

"In the name of ALLAH, the BENEFICENT, the MERCIFUL"

NOOR-I-ISLAM

(INTERNATIONAL)

AHMADIYAH ANJUMAN ISH'AT-I-ISLAM (LAHORE), CANADA
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PROHIBITION OF **INTOXICANTS** (DRINKING & GAMBLING)

When and How Intoxicants came to be forbidden in Islam

There is no doubt whatsoever that all intoxicants are forbidden for Muslims to drink. The prohibition is made absolutely clear in the Qur'an and several Hadiths by the Prophet Mohammed (peace and blessings of Allah be on him).

Drinking, Gambling, Idols and Divining Arrows were important aspects of pre-Islamic Arabia and currently a favorite practice of western society. They were closely related together in practice and tradition. The Arabs used to drink to extravagance. They considered drinking among practices which gave people distinction. They often mentioned drinking in their poetry as a practice to be proud of or to praise others with. In social gatherings, drinking was coupled with the slaughter of animals which were immediately cooked to provide food to those who took part in drinking, those who served wine and those who frequented such gatherings. The sacrificed animals were slaughtered at the feet of idols which were sprayed with the blood of the sacrifice. In such social events, divining arrows were practiced in order to determine the sharing out of the meat of the sacrifice.

This gives us an idea how traditions were intertwined with ignorant ideological concepts. Islam did not address such traditions at the start, because they were based on mistaken beliefs. To try to reform them at the surface before establishing the right foundation of faith was bound to be a wasted effort, which a divine system would not even consider.

Islam begins its reform with the paramount question for every human being, namely, faith. It uproots the very basic ideological concepts of ignorance in order to put in place the Islamic concept which is in complete harmony with human nature. The Islamic method of reform did not start with the deviations

and abominations of ignorance. It addressed the question of faith, beginning with the declaration that there is no deity save Allah.

It took around 13 years to establish in the hearts of the early Muslims the concept of the Oneness of Allah with all that entails. When submission to God was clearly established in their hearts and they recognized that they could have no choice other than what has been chosen for them by Allah, then the next phase of outlining their duties, including worship, began. This was combined with the process of eradicating the social, economic, moral and behavioral traces of ignorance.

Yes, the prohibition of intoxicants and games of chance did not come as a surprise. Before this categorical prohibition, some steps were taken to loosen the hold of such social traditions which were closely intertwined with personal habits as well as with economic aspects. Indeed, this was the third or fourth step in solving the problem of intoxicating drinks under Islam.

The first step was no more than firing a shot in the right direction when Allah (limitless He is in His Glory) says in Surah 16, "The Bee", revealed at Makkah: **"And from the fruit of date-palms and vines you derive intoxicants as well as wholesome sustenance"** (16:67). This was the first indication to Muslims, placing intoxicants as opposed to wholesome sustenance.

The second step addressed the Muslims' religious conscience through legislative logic, with the verse revealed in Surah 2, "The Cow": **"They question you about intoxicants and games of chance,**

Say: in both there is great evil although they have some benefit for man; but their evil is far greater than their benefit.” (2;219) The import here is clear: since the evil of a particular practice is far greater than its benefit, then it is better to abandon it altogether. Hardly anything is totally devoid of benefit, but its permissibility or prohibition depends on whether its evil outweighs its benefit.

The third step broke the habit of drinking and put it on a collision course with attendance to obligatory prayers. Here we have the verse revealed in Surah 4, “Women”: **“Believers, do not come near to prayers when you are under the influence of drink, until you are conscious of what you say.”** (4;4) Since Muslims offer five obligatory prayers everyday, with close time range for each, which is not sufficient to get drunk and regain sobriety, this instruction practically restricted the times available for drinking. This, in effect abolished the habits of drinking in mid-morning and mid-afternoon which were part of the tradition of pre-Islamic Arabia. Moreover, it militated against addiction, which is closely related to the time of drinking. It became practically impossible for a Muslim to attend to his prayers on time, and to drink at his habitual times.

The fourth and final stage was the categorical prohibition which came after people became fully ready to accept it. This is included in the following verses of surah 5, entitled “The Repast”. These may be given in translation as follows: **“Believers, Intoxicants, games of chance, idols and divining arrows are abominations devised by Satan. Therefore, turn away from them so that you may prosper. Satan seeks only to stir up enmity and hatred among you by means of intoxicants and games of chance, and to turn you away from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer. Will you not, then, desist?”**

Umar Ibn Al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him) reports: I said in my supplication: My Lord, give us a clear-cut ruling on intoxicants. The verse in surah “The Cow” was revealed stating: **“The question you concerning intoxicants and games of chance, Say: In them there is great evil as well as some benefit for men. However, their evil is far greater than their benefit.”** Umar was called in and the verse was recited to him. He said: My Lord give us a clear-cut ruling on intoxicants. The verse in surah “Women” was then revealed: **“Believers, do not come near to prayer when you are under the influence of drinks until you are conscious of what you say.”** Umar was called in and the verse was recited to him. He once again said: “My Lord, give us a clear-cut ruling on intoxicants.” The verse in surah “The Repast” was then revealed, stating: **“Satan seeks only to stir up**

enmity and hatred among you by means of intoxicants and games of chance, and to turn you away from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer. Will you not, then, desist?” Umar was called in and the verse was recited to him. He said: “We do desist, my Lord! We do desist.”

When these two verses which make intoxicants absolutely forbidden were revealed in the third year of Islamic Calendar, shortly after the Battle of Uhud, the matter did not require more than sending someone around the places where people gathered in Madinah to announce: “All intoxicating drinks are forbidden.”

Everyone who had a glass of wine in his hand broke it and everyone who was in the actual process of drinking threw out what was in the mouth. Barrels and bottles of wine and intoxicants were broken. The whole matter was over as if the people never drank before.

Let us now look at the way the Qur’anic statement is phrased, because it tells us much about the Qur’anic method of cultivating people’s minds and reforming their behavior. It begins with the address so familiar in this part of the surah: “Believers”. This address awakens the hearts of believers on the one hand and reminds them, on the other, of the basic requirement of the faith, namely, obedience and submission. This is followed by a decisive statement of the nature of those practices which admits no counter argument: **“Intoxicants, games of chance, idols and divining arrows are abominations devised by Satan.”** These are, then, foul practices and cannot be included among good and wholesome things which Allah has permitted. Moreover, they have been devised by Satan, the old enemy of man. It is sufficient for a believer to know that something is devised by Satan to make it totally repugnant to him.

At this point the prohibition is issued, combined with holding the prospect of prosperity which has its profound effect on the human mind: **“Therefore, turn away from them so that you may prosper.”** The Qur’anic verses go on to further expose the scheme of Satan behind the devising of these abominations: **“Satan seeks only to stir up enmity and hatred among you by means of intoxicants and games of chance, and to turn you away from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer.”** The aim of Satan and the purpose of his scheming are thus exposed before every Muslim. Satan seeks nothing except the stirring up of enmity and hatred among believers and to turn them away from their worship. What a wicked scheme! These aims of Satan can be easily recognized in practical life after we have accepted them as true, since Allah has stated them.

It does not take anyone with an open mind long to recognize how Satan does actually stir up enmity and hatred, utilizing for this purpose intoxicants and gambling, since intoxicants weaken one's consciousness and self-control, heightens tempers and stirs up whims and impulses. Gambling and all games of chance leave people with a sense of loss. It is natural that a losing gambler nurses a strong grudge against the winner who takes away his money from right under his nose and leaves him empty handed. It is only natural that such matters stir up enmity and hatred, regardless of the strength of the impression of happiness they initially give. The fact that intoxicants and gambling do turn people away from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer is too clear to require elaboration.

Drinking makes people forget and gambling makes them oblivious of everything else. Indeed, games of chance keep gamblers in a state of intoxication which is not dissimilar to that produced by drinks. The

world of a gambler is akin to that of a drunkard: tables, glasses and a strike of fortune or misfortune.

With this clear reference to the aim of Satan, the question is put pointedly: **“Will you not, then, desist?”** It is a question that admits only one answer: **“We do desist, my Lord! We do desist”**

The surah then goes on to put the whole matter in its proper perspective: **“Obey Allah and obey the messenger, and be ever on your guard. But, if you turn away, then know that the duty of Our messenger is only to convey (Our message) clearly.”**

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Mr. Majeed Ali

(10 DEC 1922 – 24 MAY 2003)

A Learned and Staunch Ahmedi passed away, *“Inna Lillahe Wa Inna Elaihe Rajeeon”* *a report from Habiba Anwar in London*

After much suffering and long illness, Allah put Mr. Ali to rest on the 24th of May 2003. His body was brought to the London Mosque (*also his home for about 16 years*) and in the company of nearly 50 jama'at members, his Janaza prayers were offered. He has been buried in a cemetery in Hertfordshire where Mr. Ali has already purchased a plot for himself. *Inna Lillahe Wa Inna Elaihe Rajeeon.*

Most of my childhood was spent in his company and he has a huge contribution in my teachings and training as a Muslim and Ahmedi. His precious advises and guidance will always help me in my life. Mr. Majeed Ali was not only one of the most knowledgeable and learned person in our UK Jama'at, but was also very close to my mother and myself, as he lived in the mission house with us for fifteen years. I feel honored to be writing about him, even though I know he did not

like eulogies or anything of that sort, But I would like everyone to know and pray for a man that was a staunch, loyal Ahmedi and is a great loss to our Ahmadiya community.

Mr. Ali was a firm believer in his faith and never a day went by when he was not adamant in making others feel intrigued and awed by his faith. He was popular for standing near London's largest mosques in Central London, Hyde Park and publicizing Islam, Ahmadiyah and the Oneness of Allah. He handed out wall hangings and pamphlets. He stood out in gatherings with his knowledge of the Holy Qur'an and the ability to make others feel so moved by his passion that they themselves would want to propagate and spread Islam too. During his memorial services at Mission House in London, I saw one member of our Jama'at holding a large envelope that many years ago Mr. Ali had given him. It was

filled with pamphlets that Mr. Ali designed himself and had printed beautifully propagating Islam. It was a handout I recognized very well, as I had seen stacks and stacks of them in my childhood. His continuous efforts in teaching me about Islam have indeed helped me throughout my life so far. I have no doubt that those words about Islam will help me for years to come. He helped form my belief and for that, I hope and pray that Almighty Allah grant him a wonderful place in Heaven.

Following are the selection of Quranic verses that Mr. Ali used to recite when going out for his daily jobs:

“He indeed is successful who purifies himself. And remembers the name of his Lord, then prays. But, you prefer the life of this world. While the hereafter is better and more lasting” (87:14-17).

DID YOU KNOW?

(a Question and Answer page for our Children)

Have a question in your mind? Send it to msnoor53@yahoo.com

Q: **What is the exact date of the “Miraj” (Prophet Mohammad’s, *peace and blessings of Allah be on him*, night journey and ascension to heaven)?**

A: According to most authentic reports, the Prophet (pbuh) was taken on his night journey from Makkah to Jerusalem on the night of the 27th of Rajab. He then made his ascent to heaven on that same night when he was shown numerous signs of the Greatness of Allah and many aspects of His kingdom. However, it is very difficult to pinpoint an exact date for the events that took place in the Makkah period of Islam. Reports of each event seldom mention a date. Early Muslim historians were concerned with the event rather than its particular timing.

Q: **In which period did North Africa become Muslim?**

A: The Muslim armies started their move into Africa at the time of Umar ibn Al-Khattab (*may Allah be pleased with him*), round about the 12th or 13th year of the Islamic calendar. The first move was that undertaken by Amr ibn Al-Aas who was able to conquer Egypt without much fighting. He made peace agreements with its inhabitants who received the Muslim army with open arms. Amr ruled over Egypt for several years after it accepted the Islamic rule and he was reappointed as governor of Egypt at the time of Mu’awiyah. The process of moving into the other parts of North Africa continued afterward and by the end of the first century, not only the whole of North Africa was Islamic, but also the Muslims had moved into Europe, crossing the straits of Gibraltar and moving into present-day Spain. Perhaps it is useful to mention that the name “Gibraltar”, which refers to the enclave in southern Spain ruled by Britain, is a distortion of the name Jabal Tariq which is the Arabic name of the area, meaning the mountain of Tariq, the commander of the first Muslim army to move into Spain. That was in the reign of Al-Waleed ibn Abdel-Malik who ruled the Muslim state for 10 years and died in the year 96 of the Islamic calendar. By that time, all North Africa was Islamic.

Q: **Is it obligatory that a Muslim minority community should have its own graveyard so that Muslims are not buried side by side with idolaters?**

A: A Muslim community should have its own distinctive character. In establishing that character, it should employ any method which can secure its rights without infringing the rights of other communities. It should work for friendly coexistence with the non-Muslim majority, trying all the time to consolidate its rights and privileges. If it can have its own cemetery, that is something to work for. If that is not possible, then perhaps the leaders of the Muslim community can make an agreement with the non-Muslim majority to have their own section in the graveyard of the city. If not, a Muslim can be buried anywhere.

Q: **If a Muslim (in minority) is offered a sheep (as a gift) by the head of a non-Muslim (majority), is it appropriate for him or them to slaughter that sheep on the Eid of Sacrifice?**

A: Establishing friendly relationships with other communities in order to prevent any friction or conflict is appropriate from the Islamic point of view. If that means the exchange of gifts on social or religious occasions, that is appropriate if it does not involve the Muslims in observing pagan rituals. If the Head of a non-Muslim community offers the Muslim a sheep for the Eid of Sacrifice, as a gesture of friendship, it is appropriate to have that gift and to slaughter it on that occasion. Also, the reciprocation of gifts is in order, but it should not entail Muslims observing pagan rituals.

This month, I am not going to write anything on this page and will leave the space for letters received from our readers (unedited). the Editor

“Mujahid” Engaged.

It is for the information of every brother and sister that, before leaving Pakistan, during my current vacations, I got engaged. Please remember me in your prayers.

(Mujahid, UK)

“WEB”

I hope all is well with you. I went through the June edition and found it well put and most informative and spiritually inspiring. I have a suggestion to make. The Arabic words must always be qualified by an English equivalent or translation, since our younger readers or non-Arabic-speaking brothers might not be aware of them. As always, I will also keep requesting and pushing the Editor to agree to have this wonderful magazine on the web at aaiil.org.

(Mujahid, UK)

“PDF”

AssSalaam-o-Alaikum

I have kindly taken notice of the contents of Noor-i-Islam, and I want to congratulate you with this periodical. I also want to make a

suggestion. Why not publish the paper in PDF format? It has several advantages above word for windows files. If you do not own a PDF writer, I want to prepare it when you send the crude text and lay out to me.

(Robbert Bipat, MD)

“DIL DIL” PAKISTAN

I have read some of the Newsletter and it was very interesting and I will finish the rest and tell you what I think and what I have learnt from it.

In these days, school year is coming to its end and I am packing my bags to go to Pakistan for my summer vacations. I smile to myself and say all thanks to Allah that even at a young age of 14, Allah has been so merciful on me by giving me chances again and again to visit my homeland, Pakistan. I am always excited to travel to Lahore and Islamabad to see my relatives, friends and Ahmadi brothers and sisters living there. While in Lahore, I attend religious events and activities and learn a lot every time I am there, and that knowledge turns to be very valuable always. Every time I come back from there, my belief in ‘family values’ get strong and stronger.

I still have to write my final exams and have to attend my graduation ceremony, as I am leaving Junior High and going into Senior High School, But, from now, I am packing my bags and getting ready to go to Pakistan. Please pray for my safe trip.

(Muneeb Sadiq, Calgary)

ENCOURAGEMENT

*(The following readers have very kindly sent letters of encouragement, and we are thankful to all of them –
Editor)*

Mansoor (Guyana), **Akbar Abdullah** (USA), **Safia Saeed** (Pakistan), **Shahid Aziz** (UK), **Riaz Ahmadali** (Suriname), **Seda Aral** (Turkey), **Farhaud** (Guyana), **Carima Barakat** (Canada), **Raza Saadat** (Canada), **Nasir Ahmad** (UK) and **Zahida Hydal** (Canada).

Correspondence and Communication is the only way to keep in touch with your brothers and sisters and express your views on what you see and read. Please write to us:

msnoor53@yahoo.com or jsmkw@hotmail.com

“MOTHER’S DAY” OR “FATHER’S DAY”

DO NOT CELEBRATE ONLY ONCE A YEAR, PERFORM YOUR DUTIES TOWARDS YOUR PARENTS EVERYDAY. IT IS A CYCLE OF LIFE – WHAT YOU GIVE TO YOUR PARENTS TODAY; YOU WILL GET IT BACK FROM YOUR CHILDREN TOMORROW.

HOW TO TREAT YOUR PARENTS, IN ISLAM

NEVER be disrespectful to parents, do not say harsh words on them.

Even if parents are unjust, it is **NOT LAWFUL** for children to ill-treat, disobey or displease them.

OBEY them in all lawful things. If they instruct you to do anything which is unlawful in Islam, then **POLITELY** and with **RESPECT** and **APOLOGY** decline. **NEVER** refuse rudely nor argue with them.

Whenever you see them, **GREET THEM**.

ASSIST them in lawful ways, even if they happen to be non-Muslims.

If you are living with them, take their **PERMISSION** before going anywhere. Inform them of your whereabouts.

If you are engaged in “Nafal” (voluntary and non-obligatory prayer) and your parents call you, **BREAK your prayer** and answer their call even if there is no urgency or importance in their call. If you are performing “Fardh” (obligatory prayer) and you detect urgency in their call, then break even the Fardh Prayer and answer their call.

Do not call your parents by their names. Address them with **RESPECT** and **HONOR**.

Speak **KINDLY** and **TENDERLY** to them.

Always be **CHEERFUL** in their presence.

Be **HUMBLE** to your parents.

DO NOT embark on a journey without their permission.

When they question you, **DO NOT** inconvenience them by delaying your reply.

It is highly disrespectful to refrain from answering them.

Even in their absence, **SPEAK HIGHLY** and **RESPECTFULLY** of them.

When accompanying parents in a walk, **do not walk in front of them** or on the right or left side. Walk – slightly behind them.

When speaking to your parents, keep your gaze low. **DO NOT** stare them in the face.

DO NOT raise your voice above the voices of your parents.

When entering the private room of parents, **seek their permission before entering**.

BE KIND, RESPECTFUL and **HELPFUL** to the friends of your parents.

After their death, always say **“Dua-i-Maghfirat”** for them. Pray for their forgiveness, **read Qur’an** and **give Sadaqah** with the intention that reward may be awarded to them by Allah.

PAY the debts of your parents.

If they had made any lawful “Wassiyat” (will), **FULFIL IT**.

ALWAYS endeavor to keep them happy.

IF, AT ANY TIME, YOU WERE DISRESPECTFUL TO YOUR PARENTS, REGRET YOUR ACTIONS AND HASTEN TO OBTAIN THEIR PARDON.

HAPPY SUMMER HOLIDAYS TO OUR CHILDREN. ENJOY THE “OFF-SCHOOL” TIME, SEE YOUR RELATIVES AND FRIENDS, BUT DO NOT FORGET TO OFFER YOUR PRAYERS.