

Q1: What is the importance of Self-Purification in Islamic Society?

Ans:

INTRODUCTION:

Self-Purification refers to the act of purifying the soul from all kinds of evil thoughts and deeds. It is the particular motive without which an impure soul cannot worship Allah. Self-Purification is an important step before offering prayer and worshipping Allah. It holds immense importance as it is the first step for success in both the worlds. Self-purification helps a soul attain inner peace, get closer to his Lord and build a strong character and moral values. Not only at individual level but self-purification also lays positive impacts on a society. The society which consists of purified souls is a united society with no crimes or social evils and it is also blessed with the favours of Allah (s.w.t). It helps in building of strong moral and ethical society. The sole reason of the creation of mankind is to worship Allah, and the souls which are impure internally as well as externally are not eligible to stand in front of Allah to worship Him. Hence, it is important for every soul to purify themselves first and worship Allah - The one who created the man.

SELF PURIFICATION - TAZKIYAH TUN NAFS

The original meaning of the word "Tazkiyah" is removal of substances which are harmful for the growth of the plant, when applied to the personality of humans it means to beautify it. So self-purification refers to the act of purifying the soul from all kinds of evil thoughts, deeds and impurities.

It is important for a Muslim to purify ~~the~~ ones self from all kinds of impurities before worshipping Allah - ~~is~~ the ~~is~~ motive of a Muslim, as Allah has said in the Holy Quran,

"I DID NOT CREATE THE JINNS AND THE HUMANS EXCEPT TO WORSHIP ME"

- Az-Zariyat

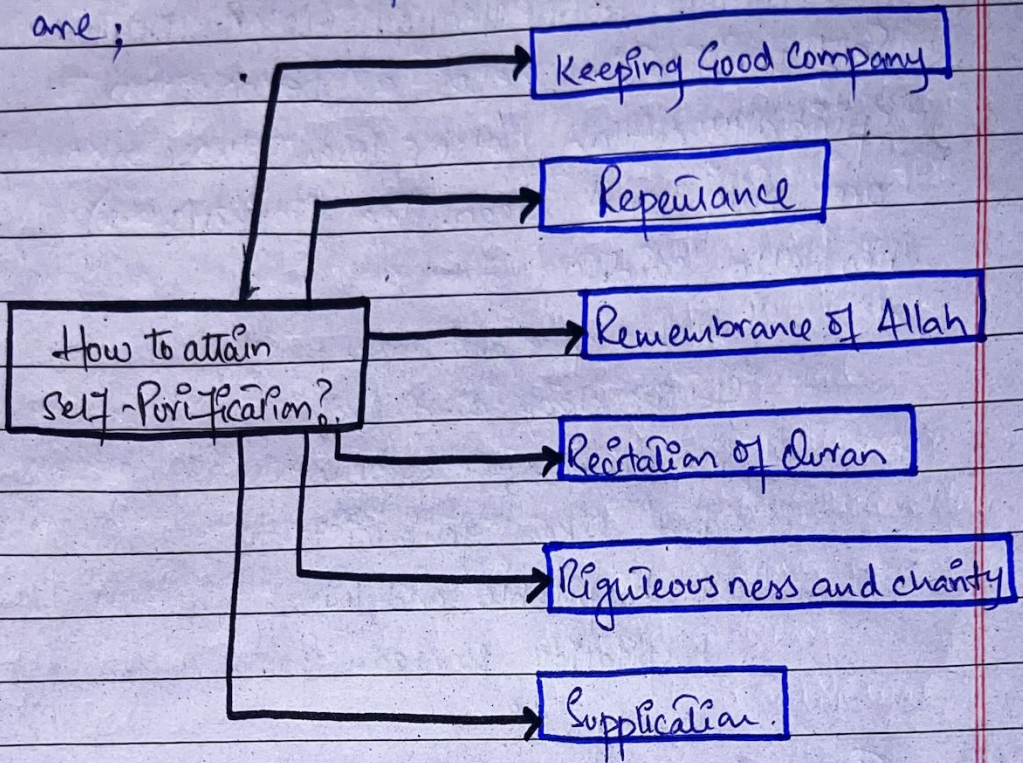
And to achieve this goal of worshipping Allah, it is important to focus on self-purification.

According to Imam Al-Ghazali, "Tazkiyah-tun Nafs" means, "Completing the perfection of one's soul (Nafs) by cutting down its desires and allowing its noble characteristics.

Self-purification is most relevant with individual development and mental health in this modern age. It lays a great emphasis on the individual life of a person and also the society. Main reasons after which self-purification is important, ~~are~~ is excessive worldly attachment which drags a person into wrongdoings.

STEPS TO ATTAIN SELF-PURIFICATION

The basic steps to attain self-purification are;



Allah said in the Holy Quran;

"And content yourself with those who pray to their Lord morning and evening, desiring His presence."

- Al-Kahf

This Ayah shows that Allah has ordered to keep a company which is spending most of the time in the remembrance of Allah. Indeed, they are the most purified souls.

In Surah Taubah, Allah said;

"Receive contributions from their wealth, to purify them and sanctify them with it; and pray for them."

IMPORTANCE OF SELF-PURIFICATION

① SPIRITUAL GROWTH THROUGH SELF-PURIFICATION:

Self-purification helps a person grow spiritually. Allah also loves those who are pure and clean. The Prophet (S.A.W) has also said

"Allah is pure and likes purity; He is clean and likes cleanliness; He is generous and likes generosity; He is hospitable and loves hospitality, so clean your courtyards."

Therefore, a society which is pure it has a strong bond with Allah as the society is free from sins, hypocrisy and arrogance.

② A CORE ISLAMIC DUTY:

Self-purification is emphasized in Quran and Sunnah as a key aspect of a Muslim's life. Prophet (S.A.W), a great example for every Muslim, he is the purest of all and always exemplified self-purification. Allah said in the Holy Quran:

"Indeed, he succeeds who purifies his soul, and he fails who corrupts it"

-Al-Quran

③ INCULCATES SOCIAL HARMONY

Purified souls never initiate fights or insurgence nor do they get involved into it. When individuals purify their hearts, they become more empathetic and tolerant which reduces conflicts and fosters unity. Hence, a peaceful Islamic society is build which practices justice, fairness and mutual respect. It eliminates man's pride and arrogance and inculcates social harmony.

④ INITIATES SOLIDARITY AMONG DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

Solidarity among diverse communities promotes social harmony and cohesion among the society, and society which is united is close to Allah. Allah has advised His followers to stay united, in the Holy Quran in following words:

"And hold fast to the rope of Allah, All of you together, and do not be divided."

[Surah Al-Imran]

⑤ REDUCES CORRUPTION:

Self-purification means self-accountability. A society in which people purify themselves they avoid doing evil deeds and do not practice any kind of corruption. Hence, it is important to self-purify to reduce corruption from the society.

⑥ ELIMINATION OF SOCIAL EVILS

The most difficult battle which is fought by anyone is against his own ego, and those who defeat their ego and temporal desires are the ones who succeed in purifying themselves. Self-purification is helpful in eliminating social evils because it forces people to exercise critical thought and make a difference between right and wrong.

⑦ A PRIMARY DUTY OF HOLY PROPHET (S.A.W)

There is no better example for Muslims than Holy Prophet (S.A.W). Holy Prophet (S.A.W) was the purest soul on the earth, even his heart was ~~was~~ purified by Hazrat Jibrail (A.S) when Holy Prophet (S.A.W) was a young child and lived with Hazrat Halima Sadiya (R.A). Holy Prophet (S.A.W) has always exemplified himself as a purified soul. Allah has also mentioned in the Holy Quran:

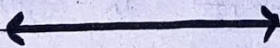
"It is He who sent among the unlettered a messenger from themselves; reciting His revelations to them, and purifying them, and teaching them the scripture and wisdom; although they were in obvious error before that."

[Al-Jumu'ah]

CONCLUSION

The main principle of Islam is the purification of the self, which means that every Muslim should focus on self-purification and focus on their bodies. Holy Prophet (S.A.W) has also laid great emphasis on self-purification as it brings social harmony in the society, promotes mutual understanding and self-accountability. Other than this self-purification also establishes a just society and eliminates social evils, gathering numerous blessings of Allah and practice righteous deeds promoting justice, peace and reducing corruption.

Therefore, it is the duty of every Muslim to focus on self-purification and follow the core Islamic duty for establishment of a peaceful society.



QUESTION NO. 2

Q: Elaborate that Islam has granted unique dignity to mankind.

Ans:

ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE ON THE UNIQUE DIGNITY OF MANKIND:

According to the teachings of Quran and Sunnah, humans are given priority among all creations of Allah. Major rights and responsibilities are granted to mankind by Allah and it mentioned as "Ashraf-ul-Makhloqat", which means "noblest of all creatures". This shows that humans are the most superior creation of Allah and Allah has created humans in the best of manner and granted them with highest form of knowledge with the ability to distinguish between the right and the wrong. The first human created was Hazrat Adam (A.S) and Allah ordered the angels to prostrate before Hazrat Adam (A.S). Allah has mentioned the dignity of mankind in the Holy Quran, in following words;

"And we have certainly honoured the children of Adam and carried them on land and sea and provided for them of the good things and preferred them over much of what we have created with preference".

[Al-Quran]

CREATION IN THE BEST FORM

"We have certainly created man in the best of stature"

[Surah At-Tin]

This Ayah proclaims how Allah has created mankind in the most excellent and balanced manner. Mankind is also unique as Allah has provided them with the ability to choose and identify among the good and bad and understand their moral activities and responsibilities.

GRANTED FREE WILL AND INTELLECT

Humans are granted with free will by Allah and they have the choice of choosing among the right and wrong. They are awarded with the ability of critical thinking and decision making. However, these abilities are not given to any other creature except humans.

VICEGERENTS ON EARTH

"And when your Lord said to the angels, 'Indeed, I will make upon ~~you~~ the earth a successive authority.'

[Al-Quran]

This verse states that Allah has appointed humans as His vicegerents and it highlights the importance of mankind as Allah has given them all the right and responsibility to manage the earth ethically and justly.

EQUALITY OF HUMAN DIGNITY

Every human being is given equal rights and responsibility and no discrimination among anyone on race, gender or color. The only way a human is superior to the others is piety. In Quran, Allah (S.W.T) mentioned,

"O mankind! We created you from a single pair of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other"

[Surah Al-Hujurat]

RIGHTS AND PROTECTIONS FOR HUMANITY

Allah has mentioned the fundamental rights of humans in the Holy Quran and highlighted that every man has the right of freedom of religion, justice and protection from the oppressors. No human is excluded from the framework of

ACCOUNTABILITY AND REWARD FOR ACTIONS

Unlike other creations, humans are to held accountable for their deeds and actions followed by them in the world, if they follow the teachings of Quran and Sunnah, Allah has also promised reward for them. However, no other creature is promised to be rewarded nor their actions matter. As Allah has said in the Holy Quran,

"I did not create humans and jinns except to worship me"

[Adh-Dhariyat]

RESPECT FOR HUMAN LIFE

"Whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption in the land - it is as if he had slain mankind entirely."

[Al-Quran]

This ayah highlights the importance of human life and how it is given value with the order of protection of human life. This also indulges the concept of justice and equity in the society. Every single human life is given immense importance by Allah and no one has the right to harm anyone.

PROTECTION AGAINST DEGRADATION

"And do not insult one another and do not call each other by names. Wretched is the name of disobedience after faith. And whoever does not repent, then it is those who are the wrongdoers."

[Al-Hujurat]

Allah has ordered in Quran to safeguard the dignity of every human being by avoiding actions which degrade or humiliate others. A great example is backbiting.

Explanation of a verse of Quran,

"Allah said that among you who talks bad about others, when they are not present, he/she will eat the flesh of their brother when dead."

[Al-Quran]

Hence, it is the duty of every muslim to protect the dignity of fellows ~~wh~~ even when they are not present. As the person not present at the moment cannot speak up for themselves, it is the duty of others to not speak about them.

CONCLUSION

Islam has granted unique dignity to mankind and it is rooted in the divine acknowledgement of human potential, responsibility and authority. Allah has made mankind the superior among all His creations and this unique dignity comes with rights and responsibilities which are to be followed keenly and do not practice any wrongdoing. The dignity which is given to mankind by Islam, must not to be lost or taken away by any human being regardless of his actions, religion, color or status. Even the most wrongdoer is to be given a dignified treatment and the punishment should not be given to humiliate but to reform and discipline a person.

