

Fatwa no. 18123

Q: Your Eminence, a woman phoned me from Lebanon. She told me that she was a Christian, but that Allah had opened her heart to Islam. She belongs to a religious family that is fanatical about its religion. The woman said that if her husband knew about her acceptance of Islam he would kill her in a terrible way. She has started to give up the symbols of her Christian faith, such as wearing a cross, wearing short dresses, and drinking Khamr (intoxicant). However, there are certain things that she is afraid to give up otherwise she will be killed, such as marital relations with her husband. The woman says that if she is driven out of her house, she will die, because she does not have anyone there that she can turn to after Allah. All the members of her family and the people in her village hate Islam with a vengeance. She is married and has three married daughters, who have stopped visiting her at her home, because she has taken her cross off from around her neck; so how much worse it will be if they know about her Islam. The woman states that it is extremely difficult for her to perform Salah (Prayer), but she will try to combine two Salahs in secret when her husband and family are not around. Dear respected Shaykh, how will she observe Sawm (Fasting) in Ramadan? The woman is suffering greatly and in deep trouble. She has two options, either to remain with them and return to Christianity or to abide by the teachings of Islam in secret, but she still has the problem of the marital relations with her husband; this is the major obstacle as she is afraid of being killed. Please, advise us and may Allah reward you well. This is an urgent matter. May Allah protect and guide you and benefit the Muslims through you.

A: It is not permissible for a Muslim woman to remain as the wife of a non-Muslim husband and it is not Halal (lawful) for her to have marital relations with him. Allah (Exalted be He) says (what means):

They are not lawful (wives) for the disbelievers nor are the disbelievers lawful (husbands) for them.

The woman in question should turn to Allah to relieve her distress, in the hope that He will provide for her a way out of her difficulty. Indeed, Allah is the All-Hearer, Ever-Near. She must try all the possible means she can to rid herself from her husband and her family by turning to one of the Islamic centers or the Mufty (Islamic scholar qualified to issue legal opinions) of Lebanon, for one of them to take the necessary procedures to help her leave her husband and family and take her away from them. They must separate her from her husband. May Allah facilitate her affairs and dispel her distress. She must perform Salah regularly, even if she combines Zhuhr (Noon) and 'Asr (Afternoon) Prayers in the time of either of them, and Maghrib (Sunset) and 'Isha' (Night) Prayers in the time of either of them. She must also perform Sawm in Ramadan in secret, until Allah provides a way out of her troubles for her.

May Allah grant us success. May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet, his family, and Companions.

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