

Women in Muhammad's Life (Peace be upon him)

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The first thing that meets the eye about women in Muhammad's life (Peace be upon him) is the fact that he liberated her from blame for the Original Sin. She, alone, is not responsible for it. The Old Testament¹ reads: "She took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate."

On the other hand, Muhammad (Peace be upon him) said that both of them committed the sin, adding that Adam assumes a large part of this responsibility. Adam disobeyed Allah². Both of them committed the sin, then they repented and their repentance was accepted. Allah who created this universe is able to forgive those who repent and regret. There is no fact which makes Allah obliged to give birth to a son then let the disbelievers kill, torture, and crucify him in order to forgive them.

The claim that Allah killed His son as Abraham killed the ram instead of his son is simply unjust. Abraham went through a hard test and when he obeyed Allah, He gave him the ram as a grace from Himself, so ponder over this! Then, should the child bear a sin that he did not originally commit or hear about? Why should the woman bear the sin alone? The Old Testament says, "I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children".³

The Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) said that the pain of pregnancy and childbirth gave women dignity in her children's eyes⁴; as she bore the pains of pregnancy and delivery. He also stated that Paradise is under mothers'

¹ Genesis 3:1-16

² Chapter of Al-A'raf, 7:7, 19, 27 and chapter of Taha, 20: 20-21

³ Genesis , 3:16

⁴ Chapter of Luqman, 31:14

feet. He (Peace be upon him) also said that kindness to mothers is greater than that to fathers and he repeated this thrice.⁵

Therefore, women have a very specific position in Prophet Muhammad's (Peace be upon him) commandments. She is not meant just for fun or enjoyment as the case is in the West, nor does she have to wage a war in order to win some of her rights. Rather, she should be treated as follows:

- 1- The family is the cornerstone of the community meant by Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) to exist. Both mothers and fathers should be treated kindly.
- 2- Mothers should be treated kindly three times more than fathers.
- 3- As a mother, wife, sister or daughter, women are taken care of by their brothers and all of their respective families which should support them financially, in full, even if such women are rich.
- 4- A wife is the backbone of the family. The goodness of men means they should be good to their wives and treat them nicely as the prophetic tradition says, "The best of you is the best to his family".⁶
- 5- "*But do some act for your souls beforehand*", no intercourse without foreplay, without which women would be psychologically hurt.
- 6- There should be no intercourse while the woman is menstruating as primarily this harms women as well as men. In order to make sure that she is clean, she can use a piece of cotton and takes it out. Once this piece is white as it is and has no other colors, this means that she is pure with no more vaginal inflammations. It is as simple and easy invention as it is accurate and accessible to all women whether in urban, countryside or desert areas.

⁵ Reported by Muslim and Al-Bukhari

⁶ *As-Selseleh as-Sahihah* (the sound chain) of Al-Albani, Vol. 6, no. 2678

7- There should be no intercourse after childbirth for a certain time, and this prohibition continues until she recovers from the pain of childbirth. She can also know that by inserting a swab of cotton into her vagina to see that there are no more traces of blood.

Now we should discuss polygamy, which is the issue of multiple wives of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him). These marriages, according to historical narration, are:

- 1- The first time the Prophet (Peace be upon him) married, he was twenty-five while his peers married at the age of 14 and 15.
- 2- The Prophet(Peace be upon him)married the forty-year- old Lady Khadija bint (i.e. daughter of) Khowayled, a widow of two men, and a mother of one daughter and two sons.
- 3- The Prophet (Peace be upon him)lived with her and did not marry any other woman until she died when he was at the age of fifty.
- 4- He spent two years wifelss thereafter, then married Lady Sawda bint Zama', who was older and quite unattractive. She was overweight, 80 years old, and no longer attractive.
- 5- After that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) married 'Aisha, the daughter of Abu Bakr, when she was nine years old; a girl still playing with her peers with toys. 'Aisha was the only virgin whom he married.
- 6- The rest of his wives had all married before, and they included a disbeliever, Muslims, a Jewish woman, and a Christian, but they converted to Islam before marriage.

That is, Prophet Muhammad(Peace be upon him)as an ordinary man married Lady Khadija only but Muhammad as a Prophet married eleven women.

A table featuring the story of the Prophet's (Peace be upon him) marriages

1	From adulthood to 25 years old	Single
2	From 25 – 40	Married Khadijah while he was not busy. He was not charged with the burden of da'wa or the responsibility of the nation. However, he was young and strong.
3	From 40-50	Married to Khadijah, and facing the difficulties of da'wa.
4	From 50-52.	A widower who suffers loneliness but still bears the responsibility and task of children and home.
5	From 52-55	Married Sawda who was quite unattractive.
6	From 55-63	The rest of the mothers of the believers. Nine years bearing the responsibility of da'wa and state. Besides, the disbelievers prosecuted him and his companions.

How Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) dealt with women in general and his wives in particular?

Throughout the whole country, Arabs and foreigners, women were but commodities for selling and purchase. This continues to be prevalent in every country in the West. A girl would change her maiden name to her husband's name because she had become his 'property'. When women rejected this scourge, laws have been amended accordingly in some countries in order to have the right to keep their father's name. Yet, some changed their names to that of their husbands, or to have any names they want. All children can be named after any other name as well.

In the midst of this situation, Muhammad (Peace be upon him) came to restore the rights of women as women are equal to men. The Prophet (Peace be upon him) used to pamper his wife as follows:

- 1- When drinking he would put his lips exactly where her lips were as a way of expressing his love for her;
- 2- He would let her put her foot on his thigh to ride the camel;
- 3- He would forbid himself from something that was permissible in order not to disturb his wife;
- 4- He would positively respond to her desire to see players and dancers and let her watch from within the mosque; and
- 5- He would accept her request to race against her. Having won the race once, he would deliberately delay himself to ensure her a win later on while saying, “Now we are even”. His wife felt happy that he did not forget to have fun and play.

This was Muhammad's (Peace be upon him) manners with women. Do you know anyone who dares to be like him in the past or the present?