136360 - A 12-year-old Muslim girl whose father is an atheist and her mother is Christian; they revile her Lord and her Prophet -- what should she do?

the question

I am 12 years old and I live with an atheist father and a Christian mother. I embraced Islam recently, but my parents did not welcome my embracing Islam. Even worse than that: they stopped me from reading Qur'aan, going to Islamic websites, telling people that I am Muslim and meeting Muslims, whether on the Internet or in real life. They also prevent me from wearing modest clothing, and many other things. The reason for that is stupid and irrational Islamophobia. I have tried to show them what Islam really is, but nothing I say or do can change their minds.
In fact, they are now trying to show me how they despise Islam in all their words and deeds, such as making stupid jokes about terrorism and even reviling Allah and His Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) in the most offensive words.
The problem is getting worse, because as I am still young, I cannot do anything without my father's help. For example, there is no Islamic clothing available for sale here, because there are so few Muslims. Hence I have no choice but to buy hijab through the Internet, and I need to use their credit cards in order to make the purchase. I am also studying in a Christian school and I need their help to change schools, as I cannot do that myself. They do not let me leave the house on my own, hence I need them to take me to the mosque… and so on. Because they do not agree, this means that I am not able to follow the deen completely.
They also force me to do things that are contrary to Islam, such as going to the church, dancing, and wearing clothes that leave my arms, legs and head partially or completely naked.
I am worried about this situation, because the Qur'aan enjoins us to obey and to respect our parents and treat them kindly, but it does not show any compromise when it has to do with those who hate Islam. I do not know what to do. If I obey my parents, I will be doing a lot of things that are contrary to Islam. If I respect them, I will be respecting people who do not respect me as a Muslim, and I will be leaving them to say those terrible things about Islam. But if I do not obey

them and respect them, then I will be doing something terrible from an Islamic point of view. I believe that both actions are wrong. What should I do?
May Allah bless you.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

1.

We were very happy to receive your letter with the good news that you have entered Islam. We believe that your joy in belonging to Islam is joy that will last a lifetime. The greatest blessing that Allah can bestow upon any of His slaves is to guide him and open his heart to Islam. We ask Allah to complete and perfect the blessing of faith and well-being for you and to make you steadfast in following it until the Day when you meet the Lord of the Worlds.

2.

We are very happy to learn that you love Islam and want to adhere to its laws. We think that this is a sign of blessing that Allah has bestowed upon you. We also feel that you have tasted the sweetness of faith at a time when many of those who belong to Islam in name only are deprived of it.

3.

We are very sad to learn about your parents and their disbelief in Allah, may He be exalted, and we are even more sad to learn of their reviling Allah, may He be exalted and His Messenger Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), even though Allah is their Lord, Creator and Provider and the Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) is the Seal of the Prophets, concerning whom Allah took a covenant from every Prophet – and, by implication, their followers -- that they would follow His Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), if Muhammad was sent when they were still alive. Allah says (interpretation of the

meaning):

“And (remember) when Allaah took the Covenant of the Prophets, saying: ‘Take whatever I gave you from the Book and Hikmah (understanding of the Laws of Allaah), and afterwards there will come to you a Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) confirming what is with you; you must, then, believe in him and help him.’ Allaah said: ‘Do you agree (to it) and will you take up My Covenant (which I conclude with you)?’ They said: ‘We agree.’ He said: ‘Then bear witness; and I am with you among the witnesses (for this).’

82. Then whoever turns away after this, they are the Faasiqoon (rebellious: those who turn away from Allaah’s obedience).

83. Do they seek other than the religion of Allaah (the true Islamic Monotheism __ worshipping none but Allaah Alone), while to Him submitted all creatures in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly. And to Him shall they all be returned.”

[Aal ‘Imraan 3:81-83].

And the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) told us that whoever hears of him but does not follow him or believe in him, Allah will forbid Paradise to him:

It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allaah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “By the One in Whose hand is the soul of Muhammad, no one among this nation, Jew or Christian, hears of me then dies not believing in that with which I was sent, but he will be one of the people of the Fire.”

Narrated by Muslim, 153.

Imam al-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The words of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), “no one among this nation... hears of me... ” mean: anyone who is alive during my lifetime and afterwards, until the Day of Resurrection; all of them are obliged to obey me. He only mentioned the Jews and Christians by

way of example, but it includes all others, because the Jews and Christians have a Scripture; if this is the case with regard to them, even though they have a Scripture, then it applies even more so to those who did not have a Scripture. And Allah knows best. Sharh Muslim.

4.

We understand very well the difficulty of the circumstances in which you find yourself, and we ask Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, to make things easy for you and to grant you relief and a way out from the situation that you are in. But even though your situation is difficult, it is not confusing or unclear. First and foremost, you are enjoined to obey Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, in that which He has enjoined upon you. So do what He has enjoined upon you of acts of worship and avoid that which He has forbidden to you of haraam things. This alone is the way of guidance. Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Say: Obey Allaah and obey the Messenger, but if you turn away, he (Messenger Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) is only responsible for the duty placed on him (i.e. to convey Allaah’s Message) and you for that placed on you. If you obey him, you shall be on the right guidance. The Messenger’s duty is only to convey (the message) in a clear way (i.e. to preach in a plain way)”

[al-Noor 24:54].

Even though you are enjoined to treat your parents kindly and keep good company with them, even if they are disbelievers, that does not mean that you should disobey your Lord in order to please them or that you should put obedience towards them before obedience towards Allah, may He be exalted; rather obedience towards Allah and obedience towards His Messenger takes precedence over all things and over obedience towards anyone. Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And We have enjoined on man to be good and dutiful to his parents; but if they strive to make you join with Me (in worship) anything (as a partner) of which you have no knowledge, then obey them not. Unto Me is your return and I shall tell you what you used to do”

[al-‘Ankaboot 29:8].

Ibn Katheer (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Here Allah, may He be exalted, is commanding His slaves to treat parents kindly, after urging them to adhere to Tawheed (belief in His Oneness), because the parents are the reason why a person exists and he is obliged to treat them with the utmost kindness. But despite this injunction to be kind, compassionate and good towards them in return for their previous kind treatment, He says “but if they strive to make you join with Me (in worship) anything (as a partner) of which you have no knowledge, then obey them not”, meaning: If they try to make you follow them in their religion, if they are mushrikeen, then beware of doing so and do not obey them in that, for you will all return to Me on the Day of Resurrection, and I will reward you for your kindness towards them and your patience in adhering to your religion, and I will gather you with the righteous, not with the group of your parents, even if you were the closest of people to them in this world, because on the Day of Resurrection, each person will be gathered with those whom he loves, namely spiritual love. Hence Allah says (interpretation of the meaning): “And for those who believe (in the Oneness of Allaah and the other articles of Faith) and do righteous good deeds, surely, We shall make them enter with (in the entrance of) the righteous (in Paradise)” [al-‘Ankaboot 29:9]. End quote.

Tafseer Ibn Katheer, 6/264-265

The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “There is no obedience if it involves disobedience towards Allaah; obedience is only in that which is right and proper.”

Narrated by al-Bukhaari (7257) and Muslim (1840).

And he (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “There is no obedience to any created being if it involves disobedience to Allah, may He glorified and exalted.”

Narrated by Ahmad (1089); classed as saheeh by al-Albaani.

Based on that: if anything your parents tell you to do contradicts the command of Allah and His Messenger, then do not obey your parents; rather you should give precedence to obeying Allah

and His Messenger. There is nothing wrong with that.

But this does not mean that all the rights of your parents over you are waived; rather Allah, may He be exalted, enjoins treating them kindly and in a good manner despite that. Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“But if they (both) strive with you to make you join in worship with Me others that of which you have no knowledge, then obey them not; but behave with them in the world kindly, and follow the path of him who turns to Me in repentance and in obedience. Then to Me will be your return, and I shall tell you what you used to do”

[Luqmaan 31:15].

We believe that what we have explained to you of the Islamic view of this problem will be sufficient to offer you a solution, at least from a theoretical point of view.

5.

But there remains the practical aspect, which is the most difficult aspect of your problem, because of your particular circumstances and the fact that you are very young, which means that you cannot be independent and do what you think is correct. You should remember that Allah will not give you a burden that is greater than what you are able to bear. Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Allaah burdens not a person beyond his scope”

[al-Baqarah 2:286]

“Allaah puts no burden on any person beyond what He has given him”

[al-Talaaq 65:7]

“So keep your duty to Allaah and fear Him as much as you can”

[al-Taghaabun 64:16]

And the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “If I command you to do something, then do as much of it as you can.”

Narrated by al-Bukhaari (6858) and Muslim (1337).

And the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Allaah has forgiven my ummah for mistakes and forgetfulness, and what they are forced to do.”

Narrated by Ibn Maajah (2045) and classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh ibn Maajah.

6.

As that is the case, you have to strive to do everything you can of the Islamic obligations and avoid everything that you can of haraam things. You have to hasten to do that as much as you are able. If they tell you not to pray in front of them, then pray behind their backs. If they tell you not to wear complete hijab or you are not able to get any Islamic clothing, then make your clothing as close as possible to Islamic clothing, even if you learn how to make that for yourself or something close to it. If they ask you to go to church, then make any excuse not to go and avoid it as much as possible; make up excuses which will get you out of that. Not all Christians in the West, or in the East, go to church; rather it is very few among them who do that.

Similarly, try to avoid parties in which there is dancing and singing, and to avoid anything they tell you to do which involves sin, by means of any excuse that you can make up. If they force you to attend parties, then avoid dancing, especially if that is with men or in the presence of men. Pretend to be sick or anything else that will get you out of it.

Whatever they force you to do of haraam things, then do the minimum of it. Make your clothes as covering as possible and on their special occasions do not stay at their parties until the end. And do the same with regard to all haraam things.

In general, strive to do whatever you can of Islamic rituals and to avoid whatever you can avoid. If

they force you to do anything of that nature, then do it outwardly only, and let your heart always be connected to Allah and remembrance of Him, until Allah grants you a way out of your situation. Be optimistic that a way out will come soon and that after hardship comes ease:

“And whosoever fears Allaah and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty).

3. And He will provide him from (sources) he never could imagine. And whosoever puts his trust in Allaah, then He will suffice him. Verily, Allaah will accomplish his purpose. Indeed Allaah has set a measure for all things”

[al-Talaaq 65:2-3]

7.

We advise you to keep in touch with Muslim sisters, whether in real life or through the Internet. We also advise you to contact Islamic websites that will help you with your religious commitment and from which you can learn to strengthen your faith and increase your knowledge. If you can get in touch with an Islamic centre that is close to you, that will be very good in sha Allah. Perhaps, because of their experience of the local region and familiarity with a lot of these problems, they will be able to offer more practical help and solutions than we are able to.

8.

Remember that some of those who came to Islam before you went through difficult circumstances, as they were punished and beaten by their parents and deprived of their human rights, but they bore that hardship with patience for the sake of Allah until the help of Allah came to them and Allah saved them from that situation and they prevailed by the blessing and grace of Allah and became victorious. So do not despair because of what has happened to you and do not be upset by your situation, for Allah is taking care of you and He hears and sees all. Be steadfast in adhering to guidance and truth as those who came before you were patient. Remember that this is a test from Allah to show the sincerity of your faith and He will give you the best reward for it in

this world and in the Hereafter. Perhaps Allah will send His help and support to you sooner rather than later.

9.

Your parents need you to save them from the fire of Hell and the wrath of Allah, so we advise you to show them the best image of a true Muslim woman, by treating them kindly, honouring them, speaking gently to them, taking care of their food and drink and serving them. Perhaps they will think again and reduce the pressure on you or stop it altogether. We also advise you to pray sincerely and ask Allah to guide them to Islam and bless them with faith, for that is not difficult for Allah. Listen to this story:

Muslim (2491) narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: I used to call my mother to Islam when she was a mushrik. I called her one day and she said to me something about the Messenger of Allaah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) that I disliked. I came to the Messenger of Allaah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) weeping, and said: O Messenger of Allaah, I have been calling my mother to Islam but she refuses. I called her today and she said to me something about you that I disliked. Pray to Allaah to guide the mother of Abu Hurayrah. The Messenger of Allaah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “O Allaah, guide the mother of Abu Hurayrah.” I went out, feeling optimistic because of the du’aa’ of the Prophet of Allaah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him). When I came near the door, I found it closed. My mother heard my footsteps and said: Stay where you are, O Abu Hurayrah! I heard the sound of water. She did ghusl then she put on her chemise and quickly put on her head cover, then she opened the door and said: O Abu Hurayrah, I bear witness that there is no god but Allaah and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger. He said: I went back to the Messenger of Allaah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and I came to him, weeping with joy. I said: O Messenger of Allaah, be of good cheer, for Allaah has answered your prayer and has guided the mother of Abu Hurayrah. He praised and glorified Allaah and said good things.

10.

We do not advise you to run away or leave home, because the bad consequences of that greater than the bad consequences of staying at home, and because anyone who offers you refuge may expose himself to the most severe punishment under the unjust law of your country. We can offer you no advice except to be patient and stop thinking about running away from home.

We ask Allah, the Most High and All Powerful, to make you steadfast in following guidance and to grant you well being both spiritual and physical; we ask Him to guide your parents to Islam and to give you the joy of seeing them as righteous believers in this world and in the Hereafter.

We hope that you will keep in touch with us, for we all your family and your brothers. Perhaps, as the result of the prayers of your brothers and sisters who read your story, Allah will benefit you thereby and grant you a way out of hardship by His blessing.

And Allah is the source of strength.