



QUESTION & ANSWER BUCKET





1 You praised Raja Ram Mohan Roy in your talk, but he was against the 'Purdah' system. Why does Islam degrade woman by keeping her behind the veil? Isn't a Hindu woman modest in her Salwar Kameez?

ANSWER

One should understand that if I appreciate certain points of a person that does not mean I agree with all his points.

For example, one of the former Home Minister of India, Mr. L.K. Advani suggested the law that the rapist should be put to death, and I appreciate it that he agreed with the Islamic philosophy that a rapist should be put to death. When I appreciated Mr. L.K. Advani that doesn't mean I agree with him totally. But I do agree with his suggestion that a rapist should be put to death, same as what Islam says. Similarly, I appreciate Raja Ram Mohan Roy, who was a great reformer, and I really respect him. I also know that he was against the Hijaab or Purdah system which is mentioned in Islam.



If we analyse the modesty level of a human being, it differs depending upon the surroundings they live in.

For example, there are certain Muslim countries in the Arab world who say that if anyone looks at a woman or stares at a woman, it is considered immodest. In India, as long as you don't touch a woman, you are modest. Therefore, while they greet, both the ladies and the gents fold their hands, but they don't touch one another. In some of the western countries shaking hands is modest. If a man shakes hands with a lady, it is modest and if you don't shake hands, it is considered that you are not friendly. In other western countries, if you kiss a woman that is modest but if you go beyond kissing, it is immodest. In some western countries as long as the man and the woman do anything willingly, it is modest.

So, different people have different levels of modesty depending upon where they live.

For example, in America if a lady wears a miniskirt or shorts, she is considered modest but if the same girl comes to India and she wears a miniskirt and shorts we will say she is immodest.



When I gave a talk in America there was an American who told me, “Brother Zakir! Do you know that Indian women are immodest?” I was shocked! I didn’t agree with him. He said, “Of course, the Indian women when they wear the Saree, they expose their belly.” So according to the Americans exposing the belly is immodest. So, depending upon different people the level of modesty keeps on changing.

Let us try and analyse what our Creator, Almighty God says about modesty.

قُلْ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوْا
مِنْ اَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوْا فُرُوْجَهُمْ



“Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty.”

(Al Qur’an 24:30)

Allah first speaks about the modesty for a man and then for the woman. Whenever a man looks at a woman, any brazen thought comes in his mind, he should lower his gaze.



There was a Muslim who was staring at a girl for a long time; I told him, “Brother, what are you doing? It is Haraam to stare at a woman!” He told me, “Our beloved Prophet said: ‘The first glance is allowed, the second is prohibited’, I have not completed half my glance.”

What did the Prophet (pbuh) mean when he said that the first glance is allowed, and the second is prohibited? What he meant was that if you unintentionally look at a woman, do not intentionally look at her again to feast on her beauty. That does not mean you can look at a woman for 10 minutes without blinking and say I have not completed my glance.

The next verse speaks about the Hijaab for the women.

وَقُلْ لِّلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ
فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا
وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَىٰ جُيُوبِهِنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ
زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَائِهِنَّ أَوْ
بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَائِهِنَّ أَوْ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ...



“And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what (must ordinarily) appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, their fathers, their husband’s fathers, their sons, their husbands’ sons...”

(Al Qur’an 24:31)

A big list of Mahrams whom she cannot marry is given further in the verse.

The criteria for Hijaab is given in the Qur’an and the Sahih Hadith. There are basically 6 criteria.

1. The extent i.e., the extent for the man is from the navel to the knee. For the woman, the complete body should be covered; the only parts that can be seen are the face and the hands up to the wrist.

The remaining 5 criteria are the same for the man and the woman.

2. The clothes they wear should not be transparent or translucent such that one could see through.

3. It should not be tight fitting such that it reveals the figure.



4. It should not be glamorous such that it attracts the opposite sex.
5. It should not resemble that of the opposite sex.
6. It should not be clothes which are signs of the unbelievers.

The reason for Hijaab:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِّأَزْوَاجِكَ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَاءِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
يُذْنِبْنَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلْبَابِهِنَّ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ أَدْنَىٰ أَنْ يُعْرَفْنَ
فَلَا يُؤْذَيْنَ



“O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the believing women that whenever they go abroad, they should put on a cloak so that they shall be recognised, and it will prevent them from being molested.”

(Al Qur'an 33:59)



Suppose there are 2 twin sisters who are equally beautiful and if they are walking down the streets of Mumbai, and one of the twin sisters is wearing the western clothes, miniskirts or shorts, and the other twin sister is wearing the Islamic Hijaab, the complete body covered except the face and the hands up to the wrist. While they are walking down the streets of Mumbai and if round the corner there is a hooligan, a ruffian who is waiting for a catch, who is waiting to tease a girl. I am asking you a question, which girl will he tease? Will he tease the girl wearing the miniskirts or shorts or will he tease the girl wearing the Islamic Hijaab? But naturally he will tease the girl wearing the western clothes.

Let's analyse what do the Hindu scriptures have to say about modesty.



“Since Brahma has become a dame, cast down thine eyes and look not up. More closely set thy feet. Let none see what the garment veils.”

(Rigveda 8:33:19)

So, Rigveda says that the women should wear the veil, should lower the gaze and should not stare.



“Unlovely is his body when it glistens with this wicked fiend, what time the husband wraps about his limbs the garment of his wife.”

(Rigveda 10:85:30)

So, Rigveda says that wearing the clothes of the opposite sex is prohibited.

When Parashuram visits Rama’s house, Rama tells his wife Sita:



“Dear one, he is our elder, therefore turn aside and veil yourself.”

(Mahaviracharita, Act 2 Page 71)

Rama tells his wife Sita to put on the veil and lower her gaze!

If you read historical books, the books talking about the Coin Age or the age of Guptas and Post-Gupta Age, there are coins which have the image of women wearing veil. Indian women used to wear veils letting them down to their shoulders, or their arms. Even today, many Indian women in the villages wear the veil and cover their head. Some of the women even cover their faces.



Thus, if you analyse, even the Hindu scriptures say that the women should wear the veil and lower their gaze. It is a pity that Raja Ram Mohan Roy might not have read these verses. God willing, if Raja Ram Mohan Roy had read these verses, even he would have said that the women should wear the veil.

I had in the past appreciated the former Home Minister L.K. Advani for suggesting that the rapist should be put to death. Maybe the next Home Minister would advise that the women of India should wear the veil, In Sha Allah.



2 Hindu scholars claim that when they are doing idol worship, they are just worshiping the Almighty God, but the idol is only used for concentration. Is this a valid argument?

ANSWER

All the Hindu scholars who have read the Hindu scriptures agree that Almighty God has got no images but what they say is that those people who have lower consciousness, they require an idol for concentration. Once you reach a higher level of consciousness then idol is not required. If an idol is required for concentration only in the initial stages and not later on when the mind reaches higher consciousness then I would like to say that the Muslims have already reached the state of higher consciousness because when we worship Allah (swt) we do not require any idol or statue.

When I was discussing with a Swami in IRF, he said that when our child asks us, “Why does the sky thunder?”, we reply that “Aaee Ma Chakki Pees Rahi Hai”, “the grandmother is grinding flour in the heaven”; because he is too young to understand.



Similarly in the initial stages people require an idol for concentration. In Islam we don't believe in telling a lie, even if it's a white lie. I will never give such a wrong answer to my child because later on when he goes to school and learns that the thundering sound after lightning is due to the expansion of rapidly heated air, he will either think that the teacher is lying or later on when he understands the fact he will conclude that the father is a liar. If you feel that the child may not understand certain difficult things you should simplify the answer, rather than give a wrong fictitious reply. If you yourself do not know the answer, you should have the guts to be truthful and say 'I don't know'. But many children nowadays will not be satisfied with this answer. If this answer was given to my son, he would say "Abba (father), why don't you know?" This will compel you to do your homework and thus educate yourself as well as your child.



Some Pandits, while trying to convince me regarding idol worship, said that in standard one the student is initially taught to worship God by concentrating with the help of an idol. But later on, when he graduates, he no longer requires the idol to concentrate while worshipping God. A very important fact to be noted is that only if the fundamentals of any particular subject is strong, will he be able to excel in future. For example, a teacher of mathematics in standard one teaches the students that $2 + 2 = 4$ irrespective of whether the student passes school or does graduation or does a PhD in mathematics, the basics of $2 + 2 = 4$ will yet remain the same and will not change to 5 or 6. In higher standards the student, besides addition may learn about Algebra, Trigonometry, Logarithm, etc. but the fundamental of addition will yet remain the same. If the teacher in standard one itself teaches the fundamentals wrong, how can you expect the student to excel in future? It is the fundamental principle of the Vedas regarding the concept of God that He has got no image, so how can the Scholars even after knowing this fact keep silent at the wrong practice being done by people.



Will you tell your son who is in standard one that 2 plus 2 is not equal to 4 but 5 or 6 and only confirm the truth after he passes school? Never. In fact if he makes a mistake you will correct him and say it is 4 and not wait till he graduates; and if you don't correct him initially you will ruin his future.



3

If Islam is the religion of peace, then why does it preach the concept of Jihaad i.e., fighting and killing the Kaafir? In fact, Hinduism is the religion of peace.

ANSWER

There is a great misconception as far as Jihaad in Islam is concerned. This misconception is not only among the non-Muslims, but also among the Muslims. They think that any war fought by any Muslim, for any reason, whether it be for personal gain, for fame, for money, or any war fought by any Muslim is Jihaad. Jihaad does not mean any war fought by any Muslim.

Jihaad comes from the Arabic word 'Jahada' which means to strive or to struggle. In Islamic context, it means to strive against one's own evil inclination. It also means to strive to make the society better. It also means to strive in the battlefield in self-defense. It also means to fight against tyranny and oppression. Jihaad basically means to strive and struggle.



Very often the critics of Islam, including the Hindu critics like Arun Shourie, who in his book, 'The World of Fatwas' quotes Surah At Tawbah, chapter no. 9 verse no. 5 and says that the Qur'an mentions:

"Wherever you find a Kaafir (Hindus), kill them."

If you read the Qur'an, Surah At Tawbah chapter no. 9 verse no. 5, it does say:



"Wherever you find a Kaafir, kill them."

Al Qur'an 9:5

But it is a quotation out of context. For the context, read a few preceding verses. The first few verses of Surah At Tawbah speaks about a peace treaty between the Muslims and the Mushriks of Makkah. This peace treaty was unilaterally broken by the Mushriks of Makkah so by the time Allah (swt) reaches verse no. 5, He gives an ultimatum to the enemies, to the Mushriks of Makkah that you put things straight in 4 months' time, otherwise, this is a declaration of war; and in the battlefield, Allah says to the Muslims that wherever you find the enemies, wherever you find the Kaafir, kill them.



This verse of the Qur'an is talking about the battlefield when the Muslims are fighting for truth against falsehood, against the enemy, saying, if they come to attack you, don't get scared, kill them! Any army general seeking to boost the morale of the soldiers will say, "kill the enemies"; he will not tell them to let the enemies go. The Qur'an say the same.

Moreover, Arun Shourie, after quoting verse no. 5 of Surah At Tawbah, jumps to verse no. 7! Any intelligent person knows that verse no. 6 has the reply to his allegation. Verse no. 6 says:



"If one amongst the Pagans ask you for asylum, grant it to him, so that he may hear the word of Allah; and then escort him to where he can be secure."

Al Qur'an 9:6

The most generous Army General today may give a command to let the enemy go but which Army General today will give a command to escort the enemy to security! This is what the Qur'an says.



There is another misconception in Islam that Jihaad means Holy War. Holy War in Arabic is 'Harbun Muqadassah'. Nowhere in the Qur'an or Hadith, 'Harbun Muqadassah' is mentioned. Holy war is not the translation of Jihaad. This term 'Holy War' was first used to describe the Christian crusaders who conquered many lands and killed thousands of people in the name of Christianity. Today, 'Holy War' is used to refer to Islam which is totally wrong and unfortunately many "Muslim scholars" even use Holy War as the translation of Jihaad which is totally wrong.

Let's analyse what the Hindu scriptures have to say about Jihaad.

Shri Krishna tells Arjuna:



"Strive for yoga..."
(Bhagavad Gita 2:50)

Strive means struggle. So even Shri Krishna tells Arjun to strive and struggle.



If you read the Mahabharat, it speaks about the battle between the cousins, the Kauravas and the Pandavas. There are thousands of verses which only speak about fighting, multiple times more than the Qur'an.

If you read Bhagavad Gita, it speaks about the advice given by Shri Krishna to Arjun in the battlefield.

Arjuna says:



“Alas, how strange it is that we are preparing to commit greatly sinful acts. Driven by the desire to enjoy royal happiness, we are intent on killing our own kinsmen. Better for me if the sons of Dhritarastra, weapons in hand, were to kill me unarmed and unresisting on the battlefield.”

“Sanjaya said: Arjuna, having thus spoken on the battlefield, cast aside his bow and arrows and sat down on the chariot, his mind overwhelmed with grief.”

(Bhagavad Gita 1:44-46)

Shri Krishna replies in the next chapter:



“My dear Arjuna, how have these impurities come upon you? They are not at all befitting a man who knows the value of life. They lead not to higher planets but to infamy. O son of Partha, do not yield to this degrading impotence. It does not become you. Give up such petty weakness of heart and arise, O chastiser of the enemy.”

(Bhagavad Gita 2:2-3)



Further Shri Krishna says:



“Considering your specific duty as a Ksatriya, you should know that there is no better engagement for you than fighting on religious principles; and so there is no need for hesitation. O Partha, happy are the Ksatriyas to whom such fighting opportunities come unsought, opening for them the doors of the heavenly planets.”

(Bhagavad Gita 2:31-32)

Many of the critics of Islam speak against Qur’an and the Hadith and they specifically quote a Hadith from Sahih Al Bukhari.



Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said:

“Allah guarantees that He will admit the Mujahid in His Cause into Paradise if he is killed, otherwise He will return him to his home safely with rewards and war booty.”

(Sahih Al Bukhari – Vol 4 Hadith 2787)

Exactly same thing is mentioned by Shri Krishna:



“O son of Kuntī, either you will be killed on the battlefield and attain the heavenly planets, or you will conquer and enjoy the earthly kingdom. Therefore, get up with determination and fight.”

(Bhagavad Gita 2:37)



Imagine if I quote Bhagavad Gita and say that you should kill your cousins, it will be devilish on my part, because I am quoting out of context. The correct context is that Bhagavad Gita says that you have to fight for the truth against falsehood and even if it be your cousins who are on falsehood, you have to kill them for the truth. Quoting out of context is devilish.

Many Hindus have spoken to me about Jihaad being wrong. But the moment I tell them that Bhagavad Gita too says you should kill your cousins, they tell me, **“No! But that is Shri Krishna talking about fighting for truth against falsehood.”** I say, that is what the Qur’an says. They quip, **“O! that is what the Qur’an says, then we agree with the Qur’an.”**



4 Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) has been prophesied in the 4000 year old scriptures of Hinduism, Vedas, and the Puranas. Does that mean you believe that these books are God-sent and therefore Hindus are also 'Ahle Kitaab'?

ANSWER

The title 'Ahle Kitaab' which means 'People of the Book' specifically refers to the Jews and Christians.

Can we consider Vedas or the other Hindu scriptures as the word of God?

لِكُلِّ أَجَلٍ كِتَابٌ



"For each period is a Book (revealed)."
(Al Qur'an 13:38)

By name only 4 revelations are mentioned in the Qur'an, Torah, Zaboor, Injeel and the Qur'an.

- Torah is the Wahi which was revealed to Prophet Moses (pbuh).



- Zaboor is the Wahi which was revealed to Prophet David (pbuh).
- Injeel is the Wahi which was revealed to Prophet Jesus (pbuh).
- Qur'an is the Wahi, the last and final revelation revealed to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

All the previous revelations that were revealed before the Qur'an were meant only for those people and for that time. Qur'an was revealed for the whole of humankind.

Can we consider Vedas or the other Hindu scriptures to have been the word of God? Since the Vedas are not mentioned by name in the Qur'an, we cannot say for sure that they were the word of God. What we can say is: maybe they were the word of God.

If someone asks me, saying, since Allah has sent various messengers, can we consider Ram or Laxman as messengers of God? We know that Allah has sent several revelations on the face of the earth, and that He has also sent several messengers, but since Vedas are not mentioned in the Qur'an to be the word of God, I can say: maybe they were the word of God, but I cannot say for sure. Similarly I can not say that Ram or Krishna are messengers of God, I can



say, maybe they were. Since they are not mentioned by name, I cannot say for sure they were. But even if Ram was a messenger of God, even if Krishna was a messenger of God, even if Vedas were the word of God, they were meant for those people and for that time. Today, whichever part of the world you are living in, you should follow the last and final revelation i.e., the Glorious Qur'an and the last and final messenger Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), who is even mentioned in the Hindu Scriptures as 'Antim Avtar'.



5 Since you promote interfaith dialogues, do you agree with those who say all the religions are same?

ANSWER

There are various interfaith dialogues going on throughout the world, including India. We find that religious personalities of various religions come on the stage and say, “All religions are same”. A Hindu personality comes and says, “All religions are same”. A Muslim personality comes and says, “All religions are same” and a Christian personality comes and says, “All religions are same”.

I ask them a simple question that if you agree all religions are the same then will a Christian priest give up Christianity and become a Muslim? Will a Muslim person give up Islam and become a Hindu? Will a Hindu priest give up Hinduism and become a Christian? The answer is no. These people try to portray an image of being secular; they scratch each other’s back. It’s like a student asking a teacher that $2 + 2$ is equal to how much? Is $2 + 2$ equal to 3 or is it equal to 4 or is it equal to 5? 3 teachers come on the stage and say all three answers are correct. $2 + 2$ is equal to 3; $2 + 2$ is equal to 4; and $2 + 2$ is equal to 5. This is nothing but trash!



I, as a student of Islam and comparative religion, have read the various scriptures. I know that the practices of the various religions are not the same. I believe in communal harmony, do I believe in interfaith dialogue? If we assume that among all the various scriptures of various religions at least one scripture is 100% authentic and the word of God, no religious personality would object to this assumption. I would not mind accepting at least one of the religious scriptures as the word of God. The Christians would say fine, at least the Bible is the word of God. The Hindus will say, no problem at least the Veda is the word of God, and the Muslims will say, no problem at least the Qur'an is the word of God. What we need to do is collect all the hundreds of teachings from the Christian Bible, from the Hindu scriptures, from the Veda and from the Qur'an. Now we look for the commonalities, and suppose 50 are common. When we sort out the 50 commonalities, the teachings from all these religious scriptures, everyone will at least agree that this portion of the various scriptures is at least surely the word of God, and no one would object in implementing it because it is present in all the scriptures. This technique of communal harmony is based on the Qur'anic verse:



تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ



“Come to common terms as between us and you”

Al Qur'an 3:64

There may be differences between Islam and Hinduism but since we are talking about commonalities, no one would object to follow the commonalities because it is present in all the religious scriptures.

There may be some people who may not be well-versed with their scriptures, and may sometimes be offended. For example, if you point out that all the religious scriptures, the Bible, the Vedas, and the Qur'an, say, that you should not worship idols, now since one is not aware of the Vedas, one may feel offended, but will not go against me because if one goes against me, he or she is going against the Vedas which is considered to be the word of God.

So, this is the best way for interfaith dialogue and communal harmony, “Come to common terms as between us and you”.



6 There are so many similarities between Islam and Hinduism; does that mean that according to Islam a person can be a Hindu?

ANSWER

If by the term 'Hindu' you mean a geographical definition, a person who lives in India, then according to Islam there is no problem in a person being an Indian. I am an Indian and I am a practising Muslim. I am proud of my country India, and I am proud to be a Muslim. So, there is no problem in Islam if you are an Indian and practising Islam. But if you mean by the term Hindu, a person who follows the religious scriptures of Hinduism, then I have got no objection as long as that Hindu strictly follows the established truths of the scriptures of Hinduism.

What do I mean by "established truth"? Established truth means those truths mentioned in the Hindu scriptures which have been reconfirmed by the last and final revelation of God i.e., the Glorious Qur'an. I am referring to the Vedas and the Qur'an, as both of them assert that there is one God; they believe in the messengers; they believe that the last messenger is Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), and believe in the Hereafter.



If they believe in all these established facts, I have got no objection. But if you tell me, “No, a Hindu is a person who believes in everything mentioned in the Hindu scriptures”, then I, being a student of comparative religion, don’t agree. It’s not possible for a Hindu to believe in all the teachings in the Hindu scriptures because many a time the teachings of different scriptures of Hinduism contradict. Many a time, the same scriptures, e.g., Rigveda, contradict themselves. Manusmriti contradicts itself; for example at one place it says that you should not have pork, while at another place, it says that you should have pork. So a person cannot follow contradicting statements simultaneously.

So, what we have to realise is that even in the Hindu scriptures, there are certain things which are unethical as said by the great reformers. They believe in caste system which Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Justice Ranade, spoke against. They spoke against the Sati system that the wife should be burnt in the funeral pyre of the husband. These things cannot be followed. That’s the reason I say that as long the Hindu follows the established facts and also agrees that there is one last Rishi, ‘Antim Rishi’, then it is fine.



When Buddha came and tried to purify Hinduism of the superstitions, many people went against him. How can he come to purify the Vedas. Later they agreed that he was the 23rd of the 24 Avatars. They even agree that he was the 9th Avtar of Vishnu. Similarly, when you read the scriptures, they talk about Muhammad (pbuh) as the 24th Avatar. He is the 10th Avatar of Vishnu. He is the 'Antim Rishi'. If the Hindu believes in the established facts, believes in Muhammad (pbuh) as the messenger of God, believes in one God, believes in the Hereafter, there is no problem in him being a Hindu.



7

If Kalki Purana is not the word of God, then why quote them to prove the similarities between Hinduism and Islam?

ANSWER

In this presentation, I have quoted Vedas as well as the other Hindu scriptures. Even if you remove all the quotations of all the scriptures besides the Vedas, the content would yet be the same.

I mentioned about the last and final Messenger not only from the Puranas like Kalki Purana, but I also gave many references from the Vedas.

To mention a few references from the Vedas:

- i. Rig Veda Book 1 Hymn 13 Verse 3
- ii. Rig Veda Book 1 Hymn 18 Verse 9
- iii. Rig Veda Book 1 Hymn 142 Verse 3

Umpteen number of other quotations were mentioned only from the Vedas talking about Muhammad (pbuh).



Even if you remove the references to Kalki Avtar in Kalki Purana, yet there is mention of 'Narashansa', 'Kaurama' and 'Abhandu' in Atharva Veda, Sam Veda and Rig Veda. In fact, in all the 4 Vedas.

We Muslims believe in:

تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ



“Come to common terms as between us and you.”

Al Qur'an 3:64

I know many Hindus who respect the Bhagavad Gita and the Puranas, therefore I quoted Puranas and Bhagavad Gita in my presentation.



8

Why does Hinduism allow only certain people to read the Vedas?

ANSWER

According to the Vedas Almighty God created from His head the Brahmins, the learned class; from His chest the Kshatriyas, the warrior class; from His thighs or stomach He created the Vaishyas, the business class; from his feet He created the Shudras, the lower class. This is the caste system which is there in Hinduism which I don't agree with. Even the reformers, Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Justice Ranade disagreed with it.

Allah says in the Qur'an:

يَأَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ
وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۗ
إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقَىٰكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ



“O humankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other (not that you may despise (each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things).”

Al Qur'an 49:13

The criteria for judgment before Allah is not caste, colour, wealth or sex, but it is Taqwa. It is God consciousness, righteousness, or piety.

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ



“We have honoured all the children of Adam.”

Al Qur'an 17:70

Whether you're born in a Hindu family, Christian family or a Muslim family, if you are a Bani Adam, if you are a human being you have been honoured. In Islam all human beings are equal, the only way you can be superior is by Taqwa, it's by God consciousness, piety, or righteousness.

Thus, I disagree with the concept of caste system.



What I believe and there are many scholars who say that this caste system has been incorporated so that the higher class, the Brahmins could rule. Their philosophy is, you Shudra should remain a Shudra, lower class and behave like a Shudra. If you serve me better, in the next life you will become a good person, but this life you have to serve me. This I believe is not the word of Almighty God. That is the reason reformers of Hinduism spoke against this caste system, against Brahmanism, Shatriyaism, and so on.

According to me this caste system is wrong and the religious scriptures should be read by anyone, whether rich or poor, businessman or warrior, because this is the book of the Creator, Almighty God and everyone should know what our Creator wants us to do.



9 Can you please clarify why a person who practices Islam goes to Paradise and those who don't, go to Hell.

ANSWER

The requirement to go to Paradise is given in Surah Al Asr, chapter 103 verses 1-3.

وَالْعَصْرِ
إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ
إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ

“By (the Token of) Time (through the ages),

Verily Man is in loss,



Except such as have Faith, and do righteous deeds, and (join together) in the mutual teaching of Truth, and of Patience and Constancy.”

Al Qur'an 103:1-3



The requirement for any human being to go to Paradise are four:

1. Imaan – faith (the pillars of Imaan)
2. Righteous deeds
3. Exhorting people to truth
4. Exhorting people to patience and perseverance

If any one of these four is missing, under normal circumstances one shall not go to Paradise.

Only by calling oneself Abdullah, Muhammad, Sultan, Zakir, it will not take you to Paradise. Just by saying, 'I am a Muslim' one will not go to Paradise.

أَحْسِبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا ءَامَنَّا وَهُمْ
لَا يُفْتَنُونَ وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ ۗ فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ
اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ الْكٰذِبِينَ



“Do men think that they will be left alone on saying, "We believe", and that they will not be tested? We did test those before them, and Allah will certainly know those who are true from those who are false.”

Al Qur'an 29:2-3



Thus, just by saying, 'I'm a Muslim' one will not go to Jannah, unless a person practices Islam. Islam comes from the root word 'Salam' which means Peace. It also means submitting your will to God. A person who submits his will to God is called a Muslim. Anyone who submits his will to Almighty God, whatever his name may be, he or she will go to Paradise, In Sha Allah.

The criteria to go to Paradise is having Imaan in all the pillars I mentioned before – believing in the existence of Almighty God, to believe in the Messengers of God, the Hereafter, His Books, etc., doing righteous deeds and submitting your will to Almighty God. If you submit your will to Almighty God in Arabic it is called as the religion of Islam.

It doesn't mean that if you live in Pakistan or you live in Saudi Arabia, you'll go to Paradise! Allah alone knows whether they will go to Paradise or not. The person who will go to Paradise is the one who obeys the commandments of Almighty God.

If one's Imaan is correct, and he or she does righteous deeds and exhorts people to truth, patience and perseverance, In Sha Allah they shall go to Paradise.



10 People from different fields of knowledge call God by different names like, 'Super-consciousness', 'Cosmic energy', etc. Your comments please.

ANSWER

Whatever name you give to God should be a correct name, if it is a wrong name, we don't accept it. Some people do refer to God as Superpower or Superbeing and there is no problem with that.

One of the names you mentioned that scientists give to God is 'Cosmic energy'. If you know, one of the religions says that Almighty God rested on the 7th day after creating the heavens and the earth. This is mentioned in the Bible, Book of Genesis, chapter no. 2 verse no. 2 that Almighty God rested on the 7th day. If the 'Cosmic energy' rests the whole universe will collapse, I do agree with you in this sense. But we disagree with that scripture regarding Almighty God resting. God doesn't require to rest. Allah says in the Qur'an in Aayatul Kursi, Chapter no. 2 verse 255 that Allah does not require to sleep, neither does He require to rest.



We also disagree with calling God as 'Cosmic energy'. God is the Creator of the energy of the universe. He is not 'Cosmic energy' but more superior than that. He has created everything, and everything is dependent on Him.

If you give any name which is a correct attribute to God, we have got no objection. But if you give a wrong attribute to God, then we take a strong objection to it.

Today scientists are not eliminating God; they are eliminating models of God.



11

A. Can a Muslim pray Salaah in a non-Muslim's house?

B. Can a Muslim take Prasad from the temples?

ANSWER

A. As long as there is no idol in the front while praying Salaah and the place you are praying is clean, one can pray in any part of the world, including a non-Muslim's house.



Our beloved Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said:

“The (entire) earth has been made for me (and for my followers) a place for praying.”

Sahih Al Bukhari – Vol 1 Hadith 438

If the place is clean, doesn't break any rule of the Shariah and there is no idol in the front, one can very well pray in a non Muslim's house.

B. Prasad is a food which is given by the Hindus in the name of deities and gods.

Allah says in the Qur'an in no less than 4 different places:



حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالْدَّمُ
وَلَحْمُ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أُهْلَ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ



“Forbidden to you (for food) are: dead meat, blood, the flesh of swine, and that on which has been invoked the name of other than Allah,”

Al Qur’an 2:173, 5:3, 6:145 & 16:115

Thus, eating Prasad is Haraam for a Muslim. It’s not permitted in Islam. But we know many Muslims who say, we don’t want to offend our non-Muslim friends, they say Bismillah and have the Prasad. Which means tomorrow they will say Bismillah and have alcohol, after that they will say Bismillah and have Pork!

Eating any food on which any name besides Allah’s name is taken is prohibited in Islam.

NB: How to deal with this situation when someone gives you the Prasad, you can enroll into the upcoming course on Al Hidaayah, “Muslim’s Choice: Da’wah or Destruction?” It shows you a way how to convince the non- Muslims regarding the concept of Prasad and how to convince them through their scriptures about the true concept of God.



12 Can one practice Christianity or Hinduism and yet go to Paradise?

ANSWER

Allah (swt) says in the Qur'an:

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ



“The Religion before Allah is Islam (submission to His Will).”

Al Qur'an 3:19

If you read the Bible, the word ‘Christianity’ is nowhere to be found. Similarly, the word ‘Hinduism’ is not there in the Hindu scriptures. The word Christian was first time used by the people to describe the followers of Jesus Christ (pbuh). It was a nickname given by the people of Antioch.



“The disciples were first called Christians at Antioch.”

The Bible – Acts 11:26



The word 'Christianity' is not there in the Bible. Jesus Christ (pbuh) preached nothing but Islam. Therefore, he is going to come in his second coming to testify that there is nothing called Christianity.

Qur'an says in Surah Aali Imran, chapter 3 verse 67 that Abraham (pbuh) was not a Jew or a Christian but was a Muslim. Abraham (pbuh) taught Islam. Moses (pbuh) taught Islam.

Islam doesn't mean to have a Muslim name or you have to live in an Arab country, Islam means submitting your will to Almighty God. If you submit your will to Almighty God, you are a Muslim.

Jesus Christ (pbuh) said:



"I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will but the will of the Father which hath sent me."

The Bible – John 5:30



Anyone who says I follow not my will but the will of Almighty God, he is a Muslim. Jesus Christ (pbuh) was a Muslim. He preached Islam. I have given a talk on “Similarities between Islam and Christianity” where I have proven from the Bible that even in Christianity, one should believe in One God, not to believe in Trinity or make images of Almighty God, that God is not begotten. From the Bible, I have proven how to offer Salaah, about Zakaah, Hajj, that one should not have alcohol, about modesty, and so on. Thus, even Jesus Christ (pbuh) did not come to preach Christianity, he came to preach Islam.

Almighty God is the same God for all the human beings. He has given only one religion, i.e., Islam. All the messengers taught only Islam. All the other religions are corrupted form of the original religion, Islam. What we have to follow is true Islam, the Qur’an and the Sahih Hadith.



If you follow Jesus Christ (pbuh) by going back to the scriptures, Jesus Christ (pbuh) never said 'worship me' or claimed divinity. In fact, there is not a single unequivocal statement, in the complete Bible, where Jesus Christ (pbuh) himself says that 'he is God' or where he says, 'worship me'. But the Christians say you cannot enter Paradise until you believe Jesus Christ died for your sins. He was Almighty God. If any Christian can show me any statement in the Bible where Jesus Christ (pbuh) himself says that 'I am God' or where he says, 'worship me', I'm ready to accept Christianity.

In fact, Jesus Christ (pbuh) said:



"My Father is Greater than I."

The Bible - John 14:28



"My Father is greater than all."

The Bible - John 10:29



“I cast out devils by the Spirit of God.”

The Bible – Matthew 12:28



“I with the finger of God cast out devils.”

The Bible – Luke 11:20



“I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will but the will of the Father which hath sent me.”

The Bible – John 5:30



“Ye men of Israel listen to this, Jesus of Nazareth, A man approved of God amongst you by wonders and miracles which God did by him and you were witnesses to it.”

The Bible – Acts 2:22



If you say a Christian means a person who follows the teachings of Jesus Christ (pbuh), then I say, we Muslims are more Christian than the Christians themselves.

All the messengers of Almighty God taught nothing but Islam. Islam is submitting your will to Almighty God. If you submit your will to Almighty God, you will go to Paradise, if you don't submit you'll not go to Paradise.



13

Shouldn't we take the good things of all religious scriptures instead of specifying any one of them?

ANSWER

The bigger question to be asked is, "Who will decide what is good and what is bad?" For example, in America and other western countries, wearing skirts and shorts is common. It is modest. If a girl wearing shorts and skirts walks on the streets in India, you will call it immodest. What is modest in America is not modest in India.

Once when I went to America there was a person who told me that Indian women are immodest. I was shocked! How come Indian women are immodest? That person said that when Indian women wear the Saree, they show their bellies. For the Americans, the women showing their bellies is immodest.

So, the question arises, "Who will decide what is modest and what is immodest?"



If you go to certain Muslim countries, the Arab countries in particular, looking at a woman is immodest. In India as long as you don't touch a woman – you can talk to her, you can look at her, it is modest. Therefore, when you greet the Indians, they say Namaste without touching.

In the western countries it is common that you shake hands. Shaking hands between a lady and a man is modest. In some western countries, if you shake hands and don't touch any other part of the body of a woman, it is modest.

In other western countries kissing a woman on the lips and the cheek is modest. In some western countries you can do whatever you want, the male and the female, as long as you do it willingly, it is modest.

Now, “Who will decide what is modest and what is immodest?”

If you go to America there are nude beaches. I had once read in the Times of India newspaper that there is a “nude cruise”, everyone in the ship will be nude, for them it is modest!

The best one to decide what is good or bad, what is modest or immodest, is the Creator, Allah (swt).



If you say that one should select the best teachings of all religions, then I totally agree with you and that is what I have done in this presentation. I have selected what is common in the Vedas and in the Qur'an. I have selected the best from the Vedas and the Qur'an. But what is the best in both, may not be the best for you and that is the real problem.



14

Nowadays more and more women are participating in wars. If more women die in wars will Islam modify its ruling on polygamy? Can we modify religion according to changing times?

ANSWER

In the past and even today in the wars, there are more men dying than compared to the women. In the Gulf war, more men died than women. In the Afghanistan war more men died than women. In the Vietnam war more men died than women.

Besides the deaths in wars, I gave the statistics of more men dying of cigarette smoking than women, more men dying of alcoholism than women. Road accidents – more men die than women. Surely, there are many more reasons why Islam allows limited polygyny.

I also know that nowadays women have started going to the battlefield. In America, just a few decades back they started a women section in the military and there was a big section of women joining the military. You should also know that the President of America then, Bill Clinton, had to apologise in the Parliament for the rape of 96 women by their superiors in military. Majority of the women that take part in the battlefield are raped by their superiors.



When you go to war, men and women together, shoulder to shoulder, what do you expect to happen?

To answer the second part of the question: If the religion is not perfect it requires a modification, but if the religion is perfect no modification is required. Therefore, I tell people to point out a single fault in Islam which requires a modification.

Our Creator, Almighty God knows the future, you and I don't know. He said a man is permitted to have more than one wife but it is not compulsory to do so. Even if I agree with you that the women population becomes the same in the future yet it's not compulsory for a Muslim man to have more than one wife.

I have got only one wife and I don't intend marrying more. If someone can marry more than one there is no problem at all, as long as you do justice between your wives.

Therefore, I insist to point out a single mistake in Islam for today, what may happen tomorrow is hypothetical. Ultimately our Almighty God, our Creator, knows about the future and He alone knows what is good and bad for us.



15 In Hinduism, Krishna had more than 16,000 wives and Islam allows marrying more than one woman, both the religions suppress the women by allowing polygamy. Free them from religions and instead promote communism.

ANSWER

I do agree with you. If you think that marrying more than one woman is suppressing the women, then who is going to take care of the millions of women who will be left unmarried? Will you be the one? Will your communist movement take care of the millions of surplus women?

Allah (swt) in the Glorious Qur'an gives you the solutions to the problems of humankind. But the solution doesn't go down the throats of many.

I am asking you a question, today there are millions and millions of women more than men in the world, who is going to take care of them? Even if you give them charity every month that charity will not be sufficient.

A man and a woman have sexual tendencies by nature.



وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا
وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ



“And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts): verily in that are Signs for those who reflect.”

Al Qur'an 30:21

As a medical doctor I know that a woman cannot remain a virgin throughout her life. It's not possible. What will it lead to? They will fall for prostitution. What solution will communism offer them? No solution. Allah, our Creator gives the solution, but the solution doesn't go down the throats of many.

Moreover, in Islam it's not compulsory for a man to marry more than one woman. It's not compulsory to marry four. I don't know of a single Indian Muslim who has got four wives, I don't know of any.

But certain men who can do justice between the wives, then Allah has given them the permission. If they can do justice, then what is troubling you I don't understand. Where are we suppressing them? We are uplifting them.



The so-called modernity in western countries is degrading the women in the name of art & culture. Their talk of women's liberalisation is nothing but an exploitation of her body, degradation of her honour and deprivation of her soul.

The western society claiming to uplift the women has actually degraded her to the status of concubines, mistresses, and society butterflies, which are hidden behind the colourful screen of art and culture.

What are you doing in the name of communism, in the name of uplifting the women, you are selling your daughters; you are selling your mothers. We Muslims don't want to do it.

In America, one can have mistresses 5, 10, 20... no one can stop you. So is the same in communism, having mistresses is allowed.



When a man takes more than one wife, he has to give her the due rights. You cannot ill-treat her, you must give her honour, you have to share your wealth and property with her, but that doesn't go down your throat. Who is degrading the women, you or me?

Today, Islam is the fastest growing religion. The Americans who talk about Islam degrading the women, out of those people accepting Islam, two third of them are women. If Islam degrades the women, then why are the American women accepting Islam? Why are the American men accepting Islam?

If Islam degrades the women, why will they accept Islam? Because they know that Islam gives security to women, and that security may not go well with your purpose of making money in the name of art and culture.

These people of art and culture talking about uplifting the women are actually selling cosmetics and making billions of dollars. In the name of beauty contests, they are making billions of dollars.

If you realise it, we don't believe in exhibiting our women in front of public. We respect them, we love them, and we revere them. We don't want to degrade them.



16 Is religion, the solution for all the problems in the world? Is it also the solution for the children dying out of hunger in Ethiopia?

ANSWER

Yes. The religion which is true, is the solution for all the problems in the world, including the solution for the children dying out of hunger in Ethiopia.

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ ۗ



“The Religion before Allah is Islam (submission to His Will).”

Al Qur’an 3:19

If every human being submits his will to Almighty God, you will not have problem of hunger deaths in Ethiopia.

Allah says in the Qur’an and it is in several Sahih Hadith that the third pillar of Islam is giving Zakaah. Every rich person who has a saving of more than the Nisaab level i.e., 85 grams of gold, should give 2.5% of his savings in charity.

If every rich human being gives charity, poverty will be eradicated from this world. Leave aside Ethiopia; there will not be a single human being anywhere in the world who will die of hunger.



The total wealth of the three richest men in the world is equal to 48 poorest countries GDP. Only 3 richest men! If only these three give Zakaah it will solve the problems of the humankind.

If every human being follows the religion of submitting his will to Almighty God, then the problem of hunger, poverty, or any other problem will not exist. The Glorious Qur'an has the solution for it.

Follow the right religion and you will get the real solution and real peace.

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