

In the Name of Allah the Beneficent the Merciful

Even though many aspects of Islam are misunderstood by non-Muslims, the ignorance, misinformation and incorrect assumptions that are made in regards to Islam's treatment of women are probably the most severe. Numerous verses of the Qur'an make it clear that men and women are equal in the site of God. According to the teachings of Islam, the only thing that distinguishes people in the site of God is their level of God-consciousness. Due to this, many people are surprised to find out that Islamic Law guaranteed rights to women over 1400 years ago that women in the Europe and America only obtained recently. For example, Islam clearly teaches that a woman is a full-person under the law, and is the spiritual equal of a male. Also, according to Islamic Law, women have the right to own property, operate a business and receive equal pay for equal work. Women are allowed total control of their wealth, they cannot be married against their will and they are allowed to keep their own name when married.

Additionally, they have the right to inherit property and to have their marriage dissolved in the case of neglect or mistreatment. Also, Islam does not consider woman an "evil temptress", and thus does not blame woman for the "original sin". Women in Islam participate in all forms of worship that men participate in. Actually, the rights that Islam gave to women over 1400

years ago were almost unheard of in the West until the 1900s.

Less than fifty years ago in England and America, a woman could not buy a house or car without the co-signature of her father or husband! Additionally, Islam gives great respect to women and their role in society --- it gives them the right to own property, marry who they want and many other rights. Also, it should be mentioned that the Prophet Muhammad's mission stopped many of the horrible practices in regards to women that were present in the society of his time. For example, the Qur'an put an end to the pagan Arab practice of killing their baby daughters when they were born.

Additionally, Islam put restrictions on the unrestricted polygamy of the Arabs of the time, and put many laws in place to protect the well-being of women. Today, most of the so-called reforms in the status of women came about after the West abandoned religion for secularism. Even those in the West who claim to follow the so-called "Judaean-Christian tradition" really follow the values of Western liberalism --- but just to a lesser degree than their more liberal countrymen. For more on this subject, please read: *Women in Islam versus Women in the Judaean-Christian Tradition --- The Myth and The Reality*. If women in the Muslim World today don't have their rights, it is not because Islam did not give them to them. The problem is that in many places alien traditions have come to overshadow the teachings of Islam, either through

ignorance or the impact of Colonialization. The status of the Muslim woman in Islaam is a very noble and lofty one, and her effect is very great in the life of every Muslim. Indeed, the Muslim woman is the initial teacher in the building of a righteous society, providing she follows the guidance from the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of His Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam. Since adherence to the Qur'aan and the Sunnah distances every Muslim - male or female - from being misguided in any matter...

The secret of her importance lies in the tremendous burden and responsibility that is placed upon her, and the difficulties that she has to shoulder - responsibilities and difficulties some of which not even a man bears. This is why from the most important obligations upon a person is to show gratitude to the mother, and kindness and good companionship with her. And in this matter, she is to be given precedence over and above the father...

A man came to Allaah's Messenger sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam and said: O Messenger of Allaah! Who from amongst mankind warrants the best companionship from me? He replied: "Your mother." The man asked: Then who? So he replied: "Your mother." The man then asked: Then who? So the Prophet replied again: "Your mother." The man then asked: Then who? So he replied: "Then your father." [Related by al-Bukhaaree (no.5971) and Muslim

(7/2), from Abu Hurayrah radiallaahu 'anhu]. So this necessitates that the mother is given three times the like of kindness and good treatment than the father.

As regards the wife, then her status and her effect in making the soul tranquil and serene, has been clearly shown in the noble aayah (verse), in His - the Most High's - saying:

"And from amongst His Signs is this: That He created for you wives from amongst yourselves, so that you may find serenity and tranquility in them. And He has put between you love and compassion. Indeed, in this are signs for those who reflect." [Soorah Room 30:21].

...And do not forget about 'Aishah - radiallaahu 'anhaa - and her great effect. Since even the great Sahaabah (Companions) used to take knowledge of Hadeeth from her, and many of the Sahaabiyaat (female Companions) learn the various rulings pertaining to women's issues from her...

And there is no doubt also, that the house in which there is kindness, gentleness, love and care, along with the correct Islaamic tarbiyah (education and cultivation) will greatly affect the man. So he will become - if Allaah wills - successful in his affairs and in any matter - whether it be seeking knowledge,

trading, earning a living, or other than this. So it is Allaah alone that I ask to grant success and to guide us all to that which He loves and is pleased with. And may the prayers and peace of Allaah be upon our Prophet Muhammad, and upon his Family, his Companions and his followers.

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"Whoever works righteousness, man or woman, and has Faith, verily, to him will We give a new Life, a life that is good and pure, and We will bestow on such their reward according to the best of their actions."

Qur'an (16, 97)