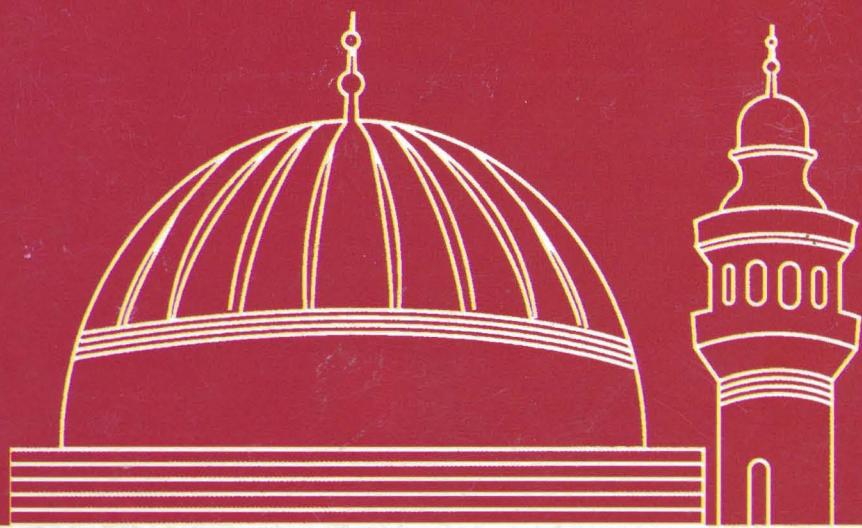


WOMAN IN ISLAM



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25 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WMN 2



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Publisher's Note

This is an augmented English adaptation of a booklet which was originally published in Germany under the title "25 FRAGEN ZUR FRAU IM ISLAM" by Cordoba-Verlag in Karlsruhe. Their kind permission is gratefully acknowledged.

The non-Muslim reader should be aware that Muslims are very attached to their practice of inserting a eulogy phrase "May God's peace and blessings be upon him!", or, "Upon him be peace!" to the name of any prophet mentioned. Whether this be Muhammad, Jesus, Moses, Abraham, Noah, etc., the Muslim finds this an opportune occasion for registering and renewing his gratitude to God for divine guidance across the ages. Most Islamic publications abbreviate the Arabic expression (s.a.s.) or its English equivalent (p.b.u.h.) as a matter of course. Similarly, the "Companions" of Prophet Muhammad are eulogised ("May God be pleased with him/her/them" or "r.a.") as it is from them which comes our vast knowledge of the doings and sayings of this final mentor for mankind.

Recognising that the repetition of such a phrase tends not to serve its intended purpose with a Western audience, we here omit this practice. Yet we acknowledge our profound praise for our Creator and the best of His creation, the prophets, especially the last Messenger of Allah, - and upon his family, and upon all who seek to find and follow God's guidance.

Translation: Abdullah Borek

Editing: Discover Islam

Publisher:

Discover Islam

Bahrain

April, 1999

WOMEN IN ISLAM

25 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Do men and women have equal rights in Islam?

It is part of the mission of Islam to establish justice and harmony between the sexes with due consideration to the inherent natural differences. God has laid down certain rights and obligations for men and women, each in accordance with the nature determined by his/her gender, and complementary to each other. If either departs from his/her specific nature, an unnatural "equality" will be forced. In front of God the two have equivalent standing; however, in relation with each other the rights of the individual are different in the same way as man and woman are different by nature. However, in general it can be said that the rights of one party are derived from the obligations of the other, and vice versa.

In accountability to God man and woman are equal. The Qur'ân - also sometimes spelled Koran - (the holy book of Islam, claiming to be the very words of God, revealed in 7th century Arabia to Prophet Muhammad (s.a.s.) and addressed to all mankind) mentions in many verses that reward and punishment in the Hereafter does not depend on gender. An example is God's statement as recorded in Chapter 3, verse 195: "... *I shall not lose sight the labour of any of you who labours [in My way], be it man or woman...*". Accordingly, the obligation to acquire knowledge applies to both sexes equally. Within marriage, men and women are equal in terms of rights and obligations in those areas where they are equal by nature. There are differences only in those areas where the natures of the sexes is different. With regard to religious duties, we shall see that there are certain concessions for women pertaining to the nature of women (cf. Qur'ân, Chapter 4). The law of inheritance takes into account the obligation of the man to provide for his family (cf. Qur'ân, Chapter 15).

2. What are the role of men and women in the family?

In Islam the husband-wife relationship is based on mutual peace, love and compassion as highlighted in the following verses of the Qur'ân:

"And among His wonders is this: He creates for you mates out of your own kind, so that you might incline towards them, and He engenders love and tenderness between you." (30:21)

“They are as a garment for you, and you are as a garment for them.” (2:187)

In Islam the man undertakes to support his family (Qur‘ân, 4:34). He is accountable before God for the welfare of his family. Like any team, a family needs leadership, someone who takes final responsibility for decisions. A quote from the Prophet (s.a.s.) is very clear about the husband’s moral obligation: *“Perfect in faith among the believers are those who are the best in character and behaviour, and the best of you are those who treat their family best.”*

It is the wife’s duty to counsel and support her husband in order to reach joint decisions. The wife is the one who bears the task of childbearing, breast feeding and upbringing. She carries the main responsibility for the welfare of the children and this is her most important gender-specific task. This does not, however, mean that rearing children is to be solely her effort, just as she does not leave her husband alone in his function as head of the family.

3. What is the position of the Muslim woman as a mother?

In Islam the mother has a very high rank. The mother is the principal person to relate to the child especially during the first few years of life. By breast feeding — as recommended in the Qur‘ân (2.233) — a close relationship comes into being. In some places such as 31:14 the Qur‘ân mentions the relationship between parents and their children and emphasises the efforts of the mother from the time of pregnancy and throughout the period of raising infants. Islam even goes so far as to give a (divorced) mother the right to claim financial compensation from her husband for breast feeding the children (Qur‘ân 65:6). The high importance attributed to women as mothers is reflected in a saying by Prophet Muhammad (s.a.s.); asked who deserves most to be treated preferentially, he answered for the first three places “your mother” - and only thereafter “your father”, and then “your close relatives”.

4. Are the religious duties of Islam also applicable to women?

The religious duties incumbent on Muslims, whether prayer, fasting, almsgiving and pilgrimage, are the same for both men and women.

“ And [as for] the believers, both men and women -- they are close unto one another; they [all] enjoin the doing of what is right and forbid the doing of what is wrong, and are constant in prayer, and render the purifying dues, and pay heed unto God and His Apostle...” (Qur‘ân, 9:71)

However, there are some concessions for women with regard to prayer and

fasting. During menstruation and after giving birth, women are exempted from the obligation of performing prayer and fasting. While she must make up for the missed fasting at some later time, prayer missed for these reasons is not to be made up.

5. Is a Muslim woman allowed to choose her husband herself?

Islam gives a woman the right to choose her own husband. Without her consent no marriage can take place; and should this take place, such a marriage contract is invalid. It is, however, a wise custom among Muslims to involve the family in any important decision. This gives the future couple the required backing, and the family bond helps in difficult situations to maintain the continuation of the marriage. It should also be mentioned that a woman keeps her own family name after marriage.

6. What is the meaning of the “dowry” (or dower) to be given to the bride at the time of marriage?

In Islam the bridegroom has to give his bride a dower (*mahr*) in the spirit of a gift (Qur’ân, 4:4). It should not be equated with a “price” paid for the bride by which the woman is “bought”. The dower belongs to the bride herself and not to her father. In most cases the dower is of material value but may, alternatively, be non-material. Islam gives a woman the right to ask for the dower from her future husband and the amount is fixed by her: she is free to dispose of it as she wishes. Obviously she will take into account the financial situation of the husband. However, even in case of divorce the husband has no right to claim back the dower he had paid (Qur’ân, 2:229)

7. Is a Muslim woman allowed to marry a non-Muslim?

Marriage and family are particularly protected in Islam because, as the basic social unit, they guarantee the continued existence of the community. In order to work out, a marriage requires the two partners to have a common basis and attitude. Thus it is naturally preferable for a Muslim to find a Muslim mate. A relationship between partners of different faiths and philosophies of life may lead to substantial problems, e.g., the religious education of children, etc. A non-Muslim husband could limit his wife’s religious practice. That is why a Muslim woman is not permitted to marry a man belonging to another religion (Qur’ân, 2:221).

The Qur’ân allows a Muslim man to marry a woman from one of the communities of

the “People of the Book” (Jews and Christians). As societies tend to be patriarchal, a Muslim man married to a non-Muslim woman is considered to have the necessary social and family structure to protect him from being pried away from his faith.

8. How are we to understand the permission for polygamy in Islam?

Technically, Islam allows men to marry four women; however, there are certain conditions to be met. This is best understood from the following verse in the Qur‘ân: “..... *And if you have reason to fear that you might not act equitably towards orphans; then marry from among [other] women such as are lawful to you -- [even] two, three, or four; but if you have reason to fear that you might not be able to treat them with equal fairness, then [only] one -- or [from among] those whom you rightfully possess.*” (Qur‘ân, 4:3)

The requirement of justice and identical treatment is therefore a condition closely tied up with polygamy. This, however, largely depends upon the personality of the man and the woman. It is possible for a man to grant a widow or divorcee honourable maintenance by marrying her as a second wife. Moreover, from a woman’s point of view a polygamous marriage, in which each wife has equal rights, is a choice preferable to that of a mistress who has no rights. The norm amongst Muslims is monogamy, which anyway is enough of a challenge for both partners! The Prophet (s.a.s.), who serves as an example for all Muslims, was married exclusively to his first wife for 25 years until the time of her death. Of the women he married thereafter there was only one virgin; all others were either widowed or divorced. In all cases, not only did the woman benefit in social security, but the political alliances thus contracted strengthened the stability of the Arab society in which Muslims lived.

9. Why is a Muslim woman not allowed to marry several men?

Islam is the religion reflecting human nature. Generally speaking, the marriage of one woman to several men is a rare occurrence throughout the world and hardly ever promoted. It can thus be assumed that it is not in accordance with the nature of a woman to be married to more than one man at a time. So it is not surprising that Islam is against it. One important factor is the fact that it is the man who is obliged to support his children. If there were more than one husband, the paternity of any particular child could be in doubt. This would lead to either quarrelling about the children or shying away from the responsibility. Clearly, it would not be practical for several men to be joint heads of the family. Alternatively, in the case of a matriarchal power structure, the experience in pre-Islamic time had resulted in a deterioration of discipline in society.

10. Is a Muslim man allowed to beat his wife?

This is a subject burdened with a lot of prejudice. This question arises from the verse in the Qur'ân which reads as follows: *“And for those women whose ill-will you have reason to fear, admonish them [first]; then leave them alone in bed, then beat them; and if thereupon they pay you heed, do not seek to harm them. Behold, God is indeed most high, great!”* (4:34). In the first place, this verse was revealed on the following occasion: A woman had come to the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.s.) and asked him for permission to hit back at her husband who had beaten her. The Prophet had given permission as a form of retaliation. Regarding this event the Prophet (s.a.s.) is reported to have said: *“I wanted one thing, but God wanted something else - what God wants must be best.”* Behind God's decision there might be wisdom which the Prophet (s.a.s.) himself did not recognise at first. This verse from the Qur'ân makes it clear that the husband is required to apply three steps in any case: Admonition, separation in bed and only thirdly beating. This means that beating in the heat of the moment is specifically forbidden. In the second place, according to the scholars, “beating” has more of a symbolic connotation rather than the meaning of physical injury or hurt. The Prophet (s.a.s.) did express quite clearly his misgivings about beating a woman by saying: *“Is it really possible for you to beat your wife as if she were a servant and then go to her at night?”* He himself never beat a woman and he is our best example. In his “farewell pilgrimage” address, he instructed and reminded his people to be kind and caring to their women. Furthermore, some scholars mention that this measure, i.e. beating, is only for such societies where it is an acceptable means of reform and likely to get results.

In fact, a Muslim woman has other means at her disposal to deal with her husband when conflicts arise; she may involve other members of the family.

11. Can a Muslim woman initiate divorce proceedings?

Divorce is the most detestable act among what God has made permissible and should be seen as only the very last resort. To prevent divorce and to arrange for a reconciliation between the partners is always the first choice. Therefore mediators from the wife's and the husband's family are appointed with the task of reconciling the couple (Qur'ân, 4:35). In principle, Islam provides for both husband and wife the possibility of initiating a divorce. The Qur'ân sets out divorce procedures in detail and regulates maintenance (Qur'ân, 2:226ff; 65:1ff). The subsequent procedures, however, differ. Until divorce becomes final, husband and wife continue to live together in their joint household. This period is meant to be used for promoting reconciliation and for determining whether the wife is pregnant. If no marital adjustment is reached after this period, the divorce becomes final.

12. In case of divorce, what happens to the children?

In this respect the Qur'ân regulates only the situation of very small children. Babies are to be breast-fed by their mothers for a period of up to two years. For older children traditional Islamic jurisprudence has set up the following rules: Girls are in their mother's care until they reach puberty or get married: boys stay with their mother until the age of seven or until they reach puberty. In both cases the legal guardian is their father. In practice, a woman usually returns to her parents after divorce without her children; this will facilitate her remarriage.

13. Why are Muslim women wearing a head scarf?

The head scarf of a Muslim woman is part of her dress, for which certain rules have been established (Qur'ân, 24:31). In Islam there is a dress code for both men and women which serves the purpose of protecting their dignity and modesty and giving them respect. In principle Muslims should not wear cloths that accentuate the body shape in such a way as to attract the attention of the opposite sex. Therefore clothing should not cling closely to the body, nor should it be transparent. As hair and the hairstyle of a woman is an important part of her looks and may also add to her attractiveness, women avoid displaying this area by covering their heads. According to a saying by the Prophet (s.a.s.), nothing of a woman should be publicly visible except her face and her hands. Her intentions, personality and presence are best ascertained, in fact, from these areas of the body.

These rules are applicable only in the presence of non-kin men whom the woman in question could marry in theory. Within the family circle and in the company of some of her kinsfolk a woman may appear without covering her head. These kinship relationships are mentioned in the above-cited chapter of the Qur'ân. At an older age a woman may discard the head-cover partially (Qur'ân, 24:60). However, as she also sets an example for the younger generation, it is better for her to continue to cover herself in accordance with the Islamic dress code.

Muslim girls start to adhere to the above Islamic dress code when they begin to develop a female shape (usually at the onset of puberty).

14. Does a Muslim woman have a right to education and work?

The obligation for education, i.e. striving for knowledge, applies equally to males and females in Islam. According to a saying by the Prophet (s.a.s.) "*Striving for knowledge is an obligation for every Muslim.*" The fact that many Muslim girls are not being given the chance for further education is due to local tradition and

is in no way connected to Islamic regulations.

As Islam regards the woman's role in society as a mother and a wife her most sacred, noble and vital one, she should not have to work or share with her husband the family expenses. However, Islam does not forbid her to seek employment whenever there is necessity for it, nor does it lay restrictions on society's benefiting from her talents in any field. This, of course, presupposes observance of the Islamic code of decency and modesty. A woman's earnings are entirely at her own disposal, and she is under no obligation to contribute to the cost of maintaining the family household. Providing for the family is solely the responsibility of the husband.

In the early era of Islam, women worked in many fields, and some even joined the men in war to look after the wounded. The first wife of the Prophet (s.a.s.), Khadija (r.a.), was a respected businesswoman in Mecca, operating trading caravans.

15. Do women have the Right of inheritance in Islam?

The Qur'ân says: *"Men shall have a share in what parents and kinfolks leave behind, and women shall have a share in what parents and kinfolks leave behind, whether it be little or much -- a share ordained [by God]."* (4:7). The reason why women are treated differently from men in matters of inheritance is based on Qur'ân, 4:11: *"Concerning [the inheritance of] your children, God enjoins [this] upon you: The male shall have the equal of two females' share ..."* The explanation as to why a woman gets "only" half the share of a man is the fact that only a man is under obligation to pay for the maintenance of the family (Qur'ân, 4:34), so he needs a bigger share; whereas a woman is not obliged to use her share for her own maintenance or to support her children or husband; she may freely dispose of her share of the inheritance without any interference by her husband or other members of her family. However, in some situations the two inherit equally.

16. Of what value is the testimony of a woman in Islamic law?

The Qur'anic basis for dealing with the question of testimony is found in (2:282): *"And call upon two of your men to act as witnesses; and if two men are not available, then a man and two women among such as are acceptable to you as witnesses, so that if one of them should make mistakes, the other could remind her ..."* Adding another woman is meant as a protection against false testimony, which Islam punishes harshly; a greater number also serves as added security. Moreover, the above verse refers to certain types of business transactions and,

strictly speaking, applies only in such cases. Its application to other matters is disputed among scholars. There are many cases in which the expertise of women is required, such as birth. But also in the field of religious science the testimony of one woman was deemed sufficient for the acceptance of many sayings of the Prophet (s.a.s.): Aisha (r.a.), one of the wives of the Prophet's (s.a.s.) later years, is probably the single most important narrator of the Prophet's sayings.

17. Is a Muslim woman allowed to enter a mosque?

As a matter of principle the mosque, as the place for gathering and prayer, is open to all Muslims, men and women alike. There are unequivocal sayings by the Prophet (s.a.s.) according to which a man should not prevent a woman going to the mosque. If in some Muslim countries women rarely go to mosques - or do not go at all, this is due to local traditions rather than prohibition in Islam.

18. Why do women not pray side-by-side with men?

The Muslim ritual prayer is performed in a series of movements from one position to another: standing; leaning forward at right angles; "prostrating" with forehead, nose, hands, knees and the toes on the ground; sitting up and returning to a stand. Worshipers stand together in rows, shoulder to shoulder, and make unified movements up and down. During an act of worship, participants should be able to concentrate fully. Were men and women to pray in an intermingled congregation, there would be distraction on both parts, considering the movement and positions involved in Muslim prayer. When praying jointly, e.g. in the mosque, women are normally allocated an area to pray either behind the men or in a separate section.

19. What is the meaning of the segregation of sexes in Islam?

The separation of sexes is mentioned in the Qur'ân in two instances (33.32f and 53). However, these refer to the wives of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.s.), who, as "Mothers of the Believers" in any case take a special position. There is a difference of opinion regarding the applicability of these verses in our time. Some consider the segregation of sexes as a device for protecting family and marriage. Others are of the opinion that the above verses refer exclusively to the Prophet's wives and that it is possible for men and women to work together, provided a certain level of manners and decorum is maintained on both parts in order to safeguard the observance of Islamic rules of decency. As far as the unchaperoned company of a woman with an unrelated man is concerned, the following is the saying of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.s.): *"He who believes in God*

and the Last Day is not allowed to be alone with a woman without the presence of a mahram (a close male relative of the woman, i.e. one whom she cannot marry), as otherwise Satan will be the third party present."

20. Is a Muslim girl allowed to have an intimate relationship with a boy?

As a matter of principle Islam rejects any form of extramarital intimate relationship. It aims at closing the loopholes that lead to indecency and immorality. This applies equally to males as to females. Only marriage offers the proper framework for intimate relations between a man and woman.

21. Are Muslim girls allowed to participate in sports and swimming lessons?

Sports activities of any kind are not only allowed to Islam but in fact considered desirable. This, however, must be within the requirements of the Islamic dress code for both sexes, in particular when it applies to sports and swimming lessons in co-educational schools or public places. Therefore it is not permitted in Islam for boys and girls when reaching puberty to participate in mixed sports and swimming activities. Obviously the same should apply to boys. Muslims should arrange for such activities to take place in a way that the sexes are segregated.

22. Is a Muslim woman allowed to be treated by a male doctor?

In principle a Muslim woman should be treated by a female doctor in order to preserve her dignity and modesty. This ideal should pose no problem when one can choose one's own doctor. A Muslim woman will in any case prefer a female doctor, Muslim or non-Muslim. In emergencies such as accidents or giving birth, when only a male doctor is on duty, the well-being of the woman take precedence over all other considerations. It is at best a recommendation that a Muslim woman should consult a female doctor. After all, a doctor is sought because of his reputation in healing. But no conflict of conscience should arise for a woman if she chooses a better qualified male doctor over a female doctor with a lesser reputation, if need arises.

23. Is a Muslim allowed to use means of contraception?

There is no prohibition of contraception in Islam as long as there is no harm to the health, and provided that pregnancy is not permanently prevented. At the time of the Prophet (s.a.s.), 'azl (=coitus interruptus) was widely practiced. The Prophet (s.a.s.) expressed approval of it. Moreover the Qur'ân recommends for Muslim mothers to breastfeed their children for a full two years (2:233); this is also a certain protection against further pregnancy for that period. In our time, well-studied and safe methods for contraception are available. A Muslim couple will decide on their own which available method suits them best, with due consideration to their family and health situation. The fact that Muslim couples often have more than the standard two children is not due to a lack of contraception but rather to their positive attitude towards children in general.

24. Is abortion allowed in Islam?

The majority of Muslim scholars allow abortion only when the life of the mother is endangered. It must be noted, however, that Islamic sources begin from different assumptions than do their Bible-based brethren. The Qur'ân clearly forbids the killing of children: *"Hence, do not kill your children for fear of poverty: it is We who shall provide sustenance for them as well as for you. Verily, killing them is a great sin."* (17:31). The Qur'ân presents the step-by-step process in which a human being is created (23:12-14):

"Now, indeed, We create man out of the essence of clay, and then We cause him to remain as a drop of sperm in [the womb's firm keeping, and then We create out of the drop of sperm a germ-cell, and then We create out of the germ-cell an embryonic lump, and then We create within the embryonic lump bones, and then We clothes the bones with flesh -- and then We bring [all] this into being as a new creation: hallowed, therefore, is God, the best of artisans!"

There is a hadîth in which the Prophet (s.a.s.) said: *"The creation of each one of you is put together in the womb of your mother from a drop of sperm in forty days, then for the same period it exists as a clot of congealed blood, thereafter for the same period a lump of flesh, then an angel is sent to breathe into him the spirit of life."*

In Islam the foetus is judged to have become a human being roughly after 120 days, when the angel has united a soul with the developing body. Alternatively, some scholars say that a 90-day pregnancy is the limit for medical termination, in case of compelling circumstances.

25. How about adoption?

Islam does not recognise adoption as practiced in Western law. A Muslim couple may, however, bring up somebody else's child and care for it. There is a great reward from God for this. This child does not take the family name of his or her foster parents, but retains the name of his/her biological parents so that true ancestry of any person is always carried in his/her name. Moreover, such a child does not have the same rights as the foster parents' own child, such as the right to inherit from his foster parents (Qur'ân, 33:4). However, the foster parents have the right to assign to this child up to a third of their estate by way of a will.

CLOSING COMMENT

Islam encourages and provides for the fulfillment of all legitimate needs and pleasures in a moderate and balanced way, respecting one's self, his/her society, and his/her environment. For example, a Muslim is encouraged to gain and hold any kind of material possession that he or she chooses, as long as this is done by honest means and giving way to the right of others. Such a property is ultimately held as a trust from the Creator, and hence the trustee is required to give at least a minimal amount of his/her gained surplus to meet the needs of others around him/her. Brotherhood and social welfare are thereby set up and provided for.

Naturally all endeavours have rules and regulations defining what constitutes 'honesty' and 'legitimacy'. Universal guidelines must not be culture-bound. The interests of all parties in any transaction or relationship must be served equally. An Islamic injunction takes into consideration the nature and needs of the parties involved, whether a buyer-seller relationship, employer-employee, teacher-student, producer-consumer, etc. The suitability of a 'product' for the consumer is also considered, e.g., the benefit or harm of profit-taking (i.e., usury is forbidden), food (i.e., pork and alcohol are forbidden), the effects of advertising or of social trends, etc.

Not surprisingly, Islam gives much attention to the universal elements of human relationships, and many of its legal injunctions regulate the parameters of family relationships. Marriage, for example, is to be taken as a serious partnership, carefully contracted and responsibly carried out; divorce is to be resorted to only as an extreme measure. A woman's distinctive biology and psychology are provided for whenever gender-specific parameters are set out. Conversely, a man's gender-specific strengths mean that a married Muslim woman is to be free of having to earn her own living and that of her children. At the same time, she is encouraged to engage in activities of benefit to herself or others, whether gainfully employed or otherwise. Her foremost position, however, is as manager of her husband's household.

No doubt, the most visible hallmark of the Muslim woman is her public presentation in a respectable, non-showy, non-provocative way. The Muslim woman should be above reproach in appearance and behaviour, establishing and maintaining the highest reputation, not to mention programming herself in the most noble virtues of God-consciousness, thankfulness, patience, generosity, etc., leading her family and acquaintances in the pursuit of a just and peaceful society.

From an Islamic point of view the modern 'Western' world presents women with the burdensome and unnatural stresses of having to glamourize herself to a media-projected fashion standard, to live as a 'super-mom' earning a second family income or supporting a one-parent household (or, alternatively to marry late in life or not at all), vying with men in a cut-throat competitive work-place, in a materialistic society of "have's" and "have not's", where conscience and morals have lost their value.

We invite all women (and indeed men!) everywhere to unite with Muslim women in working towards enlightened personal fulfillment and a caring world.

Suggested Reading

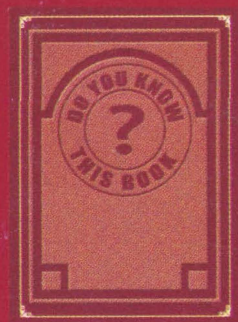
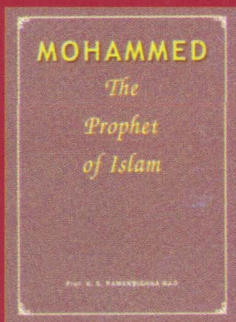
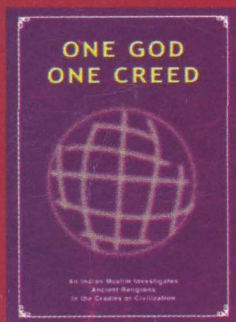
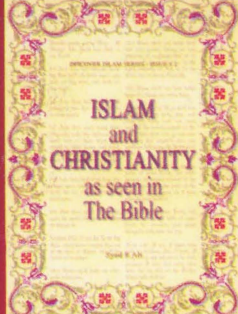
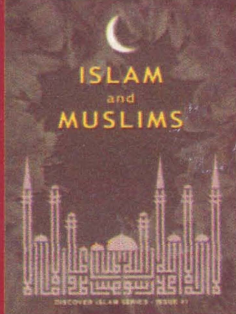
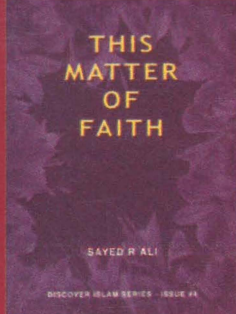
If you wish to know more about Islam you may refer the following books:

1. Fundamentals of Tawheed by Bilal Philips.
2. In Introduction to Understanding The Qur'an S.A.A. Maudoodi
3. Salvation through Repentance by Bilal Philips.
4. The Bible, the Qur'an and Science by Maurice Bucaille.
5. Al-Qur'an The Miracle of Miracles by Ahmed Deedat.
6. The True Religion of God by Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips.

Islamic Centers Worldwide

For more information about Islam you may contact any Islamic Centre or Mosque around the world. A few well-known Islamic Centre are listed below.

1. **World Assembly of Muslim Youths**
Prince Sultan Bin Abdulaziz Str.
P.O. Box 10845, Riyadh 11443
Saudi Arabia
Tel: 4641663 / 4641669
Cable ISLAMIYAH Riyadh
Telex: 400413 / 405220
ISLAMI SJ Fax: 46417
2. **Al Muntada Al-Islami Trust**
7 Bridges Place, Parsons Green
London SW6 4HHR, UK
Tel: 071-7318145
Fax: 071-738 4225
3. **Islamic Centre, Japan**
1-1-16-11 OHARA SETAGAYA-KU-TOKYO
156, Japan.
Tel: (03) 460-6169 Cable: ISLAM CENTER
TOKYO Telex: 2425329 MUHAG J
4. **Islamic Da'wah**
College International 3rd floor
A.R.B. Center 192/B Grey Street
(Cnr. Grey & Victoria Streets Durban)
4001, South Africa,
Tel: (0311) 3117887 / (0311) 3073788
Fax: (0311) 3073786
5. **Islamic Information Foundation**
8 Laurel Lane, Halifax N.S.
Canada, B3M2P6
Phone (902) 4452494
6. **Islamic Society of North America (ISNA)**
P.O. Box 38, (Plainfield) Ind. 46168, U.S.A.
Fax: (317) 839-1840 - Tel: 317-839-8157
7. **Center for Islamic Studies**
15A, Rohini Road,
Wellawatta, Colombo-06, Sri Lanka
Tel: 593523, Fax: 586660
8. **Fi Sabililla Da'wah & Media**
Foundation Inc.
No. 50 Purdue St,
Cubao, Quezon City,
Philippines 1109
Email: fidamfi@hotmail.com
9. **Islamic Research Foundation**
56/58 Tandel Street (North),
Dongri Mumbai - 400009 (India)
Tel: 3736875 (6 lines) Fax: 91-22-3730689
Email: islam@irf http: www.irf.net
10. **The Muslim Converts Association of Singapore**
32, Onan Road,
Singapore 4244484
Tel: 3488344 Ext. 32, 31 or 38
web site: www.darul-arqam.org.sg
or The nearest Islamic Centre.



How does Islam treat women?

In the popular discussion about ISLAM. A large part tends to center around the topic WOMAN IN ISLAM.

A Muslim woman wearing a head scarf in the street of the west is seen by many Westerners as something foreign, exotic and aloof. It unfortunately happens quite frequently that such a woman is ridiculed, pitted and even approached compassionately by total strangers. This all foster the perception of such notions as “fundamentalism”, “backwardness” and “suppression”, and is the result of biased reporting in the media, fuelling existing prejudice and misunderstanding.

Therefore it is important for the Western society to understand that underneath the head scarf there are self-aware, thinking women have a right to be taken seriously. This is especially so as more and more Western women are choosing Islam for their religion. There are many reasons for this and often her choice has its personal elements. Now, what makes a “modern Western woman” choose a path that allegedly lead to suppression and humiliation?

The 25 questions raised and answered aim at clarifying this issue, giving information in a concise and factual form around the topic “WOMAN IN ISLAM”.



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