

The Religious Beliefs vs. Superstitions

The Father

My child! Now that you have become mature, wise and of age, instead of honouring and respecting you parents, you are calling them ignorant, old fashioned and superstitious! What you call superstition, they consider religious knowledge and tradition. And they are deeply committed to observing them. Don't you think they could be right? And couldn't what you refer to as superstition be a set of truths that can be understood only after comprehension and attention?

My beloved! Speak with your conscience for a moment. Think about the things you label nonsense. See if you are not mistaken. Think hard and apply your wisdom for analyzing your understanding regarding religious facts. If you feel helpless, you may seek assistance from the religious scholar. See what can you come out with? Do you find them to be superstitious? Or are they a strong moral code based on logic, science, and discoveries?

I bear witness in front of my conscience that if you follow this method, and if you sincerely look into the roots and the branches of religion, you will then believe in them in a scientific and logical manner. And therefore while your parents were committed to their faith on the basis of following (Taqlid) [1](#) of the others, you will become Muslim in your own capacity on the basis of enlightenment achieved by you, after a through knowledge of the religion.

The Child

The illogical statements and irrational behaviour of some people in the name of religion make us turn away from it. The superstitions which appear as religious facts as well as hard to believe imaginary rituals caused us to flatly reject religion. Otherwise, most of us young people do believe in the Islamic teachings and we look at the Holy Qur'an with extreme respect. Further, we have no difficulty in accepting the factual aspects of the religion.

Of course, we still need guidance in understanding of what we consider ambiguous and unclear. We

also need someone to touch our hearts with simple but interesting explanations about our religious obligations and to convince us of the necessity of following them.

1. A Muslim must accept the fundamental principles of Islam (Usulud-din) with reason and faith and must not follow anyone in this respect without proof and conviction.

On the divine practical laws of Islam (ah-kamud-din) one must be either a mujtahid (authority) based on reasoning. Or, one must be confident enough in one's ability to cautiously judge between rulings of different mujtahids (for example: If one mujtahid forbids an act and others do not, one must refrain from committing that act, or if one mujtahid makes an act obligatory and others only recommend it, one must perform that act).

If one is not a mujtahid and does not have such confidence in himself, then one must follow a (taqlid) of a particular mujtahid and act according to his rulings.[Tr].

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