Lecture #13

**Sincerity, Fulfilling Promise & Truthfulness**

**1. Sincerity (Ikhlas)**

* **Definition**:
  + Sincerity means being upright, sincere, truthful, and pure, while being distant from show or ostentation in intention and conduct. It involves purity of intention, straightforwardness in thoughts, loyalty in servitude to Allah, and avoiding worldly purposes in worship.
* **Importance of Intentions**:
  + All deeds are based on intention; deeds are either valid or void depending on the intention.
  + **Quranic Evidence**:
    - *“And they were not commanded except to worship Allah (being) sincere to Him in religion, inclining to truth, and to establish prayer and to give Zakah.”* (Surah Al-Bayyinah 98:5).
    - *“Say (O Muhammad): ‘Indeed, I have been commanded to worship Allah (being) sincere to Him in religion.’”* (Surah Az-Zumar 39:11).
  + **Hadith Evidence**:
    - *“Verily, all actions are but driven by intention and for everyone is what he intended.”* (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).
    - *“Certainly, Allah does not look at your shapes or wealth but only looks at your hearts and deeds.”* (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).
  + **Examples from Hadith**:
    - At the Battle of Tabuk, people with valid excuses who couldn’t participate were rewarded equally because of their intentions (Al-Bukhari & Abu Dawood).
    - *“If two Muslims meet each other with their swords, both the killer and the killed will be in Hell-fire.”* When asked why the killed would suffer, the Prophet (PBUH) explained it was because of their intention to kill their companion (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).
* **Significance of Sincere Intention**:
  + A sincere intention rewards a non-combatant like a combatant, and a non-Mujahid like a Mujahid.
  + A good deed with an evil intention is void, and an act of disobedience cannot be transformed into worship through good intention.
  + **Examples of Invalid Intentions**:
    - Backbiting to comfort someone or attending sinful gatherings for noble reasons is still sinful.
    - Building a mosque with forbidden money or making oaths on behalf of pious individuals is disobedience, even if done with a good intention.
  + **Final Teaching**:
    - Sincerity in intention is only known to Allah. A sincere person acts solely for Allah’s pleasure without concern for human praise or reward.

**2. The Concept of Bid’ah (Innovation in Religion)**

* **Definition**:
  + Any act resembling Shari'ah but lacking evidence in the Quran and Sunnah, done with the intention of gaining closeness to Allah, is termed Bid’ah.
* **Prophetic Warning Against Bid’ah**:
  + *“Whoever does any action that is not in accordance with this matter of ours (Islam), will have it rejected.”* (Sahih Muslim).
* **Key Teachings**:
  + Acts of worship must be authenticated by Shari'ah; anything else is deviation.
* **Examples of Bid’ah in Society**:
  + Constructing domes over graves or slaughtering animals on behalf of pious individuals.
  + Performing rituals labeled as religion without evidence from authentic sources.
  + People adopt such practices due to ignorance, refusal to follow learned scholars, and neglect of the Quran.

**3. Fulfillment of Promises in Islam**

* **Definition and Virtue**:
  + Keeping promises is a hallmark of true believers and a special trait of faithful Muslims (Momineen).
  + Breaking promises is a trait of polytheists (Mushrikeen) and hypocrites (Munafiqeen).
* **Quranic Evidence**:
  + *“And fulfill (every) covenant. Verily! The covenant will be questioned about.”* (Surah Al-Isra 17:34).
  + *“O you who believe! Fulfill (your) obligations.”* (Surah Al-Maeda 5:1).
  + *“O you who believe! Why do you say that which you do not do? Most hateful it is with Allah that you say that which you do not do.”* (Surah As-Saff 61:2-3).
* **Hadith Evidence**:
  + *“Three are the signs of a hypocrite: When he speaks, he lies; when he makes a promise, he breaks it; and when he is trusted, he betrays his trust.”* (Al-Bukhari).
  + A person possessing these traits is considered a hypocrite until they abandon them.
* **Impact on Society**:
  + Breaking promises leads to loss of trust and weakens societal foundations.

**4. Truthfulness (Sidq)**

* **Definition**:
  + Truthfulness involves being truthful in words, actions, and attitude. A truthful person’s actions align with their beliefs and values.
* **Significance in Islam**:
  + Truthfulness is the foundation of all virtues and leads to righteousness and Paradise, while lying leads to evil and Hellfire.
  + Allah commands: *“Fear Allah and be with those who are true.”* (Surah At-Tawbah 9:119).
* **Prophetic Examples and Teachings**:
  + **Story of the Addicted Man**:
    - A man confessed to the Prophet (PBUH) about his multiple sins (drunkenness, theft, fornication) and sought advice. The Prophet instructed him to give up lying.
    - Whenever tempted to commit sin, the thought of confessing truthfully to the Prophet prevented him from indulging. Over time, he abandoned all his vices simply by being truthful.
  + **Prophet Muhammad’s Example**:
    - Before prophethood, he was known as Al-Sadiq (Truthful) and Al-Amin (Trustworthy).
    - His truthfulness and commitment helped overcome strong opposition during his mission.
* **Islamic Teachings on Truthfulness**:
  + Truthfulness is linked to piety and righteousness.
  + Lying is condemned as a major sign of hypocrisy and is a form of deception:
    - *“The greatest deception is to intentionally make your brother (in faith) believe something you know to be false.”*
  + Truthfulness is considered essential for individual happiness and societal harmony.