



The Young Muslims UK

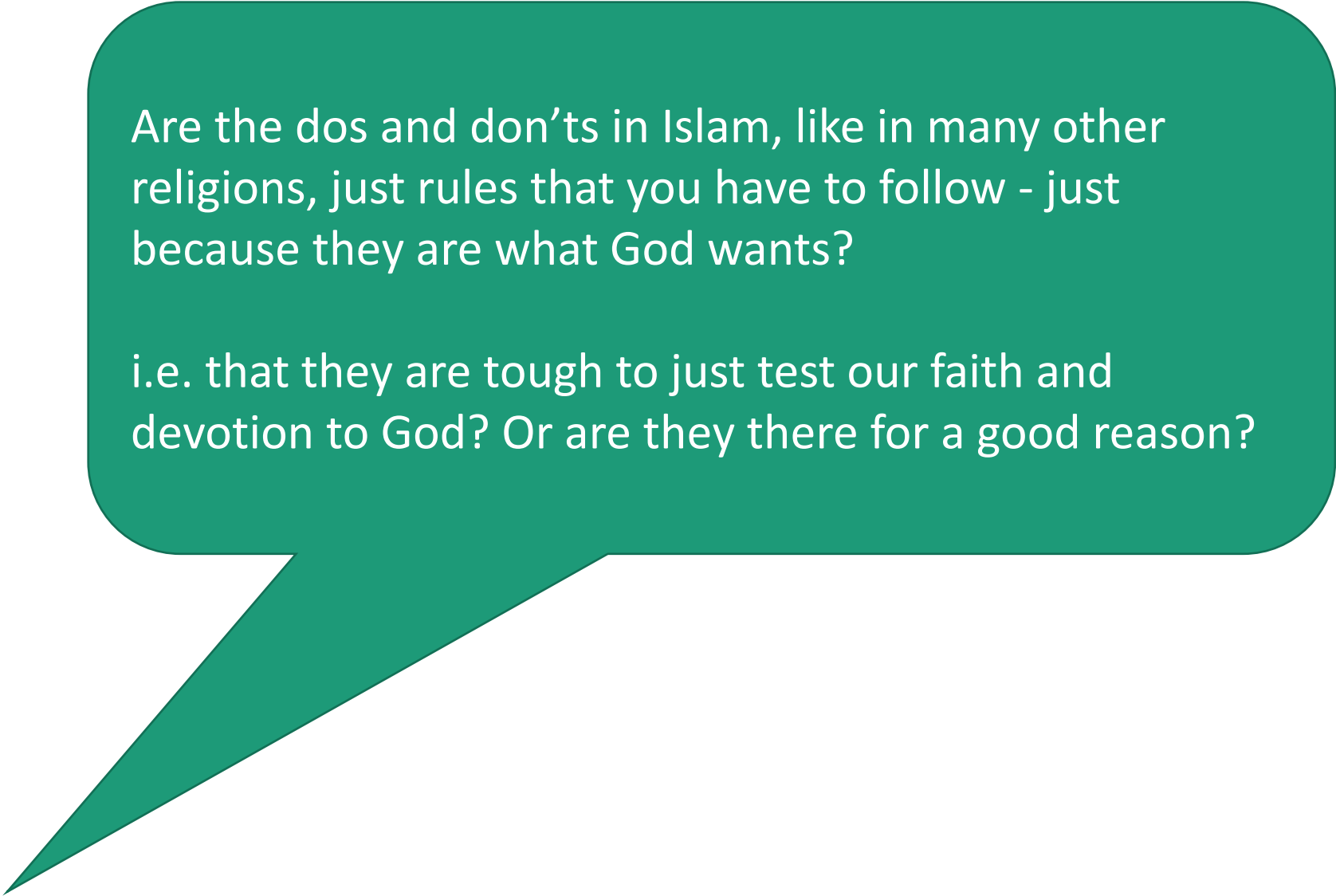


Halal & Haram

Dr Rizwan Syed

1. The first principle is the permissibility of things

- **Most things in life are allowed because the world is for us to make use of**
- **Allah wants our good**
- **What we are commanded is for our benefit, what is prohibited is because it's harmful**
- **What is haram has been made clear, the rest is allowed, as a favour**
- **You still have to abide by the law of the land!**



Are the dos and don'ts in Islam, like in many other religions, just rules that you have to follow - just because they are what God wants?

i.e. that they are tough to just test our faith and devotion to God? Or are they there for a good reason?

Most things in life are allowed because the world is for us to make use of

'He has subjected to you, from Himself, all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth....' (45:13)

'Today are all things good and pure made lawful unto you.' (5:5 or 6)

How can all this be made for us and then we be prohibited from it? Therefore, the prohibitions must be few.

'O you who believe! Do not make haram the good things which Allah has made Halal for you, and do not transgress; indeed, Allah does not like the transgressors. And eat of what Allah has provided for you, lawful and good, and fear Allah, in Whom you are believers.'
(5:90-91 (87-88))

Allah wants our good

Allah is Al-Barr – the Good, Source of All Good

‘In thy hand is all good’ (3:26)

‘Allah desires ease for you, and He doesn't desire hardship for you.’ (2:185)

Hadith: *‘I have been sent with what is straight and easy.’* (Ahmed)

‘From our exploration of the Shari'ah we have concluded that it was only set up to serve the interests of man. This is a conclusion which no one can dispute...’

(Imam Shatibi, Al Muwafaqat)

What we are commanded is for our benefit

What is prohibited is because it's harmful

Gambling and drinking:

'But the sin (or harm) is greater than the benefit' (2:219)

Adultery:

'For it is... opening the road (to much worse harm)' (17:32)

Retribution for murder:

'In it(the law of retribution) there is life for you... that you may restrain yourselves' (2:179)

Theft - hand:

'A punishment by way of example...' (5:38)

Swine:

'For it is an abomination...' (6:145)

Fasting:

'That you may learn taqwa' (2:184)

Prayer:

'Surely prayer protects from shameful and bad deeds.'

Charity:

'Take some charity from their wealth to purify them and make them grow (spiritually).' (9:103)

What we are commanded is for our benefit

What is prohibited is because it's harmful

'Allah commands justice (Adl) and righteousness (Ihsaan).'
(16:90)

Justice (Adl): *'O you who believe stand out firmly for Allah as witnesses (only) to fair-dealing. And do not let the hatred of a people cause you to swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: for it is closer to piety, and fear Allah - for verily Allah is well aware of all you do.'* (5:8 or 9)

What we are commanded is for our benefit

What is prohibited is because it's harmful

Goodness (Ihsan): *'He commands them what is right and forbids them what is evil; he makes lawful to them what is good and makes unlawful to them what is foul; he releases them from the yokes which were upon them.'* (7:157)

Imam Ibn al Qayyim al Jawziyyah said:

'When the signs of justice appear and its face is shown in any way, that is where the law of Allah and His religion are found.'

What is haram has been made clear, the rest is allowed

‘... He (Allah) has explained to you what He has made haram for you...’ (6:119)

The Prophet (S) taught:

*‘What Allah has made lawful in His Book is halal and what He has forbidden is haram, and **that concerning which he is silent is allowed as his favour. So accept from Allah His favour**, for Allah is not forgetful of anything. He then recited, "And thy Lord is not forgetful" (19:64).’ (Haakim, Sahih)*

The Prophet (S) explained, *‘That which is lawful is plain and that which is unlawful is plain and between the two of them are doubtful matters **about which not many people know.***’ (Bukhari and Muslim)

Scholars therefore explain that any evidence must be clear in proof, i.e. reliably authentic (qat’i thuboot) but also unambiguous in its meaning (qat’i dalalah)

What is haram has been made clear, the rest is allowed

You could argue that if something were really important and determined our success or failure in the Hereafter, it would be mentioned time and again in revelation (i.e. the Qur'an) and by the Prophet (S) in hadith, so we don't forget.

Imam Fakhr al-Din al-Razi (d. 606/1210) makes a similar point when talking about how we establish our creed – what we must believe, because that is also crucial and should be clearly established. He wrote:

*“...if such points were part of faith, the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) would not have judged anyone a believer until he was sure that the person knew the question. Had he done such a thing, **his position on the question would have been known to everyone in Islam and conveyed by many chains of transmission. Because it has not, it is clear that he did not make it a condition of faith, so knowing it is not a point of belief, nor denying it unbelief.**”*

What is haram has been made clear, the rest is allowed as a favour

This is why Imam Ahmed bin Hanbal said:

‘In relation to acts of worship, the principle is limitation (tawqeef); that is to say, nothing can be legislated in this regard except what Allah Himself has legislated.

To do otherwise is to incur the risk of being included in the meaning of the ayah:

“Do they have partners (with Allah) who have prescribed for them in religion that concerning which Allah has given no permission?” (42:21).

But as far as living habits are concerned the principle is freedom because nothing can be restricted in this regard except what Allah Himself has prohibited.

Here, to do otherwise is to be included in His saying,

“Say: do you see what Allah has sent down for sustenance? Yet you have made some part of it halal and some part haram. (10:59)”

What is haram has been made clear, the rest is allowed as a favour

In summary:

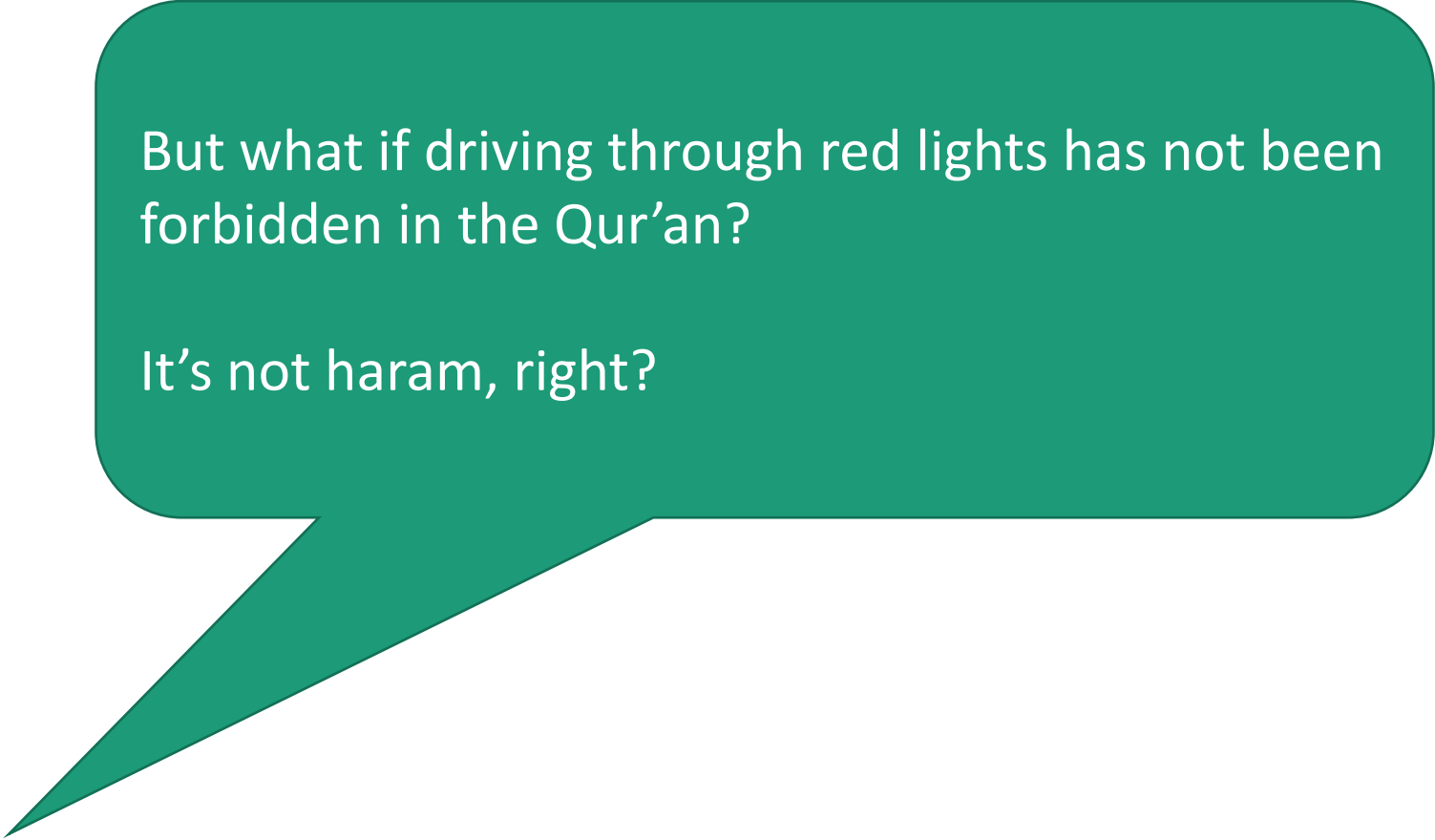
If something is clearly mentioned, either repeatedly or unambiguously in Qur'an or hadith as forbidden, then don't do it... If it hasn't been mentioned then it is halal.

In other words:

Everything is allowed, unless there is a clear evidence that it has been prohibited.

This means, we don't need to seek evidence for something being halal. If we know it's not haram, then it is automatically halal!

Note that in matters of ritual worship (e.g. salah or fasting) it is the other way around: *everything is haram unless there is a clear evidence allowing it.*



But what if driving through red lights has not been forbidden in the Qur'an?

It's not haram, right?

You still have to abide by the law of the land!

*'O believers! **Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you.** Should you disagree on anything, then refer it to Allah and His Messenger, if you truly believe in Allah and the Last Day. This is the best and fairest resolution.'* (4:59)

(Unless it is going to ask you to do something categorically haram
– but that is not likely since haram things are harmful anyway!)

1. The first principle is the permissibility of things

2. Halal and Haram are the right of Allah

3. Leave that which makes you doubt until the doubt is removed

4. Still consult your heart

5. Judge yourself; be easy on others