

News and Comment

Message to the Muslim Sisters in Britain regarding Syria

You my sisters, who feel for Syria, but know that this feeling and actions you carry out for your Ummah in Syria is no longer a simple issue. It is under pressure. Even being criminalised.

UK Home Secretary Theresa May extended her powers in December to take away passports of those who return from Syria. Deeming those individuals as criminals before they even set soil on British Land. Why? Because these people are so called terrorists - A threat to British people apparently, because they went to join or give up their lives to protect innocent women and children.

Sisters we may not agree with this action of some of our Ummah but that is not the issue here. It's the lies about these people being a threat to demonise them and the criminalisation doesn't even end there.

It has extended to people now who have given charity. We have seen Charity envoys scrutinised, like they are a hiding place of terrorists! And as a result people being pressured and intimidated. Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe said even about those going out to help the humanitarian effort, they will return radicalised. The charity commission head has just this week spoken out about his concern about Islamic extremism in charities!

Would you ever imagine sisters giving charity to help the absolutely destitute would be deemed criminal?

Then we have had Brother Moazaam Begg who suffered in Guantanamo Bay detained whilst researching Syria yes we don't know details but what message does this send out?

All in all what do we see? Is that Syria has become the litmus test for the extremist Muslim. It doesn't matter if you absolutely categorically disagree with acts of terrorism and killing innocent people. That doesn't matter. If you believe in Islamic views such as the global Ummah and the political nature of Islam, you are a potential criminal.

So how do we respond?

First and foremost, there is no doubt there is an unprecedented humanitarian crisis with refugees teeming across the camps.

We must give charity and we send as much material help that we can – food, clothing, and medication blankets - and we must do this sisters.

Not many parts of our Ummah have additional wealth to send. These efforts must not die out and they must continue as they are not being helped substantially by anyone. So support all the charities who are doing great work.

But we cannot give blankets and medicines with our open hearts but turn away our eyes from the one message that comes out from our Ummah in Syria time and time again through YouTube video after video. Which is to raise awareness that their call is one for Islam.

Our Ummah is struggling for the Islam of you and I. Are sacrificing their lives, for you and I. As part of this same Ummah, we must stand with them. If we totally ignore this whole element of their suffering, how can we stand with them?

Not only therefore are we bound to them by our bond of brotherhood, our necessity to witness the truth of what's happening to them - But because it is a struggle for our Deen as much as it is theirs.

Therefore we must play our part by standing by their struggle wholeheartedly, and not diluting its truth in anyway.

Sisters know this is not about today, tomorrow or next month. Whether Syria is an issue on the cards or not, this struggle against holding onto the values of Islam however demonised they may be - It is our struggle as a Muslim community here, as a section of this global Ummah.

And moreover we must stand back and ask ourselves in a time, where the Ummah has embarked on the thorny and difficult path of being witnesses and vanguards to the truth, embracing again their Islamic identity, what do we want our identity to be?

Because how we respond to the pressure against Islam NOW will shape who we are in years and years to come. And just think for a moment my dear sisters of who you want to be, what type of Islamic legacy you want to leave behind for your children or grandchildren to be when they are sitting in this position that you are in today. If we do not hold onto the rope of Allah today my sisters, then what can we expect for our future generations?

And if we choose to allow Syria to become a criminalised people and struggle, If we do not raise a confident voice against this as well all the other aspects of our Deen under attack: segregation, niqab, our schools. Then we allow these views to become a warped truth that Islam really is a problem, as we give nothing to counteract them. Astaghfirullah.

So my sisters, hold onto this Deen and do not let go of any part of it. And convey the call for Islam for Syria, being true to what the struggle of our Ummah is really about.

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