

Cultivating young Hearts on the Fertile soils of Islam

فِقْهُ الطَّهَارَةِ

The Fiqh of Tahaarah¹

Lesson 3

النَّجَاسَةُ

(Impurity)

This lesson will cover النَّجَاسَةُ and its different types

We briefly mentioned in our last lesson the word نَجَاسَةٌ (impurity) which is the opposite of طَهَارَةٌ. In this lesson, we will study its meaning and learn its different types so that we can cleanse and purify ourselves from its various types before offering our acts of worship to Allah. The base letters of the word نَجَاسَةٌ are نَ جَ سَ. These are the base letters we have to look up in a dictionary to learn its meaning:

najusa u (نجاسة *najāsa*) and *najisa a* (*najas*) to be impure, unclean, soiled, dirty, sullied, stained, tainted II and

¹ Compiled by Abu Ameenah AbdurRahman Bennett.

It is very clear what the verb **نَجَسَ** means in Arabic and it does not spell out anything nice! Now that we know what the word means in the Arabic language, let us learn what it means according to the scholars of **الفقه**.

Just as we learnt in our previous lesson on **طَهَارَة** the term **نَجَاسَة** has two meanings in Islam. The first is **نَجَاسَة مَعْنَوِيَّة** (intangible impurities) and the second is **نَجَاسَة حِسِّيَّة** (tangible impurities). The first type of **نَجَاسَة** refers to beliefs and actions that are impure, such as **الكُفْر** (disbelief), **الشِّرْكَ** (polytheism), **الْفُسُوق** (immorality) and **العِصْيَان** (disobedience). We perform **طَهَارَة مَعْنَوِيَّة** to rid ourselves of any type of **نَجَاسَة مَعْنَوِيَّة** in our beliefs or actions. The scholars of **الفقه** are not concerned with this type of **نَجَاسَة**.

What is **نَجَاسَة حِسِّيَّة**?

The scholars of **الفقه** teach us that **نَجَاسَة** is a substance that the Islamic sharee'ah has deemed filthy and impure. It is very important here to separate between **substances that the Islamic sharee'ah has deemed filthy and substances that we believe to be filthy**, such as spit, dirt or sweat. Some Muslims mistakenly think that when they get dirt on their clothes at work that they cannot pray, which causes them to delay their prayers from their stated times. This is a big sin!

What needs to be free from **نَجَاسَة** before we pray?

Before we can offer our prayers to Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, we have to make sure that our **(a) bodies, (b) clothes and (c) places of prayer** are free from any type of **نَجَاسَة**. Because we are Muslims who love to follow the Sunnah of Allah's Messenger, we should never be shy to ask "What is the evidences for this?" Here are three evidences for removing **نَجَاسَة** from the above three things:

Evidence for (a): bodies

The Prophet passed by two graves and said 'They are being punished but they are not being punished for something that was difficult. One of

them he used to go around spreading gossiping. As for the other, he never used to protect himself from urine.'

Evidence for (b): clothes

A women once came to the Prophet and said: 'If one of us sees menstrual blood on our garments what should we do?' He said: 'Scratch it off and then rub it with your fingers whilst pouring water on it, and continue to pour water on it (until it's clean), and then pray in it.'

Evidence for (c)

Once a Bedouin came and urinated in the corner of the masjid. So the people started to rebuke him but the Prophet forbade them. When he had finished from relieving himself, the Prophet instructed that a bucket of water be poured on it (i.e. the spot where he urinated).

How do we remove the different types of نَجَاسَةٌ?

Before we learn how to remove the different types of نَجَاسَةٌ, it is important to learn that the scholars of Islam have divided نَجَاسَةٌ into three types because each type is more impure than its former. Let us look at each type and how the Sunnah teaches us to remove each type.

Type one: concentrated impurity (نَجَاسَةٌ مُعَظَّمَةٌ) - this type is called 'concentrated impurity' because this type of filthy substance is full of concentrated bacteria, inflammation and infection. This type of impurity is linked to dogs. The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said,

إِذَا وَلَعَ الْكَلْبُ فِي الْإِنَاءِ فَأَغْسِلُوهُ سَبْعَ مَرَّاتٍ وَعَقِّرُوهُ الثَّامِنَةَ فِي التُّرَابِ

When the dog licks the utensil, wash it seven times, and rub it with earth the eighth time.²

The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) teaches us here to wash our plates and other utensils that we use to eat and drink seven times and then once with earth. We bet

² Saheeh Muslim (2/114).

you are wondering why the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) commanded us to clean our utensils with earth. Well, in earth there is a fungus called *Penicillin*, which is an antibiotic that destroys or slows the growth of bacteria. This teaches us that water alone is not enough to kill a dog's bacteria and this is why the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) commanded us over 1400 years ago to use earth or mud when cleaning a utensil that has been licked by a dog!

Type two: typical impurity (نَجَاسَةٌ مُتَوَسِّطَةٌ) – this type refers to urine and faeces of animals and humans. We just remove this type of نَجَاسَةٌ by washing it normally and making sure it is removed.

Type three: reduced impurity (نَجَاسَةٌ مُخَفَّفَةٌ) – this type is called 'reduced impurity' because it refers to the urine and faeces of children who are still breastfeeding from their mothers and are not yet eating solid foods. The evidence for this is as follows:

عَنْ أُمِّ قَيْسِ بِنْتِ مُحْصَنِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا (أَنَّهَا أَتَتْ بِابْنٍ لَهَا صَغِيرٍ لَمْ يَأْكُلِ الطَّعَامَ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَأَجْلَسَهُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي حَجْرِهِ فَبَالَ عَلَى تَوْبِهِ فَدَعَا بِمَاءٍ فَنَضَحَهُ وَلَمْ يَغْسِلْهُ)
Umm Qays bint Mihsan brought her small son, who was not eating food yet, to the Prophet. So Allah's Messenger sat him on his lap and he urinated on his clothes, and so he called for some water and sprinkled it [on his clothes] and did not wash [the area].³

As long as the child is still breastfeeding from their mothers then all we have to do when their urine gets on our clothes is to sprinkle water on the soiled place. So next time your little brother or sister go the toilet on your clothes, you now know how to clean yourself according to the Sunnah!

Al-hamdulillah, this concludes our lesson on النَجَاسَةُ .

³ Al-Bukhari (223).

Questions on النِّجَاسَة

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

1. What is the Arabic word for impurity?
2. It is very important that we separate between substances that are _____ and substances that we _____ .
3. What are the three things that have to be free from impurities before we can pray?
4. What is the evidence for removing impurities from the body?
5. What is the evidence for removing impurities from clothes?
6. What is the evidence for removing impurities from the places of prayer?
7. The scholars of fiqh have divided impurities into how many types?
8. What is the first of the three types of impurities and how do we remove it?
9. What is the second of the three types of impurities and how do we remove it?
10. What is the third of the three types of impurities and how do we remove it?
11. Write the hadith of the dog in Arabic and English from memory.