

WOMEN IN ISLAM

WHAT MUSLIMS DON'T
WANT YOU TO KNOW

BY JOE CAREY

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Joe Carey



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FOREWARD

The Muslim population is growing in the United States and other Western nations at a rather rapid pace. This growth has generated concern about the future of our nation. What influence will this growth of Islam have on American culture and way of life? Will there be an ultimate clash of cultures as some predict, or will both sides adapt to the other and assimilate with one another? And from a Christian perspective, we should be asking, "What should be the Christian response to the rise of Islam?"

One area of great concern is the view Islam as an ideology espouses toward women. Not a week goes by that someone I know tells me about a female relative or friend or coworker who is seeing or in a serious relationship with a Muslim man. They have a fear for the future of their acquaintance. Are such fears or concerns justified? Have we been led to believe that Islam suppresses women by a biased media or an anti-Islam agenda by certain groups? When we look around the world at the treatment of women in Islamic countries we notice women are not given the same status of equality as women find in Western cultures. Is this an anomaly, or is such treatment of women in alignment with authoritative Islamic texts?

None can deny that many Muslim families living in the USA and Canada are very healthy, happy, and loving. However, as we have seen over the past few years, other Muslim families have imported the treatment of women from their native lands. For example, a father in Dallas from Egypt shot and killed his two teenage daughters for becoming "too western." A man in New York beheaded his wife during a domestic dispute after she filed divorce papers to him. A man from Morocco raped his wife violently and then claimed during his criminal trial that he was merely exercising his religious rights as her husband. While we cannot deny that domestic abuse exists everywhere and with all people, is there a connection to these particular examples and the religion of those committing them? If so, what is that connection and what should be our response?

This booklet is not intended to foster hatred toward Muslims, either men or women. I take joy that many Muslim families are loving, and I am equally sad that many so-called Christian families are falling apart. Do these families reflect the tenets of each respective belief system, or are they in opposition to those tenets?

This booklet seeks to achieve the following objectives: 1) To explore the links between the religious texts of Islam and the abuse of women in many parts of the world; 2) To provide a clear and unambiguous view of women in Islam to those women considering a relationship with a Muslim man; 3) To assist Christian women working among Muslims in understanding their situation in order to form an effective response; and 4) To demonstrate to Muslim women that they will only find true equality and love by following the teaching and example of Jesus Christ and the Bible.

Women In Islam

To hear groups like the Council of American-Islamic Relations or the Islamic Society of North America, Islam holds women in high regard. Indeed, Souad Saleh, a female professor at Al-Ahzar University in Cairo and a vocal proponent of women's rights in Egypt, recently stated, "Islam is pure and simple, and it holds women in high esteem."¹ For example, she says, "Muslim women were the first to be granted the right to inherit property and conduct their own private business affairs. This was so at an age when the women of Europe and Asia were not allowed to own property, inherit wealth and in some instances were treated as chattel."² When addressing the issue of women being mistreated by their husbands, she states, "guardianship over women ... does not give male members of the family license to oppress their female counterparts. Islam enjoins men to protect, love and care for their women folk."³

Another scholar has noted that Islam abolished the horrible practice of female infanticide prevalent among the pagan Arabs. Muhammad gave clear directions leading to the restriction of polygamy, restrained the unlimited rights by men over their wives, and gave woman both spiritual and material equality with man.⁴

A recent Gallup survey polled a significant percentage of Muslims worldwide. The findings are highlighted in the book *Who Speaks for Islam*, edited by John Esposito and Dalia Mogahed. The findings of the poll paint a picture of women in Islam that is in stark contrast to the oppression many in the West believe exists. For example, the authors note, "Majorities of women in virtually every country we surveyed say that women deserve the same legal rights as men, to vote without influence from family members, to work at any job they are qualified for, and even to serve in the highest levels of government."⁵ Concerning the ability of Muslim women to obtain an education, the poll demonstrated that Muslim women were often able to pursue post-secondary educations, particularly in Iran (52%), Egypt (34%), Saudi Arabia (32%), and Lebanon (37%).

Pro-Islamic websites love to proclaim how Islam elevates the status of women. For example, at the website of the Muslim Student Association at the University of Southern California, one can find the following regarding Women in Islam:

- Islam declared women and men equal.
- Islam condemned pre-Islamic practices degrading and oppressing women.

¹ Gamal Nkrumah, "Souad Saleh: Time to tear down the divides", interview in Al-Ahram Weekly, online publication, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2005/766/profile.htm>, accessed 5 August 2008.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Pierre Crabites, cited in Allama Sir Abdullah Al-Mamun Al-Suhrawardy, *The Wisdom of Muhammad* (New York: Citade Press, 2001), p. 20.

⁵ John L. Esposito, Dalia Mogahed, *Who Speaks for Islam: What a Billion Muslims Really Think* (New York: Gallup Press, 2007), 101.

- The same injunctions and prohibitions of Islam equally apply to both sexes.
- Islam gave woman the right of inheritance and the right of individual independent ownership unhampered by father, husband, brother, son or anyone else.
- Islam gave women the right to accept or reject a marriage proposal free from pressure, and by mutual agreement to specify in the marriage contract that she has the right to divorce (if she misses that option she has the right to seek court divorce if she deems the marriage to have failed beyond repair).
- Islam does not require woman to change her name at marriage.
- Islam protects the family and condemns the betrayal of marital fidelity. It recognizes only one type of family: husband and wife united by authentic marriage contract.
- "Heaven is at the feet of mothers", is a basic Islamic teaching.
- "The best of you are the kindest to their wives and I am your best to mine", is a teaching by prophet Mohammad.
- Islam enjoins sound morality in thinking, behavior and appearance. Dress fashions and social patterns that reduce woman to a sex object and exploit her as such are not acceptable to Islam.
- The observance of chastity and moral standards is equally demanded by Islam from both men and women. "Women are the siblings of men", is a saying of prophet Mohammad.

Yet a mere 100 years ago or so, prior to Islam coming to the forefront of public view in any significant way, and prior to the excesses of political correctness and multiculturalism, Islamic scholars themselves noted an imbalance in the treatment of women in Islamic societies. At an Islamic educational conference held in Bombay, India (now Mumbai) in the early 20th century, Agha Khan noted several barriers to progress in the Muslim world, the chief of which was "the seclusion of women which results in keeping half the community in ignorance and degradation" which "hinders the progress of the whole."⁶ How much progress has actually occurred in the 100 years since Khan made this statement?



As with any area of study within Islam, one must separate out the current reality from the ideological underpinnings. If women are treated equally in Islam, is there justification for it in the sacred writings of Islam, or is this equal treatment in conflict with sacred directives? What does the Qur'an say about women? What does Muhammad say about women as recorded in the hadith, and what kind of example did he set in the way he treated women that were part of his life? Do

⁶ Annie Van Sommer, Samuel Zwemer, *Our Moslem Sisters* (N.Y., Fleming H. Revell Company, 1907), p. 5

the reports we hear of women being oppressed accord with sacred scripture, or are they rather anomalies having no foundation in Islam? What have women from an Islamic background actually experienced – what are their stories? These are some of the issues we will be addressing.

1. Does Islam protect women?

A couple of verses of the Qur'an would seem to suggest that Islam holds a high view of women.

Sura 4:19 – O ye who believe! Ye are forbidden to inherit women against their will. Nor should ye treat them with harshness...except where they have been guilty of open lewdness; on the contrary live with them on a footing of kindness and equity. If ye take a dislike to them it may be that ye dislike a thing, and Allah brings about through it a great deal of good.

Sura 65:6 – Lodge them where you lodge according to your means, and do not injure them in order that you may straiten them...

So at least on the surface, Islam suggests women are to be treated as equals with men and be provided for economically by their husbands. But what does the rest of the Qur'an say, and what can we learn about women from the traditions?

A. Husband can beat a wife he suspects of disobedience

Sura 4:34 – Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has made one of them to excel the other, and because they spend (to support them) from their means. Therefore the righteous women are obedient, and guard in the husband's absence what Allah orders them to guard. As to those women on whose part you see [suspect] ill conduct, admonish them, and abandon them to their beds, and beat them, but if they return to obedience, do not seek a means against them.

Muslim apologists will assert that the term “and beat them” speaks only metaphorically. Others insist it means only a simple strike, as with hitting them with a feather or toothpick. Still others insist the beating is to be done only with a fistful of twigs, according to Sura 38:44. Yusuf Ali adds the word ‘lightly,’ which never appears in the Arabic. Yet, a simple observation of the text shows any of the above to be erroneous.

The text presents a series of progressive disciplinary measures if a man suspects disobedience from his wife: 1) Admonish her. Give her a verbal warning regarding her behavior. 2) sleep in separate beds from her. This humiliates the woman, for in Islam a woman's worth is measured, in part, by her ability to reproduce offspring, particularly male offspring. Sleeping in a separate bed from the wife dishonors her by limiting her ability to reproduce a male child. 3) Beat them. This is the third, most significant step of the progressive discipline process and is expected to be the one that produces the desired result if the first two failed. So the idea of hitting the woman “lightly” with a toothpick as the most severe disciplinary measure loses the argument based simply on

the text alone.

The Islamic legal jurist Imam Shafi'i defines a few of the many possible behaviors that could be construed as disobedience, punishable by beating:⁷

- The wife responds to the husband coldly
- He asks her to come to bed and she refuses
- He finds her averse to him
- She leaves the home without his permission
- She allows anyone else in the home without his permission
- She is found alone with a nonfamily-member male

Ibn Kathir records a hadith that states, "The best woman is she who when you look at her she obeys you, and when you are absent, she protects her honor and your property."⁸

Ibn Kathir elaborates what constitutes ill conduct: It is "the woman from whom you see ill conduct with her husband, such as when she acts as if she is above her husband, disobeys him, ignores him, dislikes him, and so forth. When these signs appear in a woman, her husband should advise her and remind her of Allah's torment if she disobeys him. Indeed, Allah ordered the wife to obey her husband and prohibited her from disobeying him, because of the enormity of his rights and all that he does for her."⁹

Scholar Abdul-latif Mushtahiri: "If admonishing and sexual desertion fail to bring forth results and the woman is of a cold and stubborn type, the Qur'an bestows on man the right to straighten her out by way of punishment and beating provided he does not break her bones nor shed blood. Many a wife belongs to this querulous type and requires this sort of punishment to bring her to her senses!"¹⁰

Sahih Muslim, Book 004, Number 2127:

He (Muhammad b. Qais) then reported that it was 'A'isha who had narrated this: Should I not narrate to you about myself and about the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him)? We said: Yes. She said: When it was my turn for Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) to spend the night with me, he turned his side, put on his mantle and took off his shoes and placed them near his feet, and spread the corner of his shawl on his bed and then lay down till he thought that I had gone to sleep. He took hold of his mantle slowly and put on the shoes slowly, and opened the door and went out and then closed it lightly. I covered my head, put on my veil and tightened my waist wrapper, and then went out following his steps till he reached Baqi'. He stood there and he stood for a long time. He then lifted his hands three times, and then returned and I also returned. He

⁷ 'Umdat al-Salik (Reliance of the Traveller), section m10.12

⁸ *Tafsir Ibn Kathir* (abridged), Shaykh Safiur-Rahman Al-Mubarakpuri et al, translators (Riyadh: Darussalam, 2000), vol 2, p. 443.

⁹ Ibid, p. 444.

¹⁰ Quoted in <http://www.answering-islam.org/BehindVeil/btv3.html>

hastened his steps and I also hastened my steps. He ran and I too ran. He came (to the house) and I also came (to the house). I, however, preceded him and I entered (the house), and as I lay down in the bed, he (the Holy Prophet) entered the (house), and said: Why is it, O 'A'isha, that you are out of breath? I said: There is nothing. He said: Tell me or the Subtle and the Aware would inform me. I said: Messenger of Allah, may my father and mother be ransom for you, and then I told him (the whole story). He said: Was it the darkness (of your shadow) that I saw in front of me? I said: Yes. He struck me on the chest which caused me pain, and then said: Did you think that Allah and His Apostle would deal unjustly with you?

Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 7, Book 62, Number 132:

Narrated 'Abdullah bin Zam'a:

The Prophet said, "None of you should flog his wife as he flogs a slave and then have sexual intercourse with her in the last part of the day."

Translation: If you beat your wife as you beat your slave, do not expect to have sex with her that night.

Sahih al-Bukhar, Volume 7, Book 73, Number 715

"Narrated Ikrima: 'Rifaa divorced his wife whereupon Abdur-Rahman married her. Aisha said that the lady came wearing a green veil and complained to her (Aisha) and showed her a green spot on her skin caused by beating. It was the habit of ladies to support each other, so when Allah's messenger came, Aisha said, "I have not seen any woman suffering as much as the believing women. Look! Her skin is greener than her clothes! When Abdur-Rahman heard that his wife had gone to the prophet, he came with his two sons from another wife. She said, "By Allah! I have done no wrong to him, but he is impotent and is as useless to me as this," holding and showing the fringe of her garment. Abdur-Rahman said, "By Allah, O Allah's messenger! She has told a lie. I am very strong and can satisfy her, but she is disobedient and wants to go back to Rifaa."

Muslim apologists will also cite a hadith where Muhammad is quoted as stating "Do not beat Allah's handmaidens" as a proof text that Islam forbids treating women harshly. However, this particular hadith has been augmented with additional commentary and interpretation in another hadith collection:

Sunan Abu Dawud, Volume 2, Chapter 709, Number 2141

Iyas Dhubab reported the apostle of Allah as saying: "Do not beat Allah's handmaidens", but when Umar came to the apostle of Allah and said: "Women have become emboldened towards their husbands", he (the prophet), gave permission to beat them. Then many women came round the family of the apostle of Allah complaining against their husbands. So the apostle of Allah said, "Many women have gone round Muhammad's family complaining against their husbands. They are not the best among you".

So even though Muhammad *did* make the statement attributed to him, later comments show that he abrogated the earlier pronouncement and allowed men to beat their

wives. This is made even more unambiguous in the following hadith.

Sunan Abu Dawud, Volume 2, Chapter 709, Number 2142

Umar reported the prophet as saying: "A man will not be asked as to why he beat his wife."

The reality: According to the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences, over 90% of married women report being kicked, slapped, beaten or sexually abused when husbands were dissatisfied by their cooking or cleaning, or when the women had 'failed' to bear a child or had given birth to a girl instead of a boy. Another organization stated that one woman is murdered and one woman is kidnapped in Pakistan every day.¹¹



This author has friends who work in Morocco as missionaries. I received an email recently in which my friend made the following statement:

"In Sura (chapter) 4:34 of the Quran (someone's take on) God tells men to beat (or scourge) women in whom they fear rebellion. When we were in the north on vacation I was coming home with a friend from a café when I saw a man hitting a woman. I immediately ran to the man and "restrained" him, pushing him about thirty feet away. He told me the woman was his wife (she denied that) as if that made it OK. After a few moments I released him and they went their separate ways. A few weeks later I was in a shop buying some peanuts and we got on the topic of marriage. The shopkeeper asked me if I hit my wife to which I said "No." Then he asked me again (to make sure he heard me right). When I again answered in the negative he told me that they hit their wives."

Hang Your Whip

Muhammad wanted to ensure the obedience of all family members, and thus uttered the following tradition.¹²

It was narrated from Ibn 'Abbaas that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Hang your whip where the members of the household can see it, for that will discipline them."

Narrated by al-Tabaraani, 10/248; its isnaad was classed as hasan by al-Haythami in Majma' al-Zawaa'id, 8/106

Al-Albaani said in Saheeh al-Jaami', 4022, it is hasan.

¹¹ <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ASA33/010/2002/en>

¹² <http://www.islamqa.com/en/ref/10016>

See video: Allah honors women through beating
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GkOZgPfSwG8>

See video: Clip from "Not Without My Daughter"
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B8low2KOPQM>

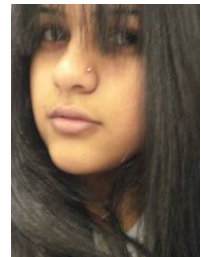
B. Honor killings by family members

Although not limited entirely to Muslims (Hindus also engage in this behavior), by far the great majority of honor killings take place within Islamic societies. The United Nations Population Fund estimated in September 2000 that as many as 5,000 women and girls fall victim to such killings each year. Until recent times, honor killings remained out of public purview of those of us in the West. However, such behavior is becoming more common in the West as immigrants from Muslim nations flock to Western nations.

Muslim apologists might argue, "Domestic violence is an issue that transcends cultures and is not limited to just the Islamic world." This is the argument generally made to deflect focus on the Islamic roots of honor killing. Shari'ah allows a father or mother to murder family members without penalty: "Retaliation is obligatory against anyone who kills a human being purely intentionally and without right ... The following are not subject to retaliation ... (4) a father or mother (or their fathers or mothers) for killing their offspring." [Umdat al-Salik (Reliance of the Traveller), section o1.1-2]

Aqsa Parvez

Aqsa Parvez was strangled to death by her father, Muhammad Parvez, on December 10, 2007 in Ontario, Canada. Aqsa shamed her father because she refused to wear the hijab and wanted to dress in Western clothing. During the murder trial, the Canadian judge said he found it profoundly disturbing that a 16-year old could be murdered by a father and brother for the purpose of saving family pride.¹³



Amina and Sarah Said



Amina and Sarah, two sisters, were gunned down by their Egyptian father Yaser Said on New Year's Day 2008 in Dallas, Texas. Their crime: wanting to be like other teenagers in high school and dress in western clothing. Yaser was assisted by his wife and has fled the country. A reward for his arrest is still active, though speculation suggests Said is back in Egypt and in full protection there.

Sandeela Kanwal

On July 6, 2008 Chaudhry Rashid, a Pakistani man, strangled his daughter with a bungee cord for refusing an arranged



¹³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aqsa_Parvez

marriage. During his arraignment, Rashid told the judge, "I have done nothing wrong." According to Shari'a law, he is correct.



Aasiya Hassan

Aasiya Hassan was beheaded by her husband, Muzzammil Hassan, in February 2009. Muzzammil was said to be an influential member of the Muslim community of Buffalo, New York where the couple lived and where they operated Bridges TV, a media outlet designed to help remove the stereotype of Islam as a violent religion.

The Shafii family: Three sisters and a wife

A man, his second wife, and his oldest son were charged with the drowning murder of the man's first wife and his three daughters in July 2009. Muhammad Shafii, a Canadian man of Afghani descent, his son Hamid Muhammad Shafi, and his second wife Tooba Muhammad Yahya, were charged with first degree murder after authorities learned they had been planning the murder for months.



Noor Almaleki

On October 20, 2009 in a suburb of Phoenix, Faleh Almaleki, an immigrant from Iraq, ran down his daughter Noor with his Jeep Grand Cherokee as she exited a welfare office. Noor had become too "Americanized" for her father's taste, and was known for wearing tight jeans, make up, and did not cover her head with the traditional Islamic hijab. Noor died two weeks later from her injuries when doctors removed life support systems after she was determined to be brain dead.

On February 22, 2011, Faleh Almaleki was charged with second degree murder in Phoenix. He had fled the country immediately after the incident, first going to Mexico and then to the UK, where he was apprehended as he disembarked from a flight.

C. Hana Basrawi

It was the moment Hana Basrawi had dreamt about for more than 11 years... and at first she was so nervous she could barely speak.¹⁴

Then with the simple words "Hello mum" she knew her ordeal was finally over. At last Hana, 21, was finally face to face with the woman who had been in her thoughts every day since she was taken from her home in Britain as a 10-year-old.

¹⁴ <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/top-stories/2010/04/11/british-girl-of-10-kept-in-saudi-hell-hole-for-11-years-by-her-dad-115875-22176525/>

Her domineering and controlling father Zuhair had taken her at the height of a bitter custody battle with her mother Suzanne and flown her to live 3,000 miles away in Saudi Arabia.

“When I turned 11 I was made to start wearing a head scarf and couldn’t leave the house without my father’s permission. I had no friends and wasn’t allowed to play outside. Dad was very controlling and verbally abusive and expected me to do all the housekeeping. He wouldn’t even have mum’s name mentioned. He kept telling me she didn’t love me.”

By 2002 when Hana was 14 she was so desperate she went to the Saudi police for help...but was sent back to her father.

She says: “I told them he was keeping me there against my will and all they said was, ‘He’s your father, if he wants he can kill you’. When I got home dad locked me in my bedroom, pinned me to the floor and cut off my hair and then set fire to it. He left me practically bald. He took me out of school and I felt even more cut off. He had a terrible temper and I was very frightened of him. He would beat me if I didn’t do what he said.”

D. Female circumcision (FGM)

In some Islamic countries women face the certainty of female circumcision. Somali women’s rights activist and ex-Muslim Ayaan Hirsi Ali notes that in her own homeland virtually every girl has her clitoris excised, sometimes when as young as five years old, and that the practice is always justified in the name of Islam. Uncircumcised girls are told they will become prostitutes but that circumcised girls will be pure. Hirsi Ali describes her own genital mutilation in her book *Infidel*:

Grandma caught hold of me and gripped my upper body... Two other women held my legs apart. The man, who was probably an itinerant traditional circumciser from the blacksmith clan, picked up a pair of scissors. With the other hand, he caught hold of the place between my legs and started tweaking it, like Grandma milking a goat... Then the scissors went down between my legs and the man cut off my inner labia and clitoris. I heard it, like a butcher snipping the fat off a piece of meat. A piercing pain shot up between my legs, indescribable, and I howled. Then came the sewing: the long, blunt needle clumsily pushed into my bleeding outer labia, my loud and anguished protests, Grandma’s words of comfort and encouragement... When the sewing was finished, the man cut the thread off with his teeth. That is all I can recall of it.

Genital mutilation is not a specifically Islamic custom. It is also practiced by a number of cultural and religious groups in Africa and South Asia. Among Muslims it’s prevalent mainly in Egypt, Sudan, and Somalia, and in other African countries, as well as Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Yet despite the fact that there is scant affirmation in Islamic teaching for this horrific practice, the Muslims who do practice it invest genital mutilation with religious significance. One Islamic legal manual states that circumcision is required “for both men and women.”

To Sheikh Muhammad Sayyed Tantawi, the Grand Imam of Cairo's al-Azhar, the oldest and most prestigious university in the lands of Islam, female circumcision is "a laudable practice that [does] honor to women." Tantawi is no fringe figure: he is, in the words of a BBC report, "the highest spiritual authority for nearly a billion Sunni Muslims." In endorsing female circumcision he uses this considerable spiritual authority to perpetuate a practice that gives women lifelong pain and blocks their access to sexual fulfillment. But perhaps in the eyes of Sheikh Tantawi the pain is worth the result: most authorities agree that female circumcision is designed to diminish a woman's sexual response, so that she will be less likely to commit adultery.

Reliance of the Traveller

English translation: e4.3 Circumcision is obligatory (O: for both men and women. For men is consists of removing the prepuce from the penis, and for women, removing the prepuce (Ar. bazr) of the clitoris (n: not the clitoris itself, as some mistakenly assert).

Arabic: Circumcision is obligatory (for every male and female) by cutting off the piece of skin on the glans of the penis of the male, but circumcision of the female is by cutting out the clitoris (this is called khufaad).

Thankfully, not all Islamic scholars agree on female circumcision. Nevertheless, its wide practice in Islamic nations is cause for concern. One female Muslim doctor shares her thoughts.

"If religion comes from God, how can it order man to cut off an organ created by Him as long as that organ is not diseased or deformed? God does not create organs of the body haphazardly without a plan. It is not possible that He should have created the clitoris in woman's body only in order that it be cut off at an early stage in life. This is a contradiction into which neither true religion nor the Creator could possibly fall. If God has created the clitoris as a sexually sensitive organ, whose sole function seems to be the procurement of sexual pleasure for women, it follows that He also considers such pleasure for women s normal and legitimate, and therefore as an integral part of mental health."¹⁵

See video clip: Honor killing, FGM synopsis

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nD4I4FXqBp8>

2. Women – social status

In general, females are viewed as less worthy and less valued than are males. The sub-points raised below will provide ample documentation to this fact: women are seen as lacking in intelligence; their testimony is worth half that of a man; they are given only half the inheritance of a man; blood money for killing a woman is half that of a man.

¹⁵ Quoted in Parshall and Parshall, *Lifting the Veil*, p. 126-127.

There is an old Arab proverb that says "The threshold of a house weeps for forty days when a girl is born, but when a boy is born the gypsies are called in and a band of music is engaged and everyone makes merry."

In the great majority of Islamic societies, the following can be said of women. "As a babe she is unwelcome; as a child untaught; as a wife unloved; as a mother, unhonored; in old age, uncared for; and when her miserable, dark, and dreary life is ended, she is unmourned by those she has served."¹⁶

A. Women are mere possessions

The following hadith demonstrate that women are viewed in Islam as nothing more than a mere possession like a watch, a piece of jewelry, a home, a car. In a word: chattel.

Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 34, Number 264:

Narrated Ibrahim bin Sad from his father from his grand-father: Abdur Rahman bin Auf said, "When we came to Medina as emigrants, Allah's Apostle established a bond of brotherhood between me and Sad bin Ar-Rabi'. Sad bin Ar-Rabi' said (to me), 'I am the richest among the Ansar, so I will give you half of my wealth and you may look at my two wives and whichever of the two you may choose I will divorce her, and when she has completed the prescribed period (before marriage) you may marry her.'

Ibn-i-Majah vol.3 no.1918 p.157

When one is given a woman, servant, or cattle, one should seize its forehead and pray to Allah.

al-Tabari vol.9 p.113

Treat women well, for they are [like] domestic animals ('*awan*) with you and do not possess anything for themselves."

See video: Girl of 7 yrs sold into marriage to pay a debt

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y91uoACXC1g>

B. Women are controlled by their husbands

Sura 4:34 – Men are the maintainers of women because Allah has made some of them to excel others and because they spend out of their property; the good women are therefore obedient, guarding the unseen as Allah has guarded...

Saudi feminist Wajeha Al-Huwaider describes the lives of many Arab women as similar to a prisoner. However, the Arab woman is a prisoner in her own home, has committed no crime, was not captured in battle, does not belong to any terrorist group.

In the book "*The Ideal Muslimah*" Dr. Muhammad Ali Al-Hashimi notes:

¹⁶ Van Sommer and Zwemer, p. 30

The true Muslim woman devotes herself to taking care of her house and husband. She knows her husband's rights over her, and how great they are, as was confirmed by the Prophet's words:

"No human being is permitted to prostrate to another, but if this were permitted I would have ordered wives to prostrate to their husbands, because of the greatness of the rights they have over them."

A woman came to ask the Prophet (PBUH) about some matter, and when he had dealt with it, he asked her, "Do you have a husband?" She said, "Yes." He asked her, "How are you with him?" She said, "I never fall short in my duties, except for that which is beyond me." He said, "Pay attention to how you treat him, for he is your Paradise and your Hell."

How can the Muslim woman complain about taking care of her house and husband when she hears these words of Prophetic guidance? She should fulfil her household duties and take care of her husband in a spirit of joy, because she is not carrying a tiresome burden, she is doing work in her home that she knows will bring reward from Allah

One of the most important ways in which the Muslim woman obeys her husband is by respecting his wishes with regard to the permissible pleasures of daily life, such as social visits, food, dress, speech, etc. The more she responds to his wishes in such matters, the happier and more enjoyable the couple's life becomes, and the closer it is to the spirit and teachings of Islam.

"It is not permitted for a woman who believes in Allah (SWT) to allow anyone into her husband's house whom he dislikes; or to go out when he does not want her to; or to obey anyone else against him; or to forsake his bed; or to hit him. If he is wrong, then let her come to him until he is pleased with her, and if he accepts her then all is well, Allah (SWT) will accept her deeds and make her position stronger, and there will be no sin on her."

It is a great honour for a woman to take care of her husband every morning and evening, and wherever he goes, treating him with gentleness and good manners which will fill his life with joy, tranquility and stability.

`Aisha urged women to take good care of their husbands and to recognize the rights that their husbands had over them. She saw these rights as being so great and so important that a woman was barely qualified to wipe the dust from her husband's feet with her face, as she stated: "O womenfolk, if you knew the rights that your husbands have over you, every one of you would wipe the dust from her husband's feet with her face."

Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 7, Book 62, Number 123:

Narrated Abu Huraira:

Allah's Apostle said, "It is not lawful for a lady to fast (Nawafil) without the permission of her husband when he is at home; and she should not allow anyone to enter his house

except with his permission; and if she spends of his wealth (on charitable purposes) without being ordered by him, he will get half of the reward."

C. Women must never be alone in the presence of another man not a relative

According to Amnesty International, women who walk unaccompanied or in the company of a man who is neither their husband nor a close relative are at the risk of arrest on suspicion of prostitution or other "moral offences." This is not simply the result of cultural practices as some would have us believe, but finds justification in authoritative Islamic law.

"A husband may permit his wife to leave the house for a lesson in Sacred Law, for invocation of Allah, to see her female friends, or to go to any place in the town."¹⁷

"It is not lawful for a wife to leave the house except by the permission of her husband, though she may do so without permission when there is a pressing necessity. Nor may a wife permit anyone to enter her husband's home unless he agrees, even their unmarriageable kin. Nor may she be alone with a nonfamily-member male under any circumstances."¹⁸

Sheikh 'Abd al-Wakil Burubi, a highly respected scholar in Syria, provides the common interpretation of shari'a and sunna for this issue: "Being alone with a woman who is not one's wife or unmarriageable kin is absolutely unlawful, though if there are two women and a man, the man and the woman are no longer considered alone."¹⁹

In February 2008, an American businesswoman of Jordanian descent was arrested in Saudi Arabia after being found by the religious police sitting in the family area of a Starbucks with a male business associate. They had been working together at their nearby office when power was lost, and they decided to go to Starbucks to use the wireless internet. She was released from jail a day later, bruised and crying.²⁰

D. Women are deficient in intellect

To find the genesis of this idea we must look back to the genesis account. According to the Islamic conception of the creation account, Adam and Eve were told to not eat of a certain tree in the garden. Eve, tempted by the snake, ate from the tree and gave to Adam. When questioned by God, Adam blamed Eve, who blamed the snake. As punishment to Eve for succumbing to the snake's temptation, God states regarding Eve:

"Now it is my obligation to make her bleed once every month, as she has made this tree bleed. I also must make her stupid, although I created her intelligent,

¹⁷ 'Umdat al-Salik, section m10.3

¹⁸ 'Umdat al-Salik, section m10.12 (2)

¹⁹ 'Umdat al-Salik, section m2.3

²⁰ http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/middle_east/article3321637.ece

and must make her suffer pregnancy and birth with difficulty, although I made it easy for her to be pregnant and give birth. Were it not for the affliction that affected Eve, the women of this world would not menstruate, and they would be intelligent and, when pregnant, give birth easily."²¹

This notion has a direct bearing on the limitation of a woman's testimony (see below).

Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 2, Book 24, Number 541:

Narrated Abu Said Al-Khudri:

On 'Id ul Fitr or 'Id ul Adha Allah's Apostle (p.b.u.h) went out to the Musalla. After finishing the prayer, he delivered the sermon and ordered the people to give alms. He said, "O people! Give alms." Then he went towards the women and said, "O women! Give alms, for I have seen that the majority of the dwellers of Hell-Fire were you (women)." The women asked, "O Allah's Apostle! What is the reason for it?" He replied, "O women! You curse frequently, and are ungrateful to your husbands. I have not seen anyone more deficient in intelligence and religion than you. O women, some of you can lead a cautious wise man astray." Then he left.

See video clip: Women created by Allah different than men

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-AtuFq8-Gpo>

E. Women's testimony equal to half of man's

Sura 2:282 - And get two witnesses out of your own men. And if there are not two men (available), then a man and two women, such as you agree for witnesses, so that if one of them (two women) errs, the other can remind her.

"The testimony of the following is legally acceptable when it concerns cases involving property, or transactions dealing with property, such as sales:

- (1) Two men;
- (2) Two women and a man;
- (3) or a male witness together with the oath of the plaintiff."²²

"If testimony concerns things which men do not typically see (but women do) such as childbirth, then it is sufficient to have two male witnesses, a man and two women, or four women."²³

Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 1, Book 6, Number 301:

Narrated Abu Said Al-Khudri:

Once Allah's Apostle went out to the Musalla (to offer the prayer) o 'Id-al- Adha or Al-Fitr prayer. Then he passed by the women and said, "O women! Give alms, as I have seen that the majority of the dwellers of Hellfire were you (women)." They asked, "Why is it so, O Allah's Apostle ?" He replied, "You curse frequently and are ungrateful to your

²¹ al-Tabari, Abu Jafar Muhammad bin Jarir, *Tarikh al-rusul wa'l-muluk* (History of al-Tabari, Volume 1), Franz Rosenthal, translator (N.Y. : State University of New York Press, 1989), p. 280-1.

²² 'Umdat al-Salik, section o24.7

²³ 'Umdat al-Salik, section o24.10

husbands. I have not seen anyone more deficient in intelligence and religion than you. A cautious sensible man could be led astray by some of you." The women asked, "O Allah's Apostle! What is deficient in our intelligence and religion?" He said, "Is not the evidence of two women equal to the witness of one man?" They replied in the affirmative. He said, "This is the deficiency in her intelligence. Isn't it true that a woman can neither pray nor fast during her menses?" The women replied in the affirmative. He said, "This is the deficiency in her religion."

F. Women given half the inheritance of men

Sura 4:11 - Allâh commands you as regards your children's (inheritance); to the male, a portion equal to that of two females...

Shari'a rules describing the allocation of the estate of the deceased are complex and depend on a number of variables. But one rule is made quite clear: females are allocated half that of males.

For example, if a wife dies, her husband is allocated one-half her estate; the remainder is allocated among other survivors.²⁴ However, if a husband dies, the wife is allocated only one-fourth of his estate. If he has more than one wife, the amount is apportioned among all his wives: two wives would each receive one-eighth the estate; four wives would each receive one sixteenth.²⁵

G. Indemnity half that of a man

Indemnity is compensation paid on behalf of a wrongful act committed against another. A colloquial term often associated with indemnity is "blood money" even though the wrongful act may not necessarily involve the shedding of blood.

Shari'a is specific regarding indemnity. An entire section is devoted to indemnities due for various infractions and grievances. Here we find a general description regarding the indemnity for a male versus a female:

The indemnity paid for the death or injury of a woman is one-half the indemnity paid for a man.

The indemnity paid for a Jew or Christian is one-third of the indemnity paid for a Muslim.²⁶

H. Women are the inhabitants of hell

Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 1, Book 2, Number 28:

Narrated Ibn 'Abbas:

The Prophet said: "I was shown the Hell-fire and that the majority of its dwellers were women who were ungrateful." It was asked, "Do they disbelieve in Allah?" (or are they

²⁴ 'Umdat al-Salik, section L6.3

²⁵ 'Umdat al-Salik, section L6.4

²⁶ 'Umdat al-Salik, section o4.9

ungrateful to Allah?) He replied, "They are ungrateful to their husbands and are ungrateful for the favors and the good (charitable deeds) done to them.

Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 1, Book 6, Number 301:

Narrated Abu Said Al-Khudri:

Once Allah's Apostle went out to the Musalla (to offer the prayer) o 'Id-al- Adha or Al-Fitr prayer. Then he passed by the women and said, "O women! Give alms, as I have seen that the majority of the dwellers of Hellfire were you (women)." They asked, "Why is it so, O Allah's Apostle?" He replied, "You curse frequently and are ungrateful to your husbands. I have not seen anyone more deficient in intelligence and religion than you. A cautious sensible man could be led astray by some of you." The women asked, "O Allah's Apostle! What is deficient in our intelligence and religion?" He said, "Is not the evidence of two women equal to the witness of one man?" They replied in the affirmative. He said, "This is the deficiency in her intelligence. Isn't it true that a woman can neither pray nor fast during her menses?" The women replied in the affirmative. He said, "This is the deficiency in her religion."

Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 2, Book 18, Number 161:

Narrated 'Abdullah bin Abbas:

The people say, "O Allah's Apostle! We saw you taking something from your place and then we saw you retreating." The Prophet replied, "I saw Paradise and stretched my hands towards a bunch (of its fruits) and had I taken it, you would have eaten from it as long as the world remains. I also saw the Hell-fire and I had never seen such a horrible sight. I saw that most of the inhabitants were women." The people asked, "O Allah's Apostle! Why is it so?" The Prophet replied, "Because of their ungratefulness."

Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 2, Book 24, Number 541:

Narrated Abu Said Al-Khudri:

On 'Id ul Fitr or 'Id ul Adha Allah's Apostle (p.b.u.h) went out to the Musalla. After finishing the prayer, he delivered the sermon and ordered the people to give alms. He said, "O people! Give alms." Then he went towards the women and said, "O women! Give alms, for I have seen that the majority of the dwellers of Hell-Fire were you (women)." The women asked, "O Allah's Apostle! What is the reason for it?" He replied, "O women! You curse frequently, and are ungrateful to your husbands. I have not seen anyone more deficient in intelligence and religion than you. O women, some of you can lead a cautious wise man astray." Then he left.

Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 7, Book 62, Number 124:

Narrated Usama:

The Prophet said, "I stood at the gate of Paradise and saw that the majority of the people who entered it were the poor, while the wealthy were stopped at the gate (for the accounts). But the companions of the Fire were ordered to be taken to the Fire. Then I stood at the gate of the Fire and saw that the majority of those who entered it were women."

Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 7, Book 62, Number 126:

Narrated Imran:

The Prophet said, "I looked at Paradise and saw that the majority of its residents were the poor; and I looked at the (Hell) Fire and saw that the majority of its residents were women."

I. Women compared to a dog

Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 1, Book 9, Number 490:

Narrated 'Aisha:

The things which annul the prayers were mentioned before me. They said, "Prayer is annulled by a dog, a donkey and a woman (if they pass in front of the praying people)." I said, "You have made us (i.e. women) dogs.

Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 1, Book 9, Number 498:

Narrated 'Aisha: It is not good that you people have made us (women) equal to dogs and donkeys.

Sahih Muslim, Book 004, Number 1032:

Abu Dharr reported: The Messenger of 'Allah (may peace be upon him) said: When any one of you stands for prayer ... his prayer would be cut off by (passing of an) ass, woman, and black Dog.

Sahih Muslim, Book 004, Number 1034:

Abu Huraira reported: The Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) said: A woman, an ass and a dog disrupt the prayer

Sahih Muslim, Book 004, Number 1038:

Masruq reported: It was mentioned before 'A'isha that prayer is invalidated (in case of passing) of a dog, an ass and a woman (before the worshipper, when he is not screened). Upon this 'A'isha said: You likened us to the asses and the dogs.

J. Women responsible for bad luck

Muwatta of Imam Malik ibn Anas, 54.8

21: Malik related to me from Abu Hazim ibn Dinar from Sahl ibn Sa'd as-Sa'idi that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "If it exists, it is in a horse, a woman, and a house" meaning ill luck.

22: Malik related to me from Malik from Ibn Shihab from Hamza and Salim, the sons of 'Abdullah ibn Umar, from 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar that the messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "Ill luck is in a house, a woman, and a horse."

3. Women and marriage, divorce

A. Men can marry up to four wives

Sura 4:3 – If ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly with the orphans, Marry women of your choice, Two or three or four;

Polygamy has always played a pivotal role in Islamic society. According to Islamic scholars, the roots of polygamy were noble. Muhammad is said to have had a deep concern for both orphans and widows. As men went into battle and were killed, Muhammad sought for a way to care for their widows and thus was given a revelation that men may marry up to four wives, if he could provide for their needs.



But as many have demonstrated, polygamy creates a unique set of problems for marriages. In the early 20th century, the Islamic jurist Kasim Ameen noted that, "Polygamy produces jealousies, hatred, intrigues and crimes innumerable."²⁷ Modern authors today echo those same sentiments. Nonie Darwish, a former Muslim woman and daughter of a shahid (martyr), notes that, "no law on earth will make a woman trust a man who has three other wives. Polygamy, thus, does not come for free. It has consequences to the health and happiness of the Muslim family."²⁸ For example, jealousies are bound to ensue as each wife "becomes a separate center of power against the others, resulting in fierce competition, animosity, and rivalry between members of the larger family and wives ... Mutual distrust and disrespect become the norm."²⁹ Sadly, the effect of polygamy in the home has implications for society at large because "chaos in the family caused by polygamy is transferred to chaos and corruption in society."³⁰ Even Muhammad himself encountered jealousy among his many wives. Aisha was very jealous of all the other wives, commenting at one point, "I used to say to him, 'If I could deny you the permission (to go to your other wives) I would not allow your favor to be bestowed on any other person.'"³¹

Recently, the allowance for polygamy in the Qur'an has taken on a new meaning.

See Video: Polygamy Permitted for men's sexual appetite
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n_Ve-jkxCT8

²⁷ Quoted in "Students and the Present Missionary Crisis: Addresses Delivered Before the Sixth International Convention of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, Rochester, N.Y., December 29 1909 to January 2, 1910"

²⁸ Nonie Darwish, *Cruel and Usual Punishment* (Thomas Neslon: 2008), p. 95.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 96

³¹ Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 6, Book 60, Number 312

B. Muhammad given permission to marry as many wives as he desired

Although Muslim men were limited to four wives by Allah, Muhammad himself received a special revelation that exempted him from this limitation. The exemption is found in Sura 33:50-51. Aisha, his favorite and youngest wife, suspected his revelations might be of questionable legitimacy, for when he was given these verses, she commented, "I feel that your Lord hastens in fulfilling your wishes and desires."³²



Sura 33:50 – O Prophet! We have made lawful to thee thy wives to whom thou hast paid their dowers; and those whom thy right hand possesses out of the prisoners of war whom Allah has assigned to thee; and daughters of thy paternal uncles and aunts, and daughters of thy maternal uncles and aunts, who migrated (from Makka) with thee; and any believing woman who dedicates her soul to the Prophet if the Prophet wishes to wed her - this only for thee, and not for the Believers (at large); We know what We have appointed for them as to their wives and the captives whom their right hands possess, in order that there should be no difficulty for thee.

C. But Muhammad permitted only one wife for his son-in-law Ali

Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 7, Book 62, Number 157:

Narrated Al-Miswar bin Makhrama:

I heard Allah's Apostle who was on the pulpit, saying, "Banu Hisham bin Al-Mughira have requested me to allow them to marry their daughter to Ali bin Abu Talib, but I don't give permission, and will not give permission unless 'Ali bin Abi Talib divorces my daughter in order to marry their daughter, because Fatima is a part of my body, and I hate what she hates to see, and what hurts her, hurts me.'"

D. Men can divorce wife for any reason

"Divorce is valid from any: (a) husband; (b) who is sane; (c) has reached puberty; (d) and who voluntarily effects it."³³ Notice that only a husband can initiate a divorce according to shari'a.

Muslim men can divorce their wife or wives for any reason at all or for no reason. All that is necessary is for him to pronounce the Arabic word 'talaq,' which means "divorce" or "I divorce you." After pronouncing the talaq three times, either consecutively all at once, or spread out over a period of time, the divorce is considered to be final and irrevocable. The man cannot again remarry a woman for whom he has issued a triple talaq (for exception, see Muhallil marriage below).

³² Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 6, Book 60, Number 311

³³ 'Umdat al-Salik, section n1.1

The triple talaq is not without its own set of inherent problems, especially in this age of technological advancement. Recently, a young husband from Qatar played what he thought was a practical joke on his wife while chatting with her via Skype. He texted her 'talaq' three times. An Islamic judge has ruled his marriage terminated.³⁴

Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 49, Number 859:

Narrated Aisha:

The following Verse: If a woman fears cruelty or desertion on her husband's part (i.e. the husband notices something unpleasant about his wife, such as old age or the like, and wants to divorce her, but she asks him to keep her and provide for her as he wishes). [4.128] "There is no blame on them if they reconcile on such basis."

Sura 2:229 – The divorce is twice, after that either you retain her on reasonable terms or release her with kindness..

Divorce is thrice. This honorable ayah abrogated the previous practice in the beginning of Islam, when the man had the right to take back his divorced wife even if he had divorced her a hundred times. This situation was harmful for the wife, and this is why Allah made the divorce thrice, where the husband is allowed to take back his wife after the first and the second divorce... The divorce becomes irrevocable after the third divorce.³⁵

E. Woman cannot divorce man

Although it is not impossible for a Muslim woman to divorce her husband, it is much more difficult. Whereas a man may simply pronounce the triple talaq, a woman must bring a lawsuit against her husband and have the divorce granted by a judge (Islamic khadi; judge of shariah).

Sura 2:228 – Divorced women shall wait concerning themselves for three monthly periods. Nor is it lawful for them to hide what Allah Hath created in their wombs.... And their husbands have the better right to take them back in that period, if they wish for reconciliation. And women shall have rights similar to the rights against them, according to what is equitable; but men have a degree (of advantage) over them.

Ibn Kathir quotes Sahih Muslim: *Fear Allah regarding your women, for you have taken them by Allah's covenant and were allowed to enjoy them sexually by Allah's words. You have the right on them that they do not allow anyone you dislike to sit on your mat. If they do that, then discipline them leniently. They have the right to be spent on and to be bought clothes in what is reasonable.*³⁶

³⁴ <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/lucknow/Talaq-joke-on-Skype-ends-marriage/articleshow/6818970.cms>

³⁵ *Tafsir Ibn Kathir*, vol. 1 p. 635.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 1 p. 633.

Sura 4:128 - If a wife fears cruelty or desertion on her husband's part, there is no blame on them if they arrange an amicable settlement between themselves; and such settlement is best; even though men's souls are swayed by greed.

The apparent wording of the Ayah refers to the settlement where the wife forfeits some of the rights she has over her husband, with the husband agreeing to this concession, and that this settlement is better than divorce. For instance, the Prophet kept Sawdah bint Zam'ah as his wife after she offered to forfeit her dower for A'isha. By keeping her among his wives, his Ummah may follow this kind of settlement.³⁷

Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 43, Number 630:

Narrated Aisha:

Regarding the explanation of the following verse:-- "If a wife fears Cruelty or desertion On her husband's part." (4.128) A man may dislike his wife and intend to divorce her, so she says to him, "I give up my rights, so do not divorce me." The above verse was revealed concerning such a case.

Video Clip: Divorcing woman no different than getting rid of animal that doesn't do what you want, or moving to a different apartment that you no longer like
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3-AIYUqTEBE>

F. Muhallil marriage: Woman can remarry husband after divorce only if she marries another man first and has sex with him

In pre-Islamic times, men had unlimited rights to divorce and remarry wives. There was no limitation for how many times a man could divorce his wife and then remarry her; reports suggest it was not unheard of for a man to have divorced his wife 100 times or more.

This is one area where it is said Muhammad improved the status of women. He allowed a woman to be divorced up to three times (the triple talaq), after which the man could not remarry her again. As with any ruling, there was an exception, and the exception is known as a Muhallil marriage.

If a woman wishes to be reconciled to her former husband after an irrevocable divorce, she first must marry another man, consummate that marriage with him, and then obtain a divorce from him. Upon waiting the required time ('iddah) after this divorce, she is then free to remarry her former husband.

"When a free man has pronounced a threefold divorce, the divorced wife is unlawful for him to remarry until she has married another husband in a valid

³⁷ Ibid., vol. 2 p. 601.

marriage and the new husband has copulated with her, which at minimum means that the head of his erect penis fully enters her vagina."³⁸

Sura 2:230 – So if a husband divorces his wife (irrevocably), He cannot, after that, re-marry her until after she has married another husband and He has divorced her.

Contrast this decree of the Qur'an with the Bible. According to biblical principles, Islam forces the divorced woman into adultery as a requirement to be reconciled to her former husband.

Matt. 5:31 “Furthermore it has been said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ 32 But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.

Deuteronomy 24:1-4 “When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some uncleanness in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, puts *it* in her hand, and sends her out of his house, when she has departed from his house, and goes and becomes another man’s *wife*, *if* the latter husband detests her and writes her a certificate of divorce, puts *it* in her hand, and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies who took her as his wife, *then* her former husband who divorced her must not take her back to be his wife after she has been defiled; for that *is* an abomination before the LORD.

Jeremiah 3:1 “If a man divorces his wife and she leaves him and becomes another man’s wife, he may not take her back again. Doing that would utterly defile the land.

Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 48, Number 807:

Narrated Aisha:

The wife of Rifa'a Al-Qurazi came to the Prophet and said, "I was Rifa'a's wife, but he divorced me and it was a final irrevocable divorce. Then I married AbdurRahman bin Az-Zubair but he is impotent." The Prophet asked her 'Do you want to remarry Rifa'a? You cannot unless you had a complete sexual relation with your present husband."

“Yahya related to me from Malik ... that Rifa’a ibn Simwal divorced his wife, Tamima bint Wahb, in the time of the messenger of Allah three times. She then married ‘Abd ar-Rahman ibn az-Zubayr and he turned from her and could not consummate the marriage and so he parted from her. Rifa’a wanted to marry her again and it was mentioned to the Messenger of Allah, and he forbade him to marry her. He said, ‘She is not *halal* for you until she has tasted the sweetness of intercourse.’”³⁹

³⁸ 'Umdat al-Salik, section n7.7

³⁹ *Al-Muwatta' of Imam Malik ibn Anas: The First Formulation of Islamic Law*, Aisha Bewley, translator (Inverness, Scotland: Madinah Press, 2004), 212

Muhallil and virgin wives

The laws regarding Muhallil also apply to wives whose marriage was never consummated, even if the wife remained a virgin. Thus, it is not incumbent on the husband to have consummated a marriage with a wife from whom he seeks a divorce. The same rules apply.

"A man divorced his wife three times before he had consummated the marriage, and it seemed good to him to marry her. He wanted, therefore, a opinion, and I went with him to ask 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas and Abu Hurayra on his behalf about it, and they said, 'We do not think that you should marry her until she has married another husband.'⁴⁰

"A man came and asked 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'As about a man who divorced his wife three times before he had had intercourse with her. 'Ata said, "The divorce of a virgin is one. 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'As said to me, 'You say one pronouncement completely separates her from her husband and three makes her *haram* until she has married another man.'⁴¹

G. Misyar Marriage

In a *misyar* marriage, a union takes place between a man and a woman where some of the responsibilities of both parties are surrendered. The man surrenders his right for housekeeping duties, the right of equal access to the husband among his other wives, and so forth. The wife surrenders her right to be provided for by her husband financially, to have a house owned by him to live in, and so forth. *Misyar* is often called 'travelers' marriage or 'vacation' marriage, because the man and woman live in separate dwellings, and the man 'visits' his 'wife' from time to time, the period often being specified in the marriage contract.

Critics have denounced misyar as nothing more than prostitution in religious garb. But Islamic scholars, while not directly advocating misyar, note that it fulfills all the shari'a requirements of a conventional marriage: the consent of both spouses, the payment of a dowry or mahr, the consent of the female's guardian, the presence of witnesses, and the announcement of the contract.

Misyar brings with it a multitude of problems. Most men desire to keep their misyar marriages secret, because the primary purpose of the misyar is simply for fulfilling the sexual needs of men without committing zina (fornication)⁴². However, when a pregnancy results in misyar, the wife will want the marriage made public rather than be seen as an unmarried, pregnant woman where such behavior has severe consequences. Further complications can include women who are misyar wives traveling outside the house with no guardian, who subsequently can be sent to jail by morality police.⁴³ In

⁴⁰ Al-Muwatta, p. 230

⁴¹ Al-Muwatta, p. 230

⁴² <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/0/1784.htm>

⁴³ <http://archive.arabnews.com/?page=9§ion=0&article=64891>

nations where misyar is practiced, some have noted an increase among single women to engage in misyar as a business, marrying a man for the large dowry and then blackmailing him for more money once the marriage is legal, in order to keep the marriage secret from the man's other wives or family.^{44 45}

H. Mut'a marriage

Mut'a (or Mut'ah) marriage is a religiously prescribed way in which a man can relieve his sexual tension without committing 'fornication.' It can otherwise be described as 'religiously sanctioned prostitution' because, in effect, it differs little from prostitution. In Mut'a, the man gives a woman something of value -- money, jewelry, clothing -- and in exchange the woman agrees to "marry" the man temporarily, strictly for the purpose of engaging in sexual relations. After the agreed upon time has elapsed, each goes his or her separate way with no further obligation toward the other. She has gotten her material goods, he has gotten his sex.

Mut'a is primarily a Shi'a practice. Sunnis believe Muhammad allowed Mut'a for a limited time but later abrogated the practice. Shi'ites believe no such abrogation took place. In practice however, Sunnis also engage frequently in Mut'a while traveling.

What is the basis for making a distinction between mut'a and prostitution? The primary distinction "is a religious and conceptual one: prostitution in religious thinking represents disorder, disobedience to the established rules, corruption, and indulgence in sinful and unlawful sexual activities. It is fornication, which is explicitly condemned in the Quran. It is viewed as detrimental to the society's general health and welfare, and goes against its stated ethics and ethos. While performing a similar function, muta symbolizes social control and harmony with the social order. Although serving to gratify sexual needs, it is presumably not an anti-social behavior. Rather, participants are following a divinely-recommended way to gratify these needs. Significantly, not only is muta not considered immoral, it is perceived to combat corruption and immorality."⁴⁶

The Marriage of Mut'ah ⁴⁷

Note the quotations below from this website regarding Mut'a marriages:

Whenever man sets foot on the earth the need to travel always emerges. Sometimes traveling can involve man going thousands of miles away from home, sometimes for months, even years. Do one's sexual desires just evaporate when an individual is traveling? Sexual desire isn't like some light switch that turns off when a man leaves his wife to set off on his travels, and turns back home when he gets back! Sexual

⁴⁴ <http://archive.arabnews.com/?page=1§ion=0&article=115267&d=9&m=10&y=2008>

⁴⁵ <http://singularvoice.wordpress.com/2009/04/23/prostitution-by-another-name/>

⁴⁶ Parshall, p. 140

⁴⁷ <http://www.answering-ansar.org/answers/mutah/en/index.php>

desire is something that remains permanently with a human, when it accompanies him at all times then how can he curtail such sexual feelings? When someone is traveling and accessing his wife is impossible, and he is incapable of summing her to join him, then what will a young red-blooded male do? Miles away from home, feeling sexually aroused his situation is not one wherein he can get permanently married, so what is he to do? He will feel the only way that he can relieve himself is by amalgamating himself into the society around him. Islam does not permit a person to sexually relieve himself through masturbation nor is he permitted to adopt the ways of the kufr and indulge himself in fornication, it offers him a legitimate mechanism with which to relieve himself and that is temporary marriage.

It is not just traveling, that might necessitate Mutah, there are many in society who just does not have the financial ability / standing to get permanent married, yet they still have sexual desires, again Mutah is there to ensure that they practice sex within the boundaries set by Allah (swt).

Islam is a religion that is suited for all nations and ages. Mut'ah is a good example of that. It is only the Deen of Islam that caters for sexual desire by permitting a legitimate method of control. For others societies the only mechanism that they see as the solution to relieving sexual feelings is through the practice of fornication. In the western world adultery and fornication are common and openly performed. Mut'ah is a way of protecting a person from committing these serious sins and vices.

Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 6, Book 60, Number 139:

Narrated Abdullah:

We used to participate in the holy wars carried on by the Prophet and we had no women (wives) with us. So we said (to the Prophet). "Shall we castrate ourselves?" But the Prophet forbade us to do that and thenceforth he allowed us to marry a woman (temporarily) by giving her even a garment, and then he recited: "O you who believe! Do not make unlawful the good things which Allah has made lawful for you." [Sura 5:87]

Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 7, Book 62, Number 52:

Narrated Jabir bin 'Abdullah and Salama bin Al-Akwa':

While we were in an army, Allah's Apostle came to us and said, "You have been allowed to do the Mut'a (marriage), so do it." Salama bin Al-Akwa' said: Allah's Apostle's said, "If a man and a woman agree (to marry temporarily), their marriage should last for three nights, and if they like to continue, they can do so; and if they want to separate, they can do so." I do not know whether that was only for us or for all the people in general. Abu Abdullah (Al-Bukhari) said: 'Ali made it clear that the Prophet said, "The Mut'a marriage has been cancelled (made unlawful)."

Sahih Muslim, Book 008, Number 3252:

Sabra Juhanni reported: Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) permitted temporary marriage for us. So I and another person went out and saw a woman of Bana 'Amir, who was like a young long-necked she-camel. We presented ourselves to her (for contracting temporary marriage), whereupon she said: What dower would you give

me? I said: My cloak. And my companion also said: My cloak. And the cloak of-my companion was superior to my cloak, but I was younger than he. So when she looked at the cloak of my companion she liked it, and when she cast a glance at me I looked more attractive to her. She then said: Well, you and your cloak are sufficient for me. I remained with her for three nights, and then Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) said: He who has any such woman with whom he had contracted temporary marriage, he should let her off.

Imam al-Baydawi

In his famous book, *The Interpretation of the Baydawi*, he says, "The purpose of the contractual marriage is the mere pleasure of intercourse with a woman, and her own enjoyment in what she has given" (p. 108).

I. Marriage to pre-pubescent girls

One common criticism of Islam is the marriage of Muhammad to young Aisha bint Abu Bakr. Tradition tells us that Muhammad signed a marriage contract with Aisha when she was six years old and consummated the marriage when she was nine. Although Islamic scholars claim that Islam allows marriage only to girls who have entered puberty and have monthly cycles, and thus Muhammad only consummated his marriage with Aisha because she had begun her regular cycles, the Qur'an seems to suggest something different.

Sura 65:4 – [speaking of the prescribed waiting period for a divorce] And those of your women as have passed the age of monthly courses, for them the 'Iddah (prescribed period), if you have doubts (about their periods), is three months, and for those who have no courses [(i.e. they are still immature) their 'Iddah (prescribed period) is three months likewise.

"A waiting period is obligatory for a woman divorced after intercourse, whether the husband and wife are prepubescent, have reached puberty, or one has and the other has not."⁴⁸

The prescribed waiting period (iddah) is the time after a divorce during which the woman cannot be remarried legally, in order to determine if she is pregnant. For women who have entered menopause (passed the age of monthly courses), she must wait three months after a divorce before remarrying. And for a woman (girl) who has not yet begun her monthly cycle (who have no courses), their iddah is also three months. This verse suggests that Muslim men can marry girls who have not yet entered puberty, have sexual relations with them, and subsequently divorce them. What other possible explanation can there be for the existence of this verse in the Qur'an?

Marriage to prepubescent girls is codified in Islamic law. When specifying the dowry to be paid by the groom, shari'a states, "A guardian may not marry his prepubescent daughter to someone for less than the amount typically received as marriage payment

⁴⁸ 'Umdat al-Salik, section n9.2

by similar brides."⁴⁹

Furthermore, one cannot be charged with fornication if one is defined as lacking the capacity to remain chaste. "A person is not considered to have the capacity to remain chaste if he or she ... is prepubescent at the time of marital intercourse."⁵⁰

One classification of divorce identifies that which is neither *sunna* nor *unlawful innovation* as "the divorce of a wife who is prepubescent, post-menopausal, pregnant, or one with whom one has not yet had sexual intercourse."⁵¹

Nujood Ali was 8 years old when she was married to a man in his thirties. Immediately he started beating her and raped her. Her nights were spent running from room to room in her husband's home attempting to escape sex with him, but he always overpowered her. She became a celebrity in Yemen after hailing a taxi by herself and demanding a divorce in a Yemen courthouse. She eventually prevailed, and was celebrated as Glamour magazine's Woman of the Year 2008.⁵²



Video clip: Marriage to one year old OK...

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ApXPuqllRTw>

J. Marriage to virgins

Virgins must give consent for marriage, but... "Malik related to me from Abdullah ibn al-Fadl ... 'A woman who has been previously married is more entitled to her person than her guardian and a virgin must be asked for her consent and her silence is her consent.'"⁵³

There is an abnormal obsession with a Muslim man marrying a virgin woman (but not necessarily the other way around: men are not required to be virgin).

"Knowing she would have to show her bloodied wedding-night sheets to her in-laws as proof of her virginity, she decided on hymen repair surgery. 'I honestly viewed it as life-saving,' she said. 'If my husband could not prove to his family that I was a virgin, I would be ostracized and sent home in disgrace. My father, who is a devout Muslim, would regard it as the ultimate shame. The entire family

⁴⁹ 'Umdat al-Salik, section m8.2

⁵⁰ 'Umdat al-Salik, section o12.2

⁵¹ 'Umdat al-Salik, section n2.3

⁵² <http://www.glamour.com/women-of-the-year/2008/nujood-ali-and-shada-nasser>

⁵³ *Al-Muwatta*, p. 209.

could be cast out from their friends and society, and one of my cousins or uncles might kill me to purge them of my sins."⁵⁴

Nonie Darwish, born a Muslim and raised in Egypt, notes, "Her virginity is the very focus of the Muslim societal institution of "honor." It is one thing that Muslim men must protect in their female relatives in order to preserve the family's honor."⁵⁵ The highlight of a wedding ceremony is the 'virginity test' when the couple consummates the marriage and presents to relatives the blood-stained bed sheet. Regarding this momentous occasion, Darwish comments, "Whether public or private, the virginity check creates an atmosphere of anxiety and distrust between bride and groom. This is the night when a girl who has never had sex before needs a tender and loving beginning. Instead she must worry about an unromantic and potentially painful act to prove she is honorable."⁵⁶

4. Sexual relations with women in Islam; rape

A. Men can have sex with wife as he desires

One of the 'rights' of a husband over his wife is the right to enjoy her physically, in exchange for the right of the woman to be provided with an allowance, food, clothing, and shelter. The husband has the right to demand physical relations from her at any time.

"Marriage gives the man the right to enjoy a woman's private parts. A wife must shave her pubic hair if her husband returns home at night after a long journey. A woman must keep her sexual organs ready for service at all times. If a woman claims to be having her period but her husband does not believe her, it is lawful for him to have sexual intercourse with her. A husband deserves total submission and gratitude."⁵⁷

Sura 2:222 – They ask thee concerning women's courses. Say: They are a hurt and a pollution: So keep away from women in their courses, and do not approach them until they are clean. But when they have purified themselves, ye may approach them in any manner, time, or place ordained for you by Allah.

Sura 2:223 – Your women are a tilth for you (to cultivate) so go to your tilth as ye will...

B. Wife must not withhold from her husband

When the husband calls his wife for sexual relations, she cannot refuse except under very limited circumstances; she is obligated to comply. Thus, if she refuses without just cause, the husband can force himself upon her - something known in western societies

⁵⁴ <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1298684/Surge-virginity-repair-operations-NHS.html>

⁵⁵ Nonie Darwish, *Cruel and Usual Punishment* (Thomas Nelson, 2008) p. 25

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 31

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 50

as spousal rape. The idea of spousal rape is foreign in Muslim worlds. A recent court case in New Jersey is one glaring example.

In this case, the couple wed in Morocco in July 2008 and came to New Jersey in August 2008. The woman endured many documented instances of abuse, including forced sex. Upon filing a criminal complaint against her husband and seeking a restraining order against him, she testified to the numerous times he had forced himself upon her against her wishes. When she objected, he told her "this is according to our religion. You are my wife and I can do anything to you." During the trial, the defense included Islamic law which specifies the husband's rights over his wife. In finding the defendant (husband) not guilty, the judge remarked, "This court does not feel that, under the circumstances, that this defendant had a criminal desire to or intent to sexually assault or to sexually contact the plaintiff when he did. The court believes that he was operating under his belief that it is, as the husband, his desire to have sex when and whether he wanted to, was something that was consistent with his practices and it was something that was not prohibited." In July 2010, the trial judge's verdict was overturned on appeal.⁵⁸

No doubt one piece of evidence introduced by the defense attorney would have included the following excerpt from shari'a:

"It is obligatory for a woman to let her husband have sex with her immediately when:

- a. he asks her;
- b. at home (home meaning the place in which she is currently staying, even if being lent to him or rented);
- c. and she can physically endure it."⁵⁹

Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 7, Book 62, Number 121:

Narrated Abu Huraira:

The Prophet said, "If a man invites his wife to sleep with him and she refuses to come to him, then the angels send their curses on her till morning."

Sahih Muslim, Book 008, Number 3366:

Abu Huraira (Allah be pleased with him) reported that Allah's Apostle (may peace be upon him) said: When a woman spends the night away from the bed of her husband, the angels curse her until morning.

Mishkat Al-Masabih: volume 2, p. 691

alq b. `Ali reported God's messenger as saying, "When a man calls his wife to satisfy his desire she must go to him even if she is occupied at the oven." Tirmidhi transmitted it.

Marriage in Islam is intended to protect the chastity of men and women alike, therefore it is the woman's duty to respond to her husband's requests for conjugal relations. She should not give silly excuses and try to avoid it. For this

⁵⁸ <http://lawlibrary.rutgers.edu/courts/appellate/a6107-08.opn.html>

⁵⁹ 'Umdat al-Salik, section m5.1

reason, several hadith urge a wife to respond to her husband's needs as much as she is able, no matter how busy she may be or whatever obstacles there may be, so long as there is no urgent or unavoidable reason not to do so.

The issue of protecting a man's chastity and keeping him away from temptation is more important than anything else that a woman can do, because Islam wants men and women alike to live in an environment which is entirely pure and free from any motive of fitnah or haram pleasures. The flames of sexual desire and thoughts of pursuing them through haram means can only be extinguished by means of discharging that natural energy in natural and lawful ways.⁶⁰

C. Women are treated as sexual objects

The right of a man to enjoy his wife sexually is deeply ingrained in Islam. It is one of the fundamental rights that a husband has over his wife. For a wife to refuse the sexual advances of her husband is grounds for discipline, up to and including beating her.⁶¹

The Arabic word translated as 'marriage' is 'nikkah,' which literally translated is 'sexual intercourse.' Thus, the 'marriage contract' in Islam is literally a contract to engage in sexual intercourse.⁶²

Mahr

In Islam, a man who wishes to marry a woman must give her the "bride price" or dowry. In the Qur'an the dowry is often referred to as the *ujur*, which means literally 'the wage.'⁶³ To say that a man is paying his bride a 'wage' implies he is hiring her to be his servant. In reality, this is exactly the status of many women; they are essentially household servants of their husband, in every respect. But to soften the word and make it less repulsive, in most Islamic societies the dowry is referred to as the *mahr*.

The mahr literally is 'payment for the use of a woman's vagina for sexual intercourse' and can be demonstrated through both hadith and references in shari'a manuals.⁶⁴ For example, in his commentary on Sura 4:24, Ibn Kathir writes regarding wives, "to enjoy them sexually, surrender to them their rightful dowry as compensation." According to shari'a, a bride may refuse to have sexual relations with her husband until she has been given her dowry. "A man is obliged to pay a woman the amount typically received as marriage payment ... when a man forces a woman to fornicate with him."⁶⁵ In other words, if a man has sex with a woman against her will, he simply has to give her a dowry similar to what a wife would get, for use of her sexual organs. And, "When a marriage is annulled before sexual intercourse, the woman does not receive her

⁶⁰ <http://www.msawest.net/islam/humanrelations/womeninislam/idealmuslimah/chapter4.html>

⁶¹ 'Umdat al-Salik (Reliance of the Traveller), section m10.12

⁶² Darwish, p. 31

⁶³ Darwish, p. 38.

⁶⁴ <http://www.wikiislam.net/wiki/Mahr>

⁶⁵ 'Umdat al-Salik, m8.10

marriage payment (mahr)."⁶⁶ A bride may refuse to have sexual intercourse with her husband until she has received her *mahr*.⁶⁷

Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 6, Book 60, Number 402:

Narrated Abdullah bin Qais:

Allah's Apostle said, "In Paradise there is a pavilion made of a single hollow pearl sixty miles wide, in each corner of which there are wives who will not see those in the other corners; and the believers will visit and enjoy them.

Video clip: Wives must comply with husband's demands

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ViyE2umebZA>

D. Men can have unlimited sex with female slaves

Sex slaves have been part and parcel of Islam from its beginning. When Muhammad dispatched his men to nearby tribes to conquer them, he distributed the captured booty among his men, keeping one fifth for himself. Some of the most treasured booty was female sex slaves.

Sexual slavery continues today. In 2005, Homaidan al-Turki, a Saudi national, was arrested in Colorado for keeping an Indonesian sex slave and housekeeper. During his criminal trial, he objected to being charged with a crime, insisting he did nothing wrong. "Your honor, I am not here to apologize, for I cannot apologize for things I did not do and for crimes I did not commit. The state has criminalized these basic Muslim behaviors," he told the judge.

Sura 4:3 – If ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly with the orphans, Marry women of your choice, Two or three or four; but if ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly (with them), then only one, or (a captive) that your right hands possess.

Sura 4:23-24 – Forbidden to you are your mothers and your daughters and your sisters and your paternal aunts and your maternal aunts and brothers' daughters and sisters' daughters and your mothers that have suckled you and your foster-sisters and mothers of your wives and your step-daughters who are in your guardianship, (born) of your wives to whom you have gone in, but if you have not gone in to them, there is no blame on you (in marrying them), and the wives of your sons who are of your own loins and that you should have two sisters together... [24] Also (prohibited are) women already married, except those whom your right hands possess: Thus hath Allah ordained (Prohibitions) against you.

Sura 23:2-6 – Those who humble themselves in their prayers; Who avoid vain talk; Who are active in deeds of charity; Who abstain from sex, Except with those joined to them in the marriage bond, or (the captives) whom their right hands possess,- for (in their case) they are free from blame, But those whose desires exceed those limits are

⁶⁶ 'Umda al-Salik, m7.2

⁶⁷ 'Umdat al-Salik, m8.6

transgressors.

Sura 33:50 – O Prophet! We have made lawful to thee thy wives to whom thou hast paid their dowers; and those whom thy right hand possesses out of the prisoners of war whom Allah has assigned to thee;

Sahih Muslim

Chapter 29: IT IS PERMISSIBLE TO HAVE SEXUAL INTERCOURSE WITH A CAPTIVE WOMAN AFTER SHE IS PURIFIED (OF MENSES OR DELIVERY) IN CASE SHE HAS A HUSBAND, HER MARRIAGE IS ABROGATED AFTER SHE BECOMES CAPTIVE

Book 008, Number 3432:

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri (Allah be pleased with him) reported that at the Battle of Hanain Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) sent an army to Autas and encountered the enemy and fought with them. Having overcome them and taken them captives, the Companions of Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) seemed to refrain from having intercourse with captive women because of their husbands being polytheists. Then Allah, Most High, sent down regarding that: "And women already married, except those whom your right hands possess (iv. 24)" (i. e. they were lawful for them when their 'Idda period came to an end).

Sahih Muslim, Book 008, Number 3371:

Abu Sirma said to Abu Sa'id al-Khadri (Allah be pleased with him): O Abu Sa'id, did you hear Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) mentioning al-'azl? He said: Yes, and added: We went out with Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) on the expedition to the Bi'l- Mustaliq and took captive some excellent Arab women; and we desired them, for we were suffering from the absence of our wives, (but at the same time) we also desired ransom for them. So we decided to have sexual intercourse with them but by observing 'azl (Withdrawing the male sexual organ before emission of semen to avoid-conception). But we said: We are doing an act whereas Allah's Messenger is amongst us; why not ask him? So we asked Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him), and he said: It does not matter if you do not do it, for every soul that is to be born up to the Day of Resurrection will be born.

If we examine the volumes of Ibn Timiyya, we read in volume 32, p.7 I the following plain text:

"It is lawful for a Muslim to (have sex) with as many as he wishes of those whom his right hand possesses, ... Muslims are not prohibited from having more than four concubines provided that no two sisters are among them."

This is similar to a quotation from Ibn Hazm. In the same volume (page 89), Ibn Timiyya says boastfully,

"Islam has made it lawful to its followers to have sex through marriage as well as with what the right hand possesses, while (for Jews and Christians) they may

have sex through marriage only. They are not (allowed to have sex with) what their hand possesses.

E. Hadith suggests marrying young women so they can be fondled

Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 38, Number 504:

Narrated Jabir bin 'Abdullah:

I was accompanying the Prophet on a journey and was riding a slow camel that was lagging behind the others. The Prophet passed by me and asked, "Who is this?" I replied, "Jabir bin 'Abdullah." He asked, "What is the matter, (why are you late)?" I replied, "I am riding a slow camel." He asked, "Do you have a stick?" I replied in the affirmative. He said, "Give it to me." When I gave it to him, he beat the camel and rebuked it. Then that camel surpassed the others thenceforth. The Prophet said, "Sell it to me." I replied, "It is (a gift) for you, O Allah's Apostle." He said, "Sell it to me. I have bought it for four Dinars (gold pieces) and you can keep on riding it till Medina." When we approached Medina, I started going (towards my house). The Prophet said, "Where are you going?" I said, "I have married a widow." He said, "Why have you not married a virgin to fondle with each other?"

Sahih al-Bukhari Volume 1, Book 6, Number 298:

Narrated 'Aisha:

The Prophet and I used to take a bath from a single pot while we were Junub. During the menses, he used to order me to put on an Izar (dress worn below the waist) and used to fondle me.

F. Girls should have their first sex before their first period

The Ayatollah Khomeini of Iran married a ten-year-old girl when he was twenty-eight. Khomeini called marriage to a prepubescent girl "a divine blessing," and advised the faithful: "Do your best to ensure that your daughters do not see their first blood in your house."

Kohmeini took this idea to the extreme. Since legally there is no minimum age requirement for entering into a marriage contract, a father or guardian can allow a one-year old toddler to "marry." In this regard, Kohmeini says:

"A man can quench his sexual lusts with a child as young as a baby. However, he should not penetrate. Sodomizing the baby is *halal* [allowed by shari'a]. If the man penetrates and damages the child, then he should be responsible for her subsistence all her life. This girl, however, does not count as one of his four permanent wives ... It is better for a girl to marry when her menstruation starts, and at her husband's house rather than her father's home. Any father marrying his daughter so young will have a permanent place in heaven."⁶⁸

⁶⁸ Darwish, p. 57

This is all in accord with the Qur'an and shari'a. See the section above on marriage to prepubescent girls.

G. Female responsible and punished for rape

Four Witnesses

Shari'a dictates that a woman who accuses another of raping or sodomizing her must be able to provide witnesses to the event. Otherwise, she is deemed to have engaged in unlawful fornication and subject to punishment.



"If testimony concerns fornication or sodomy, then it requires four male witnesses who testify, in the case of fornication, that they have seen the offender insert the head of his penis into her vagina."⁶⁹

Bride money paid for raping a woman

When a man and a woman commit fornication voluntarily, both suffer punishment according to shari'a. But when a man forces himself on a woman against her consent, and there are not four male witnesses, the man walks free while the woman is punished. And even if rape can be proven in this case, the penalty for the man is very small indeed.

"A man is obligated to pay a woman the amount typically received as marriage payment by similar brides ... when a man forces a woman to fornicate with him."⁷⁰

In March 2007, a 19-year-old Saudi woman received a sentence of 90 lashes. Her crime? A man threatened to tell her father that they were having an affair unless she met him alone. When she did, she was kidnapped and repeatedly raped, after which her brother beat her because the rapes brought shame to the family. Rather than giving her justice, a Saudi court sentenced her to be lashed ninety times because she had met a man alone who was not related to her. Fuziyah Al Ouni, a feminist activist, said she was outraged by the case. 'By sentencing her to 90 lashes they are sending a message that she is guilty.'⁷¹

"In 2004, a sixteen-year old girl, Atefeh Rajabi, was hanged in a public square in Iran.

⁶⁹ 'Umdat al-Salik, section o24.9

⁷⁰ 'Umdat al-Salik, section m8.10

⁷¹ http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticleNew.asp?section=middleeast&xfile=data/middleeast/2007/march/middleeast_march71.xml

Her crime? Rajabi was charged with adultery -- which probably means she was raped. Her rapist was not executed. Rajabi told the mullah-judge, Haji Rezaii, the he ought to punish men who rape, not their victims." The judge both sentenced and personally hanged Rajabi because, in addition to her crime, he said that she had "a sharp tongue."⁷²

On November 1, 2008 a 13-year-old girl in Somalia was stoned to death after being raped by three men. She was unable to produce the required four witnesses to the rape and was therefore accused of adultery as required by Shari'a law. It was reported that the girl begged for mercy before being buried waist high in the ground and pummeled to death by a mob of 1,000.^{73 74}

Islamic law restricts the validity of a woman's testimony, particularly in cases involving sexual immorality. And Islamic legal theorists have limited it even farther, in the words of one Muslim legal manual, to "cases involving property, or transactions dealing with property, such as sales." In other judicial areas only men can testify. It is virtually impossible, therefore, to prove rape in lands that follow these *Sharia* provisions. If the required male witnesses can't be found to exonerate her (four men who testify to seeing the actual crime, according to the Koran), the victim's charge of rape can become an admission of adultery. That accounts for the grim fact that as many as seventy-five percent of the women in prison in Pakistan are, in fact, behind bars for the crime of having been raped.⁷⁵

"Malik said, "The position with us about a woman who is found to be pregnant and has no husband and she says, 'I was forced,' or she says, 'I was married,' is that it is not accepted from her and the *hadd* is inflicted on her unless she has clear evidence of what she claims about the marriage or being forced or if she comes bleeding if she was a virgin or she calls out for help so that someone comes to her and she is in that state or what resembles of it of the situation in which the violation occurred." He said, "If she does not produce any of those, the *hadd* is inflicted on her and whatever such claims she makes are not accepted from her."⁷⁶

H. Muhammad married Aisha at 6, had sex at 9 years of age

Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 5, Book 58, Number 236:

Narrated Hisham's father: Khadija died three years before the Prophet departed to Medina. He stayed there for two years or so and then he married 'Aisha when she was a girl of six years of age, and he consumed that marriage when she was nine years old.

⁷² <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/personal-view/3610188/Death-and-the-maiden-in-Iran.html>

⁷³ http://www.news24.com/News24/Africa/News/0,,2-11-1447_2419716,00.html

⁷⁴ <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/worldnews/article-1081214/Somali-girl-pleaded-mercy-Islamists-stoned-death-raped.html?ITO=1490>

⁷⁵ http://www.sistersinislam.org.my/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=437&Itemid=194

⁷⁶ Al-Muwatta, p. 347.

Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 7, Book 62, Number 64:

Narrated 'Aisha: that the Prophet married her when she was six years old and he consummated his marriage when she was nine years old, and then she remained with him for nine years (i.e., till his death).

Sahih Muslim, Book 008, Number 3311:

'A'isha (Allah be pleased with her) reported that Allah's Apostle (may peace be upon him) married her when she was seven years old, and he was taken to his house as a bride when she was nine, and her dolls were with her; and when he (the Holy Prophet) died she was eighteen years old.

Clearly the young, under developed bodies of young girls are not ready for the physical demands of sexual intercourse with older males. Nor are they ready for the inevitable outcome of unprotected sex: childbirth. One would think the author of the Qur'an would have known this and would have allowed limitations on sexual activity with young girls not ready for such activity.



Yemeni Bride, 11, Hospitalized with Genital Injuries

By LARA SETRAKIAN (@LaraABCNews)
April 13, 2010

abc NEWS

An 11-year-old Yemeni girl who was married to a man in country's Hajja province was hospitalized today with genital injuries, said a human rights group in Sanaa.

It was the second incident involving a child bride in the last week. A 13-year-old girl died after being sexually assaulted by her adult husband. Both girls were married in the country's rural Hajja province.

The 11-year-old girl was married last year only under the condition that the adult husband would wait until she reached puberty to consummate the marriage. He did not wait, nor do many of the men who marry young brides, says Amal Basha, director of the Arabic Sisters Forum.

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According to ABC News, on average eight women die each day in Yemen due to child marriage, most of them during childbirth, quoting the Arabic Sisters Forum.

See video clip: Bahrain women's activist on child sexual abuse authorized by Shari'a

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hth0YiPhcCE>

5. Women – dress requirements, modesty

A. Women must cover to control the sexual desires of men

Although a few Muslim women like to wear a hijab or niqab or chador, most find it confining, stifling, limiting. Sadly, the reason Muslim women cover themselves is not for the sake of modesty as is often claimed, but for protection from the "wondering eyes" of Muslim men. Indeed, a Western woman walking down a street in an Islamic nation, dressed like she dresses back home, is looked at by Muslim men as a "whore" and as an invitation for rape.



A missionary couple who worked and lived in Bangladesh for over 20 years make the following observation: "Why is it that Saudi women are compelled to become anonymous in order to feel secure? How is it that a formless, seamless, colorless garment is required in order for a woman to be considered decent and respectable? Is wearing such a defense the only what that family honor can be preserved? Are Saudi

men so uncouth, so brutal, so aggressive that the women need to retreat into multiple yards of stifling hot cloth in order to be protected?"⁷⁷

⁷⁷ Phil Parshall, Janet Parshall, *Lifting the Veil* (Authentic Media: 2002), p. 64-65.

"In Arabia before the advent of Islam it was customary to bury female infants alive. Muhammad improved on the barbaric method and discovered a way by which all females could be buried alive and yet live on -- namely, the veil."⁷⁸

Sura 33:59 - O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks (veils) all over their bodies (i.e. screen themselves completely except the eyes or one eye to see the way). That will be better, that they should be known (as free respectable women) so as not to be annoyed. And Allâh is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

Sura 24:31 – And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what (must ordinarily) appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, their fathers, their husband's fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their women, or the slaves whom their right hands possess, or male servants free of physical needs, or small children who have no sense of the shame of sex; and that they should not strike their feet in order to draw attention to their hidden ornaments.

In the Muslim holy city of Mecca in March 2002, fifteen teenage girls perished in a fire at their school when the Saudi religious police, the muttawa, wouldn't let them out of the building. Why? Because in the female-only school environment, they had shed the all-concealing outer garments that Saudi women must wear in the presence of men. They had not put these garments back on before trying to flee from the fire. The muttawa preferred that they die rather than transgress Islamic law, and actually battled police and firemen who were trying to open the school's doors and to save the girls.

Wearing the full covering brings with it certain health problems also. It is a well established fact of physiology that vitamin D, necessary for healthy bones, is produced by the skin under natural sunlight. When the skin is covered and remains hidden from the sun, vitamin D deficiency results, and is manifest in rickets and other similar conditions. Reports have demonstrated a connection between Muslim women and an increased incidence of rickets.⁷⁹ Babies of Muslim women are also suffering from insufficient bone development from the lack of vitamin D in breast milk.⁸⁰

Video: Cairo then and now, no veils to completely veiled

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XMKoTwGSmKA>

Video: Egyptian activist on being veiled

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6KbM4BpMLsI>

⁷⁸ Our Moslem Sisters, p. 2

⁷⁹ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/1154211.stm>

⁸⁰ <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-469196/Women-hijabs-need-sunlight-risk-illness.html>

Conclusion

A religion or ideology is defined by what it's sacred and authoritative texts say, not by the actions of its adherents. This author acknowledges the existence of happy marriages among Muslims. But do these happy marriages exist due to the teaching found in Islamic texts, or do they exist in spite of these teachings?

I have shown, using only Islamic sources, that Islam teaches a very low view of women. They are given half the worth of men in terms of inheritance, testimony in legal cases, and for the indemnity paid for their death. Women are considered the object by which men can fulfill their sexual urges and desires. Women must submit to their husbands sexually whenever he demands and cannot refuse. Men can marry multiple wives, of any age, and may divorce a wife at will, while women have almost no right to divorce. Muhammad taught that women are lacking in intelligence and are the majority of the dwellers in hell. Women can be bought and sold like any other property, and are viewed as no more valuable than a dog or a donkey. Husbands or fathers can murder rebellious wives or daughters to maintain family honor. Young girls are routinely subjected to a barbaric disfigurement of their genitals, depriving them of future sexual pleasure as women, in order to protect their "honor."

Yet we continue to hear Muslim apologists, both male and female, attempt to convince the uninformed that Islam actually respects women and elevates their status. How sad. How blinded they are. How deep the deception we call Islam.

Video clip: Synopsis of men/women in Islam

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tGcdo5oRiuA>

Comparison: Christianity vs. Islam on Women

	Islam	Christianity
EQUALITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women deficient in intellect • Testimony of woman ½ that of man • Woman gets ½ the inheritance of man 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male and female both created in the image of God – Gen 1:27 • Both can approach God directly – Heb. 4:14-16 • All believers are equal in Christ – Gal. 3:28
SEXUAL RELATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women treated as objects of sexual satisfaction • Woman must not refuse her husband's desires or suffer Allah's curses • Men can have sex with slaves • Temporary marriages to satisfy men's physical needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woman and man lovingly give themselves to one another – 1 Cor. 7:3-5 • Lustful thoughts equated to adultery – Matt. 5:28 • No such thing as temporary marriages • Those who succumb to fleshly lusts are children of wrath – Eph. 2:3 • Flee youthful lust; pursue righteousness – 2 Tim. 2:22
MARRIAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men can marry multiple wives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One man and one woman is God's design – Gen. 2:24, 1 Cor. 7:2
DIVORCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Man can divorce for any reason • A divorced woman cannot be reconciled to her husband until first marrying another man and having sex with him, and then divorcing him. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Except for adultery, divorce is forbidden – Matt. 5:31 • A divorced man or woman who remarries commits adultery – Mark 10:11-12 • Husband should not divorce; wife should not divorce, must remain unmarried if she does until reconciled to her husband – 1 Cor. 7:10-11
AUTHORITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men are the controllers and maintainers of women • Disobedient wife can be beaten • Wife must obey husband's commands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wives submit to the authority of the husband, like the church submits to Christ – Eph. 5:22-24, Col. 3:18 • Husbands must love wives as they love themselves – Eph. 5:25-28 • Husbands must not be angry with their wives – Col. 3:19 • Live with wives in an understanding way, show her honor as a fellow heir of grace – 1 Peter 3:7
MODESTY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women must cover to avoid tempting a man sexually • Woman responsible for man's sexual advances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modest dress emphasized over worldliness, nothing to do with sexual control – 1 Tim. 2:9-10 • Men and women are responsible for their own sexual choices – Prov. 5, Prov. 6:20-29 • Men must shield their gaze from lustful temptations – Job 31:1

Testimonies of ex-Muslim women

Parvin Darabi⁸¹

Parvin Darabi recounts the last moments of her sister's life. Homa Darabi committed suicide rather than continue to live the repressive life of a woman in post-1979 Iran.

During her professional life my sister was under pressure from some parents of her younger patients to give the label of "mentally incapacitated" to many perfectly intelligent young girls so that they could be saved from the tortures of the zealots (150 strokes of a whip for things such as wearing makeup or lipstick). Having to label these young women truly broke my sister's heart. When a sixteen-year-old girl was shot to death in northern Tehran for wearing lipstick, my sister could no longer handle the guilt she felt about her former involvement in the Iranian Revolutionary Guard. She finally decided to protest the oppression of women by setting herself on fire in a crowded square in northern Tehran on February 21, 1994. Her last cries were, 'Death to tyranny! Long live liberty! Long live Iran.'

Each time my family members visited a girl as a potential wife for my uncle or cousins, their evaluation of the poor young girl would make me sick. It was as if they were buying a piece of furniture. The only thing important was her physical features.

The way the Muslims in my family and neighborhood acted, it was clear that a woman's treasure was her virginity before marriage and her vagina after marriage.

In 1991, the Prosecutor-General of Iran declared that "anyone who rejects the principle of *hijab* is an apostate and the punishment for an apostate under Islamic law is death." Girls condemned to death may not undergo the sentence as long as they are virgin. Thus they are systematically raped before the sentence is executed.

The only thing the Islamic Republic has brought to the Iranian people is poverty and misery. At the time of the revolution Khomeini told people that God was on their side. If this is what we will get by having God on our side, I am so pleased to not have Khomeini's so-called "God" on mine.

Yagmur Darsun

I was born in rural Turkey. Generally, Turkish women enjoy many freedoms that our Arab sisters can't even think of. Rural Turkey is a different story. Honor killings take place every day, women don't have much say (if any) in household matters, and female employment is out of the question. However, much hard work is done by women because men don't want to strain themselves. If a husband tells you to do something, you have to obey.

I was a disciplined and obedient girl, unlike my sister who was somewhat uppity. When she was eighteen, she fell in love with a young man. They both loved each other, but he was

⁸¹ Susan Crimp and Joel Richardson, editors, *Why We Left Islam: Former Muslims Speak Out* (Los Angeles: WND Books, 2008), pp. 1-18.

meant for another girl, thus his parents had decided. Dating is utterly forbidden in Islam; marriages are arranged and often young people meet on their wedding day.

My sister was rebellious. She “dated” that young man. Every night she would go to see him. They even kissed and then their relationship went too far: she got pregnant.

I remember their young faces. I could see they were happy. Their happiness made me happy, too, and I wanted to smile.

Instead of eloping, they decided to speak to my father. Pregnancy is a very good reason to get permission for marriage, or so they thought.

Alas, my sister had miscalculated my father’s love for her and his obsession with his religion. He became furious. Instead of letting the two young lovers marry and build their nest of love, he took her to the religious elders and they ruled that she had committed adultery. She was sentenced to death by stoning. They showed no mercy even for her unborn child. She had stained the “honor” of the family and the only to remove that stain was to nip her life in the bud. Her unborn baby was a stain, too, and that little creature had to be destroyed as well so my family could live honorably.

I still remember her black eyes; she stared into the sky while she was dug into the ground. She was wrapped in white sheets and her hands were tied to her body. She was buried up to her waist. The rabid mob circled her with stones in their hands and started throwing them at her while the roars of *Allah-u-Akbar!*, *Allah-u-Akbar!* added to their frenzy. She twitched with pain as the stones hit her tender body and smashed her head. Blood gushed out from her face, cheeks, mouth, nose, and eyes. All she could do was to bend to the left and to the right. Gradually the movements slowed down and finally she stopped moving even though the shower of the stones did not stop. Her head fell to her chest. Her bloodied face remained serene. All the pain had gone. The hysterical mob relented and the chant of *Allah-u-Akbar* stopped. Her bright black eyes that beamed with life were shut. Her jovial laughter that filled the world around her was silenced. Her heart that beat with such a heavenly love for only a short time had stopped. Her unborn baby was not given a chance to breathe one breath of air.

The saddest part is that, according to Islam, my sister deserved that death. The elders were sure she would be burning in hell for eternity.

I do hate Islam. Islam preserved the worst in our culture, reducing women into slavery and keeping them ignorant. When I look at my daughters, I pray that they may live in a free world, free from Islam and this slavery.

Women's Advocacy Group:

Arab American Family Services

9044 S Octavia

Bridgeview, IL 60455

708-599-2237

<http://www.arabamericanfamilyservices.org/index.asp>

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