201146 - She refuses to get married for fear that her husband might force her to work

the question

im am a medical doctor by profession who hasnnt pursued post graduation yet. ive recently started wathchin ur videos n rediscovered my way 2 islam.i wanted 2 ask u sir, whether or not should i go for further studies even if it involves compromising my salah times n staying out late without a mahram.i am not married yet and fear that my future life partner would force me to work against my wishes.sir, i am a dawoodi bohra by caste and in our community being "too religious" (so they say) isnt cool. sir, please guide me coz i really am confused at this junctire in my life.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

We are very happy to see among the youth of our ummah people with enlightened minds and pure hearts, both young men and young women, who are able to cast off the chains and fetters of division and differences, and return to the purity of Islam as Allah revealed it to Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him). That is an immense and incomparable blessing, because the people became divided after the time of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) into sects and parties, each of them adhering to the call of their shaykhs and imams, until Islam became like a stranger among these groups and sects, despite the fact that Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Verily, those who divide their religion and break up into sects (all kinds of religious sects), you (O Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)) have no concern in them in the least. Their affair is only with Allah, Who then will tell them what they used to do” [al-An‘aam 6:159].

We congratulate you and commend your way of thinking and focusing on the most important questions in life, those that have to do with religious commitment and beliefs, and what a person should believe in and adhere to with regard to Allah, may He be glorified and exalted.

This path begins with the first step, which you have taken on the basis of what Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, has blessed you with of a mind that is able to ponder and reflect, far removed from all previous intellectual and social influences. Hence you read the Holy Qur'an far removed from sectarian distortions and interpretations that detract from the clarity of the text and deprive the reader of its benefits. So you ponder the word of Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, that He sent down to guide mankind and enlighten humanity, and you will inevitably find therein guidance and enlightenment for yourself too, in clear and straightforward words in most of its verses and chapters. So you read therein the words of Allah, may He be glorified and exalted (interpretation of the meaning):

"And this is a blessed Book (the Qur'an) which We have sent down, so follow it and fear Allah (i.e. do not disobey His Orders), that you may receive mercy (i.e. saved from the torment of Hell)" [al-An'aam 6:155]

"(This is the) Book (the Quran) sent down unto you (O Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)), so let not your heart be troubled about it, that you warn thereby, and a reminder unto the believers.

(Say (O Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)) to these idolaters (pagan Arabs) of your folk:) Follow what has been sent down unto you from your Lord (the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad's Sunnah), and follow not any Awliya (protectors and helpers, etc. who order you to associate partners in worship with Allah), besides Him (Allah). Little do you remember" [al-A'raaf 7:2-3].

As guidance is connected to following the Holy Qur'an and following Allah's noble Messenger Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), then what guidance could you find after that in the opinions and views of human beings? What happiness could we seek other than in the

noble Book and the Prophet’s Sunnah?

Why would we introduce intermediaries between us and these two lights? Do we not have minds with which to think? Has Allah may He be glorified and exalted, not created for us hearts with which to distinguish between truth and falsehood? So why do we persist in imitating that with which we may have grown up of sectarian notions or esoteric factions?

Where do we find these factions in the Book of Allah, and where do we find them in the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)?

Do you think that we will enter Hell if we do not believe in a particular imam or a particular sect?

Does it make sense to suggest that we will enter Hell if we do not believe in things that neither the Holy Qur’an nor the noble Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) taught us?

These are very few simple questions that will lead us to cast away all these sects and factions and weird beliefs, and to become certain of the path that we follow, far away from them and closer to the pure Tawheed (affirmation of the Oneness of Allah) that is the religion of all of the Prophets (peace be upon them).

Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Say: ‘Obey Allah and obey the Messenger, but if you turn away, he (Messenger Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)) is only responsible for the duty placed on him (i.e. to convey Allah’s Message) and you for that placed on you. If you obey him, you shall be on the right guidance. The Messengers duty is only to convey (the message) in a clear way (i.e. to preach in a plain way).’” [an-Noor 24:54]

“And whatsoever the Messenger (Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)) gives you, take it, and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it) , and fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Severe in punishment” [al-Hashr 59:7].

Moreover you should understand that the teachings of Islam do not instruct you to give up studying for fear that your husband may force you to work. The husband has no right to force his wife to do that, and by the same token he has no right to your wealth or property. Rather you can stipulate (in your marriage contract) whatever is appropriate for you and your situation. If you both agree that you can work in an appropriate environment, there is nothing wrong with that, so long as you strive to adhere to Islamic guidelines.

If you yourself do not want to work, then no one has the right to stipulate that you must do that, and you have the right to state that and stipulate whatever you wish to anyone who proposes marriage to you, so long as you do not make that a barrier that prevents you from getting married. Rather you should strive to maintain your chastity by getting married and choose for yourself a righteous husband who will take you from the environment, beliefs and traditions with which you have grown up and help you to adhere to the true and pure religion. It is not essential that his outward appearance should be such that it would cause your family to reject him; rather it is sufficient that he should be of good character and generally acceptable in terms of religious commitment, one who is keen to follow his religion and who prays regularly.

If you want to delay postgraduate study until after marriage, then you know best what is appropriate for you. But if you want to complete your studies, whilst striving to reduce things that are contrary to Islamic teachings to the best of your ability, and you are keen to pray on time so that the time for prayer does not end before you offer the prayer, except in exceptional circumstances and emergencies, then do that, and we hope that there will be nothing wrong with you doing that, in sha Allah.

Going out of the house does not require a mahram; rather it is in the case of travel that that is required, especially if you adhere to hijab and proper conduct, and there is no danger posed by aggressors.

But if you fear for yourself, that you may be subject to aggression, or you fear losing your religious commitment, or you are not able to observe hijab or adhere to the guidelines of your religion, then give precedence to all of that over the interests of work.

And Allah knows best.