

Orientalists' views on the concept of fasting in Islam a research based study

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Abstract

The Orientalists' views on Islam also gained traction on a global scale, which is why Islam was still avoided in Christian literature. In addition to not being familiar with Islamic traits, the neutral world also saw Islam through a Western prism, which caused their neutrality to gradually wane in the West. A class of people emerged in Islamic society who began to interpret Islam through the eyes of Orientalists, and as a result, the educated class from the West continued to avoid Islam.

This essay focuses on the actions of the Orientalist West in an effort to shed light on how the Orientalists treated Western-educated Muslims and underprivileged Muslim scholars who expressed doubts about the West and their methods. The Orientalists' writings exhibit an almost antiquated desire for knowledge and professional honesty. They also raise questions about the source of the doubts and suspicions that fueled their beliefs.

This article examines the arguments put forth by Orientalists against Fasting. The focus is on refuting this charge they have made against fasting from the perspective of the Quran and Sunnah. Only heresy or the use of shaky sources are used to support this claim. In order to

refute these assertions, this article refers to the Quran, the Sunnah, and other trustworthy sources.

Keywords: Islam, Quran, Sunnah, fasting, precaching, orientailists, views

ORIENTALISTS VIEWS REGARDING FASTING:

VOGEL'S VIEW REGARDING FASTING:

"Traces of some of these rules like Zihar(a specific form of divorce) are found in pre-Islamic times- Tariff rates and compensations resemble Christian practices."¹

Traces of some of these laws can be found in the age of Jahiliyyah.

1. Atonement rates and fines are found in Christian ways.

2. The (ظہار) problem in-laws

He alleges (العیاذ باللہ) that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) derived these laws from Christian laws. We find this in the evil of atonement from the Christian religion. Before claiming prophethood, he used to meet with Christians.

There is no mention of fasting in any of the books of Christians, except in one place in the four Gospels, where it is mentioned that Jesus, Peace Be Upon Him, fasted for forty days.

Another objection is that there was a Roman blacksmith living inside Mecca, and Muhammad (PBUH) used to visit him. He used to meet with him, and he used to tell Muhammad (PBUH) that we have this concept of fasting, atonement, and breaking the fast (العیاذ باللہ) was better than him and used to learn the same teachings when he returned to Makkah.

The first thing is that there is no proof of the manuscript of the Gospel in Mecca during this period. No one can prove that there was a copy of the Bible in the area around Mecca during the Prophetic era.

There was no Arabic translation either. We have no evidence of Warqa bin Nawfal's Arabic translation of the Bible. He, who was a Roman blacksmith, had no time to read the Bible. The Bible used to be with the

¹ . Jane Dammen McAuliffe, Encyclopaedia of the Quran, (Brill, Leiden-Boston-Koln,2001) Vol 2 Page 181

priests, but the ordinary person did not have the Bible. He was an ordinary Christian. So, this was a baseless objection of theirs. Islam had not completely abrogated the previous Shariahs, which were their well-known issues, had been Islamized.

This orientalist says if we do further research, we will find that the foundation of the atonement is found in the teachings of Catholics, in which the Pope has also determined the punishment or retribution for the atonement.

Martin Luther objected to the question of who gave the Pope the authority to pardon the sin.

Quran says about Zihar(ظهار):

"الَّذِينَ يَظْهَرُونَ مِنْكُمْ مِمَّنْ نَسَابِهِمْ مَا هُنَّ أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ إِنْ أُمَّهُتُهُمْ إِلَّا الْوَالِدَتُهُمْ- وَإِنَّهُمْ لَيَقُولُونَ مُنْكَرًا مِنَ الْقَوْلِ وَ زُورًا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَعَفُوفٌ غَفُورٌ"²

Nobody is their mother except the person who gave birth to them, so those among you who divorce their wives by claiming they are their mothers are not their mothers. What they say is completely false and despicable. Indeed, Allah is the Most Forgiving and Pardoning.

DEFINITION OF ZIHAR AND FOUR RELATED SHARIAH LAWS:

The term "Zihar" and its four associated Shari'ah rulings are explained below. The definition of Zihar is as follows, according to Mufti Amjad Ali Azmi, may Allah have mercy on him: "Zihar is the act of comparing one's wife or herself to a part of the public or a part that is interpreted as a whole and is forbidden to him forever, or to compare a part of her to a part that is forbidden to look at, for example. He said: You are like my mother on me, or (he said) your head, or your neck, or half of you is like my mother's back."³

The four Shariah laws that apply to Zihar are as follows:

(1) If the woman being compared has a transient sanctity, meaning it will not last forever, she will not show up as the wife's sister, the woman who has gone through three divorces, a magician, or an idol. A pious

² . Mujadila:2

³ . Allama Muhammad Amjad Ali Azmi, Bahar Shariat (Karachi, Maktab tul Al-Madinah Bab Al-Madinah, 2008) Part VIII, Zihar's Statement, Vol: 2 P 205-206

woman is one whose sanctity is neither enduring nor prominent, whether she is a Kitabiyah or a Muslim.

(2) Maharam refers to a general relationship, such as that of a mother, sister, mother-in-law, daughter, foster mother sister, etc., whether they are related or not. Indeed, comparing him to a girl does not prove that he is not a haraam if there is no penetration. It is also evident if he made a comparison between himself and the mother or daughter of the woman he had an adulterous relationship with or if he compared her to his father or son. May Allah be pleased with him.

(3) A woman speaking Zihar to a man does not speak Zihar; instead, she speaks useless words.

(4) Zihar's order states that until the woman has made atonement, it is forbidden to engage in sexual activity with her, kiss her passionately, touch her, or look in her private areas. While it is okay to touch or kiss passionately, it is not acceptable to kiss without lust. If not, he should not do it, and a wife should not consent to her husband having intimacy either.

That is to say, comparing a wife to a mother is, to begin with, a ridiculous and repugnant idea that no honorable person should ever entertain, much less say aloud. Second, it is untrue because He cannot treat a woman as his wife for however long he pleases and then begin to treat her as his mother because God has not given him that power. The claimant is lying if he is implying that his wife has now taken on the role of his mother. If he is asserting that he has now granted his wife the sanctity of the mother, then that assertion is likewise false.

The source of law is none other than Allah Almighty, and among those included in the chain of motherhood are the wives of Muhammad (PBUH), mothers-in-law, foster mothers, and grandmothers, both maternal and paternal. It is not appropriate for anyone to arbitrarily add another woman to this list, let alone the one who has been his spouse. This grants the second court order. Pronouncing zihar is a severe transgression that is prohibited and should be punished.

This is Allah's initial decree regarding zihar. It implies that a person does not automatically make his wife his mother or grant her the sanctity that a mother has when they openly compare their spouse to their mother. Given that she gave birth to the man, the mother's status as a mother is

undeniable. She is forbidden and eternally sacred on this very ground. Now, how will reason, morality, and the law, which are by this very fact only applicable to the mother who gave birth, establish sanctity and prohibition for her, and how will the woman who did not give birth to him become his mother by mere word of mouth? As a result, Allah eliminated the pre-Islamic ignorance custom of the husband and wife standing and dissolved their marriage contract by pronouncing zihar, making the wife wholly forbidden to him like the mother.

GOITEIN VIEW ABOUT FASTING:

"Muslim tradition is uncertain about what is meant by sent down in Ramadan. Generally, it is thought to commemorate Muhammad's first revelation." ⁴

LACY JHONSTON VIEW ABOUT FASTING:

"Next in order comes Fasting. This is commended at all seasons but commanded only during Ramadhan. The fast is during the hours of the day, from sunrise to sunset, and is very rigorous; and as the lunar year makes the month pass through all the seasons, it in hot climates with great severity on the poor, and it is they who observe it most strictly. At the end of the fast comes the great Feast - day (Fitr, "breaking," in Egypt Bairām), which celebrated with the utmost rejoicing." ⁵

Literal Meaning of Soam:

We should first discover the precise definition of the word "soam," which is used to refer to a specific type of worship in the Holy Qur'an, before examining its connotation. The word Soam is derived from (ص، و، م). The literal meaning of this word, soam, is "to stop working" in order to remain in a location. Fasting is the term for refraining from eating, drinking, speaking, and moving around. In Arabic, the word "Soam" is used to refer to fasting as well as other things. (صامت الريح) The wind diminished. Because the sun stops at Nafs-ul-Nahar at noon, it is called

⁴ . Jane Dammen McAuliffe, Encyclopedia of the Quran Vol: 2 Page 181

⁵ . P De Lacy Johnston, Muhammad and His Power, (T & T Clark , Edinburgh, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901), P 156

Sam-ul-Nhar. The sun is concentrated on Nafs-ul-Nhar; hence, it is also known as "Samat-ul-Shams," another name. Soam al-Sa'im, therefore, means abstaining from food and liquids as well as from all other things.

Quran says:

“فَكُلْ وَاشْرَبْ وَقَرِّ عَيْنًا فَإِمَّا تَرَيْنَ مِنَ الْبَشَرِ أَحَدًا فَقُولِي إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَنِ صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أُكَلِّمَ الْيَوْمَ إِنْسِيًّا”⁶

"So eat and drink, and calm your mind. Say, however, "I have vowed silence to the Most Compassionate, so I am not talking to anyone today," if you see any of the people.

TERMINOLOGY MEANING OF FASTING:

Keeping this literal meaning in front, the term "fasting" in the Shariah means that a person not only abstains from eating and drinking after eating Suhoor until sunset but also from speaking lies, backbiting, backbiting, or gossiping, stopping the hands from harming someone, stopping the feet from unlawful travel, stopping the ears from listening to lies, backbiting, backbiting and nonsense, stopping the eyes from treachery. The correct meaning of "Soam" is to protect oneself from every evil and every mistake and to be bound within the limits set by God.

In the same way, if a person does not protect himself from lying, backbiting and other evil deeds after fasting, then this is fasting, not fasting, but starvation.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated from him that the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) said, "If a person does not give up lying and cheating (even while fasting), then Allah has no need for him to give up his food and drink.”⁷

Fasting Advice:

⁶ . Almariaam:26

⁷ . Muhammad Bin Ismail al Bukhari, Sahih ul Bukhari (Lahore: Maktab Rahmania. 1961) Hadith 1903

All of the forms of worship that God Almighty has provided for His followers include some hidden knowledge. God and human beings can communicate through prayer. The servant converses with his real God in it. In actuality, fasting is a form of worshipping the Almighty God.

Quran says:

“يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ”⁸

O Believers! As it was for those who came before you, fasting is advised for you so that possibly you will develop an awareness of Allah.

God Almighty said:

“الصوم لي وأنا أجزي به”⁹

That fasting is for Me and I will reward it.

Another wisdom stated:

“وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَى مَا هَدَيْكُم وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ”¹⁰

So that you may complete the prescribed period and proclaim the greatness of Allah for guiding you and perhaps you will be grateful.

Even during a fast, the knowledge of appreciating the value of the Almighty God and being thankful for His blessings that we consume is concealed. This, of course, increases our relationship with the Almighty God since it pleases Him.

This knowledge is equally applicable to fasting. While a person's physical health and digestive system problems can be treated, fasting is also committed to the inner purity and spiritual wellness of that person.

Our Holy Prophet (PBUH) says:

“Zakat is for everything, and fasting is zakat for the body, according to the Prophet of Allah.”¹¹

⁸. Al Baqarah:183

⁹. Muhammad Bin Ismail al Bukhari, Sahih ul Bukhari (Lahore: Maktab Rahmania. 1961) Hadith 5927

¹⁰. Al Baqarah:185

¹¹. Muhammad Bin Yaqoob Al Kayani Al-Kafi,(Markaz Bahoos ul Hadith Ahia ul Turass) Volume: 4, P 62, Hadith 3

In the same manner as giving Zakat purifies wealth, fasting likewise cleanses the body of ailments.

Overeating promotes materialism and the devaluation of sensuality. One advantage of fasting is that it weakens the body's organs because of constant hunger and thirst, which lessens the intensity of attacks from sensual feelings. Sexual desire is suppressed by hunger and thirst.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

¹²"الصوم جنة" that fasting is a shield.

In addition to protecting against the wrath of hell, fasting also protects against sexual excitement and a variety of physical and mental illnesses because it quenches one's appetite and quenches one's thirst. He's attracted to God.

Imam Bukhari says:

"Muhammad ﷺ said to us, O youth! Whoever among you has the power to marry should get married, and whoever does not have the power to do so should fast, because this desire will break the soul."¹³

The above hadith should not be taken to mean that Islam teaches monasticism and encourages suicide like Buddhism or Hinduism. Instead, the argument of the jurists about this hadith is that fasting forces a person to be satisfied with a proportional amount of food, which causes weakness in his body which causes the body to resist sexual impulses. Lack of food is not the purpose of Islam. Islam does not give this lesson that a person should deprive himself of such essential food that will bankrupt his health. Reducing food to such an extent that the body cannot maintain strength and energy, or such austerity or hard work in which the body breaks down, is not austerity or worship. However, it is a punishment, and God is most merciful to His servants. He is not. He wants man to surrender himself to death.

The primary purpose of obedience is the remembrance of God, and His remembrance is the basis of His obedience, and the remembrance of

¹² . Abu Abd al-Rahman Ahmad bin Shuaib bin Ali al-Khurasani, Al-Nisa'I, Al-Sunan al-Kubri (Beirut Lebanon, , Resalah Publisher, 2001) Hadith 2224

¹³ . Muhammad Bin Ismail al Bukhari, Sahih ul Bukhari , Hadith 5065

God prevents a person from all evil. This is the main requirement of this worship that we do not do any work throughout the day that injures the spirit of this worship.

The purpose of fasting is not only to stop eating and drinking; it is not called "fasting", but fasting means that we stop not only significant sins but also actions such as fighting, abusive language, stealing, backbiting, lying, and deception.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“ابوهريرة رضي الله عنه، يقول: قال رسول الله ﷺ: قال الله عز وجل: "كل عمل ابن آدم له إلا الصيام، فإنه لي وأنا اجزي به، والصيام جنة، فإذا كان يوم صوم أحدكم، فلا يرفث يومئذ ولا يسخب، فإن سابه أحد أو قاتله، فليقل: إني امرؤ صائم"، والذي نفس محمد بيده لخلوف فم الصائم، أطيب عند الله يوم القيامة من ريح المسك، وللصائم فرحتان يفرحهما: إذا افطر فرح بفطره، وإذا لقي ربه فرح بصومه”¹⁴

That when one of you is fasting, he should refrain from bad language, perversion and ignorance. Yes, if someone abuses a fasting person, he should say, Mian! I am fasting.

At another place Holy Prophet says:

“عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ: "رُبَّ صَائِمٍ لَيْسَ لَهُ مِنْ صِيَامِهِ إِلَّا الْجُوعُ. وَرُبَّ قَائِمٍ لَيْسَ لَهُ مِنْ قِيَامِهِ إِلَّا السَّهَرُ”¹⁵

It was narrated from Abu Hurairah that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"There are people who fast and get nothing from their fast except hunger, and there are those who pray and get nothing from their prayer but a sleepless night."¹⁶

“عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ. "إِذَا كَانَ يَوْمُ صَوْمٍ أَحَدِكُمْ فَلَا يَزُفْتُ وَلَا يَجْهَلُ. فَإِنْ جَهِلَ عَلَيْهِ أَحَدٌ، فَلْيَقُلْ: إِنِّي امْرُؤٌ صَائِمٌ”¹⁷

¹⁴ . Muslim bin Hajaj Qusheri Sahih Muslim, (Karachi Qadeemi Kutubkhan, 1956), Hadith 2706

¹⁵ . Muhammad ibn Yazid Al-Qazwini Abu Abdullah ibn Maja, Sinan Ibn Majah, (Lebanon, Darul kutub Alilmia, 2008) P, 1690 Book 7, Hadeeth 53

¹⁶ . English Translation: Vol. 1, Book 7, Hadeeth 1690 Darussalam

¹⁷ . Abu Abdullah ibn Maja ,Sinan Ibn Majah P 1691 Book 7, Hadeeth 54 Darussalam

The Prophet of Allah (ﷺ) reportedly said: "When anyone of you is fasting, let him not utter evil or ignorant speech. This was narrated by Abu Huraira. Say "I'm fasting" if someone speaks to him in an ignorant way.

BENEFITS OF FASTING:

Two things come to mind when we talk about the benefits of fasting. Some people mistakenly believe that the virtues of Ramadan are the same. However, when the Qur'an and Hadith are studied objectively, it is evident that the virtues of the month of Ramadan and the virtues of fasting are two distinct things. The benefits of Ramadan are kept for another time. Only the benefits of fasting or the honour and dignity of the faster are discussed here.

There is no question that fasting is among the best, if not the best, practices, just as "Ramadan" is superior to all other months. God considers fasting to be valuable. The words of the Hadith can be used to explain it.

"لِلصَّائِمِ فَرْحَتَانِ يَفْرَحُهُمَا: إِذَا أَفْطَرَ فَرَحٌ، وَإِذَا لَقِيَ رَبَّهُ فَرَحٌ بِصَوْمِهِ"¹⁸

There are two happy occasions for the fasting person. The first occasion is when he breaks his fast every evening, he has a special spiritual joy, and the second occasion is that when he meets his Lord, he will be very happy because of his fast.

"That a person who fasts for the sake of Allah for one day, Allah Ta'ala removes his face from the fire for a distance of seventy years with the blessing of this one fast."¹⁹

"That the person who completes the fast of Ramadan with the wealth of faith and belief, all his previous sins will be forgiven."²⁰

"فَمَنْ صَامَهُ وَقَامَهُ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا خَرَجَ مِنْ ذُنُوبِهِ كَيَوْمٍ وَلَدَتْهُ أُمُّهُ"²¹

That one who completes Ramadan with faith and accountability is absolved from his sins as if his mother had just given birth to him today.

"لا يزال الدين ظاهرا ما عجل الناس الفطر"²²

¹⁸ . Muhammad Bin Ismail al Bukhari, Sahih ul Bukhari , Hadith 1904

¹⁹ . Ibid: 2840

²⁰ .Ibid :1901

²¹ . Abu Abdullah ibn Maja ,Sinan Ibn Majah , Hadith 1328

²² . Muslim bin Hajaj Qusheri Sahih Muslim, Hadith 2554

That this religion will prevail over all other religions as long as people hasten to break the fast!

Now consider that although God commanded us to fast, He also wanted to spare His servants from unnecessary suffering. This simplicity and convenience were therefore seen as a reward. Instead, he even stated that the path to true goodness and goodness is to break the fast early. In order to be deserving of His mercy and blessings, let us break the fast early and quench our thirst.

CONCLUSION:

The main contention of the discussion is that the authors' arguments are biased and untrue. Other than the English translation, they do not have any trustworthy references. This is an irrelevant allegation based on secondary sources that have no bearing on the field of research given the Qur'an and Sunnah.

The only evidence in favour of the orientalist's position is an unattributed English translation.

However, in the authentic and trustworthy traditions mentioned earlier, the Sira mentions this incident. In light of the Quran and Sunnah, they are unable to cite a reliable and authentic source to substantiate any of these objections.