

A Muslimah preserving her religion in Japan

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Question:

Thanks to Allaah, some Japanese women accepted Islam. They began to struggle with the atheist Japanese society that prefers disbelief and distorted Christianity to Islam. Indeed, there are no obligations in the distorted Christianity, so a person may drink Khamr (intoxicant), eat pork, have girl friends, and at the same time be a Christian who believes in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, a new Muslim has to stand out and become different from non-Muslims and keeps away from their society and gatherings when it comes to `Aqeedah (creed); so they become subject to be ostracised and regarded as insane. Non-Muslims may even isolate new Muslim converts and deny them work. They cannot accept them as fellow Japanese while seeing them do what they deem as awful offense i.e. becoming Muslims, abandoning non-Muslim parties, Khamr, pork, and praying to Allaah, the God that such non-Muslim people deny as the true Lord?

The problems the girls face are even worse, as they are weaker and usually depend on work to support themselves or on their non-Muslim families to support them.

Among the various problems the Muslim women face is the observation of the religious obligations e.g. wearing the Hijaab (veil). Many times, a woman is prevented from wearing Hijaab and offering Salaah (Prayer) at her workplace. as she cannot pray on time, she makes up for the missed prayers together lest she should be fired from work; her only source to earn her living, as she lives apart from her non-Muslim family.

Another problem a Muslim young woman may face is her inability to fast Ramadan when she hides her Islam from her family, especially her strict Christian mother. This mother prefers that her daughter becomes a disbeliever to becoming a Muslim. This girl studies at the university and her family supports her. She lives, eats, and drinks with them in the same house. This might lead her to committing many prohibitions. She cannot fast Ramadan, as this will be strange to her family. If they know of her conversion, they might harm and prevent her from continuing her education which will be her only way to earn her living in the future. A third problem a new Japanese Muslim may face is when his wife and children remain non-Muslims and he does not know what to do about them.

We would like to ask your Eminence the following questions:

1. What should a Muslim woman do in such circumstances in Japan?
2. What should this Muslim man do with his non-Muslim wife and children? Is his disbelieving wife still lawful to him?

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3. Is Salaah (Prayer) offered by a woman outside her house and in public places while sitting behind a screen to cover her `Awrah (private parts of the body that must be covered in public) valid? May Allaah reward you with the best!

Answer:

Firstly, anyone who reverts to Islam and conceals it lest they should be harmed need to indirectly show the merits of Islam to people they fear from without making their reversion known. They should invoke Allaah (Exalted be He) to guide them, perhaps Allaah will guide them to accept Islam. This would ward off their evil. If they are not guided and are expected to harm the person, or the country does not allow the practicing of the Islamic rites, then this person should migrate to Muslim lands, if possible. Allaah (Exalted be He) says, He who emigrates (from his home) in the Cause of Allaah, will find on earth many dwelling places and plenty to live by. I.e. they should find another place away from the place they detest, a way out from deviation to guidance, from distress to relief, and from poverty to welfare.

A weak person who cannot migrate is excused as they are prevented from immigration or due to being a woman. Allaah (Exalted be He) says, **Verily! As for those whom the angels take (in death) while they are wronging themselves (as they stayed among the disbelievers even though emigration was obligatory for them), they (angels) say (to them): "In what (condition) were you?" They reply: "We were weak and oppressed on the earth." They (angels) say: "Was not the earth of Allaah spacious enough for you to emigrate therein?" Such men will find their abode in Hell – What an evil destination! Except the weak ones among men, women and children who cannot devise a plan, nor are they able to direct their way. These are they whom Allaah is likely to forgive them, and Allaah is Ever Oft-Pardoning, Oft-Forgiving.** These Ayahs (Qur'aanic verses) mean that the weak people are not able to develop plans, spend, and direct their way if they migrate.

Secondly, a weak woman should be in contact with the Islamic centres in her country, as they might help her. Otherwise, she should be patient and wait for a way out. She should invoke Him (Exalted be He) to facilitate her affairs. She will be rewarded Inshaa'allaah (if Allaah wills). She should abide by the teachings, rulings, and obligatory acts of Islam as much as she can for Allaah (Glorified be He) says, **So keep your duty to Allaah and fear Him as much as you can.** The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم)¹ said, **If I order you to do something, do as much of it as you can.**²

Thirdly, when a man converts to Islam but his wife remains in disbelief, it is permissible for him to keep her, if she is from the People of the Book (a Christian or a Jew), since the basic ruling is that it is permissible for a Muslim to marry chaste women of the People of the

¹ (صلى الله عليه وسلم) (sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him

² Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim agreed upon its authenticity.

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Book. Allaah (تعالى)³ says, **Made lawful to you this day are At-Tayyibaat [all kinds of Halaal (lawful) foods, which Allaah has made lawful (meat of slaughtered eatable animals, milk products, fats, vegetables and fruits)]. The food (slaughtered cattle, eatable animals) of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) is lawful to you and yours is lawful to them. (Lawful to you in marriage) are chaste women from the believers and chaste women from those who were given the Scripture (Jews and Christians) before your time.**

However, it is not permissible for him to stay with her if she is not from the people of the Book. Allaah says, **Likewise hold not the disbelieving women as wives.**

On the other hand, if a woman converts to Islam while her husband remains a disbeliever, she becomes unlawful to him for Allaah says, **O you who believe! When believing women come to you as emigrants, examine them; Allaah knows best as to their Faith, then if you ascertain that they are true believers send them not back to the disbelievers. They are not lawful (wives) for the disbelievers nor are the disbelievers lawful (husbands) for them.**

If she is forced to stay with him, she should be patient until she finds a way out and there is no harm on her as the early Muslim women did. Zaynab (رضى الله عنها)⁴ the daughter of the Messenger of Allaah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) stayed with her husband Aboo Al-`As ibn Al-Rabi`, after she converted to Islam, before he converted to Islam. The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) did not separate them. When she followed the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) to Madinah, their marriage was annulled. However, the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) gave her back to him after he became a Muslim.

Fourthly, as for the children, they should follow the best religion of their parents. If one of the parents embraces Islam, all the minor children will be Muslims, as children follow the best religion of their parents.

Fifthly, a woman should cover before any Ajnabee (man lawful for the woman to marry). She should stay away from anything that shows her adornment, stay at her house, and she should not leave it except out of necessity and in such a case she should dress modestly. If the time of Salaah is due while she is out of her house, she has to offer it in a place away from men. The excuse mentioned in the question does not exempt her from standing while offering Salaah, because standing is a pillar of Salaah for anyone who is able to.

May Allaah grant us success! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and Companions!

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³ (تعالى) Ta'aala (He, The Most High)

⁴ (رضى الله عنها) (rad iyallaahu `anhaa) May Allaah the Most High be pleased with her

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