

## فِقْهُ الطَّهَارَةِ

# The Fiqh of Tahaarah<sup>1</sup>

### Lesson 1

**Question:** why do we start our fiqh studies with الطَّهَارَةِ (purification)?

**Answer:** we start our fiqh studies with الطَّهَارَةِ (purification) because:

- (1) Cleansing removes all types of physical and ritual impurities.
- (2) Purification is the key to the prayer. The prayer is the most important pillar of Islam after الشَّهَادَتَيْنِ, and for this reason the scholars of الفقه always start with the Book of Purification (كتاب الطهارة).

## أَنْسَامُ الْمِيَاهِ

### (The Types of Water)

This lesson will cover the types of الْمِيَاهِ (water)

Before we learn about الطَّهَارَةِ (purification), it is very important that we learn about the types of water so that we can distinguish between dirty water and clean water. Some of the scholars of الفقه have divided water into four

<sup>1</sup> Compiled by Abu Ameenah AbdurRahman Bennett.

types:

### (1) الماء المطلق (Pure water)

This type of water is **naturally pure** (طاهر) and **purifying** (طهور) for others. This water comes in the natural state it was created, such as rain and snow that falls from the clouds or water that flows in rivers and seas. The best and most blessed water is the water of Zamzam (زَمْزَم), which is located in Saudi Arabia, Mecca. The water of Zamzam was dug up by Angel Jibreel for Ibraheem's wife and son, Ismaa'eel. So this type of water we can use for removing **الحدَث** (ritual impurity) and removing **النَّجَاسَة** (impure substances). Do not worry, we will learn what these Arabic words mean in our next lessons, insha Allah. Allah states about water that falls from the clouds

وَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً طَهُورًا ٤٨

And We send down **pure water** from the cloud,

[Al Furqaan 48]

Our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) supplicated to His Lord for the following:

اللَّهُمَّ طَهِّرْنِي بِالتَّلْجِ وَالبَرْدِ وَالمَاءِ البَارِدِ

O Allah purify me with **snow** and **hail** and cold **water**.

Water is the only liquid we can use to ritually purify ourselves with when performing **الْوُضُوءُ** (wudhu). We cannot use other pure liquids, such as tea, coffee, juice, oil or ink, to ritually purify ourselves. The only other substance we can use is earth to perform **النَّيْمُ** (dry ablution). We will learn about **النَّيْمُ** in one of our future lessons, insha Allah.

### (2) الماء المُسْتَعْمَل (used water)

This is a type of pure water that has already been used on the body to wash or ritually purify ourselves before prayer. For example, someone fills up a bath full of water and then performs **الغُسل** in this water. But then later on, he

takes some of this water he bathed in and uses it for الوضوء. This is what the scholars mean by **used water**.

Now, with regard to this type of water, there is a difference of opinion amongst the scholars regarding whether this water can be used to ritually purify ourselves. The majority of the scholars say that even though this type of water is pure (طاهر), it is not purifying (طهّور) and so this type of water cannot be used to ritually purify ourselves. Other scholars say that this type of water is permissible to use as long as the colour (اللون), smell (الرائحة) and taste (الطعم) has not changed. They argue that, because there is no difference of opinion that **used water** remains pure (طاهر), and that it is still called 'water' then unless evidence can be given to prove it cannot be used, it falls under the general ruling of water that can be used to ritually purify.

### (3) الماء الذي خالطه طاهر (water mixed with a pure substance)

This type of water has been mixed with a pure substance (طاهر), such as soap, leaves, saffron or fruit. If the pure substance has not changed the water then he can use it to ritually purify himself. As for when the pure substance causes the water to change its colour (اللون), smell (الرائحة) or taste (الطعم) then the water remains pure but it cannot be used to for ritual purification. In other words, we can use it to drink but we cannot perform الوضوء with it. However, just like the 2<sup>nd</sup> type of water, it seems that the stronger view is that we can use it to ritually purify ourselves.

### (4) الماء الذي خالطته النجاسة (water mixed with an impure substance)

If water mixes with an impure substance and the impure substance changes the colour, smell or taste of the water then this water becomes impure. All the scholars agree on this. This water cannot be used for removing ritual impurity (wudhu or ghusl), and it cannot be used to remove any physical impurity from clothes and other places. If it is a large quantity of water and an impure substance is mixed with it, but it does not cause any change to any of its characteristics, then the water remains pure and can be used to ritually purify. If, however, the quantity of water is a little and something impure mixes with it then it is no longer pure and cannot be used to ritually

purify.<sup>2</sup>

So how much is a lot of water? Well, the scholars say that it must reach **فُلتَيْنِ** (two large vessels) or more. The word **فُلتَيْنِ** is taken from the following hadith of our Prophet (ﷺ):

إِذَا كَانَ الْمَاءُ فُلتَيْنِ أَوْ ثَلَاثًا لَمْ يُنَجِّسْهُ شَيْءٌ

If the water is the amount of **two** or **three large vessels**, nothing can make it impure.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> When we look closely at these four types of water, we learn that there are only two types of water in reality.

<sup>33</sup> Sunan Ibn Maajah (518).

### Questions on the types of water

Answer the following questions by reading the text of the lesson carefully:

1. What is the Arabic word for 'purification'?
2. What is the Arabic word for 'water'?
3. How many types of water are there according to some of the scholars of الفقه?
4. What is the first type of water?
5. Give an example of the first type of water.
6. What is the Arabic word for removing ritual impurity?
7. What did Allah send down from the clouds?
8. What is the only liquid we can use to ritually purify ourselves with?
9. What is the Arabic word for impure substances?
10. What is the difference between something being طاهر and something being طهّور?
11. What is the Arabic word for dry ablution?
12. What is the second type of water?
13. Give an example of the second type of water.
14. Do the scholars of الفقه agree on the second type of water?
15. What is the third type of water?
16. Name some things that this water can be mixed with?
17. What is the fourth type of water?
18. What do all the scholars of الفقه say about this type of water?
19. When does this type of water become impure?
20. How much water do we need to make sure that water which has been mixed with something impure remains pure? Use the Arabic word in your answer.
21. Where did we learn about this quantity of water?
22. What is the Arabic word for 'types'?

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