

## **"Teeja, Dassei, Bissei, Chalissa, Chammei, and Salina" Have No Validity in the Holy Qur'an**

This article is written to help Muslims withdraw and move away from unethical and Non-Muslim practices, associated on matters concerning events after death of persons; the article is in no way intended as insulting or criticizing other religious groups, from where such unethical and Non-Muslim practices actually originated.

It has become a matter of worrying concern that certain Muslims are both believing in and practicing certain post-funeral rites, which are not prescribed in Muslims' ultimate authority, the Holy Qur'an. Both the problem and its solution reside in a study of the history of India.

The only stipulated restriction in Islam, as relating to death is to women who have become widowed. There is prescribed special waiting time, before the widows may remarry. This ensures that women are not pregnant before arrangements are made for remarriage. It is expressly stated in the Holy Qur'an at Chapter 2 and verse 234 as -  
*"2:234 And (as for) those of you who die and leave wives behind, such women should keep themselves in waiting for four months and ten days; when they reach their term, there is no blame on you for what they do for themselves in a lawful manner. And Allah is Aware of what you do."*

The corrupted Hindustani terminologies of *"Teeja, Dassei, Bissei, Chalissa, Chammei, and Salina"* are alien words in Islam. These words are not used by mainstream Muslims throughout the world, except by some people originating from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and their Diasporas to many parts of the world (e.g. Fiji). There are variations in terms and this depends upon which part of India the people originate from. For example, some parts of India call *Dassei* as *Dasswan*.

None of these alien words are found in the Holy Qur'an. These Non-Arabic words were introduced into Islam by influential and prominent Muslims of early India, during the Mughal regime of the entire Indian subcontinent. The Mughal Empire stretched from Afghanistan to Burma

and much of the “V” of the Indian subcontinent. It is common knowledge that Mughal Empire governed over entire India from early 16<sup>th</sup> Century to mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century. These points, which need deeper and accurate explanations for readers’ clarity and completeness, are given below.

More explicitly, the influential persons were amongst, and as commencing with the Delhi Muslim Sultanate (1206-1526), the Mughal Empire (1526-1857) and with the British Raj of India (1858-1947), which finally led to independence of India and Pakistan on 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> August 1947.

During these very trying times (1206-1857), the Indian communities were under intense pressures, where on one hand the Muslim (Mughal) Rulers imposed strict Muslim prescriptions, and on the other hand the mixed Indian populace went through various transformations, which included conversions from other faiths to Islam; and some extent of cross-marriages.

The East India Company, which was formed in 1600 and finally after merger with various other similar trading companies, formed a mega corporation of Honourable East India Company; this then led to the Battle of Plassey from 1757 and to the Sepoy Mutiny in 1857. This period saw thousands of British businessmen, British clergies and British troops pouring into India, along most of the East coastal areas. However, in Cochin, Christianity which was introduced by St Thomas in 52AD continued to spread. Consequently most of Eastern India from Assam through to the Malabar was a rich mix of ethnicities made up of mainly Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Zoroastrians (Parsis), Jain and many insignificant small religious groups of various names. This religious mix placed lots of administrative pressures on the Mughal Emperors.

It is necessary to list the first six of the greatest Mughal Emperors, which reflects the rapid and vast spread of Islam in India. The first five Emperors were very balanced in their regal administrations in imposing Islamic prescriptions of law and order.

These Mughal Emperors enforced law and order both regally and sensibly, and at the same time, allowing other religious groups in carrying on with their religious beliefs and practises; as rightfully

stipulated in the Holy Qur'an (i.e. allowing other faiths the rights of religious practices). The Holy Quran clarifies in a most balanced statement at Chapter 2 and verse 256 as-

*"2:256 There is no compulsion in religion — the right way is indeed clearly distinct from error. So whoever disbelieves in the devil and believes in Allah, he indeed lays hold on the firmest handle which shall never break. And Allah is Hearing, Knowing."*

The Mughal Emperors were sequentially as, and in their subsequent hierarchy successions of:

1. Emperor Zahir ud Din Muhammad Babur (b.1483 d.1850).
2. Emperor Nasir ud Din Muhammad Humayun (b.1508 d.1556).
3. Emperor Jalal ud Din Muhammad Akbar (b.1542 d.1605).
4. Emperor Noor ud Din Muhammad Salim (b.1559 d.1627).
5. Emperor Shahanshah Shahab-ud-din Muhammad Shah Jehan (b.1592 d.1666).
6. Emperor Abul Muzaffar Muhy-ud-Din Muhammad Aurangzeb Alamgir (b.1658 d.1707).

The sixth Emperor, Emperor Abul Muzaffar Muhy-ud-Din Muhammad Aurangzeb Alamgir (b.1658 d.1707) was extremely tyrannical and compulsively religious to such an extent, that the populace of India were waiting for his demise. To be more exacting, Islam in India began its diminishing returns on the aggregates of Islamic investments by the previous five Emperors.

During the Mugal regime (1526-1857), the mainstream religions existing in India were in the following array (with largest first, then descending to smaller): Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jain and many insignificantly small religious groups of various names.

Islam took its rapid and vast spread commencing with Emperor Babur (the 1<sup>st</sup>) and reached its peak with Emperor Aurangzeb (the 6<sup>th</sup>).

Upon death of Emperor Aurangzeb in 1707, Islam in India began to implode and faced intense oppositions from various other religions in India, and then these other religions began to grow exponentially. The situation was switched-about with Islam having lost its widespread stronghold and the other religions, which were in the minority, now began their steep prominence and spread widely.

Subsequent Mughal Emperors after Aurangzeb lost the plot. Consequently, those other people who were converted to Islam began to reintroduce and practice some of their previous religious practices, especially those religious ceremonies associated with and after the death of persons.

The new generation Mughal regime (having lost the plot) allowed this to continue and over several decades; and generations later, these practices of "*Teeja, Dassei, Bissei, Chalissa, Chammei and Salina*" began to spread throughout India and within Islam.

Islam as practised in the rest of various other countries with Muslim domination was not affected at all.

There is some necessity to identify how societal cracks appeared within the Mughal Emperors' royal households' administrations; and through which, ingresses of alien death-ceremony rites to Islam got accommodated, with practices such as "*Teeja, Dassei, Bissei, Chalissa, Chammei, and Salina*".

The first societal crack appeared undeniably, when the third Mughal Emperor Jalal ud Din Muhammad Akbar got married to Princess Jodha Bai, who was the eldest daughter of Kachwaha Rajput Raja Bharmal of Amber. She was a Hindu princess. The Raja got his daughter married to the Muslim Mughal Emperor, on the assumption, that his daughter will ultimately inherit the wealth of entire India from her husband (Emperor Akbar).

Mughal Emperor Jalal ud Din Muhammad Akbar permitted Jodha Bai to have a *mandir* inside the Raj Mahals (palaces), in Delhi, complete with typical outfitting of *mandirs*. This also included the worshipping fire-pit (*havankhund*).

Later her name (from Jodha Bai) was recorded in Mughal chronicles as Mariam uz-Zamani, indicating that she later converted to Islam. The damage was already done, as hundreds of Muslims employed inside the palaces, assumed as permissible to have such alien practices inside Muslim households. They also assumed and understood that the Emperor's household administration was being led by example.

There was also some degree of flexibility introduced by the Mogul Emperor of the time in mid 15<sup>th</sup> Century; and Mogul Emperor Jalal-ud-

Din Muhammad Akbar and later his son, Mogul Emperor Nur-ud-Din Muhammad Salim, who was later known as Mogul Emperor Jahangir, allowed some of the Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, Jain and Zoroastrian practices to continue as a compromise, under an agreement known as "*Din Illahi*." This arrangement continued in India through to Emperor Shah Jehan, (the person who had the Taj Mahal built for his wife Mumtaz, at Agra). "*Din Illahi*" ultimately failed, when the Grand Mufti of Delhi advised the Emperor that the Emperor's decision to progress with "*Din Illahi*" was unethical and seriously threatening the purity and originality of Islam.

Allah, in His indisputable and magnificent wisdom saw appropriate to introduce the 13<sup>th</sup> Century Reformer, *Mujjadid* Hazrat Sayyid Ahmad Barelvi (b.1786 d.1831).

*Mujjadid* Hazrat Sayyid Ahmad Barelvi served his term in India, after the death of Emperor Aurangzeb. The purpose of *Mujjadid* Hazrat Sayyid Ahmad Barelvi's timely arrival in India was to revive and bolster Islam; and prevent its further decline. *Mujjadid* Hazrat Sayyid Ahmad Barelvi was however, surrounded and killed by the Sikhs in Punjab in 1831.

In order to understand the introduction of Hindi terminologies "*Teeja, Dassei, Bissei, Chalissa, Chammei and Salina*" and in all fairness to those who use these terminologies to this day, it is essential to reflect firstly, the origins of Islam and secondly, the origins of such "alien to Islam terminologies."

The Holy Qur'an was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in pure Arabic language over a passage of 23 years, as a series of Divine revelations. All such revelations were directly revealed as supreme Divine deliveries from Allah to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh); but always via Archangel Gabriel (*Jibrail*). These revelations happened over 1,400 years ago.

It has to be noted with some degree of stressing, that Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was an Arab and of course he spoke only the Arabic language. The Arabic language was at that point in time the most perfect language of the educated communities. Accordingly, when Archangel Gabriel (*Jibrail*) delivered the Divine revelations from Allah, each and every revelation was delivered in Arabic language and

of the particular dialect which Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) spoke. No alien word (alien to Arabic) was ever introduced in the revelations.

As Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) received the revelations, he used to go into trance-like situations; and as he relayed the revelations he had been receiving, his scribes were quickly writing down word for word and with punctuations, whatever Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) uttered.

Upon completion of all and the final revelation, which lasted a stretch of 23 years, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) directed that his scribes read out to him what they had written, as Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was completely illiterate and could not personally read or edit the scribes' writings. After reading out to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), the scribes were further directed by Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) to rearrange all revelations into a particular sequence of logical order.

The final completed sequential arrangement is today referred to as the Holy Qur'an, the most perfect document ever written, and which uses the most difficult number 19 as the master key and test to all texts, editorial and structural engineering, related opposite binaries and Arabic punctuations, all as multiples of 19.

Readers must remember that all Islamic and religion-associated words which are used in Islam must be in Arabic language; and must also have a precise meaning, as they are a part of the revealed words which make up the Holy Qur'an. Some examples of such revealed meanings (just to mention a few) are *Janaza*, *Lailatul Qadr*, *Eid-ul-Fitr* and *Eid-ul-Adzha*. All such words have an Arabic root and validate their usage directly from the Qur'an texts.

Nowhere in the entire Holy Qur'an do the words "*Teeja*, *Dassei*, *Bissei*, *Chalissa*, *Chammei* and *Salina*" appear in any form of description whatsoever.

Therefore, externally introduced Hindustani words of "*Teeja*, *Dassei*, *Bissei*, *Chalissa*, *Chammei* and *Salina*" are neither of Arabic language roots nor do they form any validation to the Holy Qur'an as revealed words. Such words, alien to Islam, may be brutally referred to as "damaging diseases" to the general purity and splendor of Islam.

When a person gets sick or diseased, the doctor needs to examine and carry out a diagnosis of the sick person. The doctor needs to identify

the cause of the ailment, its cure and some caution to the patient, not to repeat the cause and of course, not getting sick again.

Accordingly it is necessary to examine and diagnose each of those words, as would a doctor and, how they got unintentionally introduced as practices in India. Again, the reader must be mindful of the Indian Diaspora and wherever the Indians went, there were always some Muslims who made up the migratory groups.

Consequently, these Muslims' practices in India went along with them to each of those countries and such Hindi terminologies of "*Teeja, Dassei, Bissei, Chalissa, Chammei and Salina*" became part of their regular conversation and practical usage. Sadly, in many cases, religious leaders have made these non-prescribed and unethical practices to the point of compulsivity. Each of these alien to Islam practices also involve costly feasting with relatives, friends and neighbours. The survivors of the dead person, who are unfortunately in lower income brackets, often get into serious debts, as these events are spread over next few months and then every 12 monthly.

It is necessary to reiterate that before Islam came to India, there were some other mainstream religious groups such Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity, etc. During the reign of the Mogul Empire, Islam was the religion of the Mughal Emperors of India; and many people in India converted to Islam.

When these people converted and became Muslims they also brought over "their old baggage" of customary habits and practices, which they were so used to in their previous religion. Many of these habits and practices were associated with significant emotions in peoples' lives in India; and they retained those words and practices as forces of habit.

The historical descriptions in the next few paragraphs following is not in any way intended to be derogatory against other communities, but the sole purpose is to show how beliefs and practices of other communities in India, crept into Islam, when peoples of those other communities converted to Islam. Their current beliefs, practices and their fundamental human rights are all sincerely respected.

"*Teeja*" is a Hindustani word with root of "*teen*" and which is taken to mean the Hindi numeral (teen=3). The origin of "*teeja*" comes from two sources: First is the Zoroastrian religion in which, a dead person's

soul is completely separated from the body and all forms of worldly possessions. In the Zoroastrian religion, there is Zoroastrian belief that the soul, which hangs about a dead person's body, gets completely separated on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day. This is followed by feasting and distribution of fruit and some sweets as "holy prashad." The second aspect is the Christian influences and belief that Jesus Christ (as) had risen from the dead on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day after his crucifixion.

Communities in India adopted post-funeral rites, which grow on a simple formula, commencing with a base of ten, as people have ten fingers on their hands. This base of ten is taken to be called "*Dassei*" with root from the Hindustani word "dass" (dass=10). It is ten days after death of person. (This comes from Hindu practices in India when the sons of the deceased person have their heads shaved. A special feast follows and the closest relatives of the deceased must gather closely around the prayer circle, in odd numbers of 7 or 9 or 11).

The next post funeral rite is doubling ten to twenty. Hence this rite is on the twentieth day and called "*Bissei*" with root from the Hindustani word "biss" (biss=20). A similar feast of variety of food follows.

In accordance to the doubling formula, the twentieth day is now doubled to forty days. Similarly, "*Chalissa*" is another Hindustani word with root of Hindustani word "*chaliz*" (*chaliz*=40). Again, prayer rites and a similar feast of variety of food follow.

In continuation of this practice, the term "*Chammei*" is also a Hindustani word with roots of "*cheh-mah*" and which is taken to mean a passage of 6 months. Again, prayer rites and a similar feast of variety of food follow.

Moreover, "*Salina*" is yet another Hindustani word with root of "*saal*" and which is taken to mean a year. This directly comes together from adoption of the widely practiced Hindu word '*Shradh*,' which is ceremoniously carried out one year after the death of the person.

All of the above Hindu practices come with gathering of family members, neighbours and friends. In each case a variety of food is prepared and offerings made over the fire-pit (*havankund*) and the food is then distributed to family members, neighbours and friends in small lots called "prashad."

In the case of Muslims, they have substituted the (*havankund*) with incense sticks (*aggarbatti*) and serving exactly the same purpose!

It is also necessary to roll back history of ancient India and equate such post-death associated events with communities in India before the arrival of Islam into India. In Hindu system, cremation is a ritual designed to do much more than dispose of the body. It is intended to release the soul from its grasp of earthly existence. Hindus believe that cremation (compared to burial) is most spiritually beneficial to the departed soul. This is based on the belief that the soul will linger as long as the physical body remains visible. If the body is not cremated, the soul remains nearby for days or months.

Accordingly there are periodic events to ensure that the departed soul re-enters into some animal form but does not return to the humans system, before finally making way to Nirvana. The Arthasastra, a Hindu textbook from the second century, offers a detailed description of some of the more explicit realms the soul must encounter.

From the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> day, relatives gather for a meal of the deceased's favourite foods. The number of days may differ with different Hindu casts. On the 40<sup>th</sup> day, a memorial service is held. In some traditions it is a repetition of the funeral rites. These ceremonies are held to make sure that the spirit will enter in the body of any bird or animal and so ensure it will not return looking for its human body. At the yearly anniversary of the death (according to the moon calendar), a priest conducts the rites in the home, offering food to the ancestors. This ceremony is done yearly as long as the sons of the deceased are alive.

What do some Muslims do for their Muslim "*Chalissa?*" The same!

It can now be seen and comprehensively concluded that Hindu rites and practices have crept into Muslims' practices, only for those Muslims, whose origins are from India and they have further spread out with the Indian Diaspora.

Muslims from other countries to not indulge in such practices as those practices are not authenticated in the Qur'an.

All Muslims must understand and remember at all times that any terminology, which is not in the Holy Qur'an, is obviously not a revealed word and did not come from Allah. Such alien words, as

discussed above, therefore must not be taken as part of Islamic terminology.

In addition, Muslims must also remember, that such alien words must not become compulsively imposed upon all Muslims, and that they must not perform such alien rituals.

The last Emperor, whose rule was temporarily restricted to the city of Delhi, was imprisoned and exiled by the British after the Indian Rebellion (Sepoy Mutiny) of 1857. The British identified that Islam was the resin that helped bond together all communities in India under the Mughal regime. In order to break this administrative resin, the British saw fit to arrest, charge and convict, imprison and then again exile to Burma, the last Mughal Emperor, Emperor Abu Zafar Siraj ud Din Muhammad Bahadur Shah II in 1857. Two of his sons and a grandson were beheaded compelling the Emperor to sign the deed of surrender. He died in exile in Burma in 1862.

The classic period of the Mughal Empire commenced with the accession of Emperor Akbar in 1556 and ended with the death of Emperor Aurangzeb in 1707, although the Mughal Empire continued in a fragmented way for another 150 years, as summarized above. Islam continued to decline out of control and once again, Allah saw fit in His magnificent wisdom, to send another Reformer, the 14<sup>th</sup> Century Reformer to India to prevent Islam from further decline.

This Reformer was Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (b.1835-d.1908).

The 14<sup>th</sup> Century Reformer, commenced a new Islamic movement, which came into existence in India, propagating to the world. This is called the "Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat-i-Islam (Lahore)." This Reformer proved to the world, that Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was the final Prophet and that the Holy Qur'an is the final revealed scripture. This is given in Holy Qur'an at Chapter 33 verse 40, as-  
*"33:40 Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the prophets. And Allah is ever Knower of all things."*

People in the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat-i-Islam (Lahore) are called Ahmadiyya not because of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, although his last name was also Ahmad. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad did not choose his own name for his followers; but he chose the original birth

name of Rasul Allah (pbuh). When Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was born, his father (Abdullah) had already died, whilst on a return business journey from Damascus, Syria. Abdullah was a well to-do import/export businessman, who frequented between Arabia and Syria, using camel trains loaded with saddlebags of merchandise.

His mother Amina, as wife of a businessman, and whilst still pregnant with her first and only child, had a dream about the greatness of her son, whose name would be glorified in every part of the world; and then she was informed in her dream that her baby should be named Ahmad.

Amina, now a widow, gave her baby the name of Ahmad. Ahmad was then given into care of Halima, a professional child care-giver.

However, five years later after widowed Amina was relegated to poverty, and Amina also died, the child Ahmad was taken to his paternal grandfather Abu Muttalib. Abu Muttalib then decided to give the child a new re-start in life and changed his grandson's name - from Ahmad to Muhammad.

This clarifies that Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat-i-Islam (Lahore) is called Ahmadiyya because of Rasul Allah's (pbuh) original birth-name of Ahmad, and not because Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's last name was Ahmad. That was a simple coincidence. Please note this clarification.

This religious Islamic group, Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat-i-Islam (Lahore), therefore proves the prophecy in the Holy Quran at Chapter 3 and verse 104 as-

*"3:104 And from among you there should be a party who invite to good and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong. And these are they who are successful."*