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Response to the lies and distortions of christian missionaries about the position of women in islam



Part 3, Written by Kevin el-Karim

"The most perfect of believers are those most perfect of character; and the best of you are the best of you to your spouses." Tirmidhi, Ibn Hibban

"None but a noble man treats women in an honourable manner. And none but an ignoble treats women disgracefully" At-Tirmithy

He wrote:

The collector of the so-called sound narrations, Imam al-Bukahri narrated:

Narrated Sahl bin Sad: While we were sitting in the company of the Prophet a woman came to him and presented herself for marriage to him. The Prophet looked at her, lowering his eyes and raising them, but did not give a reply. One of his companions said, "Marry her to me O Allah's Apostle" The Prophet asked him, "Have you got anything?" He said, "I have got nothing." The Prophet said, "Not even an iron ring?" He said, "Not even an iron ring, but I will tear my garment into two halves and give her one half and keep the other half." The Prophet said, "No. Do you know some of the Quran (by heart)?" He said, "Yes." The Prophet said, "Go, I have agreed to marry her to you with what you know of the Qur'an (as her Mahr)." 'And for those who have no courses (i.e. they are still immature). (65.4) And the 'Iddat for the girl BEFORE PUBERTY is three months (in the above Verse). (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Volume 7, Book 62, Number 63; emphasis ours)

Response:

The christian missionary relies his opinion on an english translation of the heading of a chapter. The Sahl bin Sa'd ahadith ends at: "Go, I have agreed to marry her to you with what you know of the Qur'an". What is mentioned next, the fat quoted text by sham shamoun, is not a hadeeth but part of the title of the next chapter in sahih al-bukhari:

غول بل لبق رهش أفتال امتدع لعجف { نضحي مل يئال او } لاعت ملوقل راغصل هدلو لجرل حالكنا باب

something like:

“Chapter on (the permissibility of) a man marrying off his underage daughter (which would be) in accordance with the saying of Allah "And for –“those who do not menstruate" so the `iddah was set to three months prior to buloogh.”

In the context of this verse prior to ‘buloogh’ refers only to ‘prior to menstruation’, since the verse speaks about those who have no courses yet. When a girl has her first menstrual period, she is general considered as having reached ‘buloogh’ / puberty. Therefore the writer here in his chapter uses the words ‘underage’ and ‘prior to buloogh’ as a reference to ‘prior to menstruation’. This can be clearly seen without doubt at the rest of the text and its context in connection to the quranic ayah. A lot of writers used the term ‘buloogh’ only as a reference to menstruation, since menstruation is the well known sign which shows that a girl has reached ‘buloogh’. Therefore most writers use the term ‘prior to buloogh’ and ‘underage’ as a synonym for ‘prior to menstruation’. This can be confusing sometimes, since one could think that girls could consummate marriage before puberty, which is actually not allowed in islam. Like we mentioned before there are also other things which are a sign of having reached ‘majority’ in islam. These things are: wet dreams, breasts, public hair and the age of 15 years. Therefore a girl can only consummate marriage prior to menstruation (which is general considered as buloogh for girls) when she has already public hair, breasts or reached the age of 15 years or had a wet dream, which are also signs that a girl has reached puberty in islam. So keep in mind that the heading of this chapter only refers to girls who had not yet menstruated which can be clearly seen at the rest of the text and its connection to the quranic ayah.

Proof that girls can only consummate marriage on the onset of puberty can be found in the sunnah of our prophet. The Prophet, peace be upon him, didn't consummate his marriage with Aicha when she was six. He consummated his marriage with her three years later. The reason for this was that they were waiting for her to come of age, or in other words reached puberty.

Another author, Karen Armstrong, has this to add:

Tabari says that she was so young that she stayed in her parents home and the marriage was consummated there later when she had reached puberty.

(Karen Armstrong, Muhammad: A Biography of the Prophet, Harper San Francisco, 1992, page 157)

Now if a marriage could be consummated at any age with a girl or prior to puberty, then certainly the prophet, peace be upon him, would have consummated his marriage with Aicha when she was six. However he never did this for a reason, he waited until she reached puberty. From this we can already see, that girls prior to puberty are not allowed to consummate marriage. But what about the ayah which says 'and the waiting period for those who have no courses yet is three months' ? Like we have seen in the heading of the chapter of sahih bukhari is that girls prior to menstruation can marry, which is by some writers described as 'prior to buloogh' or 'underage' since menstruation is general considered as having reached buloogh. However this does not mean that girls can consummate marriage before puberty, which some people think. This confusion occurs because some writers used the terms 'prior to buloogh' or 'underage' as a reference or synonym for 'prior to menstruation' since menstruation is the well known aspect which shows that a girl has reached puberty / majority. However in islam a girl has also reached puberty / majority when she had her first wet dream, or has already public hair, breasts or reached the age of 15 years. These facts can be found in Ibn Kathirs famous tafsir on soerah 4:6

Qu'ran An-nisa 6:

Waibtaloo alyatama hatta itha balaghoo alnnikaha fa-in anastum minhum rushdan faidfaAAoo ilayhim amwalahum wala ta/kulooha israfan wabidaran an yakbaroo waman kana ghaniyyan falyastaAAfif waman kana faqeeran falya/kul bialmaAAroofi fa-itha dafaAAatum ilayhim amwalahum faashhidoo AAalayhim wakafa biAllahi haseeban

Prove orphans till they reach the marriageable age; then, if ye find them of sound judgment, deliver over unto them their fortune; and devour it not by squandering and in haste lest they should grow up Whoso (of the guardians) is rich, let him abstain generously (from taking of the property of orphans); and whoso is poor let him take thereof in reason (for his guardianship). And when ye deliver up their fortune unto orphans, have (the transaction) witnessed in their presence. Allah sufficeth as a Reckoner.

Ibn Kathir in his tafsir comments:

The age of puberty, according to Mujahid. The age of puberty according to the majority of scholars comes when the child has a wet dream. In his Sunan, Abu Dawud recorded that `Ali said, "I memorized these words from the Messenger of Allah , "There is no orphan after the age of puberty nor vowing to be silent throughout the day to the night" .

In another Hadith, `A'ishah and other Companions said that the Prophet said, "The pen does not record the deeds of three persons: the child until the age of puberty, the sleeping person "until waking up, and the senile until sane"

Or, the age of fifteen is considered the age of adolescence. In the Two Sahihs, it is recorded that Ibn Umar said, I was presented in front of the Prophet on the eve of the battle of Uhud, while I was fourteen years of age, and he did not allow me to take part in "that battle. But I was presented in front of him on the eve of the battle of Al-Khandaq (The Trench) when I was fifteen years old, and he allowed "me (to join that battle).

Umar bin `Abdul-`Aziz commented when this Hadith reached him, " This is the difference between a child and an adult." There is a difference of opinion over whether pubic hair is considered a sign of adulthood, and the correct opinion is that it is. The Sunnah supports this view, according to a Hadith collected by Imam Ahmad from `Atiyah Al-Qurazi who said, We were presented to the Prophet on the day of Qurizah, whoever had pubic

The christian missionary moreover fails to realize that it was a normal custom for young people to marry at the onset of their puberty or some years later, since the prophet, peace be upon him, recommended those who had the means for it to marry. The christian missionary obvious only fantasizes that older men married with younger girls, he obvious never realizes that young boys just married young girls back then, and only consummated marriage with them when they had reached puberty. In those times and biblical times it was the custom of the society, which nowadays many people fail to realize. Also puberty and adulthood in those societies back then were reached at an earlier age than today. Also it's important to know that in islam girls have free will to choose a husband they want / like. They have the right to refuse a proposal from someone they don't want to marry or just don't like. So a marriage can only happen in islam if both parties agree with each other, and are happy with it. This can be found in the next hadith:

Sahih Bukhari, Volume 7, Book 62, Number 67

The Prophet said: "A matron should not be given in marriage except after consulting her; and a virgin should not be given in marriage except after her permission"

Also the option that a girl can (not must) consummate marriage at the onset of her puberty, does not mean that girls have to marry at this age. It's only an option. Secondly even if she has reached the onset of puberty or general age of puberty in islam, then she can only marry if she is able to. If she is not able / capable / or ready to marry or consummate marriage, then she cannot and should not marry. This rule can be found in the next hadith:

Sahih Bukhari , Volume 7, Book 62, Number 3

The prophet said: " O young people ! Whoever among you is able to marry, should marry, and whoever is not able to marry, is recommended to fast, as fasting diminishes his sexual power. "

Thirdly she can only consummate her marriage at the onset of puberty, if she and her parents are sure that there would be no harm in it for her to marry and consummate her marriage, since the prophet said:

Related by Al-Daraqutni, Ibn Majah and Ahmad.

The Prophet said: "There shall be no infliction of harm on oneself or others"

So if a girl on the onset of puberty by herself is not mentally or emotional ready for marriage, then she herself and her parents should conclude and agree that it's not the right time yet for her to marry and / or consummate marriage. If they would do the opposite, then:

A:

If the parents give their daughter permission to consummate her marriage, or letting her marry while they know that their daughter is mentally and emotionally not ready for it, then they would harm their daughter. This would be a violation of the hadith which states 'not to harm others'.

B:

If the girl herself at the onset of puberty agrees and or insists to consummate her marriage or to marry (and forces her parents to give her permission, because for example she's in love), while she herself is actually not ready for marriage, mentally and emotionally, then in this case she would harm herself. This would also be a violation of the hadith 'not to harm oneself'.

In today's society many girls would not be ready (except some) to marry on the onset of puberty or general considered age of puberty in islam (fifteen years old). Most of them would certainly not have the means for it, due to lack of education or qualifications for a job which are required nowadays to survive and live a good life. We should also remember that back then in early islamic times and biblical times, females like Aicha were raised in a society where womanhood was reached at a much earlier age than it is in many societies today. Therefor my advise to young men and women is to marry at an age when they have finished their schools and are both are sure that they have the means for marriage. This would mean that they are 100% sure that one is emotional and mentally ready for marriage and consummation of marriage.

Men should be 100% sure that they can support and carry the burdens to support and protect their wives and family from any harm or / and danger. Also both men and women have to be sure that they are willing and open to spend as much time as possible with their partner in marriage, in romance and happiness, since marriage in islam has to be based on love, peace and rest (see soerah 30:21). If one fails or harms the other partner in marriage all the time, one commits a major sin. Marriage in islam is something important and half one's faith, which means husband and wife must work together and offer themselves for each other to make their marriage succesfull. Also man's treatment of his wife is a measure of the perfection of his faith as in the hadith where the prophet, peace be upon him, said:

Riyad as-Salihin, Chapter 34, Nr. 278

The Prophet said: "The most perfect of the believers in their belief are those with the best manners, and the best of you are those who are best with their wives."

Sources:

1:

<http://www.tafsir.com/default.asp?sid=4&tid=10463>

2:

The Holy Qu'ran by Muhammad Maulana Ali , commentary soerah 4:6