

The meaning of mubaah

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Taken from the works of Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al 'Uthaymeen (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

With regards to the meaning of mubaah in the Islaamic Sharee'ah, Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al 'Uthaymeen (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ)¹ comments:

The takleefiyyah² are of five types:

waajib (obligatory)

mandoob (recommended)

muharram (prohibited)

makrooh (disliked)

mubaah (permissible)

The meaning of mubaah in the (Arabic) language is: mu'lan (something made manifest and public) and ma-dhoon feehee (something for which permission has been given).

And its technical meaning is: that to which neither a command nor a prohibition is attached, in and of itself – such as eating at night in Ramadaan.

And the statement of ours “that to which neither a command... is attached,” excludes that which is waajib (obligatory), and that which is mandoob (recommended).

And the statement of ours “...nor a prohibition” excludes that which is muharram (prohibited) and that which is makrooh (disliked).

And the statement of ours “in and of itself” excludes that to which is attached

- 1 a command, due to its being a means to something which has been commanded with; or
- 2 a prohibition, due to its being a means to something which has been forbidden³

¹ (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) (rahimahullaah) May Allaah the Most High have mercy on him

² Rulings which relate to the actions of the people who are bound by the Islamic duties – so this excludes the young child and the insane person for example.

³ Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al 'Uthaymeen (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) explains in Sharh Al Usool min 'ilm ul usool (page 67-68): The fundamental principle with us is:

If something mubaah (permissible) is a means leading to something forbidden, then it (itself) is forbidden.

If something mubaah is a means leading to something makrooh (disliked), then it (itself) is disliked.

If something mubaah is a means leading to something obligatory, then it (itself) is obligatory.

If something mubaah is a means leading to something recommended, then it (itself) is recommended.

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So it has the ruling of that which it is a means to – be that something commanded with or something prohibited.⁴

And that does not take it away from its being something permissible in its origin.

And as long as it (remains) with the attribute of ibaahah (being permissible), then something mubaah does not give rise to reward nor to punishment.⁵

And it is also known as halaal and jaa-iz.

(Al Usool min 'ilm ul usool, quoted in Rasaa-il fil usool of Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al 'Uthaymeen rahimahullaah , p128)

⁴ Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al 'Uthaymeen (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) explains in Sharh Al Usool min 'ilm ul usool (page 65-66): For example – buying water. The origin with regards to it is that it is something mubaah (permissible). However if (making) wudhoo for the prayer is dependent on that, then buying it becomes something waajib (obligatory). So it is obligatory to buy it, because anything which is (needed) to complete something obligatory, then it (itself) is obligatory.

⁵ Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al 'Uthaymeen (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) explains in Sharh Al Usool min 'ilm ul usool (page 67): This is the ruling of mubaah – is it rewarded or not?

We say: as long as it (remains) with the attribute of ibaahah (being permissible), then something mubaah does not give rise to reward nor to punishment.

However (for example) if the person has the intention of preserving his body or taking enjoyment from the blessing of Allaah when he eats, then there is reward in it.

But it is according the (person's) intention.