

Preservation of Faith and Life

As Fundamental Goals of the Shariah

Recap of previous weeks

- ▶ The laws of Islam work towards the attainment of specific goals (Maqasid).
- ▶ The primary goal is the attainment of benefit and the prevention of harm.
- ▶ Sometimes a small harm is tolerated in order to prevent a greater harm.
- ▶ The Shariah revolves around the protection of the five necessities - faith, life, intellect, wealth and family.
- ▶ This week we will discuss the protection of faith and life.

Preservation of Faith

- ▶ A priority in Islam is the protection of faith.
- ▶ This takes precedence over other goals.
- ▶ Protection of faith operates on two levels:
- ▶ Preserving the religion of Islam as a whole
- ▶ Preserving the faith of the followers of Islam
- ▶ Previous religions were distorted, as this is the final revelation, it must be preserved until the end of time.
- ▶ People's faith fluctuates, so steps must be taken to protect it from dying out.

Examples of Preservation of Faith

- ▶ The compilation of the Quran and recording of Hadith were done as part of preserving the faith as a whole.
- ▶ The existence of scholars with chains of teachers tracing back to the Prophet (pbuh) is done to preserve the integrity of the message.
- ▶ The obligation to live in Muslim communities serves to protect the faith of the individuals living in those communities.
- ▶ The obligation of Salah, Sawm and Hajj all work to preserve the faith of the individuals performing these actions.
- ▶ Jihad is allowed because preservation of faith takes precedence over preservation of human life.

Preservation of Human Life

- ▶ The second goal of the Shariah is to preserve human life.
- ▶ Modern scholarship extends this to include preservation of life in general.
- ▶ The Shariah considers life sacred and it should not be taken unless necessary.
- ▶ Humans living in a Shariah land should feel safe and should be able to live in peace.
- ▶ Sometimes to preserve the life of many, the lives of a few need to be taken, eg: death penalty for murder, Jihad.
- ▶ The protection of life includes protection of health and body.

Examples of Preservation of Life

- ▶ Islam prohibits murder and classifies it as a major sin.
- ▶ Islam also prohibits abuse, mutilation, torture, disfiguring and dismembering of people and animals.
- ▶ Animals can only be killed for food or in self-defence.
- ▶ It is prohibited to damage or kill plant life without reason.
- ▶ The death penalty exists to maintain peace and protect society from murderers.
- ▶ Jihad has very strict rules to protect non-combatants from harm, and to minimize violence and deaths caused during wars.

Practical Application

- ▶ We should live in Muslim communities in order to preserve the faith of our children.
- ▶ We must set up systems of education that work to preserve the faith of the believers.
- ▶ The obligatory acts of worship must be priorities in our life as they are a barrier between us and disbelief.
- ▶ We should strive to build a society that is safe from murder and abuse.
- ▶ Part of preservation of life is preservation of health.
- ▶ We need to ensure our treatment of people, animals and plant-life are all in keeping with the goals of the Shariah.

Q & A