



132959 - Women between the honouring of Islam and the humiliation of Jahiliyyah

the question

The West accuses Islam of oppressing women. What is the status of women in Islam?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Women in Islam have attained a high status which no previous nation granted to them, and no subsequent nation attained, because Islam's honouring of the human being is shared by both women and men equally. The divine teachings in this world apply equally to both, and they are also equal in terms of reward and punishment in the hereafter. Allah, may He be Exalted, says:

{And We have certainly honored the children of Adam} [Al-Isra' 17:70]

{Men have a share in what parents and relatives leave behind, and women have a share in what parents and relatives leave behind} [An-Nisa' 4:7]

{And women have rights similar to the rights over them, according to what is equitable } [Al-Baqarah 2:228]

{The believing men and believing women are allies of one another} [At-Tawbah 9:71]

{Your Lord has ordained that you should worship none but Him and show kindness to parents. If one or both of them reach old age in your care, do not say to them even the mildest word of annoyance or reproach them; rather speak to them with respect.

And lower to them the wing of humility out of compassion, and say: My Lord, have mercy on them, as they cared for me when I was small} [Al-Isra' 17:23-24]



{Their Lord has answered them: Never will I allow to be lost the work of any of you, be he male or female} [Al `Imran 3:195]

{Whoever does righteous deeds, male or female, and is a believer, We will surely grant him a good life, and We will surely grant them their reward according to the best of their deeds} [An-Nahl 16:97]

{Whoever does righteous deeds, whether male or female, and is a believer – it is they who will enter paradise, and they will not be wronged by even as much as the speck on a date stone} [An-Nisa' 4:124].

This honourable status that women acquired in Islam is unmatched in any other religion, nation or law. Roman civilization affirmed that women were slaves belonging to men, and they had no rights at all. A large council met in Rome and discussed women's affairs; they concluded that a woman is a living being with no soul, so she will have no part in the afterlife and she is impure.

In Athens, women were regarded as chattels to be bought and sold. They were regarded as impure and the work of the devil.

The laws of ancient India stated that epidemics, death, hellfire, snake venom and fire were better than women, and her right to life ended when her husband – who was her master – died; when she saw his body burning on the funeral pyre, she was expected to throw herself into the fire, otherwise she would be cursed.

In Judaism, the ruling on women in the Old Testament is as follows:

“So I turned my mind to understand, to investigate and to search out wisdom and the scheme of things and to understand the stupidity of wickedness and the madness of folly.

I find more bitter than death the woman who is a snare, whose heart is a trap and whose hands are chains”

Ecclesiastes 7:25 – New International Version.



It is well known that both the Jews and Christians venerate and believe in the Old Testament.

This was the status of women in ancient times. As for her situation in the Middle Ages and the modern era, it is explained by the following facts:

The Danish writer Wieth Kordsten described the view of the Catholic Church towards women when he said: During the Middle Ages, care for European women was very limited, in accordance with the view of the Catholic Church, which regarded women as second-class beings. In France, a council was held in 586 CE to discuss the status of women and whether they were to be regarded as human or not. After some discussion, the attendees determined that women are human, but they were created to serve men.

In French law, article 217 states the following: A married woman – even if her marriage is based on the stipulation that what she owns is separate from what her husband owns – is not permitted to give it away, transfer ownership of it or give it as collateral, and she cannot gain ownership of something, whether that is in return for money or not, without her husband being a party to the contract or agreeing to it in writing.

In England, Henry VIII forbade English women to read the Bible. Until 1850 CE, women were not counted as citizens, and until 1882 CE, they had no individual rights. *Silsilat Muqarinah al-Adyan* by Dr. Ahmad Shalaby, vol.3, p. 210-213.

As for women in Europe, America and other industrialized countries, they are worthless creatures that are exploited for commercial gain, as they are used as part of advertising campaigns. In fact, the situation is so bad that a woman sheds her clothing in order to sell an item in commercial promotions, and her body and dignity are sold on the basis of a system designed by men, so that they are no more than an item to bring them pleasure, wherever they are.

A woman is cared for so long as she is able to earn and contribute through her work, her intellect or her body. But when she grows old and is no longer able to contribute, society – both individuals and institutions – abandon her and she lives alone in her house or in a sanatorium.



Compare this – and they are not equal – to what Allah says in the Holy Quran:

{The believing men and believing women are allies of one another} [At-Tawbah 9:71]

{And women have rights similar to the rights over them, according to what is equitable} [Al-Baqarah 2:228]

{Your Lord has ordained that you should worship none but Him and show kindness to parents. If one or both of them reach old age in your care, do not say to them even the mildest word of annoyance or reproach them; rather speak to them with respect.

And lower to them the wing of humility out of compassion, and say: My Lord, have mercy on them, as they cared for me when I was small} [Al-Isra' 17:23-24].

As Allah has honoured women in this way, He has made it clear to all humanity that He has created women to be wives, daughters and sisters, and He has prescribed for that purpose laws that apply specifically to women and not to men.