



Class 2: Fiqh of Marriage

The Hadith:

825. Narrated Anas bin Malik: The Prophet praised Allah and extolled Him, and said: “Yet I pray and sleep; I fast and break my fast; and I marry women. He who is displeased with my Sunnah is not my follower.” [Agreed upon]

The Explanation:

Reflect on this text, and the reason the author, al-Hafidh Ibn Hajr, placed it here. The Messenger of Allah did not say, “I do this...”, rather he said, “Yet I do this..” ‘Yet’ meaning that he is rejecting what was previously said, and that this previous speech has not been mentioned. What was it?

The Commentators state that this hadith is a portion of a larger text, that was narrated by Ibn Abbas and others: That there were three visitors who came to the house of the Prophet to ask about his acts of worship inside his home, that was not known to the people. They wanted to know about his special acts of worship between him and Allah.

The Prophet was not home, so they asked Aisha about his acts of worship at home. She said, “As for the Messenger of Allah, at night he sleeps and he stands in prayer, and in the day time, he fasts and breaks his fast, and he marries women.”

This is what Aisha mentioned, since most people do not know about one's prayers at home, or their fasting in the daytime. As for the rest of one's actions, they are apparent to people.

These three people stood in front of Aisha's house, thinking about what they heard as if belittling what they heard. One of them said, "He sleeps part of the night, and prays part of the night, all people do that." "He fasts some days, and breaks his fast some days, everyone does that." As if they thought that the Prophet's actions were too little.

They spoke amongst one another, then one of them said, "As for me, I shall stay up the whole night in prayer, and not sleep."

The second one said, "I will fast every day, and never miss a day."

And the third one said, "I will stay away from women and never marry."

Here, Aisha heard the words of these three visitors, and went to the Prophet, and informed him of what she heard.

The Messenger of Allah came out to the people, angered, and ascended the minbar to speak to the people. He used to use the minbar for general addresses to the people. They would gather around him, and he would speak to them.

He ascended the minbar, and praised Allah, and this is befitting of giving speeches. "Every important matter that does not begin with the praising of Allah, or in the name of Allah, then it is cut off." i.e. its ending will be cut short.

"Yet I..."

Before saying, "Yet I...", he said, "What is the matter with a people who say, 'as for me, I will do this...' by Allah, I am the most knowledgeable amongst you about Allah, and I have the most Taqwa of Him, I know the most about Allah and

His rights upon me, and I fast and break my fast, and I pray at night and sleep, and I marry women. Whoever is displeased with my Sunnah is not from me.”

“Yet as for me...” meaning that there are those who took a different path, and this is my path.

The explanation of this hadith revolves around a number of issues. The Author mentioned the hadith here for one reason, which is the Prophet’s words, “I marry women, and he who dislikes my Sunnah...”

The general meaning of the hadith is the prohibition of exaggeration in acts of worship, and the prohibition of overburdening one’s self. This principle has a lower and upper limit.

Do you remember the man who came to the Prophet and said, “What is it that Allah has obliged upon me?” The Prophet replied, “Five prayers in a day.” He said, that is all?” until he said, “By the One Who has sent you with the truth, I will not do more, nor less, than this. What did Allah oblige upon me each year? “Fasting of Ramadan.” By the One Who sent you with truth, I will not do more, nor less, than this.”

Then the man left, and the Prophet said, “He will be successful if he was truthful.” If he does what Allah has obliged upon him, without the Nawafil (superogatory acts), and he guards his Faraa’id, without addition, he will be successful.

This is the lower limit to acts of worship. The other hadith: “The best that a servant of Mine does to attain closeness to Me is what I have made obligatory upon him. And My servant continues to attain closeness to me with Nawafil, until I love him. And if I love him, I will be his hearing by which he hears, and his seeing by which he sees, and his hand by which he grips.”

This closeness, with Nawafil, is after the obligatory acts. But in the first case, the man said he will not perform any Nawafil, just the obligatory acts. And the Prophet said, “He will be successful.”

So the first case is the lower limit to acts of worship, and the Nawafil mentioned in the second hadith are a type of protection, that guard the Faraa'id, and protect them from being lost.

This is proven in the hadith about the Day of Judgment, where the Prophet said, "The first thing to be accounted for on the Day of Judgment will be the Salat. If it is complete, then it will be sufficient. Otherwise, Allah will say, "look and see if my servant has any Nawafil. They will say, yes. Allah will say, "Compensate for his shortcoming in obligatory acts with his Nawaafi."

Ibn Abbas said, "Likewise will be the case with Fasting, Zakat, and all his other actions."

Thus, the Nawafil are a guarantee for the correctness of one's Faraaid. There is no upper limit for Nawafil, except that it must be within one's physical ability.

The Prophet said, "Take responsibility for actions to the extent that you are able, for none will go to extremes in this religion except that he will be overwhelmed by it."

The man who desires to reach Makkah on his riding beast and forces the animal to run at its peak from the beginning of the journey until it is exhausted will never be able to reach Makkah. It will fall down incapacitated in the middle of the journey. You will not make it to Makkah, and you will also lose your mount.

But if you let it ride at its normal pace, and if you find some grass, you let it feed. And if the time of heat comes at midday, you come down and let it rest. If you do this, you can make it to Makkah, and return home too.

Likewise is the case with religion. The scholars speak at length about this issue, and it is obligatory upon the student of knowledge to be moderate. And if we

want to mention just a small piece of advice, we look at what Allah has obligated upon us 17 times in each day.

We recite in Surah Fatihah: “You alone do we worship, and from You alone do we seek help.” All worship is devoted to Allah alone, and it is Allah alone who helps us to accomplish our worship.

Then we say, “Lead us to the Straight Path.” The Straight Path in acts of worship, that is Your Right, and that You help us to fulfill.

But then Allah gives us a type of guidance, saying, “The path of those whom You have blessed, and not the path of those whom have earned your anger, or gone astray.”

Those who have earned Allah’s anger, as it is said, are the yahud, since they fled from obligatory worship, and were very lax in fulfilling the command of Allah. They made tricks in order to earn unlawful wealth.

But as for those who have gone astray, they worshipped Allah without knowledge. So they lost the path.

Those who have earned Allah’s pleasure (an’amta ‘alayhim) are far away from both extremes, those who tried to escape the obligatory worship of Allah, and they are far away from those who worshipped Allah, but without knowledge.

Rather, the Straight Path are those who take the middle balanced course, between those who have earned anger, or gone astray.

The scholars of Aklaaq point out that the path of balance and uprightness is always between two extremes, one of laxity, and one of excessiveness.

We can give a simple example of how people went to two extremes, one in laxity and one in excessiveness: The example of Jesus, son of Mary. The Jews said to Mary, “You have come with a scandalous thing, oh sister of Aaron, your father was not an evil man, nor was your mother a prostitute.”

See the accusations, and she has not a husband, and they have proof against her. So what did she say? She trusted in Allah, she said, “I have made an oath to the Merciful One, and I shall speak to no one today.”

She mentions the merciful one, and points to the baby. They said, “How can this one in the cradle speak?” Is she joking?

So the Jews accused her of Zina and accused ‘Eesa of being an unlawful child.

But he spoke, saying “Innee ‘abdullah, I am the servant of Allah.” He did not say son of Allah, or the third of a trinity, rather he said, servant of Allah. So how did those who came later attribute divinity to him? This was sufficient, but he added, “He gave me the book, and made me a Prophet.” “And He commanded me with Prayer, Zakat, and kindness to my mother.”

Thus the Christians went to an extreme, imaging that this child is the son of God, or God, or that divinity mixed with humanity to make Jesus. The difference between this and the truth is like the distance between the earth and the heavens.

These are the two opposing extremes. What did the Muslims say? “The example of ‘Eesa with Allah is like the example of Adam, He created him from clay, and then said, ‘Be!’ and he was.

‘Amr bin Aas, when he went to the Najashi, and the Mushrikeen said, look he will not prostrate to you like we prostrate. He said, “Why did you not prostrate like the others?” He said, “We do not prostrate to other than Allah.”

Then they said to Najashi, “Ask him what he says about Jesus.” Najashi was a Christian, he believed Jesus was the son of God, and the trinity, and so on.

Jafar said, “We say what Allah says about him: The example of Jesus with Allah is like the example of Adam.”

The king took some dust from the ground and said, “Your book has not differed from our belief except like this line.”

And some say this is when he accepted Islam.

What is important is that the correct balanced path is not by praying all night without rest, or fasting days without breaking one’s fast, nor by not getting married or not having relations with one’s wife.

Because we have an inherent nature, a Fitrah, and the body requires sleep and rest, and worship requires standing at night. And the body requires eating, and fasting, and our body also requires fulfilling one’s desire and the need for cohabitation.

The Prophet became angry with these three visitors, in spite of the fact that they wanted to worship Allah and give up their desires. The Prophet knew that this behavior was extreme, and that it may lead to its opposite.

“And whoever is displeased with my Sunnah is not from my followers.”

He then warned about having dislike for his Sunnah. And our scholars have warned about this sentence and the danger of meanings.

Being displeased with the Prophet’s Sunnah because of opposing it, or thinking that it is not sufficient, this is Kufr and disbelief in Allah.

But if he turns away from the Sunnah seeking to increase his worship and extra acts (beyond what is mentioned in the Sunnah), then this is going against the Sunnah but it does not take one out of Islam.

However, it is extremism. And the Shariah of Islam is a middle way, Wasataa. i.e. balanced, between the extremism of extremists, and the laxity of those who disregard the religion.

The scholars also mention a type of extremism in abandoning the Dunya (Zuhd), and overburdening one's self in worship, and they said this is contrary to the Sunnah.

From extremism in Zuhd of the dunya is leaving permissible provision (Rizq) that Allah has provided for a person, saying that they would suffice with vinegar and bread and salt. And they abandon meat, or wholesome food.

Once the Prophet was given vinegar and bread, while there was a pot of meat cooking on the fire. He said, "Why this bread and vinegar and I see a pot cooking on the fire?"

They said, "It is not for you, it is meat that was given in Sadaqa to Barrira, and you do not take Sadaqa." He replied, "No, it is Sadaqa for her, (but if she gives it to me) it is considered a gift."

He requested to be given from the pot, and he did not say, bread and vinegar is enough for me, abandoning what Allah had given him from the dunya.

For this reason, Imam Ahmed says, "I am amazed by those who leave the pure provision Allah has provided for them, and eat dry bread. And I am amazed by those who leave the soft cotton garments and wear the wool garments. Wool, in those days, is not like wool that we have today.

It was made by hand, and each thread was about a millimeter thick. A wool cloak required an effort to be lifted. Wearing it in the summer was difficult, and even in the winter, and not every person could bear it.

Imam Ahmed was amazed by those who leave cotton garments, and wear wool, thinking this was Zuhd from the dunya. They leave what Allah has made

permissible, and he read the verse, “Say who has forbidden the Tayyibaat (pure and wholesome things) from your provision?” Who has forbidden these things?

It is a blessing from Allah, and it is not appropriate for a person in terms of his dunya, or religion, to go to extremes, rather the Prophet was encouraging balance, even in acts of worship.

Praying at night, fasting, staying away from women, if one prays all night, what will he do during the day, will he be able to be strong in the day?

The early generations were brave horsemen in the daytime, and devout worshippers at night, and they could live on one date in a day, when the food ran out. They would get a single date in a day when the leader of an expedition distributed what they had.

Can we live this today? Some of us eat so much today, that we cannot finish a meal without drinking a Pepsi. Why do we not decrease our amount of food from the beginning?

Each age has its people, and the presence of Imaan in a person can have a stronger effect on him than food and drink. It gives you strength and bravery, and food increases one in fear and cowardliness.

Thus, the religion is not abandoning the pure and wholesome things, Allah says, “He is the one who has created all things on earth for you.” But we must be grateful for Allah’s blessings.

As it is said, the true gratefulness is using one’s blessing in Allah’s obedience.

Some may say, Umar used to have such simple clothing. Yes, but when Allah blessed him and he received gifts, he took them. He once found a nice robe, and immediately brought it to the Prophet, and said, “Buy this, so that you can meet the delegations in it.”

There should not be Zuhd in front of the enemy, or with your family and children, One can have Zuhd with one’s self, but not oblige one’s children and family to follow his Zuhd.

Some go to extremes in abandoning the dunya, but our pious predecessors would eat sweets, and meat, and drink milk, and fruits.

At the same time, they were devoted in acts of worship. He who makes the successful journey is not the one who rushes his travel or overburdens his back. But rather takes a middle way.

Extremism in acts of worship can lead to what is worse, which is leaving them altogether.

“And I marry women.”

This is one of the qualities of the Prophet. And when Ibn Masud saw the Prophet getting married, he said, “The best of this nation is the one with the most wives.” When he meant by that was the Messenger of Allah.

Walhamdulillahi rabil ‘alameen.

End of Class Two