



ISLAM AND WESTERN WOMEN

The London Times published a report titled: "Why are British women accepting Islam?" Interesting

THE WINDS OF GUIDANCE are sweeping the West. There is an unprecedented move towards Islam in America, Britain, France and many other European countries. According to a survey of the Los Angeles Times (10/12/94) each year the Muslim population of America increases by one hundred and fifty thousand people. While this figure includes those Muslims who settle in America from abroad, a very large percentage is made up of Americans who have accepted Islam.

MEDIA

As for Britain, a report in the London Times (9/11/93) titled "Why are British Women accepting Islam?" states that a great number of Britons are accepting Islam. The report claims that despite the extremely antagonistic media coverage of Islam, the number of people flocking to it is ever on the increase. Among the reasons for the exodus towards Islam is that "Westerners despairing of their own society - rising crime, family breakdown, drugs and alcoholism - have come to admire the discipline of Islam." **Ironically, the antagonistic attitude of the media and the relentless propaganda against Islam are also counted among the reasons for people accepting Islam in great multitudes.**

75% WOMEN

However, what has surprised the West is that from the thousands accepting Islam, most are women. The London Times claims that 75% of Americans accepting Islam are women and that the case in Britain is similar. This surprise is evident in the following words of the author: "It is even more ironic that most British converts should be women, given the widespread view in the West that Islam treats women poorly."

The report contains many interviews with British women who have accepted Islam. Many of them

are very highly qualified and have accepted Islam with complete insight. Maymoona who is 39 years old was initially a Christian. First she researched all the Christian sects. Thereafter she studied Judaism, the Hari Krishna sect and other religions deeply. She finally chose Islam. Another woman who named herself Huda says that Christianity keeps changing from time to time. However she found Islam to be constant and steady in all respects. She also found that the five daily Salaah which are compulsory are an excellent basis for one's constant contact with one's Creator and that they maintain the realization of His existence in one's

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heart all the time.

SHOULDER TO SHOULDER

Although the general impression is that Western women wish to work shoulder to shoulder with men, the newly converted British women spoken to by the London Times feel otherwise. They claim that the attraction for them in Islam was that it had chalked out different roles for men and women which are in accordance to the physical and biological make up of each of them. According to them the feminist movement in the West is an insurrection and rebellion against women. They sum up feminism in the following words: **"Women copying men, an exercise in which womanhood has no intrinsic value."**

Nooria, a thirty six year old

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Scottish woman, found a page of the Qur'an in 1974 lying in a waste paper basket (Allah forbid!). Having picked it up and read it, it inspired her to accept Islam. During an interview she criticised the manner of Western women. She says: "Most of the women in this country are traitors to their sex. It's almost as if we have been defeminised."

HIJAAB

Hassanah, who is a close friend of Nooria, accepted Islam in 1988. She strictly adheres to the laws of *hijaab* and dons the veil. She says: "At least I am not a traitor to my sex." On the question of *hijaab* or *purdah* she says that she finds much protection in it and that it also enhances self respect.

According to the London Times report, many Western women have found that the woman has much more dignity and respect in Islam. The author says: **"Many Muslims contrast the status of women in Islam with what they see as the dismal plight of women in the West. They note that here women work full-time out of financial necessity, remaining lumbered with the housework and children care. It is a puzzling version of emancipation."** Many other interviews are included in the report wherein the women who have recently accepted Islam claim to be disgusted with the Western way of life and have found peace and tranquility in Islam.

Together with this report, an editorial also sums up the reality. It commences by saying: "As the investigation in the Times on women and Islam has shown, the intellectual clarity and moral certainty of this 1400 years-old faith are proving attractive to many Western women disillusioned with the moral relationism of their own culture." Further the editorial goes on to say: **"...The separate spheres marked out for the two sexes by Islam**

WESTERN WOMEN (from pg. 1)

relationship to the notions of gender which have been ushered in by the feminist revolution. But what matters is that many of the women in the West who have taken this unexpected path have done so **out of choice** rather than familial duty or historic obligation. They have been positively attracted by the sense of sisterhood and community they discover in Islam.”

LESSONS

There are several lessons to take from this report. While those who have lived in the Western way of life all along are throwing it overboard, many Muslims, due to weak Imaan, are casting aside the noble Sunnah and adopting the disgusting ways of the West. It is a matter of licking up what the West is spitting out.

APOLOGETIC

Similarly, while westernised apologetic Muslims in our own country are propagating to the masses that adopting the Hijaab will be the “death-knell” for the spreading of Islam, newly converted British women are donning the veil and finding security in it. For those who were walking around “clothed yet naked” to adopt the Hijaab speaks volumes about its wisdom and benefit.

FEMINIST BRIGADE

Even the feminist brigade (including the men who champion their cause) would surely take a lesson from the views expressed by such women who have seen all that there is about feminism. Special note should be taken of these women’s appreciation of the separate roles that Islam has assigned to men and women. They have realized the dangers of throwing women into the mens working world where, in South Africa for instance, seven out of ten women encounter sexual abuse. (Natal on Saturday 25/3/95)

APPRECIATE

These women have been on “the other side of the fence” and have seen and experienced everything there first hand. Now they have come to Islam and truly appreciate what they find in it; including the separate roles for men and women, the Hijaab and everything else. They ought to appreciate just how great these aspects are, as the last line of the editorial says: “Only those who have crossed the divide can truly

VISITING THE SICK

ETIQUETTE

ONE could keep marvelling at just how comprehensive the teachings of Deen are. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has taught us the finer details of many such actions which apparently may seem trivial. However, there are oceans of wisdom in these teachings. The true benefits of these aspects can only be realized when one will translate these teachings into practice.

Among these splendid lessons is the etiquettes of visiting a sick person. Having greatly emphasised and encouraged the visiting of the sick, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) also, by way of word and practice, demonstrated how this should be done.

VIRTUES

The virtues of this great action are indeed tremendous. The fact that it is a Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is sufficient as a virtue. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) would not only visit his companions and family members when they were sick. He also once visited a young Jewish lad who had fallen ill and had also visited the leader of the munafiqeen, Abdullah bin Ubay. Nevertheless various Ahadith explain the virtues of visiting the sick. It is reported that the one who visits a sick person in the evening, seventy thousand angels pray for his forgiveness until the morning. And if he visits him in the morning, seventy thousand angels pray for his forgiveness until the evening (Tirmizi).

In another narration it is reported that on the day of *Qiyama* Allah Ta’ala will ask a person: “I fell ill and you did not visit Me?” “But how can I visit You, O my *Rabb*, when you are the Sustainer of the worlds,” the person will respond. Allah Ta’ala will then say: “Did you not know that so and so, who is my servant, was ill? Did you not know that had you visited him you would have found Me with him?” (Sahih Bukhari) Besides this, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has enumerated among the rights of a Muslim that he should be visited when he falls ill.

While visiting the sick earns much reward, the proper *Aadaab* (etiquettes) must also be observed. Hereunder are some *aadaab* which are mentioned in and deduced from various Ahadith:

V Visit the sick only for the pleasure of Allah, to earn the rewards mentioned and to console the person.

V Do not lengthen the visit. It has been stressed in the Ahadith that the visit should be short. If the sick person himself desires that the visitor should remain longer, there is no harm in it.

V Commence the visit by asking about the health of the person. Talk light hearted things and cheer the person up. It is also narrated that one should mention to him that he will *Insha Allah* recover and have a long life. Do not speak of such things which will make him despondent or grieve him further. One should mention the incidents of the pious people regarding how they reacted during illness.

V Mention to the person that illnesses cause the forgiveness of one’s sins.

V Do not cry or express grief in the presence of the patient.

V It is preferable to place one’s hand on the forehead of the sick person and make dua for him. Learn the duas that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) made for the sick and recite the same. There is great blessings in these duas.

V Besides making dua for him, one should also request dua for oneself from the sick person.

V Encourage the patient to engage in Salaah, Zikr, Durood, etc. (It should be noted that the sick person is never absolved of his Salaah. If he cannot perform his Salaah standing, he should do so while sitting. If this also is not possible, then he should do so in a reclining position. If it is not possible to perform Wudu, Tayamum should be performed. The relevant Masail should be learnt from the Ulama or from authentic literature).

V If the person is in hospital, abide by the times and rules of the hospital.

V If the doctors have recommended that the patient should not be spoken to, do not insist on speaking to him.

V If the patient is being visited at

THE FIRST TEN DAYS OF ZIL-HIJJAH

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is reported to have said: "On no other day is the worship of Allah Ta'ala more beloved than the first ten days of Zil-Hijjah. The fast of each of these days is equal to the fast of a whole year, and the Ibaadah (worship) of each of these nights is equal to the Ibadah of Lailatul Qadr" (Tirmizi; Ibn Majah).

Hazrath ibn Abbas (R.A.) relates that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "On no other days are good actions more beloved to Allah Ta'ala than on these days (ie the first ten days of Zil-Hijjah). Someone enquired: "Not even Jihad in the path of Allah?" "Not even Jihad in the Path of Allah Ta'ala" replied Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) "except that person who goes out to fight with his life and wealth and does not return with anything (ie he becomes a martyr)." (Sahih Bukhari)

From the above, one can gauge the great virtues of these ten days. Even the smallest of good actions becomes more virtuous than even Jihaad in the path of Allah at other times. Hence we can imagine what great rewards one would get for Jihad and striving in the path of Allah in these very days.

READ EXCESSIVELY

It is related from ibn Abbas (R.A.) that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "No days are as weighty with Allah and so liked by Him for good deeds than the first ten days of Zil-Hijjah. Therefore in these days excessively read *tasbeeh* (Subhanallah), *tahleel* (La-ilaha il-lah), *tahmeed* (Alhamdulillah) and *takbeer* (Allahu Akbar). (Tabrani)

DAY OF ARAFAH

The fast of the day of *Arafah* (9th Zil Hijjah) has lofty virtues. In a narration of Tirmizi it is reported from Abu Qatadah (R. A) that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam), said "I have hope in Allah Ta'ala that the fast of Arafah will be an atonement for the sins of the past and forthcoming year." (Tirmizi Vol. 1 p 157.)

It should be remembered that forgiveness of the sins refers to the minor sins. One must sincerely repent from the major sins. If one had violated the rights of people, one must also fulfil the

QURBANI

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

QURBANI

Q Certain individuals are encouraging others to give cash in charity rather than perform Qurbani. Is it permissible to do so?

A Qurbani is waajib upon the person who owns nisaab (the amount of wealth upon which Zakaat is compulsory) on the day of Eidul-Adha. Just as Salaah cannot be fulfilled by keeping a fast instead, or Haj cannot be fulfilled by giving a million rands in charity, in a like manner Qurbani cannot be fulfilled by means of charity. One will only be absolved of the Waajib by executing that specific action. This is the case of the Waajib Qurbani.

However, if Qurbani is not Waajib upon a person (due to not having the means) but he still wishes to do so, it will also be BETTER FOR HIM TO PERFORM QURBANI rather than give the equivalent amount in charity. As much as the logic of our feeble minds may induce us to believe that it is better to give the equivalent in charity, the Hadith of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) clearly describes the slaughtering of the animals to be the best action on the day of Eidul-Adha. It is reported from Ayesha (Radhiyallahu anha) that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) said: "No person has performed any action on the day of sacrifice (*Eidul Adha*) which is more beloved in the sight of Allah Ta'ala than causing the blood (of the animal) to flow (by slaughtering it) (Ibn Majah p. 226).

Besides this Hadith, there are many other proofs indicating that it is more virtuous and meritorious to slaughter the animals of Qurbani. This is easily ascertained from the fact that despite there being many poor people present in the time of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam), yet he did not ask anybody to omit Qurbani and give the equivalent in cash or kind to these poor persons. On the contrary, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) ordered them to perform Qurbani and then instructed them to give a portion of the meat to the poor.

Salma Bin Akwa (Radhiyallahu anha) reports that Rasulullah

(Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) said: "Whoever among you have performed Qurbani should not have any part of the animal left over in his home after three days." The following year the Sahaaba (Radhiyallahu anhum) enquired "O Prophet of Allah; should we do the same as we had done last year?" Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) replied, "Eat, feed others and (you may even) store (the meat). The people were in difficulties last year so I wished that you should assist them (hence I instructed to dispense with the meat within three days)". (Bukhari Vol. 2 p 835).

Here too the same argument could be put forward that these poor people could have needed the cash urgently. By the distribution of the Qurbani meat among them, their problem of food would have been alleviated for a few days. However, had they been given the cash, they could have bought food as well as other necessary items, yet we find that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) did not ask the Sahaaba (Radhiyallahu anhum) to omit the Qurbani and give the money in charity. Similarly, the Sahaaba (Radhiyallahu anhum) too continued to perform Qurbani. They never entertained the thought that they rather omit Qurbani and give the money to the poor.

Is it necessary to face the animal towards the Qibla when slaughtering it? What is the method of facing the animal?

Q It is *Sunnah* to face the animal towards the *qiblah*. Like other *Sunnahs*, fulfilling this *Sunnah* is also extremely important. The *fuqaha* (jurists) have stated that to deliberately omit facing the animal towards the *Qibla* is *makrooh* (reprehensible) (*Durrul Mukhtar*). When being slaughtered, the animal should be placed on its left side (Bazlul Majhood v.4 pg.337) The best method is that the *mazbah* (the part of the throat where the knife will be placed and the animal slaughtered) should be made to face the *qiblah*. This will make it possible for the slaughterer to also face *qiblah*. **G**

A

FAQIHUL UMMAH

The sterling advice of Faqihul Ummah Hazrath Mufti Mahmood Saheb (*Daamat Barakaatuhum*) has helped thousands of people to overcome many problems and difficulties — especially in the line of *Islahun Nafs* (self-reformation). Hereunder is a reply to a letter seeking guidance.

SEVERING FAMILY TIES

SUMMARY OF LETTER:

Respected Mufti Saheb

$$\ddot{a}^{3/4}\ddot{s}Z\ \ddot{x}_i\ddot{S}fz\ \hat{a}^{1/4}\hat{A}^{3/4}\text{w}\ddot{e}\pm\ddot{s}Z$$

My brothers and sisters have dealt with me in such a manner that I do not even wish to look at them anymore. I personally took care of them when they were young. Despite being in stringent financial conditions myself, I bore all their expenses as well. However, now that they have grown up, I am being repaid with endless troubles from them. They spread false propaganda against me and cause me much difficulty. I therefore wish to break ties with them. My mother has also sided with them and continuously rebukes and curses me. I am presently not on talking terms with her...

REPLY:

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Respected Brother

ä^{3/4}šZ æ;Šfz â^{1/4}Å^{3/4}“ wë±šZ

...I was greatly distressed with your present condition. To honour and respect your mother is vitally important. To break contact and not to be on talking terms with her is a matter of severe deprivation and loss. Likewise to sever ties with your brothers and sisters is also extremely detestable. You have perhaps read the following Hadith: “Join (ties with) those who cut you off, forgive the one who oppresses you and do good to the one who has done evil to you.” Never consider the wicked way in which others have treated you. Rather consider what should be your (proper) response. Only in this will you find salvation. You may still remember the couplet in the *Bustan* (of Sheikh Sa’di): “*To return evil with evil is very simple; if you are man enough return evil with good..*”

Ash'as bin Qais and Jareer bin Abdullah (R.A.) came to Salman Farsi (R.A.) while he was resident in Mada'in. Upon meeting him they first enquired: "Are you Salman Farsi?" "Yes" he replied. "Are you the companion of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)?" they again asked. "I do not know" he said. This left the visitors in doubt and they wondered that perhaps they had come to the wrong person. Observing their confusion Hazrath Salman (R.A.) said: "I *am* the person you are seeking. Indeed I have seen Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and have sat in his company. However, the companion of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is the one who enters with him into Jannah. What is it then that has brought you here?" The visitors replied: "We have come from Syria from your brother." "Who is he?" he enquired. "Abu Darda (R.A.)" they answered. "Well then" he said, "where is the gift that he sent with you?" "But he did not send any gift with us!" they exclaimed. Hazrath Salman (R.A.) advised them: "Fear Allah and hand over the *amaanah* (trust). Nobody comes to me from Abu Darda (R.A.) without a gift from him." The visitors were greatly perturbed and they said: "Look, we have some wealth and goods with us. Take from it whatever you desire." "I Have no need for your wealth," he replied. "All I want is the gift that he has sent with you." "By Allah, he never sent anything with us" they protested. "All he said to us was this: "Verily you have a person with you (Salman R.A.) who was greatly loved by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). When you go to him **convey my Salaams to him!**" Upon this Hazrath Salman (R.A.) exclaimed: "What **other gift did I want from you? AND WHAT GIFT IS BETTER THAN SALAAM?** It is the pure and blessed greeting from Allah Ta'ala!" (Hayatus Sahaaba v.2 pg.275)

ONLY 3 DAYS !!

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is reported to have said: "It is not permissible for a Believer that he cuts off relationship with his fellow Muslim for more than three days. If three days pass, he should meet him and make salaam to him. If the brother replies to the salaam, they share the reward. If he (the brother) does not reply, he has returned with the sin and the one who had greeted has freed himself from the sin of breaking ties." (Abu Dawood)

ENTER JANNAH

Abu Hurairah (R.A.) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "You will never enter Jannah until you Believe. And you will never be true Believers until you love one another. Should I not show you something which, if you practice upon it, you will love one another? Make Salaam common among yourselves." (Muslim) Another Hadith says: "The one who commences with Salaam is free from pride."

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