



Class 2: Fiqh of Purification

The Hadith:

2. Narrated Abu Sa'id al-Khudri: Allah's Messenger said, **“Water is pure and nothing can make it impure.”**

Reported by the Three (Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi, and Nasa'i) and Ahmed graded it as authentic.

3. Narrated Abu Umama al Bahili, Allah's Messenger said, **“Water cannot be rendered impure by anything except that which changes its taste, smell, or color.”**

Reported by Ibn Majah.

- 4: Narrated Abdullah Ibn Umar, Allah's Messenger said, **“If there is enough water to fill two pots (qullatayn), it carries no impurity.”**

Reported by the Four.

The explanation:

The scholars divide impurities into two types: physical and spiritual impurities. Examples of spiritual impurities are Shirk, Kufr, idols, alters, etc. Allah says, “Inmal mushrikoona najass.” This type of impurity can only be removed by Tawheed.

A second type of impurity is physical impurities, like blood, urine, swine, dog saliva, etc. They must be removed through physical means of purification, such as

cleaning with water, dirt, the tanning of skin, sun, istihaalah (changing of state), etc.

Identifying what type of water can be used to purify is the first step in removing physical impurities.

Al-Hafidh Ibn Hajar, after indicating that ocean water is purifying through the previous hadith, now introduces the subject of fresh water.

This hadith is regarding a well named Bi'r Budaa'ah from which the Prophet would be given water to drink and perform Wudu. It was located in the north east of Madinah. It was present until recent times, where a Madrassah for the memorization of Quran was built, and then it later became a cultural center, then they were all demolished.

Bi'r Budaa'ah is one of the relics of the Sunnah. Studying its geographical location gives us an understanding of its importance, and Abu Dawud did this when he visited Madina and visited this well.

The Prophet's drinking water would be drawn from this well, and not every well in Madina had fresh water that was drinkable. And we know the story of Bi'r Rumaa, or what is now known as Bi'r Uthman. It was the main well from which the people of Madina would derive their water. Rumaa was a Jew who would sell the water to the people.

The Prophet said, "Who will buy Bi'r Rumaa, and he will have the like of it in Paradise?" Uthman went to the Jew and gave him an offer, but he raised the price exorbitantly, and Uthman said that it was too much. Uthman said, "Are you eager to sell this well?" He said, "Yes."

Uthman said, "So sell me half of it."

He said, "How is that, should we build a wall?"

Uthman said, "No, we will have turns, one day for you, and one day for me." The Jew agreed.

Then Uthman announced among the people of Madina that the day that it was his turn, water would be free to all, for the sake of Allah. So everyone started taking two days worth of water on Uthman's day.

When Rumaa's day came, he searched for customers and he could not find anyone to buy his water, as they did not have a need for it.

The important point is that Uthman bought the rest of the well from him, and they used to derive their water from Uthman's well.

Bi'r Budaa'ah was one of the wells from which the people of Madinah would derive their drinking water. So they mentioned the well to the Messenger of Allah, after they had noticed something about its water, in order to know what to do. And this was from his right on them, that they point out to him what they noticed, in order that he could clarify the ruling.

This is similar to the story of the lizard that was presented to the Prophet on a banquet table. They said to him, "It is a lizard." So the Prophet lifted his hand away from it. They said, "Is it haram, oh Messenger of Allah?" He said, "No, but it is not present in the land of my people in order that I like to eat it." After hearing this, Khalid ibn al Walid extended his hand, and ate from it.

What is important is that the Sahabah would point out things that they noticed, in order that the Prophet could clarify its ruling.

With regards to this hadith, the Sahabah mentioned to the Prophet "Should we derive drinking water from the well of Budaa'ah, while people throw their filth in it?"

His response to this question was, "Water is pure, and nothing can make it impure."

If we look at this question, and this answer, we see that what the Prophet meant is that since the water that is taken out of the well does not have the filth in it, it is purifying (by default).

Water, in and of itself, is by definition purifying. But al-Hafidh presents the next hadith in order to specify the generality of this hadith. The Prophet says, "Water cannot be rendered impure except by some impurity that changes its smell, taste, or color."

What is understood implicitly (the mafhoom) from this hadith is that if the smell, taste, or color, are changed by something pure, then the water remains pure.

And this is where the Ulema agree that specific texts override general texts, and thus water is pure, except that which has been affected in one of its three qualities.

This is a foundational principle amongst the jurists, which is: whenever we have a general text, and another one that specifies it, we use the specific text to restrict the generality of the first one. Thus, we get a complete picture.

This is regarding change in the water's qualities.

Now, regarding the types of water, we have some texts that mention water whose qualities have not been changed, yet the Prophet forbade using it.

For example, the Prophet said, "If one of you wakes up from sleep, then let him not place his hand in a container of water until he washes his hand three times."

What effect will dipping a hand in a container of water have, when there is nothing apparent on the hand? It will not change the qualities of the water.

And the Prophet said, "If a dog licks a container of yours, pour it out and wash it seven times,..."

On the other hand, we have the hadith of the Bedouin who urinated in the Masjid of the Prophet, and they brought a large amount of water and poured it over the urine, and it became purified. This is despite the fact that the water mixed with the urine.

Because of these texts, we have some different positions amongst the Ulema. There is what is agreed upon, and what is differed over.

What is completely agreed upon by all scholars is that a large quantity of water whose qualities have not been changed is pure, without question.

What is also completely agreed upon is that any amount of water, large or small, if impurity mixes with it and changes one of its qualities, it becomes impure. It cannot be used, by consensus.

What remains is the middle state, and this is the place of difference amongst the Ulema. A small amount of water, that mixed with some impurity that does not change any of its qualities.

If one of its qualities changed, then this is of the second type who all agree is impure. But in this case, the impurity did not change any of its qualities, since it was very little.

An example of this is like a bucket of water that a few drops of urine fall into, that does not affect it. What is the ruling on it?

This is where the scholars differed. All the differences amongst the Ulema in the chapter of water are regarding this special middle case of water.

Again, there are three categories of water:

- 1.) A large amount of water unchanged by impurity. It is pure by agreement of the scholars. The Prophet said, "Its water is pure, and its dead are permissible for you."
- 2.) The second category is that changed by impurity. This is rendered impure, whether the amount of water is small or large. If there was a pond, for example, and impurity affected its taste, smell, or color, it would be rendered impure.

3.) The third category is a small amount of water touched by impurity but unchanged.

If we examine the hadith, “Water is pure and nothing makes it impure except what changes its smell, taste, or color.” We find support for Imam Malik’s position, which is that any amount of water, small or large, remains pure as long as none of its qualities change.

The other three Imams said, “No, if there is a small amount of water, and najassah falls into it, then the impurity remains in it and renders it impure.”

Why? They refer to the third hadith, “If water reaches qullatayn (two large pots), it does not carry impurity.”

One last time, the purity of water is based upon one of the three categories it falls into: Pure, which is a large amount, unchanged. And Impure, which is that which has been changed by an impurity. The third, a small amount of water with small impurity without change, is what is differed over.

Malik says, water is always pure. Only if impurity changes it does it become impure, even if it is a small amount of water.

The Three Imams made a distinction between water that is less than qullatayn, and what is more than qullatayn.

The majority of Ulema also made a distinction between purifying water, pure water, and impure water.

Purifying water is what has been unchanged. Pure is what has been changed by a pure substance, like rose water, or mixed with rose scent. Its smell has changed. Is it purifying, can we make wudu from it? No. Is it impure? No. It is pure but cannot be used to purify.

You can place it in your drink, or food, or perfume yourself with it, but you cannot use it in acts of worship. Only water that is untouched and is the way Allah created it can be used for worship.

Any water changed by a pure substance is pure, but cannot purify. It can be used for 'aadaaat, not Ibaadaat. If ink fell into a bucket, can you make wudu with it? No, but you can use it for other purposes.

You cannot use it for wudu, or ghusl, or to cleanse impurity, but you can use it for other purposes. You can drink it, or wash with it in general.

There is a weak opinion that says that water remains purifying even if a pure substance changes it. They use as proof the hadith of Safiyya, who said, "I and the Prophet took a bath from a pot that had the traces of dough in it." They say the dry dough in the pot must have changed the color of the water to white. But the Jumhoor says, no, they washed quickly before the dried dough dissolved into the water.

The Jumhoor say rose water, or saffron water, or salt or sugar water, is no longer just water, rather it is a new substance, rose water or saffron water, and it cannot be used for purification.

Hadith 4: Narrated Abdullah Ibn Umar, Allah's Messenger said, "**If there is enough water to fill two pots (qullatayn), it carries no impurity.**" Narrated by the Four.

The Mafoom (implicit meaning) of this hadith is, if water is less than qullatayn, does it carry impurity? Yes, even if it does not change. Using Qullatayn to differentiate a small amount of water from a large amount is the madhab of Shafii and Ahmed. The school of Abu Hanafi has two definitions of large and small amounts of water.

Abu Hanifa said if the water is enclosed, like in a small pond, and you made a wave and it did not reach the other side, this is considered a large amount of water. If the waves reach the other side, it is considered a small amount. This definition is not restricted by a fixed amount of water.

The companions of Abu Hanifa said that the water must be approx. 10 square dhiraah', (or 7.5 square meters).

If you had this amount of water, and a single drop of impurity fell into it, it would remain pure. But if the water was less than this, it would become impure.

The hadith of qullatayn has some weakness in its chain, but the scholars of Fiqh accepted it, since it has many supporting narrations. Shafii and Ahmed ruled according to it.

Shafii and Ahmed state that if water is Qullatayn, it is a lot of water, and a small amount of impurity will not affect it.

To summarize, we have two major schools with regards to water, Malik, and the 3 Imams. Malik only considers the change in qualities, while the three Imams consider the change in quantities, as well as whether there is a small or large amount of water, according to what we mentioned.

Walhamdulillahi rabil 'alameen.

End of Class Two