

CELEBRATIONS

Human beings by nature wish to express their joy and happiness. They seek occasions to celebrate and enjoy themselves. As a natural religion, Islam has catered for this need by declaring the days of *Eid* as days of celebration. In fact Islam has made it compulsory to celebrate. This is clearly understood from the fact that *Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)* has even prohibited fasting on these days. One is encouraged to wear one's best clothes and to feast within moderate limits.

While the days of *Eid* are days of celebration, a *Mu'min's* celebration is one which takes him closer to *Allah Ta'ala*. The night of *Eid* is a night of *ibaadah*. *Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)* is reported to have said: **"The one who will keep alive the nights of the two Eids (by remaining awake to engage in extra *ibaadah*), his heart will not die on the day (of Judgment) when other hearts will die"** (*Targheeb*). Daily the servant of Allah performs the five *Salaah*. On the day of their celebration they proceed for an extra *Salaah* — the *Eid Salaah*. En-route to the *Eid Salaah* they are engrossed in the recitation of *takbeer*. It is also a day of engaging in excessive *dua*. Thus while a Muslim also celebrates, his celebration is a means of getting closer to *Allah Ta'ala* at every moment.

"SILLY"

On the contrary, during the celebrations of those who are devoid of *Imaan* many people even take leave of their intelligence. Hence that time of the year is called the *"silly season."* Crime rockets, drinking and getting drunk is almost the norm, etc. Such "celebrations" are worlds apart from the celebrations of Muslims.

While Muslims have no control over what others do, the crucial question is how do Muslims respond to the celebrations of people of other creeds? Do they join them? Can they merely "watch" what is going on? This should be considered in the light of the directives of the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*.

INCLINATION

In this regard *Allah Ta'ala* declares: **"And do not incline towards those who have oppressed themselves (by means of committing *shirk* (idolatry) or else you will be afflicted by the fire"** (*Surah Hud*). "Inclination" pertains to all aspects — beliefs, customs, worship, celebrations and generally in their way of life.

Furthermore, *Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)* is reported to have said: **"The one who adds to the numbers of a people is counted as being among them**

(i.e. he is one of them)" (*Kanzul Ummaal*).

Having considered the abovementioned *Aayat* and *Hadith*, let us consider the reality of some of the celebrations of the *kuffaar*. The World Book Dictionary defines Christmas in the following manner: "1. The yearly celebration of the birth of Christ; December 25. Christmas is marked by special Church services, giving of gifts and sending of greetings. 2. The religious and festive season before and after Christmas day."

"GOD OF GATES?"

As for New Year's Day, the World Book Encyclopaedia describes it in the following words: "The Roman ruler Julius Caesar established January 1 as New Year's Day in 46 B.C. The Romans dedicated this day to Janus, the god of gates, doors and beginnings. January was named after Janus, who had two faces - one looking forward and the other looking backward. The early Romans gave each other New Year's gifts of branches from sacred trees. In later times, they gave coins, imprinted with pictures of Janus, or gold covered nuts."

Likewise, Easter is described as: "The yearly celebration of the day on which Christ rose from the grave."

The abovementioned definitions make it abundantly clear that these are "religious" celebrations — religions which are *baatil* (false) and are steeped in *kufr* and *shirk*. It could therefore be said that these are celebrations of *kufr* and *shirk*. Participation in such celebrations is certainly "inclination" towards such people. It also clearly adds to the numbers of such people. Therefore this is extremely dangerous for one's *Imaan*. Muslims should therefore entirely shun participating in such celebrations.

NO INJUSTICE

Shunning participation in such celebrations should not be confused with being unjust to any person or treating him wrongly. Rather there is great emphasis in Islam on the treating every human being with kindness. Even prisoners were treated by the *Sahaaba (R.A.)* as if they were guests. Indeed, while kindness will be shown to every human, there will be no participation

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or inclination to his beliefs, customs and way of life.

Sometimes, many people, due to not having reflected on the implications, unwittingly become involved in supporting celebrations of *kuf'r* and *shirk*. The following are some of the ways in which such "passive" participation or support takes:

***Advertising "Christmas," "New Year" or "Easter" sales (or any other religious celebrations).** There is no harm in having a sale or advertising "specials" at any time of the year. Why must it be a "sale" in the name of a celebration of *shirk*.

*** Giving "Christmas" gifts to customers, staff, etc.** This is tantamount to celebrating Christmas. Instead, without making it customary, give a gift at the time of *Eid*. *Eid* is our celebration. Bring alive the message of *Eid*.

*** Selling items which are specific to *kuffaar* celebrations.** *Allah Ta'ala* has prohibited us from assisting in acts of sin and transgression. Therefore one must refrain from selling items such as Christmas trees or decorations, Easter eggs and "hot-cross-buns" at the time of Easter, fireworks during Diwali, etc.

*** Remaining awake till midnight on 31 December "to see in the new year."** A *Mu'min's* new year is on the first of *Muharram*. The first of January is the new year of those who believe in the "God of Gates" — *Allah* is pure from such *shirk*. One should not observe such customs which are steeped in idolatry. May *Allah Ta'ala* keep us all steadfast on *Deen* and protect us from following the ways of His enemies. *Aameen*.

CHILD'S PLAY

Computer games, comics, fiction novels, apparently harmless cards, metal disks found in various food products ... and many other such "toys" have become the "in-thing" with most children and teenagers. Yet, are they really as harmless as they seem? And do they have no effect on the impressionable minds of young children? Many parents have experienced that a great number of these forms of "entertainment" have a dramatic negative impact on young minds. If one looks carefully at these toys, with the spectacles of *Imaan* and through the eyes of the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*, the danger will be glaring.

SHIRKIN GAMES

Among the thousands of titles of computer games, subtle messages of immoral behaviour and even *shirk* (idol worship) can be discerned. The "characters" in one game can be controlled to interact with other characters in various ways. Some of these ways are clearly what amounts to illicit contact in terms of *Shariah*. Imagine the effect on children who continuously control the characters to behave in an illicit manner? Another game takes the player through various stages wherein he conquers the enemies. As he progresses to higher levels, he eventually comes to the "Grand Temple" and his prize is to come into the court of the "Grand Master," etc. In the process of these "games" many subtle messages settle in the mind and heart. *Allah* forbid, they could become the stepping-stone to acting in a like manner in real life.

METAL DISKS AND CARDS

The metal disks and cards in packets of chips, boxes of cereals and other products are also a cause for great concern. Apart from the eerie faces and horrid pictures on the cards, they largely centre around magic, wizards and fairies. The "powers" of one card character is listed as "omnipotent." Omnipotence is an attribute of *Allah Ta'ala* alone. The aspect of *shirk* in this is obvious.

Fiction novels are another major factor in the breakdown of Islamic morals and respect in the youth. Many fiction books that are very popular among school-going boys and girls are books that encourage "dating" and in general the illicit boy-girl relationships that are a standard feature in Western society. A Muslim teenage girl came to a local dressmaker and asked for her garment to be sewed in exactly the same immoral style as the character of a popular novel series that she was reading! Many comic books also centre around illicit boy-girl relationships. Children reading these "comics" for entertainment are affected by the behaviour of the characters. The negative effects are bound to fall in their impressionable minds.

Parents can never afford to be complacent with regard to what their children play with. The damage to their character and *Imaan* can be disastrous. We cannot allow anyone to play with the *Imaan* and character of our children!!!

SECRET NIKAH

Q I am 18 years old. I am going out with a girl from my school for more than a year. We now desperately want to get married. Despite initial resistance from her parents they finally agreed and we are now proposed. Since we are in daily contact and fear that we may commit Haraam, we want to have the Nikah urgently. My parents are insisting that the Nikah will only take place in one or two years time. We now want to perform a secret Nikah so that we may not be involved in any sin. Later, when my parents decide to have the wedding, we will go through with the “public” Nikah. Will the secret Nikah be valid?

A You state that you are “going out” with the girl you have met for more than a year. You now want to get married due to the fear of committing Haraam. It apparently seems that while you have understood that zina is Haraam, you have not acknowledged or you do not realize that your “going out” is also equally Haraam. You should therefore desist from this immediately and make *tawbah* (repent) for what has past. Provided that one repents sincerely, Allah Ta’ala’s forgiveness and Mercy will engulf one. Being “proposed” does not make any contact *Halaal*. In terms of *Shariah* you are both still strangers to each other. It is compulsory upon both of you to strictly observe the laws of *Hijaab* with each other. “Going out” and even unnecessary talk is not permitted.

There are two aspects to consider with regard to the “secret nikah.” One is the validity of the *Nikah*. If a proposal and acceptance takes place in the presence of two adult male witnesses, the *Nikah* is valid. The couple will be legally married and any subsequent contact will be permissible. There is nevertheless another aspect to consider as well. *Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)* has greatly emphasized that the *Nikah* should be performed publicly and should be announced. Thus such a “secret” *Nikah* will be deprived of the *barakah* of being conducted according to the instructions of *Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)*. Furthermore, for how long do you expect that the nikah will remain a secret. Some unforeseen circumstances could force you to reveal that the nikah has taken place.

AL-HAADI COMMENT

The above question is one of many of this nature that are received on a regular basis. It is evident from the number of questions received that this is a very common situation — where youngsters who are already in some illicit relationship want to get married, but the parents for various reasons insist that the couple may marry “later, not now!” In the interim a *Haraam* relationship continues or some “secret *Nikah*” is being conducted — and it appears that numerous such *Nikahs* have taken place. In this regard some simple advice is offered to parents which will *Insha-Allah* help to reduce the number of such *Haraam* relationships.

The society that we are living in is by and large being stripped of all morality. Everything around young people stirs their passions. Free intermingling occurs at schools, universities and in the work place. This situation is a direct pathway to *zina*, which is where many people are tragically ending up.

REALITIES ON THE GROUND

Parents need to take heed of the realities on the ground. We have chosen to send our children into such environments. Many fall into sinful relationships and secretly continue with it without bothering about *Nikah*. Others have a Deeni conscience. While they have succumbed to their temptations, they are concerned that they should not be committing such sins. The solution is *Nikah*.

Yet many parents insist on delaying the *Nikah* for various reasons — some trivial and some supposedly valid. *Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)* has warned that if a child comes of age and his marriage is delayed despite a suitable match being found, any sin that he commits thereafter will be upon his father as well. *Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)* has encouraged that when a person intends to marry a girl he should first see her. If he then proposes and the same is accepted, the *Nikah* should not be delayed. Unnecessary lengthy delays will lead to great *fitna*. When the hearts of the couple have become inclined to each other, in the permissive society that we live in it will be a great challenge for them to remain completely apart until the marriage which is sometimes delayed for years.

GRAND STYLE

Parents are either unaware that their sons/daughter have contracted “secret *Nikahs*” or choose to ignore it so that the official *Nikah* could take place in a grand style later. The youth in the interim are being forced to conduct *Nikahs* in a totally inappropriate manner. It is therefore necessary that parents face the realities. If their sons/daughters are already tangled in illicit actions, or they have already indicated that they want to marry, their *Nikahs* should not be delayed.

Among the more practical issues in some instances is that of a job and house. While this is something for the families to consider and decide upon, if the commitment seems genuine the *Nikah* should be performed and both the boy and girl can continue to officially live with their own parents. While they may live together whenever possible, each one’s families will continue to support them until such time that they can officially live together. This may sound strange. However, this is more or less what is taking place in the numerous “secret *Nikahs*.” Besides, anything that can prevent a couple from falling into *zina*, especially in cases where an illicit relationship

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SECRET NIKAH

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has already been struck, is not strange. Families should not feel awkward about such an arrangement if it saves their children from haraam.

FORGIVENESS

It is reported that on various special occasions such as Friday nights, the fifteenth of Sha'baan, the month of Ramadhaan, etc., Allah Ta'ala showers his forgiveness on his servants. Yet some people due to their haraam relationships are deprived. Parents are often a silent party to such relationships or are the means for it continuing due to their insistence on delaying the nikah.

The above is merely a suggestion. If parents apply their minds and be realistic, they would be able to find practical solutions which overcome the real obstacles and make it possible to have the *Nikah* immediately. Availability of halls and wanting to conduct the *Nikah* in a "grand style" is a total non-issue. Such considerations do not feature in a Muslims *Nikah*. Just as a secret *Nikah* is devoid of *barakah* due to non-compliance with the Sunnah, extravagance also deprives the *Nikah* of *barakah*.

May Allah Ta'ala guide us to His pleasure.

From the advices of ...



FAQIHUL UMMAH

The sterling advice of Faqihul Ummah Hazrat Mufti Mahmood Saheb (*Rahmatullahi Alaihi*) has helped thousands of people to overcome many problems and difficulties — especially in the line of *Islahun Nafs* (inner-self reformation). Hereunder is an extract from his discourses.

TABLIGH

“... Every *Sahaabi (R.A.)* made *tabligh* (propagation of *Deen*) the object of his life. Although they engaged in business as well, yet their priority was *tabligh*. Even on business journeys, they continued with *tabligh*. The people would observe their excellent qualities and habits and accept Islam. Wherever they went, Islam would spread and *Deen* would come alive.

PURPOSE OF LIFE

Nowadays we have become deeply involved in our business, family and other occupation. We have become occupied with making money to such an extent that even the thought of *tabligh* does not cross our minds. We have made business and other occupations our purpose of life. What was meant to be a servant to us has been made the objective.

Thus it is necessary that what *Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)* brought to the world, and the responsibility he gave to the *Sahaaba (R.A.)*, be made our objective. His concern should become our concern. One will continue with one's business but the heart will be engaged in *tabligh*. The mind will always be conscious of the fact that we have been sent for *Deen* only, while engaging in business has been made permissible for us. Business is the servant while *Deen* is the master and the objective.

SERVANT OR MASTER?

Unfortunately we have made business and the acquisition of wealth the master and objective. The earning of wealth has become such an obsession that a person continues to acquire one business after another. Yet the purpose of business was to fulfil one's needs in order to acquire *Halaal* sustenance for one's family. Also, by means of earning a *Halaal* sustenance one will refrain from usurping the wealth of others. Among the other intentions for engaging in business is also that one will spend for the *Deen* of Allah Ta'ala. Apart from this necessary involvement the rest of one's time will be dedicated for *Deen*.

Therefore it is necessary that we free our time and minds and spend some time in *tabligh*. Then will we understand the blessed life of *Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)* and the *Sahaaba (R.A.)*. (*Mawaaiz Faqihul Ummah* - Vol. 7, Pg. 104).”