus (AS) is not shown bare-headed or in short dresses or skirts. This modest dressing is a virtue that people of all religions should accept and respect rather than criticize.

Should we say that a woman who uncovers herself and shows her body off has every right to do so, but that a woman who chooses to protect herself and her chastity has no right to do so?

Modesty in dress and behaviour should be the norm not the exception.

The veiling of the face by women is permissible and left to the individual taste, but the face must be uncovered for Hajj. Interestingly in the past Christian women were required to cover their heads in Church. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 11:3-13 **"... any woman who prays or prophesies with her head**

unveiled dishonours her head - it is the same as if her head were shaven... let her wear a veil..."

Period 12

SHOULD THE VOICE OF A WOMAN BE HEARD BY MEN?

There is no indication whatsoever either in the Qur'an or in the Hadith of the Prophet (ﷺ) in support of this view. On the contrary, the Prophet (ﷺ) used to listen to the voices of women other than his wives. In Qur'an 58:1 the case is mentioned of a woman who came to lodge her complaint, and a revelation came to him about it. It is an obvious proof that the Prophet (ﷺ) never considered women's voices as part of their "*awrah*". Women are not prohibited from speaking. However they should not speak in a tone that could be seductive as Allah indicated in Qur'an 33:32 ***"... be not over-soft in your speech, lest any whose heart is diseased should be moved to desire (you), but speak in a kindly way."*** This command definitely cannot be for the husband and wife since it is not haram i.e. forbidden, to speak to each other in a seductive tone.

It applies to men who are unlawful to her. Likewise, women are not prohibited from raising their voices. In a Hadith, Ibn Abi Hatim reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) heard a woman reciting the Qur'an Chapter 88 aloud (Qur'an 88:1) at night as he was walking in the streets of Madina and he did not stop her.

Furthermore, the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) used to ask the wives of the Prophet (ﷺ) questions, and they used to answer them. An example is the case of the girl who complained about being forced into marriage by her father (Hadith - Ibn Majah, also Bukhari Vol.2:95, etc.) In fact, Al-Baihaqi further reported that A'isha (RA) used to call Adhan, and lead women in congregational prayer. Accordingly the Shafi'i and Hanbali Schools consider the Adhan (Call to Prayer) of women as permissible (Fiqh-ul-Sunnah, Vol.1, p.113). This is provided that the women hold their congregational prayer separately from men, and that it does not cause any undesirable consequences. This is an additional piece of evidence for the permissibility of women's speaking aloud.

Prohibiting women speaking in church is a teaching found in Christianity as it is observed in 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 that: "As in all the Churches of the Saints, the women should keep silence in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as even the law says. If there is anything they desire to know, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church." This is however not found in Islam. During the time of Umar's Caliphate a woman in the mosque publicly disagreed with him on a legal ruling. He accepted her correction and did not reprove her for speaking in public in the mosque.

SHOULD A MENSTRUATING WOMAN BE ALLOWED INTO THE MOSQUE OR TO TOUCH OR RECITE THE

QUR'AN?

There are three opinions on the issue. Different views are based on the interpretation of a passage in the Qur'an 4:43 that says:

“O you who believe! Draw not near unto prayer when you are drunken, till you know that which you utter, nor when you are (ritually) polluted, save when journeying upon the road, till ye have bathed.”

- The first group of jurists prohibited prayer while in a state of pollution absolutely, which is the opinion of Malik and his disciples.
 - The second group including al-Shāfi'i, prohibited staying in the mosque but permitted one who is passing through it.
 - The third group, including Abu Dawud and his disciples, permitted entry, passing through and stay in it.
- The disagreement arising from the verse stated above is on the actual interpretation of the word ***“come not near unto prayer”***. Those who maintain opposition have interpreted it to mean, ***“come not near the place of prayer”*** that is an insertion of the word “place” in the passage. By this, they say that it is prohibited for a person in the state of Junub (impurity) to be in the mosque.

They also uphold this position based on the report in certain hadith: Aisha said “The Messenger of Allah (p) said that his companions’ houses were practically in the mosque. He said, “Direct these houses away from the mosque’. He then entered the mosque, but the people did nothing, hoping that Allah would reveal to Muhammad that what they were doing was permissible. After he came out, he said, ***“Direct those houses away from the mosque, for it is not permitted for a menstruating woman or sexually impure person to be in the mosque”*** (Related by Abu Dawud.)

However this is considered a weak hadith and it is a tradition that is not established according to the traditionists (al-Albani’s Dha’eet Sunnan, Abu Dawud, number 32. See also Bidayat at Mujtahid Vol. 1 p.50 by ibn Rushd.)

Therefore according to the third group, the content of the verse does not say “place of worship” rather it emphasizes “salat” i.e. “come not near prayer (Salat)”. This makes sense when considering other categories of people in a state of impurity in the verse, which includes a traveller. Allah says a traveller in the state of ritual impurity should not pray unless purified even by Tayammum (dry ablution) if water cannot be reached. Hence the verse should be read as it is without adding or interpolating any word into it.

The permissibility of a person in a state of impurity entering the mosque is further made clear by ash-

Shaukani quoting a hadith reported from Aisha who related: ***“The Prophet (ﷺ) said to me, ‘Fetch me my cloth from the mosque’. I said, ‘I am menstruating’. He said, ‘Your menstruation is not in your hand’.”***

(Related by major collectors of Hadith except for al-Bukhari.)

Maymuna the wife of the Prophet said: ***“The Messenger of Allah used to come to one of our rooms while we were menstruating and put his head on (his wife’s) lap and recite the Qur’an.***

Then one of us would take his clothes and put them in the mosque while she was menstruating.”

(Related by Ahmad and an-Nasa’i with supporting evidence.)

Concerning whether a person in a state of impurity can touch or recite the Qur’an, opinion differs. One group prohibited it based on a Qur’anic verse that says of the Qur’an: ***“Which none touch save the purified”*** (Qur’an 56:79). They also rely on a hadith related by Ali (R.A). It says: ***“Nothing prevented the Prophet (P) from the recitation of the Qur’an, except janaba (ritual impurity).”***

Therefore it is not considered permissible for the junub to touch or recite the Qur’an until he or she is purified.

The other group of jurists says that Qur’an 56:79 is not a prohibition addressed to human beings but a statement referring to the angels with Allah. Ibn Hazm and Abu Dawud pointed out also that the Prophet (ﷺ) sent a letter to Heraclius containing Qur’anic ayah (3:64). They concluded:

“This is the letter the Messenger of Allah wrote containing this verse, to the Christians, and of course they touched it.” Therefore, scholars like Al-Bukhari, at-Tabarani, Abu Dawud and Ibn Hazm are of the opinion that it is permissible for one who is in post-sex impurity (or in menstruation) to recite the Qur’an. Ibn Abbas saw nothing wrong with it: he said ***“The Prophet (ﷺ) used to mention Allah under all circumstances”***.

In Ibn Hajr’s notes to Bukhari’s work, he says, ***“There is no authentic hadith reported by Bukhari concerning the prohibition of reciting by one who is sexually impure or menstruating”***.

However, some jurists took consideration of the aforementioned hadith as Sahih such as AtTirmidhi, al-Hafez and another one by the same person, Ali (R.A) that says: ***“I saw the Messenger of Allah perform ablution and recite some of the Qur’an after which he said ‘This is for the one who is not in post-sex impurity’. If one is in post-sex impurity, he may not do so, not even one verse.”*** (Ahmad and Abu Ya’la)

These jurists interpreted it in two ways: that the first tradition does not give rise to a rule of law as it is only the impression of the narrator, while for the second tradition, if seen as authentic, it is not to make it forbidden, but only permitting it for menstruating woman because of the length of the period (this is Malik’s opinion).

Therefore interpretations differ, but in view of strong evidence permitting it, it may be concluded that

there is nothing wrong in a menstruating woman or anybody in a state of impurity touching or reciting the Qur'an. However, believers are advised to take to the opinion that gives them peace of mind.

WEEK SIX

3. Period 13

SHOULD A WIFE BE ABLE TO DIVORCE HER HUSBAND IN THE SAME WAY THAT HE CAN DIVORCE HER?

This question requires broader discussion. There are several types of divorce in Islam, each with its conditions, and a woman with marital problems has several options to end her marriage. It must first be said that in Islam marriage and the family are very important and divorce is to be used only as a last resort when all attempts at reconciliation have failed. (See Unit 1, Section 6)

However, there are a number of reasons why a couple cannot live together, such as alcoholism, abuse, cruelty, extreme incompatibility, etc.

Basically, there are 4 types of divorce:

- (a) Divorce pronounced by the husband
- (b) Divorce by mutual consent (but pronounced by the husband)
- (c) *Khul'*, whereby a wife agrees to pay back all or part of her mahr (or whatever may be agreed on) in order to be released
- (d) divorce by the court if the wife complains and it is confirmed that the husband is not fulfilling his legal obligation of her maintenance, or abandons her, or is taking alcohol, or is harming her in any way etc. In this case she is not required to pay back anything to the husband. (The above is in accordance with the Maliki School of Jurisprudence - there may be variations in other Schools.)

The husband has the stronger right to pronounce divorce since he bears financial responsibility for the household and its maintenance according to his means (even if the wife happens to be wealthy).

However, he must be conscious that if he pronounces divorce he will not be able to take back the *mahr* (wedding gift to the bride) or any of the gifts he has given his wife during the marriage. Moreover it is normally the wife who is entitled to custody of the children especially the younger ones.

WHAT IS MEANT BY THE TERM "BID'A" IN ISLAM?

The word "*bid'a*" in Arabic comes from the word "*bada'a*" and means originating something, or an innovation (of a 'new' thing), as for example in Qur'an 2:117, where Allah is described as the "*Originator of the heavens and earth...*" (See also 6:101, 29:19, and 65:1). Allah in Qur'an 46:9 also tells the Prophet (s) to "*Say: I am no innovator (nor am I the first) among the Messengers...*" The discussion of *bid'a* by Muslim jurist center around the following sayings of the Prophet (s):

1) ***"Beware of matters newly begun, for every matter newly begun is bid'a, every bid'a is misguidance, and every misguidance is in the Fire"*** (Abu Dawood, Tirmidhi), and

2) ***"Whoever innovates into our religion what was not (originally) in it, it is rejected"***

(Narrated by Aisha in Sahih al-Bukhari Vol.3, No.861 in the Alim Version 6.0 Software; and An-Nawawi Hadith, No.5).

3) This latter hadith has also been narrated as ***"Whoever performs an action not in accordance with our affairs is rejected."*** (Sahih Muslim).

4) Ghudayf ibn al-Harith ath-Thumali narrated that Allah's Messenger (s) said, ***"Never did a people make an innovation (in religion) that there was withdrawn from them the equal measure of Sunnah."***

Adhering to Sunnah is better than making innovations." (Transmitted by Ahmad in the collection of Tirmidhi, No.65 in the Alim 6.0 Software).

5) A narration by Jabir ibn Abdullah further states that the Prophet (s) said, ***"The best speech is the book of Allah, and the best path to follow is the path of Muhammad (s), and the worst things are the innovations, and every innovation is an error."*** (Sahih Muslim, No.425 in Alim 6.0).

These are strong words, with apparently general implication. However, the Prophet (s) has also been reported to have said ***"...Whoever begins a good sunnah (practice) in Islam earns the reward of it and all who perform it after him, without diminishing their own reward in the slightest, and whoever begins a bad sunnah (practice) in Islam bears the responsibility of it and the responsibility of all those who practice it..."*** (Narrated by Jarir ibn Abdullah al-Bajali in Sahih Muslim, No.1230 in Alim 6.0; Tirmidhi; Nasa'i).

Moreover, *Bid'a* is a term reserved for *ibaadah* acts, and only those which do not have a basis in the law. "If this way of innovation belongs to *dunya* exclusively, it would not be a *bid'a*" (*ibid.*).

That is, new matters belonging to social affairs of the Ummah, whether positive or negative, are not subject to the term "*bid'a*". This is because the hadith mention the existence of change and new things without condemning them as *bid'a*.

Shatibi also argues that acts of *ibaadah* are acts of pure obedience and do not involve human reasoning. Hence, human reasoning cannot contrive upon new acts of *ibaadah* that are acceptable. However, the area where human reasoning can contrive upon new practices are in the area of *adat* (or *mu'amalat*). Practices such as flying in aeroplane, applying traffic rules and the like are not *bid'a* because they do not contradict the Shari'ah. Before a practice can be declared *bid'a*, a comprehensive indepth knowledge of Qur'an and Sunnah is a prerequisite. Genuine difference of opinions must be based on Qur'an and

Authentic Sunnah. A person who does *Ijtihad* (sound reasoning) and arrives at a right answer gets double reward but he who does it and arrives at a wrong answer shall only have one reward (Hadith).

Period 14

DOES ISLAM PROHIBIT TOBACCO SMOKING?

Allah says in the Qur'an: "...***Do not stretch your hands to what may cause your own destruction...***"

(Qur'an 2:195) Therefore it is haram for a Muslim to eat or drink anything that is harmful to him and may lead to his death, whether quickly or slowly.

Allah has bestowed life on people as a Trust, which he is not permitted to misuse or abuse (Qur'an 4:29).

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "*Do not harm yourself or others*" (Ibn Majah).

Another principle of Shari'ah states that "***whatever has been declared haram is so because of its impurity or its harmfulness or both.***"

In view of these verses of the Qur'an, the Hadith and the principles of Shari'ah, it is clear that if the use of tobacco is injurious to health, it is either haram or at least makruh (undesirable).

The harmfulness of smoking is beyond doubt. Governments all over the world now warn their citizens and compel the tobacco companies to place health warnings in their cigarette advertisements. Smoking is not only linked with cancer, bronchitis, heart problems and other killer diseases, it is known to cause harm to the foetus of a pregnant woman. Moreover not only the smoker is harmed - he also harms his family and co-workers and other non-smokers by what is known as "passive smoking" - his smoke goes into their lungs and causes the same kind of health problems that he is inflicting on himself.

Apart from the disease and death caused by smoking, it is also a total waste of resources.

Valuable farmlands are used to grow the tobacco plant, and millions of dollars are spent on buying the product, only for it literally to go up in smoke! It is like burning currency notes to no useful purpose. The Qur'an has a most apposite reference:

"... do not squander (your wealth) senselessly..." (Q.17:26)

In some Muslim countries, smoking is a deeply ingrained and addictive habit, and the smokers have sometimes convinced themselves that smoking is not haram. Do not allow a bitter argument over smoking to get in the way of your da`wah efforts. Reform of bad habits begins on the inside.

ANIMAL RIGHTS IN ISLAM

Allah says in the Qur'an 6:38 ***"There is not an animal that crawls on the earth, nor a bird that flies on its wings, but they are communities like you."***

From the above it is observed that despite the fact that human beings have been made to benefit from the animals they have nevertheless been urged to be kind and considerate in dealing with them.

Believers are taught to show gratitude to Allah for subjecting animals to their use (Qur'an 16:5-8, 22:36, etc.).

We are prohibited from showing cruelty to animals for no just reason. The Prophet (ﷺ) is reported to have said: "One of the great Prophets of the past was once bitten by an ant. He ordered the ants' nest to be burnt. Then Allah revealed to him (saying): 'If an ant has bitten you, you have burnt a (people like yourself) who celebrated the glory of their Lord'" (Bukhari and Muslim). He further said: 'Whoever kills even a sparrow for no reason, it will cry aloud to Allah on the Day of Resurrection, saying: 'O my Lord! Such and such a person killed me for nothing: he killed me for no good reason'" (narrated by Ibn Umar and Abdullah bin Al-As). According to another hadith a man took some young birds from the nest of their mother and the Prophet (ﷺ) ordered him to return them as a result of loving care shown by the mother bird. So, treatment of animals in a such a manner that will tamper with their natural needs and welfare as ordained by Allah, is condemned and discouraged. This includes confining animals in cages. Kindness to animals has a noble reward: It was reported that an adulteress allowed a thirsty dog to drink water she drew from a well, and her sins were forgiven for this act of kindness (Bukhari). The Prophet referred to another woman who tied her cat inside a room without feeding or allowing it to scavenge around by itself so that it died. He commented that woman would be put in Hell (Bukhari and Muslim). Modern technology and biotechnology in particular, have enabled human greed to manipulate animal hormones to over-produce their products such as eggs, milk, meat etc.

Overstressing animals in this manner is a kind of cruelty. Using animals for experiments has also been criticized by Muslim scholars on the grounds that scientists have been causing pain and suffering to the defenseless and innocent animals in the guise of testing drugs meant for humans.

They argue that they can make use of dead animals for dissections during physiological and anatomical practicals and that before subjecting animals to any medical treatment or experiments it must be ascertained that the experiment is really necessary and that there is no alternative for it. Where possible the animal should also be anaesthetized.

Violent treatment of animals such as Bull-fighting, Ram-fighting, Cock-fighting, using animals for target practice and over-burdening them are equally prohibited.

The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) himself was once reprimanded by God for neglecting his horse. The Prophet (ﷺ) was seen wiping the face of his horse with his gown (jullabiya). When asked why he was doing that, he replied: ***'Last night I had a reprimand from Allah regarding my horse for having neglected him'*** (narrated by Yahya bin Said).

Aisha herself narrates: ***"I was riding a restive camel and turned it rather roughly. The Prophet (ﷺ) said***

to me: 'It behooves you to treat the animals gently'" (Muslim).

Period 15

DO THE CRESCENT-MOON AND STAR NOT HAVE SPIRITUAL OR RITUAL STATUS IN ISLAM, ESPECIALLY AS

THESE SYMBOLS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH RAMADAN, MOSQUE ARCHITECTURE ETC.

Taking these to be the symbols of Islam is a wrong assumption. This wrong notion is normally based on what is known of Christianity i.e. no cross no Christianity. This does not apply to Islam.

The crescent-moon and star have no religious implications nor are they part of the fundamentals or basic teachings of Islam. Their origin can be traced back to the Ottoman Empire (Turkish Caliphate) which adopted them for some historical reasons. But there is no basis for it in the Qur'an and Sunnah. However, this is considered as *Mubah* i.e. tolerated, most especially as it can be useful in identifying mosques in some areas where the architectural structures of a mosque and a church appear the same.

SHOULD A MUSLIM CALL ANYONE A "KAFIR"?

Calling someone a "*Kafir*" (i.e. one who denies the truth) or "*Munafiq*" (i.e. a hypocrite) or "*Fasiq*" (i.e. a wrongdoer,) is itself wrongdoing. Allah alone can see into people's hearts. It is in the light of this that the Prophet (ﷺ) proclaimed in a Hadith that if you call someone a *Kafir* and he is not a *Kafir*, then Allah will consider you as a *Kafir*. (Bukhari) From Riyadh-us-Saliheen No.1565. Allah says that He knows best who strays from His path and who receives guidance (6:117).

The use of the word *Kafir* poses a great obstacle in the field of da'wah, because the person you abuse in this way will automatically be offended, take you as his enemy and refuse to listen to your message.

THEME: MORALITY (AKHLAQ) TOPICS

WEEK SEVEN

ETIQUETTE OF BATHING IN ISLAM (GHUSL) AND ISLAMIC TOILET RULES

Description:

Islam being a comprehensive way of life; it teaches us how to maintain and improve our hygiene. This lesson incorporates the Islamic etiquette of bathing and its relation to spiritual purity. Special attention is given to the aspects specific to Muslim women.

Introduction

For many people, the main purposes of bathing are to remove dirt and odors and slough off dead skin cells - basically, to maintain good hygiene. In addition, people bathe to feel clean, smell fresh, and revitalize or relax. Good hygiene helps promote health and prevents disease.

Islam is a comprehensive way of life and teaches us how to maintain and improve hygiene. Bathing etiquette is raised to the level of worship, and good hygiene is tied to spiritual purity. A new Muslim should learn the simple rules of bathing to maintain physical and spiritual cleanliness. *Ghusl* is the Arabic word for washing, specifically washing the entire body with water in a prescribed manner. Sometimes it is also called the 'ritual bath' or 'major ablution' to distinguish it from 'minor ablution' (*wudoo*). When one seeks to purify themselves from major state of impurity, they should bathe keeping this intention in heart

Water as a purifying element is not unique to Islam, but is common to Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism, Shintoism, and others. In Judaism, water was traditionally used in the *mikvah* (Jewish bath) and in rituals of conversion. Also, the ritual bath (*ghusl*) should not be confused with Baptism, a ritual performed for admission into some Christian churches whose forms and rituals vary, such as by immersion in water or bathing the head, starting from the forehead. In contrast, the ritual bath (*ghusl*) is not associated with the removal of an inherited sin.

In this lesson, we will learn how and when to perform the ritual bath. We will also discuss the aspects of the ritual bath specific to Muslim women.

HOW IS THE RITUAL BATH PERFORMED?

It is sufficient in the ritual bath that a person wash all his body completely, but the correct manner and order of performing the ritual bath, as did the Prophet, may Allah praise him, is as follows:

(1) the person must intend in their heart to purify themselves in a prescribed manner for Allah's sake. The intention is a simple matter that changes regular bathing into an act of worship pleasing to Allah.

(2) say '*Bismillah*' [meaning: (I begin) in the name of Allah]

(3) wash both hands three times.

(4) then wash the genitals with the left hand.

(5) make ablution (*wudoo'*) like the one made for prayer.

❑ wash the hands three times.

❑ rinse the mouth and nose.

❑ then wash the face three times.

❑ followed by washing the right hand and arm up to and including the elbow three times.

❑ then the left hand and arm likewise.

❑ wipe the entire head and ears (inside and out).

The Prophet, may Allah praise him, used to delay washing his feet until the end of his ritual bath. You may wash them now or delay till the end. Wash the right foot first.

(6) Rub water through one's hair three times, letting the water reach down to the roots of the hair.

(6) pour water over the entire body, beginning with the right side, then the left, washing under the armpits, inside the ears, inside the navel, between the toes and whatever part of the body that can be easily reached.

ISLAMIC TOILET RULES

What are the Islamic toilet regulations?

The Quran says almost nothing about toilet etiquette. The only mention is in verse 5:6 where it says that it is important to wash before prayer, or after you have used the toilet or had contact with women:

O you who believe, when you rise up for prayer, wash your faces, and your hands up to the elbows, and wipe your heads, and (wash) your feet up to the ankles. And if you are under an obligation, then wash (yourselves). And if you are sick or on a journey, or one of you comes from the privy, or you have had contact with women and you cannot find water, betake yourselves to pure earth and wipe your faces and your hands therewith. Allah desires not to place a burden on you but He wishes to purify you, and that He may complete His favour on you, so that you may give thanks.

That's all that the Quran has to say on the topic. The Islamic regulations on toilet hygiene are codified in *hādīth*, sayings attributed to Muhammad. Large collections of *hādīth* were gathered during the 8th and 9th centuries. The Shi'a and Sunni use different *hādīth* collections, making for the possibility of different sect-specific toilet procedures.

Qadaahul Haajah, or *Relieving Oneself*, codifies Islamic regulation controlling how to use the toilet so as not to defile oneself before prayer.

Before getting into the details, first ask yourself if the trip is really necessary. The code says that a person must relieve themselves as infrequently as possible, as the natural functions of the body are sinful and unclean.

If you *really* have to go, before entering the toilet you are supposed to pray:

Bismillaah, Allaahumma inee a'uudhu bika minal khubthi wal khabaaith.

meaning:

In the name of Allah, O Allah! I seek refuge with You from all offensive and wicked things (evil deeds and evil spirits).

You are not allowed to enter the toilet carrying anything bearing the name of Allah, such as the Quran or any other book containing the name Allah, or jewelry engraved with the name of Allah. Or, at this point, a printed copy of this page.

Step into the toilet area left foot first.

You must keep silent while in the toilet. No talking, reading aloud, greeting others or answering greetings. This is in contrast to the Buddhist toilet rules described in the *Vinaya Pitaka*, in which monks are instructed to cough loudly when arriving at the toilet and anyone already there should cough in response.

You are also instructed that you shouldn't eat while using the toilet.

If two men are defecating together, they are told that they must not converse, look at each other's genitals, or fondle each other's genitals. Really. Ibn Mājah realized that he would have to put these specifics in the *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, one of the *Al-Kutub al-Sittah* or six major *hādīth* collections he authored. This admonition against fondling appears at 1.342. The *Sunan Ibn Mājah* is pretty big, with over 4,000 *hādīth* in 1,500 chapters spread across 32 books.

Proper physical orientation is important. You must not face toward the Kaaba in Mecca, nor face directly away from it, either. Try for a 90° orientation.

According to the *hādīth*, Muhammad specified that the defecator should use an odd number of stones, preferably three, to clean the anus, wiping upward and not downward. Then move to a different location and wash the anus with water. Do all of this with your left hand. Muhammad didn't come up with the idea of three stones, it originated in ancient Greece. These days paper is allowed instead of stones, I suppose an odd number of squares.

Shattaf is the term for a hand-held water sprayer, and that can be used also to purify self from impurities.

When you're finished, it is time for another specific prayer:

Alhammdu lillaahilla dhee adhaba 'annil adhaa wa 'aalaanee.

Praise be to Allah who relieved me of the filth and gave me relief.

Now you are ready to step out of the toilet area. Make sure to step out right foot first, the opposite of how you stepped in.

WEEK EIGHT

NAKEDNESS AND CLOTHING ETIQUETTES IN ISLAM

The covering of one's nakedness (awra) is of utmost importance for a male and female in Islam, thus the Qur'an and Sunnah have laid great emphasis with regards to this. We also see the various books of Islamic Jurisprudence (fiqh) discussing the issues relating to the nakedness (Awra) of both the male and female in great detail.

Ibn Manzur posited that;

"Awra is an Arabic term the plural of which is Awrat. Linguistically, it means a hidden and secret place, and a person's Awra is that which must be kept hidden. It also refers to everything that causes shame when exposed, thus, the Awra of an individual is the area of the body which (normally) causes embarrassment if exposed".

(Ibn Manzur, Lisan al-Arab, 9/370).

In the terminology of Islamic Jurisprudence, Awra refers to the area or part of the body that must be covered with appropriate clothing. In the English language, it is normally translated as 'nakedness' or 'area of the body that must be concealed'. Many people (normally from the Indo/pak) refer to it as 'Satar'. For the purpose of simplicity, I will use the term 'Awra' in this article, Insha Allah.

Clothing from an Islamic Perspective

Muslims are required to pay attention to their appearance, making sure that their clothing is beautiful and clean, especially when dealing with others and when performing the prayers, as the Qur'an states,

"Children of Adam, wear your best clothes to every mosque." (Soorat Al-A'raaf, 7:31)

Allah ﷻ has permitted people to wear nice clothes and put on a good appearance, as doing so is one aspect of remembering Allah's blessings upon them. As the Qur'an states,

"Say, 'Who has forbidden the adornment of Allah, which He has brought forth for His servants and the good things, clean and pure, which Allah has provided for them?' Say, 'They are [lawful] for the believers in the present life but they shall be exclusively for them on the Day of Resurrection.' Thus We explain Our signs for a people who understand." (Soorat Al-A'raaf, 7:32)

Clothing Serves a Number of Purposes and countless benefits:

It covers the parts of the body which must be covered in public, following the standards of modesty which are innate in all human beings:

"Children of Adam, We have sent down clothing to you to conceal your private parts." (Soorat Al-A'raaf, 7:26)

It covers the body against heat, cold and harm in general. Heat and cold are weather phenomena which can harm people. Describing the benefits of clothing which He has provided for His servants, Allah states,

"He has made shelters for you in the mountains and He has made garments for you to protect you from the heat and garments to protect you from each other's violence. In that way He perfects His blessing on you so that hopefully you may devote yourselves to Him." (Soorat An-Nahl, 16:81)

Islam is a religion which lays down rules based on the dictates of the pure nature innate in all humans (fitrah), straightforward reasoning and sound logic.

THE GENERAL RULE REGARDING CLOTHING

Islam is a religion which lays down rules based on the dictates of the pure nature innate in all humans (fitrah), straightforward reasoning and sound logic.

The general rule in the Sharee'ah is that all types of clothing and adornment are allowed.

Indeed, Islam does not require Muslims to wear a certain type of clothing. It considers all types of clothing lawful as long as such clothing serves the required purposes without exceeding the bounds set by Islam in this respect.

The Prophet ﷺ wore the same type of clothes prevalent in his time and did not order people to wear a particular type of clothing. He only warned them against certain qualities relating to clothing, for the general rule in Islamic Law regarding dealings in general, including clothing, is that everything is allowed unless there is evidence which states otherwise; this means nothing is considered forbidden except with

evidence, as opposed to acts of worship, such as the prayer and fasting, which are governed by the principle of restriction, in that legally responsible people must not perform any act of worship unless it becomes clear to them that it is prescribed and approved by Allah Himself, and thus no act of worship may be performed without textual evidence from the Qur'an and the Prophet's Sunnah.

The Prophet ﷺ said,

“Eat, drink, dress and give charity, but without extravagance or arrogance.

(Sunan An-Nasaa'ee: 2559)

While Islam outlines a code of modesty, it has no fixed standard as to a type of clothing that Muslims must wear. However, Muslims may use the same type of clothes commonly used in their respective countries, with the exception of those that Islam has declared forbidden.

FORBIDDEN TYPES OF CLOTHING

1. Clothing that reveals the private parts:

Muslims are required to cover their private parts with appropriate clothing, as the Qur'an states,

“Children of Adam! We have sent down clothing to you to conceal your private parts.”

(Soorat Al-A'raaf, 7:26)

Islam has fixed the standards of modesty for both men and women. For men, the minimum amount to be covered is between the navel and the knee. For women who are in the presence of men not related to them, they must cover their bodies except for their face and hands.

Islam requires that clothing must also be loose enough to cover the body properly. Therefore, skin-tight and see-through clothes are not allowed in Islam. In fact, the Prophet ﷺ warned those people who do not observe modesty in dress, calling them ***“types among the people of Hellfire”, one of them being “women who are clothed yet naked”.***

2. Clothing that involves dressing like or imitating the opposite sex:

This type of clothing is strictly forbidden in Islam and wearing it is considered one of the major sins. This imitation may be extended to include imitation in the manner of speaking, posture and movement, for Allah's Messenger ﷺ cursed men who wear women's clothes and women who wear men's clothes. *(Sunan Abu Daawood: 4098)* ***He also cursed men who make themselves look like women and women who make themselves look like men.***

(Saheeh Al-

Bukhaaree: 5546)

By directing men and women to observe different modes of dress, Islam takes into account the biological differences between them and encourages them to act in accordance with the dictates of reason and dictates of sound reason and the pure inner nature innate in all humans (fitrah).

It is prohibited to wear clothing which involves imitation of the dress traditionally worn by non-Muslims or clothing of religious significance.

3. **Clothing that involves imitation of the dress traditionally worn by non-Muslims.**

Such as the type of clothing worn by monks and priests and wearing a cross. This also includes clothing that is specific to a certain religion, for the Prophet ﷺ said,

“Whoever imitates a people is one of them.” (Sunan Abu Daawood: 4031)

This imitation extends to wearing clothing of religious significance. Imitation of this type is a sign of weakness and lack of confidence in the truth one adopts. Imitation here does not include wearing clothing that is predominant in one’s country even if such dress is worn by the majority of non-Muslims, for the Prophet ﷺ used to wear clothing that was common amongst the Quraysh pagans with the exception of those clothing items that are expressly forbidden.

4. **Clothing that is worn with pride and conceit:**

The Prophet ﷺ said,

“No one who has an atom’s weight of pride in his heart will enter Paradise.”

(Saheeh Muslim: 91)

It is for this reason that Islam warns against trailing one’s lower garments on the ground out of pride.

The Prophet ﷺ said,

“On the Day of Resurrection, Allah will not even look at those who drag their garments on the ground out of pride.” (Saheeh Al-Bukhaare: 3465; Saheeh Muslim: 2085)

Islam also warns against wearing the so-called libaas ash-shuhrah (flamboyant, flashy clothing). In fact, this term refers to a number of things including any type of weird clothing which has certain qualities that attract the attention of the general public, making its wearer known for it; ‘notorious clothing’ due to its type or loud and repulsive colour; any type of clothing that makes its wearer an object of pride and fame, attracting too much attention to himself. The Prophet ﷺ said,

“Whoever wears clothes of shuhrah in this world, Allah will make him wear clothes of humiliation on the Day of Judgement.” (Musnad Ahmad: 5664; Sunan Ibn Maajah: 3607)

5. **Silk clothing or clothing adorned with gold or silk for men:**

Referring to gold and silk once, the Prophet ﷺ said,

“These are forbidden for men among my followers but permissible for women.”

(Sunan Ibn Maajah: 3595; Sunan Abu Daawood: 4057) By silk is meant pure silk obtained from the layer of the silkworm.

6. **Extravagant clothing:**

The Prophet ﷺ once said, ***“Eat, give charity and wear clothes. Let no extravagance or pride be mixed with what you do.”*** (Sunan An-Nasaa’ee: 2559)

The manner of dressing, however, varies from one person to another depending on one’s social position. If a person is rich, he may purchase clothing that a poor person cannot afford, given his monthly outcome, economic position and other financial obligations he has to fulfill. While a piece of clothing may be considered a form of extravagance for a poor person, it may not be considered as such for a rich person.

WEEK NINE

ETTIQUETES OF TRAVELLING IN ISLAM

Travelling is a piece of torment and discomfort, and when one is proceeding on journey the following things must be considered in Islam.

Return trusts to their owners, settle grievances and debts, and leave for your family sufficient provisions. Never travel alone except in cases of emergency when you find no company. The Holy Prophet peace and blessing of Allah be upon him, said:

“One passenger is one devil, two passengers are two devils, but three passengers make a caravan”

(Abu Dawood, Nasa'i and Tirmidhi).

On travelling, choose good company and select one of you as your leader. The Holy Prophet peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said:

“When three people set out on a journey they should appoint one of them as a leader”

(Abu Dawood).

You should inform your family of the time of your arrival back to them. Do not return home at night as this is undesirable so that he should not see anything that he dislikes. The Prophet peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said:

“If one of you is absent from home for a longtime, he should not come back to his family by night”

In another version of the Hadith, the Holy Prophet peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, prohibited a man returning home by night (Bukhari and Muslim).

He should say goodbye to his family, friends and companions, as the Holy Prophet peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said:

“If one of you intends to set out on a journey, let him say goodbye to his brothers, for Allah Almighty will make in their prayers a blessing for him”

He should return home quickly after he achieves the objective of his journey. The Holy Prophet peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said:

“Travel is a piece of anguish as it deprives each traveler (of you) of the facilities of eating, drinking and sleeping. Therefore, when one of you has completed the purpose of your journey he should return home quickly” (Bukhari and Muslim).

THEME: ISLAMIC JURISPRUDENCE TOPICS

WEEK 10

Zakat in Islam

- I. Definitions
- II. Importance
- III. Beneficiaries

WEEK 11

Alms giving in Islam

- I. Definition
- II. Importance
- III. Beneficiaries
- IV. Difference between Zakat and alms giving.

WEEK 12

THE MEANING AND ARTICLES OF FAITH IN ISLAM

The basis of any religion is faith. Faith is not merely conviction of the truth of a given principle, but it is essentially the acceptance of a principle as a basis for action. Without faith, a man is like a car without a steering wheel, drifting aimlessly upon a sea of doubt and confusion.

What is faith in Islam?

It is belief in the Unity of God *or Tawheed*. This is expressed in the primary *Kalimah* (Word) of Islam as: “*Laa ilaaha illallaah*”, meaning: *“There is no one worthy of worship but Allah.”*

This beautiful phrase is the bedrock of Islam, its foundation and its essence. It is the expression of this belief, which differentiates a true Muslim from an unbeliever, or one who associates others with God in His Divinity. Thus, faith is firm belief arising out of knowledge and unshakable conviction in the Unity of Allah, in His Attributes and revealed guidance. One who believes as such is called Mu'min (faithful).

THE SIX ARTICLES OF FAITH

Faith is referred to in Arabic as ***Iman***. It represents firm belief in the heart, and not simply blind faith. Islamic doctrine revolves around six aspects described by the Prophet.

1. Belief in Allah, which entails the following:

- (i) Belief in Allah's existence.
- (ii) Allah is The God. He is The Creator, The Provider, The Sustainer, and the Owner of the entire universe. None has any share in these roles.
- (iii) Allah is the only being entitled to worship. No worship, service or veneration is to be offered to others besides Allah or along with Him, whether they be prophets, priests, saints, angels, idols, or stones.
- (iv) Allah has the most beautiful and perfect of names and attributes, which none can be compared to. He is Unique, separate and unlike His creation. No evil or deficiency can be attributed to Him.

2. Belief in the Angels, which entails the following:

- (i) Belief in the existence of angels, a creation of Allah.
- (ii) Belief that they have no right to receive any form of worship
- (iii) Belief in the names by which the angels are identified in the Quran and *Sunnah* (teachings of Prophet Muhammad).
- (iv) Belief in the special tasks assigned to each of them by Allah in the Quran and *Sunnah* (teachings of Prophet Muhammad).

3. Belief in the Revealed Scriptures, which entails the following:

- (i) Belief that Allah revealed scriptures to various prophets.
- (ii) Belief that they contained the truth from Allah if it is not adulterated ones.
- (iii) Belief that all previous scriptures other than the Quran have been altered.
- (iv) Belief in the Quran has several aspects:

- a) Belief that it is one of the scriptures of Allah.
- b) Belief that it is the Final Revelation to humanity, and that no other scripture will be revealed after it.
- c) Belief that everything in it is true, containing no falseness.
- d) Belief that it has remained unchanged, and will remain so for eternity.
- e) Belief that it has abrogated all previous scriptures before it.

4. Belief in the Messengers, which entails the following:

- (i) Belief that Allah sent prophets to every nation, calling them to worship and obey Allah Alone. One must believe in all of them, known or unknown, without rejecting any of them.
- (ii) Belief that they were the best of humanity, chosen due to their virtuousness.
- (iii) Belief that they were mere humans, not divine in any way, and that they do not have any right to receive worship, nor did they claim so.
- (iv) Belief that they merely conveyed the message from Allah and did not legislate from their own selves.
- (v) Belief that they did not err in conveying the message.
- (vi) Belief that obedience to them is a must.
- (vi) Belief that Muhammad was a last prophet.

5. Belief in Life after Death and the Final Day of Judgment, which entails the following:

- (i) Belief that a day will come when everything will come to an end, and Allah will raise the creation and judge them according to their deeds.

(ii) Belief that those who believed and practically followed the correct religion by following the prophets will enter Paradise for eternity, and that those who disbelieved will enter the Hellfire for eternity.

6. Belief in Divine Decree, which entails the following:

(i) Belief that Allah's Foreknowledge is all inclusive and complete. He has always known everything that would or would not happen, even before the creation of mankind.

(ii) Belief that Allah has recorded everything that was going to occur until the Day of Judgment in a book known as "The Mother of the Books" or "The Preserved Tablet".

(iii) Belief that whatever Allah willed has occurred, is occurring, and will occur. Nothing occurs against or without this Will.

(iv) Allah created everything.

We have mentioned here the minimal requirements of faith in each of these six categories that Muslims believe in, as the Prophet, may Allah praise him, mentioned that these articles form the basis of Islamic belief and faith.