

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

INTRODUCTION

"Indeed we have honored the children of Adam."

(Al-Quran)

This verse from the Holy Quran provides a holistic view of human dignity and honor regardless of gender. Islam emerged at a time when women in many parts of the world were denied of their basic rights, often treated as property or subordinates. The message of Islam, some 1400 years ago brought a revolutionary transformation in the treatment of both men and women. Emergence of Islam with its egalitarian view turned out to be a ray of light for humanity as a whole. Islam declared gender equality in spiritual essence, which was propagated by Prophet Mohammad (SAW) as:

"Women are the twin halves of men."

(Al-Hadith)

In contrast to other religions, Islam provides a balanced and comprehensive framework of rights for both men and women. While other religions confined women to domestic or subordinate roles, Islam granted them rights in inheritance, education, worship, social justice, and economic participation.

RIGHTS OF MEN AND WOMEN IN ISLAM COMPARED TO OTHER RELIGIONS

Islam provides better rights to men and women compared to other religions which are evident through out the history and teachings of Islam through Holy Quran and Sunnah of Prophet (SAW).

RIGHT TO LIFE AND DIGNITY FOR BOTH MEN AND WOMEN IN ISLAM COMPARED TO OTHER RELIGIONS:

Islam has given humankind a great amount of respect and provided them with rights when the powerful had all the control over their subordinates (slaves). Prophet Mohammad (SAW),

The flag bearer of human rights, in his last sermon during Hajj which is considered as the first charter of human rights in humankind's history, imparted that:

"Your blood and your property are as sacred as are this Day and this Month and this city."

(Last Sermon)

Furthermore, the sanctity of human life is emphasized in Holy Quran as:

"Whoever kills a person, is as if he has killed the whole mankind; and whoever saves it, is as if he saved the whole mankind."

(Al-Quran)

The Quran condemned the Pre-Islamic Arabian practice of female infanticide:

"When the girl buried alive is asked for sin she was killed."

(Al-Quran)

In contrast, the people of Makkah felt embarrassed when a girl is born into their homes, which was addressed by in Quran as:

"And when one of them is given news of female infant, his face darkens, and he chokes with grief."

(AI - Quran)

The recognition of dignity, not just life, of both men and women is unmatched with any pre-modern or contemporary religious frameworks.

RIGHT TO EDUCATION IN ISLAM FOR BOTH MEN AND WOMEN IN CONTRAST TO OTHER RELIGIOUS BELIEFS:

"Seeking knowledge is obligatory on every Muslim."

(AI - Hadith)

This Prophetic Saying itself elaborates the importance of education for both men and women. Islam commands the pursuit of knowledge, even the first word revealed in the Holy Quran was 'Iqra' which means 'Read'.

Historically, other religions such as Christianity and Hinduism have restricted

women from accessing education (religious). For instance, Hinduism confined Vedic learning to men only, while Islam first fostered female scholarship. A great example of which is Aisha (RA), the wife of Prophet (SAW), one of the most renowned female scholars of her time, narrated over 2000 Hadiths.

RIGHT TO PROPERTY AND INHERITANCE FOR BOTH MEN AND WOMEN IN ISLAM COMPARED TO OTHER RELIGIONS:

In the dark ages of medieval and pre-Islamic traditions, Islam came with most progressive reforms of granting women the right to own inherit and manage property along with men. The commandments were given in the Holy Quran as:

"For men is share of what they have earned, and for women is share of what they have earned."

(Al-Quran)

In comparison, many other religions denied women of this right until very recent times. For instance, in Hinduism daughters

had no legal share in ancestral property.

In Christianity, women could not own property independently until 19th century.

While, Islam granted these rights in 7th century. Hazrat Khadija (RA), the Prophet (SAW) first wife, was a successful businesswoman even before the Prophet (SAW) Prophethood.

RIGHT TO MARRY AND CONSENT IN ISLAM AND OTHER RELIGIONS FOR MEN AND WOMEN:

Islam has emphasized the consent of both men and women in marriage.

It is evident from the Prophetic tradition:

"A previously married woman must not be married till she is consulted, and a virgin must not be married till her consent is asked."

(Al-Hadith)

At an occasion Prophet (SAW) was asked by a companion: whether it is necessary or not to consult a virgin whose marriage solemnized by a guardian. The Prophet (SAW) replied: "Yes, she must

be consulted."

Comparatively, in many other religions right to choose partner was absent. For instance, historically in Christian Europe forced marriages were common to preserve family alliances. Islam not only forbids forced marriages but also allow women to propose marriage as in the case of Hazrat Khadija (RA). Also, Islam allows women to seek divorce (Khula) in extreme cases.

ISLAM PROVIDES EQUALITY FOR BOTH MEN AND WOMEN IN SPIRITUAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND REWARD:

In Islam both men and women are equal in the eyes of Allah in terms of accountability and reward.

"Whoever acts righteously - whether a man or a woman - and is a believer, we will surely grant him good life."

(Al-Quran)

While some religious narratives portray

women as spiritually inferior and responsible for the original sin ie Eve in Christianity, Islam hold both Adam and Eve equally accountable.

"But ~~the~~ Satan deceived them..."

(Al-Quran)

CONCLUSION

Islam emerged with a divine framework for human rights centuries ahead of its time. At a period when women were marginalized because of their gender and men were enslaved based on their economic conditions, Islam elevated their status by bringing in its egalitarian concept. While societal practices at times failed to uphold the sanctity of man and women, Islam steadfastly promoted a balanced and just view of gender. The principles of justice, respect, and balance lies at the heart of Islamic teachings.

"Verily each of you is a shepherd, and each of you is responsible for his flock."

(Al-Hadith)