

A Q & A Session With Shaykh Al-Albaanee

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Original Source: Silsilah Al Huda wal Noor, Tape number 763/1

Translation source: Article: Allaah Has Made A Cause For Everything

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Shaykh Al-Albaanee: Now the one who has a question may raise his hand.

Q: Our shaykh, there are some people who have an opinion and its summary is; The government takes taxes and customs from some of the muslims, and they eat the people's money unjustly. Am I allowed to take this money back if I am sure that I am not going to be hurt?

Shaykh Al-Albaanee: What do you mean by taking back?

Q: Maybe with deceiving?

Shaykh Al-Albaanee: Ok, I want to understand what you mean by taking back. Can you give me an example?

Q: For instance there are some employees of the government in a governmental establishment. Let's say I claim overtime hours without really working them because the government was unjust to me, or the one in authority was unjust to me. How can we answer those who think in this way? And may Allah reward you!

Shaykh Al-Albaanee: The reply is one of the authentic narrations of the Prophet peace be upon him and one from the speech of Abdullah Ibn Masaud (Radiya 'Llahu 'anhu). He (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) said "if somebody entrusts you with something, honour it, and don't deceive the one who deceived you". Don't deceive the one who deceived you!

Even though the meaning of this is clear, your attention must be drawn to something that might be unclear for some people, and clear for others. The shaytaan takes this opportunity to get somebody to take what he claims to be his right from one who was unjust to him. Whether it was a government, or people, or an individual. The shaytaan may whisper to him to exploit him, for example, the shaytaan says "you have the right to 100 dinars" but he doesn't actually have the right to this amount! Rather, he only has the right to 99. The shaytaan says "It doesn't matter if you take 1 dinar extra". This is only an example. When somebody claims that somebody else was unjust to him, who can bear witness for him that this is true? And who can bear witness that it was this amount that was due?

So, in this way, you may be opening the doors to eating other people's money unjustly, using the retrieval of your rights as a pretext. Therefore, the rule of "that which leads to something wrong is wrong" is a rule of this complete religion "if somebody entrusts you with something, honour it, and don't deceive the one who deceived you".

Concerning the saying of Ibn Masaud, it is one of his greatest speeches, (Radiya 'Llahu 'anhu), when he advised his companions saying "don't be a sheep by saying "if people do right we do right, and if they do wrong we do unjust things". But be one who if they do right you do right, but if they do wrong, you don't do unjust things".

Q: I have another question, what is atheism and what is the religious ruling on it?

Shaykh Al-Albaanee: Atheism is denying religion, and the ruling on atheists is that they will stay in hell for eternity!

Q: What's the ruling on combining two intentions. First between two voluntary acts, and second between an obligatory and voluntary act.

Shaykh Al-Albaanee: We have no doubt that both are permitted. To add to an obligatory intention with a voluntary intention, but not the opposite, i.e. adding an obligatory intention to a voluntary intention. So it is correct to intend to do something obligatory, then to intend with that intention a voluntary intention, this is permitted. Therefore, it goes without saying that we can add a voluntary intention to another voluntary intention.

For example, a man or a woman has to make up some fasting from the month of Ramadaan, and he/she wants to fast one of them. He/she decided to do this on a Monday or Thursday because he/she knows that fasting Mondays and Thursdays voluntarily has a special reward according to the narrations.

He/she is not about to combine two intentions and two actions, i.e. to do an action for the obligatory intention and another for the voluntary intention. He does not want to fast Monday and Tuesday, or Wednesday and Thursday (by considering the first day to be the obligatory one and the second day to be the voluntary one).

He/she is one of the general people that only do what is obligatory like the nomad that came to the Prophet (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) and asked him about what Allah had made obligatory upon him, and he (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) mentioned to him the five prayers a day, fasting 1 month per year which is Ramadhan. The nomad asked if he had to do anything else, (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) said no, unless you want to do voluntary acts. When the nomad heard what Allah had made obligatory upon him from the pillars (of Islam) he said "I swear by Allah oh messenger of Allah, I will not go beyond or fall short of this. I will not exceed in voluntary acts and will not fall short of the obligations. But I am going to be careful to do that which is imposed upon me by Allah completely without adding any voluntary actions."

What did the Prophet (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) bear witness to for him when he said this? He (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) said "he will succeed if he was telling the truth". He will enter paradise if he was telling the truth. The Prophet (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) said "If he was telling the truth" because many people don't keep their promises, but the man promised, so the Prophet (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) said "he will enter the paradise if he keeps his promise". Thus, a man has to make up for a day from Ramadaan because of an illness or because of travelling, or a woman because of her menstruation. Knowing this principle (i.e. joining intentions) he/she wanted to make up for the fast on a Monday or Thursday. This is permissible for him, it is even better than someone who did not add the voluntary intention. Even if he fasted on Monday or Thursday to make up for his missed fast, not intending, and the idea not crossing his mind, he will only achieve the reward for making up the missed fast of Ramadhan. Whilst the person who adds the voluntary intention to the main intention will only fast one day - and you cannot fast twice in one day, this is why we said he adds the voluntary to the obligatory, because the obligatory is more important than the voluntary - Then we can, as we have said in many previous sittings answering similar questions, here in this example, and there are many examples, which we will not mention to save time. In this issue of making up for

fasts in Ramadaan, we have three pictures. We will start with the best one, then the following two in priority order.

A man that has to make up for the fast of Ramadhan should fast a day other than Monday or Thursday, then fast on Monday or Thursday with the voluntary intention. Thus he is given two multiplied rewards, because the reward for doing an act of worship is multiplied by Allah through His mercy and Generosity, as it came in the authentic narration, that Allah says to His angels; "if my slave intended to do a good deed and did not do it, write a good deed for him. And if he does it, write ten good deeds for him up to one hundred, up to seven hundred up to many multiples! And Allah multiplies the reward to whomever He wishes". Then when he only intends a good deed is written for him, but if he does it ten good deeds are written for him or more. Then whoever makes up for one day's fasting of Ramadaan at least ten good deeds are written for him. Then he adds the fasting of a Monday or Thursday to it, at least another ten good deeds are written for him. This is the best case!

The next best is the one we have already mentioned. A man wants to fast only one day, he should combine two intentions. The first intention is the obligatory one, and the other is the voluntary because of the favour of Monday or Thursday. This is the next best scenario.

In the last case, this good intention, which would have been written for him as a good deed, does not cross his mind at all. This is the answer to question that has been asked.

Q: Ash-Sheikh Al-Tahaan gave an example of an unauthentic narration, this narration was authenticated by Sheikh Al-Albani. Sheikh Ali Hashish said – who is an Egyptian narrator – that the authentication of Sheikh Al Albani to this narration was by aiding this narration with another one in Imam Ahmad's Musnad. He said that the supporting narration to this narration is insufficient, and the whole narration is not authentic. What is your comment concerning this narration.

Shaykh Al-Albaanee: Allah forgive you, you didn't mention the narration before your explanation?

Q: This narration was brought by Sheikh At-Tahaan in the Sunnan of...

Shaykh Al-Albaanee: (Sheikh interrupts the brother)...May Allah guide you, don't repeat your words, just mention the text of the narration...

Q: The narration by Hakeem Al Atram from Abu Harayrah said the Prophet (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) said "The one who has intercourse with a menstruating woman, or in her anus, or goes to a fortune teller. He has disbelieved in what was revealed to Mohammad.

Shaykh Al-Albaanee: Yes, and what is the insufficient supporting narration?

Q: The insufficient supporting narration in Imam Ahmad's Musnad is that this support only came one part of the narration which is "the one who has

intercourse with a woman in her anus has disbelieved in what was revealed to Mohammad"

Shaykh Al-Albaanee: And the rest is not supported?

Q: Only one part is...

Shaykh Al-Albaanee: Such a question requires the questioner to bring the book and the takhreej (to see state of the narrators etc...) and the two texts, the supporting and the supported. After that we can answer, this is a scientific research that cannot be expounded upon without the correct tools. If you are really interested in getting the answer call me any night between 9–11 o'clock. I can open the book and listen to you, then give you the answer. Either by retracting from my mistake or to show the other side is mistaken.

Q: Assalamu alaikum, our Noble sheikh, what do you say about using perfumes especially those that have alcohol in them. Are they forbidden? And what do you say about alcohol, is it impure or not?

Shaykh Al-Albaanee: Alcohol is actually in its religious sense is the mother of the khaba'ith (evil). Spirits as you know, is the mother of the khaba'ith (evil), and spirits are a composition of water and sweet substances and alcohol. Neither the water or the sweet substances are the cause of drunkenness, but the real cause is alcohol. This is why I can say that alcohol is the mother of khaba'ith.

As you know Allah has forbidden the khaba'ith, therefore prohibiting the mother of the khaba'ith goes without saying. However, what must be known by the seekers of knowledge is that being forbidden does not always mean being impure, but the opposite is correct. Everything that is religiously impure is prohibited but not the opposite. Everything that is prohibited is not necessarily impure. This is in the religious aspect. There is nothing to say that the prohibited and impure are inseparable, nothing came in the Qur'an or the sunnah to say so, keeping in mind that muslims differ about this issue as we are going to mention.

Secondly, there is a consensus among the muslim scholars about prohibiting things. On the other hand there is another consensus that these prohibited things are not impure, for example; gold is forbidden for men and allowed for women in special cases of which we will not mention the details now. If a man is wearing a gold ring on his finger, he undoubtedly committed a sin. So if he prays do we say that he is praying whilst he was carrying something impure? Rather, he prayed whilst carrying something that is forbidden, not impure, even though it is prohibited. So the prohibited and the impure are not equivalent. Another example; if a man prays on a silk mat or wearing a silk thobe, he prays whilst indulging in what is prohibited for men, but is his prayer invalid because whilst carrying impure things? The answer is no! The prohibited and the impure are not equivalent. Last, one of the funny examples that Al Imam Al San'ani mentioned in his Sobul As Salam to show that there is equality between the prohibited and the impure. He said that Allah says "your mothers are forbidden for you..." to the end of the ayah. Are your mothers impure?! The consensus on this answer is "no". So the prohibited and the impure are not equivalent.

According to this we ought to say concerning the well known old difference among the scholars about alcohol, is it impure, along with being prohibited by consensus? If some alcohol fell on a muslim's thobe unintentionally, does that mean that his thobe is now impure? There are two opinions of the scholars. Some of them say that alcohol is both, impure and prohibited. While others say it is prohibited but not impure. Of course any muslim who is particular about knowing the religious rules supported by its evidence asks himself what is the evidence for the purity of alcohol along with its prohibition.

We say first, this question is not a fiqh or scientific question. Why? It has to be changed to "what is the evidence that alcohol is impure?" This is because generally things are pure. This is a rule known by the scholars. For instance, a man who smokes is praying, and regrettably some people decorate their chests and their pockets with the cigarette packets which are coloured, but he is not smoking however the packet is in his pocket.

We know that smoking is prohibited, the man is praying whilst carrying the packet, is he carrying something impure? The answer is no. This is a plant, and there is no evidence that it is impure. But because it is harmful, and its nasty smell hurts him and his friends who pray close to him etc...cigarettes are prohibited but not impure and so on.

So the correct question is; what is the evidence that alcohol is impure? Some people answer saying that reason of its impurity is the fact that it is forbidden! However, we have shown that this is not true. Whatever is forbidden is not necessarily impure, but what is impure is forbidden.

Despite what we have said we are going to bring some evidence that alcohol is not impure, even though it is forbidden. For example, when alcohol was forbidden the Prophet (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) ordered the muslims to spill it into the streets of al Madina, and we know that the streets didn't used to be as they are now, i.e. level and smooth. They were dirt roads, so when it rained the roads turned to mud. So when the Prophet (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) ordered the alcohol to be spilled into the streets of al Madina – so that everybody knew that it was now forbidden. We know that there are religious rulings concerning men and women's shoes, that it is permitted for them to pray whilst wearing shoes, as the Prophet (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) said "pray with your shoes on, be different from the Jews" and he said "if one you enters the masjid let him check his shoes, if there are impurities on them rub them on the dirt because dirt will purify them." And concerning women's dress, when Ummu Salamah heard the prophet peace be upon him say: "Allah will not look at the one who drags his garment on the ground proudly on the day of judgement" she said "Oh messenger of Allah, even women?" He (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) said "they add a hand span" She or another woman said "a wind may come" he (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) said "she adds another hand span". i.e. she drags it on the ground.

Another question came to the Prophet (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) at another time, "Oh messenger of Allah, one of us (women) walks on impure ground with her garment" He (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) said " the ground that comes after it purifies it." Thus, if alcohol were impure it would mean that the Prophet (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) exposed the shoes of men and women and the garments of women to impurities. The Prophet (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) would never have done that if it was revealed to him that alcohol was impure along with it being forbidden.

The second evidence, which is clearer, is that when the prohibition of alcohol was revealed to the Prophet (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) he said ending the ayah,

"will you not abstain?" Umar ibn Al Khattab (Radiya 'Llahu 'anhu) said "Oh Allah, we do". In one of the places there was a bag full of alcohol, the Prophet (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) asked for a knife and began hacking it, someone said "Oh messenger of Allah, it has (the bag) a benefit" The Prophet (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) said: "Yes (this is true)" As if he was saying just spill the contents without destroying the bag because it has a benefit.

The Prophet (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) didn't say it didn't have a benefit because it is impure but he agreed to what they said by saying "Yes," but he continued saying "I did that to take revenge for what Allah has forbidden" i.e. to emphasise the prohibition of alcohol he tore the bag which he (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) acknowledged could be benefited from.

When alcohol touches the ziqaq, maybe you know that the ziqaq is not a smooth container that is made of beautiful smooth china-ware, no, the ziqaq is made of absorbent leather that absorbs. Despite that, he (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) agreed that it can be benefited from, however, he (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) said "I did that to take revenge for what Allah has forbidden".

In summary, spirits and its origin alcohol are forbidden but not impure, when we understand this fact we can answer part of the question, that alcohol that exists in some perfumes does not make the perfumes impure. Therefore it is allowed in this sense to use them because they are not impure, on your thobe, face or hair.

But the answer to the first part of the question, "Is it allowed to use perfumes that have alcohol in them?" The answer is that we have to differentiate between two things, if those perfumes are made in a muslim country it is forbidden, because this means that a muslim will squeeze alcohol out of something, and this is forbidden. From the ten people cursed by Allah concerning alcohol are;

"...the one who squeezes it and the one whom it is squeezed for..."

This is forbidden. However, if those perfumes came to the muslims lands ready made, we have to apply a test, if the ratio of alcohol is high as in many perfumes – some of them are 60, 70 or 80% alcohol – so that alcoholics can add something to it so they can drink it. If the percentage of alcohol is high in the perfume, then it is not allowed to trade with it, neither buying nor selling it. If the ratio of the alcohol is too small, the narration saying

"if much of something causes a person to be drunk, a little of it is forbidden"

does not apply, in this case it is allowed to buy and sell these perfumes. This is a detailed answer to the question.

published: 16-09-07