

Islamic Summer Intensive Course 2019

Brothers' Component: Course Descriptions

The Engendered Intellect: 'Alawī Aḥādīth on Gender

Instructor: Shuja Ali Mirza

Duration: 5 sessions

Introduction: Mawlānā Rūmī in his *Mathnawī* says of Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib ('a):

ای علی که جمله عقل و دیده‌ای شمه‌ای واگو از آنچه دیده‌ای

O 'Alī, thou who art all intellect and vision, relate a little of that which thou hast seen!

One fundamental way of establishing correspondence with the objective standard of truth is to take guidance from the narrations and traditions that come from the prophets and messengers of God and the immaculate saints who are in a constant state of envisioning the truth and beauty of the Divine. Imam 'Alī ('a) is unique in this regard and is commonly known as the 'intellect personified.' His pronouncements on the intellect in general, and its relationship with gender in particular, are famously known. Misunderstandings stemming from the myopia of modernist and rationalist perspectives have led to these traditions being critiqued, discounted, and categorized as misogynistic. The course will attempt to dispel some of these criticisms and misunderstandings by taking a more principled and profound approach towards the *aḥādīth* in question.

As Seen by the Divine Legislator: A Survey of Gender Specific and Non-specific Aḥkām in Shī'ī Fiqh

Instructor: M. Mahdi Kassamali

Duration: 5 Sessions

Introduction: This course will attempt to give participants an overview of how men and women have been treated in the books of Shī'ī Fiqh. The course will start with looking at how the two genders are treated similarly across the various chapters of Fiqh dealing with worship, economics and social matters. This will be followed by a more detailed look at some of the differences, along with a glimpse at the ijtihādī sources for these differences and the philosophy behind them. Opinions of contemporary marāji' will be highlighted.

Pink Power: the History of Feminism and the Gender Politics Movement

Instructor: Asad Jafri

Duration: 4 Sessions

Introduction: Feminism is a movement that is deep-rooted in Western history dating back to the 18th century. Throughout the years, this movement has changed and fluctuated in terms of its focus and purpose. We will look at the various "waves" of feminism throughout history and attempt to dissect the base of this movement. The class will culminate with a discussion on Islam's viewpoint on this movement.

Tawhīd & Divine Duality: The Formation of the Immaterial-Material Gendered Soul

Instructor: Rizwan Rashid

Duration: 5 Sessions

Introduction: In striving to understand the origination, nature, and subsistence of the human soul, philosophers have elaborated detailed theories based on intellectual principles, cosmological correspondences, and scriptural teachings. In this course, we will examine Mulla Sadra's views on the material origination and spiritual subsistence of the soul as well as the foundations on which this view is based. Using this Sadrian model, we will attempt to locate the source of gender, its materiality and/or immateriality, and the way it affects and is affected by the human soul. Finally, we will end with a glimpse of the 'Irfānī outlook with regards to masculinity and femininity, particularly as it pertains to the return journey to God.

“The Male is unlike the Female”: Gender in the Qur'an

Instructor: Muhammad Hasnain

Duration: 5 Sessions

Introduction: Living in a modern world overwhelmed by mass and social media, where the values, beliefs and criterion of right and wrong are implanted in us even before we have started our journey towards understanding the Holy Qur'an, makes it difficult to understand the Words of Allah (s.w.t) accurately. This short course will be an opportunity to learn a relatively systematic approach towards extracting the Quranic view about any controversial topic, taking gender-related issues as examples.

The appeal to feminism and the fluidity of gender have become the latest idol for modern man. A number of Muslim scholars and exegetes make every possible attempt to explain Quranic ayahs in a way to make these verses in “harmony” with these new “holy” dogmas.

The purpose of the course is to be able understand the unbiased Quranic view on this issue with emphasis on the scholarly opinions of 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī.

The following topics will be presented in this course, *inshā Allāh*:

1. A few universal Quranic principles, particularly regarding the rights and responsibilities of each gender.
 2. The procedure for understanding Quranic vocabulary, with examples from the topic at hand.
 3. Selected commentaries of two significantly related verses on the topic: ليس الذكر كالانثى (3:36) and الرجال قوامون على النساء (4:34)
 4. Various dimensions and perspectives regarding the equality and inequality of men and women.
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Cultural Oppression and the LGBTQ Movement

Instructor: Salim Yusufali

Duration: 2 Sessions

In these sessions, we will insha'Allah explore the Islamic perspective on cultural forms of oppression and examine the LGBTQ's effect on culture from an Islamic lens of cultural oppression.

Gender Development in Children: Educating and Raising Techniques in Children

Instructor: Ali Karamali

Duration: 3 Sessions

Introduction: In this course we will explore the development of gender identity in children as part of the overall development of a healthy child. We will examine the multiple factors that contribute to this healthy development including family dynamics, social influences, the environment, and others.

The discussion will be framed on Islamic sources drawing from various sciences including psychology and sociology. We will explore various practical techniques in which parents, teachers, and mentors can positively affect the development of children through prevention, orientation, and intervention.

The course will draw from real life examples and case studies and is intended for a mature audience.

Analysis of Gender Identity as it Correlates to Islamic Community Building

Instructor: Husayn el-Mekki

Duration: 5 Sessions

Introduction: This course aims to build on previously discussed Community Building ideals. Many matters are intertwined and the issues that relate to gender are an integral part of community building. We will refresh some of the proper concepts in establishing a true Islamic community and their prerequisites. There are layers within community building for Muslim minorities residing in non-Muslim lands and a correct comprehension of gender relevant matters is critical in today's society. We will examine a variety of areas where gender roles and identity impacts lives, such as family, marriage, education, scholarship, leadership, etc. Distinctions will be made in areas where Islam differs with prevalent western thought. We will try to look at divine wisdom from an array of lenses so as to better comprehend when there are differences and to help make the spiritual and philosophical components more tangible. In this course please be prepared to think critically, openly, and 'come with an empty cup'.
