



DOWRY AND ISLAM

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ISLAM**

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**QUENCH NOT  
THINE OWN LIGHT**

by

**W.B. Bashir Pickard**  
(B.A. Cantab)

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**ISLAM**  
in the Soviet Union  
*Courtesy Indian Express*

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**March 1991**

*The beginning of Wisdom is the fear of God*

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## DOWRY IS FORBIDDEN IN ISLAM

### AND SO IS LAVISHNESS AT WEDDINGS

*This article is dedicated, in the Name of Allah, to those Muslim parents who are unable to get their daughters married because of un-Islamic financial demands made by the boys and their parents. Only social awareness and public wrath (social boycott) can cure the Muslim community of this cancer.*

Un-Islamic innovations have crept into the Islamic Society which are spreading in the body as maggots which will ultimately lead to total destruction. In this pamphlet the evil of dowry system and lavishness at weddings is being highlighted to focus attention of the members of the Muslim Ummah and create awareness against it.

#### DOWRY :

The contemptuous, degrading, abominable demand by boys parents for dowry has crept in Muslim Society. Quran says, give "Mehr" to the women but does not say take dowry. What answer will those who demand dowry and also get it answer Allah on the day of Judgement. For a man not to marry a Muslim girl who has all qualifications to be a good wife only because her parents cannot give dowry will become accountable to Allah. If a girl falls prey to bad ways by remaining single (un-married) for her survival just because she could not be got married because of her parents inability to meet the bridegroom's or his family's dowry demand, Allah may hold them responsible for her sins. The possibility of having to face such a situation in the Court of Allah is there. Do not forget, we have got this dowry system because we don't read the Quran and only pay lip service to the teachings of the Prophet (SAS).

Let us see what the Holy Quran says :

*O Ye who believe  
Eat not up your property  
Among yourselves in vanities  
But let there be amongst you  
Traffic and trade  
By mutual good-will  
Nor kill (or destroy)  
Yourselves; for verily  
Allah hath been to you  
Most Merciful !*

*If any do that  
In rancour and injustice  
Soon shall we cast them  
Into the Fire; and easy  
It is for Allah.* (Sura: 4, Verses 29,30)

*Allah doth command you  
To render back your Trusts  
To those to whom they are due  
And when ye judge  
Between man and man  
That ye judge with justice  
Verily how excellent  
Is the teaching which He giveth you  
For Allah is He who heareth  
And seeth all things.*

*O Ye who believe !  
Obey Allah obey the Apostle  
And those charged  
With authority among you  
If ye differ in anything  
Among yourselves, refer it  
To Allah and His Apostle  
If ye do believe in Allah  
And the Last day :  
That is best and most Suitable  
For final determination.* (Sura: 4, Verses 58,59)

Please read the above verses carefully over and over again and ponder over its meaning. Does not the demand for dowry from helpless parents of daughters falls within the definition? "Eat not up your property among yourselves in vanities". To those who defy verse 29 see how verse 30 of sura 4 thunders to such people. Again does not demanding and taking dowry amount to taking advantage of someone's helplessness to benefit oneself? Getting something easily without working for it, is totally forbidden in Islam. It is on this principle that interest and gambling is forbidden. Can you afford to incur the wrath of Allah and still say we are Muslims? When the Bridegroom who demands and gets dowry himself becomes the parent of girls, how would he like to be at the receiving end 20 years later when someone asks him for dowry to marry his daughters. These are questions to be carefully considered and not to be brushed aside. Remember the answers one has to give in the loneliness of his dark grave. The demand for dowry has no place in Sharee'at. In fact there is a Fatwa on this, "Dowry, in cash and kind, at the time of marriage, is positively unlawful (Haram) and giving dowry voluntarily is also unlawful (Haram)". JUDICIAL VERDICT - FATWA - OF MOULANA MUJAHIDUL ISLAM QASIMI QAZI SHAREE'AT at BIHAR & ORISSA.

From the above it is clear that receiving dowry in cash or kind at the time of marriage is positively forbidden (Haram) and giving dowry willingly is also prohibited (Haram), because it is a bribe. Caution against the exploitation of others by wealthy is given in 14 suras of Holy Quran. Quran says look to piety in the boy and the girl and their families-not wealth and beauty. Therefore to marry only for reasons of wealth and beauty is against a very strict and clear rule of Allah in the Holy Quran. Allah says he will be severe on those who defy Him.

Every Muslim boy, whose parents insist on dowry, must protest to his parents against it.

Remember Holy Quran gives the authority to the children to protest to their parents (without being disrespectful to them) if their parents act in an un-Islamic manner. By doing so you will be pleasing Allah. You will please Allah more if dowry already received is returned to the parents of the bride. Allah will reward you for this.

#### Weddings :

The lavishness with which the weddings are celebrated ignoring the severe warning in Quran against extravagance. How can we celebrate such a solemn thing as a marriage by doing something that annoys Allah. Is it correct? Is it Islamic? Is this not being done for show and to create an impression? Remember the questions Quran asks in Sura Al-Takatur (Sura No. 102). What answer will a person give to Allah who flaunts wealth for the sake of flaunting. Remember it is the Quran warning. Caution against extravagance and wealth is given in 9 suras of Holy Quran.

Why don't the Muslims hold marriage ceremony in Mosques, instead of Five Star Hotels? A Nikkah performed in a Mosque will be far more pleasing to Allah than putting up a show in a Five Star Hotel. Look at the Christian community. They have their marriage ceremonies in Church. Even well-to-do Hindus have their wedding ceremony in Temples. Other communities are following what Allah expects us to follow but we consider it below our status to have Nikkah ceremony in Mosques. Is this not vanity? The ideal place, if we have a sense of Islamic spirit in us, is to have Nikkah in campuses where there is a Mosque and enough accommodation is also available for other arrangements. The money that is paid as rent for hotels, etc., can be given to our own institutions. Our affluent Muslim brothers must give a lead in this matter. **To try to impress someone other than Allah will amount to shirk and that is one thing Allah says in the Quran, He will not forgive. It is**

high time that the affluent of our society set up example in this regard instead of trying to create shallow impressions.

The other disgusting practice is of taking Video films. Especially pictures of purdah ladies in the ladies wing. Their trust is thus betrayed for uncovering their faces. Is this Islamic? Would our Prophet (SAS) have approved of this? **Our affluent are most guilty of this.** Allah says that on the day of Judgment each person will be given his/her record in his or her hand. Do you want marriage video film flaunting wealth and violating rules of 'hijab' also to be handed over to you as a further proof of your disobedience, defiance, extravagance and vanity? A true Muslim must act within the framework of Islam. Every Muslim who is affluent must think that the wealth in his possession is trust property belonging to Allah and therefore he has to be careful how he uses the wealth in his possession.

Wake up, change this double standard behaviour. Society must create awareness against evils which have crept in their midst. Enough of this vanity. Remember Allah's warning that He will replace us if we do not behave. History has given us enough examples of this. This vanity is because we do not read Quran and take its advice. Allah has warned in the Quran against extravagance and displeasing the Prophet (SAS). Can we dare to ignore this warning and yet say we are Muslims?

Late Dr. Radhakrishnan, former President of India, once remarked that as long as the Muslims followed the Prophet's (SAS) example of **Simple living and High thinking**, they were Masters of the World. But when they came to power they forgot this example of the Prophet (SAS) and instead adopted High living and Simple thinking. This resulted in the slide down of Muslim glory and grandeur. Dowry system, ostentatious weddings, vain functions for self

praise, egoism etc., are manifestations of high living and simple thinking. Muslims must go back to Simple living and High thinking if they want to regain their original grandeur and command respect.

*'Worldly wealth, power, progeny, affluence and influence may be but trials. Let not their possessors think that they are in themselves things that will necessarily bring them happiness?'*

(Sura: 23, Verses: 55, 56)

*"Give the kinsman his due, and the needy, and the wayfarer, and squander not (thy wealth) in wantonness".*

Pay heed to these warnings in Holy Quran.

قلب میں سوز نہیں روح میں احساس نہیں  
کچھ بھی پیغامِ محمدؐ کا نہیں پاس نہیں

*May Allah guide us all on the right path, Ameen,*

#### **QUENCH NOT THINE OWN LIGHT**

**W. B. Bashir Pickard (B.A. Cantab)**

*"Guard thyself against the insidious evils of intoxicants and games of chance."*

In a few brief sentences I am called upon to strengthen the bulwarks of humanity against an insidious, fair-seeming evil, that, armed with the shining nets of pleasure, entangles and ensnares the

unsuspecting. The victim once ensnared, an onlooker can recognise the poisonous nature of the evil, can see the poison eating its ways into the reason, corroding the sources of vitality and corrupting the sense of proportion, beclouding the clear judgement of what is good and what is evil, of what is right and what is wrong.

With this brief exordium, let me proceed in earnest to lay bare the subject. Take away the cloak from evil, and the cowardly ugliness of the essence of evil has but little power. The Holy Quran states :-

*"O you who believe ! Intoxicants and games of chance . . . are only an uncleanness, the devil's work; shun it therefore that you may be successful. The devil only desires to cause enmity and hatred to spring in your midst by means or intoxicants and games of chance, and to keep you off from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer; will you not then desist?"*

(Sura 3, Verses 90-91)

To become intoxicated is to smudge and make filthy and to blotch the fair face of your reason. You yourself can recognise a splash of mud upon your own physical person. Even so, another can recognise the defilement existing over the reason of a man or woman intoxicated. Yet worse is intoxication for this very inherent reason, that, once the judgement is smirched, beclouded, it no longer possesses the clear-sighted vision to recognise the state into which it has come. It knoweth not its own defilement and disgrace. Wherefore it certainly behoves humanity to watch carefully and to guard tirelessly against all the approaches of this most insidious, smooth seeming foe, intoxication.

Wine maketh pleasant and comfortable the entrance to her palace of rosy-hued oblivion. Wine inviteth thereto gently, flattering the unsuspecting self esteem. Wine saith; "Come a little way with me just to take off the roughness of reality! You are tired: you have fought hard today: You have worked

hard. I have plenty of soft cushions! You positively owe it to your self to make use of them and rest upon them! You deserve all this pleasantness now: So relax a little and take your ease with me: it will be for your good!

If a man or woman is not fore-warned, strongly determined not to dally with things evil, what happens? Reality remains the same, unchanging, but wine seduces the senses to think it otherwise. Reason is gradually befooled by wine into imagining that a better state of affairs is coming into being. Wine and intoxicants bring a rose-coloured veil between reason and reality, thereby depriving reason of her true faculty of taking stock of reality.

Intoxicants destroy reason's power of providing against eventualities. Intoxicants mock the reason and blind the reason with false semblances, so that it cannot see clear Truth and build up life constructively in accordance therewith.

Now the following strange inequality exists in the action of wine and intoxicants upon a man's life, namely that they will steal away the best part of a man (his reason), cause him when only half himself to do something, of which his complete self would strongly disapprove. Once the act is committed, slinketh then away the intoxication, leaving perchance the man or woman in a bemused state of uneasy slumber, whether physical, mental or spiritual, or all three combined, to awake amidst the thorns of pain, the bitings of remorse and the sharp penetrating points of undoubted, evadeless reality.

So the process has been in these three stages :

1. Dissatisfaction at reality
2. Satisfaction with unreality
3. Regrets and remorse at a reality foolishly made worse than formerly.

In this third stage, too, a man or woman finds that they have to take the consequences and pay the penalty for what "someone else has done;" for, truly, when under intoxication a man or woman is not himself. Now, where as a normally intelligent being is prepared to take the consequence of their own considered action, remorse, shame and pain is but doubled to endure the sharp punishment of a "blind" action, an action committed when only half oneself.

I should now like to draw attention to the simplicity and the beauty of this absolute and final prohibition of wine contained in the words of the Holy Quran.

The taking of wine and intoxicants is clearly, without question, doubt or dispute, designated as "an uncleanness, the devil's work." Who then would want to "take a little," "be moderate," or know when to stop?" Nay, the time to stop from "an uncleanness, the devil's work" is **not to commence at all**, shun it completely, dabble not therein either secretly or openly. Play not with an admitted evil, but eschew it absolutely.

The total prohibition of wine is a vast blessing, a great simplifying of much of the complexity of modern life. Not only is a portion of life radically simplified, but the benefit conveyed by total avoidance of wine is the acquiring of a steadfast sanity, a clearer reasoning for the overcoming of the difficulties and complexities that still remain in other directions and phases of modern life. Mark this clearly; a two fold benefit, two blessings :-

#### **First benefit :**

Simplification of life: avoidance of unconsidered, wrongful actions, that would bring a train of painful consequences and many regrets: a safeguard from falling inadvertently into evil, strifes, quarrellings, foolishness, stupid mistakes, angry estrangements,

violence, headlessness and forgetfulness, which often, though small in themselves, entail enormous and unforeseen consequences, even as the careless throwing of a lighted match, or neglect of a lighted candle, or carelessness of a glowing fire in the grate, may result in a house burning, a conflagration, deaths and distresses. All these serious consequences arose from a carelessness : and what occasioned carelessness? The mind was not alert: it was temporarily off its guard: and what is one of the things that most readily puts the mind off its guard? That thing is wine and intoxicants.

#### **Second benefit :**

A clearness of the eyes for seeing, of the mind for judging, of the reason for estimating, and a brightness and quickness in the powers of action for carrying out right purposes.

Avoidance of wine and intoxicants is a sane and steadfast progression in the direction of righteousness, in the fulfilment of duties unto God, to oneself and to others.

The total avoidance of wine is the only perfect way. This is a clear-cut demarcation between black and white, good and evil, right and wrong. This gives no rise to a misty field for endless discussion and dispute, as to "how far?" "how much?" "how little?" "where is excess?" "what are the circumstances?" "for some people so much, for others so much?" Nay, in total and invariable avoidance of wine there is no "white" fading away and sinking by hardly perceptible degrees into definite "black", no bemused mind groping to draw the line of "too much" at a convenient point; nor, when the convenient point has been found and the line demarcated, all the relaxing will power vainly summoned to prevent the reeling body and the rocking mind from overstepping this imaginary line of extravagance and excess: a line strangely seeming to move and to become multi-



plied, as one approaches it! Nay, nay, but a clear and definite prohibition: "No Wine!"

Turning now to some of the evils resulting from the use of intoxicants, we find that some of the many evils and abuses arising from wine are specified by the Holy Quran. Thus Sura 5 : V. 91: "The devil only desires to cause enmity and hatred to spring in your midst by means of intoxicants and games of chance, and to keep you off from the remembrance of Allah and prayer: will you then desist?"

Now, in being kept off from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer, there is definitely a double disadvantage: those who indulge in intoxicants and games of chance suffer two losses.

#### **First loss or disadvantage :**

The remembrance of Allah is swept away from their hearts. Prayers and the sweetness of prayer's solace is foregone, forgotten.

#### **Second loss or disadvantage :**

Strife and trouble, quarrel and wordly embarrassments are incurred, which otherwise by the remembrance of Allah and by keeping up of prayer would not arise; or, even if arising, would, by the Grace and Help and Aid of God, be dealt with successfully.

Now it is to be presupposed that it is part of human nature that, when once the true good of a person has been thoroughly realised by that person, he will not only desire to obtain that true good, that essential benefit, but will take steps himself to grasp that good, to seize that benefit firmly and make it absolutely his own.

So then we proceed to state that health and

efficiency of faculties is one of the greatest benefits that a person can enjoy. Health and efficiency is the true good of every person.

Now wine and intoxicants are the greatest enemy of normal human health (we are not here discussing the use of alcohol by physicians upon the sick and abnormal). The action of alcohol is upon the nervous system. In these days of stress and strain and tension, anything acting directly upon the nervous system must be viewed from the first with the gravest suspicion. After a gentle excitement of the senses, the essential nature of alcohol makes itself evident upon the human system by a diminution of the power of self-control and by a discarding of the sense of personal responsibility, until, finally, the intellect itself is submerged.

The action of alcohol upon the tissues and substances of the body is as the action of fire, of an acid upon tender substances, eating, corroding, destroying; so that by intoxicants health is rapidly ruined. For it seems that the forces of the body are similar to an army fighting in the field. Snipe off the officers and the high command, and how will that army fare? Will it not suffer confusion, rout and disintegration? So would the glorious health of the body suffer at the hands of alcohol, which first would incapacitate the High Command, even the Reason, and then would play havoc at its own free will upon the nerves, the limbs and organs of the body, now helplessly become its prey.

So, in brief, the matter should be summed up and stated thus : "If you value health, avoid intoxicants. If you desire efficiency refrain from wine."

And now, the evils inherent in intoxicants being sufficiently manifest and indisputable, let us turn and consider especially games of chance, gambling.

This social evil is desperately attached, even as a cancerous growth, upon Western Civilization. Is gambling really regarded by the majority of Western people as deleterious, as harmful, as a great social and national pest, as an enemy to true civilisation? Yet actually gambling is such an enemy to civilization, such a destroyer of social happiness and well-being. Gambling saps the foundations of confidence: It makes social conditions unstable, unreliable: It takes away the honest value of money and of material things, and creates instead a state of feverish uncertainty and hysterical recklessness, prelude to panic, downfall and disaster. The object of gambling is "to get without earning". Gambling is, therefore, from its root nature, unjust and subversive of sound and sane financial organisation. Gambling breeds a fever of continual speculation and unrest, and destroys intrinsic value and the sweetness of the earnings of honest labour. Gambling is either a spendthrift, causing the vanishing of the profits of honest labour, or else a dishonest grabber, gaining piles of valueless, worthless money, to be squandered as easily and as worthlessly as acquired.

Beautifully, indeed, hath the Divine Wisdom of the Quran forbidden all these things, these games of chance, this gambling. How sane and happily balanced would society be if these precepts were universally observed! May Allah aid the spreading abroad of this sanity, this happiness!

#### CRESCENT MOON RISING OVER SOVIET UNION

Tashkent, August 12, 1990 (AP) : A stonework galaxy of crescent moons has risen above the jagged outlines of tombs in the 1,000-year-old Chigotai cemetery, symbolically ending the long Soviet eclipse of Islam.

"Now Communist party officials mourn their dead in the open instead of performing Muslim rites secretly at home" the aged guardian told visitors.

From Askhabad to Alma Ata, across a 1,920-km sweep of the Soviet Union, Central Asians are embracing Allah with the fervour of long-last prodigal sons. On Fridays, row after row of barefoot, bearded men in braided skullcaps chant centuries-old litanies and bow not towards Moscow but to Mecca.

Koranic schools are filling with youngsters, and countless mosques are reopening. "I cannot even say how many", said Mohammed Zakhir, Deputy Grand Mufti of Central Asia. "But a new one opens every week. It is endless."

Religious leaders insist the new mood is joyous rather than militant, a sign that tenacious faith has prevailed over an ideology that used propaganda and sometimes brute force to try to wipe it out.

In fact, many Central Asians say, Islam is an important force in the new political current carrying five of the Soviet Union's 15 republics further away from Moscow.

At the rural level, power is slipping away from local Communist party officials to Imams, and in cities the party carries favour with the clergy.

An aggressive new attitude is evident in scattered outbreaks of violence. In May, in the crowded Fergana valley, east of this old Uzbek capital, witnesses said masked fundamentalist leaders led youth on a rampage of burning and looting in an apparent play for power.

Three months earlier and farther south, in Dushanbe, capital of mountainous Tadzhikistan, Western visitors reported that Muslim faithful went directly after prayers to rioting and to demanding the resignation of local officials.

Tashkent and the populous republic of Uzbekistan are shared by nearly 100 ethnic groups,

with beliefs ranging from orthodox Islam to Marxist atheism. In many areas, they compete intensely for land, housing and jobs.

From the first Russian incursions to the south, Islam was a principal target, and many Soviet Muslims say they feel a deepseated prejudice against Russian people.

After the 1917 Russian revolution, Moscow condemned Islam as divisive superstition and sought to eliminate it along with other religions. Most mosques were closed and many were destroyed. During some periods, Islam was banned outright. More often, it was vilified by intense propaganda, and faithful Muslims had to choose between Allah and advancement in a party-controlled society. No muezzins wailed before prayer. Hardly a trickle of Soviet Muslims made it to Mecca for the annual pilgrimage.

"These past oppressions are ending," said Usmonhon Alimov, Imam of the graceful Al-bukhari mosque near Samarkand, among the few Islamic holy sites to remain mostly unmolested since the 1920s.

"Young men are flocking to the faith, openly, and mosques are being established in every village" he said.

Today, 55 million Muslims, most of them in Central Asia, make up a fifth of the national population, and every second child born in the Soviet Union is a Muslim.

A decade ago, during the height of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's Islamic revolution in neighbouring Iran, powerful Iranian radio transmitters urged Muslim brothers to rise up against the Soviet state. At the time, Moscow was at war in Afghanistan, deploying some central Asian soldiers against anti-communist Muslim guerrillas.