

Notes of Lectures on Fiqh by Maulana Sadiq Hasan Lecture # 22 (Thursday 14 August 2003)

TAHARAT IN ISLAM

☀ Taharat (to be Islamically clean or pure) is a part of Iman (faith), according to the Hadith of our Holy Prophet (SAW). Taharat is a basic condition for most acts of worship (ibadat).

☀ But Islam does not want Muslims to go to extremes in matters related to Taharat or Najasat. One should adopt a balanced and normal approach in deciding whether a thing is najis or tahir. As discussed in earlier Lecture Notes, in order to decide if a thing is najis/tahir or halal/haram, you must either (a) have witnesses, or (b) have information from Sahibe Yadd, or (c) have Yaqeen or Itminan. Decision based on witnesses or sahibe yadd are more important in most cases and have to be accepted even if you have doubt about a thing.

☀ For Muslims living in West, Itminan is a more common method of deciding if a thing is najis or haram or about any other fact, because in many cases it is very hard to get reliable or adil witnesses and very hard to get information from sahibe yadd. And decision based on Itminan can vary from person to person.

☀ A witness is one who himself has seen about the truthfulness of something. If he has heard some facts from someone and then tells you about that thing, then this is not considered as witness.

☀ It is not wajib to read ingredients on a food packet, nor it is wajib to enquire any one about the ingredients. In fact Islam discourages Muslims on enquiring about the food content with a Muslim.

NAJASAT

☀ Allah has created everything tahir (Islamically clean or pure) in this universe **except** some which Allah has declared as Najasat (inherently unclean or impure). These Najasat are unclean or impure by their nature and can never be made tahir in their present state as such. Anything which comes in contact with these Najasat with wetness will also become najis and that thing can be made tahir by methods (called Mutahhirat) specified by Islamic sharia.

☀ Mujtahids differ on exact number of Najasat (can vary from 9 to 13), but almost all agree that there are ten types of Najasat:

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|----------|----------|----------|----------|---|
| 1. Urine | 2. Stool | 3. Semen | 4. Blood | 5. Dead body (& meat of unslaughtered animal) |
| 6. Kafir | 7. Wines | 8. Beer | 9. Dog | 10. Pig |

☀ We must understand the difference between Najis/Tahir, and Halal/Haram. Najasat/Taharat relates to external physical contact, while Halal/Haram relates to eating and drinking. Thus, there are:

Things which are **Najis as well as Haram** to eat, e.g. all above 10 najis things,

Things which are **Tahir as well as Halal** to eat, e.g. all vegetables, fruits, zabiha meat, water etc,

Things which are **Tahir but Haram** to eat, e.g. boiled grape juice, dead fish not having visible scales etc.

✳️ Some Mujtahids say that Beer is tahir, but all Mujtahids say that Beer is haram to drink.

HARAM DRINKS AND ALCOHOL

✳️ Four types of drinks are haram in Islam:

- (a) Wines
- (b) Intoxicated Drinks
- (c) Beer
- (d) Boiled Grape Juice

✳️ All above four types of drinks normally contain alcohol. But the criterion of them being haram is not because they contain alcohol. All above drinks as such are considered haram in Islam whether they contain alcohol or not. Alcoholic drinks as such have no meaning in Islam

✳️ Alcohol is considered tahir according to Ayatullah Seestani and Ayatullah Khui.

✳️ Is pure or raw alcohol haram ? According to all Mujtahids, if a person has Yaqeen or Itminan (or witnesses testify) that pure alcohol itself causes intoxication (nasha), then the pure alcohol is haram as well as najis for that person.

✳️ What is wine or beer ? If according to Urf (general opinion of the people), it is known as wine or beer, then such wine or beer is haram in Islam.

✳️ Any non-alcoholic wine or any non-alcoholic beer will also be considered haram (as well as najis) as long as these drinks are known as wine or beer in the general sense by the Urf (general opinion of the people). Naming of a drink has no value (e.g. a soft drink called Root Beer sold in USA is halal).

✳️ Many soft drinks and food such as Coke, Pepsi, Apple Juice, Yogurt etc contain small amount of alcohol. But such drinks and food are halal to consume on the following grounds:

- (a) If you do not know or do not have Itminan that the alcohol used is the same alcohol, which in its pure form causes intoxication, or
- (b) If the amount of alcohol is so small that it is absorbed in that drink or food through the process of Istahlak (Refer to Fiqh Note #6 of 20 July 2001). Rule of Istahlak only applies to those things which are tahir but haram to consume.

✳️ If you are not sure or you do not know if a food or drink contains alcohol, then it is halal to eat and drink. It is not wajib on you to ask someone what it contains.

✳️ Many other items such as perfumes, shampoo, cosmetics, paints etc contain alcohol. All such items are tahir and can be touched because alcohol is tahir and such items are not used as drinks or food.

✳️ Medicines containing any amount of alcohol are considered tahir and can be taken because alcohol used in medicines are considered tahir. Rule of istahlak is not necessary in case of medicines. But if you have yaqeen (100% sure) that the alcohol (used in the medicine) causes intoxication in its pure form, then you can not take that medicine.