

Question:

Islam provides better rights to men women than all other religions. Explore with arguments.

Answer:

Islam, often misunderstood and misinterpreted, offers a profound framework for gender equality and rights. Rooted in Quran and Hadith, Islam champions the spiritual, economic, educational and social rights of both men and women, promoting justice and fairness.

① Equal Spiritual Status

Islam asserts the equal spiritual status of men and women. The Quran states:

من عمل صالحا من ذكرا أو انثى وهو مؤمن فلنجزيه حيوته طيبة ولنجزينهم اجرهم باحسن ما كانوا يعملون -

Whoever does good, whether male or female, and is a believer, we will surely bless them with good life, and we will certainly reward them according to the best of their deeds (16:97)

This verse underscores that both men and women are equally capable of achieving spiritual success and closeness to God.

② Equality in Creation and Human Dignity

Islam asserts the fundamental equality of all human beings, regardless of gender. Both men and women were created from a single ~~soul~~ (nafs), emphasizing their inherent equality in creation.

يا أيها الناس اتقوا ربكم الذي خلقكم من نفس واحدة وخلق منها أزواجها وبعث منها رجالا كثيرا ونساء.

O humanity! Be mindful of your Lord who created you from a single soul, and from it he created its mate, and through both He spread countless men and women. (4:1)

In contrast, certain religions ^{like Christianity} have historically placed women in a subordinate role, particularly in ecclesiastical settings.

③ Right to Education

Islam places a strong emphasis on the education of both men and women. The pursuit of knowledge is seen as religious duty for all Muslims.

As Holy Prophet ~~sa~~ (P.B.U.H) said:

طلب العلم فريضة على كل مسلم
Seeking knowledge is an obligation upon every Muslim.

(Sunan Ibn Majah 224)

Similarly, Imam al-Ghazali, one of renowned muslim scholars, in his work "ghya ulum al-Din" stressed the importance of education for both genders. While on the other hand with certain other religious traditions that either placed less focus on the education of women or ~~at~~ made utmost effort to restrict it.

④ Economic Rights of Women

In premetive times and even to date present timesⁱⁿ most of the regions economic rights were granted to men only. But Islam granted women extensive economic rights, which were revolutionary at the time of its revelation. Women are granted right to inherit, own and manage property independently. Surah An-Nisa in Quran states:

لرِجَالٍ نَّصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانُ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ وَلِلنِّسَاءِ
مِمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانُ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ مِمَّا قَلَّ مِنْهُ أَوْ كَثُرَ
فَوَصِيَّتُهُنَّ مِثْلَ مَقْرُونِهِنَّ -

"For men there is a share in what their parents and close relatives leave, and for women there is a share in what their parent and close relatives leave, be it little or much - an obligatory share" (4:7)

Scholar Dr. Amina Wadud in "Quran and Woman" highlights that these

rights were unprecedented at the the time and placed women in a significantly more advantageous ~~place~~ position compared to other contemporary societies

⑤ Mutual Consent and Respect in marital relationship

Islam upholds both men's and women's rights in marriage, emphasizing mutual consent and respect. In Surah Nisa Allah Almighty commands

يا ايها الذين امنوا لا تحل لكم ان تراثوا النساء كرها
ولا تعفروهن لتذنبوا بهن ما ذنبتوهن
الا ان ياتين بفحشة مبينة وما شرعوا
بالمعروف - (4: 19)

"O believers! it is not permissible for you to inherit women against their will or mistreat them to make them return some of the dowry unless they are found guilty of adultery. Treat them fairly."

while many religions at that time and even present time do not ~~to~~ grant this right of mutual consent and respect

⑥ Protection and Respect

Historical norms and contemporary practices often reflect cultural

influences along religious teachings. And among most of those practices promote patriarchal structure. Unlike these practices, Islam grants both respect and protection to women, both in personal relationships and social interactions. Dr. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, in his work "Islamic Art and Spirituality" ~~along~~ describes Islamic ethics, including the respect and protection for women along with other concepts.

⑦ Freedom of Expression and Thought :

Unlike other religions that consider women to be subordinates of men without any reasoning and intellectual ability, Islam encourages women to express their thoughts and opinions within the framework of Islamic ethics. The Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) listened to and valued the opinions of women in various matters. For instance, during the negotiations for the "Treaty of Hudaibiyyah" in 628 CE, Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) consulted Umm-e-Salmah ^{regarding a specific} ~~on~~ ~~the~~ clauses that required Muslims to return any Meccan convert who sought to refuge with them back to the Quraysh. Umm Salmah,

Date: _____

Day: _____

known for her wisdom and insight, advised to not accept this clause and suggested a compromise. The Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) took her seriously and followed it.

⑧ Right to choose a religion of one's own choice

Islam ^{the right} guarantees both women and men to express and choose their own religion. Islam gives everyone equal freedom in this regard without any discrimination as it is mentioned in Quran.

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ

"Let there be no compulsion in religion" (2:256)

While on the other hand Judaism does not allow this freedom. In Judaism only those people are entitled to practice their religion who are born in Jewish families.

Add more arguments. A 20 marks answer should have around 15 subheadings/arguments

Conclusion

In conclusion, while the claim that Islam provides better rights for men and women than other religions can be a subject to extensive debate, it is important to understand that ^{the} perception of rights may differ according to cultural traditions. ^{But,} if one follows Quran and Hadith, ~~the~~ the two pinacles of Islam, it becomes clear that Islam provides a proper framework for the rights of men and women, emphasizing principles such as equality, justice and compassion.