

## Question 21: Why It Is Forbidden To Read The Deviated Books?

**Question:** When Islam is the religion of knowledge why does it forbid reading deviated books?

**Answer:** Without any doubt Islam is the religion of learning and knowledge and it encourages people to acquire and spread knowledge. The progress of a person or society depends upon acquisition of knowledge but side by side Islam pays attention to the basic point that just as there are dangerous factors of materialism in society e.g. to protect from it, it is necessary; in the same way to protect the mind and spirit from factors of going astray is also necessary.

In today's culture people are free, to accept any belief or view with the only condition that it should not be against the material principles of the society. This is not so in Islam. Islam wants that such a society, which comes into existence, should progress spiritually and ethically. This aim will not be realized unless and until it fights against the factors against ethics and spirituality, and that it should not have effects on the lives of the people.

By paying attention to this basic point, we come to know that those books which are strayed and which spoil right thinking, faith and healthy ethics have been banned. If all the people are given the freedom to read these types of books what is the guarantee that their thinking and ethics would be safe?

We should not underestimate propaganda and the power of propagation. There are many youths who after reading strayed books, and novels based on love, sex and crime have fallen in the pit of bad manners and unethical practices.

That is why Islam has not permitted publishing of strayed books freely so that all can read them. Although Islam encourages knowledge and its acquisition, it has not forbidden those people who have the ability to differentiate between right and wrong with the help of their powerful intelligence.

Islam has not banned the learned people from reading these books but it is wajib for the scholarly and learned people so that they can understand the logic of those people and then refute them. By

acquainting themselves with the ways of propagation and logic of the enemies and they can find appropriate ways to rebut them.

There were many discussions in the history of Islam between the religious leaders and followers of other faiths. The author of *Ihtejaj Tabarsi*<sup>1</sup> and many other authors have collected such types of discussions in books. This is itself an example that Islam has not banned the strayed books for the learned people and has not opposed knowledge. The religious leaders have always answered this type of faith not by killing those who follow that faith but by logic and free discussion.

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1. Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Abi Talib's writing who died approximately in 550 Hijri. This book was published many times and shows one aspect of knowledge of Ahlul Bayt (a.s.).

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