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1. **What are the sources of legal opinion (Islamic Law) in Islam? Please describe each.**

Legal opinion in Islam can be raw from various sources. God is the leading source of opinion, as Muslims regard His view above all else. God’s opinion is considered His will, and Muslims firmly believe it always prevails. Muslims believe God’s opinion can be reliably derived from the Quran. Prophets whom God inspired wrote the holy book. The Quran’s teachings on various moral issues provide God’s opinion. These opinions are usually admissible in Shari’a law in a kadhi court. Legal opinion is also drawn from the state where a Muslim resides.

Islam teaches people to be dutiful to their leaders and to respect authority, as there is no authority on earth except that which comes from God.Muslims also draw legal opinions from Sunna/Hadith by scholars and writers of high repute. Their teaching helps Muslims apply the Quran better and sometimes overcome challenges that befall Muslims. If a Sunni master wrote a hadith about something, it would justify a legal opinion as one from an anointed servant of Allah (SWT).

Some of these Hadith contain Qiyas (analogies) that help interpret different scenarios that can be used in the legal interpretation of Islam law. Analogies are preferred since they can be relatable to present-day scenarios. They provide the opinion of those who had experienced a similar problem in the gilded age resulting in better solutions. Legal opinions can also be drawn from n evaluation of Maslaha by the public if an opinion I designed for the public good is acceptable in Islam law.

**2- What were the reasons behind the split within the Muslim Community? (63 words each)**

The first split in Islam occurred after the assassination of Uthman ibn Affan, the third caliph of Islam. Although the reasons for his assassination remain unknown, the assassination split Islam into two groups, the Aisha and Ali factions. Most Muslims remained loyal to Ali, the main suspect, believing he was innocent of the accusations. This faction is considered the traditional Muslim faction. Another faction, the Aisha faction, believed that Ali and others suspected of the assassination were not appropriately punished. They believed Ali was guilty and that sharia law had spelled out the punishment for murder, but Ali was free. The desire to serve vengeance for Uthman’s assassination inspired them, and they hoped to take over as the fourth caliph after Uthman.

The third major split consisted of the Mu’awiya, neither for nor against Ali. They rallied behind Mu’awiya and fought as Siffin. This faction was the foundation block for Islam’s Sunni and Shi’ite communities. This faction was the mother of a major split in Islam, although many consider it a precursor and not the actual event that caused the split. A faction of rebels also emerged after Ali accepted arbitration at Siffin because he did not enjoy the bloodshed among the Muslim brothers. He negotiated with the different factions, which aggrieved some of his loyalists. The aggrieved split from his faction and formed the rebel faction, also known as the seceders. They believed that the law of Islam was clear and that the negotiation should not have happened.

**3- Explain the categories of valuation (fard,haram etc) in Islam. Give examples of three of them.**

The Obligatory (fard) valuation consists of the actions that a dutiful Muslim should do by obligation. For instance, Islam requires the faithful to do dua and salah as often as they can in a day. Salah helps Muslim fight the temptations of the devil while giving them faithful strength to overcome challenges. The recommended consists of anything that is beneficial to the umma and that is not against Shari’a. For instance, Islam has considered environmental conservation Sunna since it benefits modern life. Environmental conservation is also beneficial since it is not against Shari’a. The proper consists of actions or deeds considered neutral where they do not harm umma or deviate from the will of Allah. These actions are considered unlawful in some laws or unacceptable by some people but can be excused given special conditions. For instance, the debate over women's rights in Islam is taking the approach of Mubah by accepting increased women's involvement and empowerment in society.

The reprehensible consist of actions that are light in their intensity of fault, and Makruh are wrong deeds that harm others but are considered light attracting a light punishment. For instance, the sin of a child telling a lie to a parent after eating a teaspoon of sugar. The act of disobedience is a sin in Islam, but the circumstances show a makruh. The Tahrim, on the other hand, is a potent offense based on circumstances and intensity. In Islam, the intensity of a sin is measured carefully to pass a fair judgment.

A tahrim is an offense judged as a gross violation requiring a harsh punishment as restitution. In Islam, burnt food is a tahrim. The most severe valuation of an offense is the forbidden, also known as haram. Actions that are haram are forbidden from being done or even attempted. For instance, abortion is haram based on Islam law. Under no circumstances should a Muslim engage in these practices, as their punishment under sharia law is death. Muslims are also prohibited from eating pork as pigs are considered haram.

**4- What is Sufism? Explain the early stages of Sufism and Sufi brotherhoods.**

Sufism is the spiritual aspect of Islam where the Muslim is closely connected to God, and it is also a spiritual path of deeds and meditation leading one to God. The enlightened Muslim distinguishes the actual, physical, and spiritual worlds where Allah (SWT) exists. Understanding the Sufism realm is more manageable when one understands the ilm and ma’rifa. The ilm consists of the knowledge one gains from education or other passive forms o education e experience. Ilm is the gained wisdom of earthly things like education, science, and technology, and it also forms a noteworthy part of Sufism. On the other hand, ma’rifa is the wisdom given by God which is gained as a gift from Allah and not from any earthly form of apprenticeship.

Sufism is achieved in different stages. The acquisition of ilm is straightforward, and everyone gains it through education or experiences in life. As one grows spiritually, Allah (SWT) gains wisdom that helps achieve extraordinary achievements. Achieving Ma’rifa requires two essential things from a Muslim. One, the individual must obey God by remembering God (Dhikir) through prayer (Hadi). If an individual consistently prays to God, they grow closer to Sufism. The result of consistent obedience to God is total Sufism, where the Muslim reaches God in the last stage. Reaching God is the goal of any Muslim seeking Sufism. Sainthood in Islam is a coveted achievement that makes God happy and rewards lifelong devotion and service to Allah while one is living.