

Muslim Women

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

OUR DAUGHTERS ARE A BLESSING, NOT A BURDEN

Children are a great gift from Almighty Allah to all parents. Parents must think of their children as such treasures that the all the wealth and material resources are worthless as when compared to one's children. We, as parents, should thank Almighty Allah for blessing us with children whether they are boys or girls. Today, it is quite disheartening to see that some parents rejoice when the newborn child is a male and show their dissatisfaction when the child is a female. But, this should not be the attitude. Islam does not condone this type of behaviour, as such was the manner of the parents in the time of ignorance.

Daughters are without doubt a great blessing from Almighty Allah. They are a means of salvation and a path to Jannah for their parents. The Holy Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) has stated that when a boy is born, then he brings one Noor (light) and when a girl is born, then she brings two Noors. It has been narrated in a Hadith that the Holy Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) has stated that if parents are kind and generous towards their daughters, then they will be so close to the Holy Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) in Jannah, like one finger is to the next. The Holy Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) has also stated that the person who is faced with hardship due to his daughters, and makes Sabr (is patient), then his daughters will be a Purdah (curtain) between him and Hell.

The crux of one narration states that one who loves his daughters and withstands the hardship of grooming and getting them married, then Almighty Allah makes Jannah Waajib (compulsory) on him and keeps him protected from the Fire of Hell.

Hazrat Khwaja Uthman Haaroni (radi Allahu anhu), the Peer-o-Murshid of Khwaja-e-Khwajegaan, Hazrat Sheikh Khwaja Ghareeb Nawaaz (radi Allahu anhu), states: "Daughters are a gift from Almighty Allah. Those parents who are kind towards them, then Almighty Allah is generous towards such parents. Those who are merciful to their daughters, Almighty Allah is Merciful towards them." The great Saint also said, "When a girl is born to a family, then between the parents and Hell, there shall be a distance of five hundred years."

It has been stated that when parents rejoice at the birth of a daughter, this is greater than making Tawaaf of the Kaaba seventy times. Muslims should also remember that the family of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) is from his beloved daughter Sayyidah Fatima Zahra (radi Allahu anha).

Dear brothers and sisters, rejoice on the birth of your daughters, love and guide them and give them that which is due to them from your belongings. Do not deprive them of their inheritance as they also have say in this. Remember! Daughters are a blessing and not a burden.

ISLAMIC HIJAB - ARE MUSLIM WOMEN OPPRESSED?

The feeling still persists in society that Muslim women wear *Hijab* or the outer covering because they are slaves to tradition, so much so that it is seen as a symbol of oppression. Western society says that women's liberation and independence is impossible unless they first remove the *Hijab*. This view is not correct. Why do Muslim women wear the outer covering that sometimes covers their face and hides the rest of their body?

Almighty Allah says in the Holy Quran, Chapter 33, Verse 59: "O Prophet! Tell your wives and daughters, and the believing women, that they should cast their outer garments over their persons; that is better, that they should be known (as such) and not be molested." And in Chapter 24, Verse 31: "And say to the believing women that they

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should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what appear thereof; that they should draw their scarves over their bosoms - "

Muslim women all over the world are wearing *Hijab* as a religious requirement and a sign of respect, not out of a misdirected sense of "tradition." It is both a sign of a women's obedience to Allah and a manifestation of her faith. The *Hijab* is part of a Muslim's religious identity. It gives women dignity and self-respect.

Islam commands women to cover their bodies so as not to trouble men who are weak and unable to resist temptation. In Islam, men and women are commanded to dress modestly and not appear "naked" in public, even in all male and female situations.

Just as a short skirt or a see-through dress can send the signal that the wearer is available to men, so the Hijab signals, loud and clear: *"I am forbidden to you."* Wearing the *Hijab* protects the female from harassment and men. It is the western women who are to be pitied for displaying their private self for all to see.

An American, Ruth Anderson, has said: *"Hijab is not a sign of backwardness, ignorance or mental incompetence, but a woman's duty and her right."*

A women in *Hijab* is like a jewel that is of high exceptional value and that which must be kept hidden. Wearing the *Hijab* is a choice that Muslim women make. To discard the *Hijab* or expose that part of her body ordered covered by the Divine Law is to disobey Islamic principles and a women's basic Islamic belief.

RE-INTRODUCTION OF HIJAAB IN INDONESIA

Growing popularity of Islamic dress code in Indonesia has started a new trend. Women from the middle-income group have explicitly shown escalating preference to Islamic clothes resulting in a multi-million fashion industry as admitted by Aami Waamsu, Editor of the fashion magazine "Femina."

According to Taufiq Abdullah Nigar of Indonesian Science Institute, this shocking trend has developed in the short span of the last 2 - 3 years. This has been in the wake of the recognition that Indonesian men are more respectful towards women in Islamic attire. Previously, modern Indonesian women wore tops, pants and ordinary scarves. Nowadays, preference is given to dignified loose clothing with scarves completely covering the head.

The fever has caught on to such an extent that even non-Muslim designers have resorted to designing Islamic clothes. Muslim women are active in social, religious and political fields dressed according to Islamic dressing code. A really interesting angle of this "fashion revival" is that so impressed are the non-Muslim women by this trend that they too have begun to imitate it!

BEIJING WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN CONSPIRE TO "LIBERATE" MUSLIM WOMEN FROM ISLAM

At the Beijing World ("anti-Islam & anti-religion") Conference, "experts" talked about the need to liberate Muslim women from Islam, and in general all women from religion. It was easy to see that there were open attacks against Islam and religion in general. There were also open talks about rights for prostitutes, lesbians and homosexuals. The Conference also discussed about the rights of children over their sexual lives.

Betty Freidan, an American feminist leader and author, talked about the dangers Islamic conservatism poses to women. In a panel session entitled "Muslim Women in North America", led by a Muslim delegate chosen by the Clinton administration to represent the US as a liaison between the US and the Muslim and Arab worlds, a panel member vehemently attacked the Imams of North American mosques for fanaticism against Muslim women in the

"land of freedom".

In another session that was chaired by a feminist Hindu, she described how the Vatican had come together with Islam for the purpose of denying women's rights. Another speaker in this session, who was a liberal Catholic, encouraged women to become more "open" and to acquire power. She also said that "the biggest mistake in the universe" is to envision an "omnipotent or perfect God." Dr Riffat Hassan, a professor in Islamic studies from the University of Louisville, explained how she had been engaged in the last 20 years in developing a "feminist theology in the context of Islam".

It was also clear from the Conference that the powers who were running the UN have an agenda to impose their own "Shariah" on the entire world. Just by attending the Conference at government level, the Muslim countries accepted the principle that they could negotiate about this imposed Shariah. Muslim delegates did not realise that they were actually "dignifying" a gathering that could not be dignified.

The Conference failed to encourage the individuals need in altering their life styles in order to combat sexually transmitted diseases; did not encourage family life and morality; for women (*and men*) to abstain from early sex; etc. The UN also encourages that for women to work in a factory or an office is a right; to stay at home is an oppression. A woman should not be dependent of her husband; she should be dependent on her boss.

Muslims throughout the world, including all South African Muslims, must condemn and reject this Conference. What about the women in Kashmir who jumped into the Jhelum River in Kashmir to protect their honour from the Indian forces? Why did the World Conference on Women not speak about that! What about the 70, 000 Muslim women raped, abused and beaten in Bosnia? What about the millions in Iraq, Kashmir and Bosnia who are without food and medicine? The "women's right" which the Conference speaks about is far from the women's rights which Islam grants. This is nothing but an attempt by the UN and the world in condemning Islam, Islamic values and creating a world and society completely devoid of all sensibility and shame. (Facts extracted from "Impact International" - Vol.25 No.10)

DUTY TOWARDS OUR MOTHERS

A Saint relates that once, having made intention of performing Haj, he left for Baghdad from where he was to proceed to Hijaz. In Baghdad, he arrived at the house of Hazrat Abu Hazim Makki (*rahmatullahi alai*) where he found Hazrat Abu Hazim Makki (*rahmatullahi alai*) fast asleep. When he awoke from his asleep, he came over to the Saint and told him, "*I had the good fortune of seeing Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) in my dream just now, and he asked me to convey a message to you.*"

"*What is the message?*" asked the Saint.

"*He asked me to inform you that it would be better for you if you called off your journey to Hijaz for purpose of making Haj, and spent time looking after your ageing mother and keeping her happy at all times. This would enable you to perform your Haj in the future with Allah's Pleasure.*"

The Saint, upon hearing this, returned home without performing Haj.

ESCALATION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN MUSLIM COMMUNITY

This almost taboo issue is being brought out to the open. Violence against women has reached such high levels in the Muslim community that almost 1 in 5 families is adversely affected. Whether it is physical, emotional or sexual abuse, it threatens the very existence of healthy communities. If women are abused how does a mother then fulfill her major roles as a wife and a mother? Yet Muslims in South Africa have not yet acknowledged this as one of the major social problems them all the time. Research clearly shows that children from abusive homes, themselves become abusive

parents. The high rate of divorce, separation, extra-marital relationships is a daily occurrence in our society. The disruption and breakdown of families leads to a variety of social problems. (Courtesy: JIMASA - Dec. 1996)

VERY IMPORTANT NOTE

It is Haraam for women to touch the hand, feet or body of any strange man and it is also Haraam for the man to give her the permission to do so. The Masha'ikh and Peers of today should take a lesson from this. The evil practice of Mureedas (female Mureeds) kissing the hands and feet of their Peer-o-Murshid must stop. It is totally Haraam for both to kiss and to be kissed. It is FARD on the Sheikh to strongly forbid their female Mureeds from doing such un-Islamic acts. Sayyidah Ayesha Siddiqa (*radi Allahu anha*) states that there was never an instance when a woman touched the hands of the Holy Prophet (*sallal laahu alaihi wasallam*) at the time of Bai'at. Likewise, those persons who visit massage parlours, etc. and have their bodies massaged or rubbed by strange women is strictly Haraam and a great sin (Kabeera). It is Fard on them to abstain from such immoral acts and fear Allah, the All Knowing and All Powerful.

A FEW REASONS FOR POVERTY

Wealth and poverty comes from Almighty Allah. However, the pious servants and learned scholars have given a few reasons as to why poverty comes and what to abstain from to avoid poverty:-

1. By not reading Namaaz and Quran.
2. By reading Quran without Wudhu.
3. By calling parents by their names or disrespecting them.
4. To be annoyed with receiving visitors.
5. By being unkind to relatives.
6. To hit and scold your children without reason.
7. To eat without saying Bismillah.
8. To eat without washing the hands.
9. To eat without a hat or with the left hand.
10. To eat near a deceased or in the dark.
11. To leave food opened.
12. To delay food that has been already served.
13. To leave dishes unwashed after eating.
14. To wash your hands in eating utensils.
15. To take a false oath.
16. To talk of worldly things in the Musjid or during Wudhu.
17. To sleep until the sun rises.

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18. To sleep between Maghrib and Esha.
19. To sleep naked.
20. To urinate in the bathroom.
21. To go to the toilet without a hat.
22. To talk in the toilet.
23. To pass urine or stool on a pathway or under a tree.
24. To laugh in a cemetery.
25. To use broken utensils.
26. To use a broken comb.
27. For ladies to remain with the head uncovered.
28. To stand and comb or tie the hair.
29. To sweep at night.
30. To sweep the house and keep the dirt in the house.
31. To keep long nails, or bite one's nails.
32. To sew torn clothes on the body.
33. To have a haircut while Na-Paak.
34. To keep the pubic hairs more than forty days.
35. To put off a flame by blowing it.
36. To sit on the stoop of the house.
37. To leave shoes upside down and not straighten it.
38. To leave spider cob-webs in the house.
39. To burn the peel of garlic or onions.
40. Not to help a person in trouble at night.
41. It has been mentioned by some pious persons that to be intimate with the wife on Saturday after sunset till Sunday morning and on Tuesday after sunset till Wednesday morning is not regarded as a good time. They said that if the wife becomes pregnant in this time there is a risk of sickness and bad habits in the child.

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