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## **WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN ISLAM**

This article is devoted to the consideration of the legal status of women in Islam. Relevance of the work is mentioned in introduction. This topic has been relevant from past times, and to this day is also relevant not only in certain regions, but also all over the world. Before writing the main part, a brief comparative analysis of the rights and position of women in ancient civilizations such as Greek civilization, the kingdom of Manu (Hinduism), Judaism and Arab countries before the Islamic period was made. The main part was devoted to the consideration of the rights of a Muslim woman. Islam elevated the status of a woman so much that when she was born she opens the door to jannah, and by becoming a mother, paradise is under her feet. In the Holy Quran, even there are surahs dedicated to women «An-Nisa» that in Arabic means «Women» and «Maryam». And the prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) became an example in relation to women for all mankind. The article contains the hadiths. Islam showed that a woman is also a man and has the same number of rights as a man. Compared with men, women in religion are granted privileges in worship or duties in some cases. All this in turn shows up to what trifles in Islam all is thought of. In the final part, emphasis is placed on the fact that, contrary to the generally accepted opinion, women in Islam have sufficient rights and privileges.

Key words: Islam, women, rights, status.

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# Исламдағы әйел құқығы

Бұл мақала исламдағы әйелдердің құқықтық мәртебесін зерттеуге арналған. Кіріспеде жұмыстың өзектілігі көрсетіледі. Бұл тақырып бұрынғы заманда ғана емес, қазіргі заманда да бүкіл әлем бойынша өзекті. Негізгі бөлімге дейін ислам кезеңінен бұрын ежелгі грек өркениеті, ману патшалығы мен яһудилік пен араб елдеріндегі әйелдердің құқықтары мен қоғамдағы орнына салыстырмалы талдау жасалды. Негізгі бөлім мұсылман әйелдің құқықтарын қарастыруға арналған. Ислам діні әйелдің дәрежесін жоғары көтерді. Егер қыз туылса, жаннатқа есік ашады, ал ана болғанда жаннаттың кілті аяғының астында болады. Қасиетті Құранда әйел адамға «Ан-Ниса» араб тілінен аударғанда «әйелдер» мен «Мәриям» секілді сүрелер арналған. Бүкіл адамзатқа үлгі болған Мұхаммед пайғамбар (Оған Алланың игілігі мен сәлемі болсын!) әйел адамға қандай қарым-қатынас жасау керектігін хадистерде айтып кеткен. Ислам діні әйелдің де адам екенін және еркекпен бірдей дәрежеде құқығы бар екендігін көрсетеді. Ер адамға қарағанда әйел адамға дінде құлшылықта және кейбір міндеттемеде жеңілдіктер қарастырылған. Осының барлығы ислам дінінде қамтылған. Қорытынды бөлімде жалпыға ортақ пікірлерге қарамастан, исламдағы әйелдердің құқығы әлдеқайда зор екендігін және әйел адамға арналып жеңілдіктер жасалғаны көрсетіледі.

Түйін сөздер: ислам діні, әйел адам, құқық, мәртебе.

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### Права женщины в исламе

В статье рассматривается правовой статус женщины в Исламе. Данная тема актуальна не только в отдельных регионах, но и во всем мире. До написания основной части был сделан краткий сравнительный анализ прав и положений женщины в древних цивилизациях, таких как греческая цивилизация, королевство ману (индуизм), иудаизм и арабские страны до исламского периода. Основная часть посвящена рассмотрению прав мусульманской женщины. Ислам возвысил статус женщины настолько, что, родившись, она открывает дверь в рай, а став матерью рай, находится под ее ногами. В Священном Коране даже есть суры, посвященные женщинам, – «Ан-Ниса», что в переводе с арабского означает «Женщины» и «Марьям». А примером по отношению к женщинам для всего человечества стал пророк Мухаммад (да благословит его Аллах и приветствует!). Ислам показал, что женщина тоже человек и обладает таким же количеством прав, что и мужчина. По сравнению с мужчинами, женщинам в религии предоставлены в некоторых случаях льготы в поклонении или в обязанностях. Все это, в свою очередь, показывает, до каких мелочей в исламе все придусмотрено. В заключительной части сделан акцент на то, что вопреки общепринятому мнению женщины в Исламе обладают достаточным объемом прав и льгот.

Ключевые слова: ислам, женщина, право, статус.

### Introduction

The story of woman's rights and her liberty is one of the live and attractive issues being discussed over the last few years in the Eastern circles. Islamic countries are also faced with this debate, and different societies have different views in this regard, positive or negative. Women in Islam are thought to be subjugated, degraded, oppressed – but are they really so? Are millions of Muslims simply that oppressive or are these misconceptions fabricated by a biased media? To judge the status of women in Islam, we must know their status in the religions and nations that preceded Islam. Then, we will discuss her status under Islam given that there is a long period of time between us and the time of the Prophet Muhammad(peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). In introduction I want to say about before Islam, status of woman was degraded and base in most nations. They did not consider her human being with a soul; rather, they used to believe that she is created from a base soul and that she is the source of evil and sin. The distinction that Islam gave to woman set a precedent in history of mankind fourteen centuries ago. A considerable amount of research by Russian and foreign scientists has been devoted to this topic. Especially noticeable is the intensity of research on the rights of women in religion. This topic was considered by M. Isahan, K. Kurmanbayev, A. Abdirasilkyzy and etc.

The object of the study is a woman and her rights pre Islamic period and after Islam.

The subject of the study is to identify the rights of women in Islam. Religious analysis of women's

rights and their applications, prevention of various contradictions in social development. For this purpose it is planned to consider the following tasks:

- definition of the meaning and functional concepts of the concept of law;
- a comprehensive analysis of the problems of women in Islam.

# **Status of women in Hinduism:**

According to the Hindu Laws of Manu, the woman had no rights. She was a mere servant to her husband or father. She did not have the competence to dispose of her property, and she had no right of ownership. Anything that she owned was the property of her husband, father or son. Also, when her husband died, she has to be burnt alive and buried with him. This heinous crime lasted even after the start of the British occupation in India which imposed laws banning the act of burning women alive. Nevertheless, the burning of wives continued from time to time even in the twentieth century (Абуль-ХасанАлиан-Надви 2006: 192).

Status of women in the ancient Greek civilization:

In ancient times, Greece was the most civilized and urbanized nation. Athens was the city of wisdom, philosophy, medicine and knowledge. However, the people of Athens used to buy and sell the woman as if she were a mere commodity. They considered the woman nothing but defilement from the devil's handiwork. You will be amazed to know that the Spartan women were allowed in the past to

marry more than one husband. Undoubtedly, this was one of the most abominable customs (АлиАб-дулуахидУафи 1999: 9-11).

Status of women in Judaism:

The woman in Judaism was in the rank of a servant. The father had the right to sell his underage daughter. She had no right to inherit if her father had no male offspring. It is stated in the Old Testament (the distorted Torah) that the woman should not inherit as long as there are males in the family; rather, she is part of the inheritance.

She was believed to be the source of evil and sin. They considered her impure especially on the days she was menstruating and whoever touched her during this time became impure for seven days. They blamed her for the expulsion of Aadam (Adam), from Paradise, as they believe that she enticed him to eat the apple from the forbidden tree. They considered her the reason behind the eternal curse that befell Aadam and his offspring. Accordingly, all her offspring are born stained with the disgrace of sin.

Status of the woman in Arab Society before Islam:

At pre-Islamic period Arabs regarded the woman as a piece of property or as rubbish. When her husband died, his guardian would cover the wife of the deceased with his garment and she could not remarry until he permitted her or until she ransomed herself. They used to prevent her from remarrying until the young matrimonial guardian would grow up and then decide whether he wishes to marry her or make her in marrying with anyone else and take the dowry as long as she was not his mother. If she was his mother, he would not marry her. The woman had no rights and she did not inherit anything. She was considered a source of humiliation and shame (Рауая бинт Ахмад Абдулкарим аз-Заһар 2003:63).

Islam prohibited all this and allocated for her a specific share in inheritance. Allah Almighty Says (what means): «For men is a share of what the parents and close relatives leave, and for women is a share of what the parents and close relatives leave, be it little or much — an obligatory share» [Quran 4:7] (Translation of the meaning of The Noble Quran in the english language by Dr. Muhammad Taqi-ud-din Al-Hilali and Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan 2006).

Moreover, the Arabs in the pre-Islamic era did not only deprive the woman of inheritance but also deprived her of life itself. When some of them begot a female child, they would dig a hole and throw her into it and heap dust over her. What is worse and more disgusting is that once, a father was away travelling when his wife gave birth. When he came back, he took his grown up daughter from her mother, dug a hole while she removed the dust from his clothes, and then, taking her by surprise, pushed her into the hole then heaped dust over her while she screamed for pity. But his heart did not soften for her. This situation is described in Quran when Allah Almighty Says (what means): *«And when the girl [who was] buried alive is asked\* For what sin she was killed»* [Quran 81:8-9] (Translation of the meaning of The Noble Quran in the english language by Dr. Muhammad Taqi-ud-din Al-Hilali and Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan 2006).

Some mothers used to fear this painful destiny. So, the mother would dig a hole herself during her pregnancy. If she has a girl, she would throw her into the hole in order to save her from the tragedy that would take place when the father returned from traveling. Some mothers would strangle their baby daughters after delivering them. Some fathers' faces used to turn dark when they received the news that their wives had given birth to a girl because of their intense hatred for girls, and they would be hesitant whether to bury her alive or bear the humiliation and let her live. Allah Almighty Says (what means): «And when one of them is informed of [the birth of] a female, his face becomes dark, and he suppresses grief. He hides himself from the people because of the ill of which he has been informed. Should he keep it in humiliation or bury it in the ground? Unquestionably, evil is what they decide» [Quran 16:58-59] (Translation of the meaning of The Noble Quran in the english language by Dr. Muhammad Taqi-ud-din Al-Hilali and Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan 2006).

Their hatred for girls was based on two reasons: First, girls do not take part in wars. Second, they feared that the girl may later become a source of shame. Despite their fear of shame, strangely enough, we find that many Arab tribes were quite lenient in the face of prostitution and that they used to force their slave girls into prostitution until Allah Almighty revealed the verse forbidding this act (which means): «And do not compel your slave girls to prostitution, if they desire chastity, to seek [thereby] the temporary interests of worldly life. And if someone should compel them, then indeed, Allah is [to them], after their compulsion, Forgiving and Merciful» [Ouran 24:33] (Translation of the meaning of The Noble Quran in the english language by Dr. Muhammad Taqi-ud-din Al-Hilali and Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan 2006).

This means that Allah the Almighty forgives the slave girls who were compelled only, not those who compelled them. The most notorious in this respect was 'Abdullaah bin Ubayy ibn Salool the head of the hypocrites in Al-Madeenah who used to make money by compelling his slave girls to be prostitutes. When this practice was prohibited by the revealed verses of the Quran, he was furious but then later he yielded in submission.

Women in the pre-Islamic era used to expose their adornments and entice men. Noble verses of the Quran were revealed to prohibit Muslim women from imitating the disbelieving women just as Muslim men were prohibited before them from imitating the disbelieving men. Allah The Almighty Says addressing women (what means): *«And do not display yourselves as [was] the display of the former times of ignorance»* [Quran 33:33]. Allah The Almighty ordered them to stay in their homes when He Says (what means): *«And abide in your houses»* [Quran 33:33] (Translation of the meaning of The Noble Quran in the english language by Dr. Muhammad Taqi-ud-din Al-Hilali and Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan 2006).

The woman of today is like the woman in the pre-Islamic era in terms of exposing adornments and immorality. However, the exposure of adornments in the pre-Islamic era was unsophisticated and naïve, whereas the woman's exposure of adornments nowadays is wrapped in manicure, pedicure, perfumes, cosmetics, revealing clothes and hair-cuts which look like the humps of the camel which incline women to evil and invite men to it. It is time we noticed the humiliated state of women in these times and discussed the status of women in Islam in order to see the great difference between that low degrading status and the refined, sublime status that Islam granted them (Ализаде, 2008)

Over 1 400 years ago, Islam gave women rights that those in the west have only recently began to enjoy. In the 1930s, Annir Besant observed, «It is only in the last 20 years that Christian England has recognised the right of women to property, while Islam has allowed this right from all times. It is a slander to say that Islam preaches that women have no souls.» Islam was revealed at a time when a lot of people denied the humanity of the woman; some were sceptical about it; and still others admitted it, yet considered the woman a thing created for the humble service of the man. With the advent of Islam, circumstances improved for the woman. The woman's dignity and humanity were restored. Islam confirmed her capacity to carry out Allah's commands, her responsibilities and observation of the commands that lead to heaven. Islam considered the woman as a worthy human being, with a share in humanity equal to that of the man. Both are two branches of a single tree and two children from the same father, Adam, and mother, Eve. Their single origin, their general human traits, their responsibility for the observation of religious duties with the consequent reward or punishment, and the unity of their destiny all bear witness to their equality from the Islamic point of view (Islamic pamphlets).

Establishing this fact, the Noble Qur'an says: «O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Adam) and from him (Adam) He created his wife (Eve), and from them both He created many men and women and fear Allah through Whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allah is Ever an All-Watcher over you » Quran 4:1] (Translation of the meaning of The Noble Ouran in the english language by Dr. Muhammad Tagi-ud-din Al-Hilali and Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan 2006). That people all people men and women, were created by their Lord from a single person or self, that this self is a nucleus from which Allah created an integral counterpart that completes this original self and is completed by it, is stated in another verse: «It is He Who has created you from a single person (Adam), and (then) He has created from him his wife (Eve), in order that he might enjoy the pleasure of living with her» [Quran 7:189](Translation of the meaning of The Noble Quran in the english language by Dr. Muhammad Taqi-ud-din Al-Hilali and Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan 2006). Eventually Allah, out of this nuclear pair, scattered the multitudes of men and women, all worshippers of a single God and children of the same parents implying they are united in a fraternity, embracing men and women alike. Because of this fact, the verse commands people to fear Allah as their Lord and be heedful of the duties that the wombs, as symbolic of this bond, impose.

On the basic social and religious responsibilities, the Qur'an establishes equality by maintaining: "The believers, men and women, are "Awliy," (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another, they enjoin (on the people) Al-Ma'ruf (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do); and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar (i.e. polytheism and disbelief of all kinds, and all that Islam has forbidden); they offer their prayers perfectly (lqamat-as-Salat), and give the Zakat and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah will have mercy on them» [Quran 9:71](Translation of the meaning of The Noble Quran in the english language by Dr. Muhammad Taqi-ud-din Al-Hilali and Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan 2006).

## The main part

The woman's right to seek education or learning is basic and is also guaranteed by Islamic teachings. Islam actually makes it incumbent on the woman to seek knowledge; the Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) says, 'seeking knowledge is incumbent on every Muslim," where "every Muslim" obviously involves men and women on an equal footing as a rule formalised by all authorities of jurisprudence (Muhammad Jawad Bahonar).

The woman is also required to perform religious ordinances and forms of worship the way the man is. Praying, fasting, Zakat (the alms sanctifying tax), pilgrimage and all the other fundamental practices in Islam are required of Muslims in their capacity, both men and women, as responsible humans. Again the woman's actions are recompensed by Allah the way the man's actions are. Islam has always appreciated the femininity of the woman and regarded her as playing a role integral to that of the man, and similarly regarded the man as playing a role integral to that of the woman. Neither is a foe, adversary or a competitor to the other. Rather, each is a help to the other in attaining the relative perfection of his or her person.

Allah's ordering of the universe makes binary existence one of its characteristics. This principle is manifested in the presence of male and female in the animate world of man, beast and plant, and the presence of negative and positive in the inanimate world with its phenomena of magnetism, electricity and others. Even in the atom, there are positive and negative charges, that is, the proton and the electron. The Qur'an, revealed fourteen hundred years ago, makes an explicit reference to the fact: *«And of everything We have created pairs, that you may remember»* [Quran 51:49] (Translation of the meaning of The Noble Quran in the english language by Dr. Muhammad Taqi-ud-din Al-Hilali and Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan 2006).

Men and women are, so to speak, like a can and its lid, a unity that comprises the thing and its counterpart; one does not exist without the other. When Allah created the first human soul, Adam, He also created from it its counterpart, Eve, so that he would settle and find peace with her. The Almighty did not leave Adam alone, not even (self sufficient enough) in Heaven. Allah's discourse, whether in the form of prohibition or command, was addressed to both of them: "Dwell you and your wife in the Paradise and both of you freely with pleasure and delight of things therein as wherever you will, but

come not near this tree or you both will be of the Zalimun(wrongdoers)» [Quran 2:35](Translation of the meaning of The Noble Quran in the english language by Dr. Muhammad Taqi-ud-din Al-Hilali and Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan 2006).

What all this comes to is that the woman is different from the man, for she complements him and he her. A thing does not complement itself. The Qur'an emphasises that difference: *«And the male is not like the female»* [Quran 3:36](Translation of the meaning of The Noble Quran in the english language by Dr. Muhammad Taqi-ud-din Al-Hilali and Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan 2006).

They are as unlike as positive and negative. Yet the difference does not mean that they are adversaries in any sense. They arise from each other and are for each other: *«you are from one another»*, and *«And Allah has given you wives of your own kind»* [Quran 4:25](Translation of the meaning of The Noble Quran in the english language by Dr. Muhammad Taqi-ud-din Al-Hilali and Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan 2006).

Allah's wisdom has also ordained that the physical and psychological construction of the woman should carry elements that enable her to attract and be attracted by the man. Fundamental to this purpose was Allah's equipment of the female with an instinctive desire and a strong natural passion that leads to their mutual attraction and communion so that life would continue and generations would spring forth. The Quranic moral code is based on the emphasis on obligation not duty in contrast to the emphasis on right. Now, the implications of the emphasis respectively on duty and right are: Right is a right against someone. Duty is a duty towards someone. Right means that someone owes something to us. For, when we say: it is our right, it means that someone has to perform a duty to us. On the contrary, when we say: it is our duty, it means that someone has a right against us.

Islam has granted to the husband a senior position in the functioning of the household and appointed him as the commander so that he could get through any crisis with the help of wisdom and initiative given to him by Almighty Allah. Islam has prescribed certain obligations that a husband has to fulfill in the interest of his wife. Simultaneously, Islam has enjoined upon the wives to appreciate their duties towards their husbands. This is a give-and-take business. Both man and woman are closely connected with each others rights and duties.

Therefore, Islam disapproves of systems that clash with this instinctive nature or render it inef-

fective, such as the system of monasticism. By no means, however, does this reflect acceptance of the channelling of this energy in the wrong direction, that is, outside divinely-sanctioned marriage which forms the basis of the family. Thus Islam, as do all other revealed religions, prohibits adultery as well as all forms of licentiousness whether they be visible or invisible. Islam has filled in all the gaps that could lead to these acts, thus providing protection for men and women from all factors of seduction and lust.

On the basis of the instinctive nature of the woman and the need for a healthy and proper atmosphere for her relationship with the man, Islam has set its codes for the woman as well as all the other relevant codes, instructions and rules. To guard her femininity and acknowledge its needs so as not to repress it, is what Islam is after. It tries to create a barrier between the woman and degradation, to protect her from the human wolves and predators who chase her into their lairs, devour her and discard the despoiled remains.

We can give a rough summation of Islam's attitude to femininity as follows:

1- Islam protects femininity to keep the stream of tenderness and beauty running. For this reason some of the things that men are forbidden to do are permissible for women. So the woman can wear gold and pure silk; hence the Hadith, «These two (substances) are prohibited for the men of my nation and allowed for its women». [Transmitted by Ibn Majah on the authority of Ali (3595), Hadith Sahih.] The permission to use things that suit women is supported by forbidding them from handling things that go against their femininity, such as men's wear, movement and behaviour in general. A woman is not to wear a man's garment; a man is not to wear a woman's garment. The Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) says: «Allah condemns the man who dresses like a woman and the woman who dresses like a man». [ Transmitted by Abu Huraira, Abu Dawud (4098); and Ahmad 2/325; and Ibn Hibban (1904); and others.] For men to behave like women and women to behave like men is equally condemned by Alkib. Again the Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) says, «Three (kinds of people) do not enter Paradise and do not enjoy Allah's gaze upon them on Judgement Day: a son who is disobedient to his parents, a mannish woman and an adulterer. [ Transmitted by Ahmad Ibn Umar and approved by Sheikh Shaker as Sahih (1680); and Al-Nisa'i 5/80; and Al-Hakim 1/72 and others.]

2- Islam supports femininity in view of its relative weakness, placing it in the hands of a support-

ing man, securing the costs of living and the provision for her needs. Whether under the guardian care of her father, her husband, her son or her brother, she will be provided for by them as an obligation under the shar'a. No basic need should compel her then to wade in the unexplored stretches of life with its conflicts, within the hustle of competitive men to win her bread-something that has befallen the Western woman under severe necessity in which neither father, brother, son or uncle look after her. The result is that she has to accept any kind of work for whatever payment in order to survive.

3- Allah's Religion protects her morals and decency, guards her reputation and dignity, and defends her chastity against evil thoughts and tongues, and tries to foil tempting hands that seek to harm her. In order to achieve these noble objectives, Islam makes it incumbent on the woman to lower the eyes and preserve chastity and purity.

«And tell the believing women to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts etc)» [Quran 24:31](Translation of the meaning of The Noble Quran in the english language by Dr. Muhammad Taqi-ud-din Al-Hilali and Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan 2006).

Preserve a decent, unrevealing manner of dress and ornamentation, all without being oppressive towards her. «and not to show off their adornment except that which is apparent and to draw their veils all over Juyubihinna (their bodies, faces, necks, and bosoms, etc.) « [Quran 24:31] The visible or apparent ornament that the verse refers to has been interpreted to be inclusive of kohl, the finger ring, the face, the two hands and, some exegetes and jurisprudents establish, the two feet. At the time of the Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him). it was customary for some women to cover their face. The flexibility of Islam allows the woman the option of covering her face or not (Sheikh Yusuf Al-Qaradawui).

Cover the other attractions that do not show, such as the hair, neck and throat, arms and legs, from all people except her husband, and her consanguineous, non-marriageable relations or mahrim [ Those persons whom the woman is forbidden to marry because of the proximity of the relation. (editor's note)] (brothers, uncles etc.) whom she finds it hard to hide these afrom. «and not to reveal heir adornment except to their husbands, fathers, their husband's fathers, their sons, their husband's sons, their brothers or their brother's sons, or their sister's sons or their (Muslim) women (i.e. their sisters in Islam), or the (female) slaves whom their

right hands possess, or old male servants who lack vigour, or small children who have no sense of the shame of sex» [Quran 24:31](Translation of the meaning of The Noble Quran in the english language by Dr. Muhammad Taqi-ud-din Al-Hilali and Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan 2006).

Maintain staidness in gait and speech. «And let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment» [Quran 24:31] and« if you keep your duty (to Allah), then be not soft in speech, lest he in whose heart is a disease (of hypocrisy or evil desire for adultery, etc.) should be moved with desire, but speak in an honourable manner» [Quran 33:32] (Translation of the meaning of The Noble Quran in the english language by Dr. Muhammad Taqi-ud-din Al-Hilali and Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan 2006).

Therefore she is not (as some wrongly understand) forbidden to speak; nor is her voice a shameful thing to show. On the contrary. She is commanded in the Quran to speak in good faith. [bullet] Be above all acts meant to excite and tempt men in a way reminiscent of the showiness of Pre-Qur'anic ignorance or Jahiliyya. or in the manner of modern jahilivva. This showiness contradicts the conduct of a decent woman. Avoid being in seclusion with a man who is neither a husband nor a non-marriageable relation, so as to keep a barrier between herself or the other man and all thoughts of sin, and between her good name and false rumours. The Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) says, «No man should be in seclusion with a woman and no woman should travel except with a non-marriageable relation,» or her husband of course. Avoid male gatherings except on the grounds of necessity or an appreciable interest and only to the necessity or limit. Attending the congregational prayers in the mosque, seeking learning, co-operation in charity and promotion of piety are fields in which a woman's presence with men is accepted so that she will not be deprived of her right to participate in serving her community, and only on condition that she observes the limits of the Islamic code on social life. With these directions and regulations, Islam provides safety for the woman and her femininity from impious tongues; it preserves her decency and chastity by distancing her from all factors of deviation. Islam guards her honour against the slurs of slanderers and spreaders of calumny. Above all, it protects her soul and calms her nerves against the tension, instability and trepidation that spring from wild imaginations or obsessed hear torn between the factors of agitation and excitement. At the same

time, islam protects the man from anxiety and aberration, the family from disintegration, and the society from collapse and decay.

### Conclusion

Islam brought a new lease of life to women. Islam elevated the status of women to great heights: so high that she stood shoulder to shoulder with man. Like men, their rights were also well defined and Islamic Courts supported them to achieve these rights. Islam granted women the right to ownership. They now owned the amount of their Mehr. They could engage in trade and have their own properties. They were also given the right to inherit the property of the deceased father and husband.

With the advent of Islam came the verse from the Quran condemning those who practiced female infanticide: «When news is brought to one of them, of (the birth of) a female (child), his face darkens, and he is filled with inward grief! With shame does he hide himself from his people, because of the bad news he has had! Ah! What an evil (choice) they decide on»[Quran 16:58-59](Translation of the meaning of The Noble Quran in the english language by Dr. Muhammad Taqi-ud-din Al-Hilali and Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan 2006).

Before Islam, women were considered shameful, female children were buried alive, prostitution was rampant, divorce was only in the hands of the husband, inheritance was only for the strong, and oppression was widespread. Islam came and abolished these practices. Even now, in «developed countries», women are not granted respect, dignity and honour, let alone equal pay for equal work. Islam, however, regards women as precious and valuable, not to be disrespected or disgraced. The mistreatment of women in some Middle-Eastern countries or Muslim families is due to cultural factors that some Muslims wrongly follow, not because of Islam. Why would many women around the world willingly enter Islam if it is an oppressive religion?

We end with the words of our Lord and your Lord, the Creator and Sustainer of all men and women: «Surely the men who submit and the women who submit, and the believing men and the believing women, and the obedient men and the obedient women, and the truthful men and the truthful women, and the patient men and the patient women, and the humble men and the humble women... Allah has prepared for them forgiveness and a great reward» [Quran 33:35] (Translation of the meaning of The Noble Quran in the english

language by Dr. Muhammad Taqi-ud-din Al-Hilali and Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan 2006).

Islam has an extensive tradition of protecting the civil liberties of women based on the guidelines set forth by God and His Prophet. Women are empowered with many rights and protections under Islamic law and are honored with a dignified stature in society.

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