

GENERAL

DA'WAH

ISSUES

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## MUSLIM MEN ARE POLYGAMISTS

**Muslims are often accused of being promiscuous because polygamy is legal in Islaam.**

1. Islaam did not introduce polygamy. Unrestricted polygamy practiced in most human societies throughout the world in every age. Islaam regulated polygamy by limiting the number of wives and establishing responsibility in its practice.
2. Monogamy of the West inherited from Greece and Rome where men were restricted by law to one wife but were free to have as many mistresses among the majority slave population as they wished. In the West today, most married men have extramarital relations with mistresses, girlfriends and prostitutes. Consequently the Western claim to monogamy is false.
3. Monogamy illogical. If a man wishes to have a second wife whom he takes care of and whose children carry his name and he provides for he is considered a criminal, bigamist, who may be sentenced to years in jail. However, if he has numerous mistresses and illegitimate children his relation is considered legal.
4. Men created polygamous because of a need in human society. There is normally a surplus of women in most human societies.<sup>1</sup> The surplus is a result of men dying in wars, violent crimes and women outliving men.<sup>2</sup> The upsurge in homosexuality further increases the problem. If systems do not cater to the need of surplus women it will result in corruption in society. Example, Germany after World War II, when suggestions to legalize polygamy were rejected by the Church. Resulting in the legalization of prostitution. German prostitutes are considered as workers like any other profession. They receive health benefits and pay taxes like any other citizen. Furthermore, the rate of marriage has been steadily declining as each succeeding generation finds the institution of marriage more and more irrelevant.
5. Western anthropologists argue that polygamy is a genetic trait by which the strongest genes of the generation are passed on. Example, the lion king, the strongest of the pack, monopolizes the females thereby insuring that the next generation of lion cubs will be his offspring.
6. Institutional polygamy prevents the spread of diseases like Herpes and AIDS. Such venereal diseases spread in promiscuous societies where extra-marital affairs abound.

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<sup>1</sup> Russia: 46.1% male to 53.9% female; UK: 48.6% male to 51.5% female; USA: 48.8% male to 51.2% female; Brazil: 49.7% male to 50.27% female (*The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, vol. 17, pp. 34, 270, 244). Exceptions in China and India due to wide-spread infanticide on a national scale.

<sup>2</sup> According to the Center for Health Statistics, American women today can expect to live to be 77.9 years old, while men can only expect to live to 70.3.

7. Polygamy protects the interests of women and children in society. Men, in Western society make the laws. They prefer to keep polygamy illegal because it absolves them of responsibility. Legalized polygamy would require them to spend on their additional wives and their offspring. Monogamy allows them to enjoy extra-marital affairs without economic consequence.
8. Only a minority will practice polygamy in Muslim society. In spite of polygamy being legal in Muslim countries, only 10-15% of Muslims in these countries practice polygamy. Although the majority of men would like to have more than one wife, they cannot afford the expense of maintaining more than one family. Even those who are financially capable of looking after additional families are often reluctant due to the psychological burdens of handling more than one wife. The family problems and marital disputes are multiplied in plural marriages.
9. Conditions have been added for polygamy in many Muslim countries. For example, in Egypt, the permission of the first wife must first be obtained. This and similar conditions are a result of colonial domination. No woman in her right mind will give her husband permission to take a second wife. Such a condition, in fact, negates the permission given by God in the Qur'aan.
10. Others have accepted polygamy on condition that it not be for "lust". That is, if the wife is ill, or unable to bear children, or unable to fulfill the husband's sexual needs, etc., taking a second wife is acceptable. Otherwise it becomes "lust" on the husband's part and is consequently not acceptable. The reality is that "lust" was involved in the marriage of the first wife. Why is it acceptable in the case of the first and not the second? As has already been pointed out, men are polygamous by nature. To try to curb it by such conditions will only lead to corruption in society.
11. Feminists may object to this male right by insisting that women should also be able to practice polygamy. However, a woman marrying four husbands would only increase the problem of surplus women. Furthermore, no child would accept his or her mother identifying the father by the "eeny meeny miney mo" method.
12. The question which remains is, "If God is good and wishes good for His creatures, why did he legislate something which would be harmful to most women?" Divine legislation looks at the society as a whole seeking to maximize benefit. If a certain legislation benefits the majority of the society and causes some emotional harm to a minority, the general welfare of society is given precedence.

## **ARRANGED MARRIAGES**

### **Muslims are often accused of forcing their daughters into marriage**

1. Islamic law requires that females must give their permission before they are married. Prophet Muhammad (...) said, "*The permission of virgins should be taken and their silence is their consent.*" On one occasion a woman came to the Prophet (...) and

informed him that her father had married her off without her permission. He offered to annul her marriage, however, she did not accept his offer saying that she only wanted to confirm her right. A previously married woman has the right to choose for herself.

2. Muslims are encouraged to help their children find suitable marital partners since males and females are raised separately in society. Women are spared having to look for their own mates.
3. From a Western perspective, where teenagers are often required to leave home and go out to work and look after themselves, it would seem ludicrous for parents to later on suggest whom they should marry.
4. It has become a practice among some Muslims to force their children to marry their cousins. For Muslims in the West it becomes a means to help their family members also reach the West. Consequently, there have been a number of cases reported in the newspapers in England of the Home Office rescuing Muslim girls from forced marriages at the airport. There are also many Muslim girls who have run away from home rather than be forced to marry relatives in villages in Pakistan or India. Such girls are being given new identities by police authorities and will likely lose their Islaam in the process.

### **MUSLIM WOMEN CANNOT MARRY THEMSELVES**

**The Muslim woman is considered oppressed since she must have her father's permission to get married.**

1. Islaamic law requires the permission of a woman's father for her marriage to be valid. Prophet Muhammad (...) was reported to have said, "*The marriage of any woman who marries herself without her guardian's consent is invalid.*"
2. From a Western perspective in which teenagers are required to leave home and fend for themselves, it would seem unthinkable that the father's permission would be needed for marriage.
3. The Muslim woman lives a sheltered life. She is not used to dealing with men outside her blood relatives whom she cannot marry (*mahaarim*). The father will be more capable of judging the young man objectively. The young woman could easily be fooled or sweet-talked as she tends to be more emotional in her judgement.
4. If the guardian refuses proposals for illegitimate reasons like the persons tribe, race, color, status, the young lady has the right to seek redress from the court. If he judge concludes that the father is wrongfully preventing his daughter from marriage, he may take the guardianship from the father and act as the girls guardian.

## **DOUBLE STANDARD IN MARRIAGE**

**Muslim males are allowed to marry non-Muslim females but Muslim females are only allowed to marry Muslim males. This is often cited as discrimination and one of the symbols of oppression of Muslim females.**

1. Muslim males are not allowed to marry any non-Muslim female. Only Christians and Jews (People of the Book) and not any other religion. This is due to the fact that the scriptures held sacred by Christians and Jews do contain large portions of revelation even though the texts have been distorted and changed. Consequently, in honor of the revelation still remaining in these texts, permission was granted to marry their women. However, the condition of chastity is added to the permission mentioned in the Qur'aan. Consequently, only a woman who is either a virgin, divorcee or widow can be married. This means that the common practice of Muslims from the East coming to Europe and America and finding blue eyed blondes in discos for wives is quite illegitimate. Finding chaste females in the West is more difficult than finding the proverbial "needle in the haystack." By mid teens, virginity is looked at as a fault rather than a virtue.
2. The reason for allowing men and not women is in order to protect the woman's religion. If a Muslim man requested his Christian wife not to bring alcohol or pork in his house and that she not wear mini-skirts or kiss his friends, she could comply without affecting her religious teachings. However, If a Christian husband requested his Muslim wife to purchase alcohol and serve him pork, to wear mini-skirts and kiss his friends since it is his custom to kiss the wives of his friends. It is natural for a wife to try to please her husband. In the case of the Muslim wife, that could lead to the destruction of her faith.
3. Marriage to non-Muslims is discouraged in situations where Muslims are weak or in the minority in order to safeguard the religion of the children. If a Muslim man marries a non-Muslim woman in the West and their marriage ends in divorce, or the man dies, the courts will award custody of the children to the wife who will likely raise them as non-Muslims. However, if they were married in a Muslim country, the *Sharee'ah* would not give the children to a non-Muslim mother. They would instead be given to either the husband or his relatives in order to insure they receive a Muslim upbringing.

## **DIVORCE IS EASY IN ISLAAM**

**It is generally held that divorce in Islaam is very easy; a man only has to say to his wife: "You're divorced," three times and its all over.**

1. In reality, divorce is not that easy in Islaam. There are conditions which must be fulfilled even before its proceedings can begin. Firstly, divorce cannot be pronounced while a woman is menstruating. Prior to the beginning of the menstrual cycle, many women suffer mood swings and become cranky. The biological changes in their systems cause psychological changes that are commonly known as PMS

(premenstrual syndrome). In order to ensure that the cause of the husband pronouncing divorce is not a product of behavioral changes brought on by PMS, divorce pronouncement during menses is prohibited. Secondly, the divorce cannot be pronounced during a period between menses in which the couple has had sexual relations. The rationale being that if the man cared enough about the woman to have sexual relations, he needs to reflect about his decision more before going ahead. He will have to wait until after the woman's next menses ends, before he can pronounce divorce.

2. The pronouncement is considered invalid if the man was in such a rage that he did not know what he was saying. This is based on the Prophet's statement, "*The divorce pronouncement is not valid at the time of [mental] seizure.*"
3. After the pronouncement, the divorce does not come into effect until the woman has had three subsequent menstrual cycles. The first cycle is to insure that she is not pregnant and the second two are further opportunities for reconciliation. She is not supposed to leave her home as is common among Muslims today. The husband is required to continue to maintain her until the waiting period [*'iddah*] ends.
4. If a woman is pregnant at the time of the pronouncement, her *'iddah* is until she has delivered her child. This principle gives the maximum amount of time for reconciliation in order for the welfare of the child to be reflected upon.
5. In the final analysis, divorce proceedings are somewhat easier than in many Western countries [a notable exception being the well known "Mexican divorce" which can be concluded in a matter of minutes]. The theory being that marriage in Islaam is primarily a contract and not a sacrament as originally perceived in the West where it was considered unbreakable [and remains as such among Catholics]. Consequently, if the contract was entered into with a verbal statement of "I do," and witnesses, it should be dissoluble with the statement "I don't," and witnesses.

## **DIVORCE IS ONLY THE MAN'S RIGHT**

**Muslim women are often portrayed as being oppressed due to their being denied the right to divorce.**

1. The pronouncement of divorce (*talaaq*) is primarily the right of the husband as he is in the position of authority in the family. Also PMS considerations and the emotional nature of women could cause a greater incidence of divorce if it were put in the hands of the wives as an automatic right.
2. The wife may institute divorce proceedings by making her request through the court. If the judge (*Qaadee*) sees just cause or a real need on her part, he can act on her behalf and institute the *khula'* divorce which has a waiting period of only one menstrual cycle.

3. A woman can obtain the right to pronounce divorce if it is made a condition in her marriage contract which her husband agrees to. She may also gain the right by requesting her husband's permission at any point during the marriage. If permission is given she may pronounce divorce according to the previously mentioned conditions.

### **MUSLIM WOMEN ARE OPPRESSED BY THE ISLAAMIC DRESS CODE**

**The covering of Muslim women has become one of the international symbols of female oppression in feminist circles.**

There are two major trends which have developed in the West over the past century. On one hand, the fashion industry has systematically unclothed women. From being fully clothed from head to toe at the turn of the century, she now wears virtually nothing when the weather permits. On the other hand there has been a dramatic rise in the reported incidents of rape. In the USA in the early 90s the reported incidents of rape had crossed the 100,000 mark. And researchers estimated that the actual number was between 7 to 10 times that number since most women are shy to report rapes. The two trends are closely interrelated. The woman in the West has become a sex-object with which to sell products thereby pumping up the sexual tension of the society. The Corvette is not sold based on its powerful engine or its special features, instead the car is displayed with a model in a bikini lying on it. Similarly, a new Gillette razor blade is not sold by giving details about its new titanium blades. Instead, a man is shown in ads shaving with a woman's hand with long red fingernails coiled around hold his. The subliminal message being taught is: You buy the car, you get the girl. You buy the razor, you get the girl.

Islaam prescribes the covering of females for two primary reasons stated in the Qur'aan. God says in *Soorah al-Ahzaab* (33: 59):

**يُذْنِبْنَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلَابِيْبِهِنَّ ذَلِكَ اَدْنٰى اَنْ يُعْرَفْنَ وَلَا يُؤْذَيْنَ**

**“Let them cast their outer garments over their bodies. That is best in order that they be known and not harmed.”**

The *hijaab* is to make the Muslim woman known in the society as a virtuous and honorable woman. Her *hijaab* makes the statement that she is not available and not interested in any advances. Many Muslim women who have emigrated to the West take off their scarves and outer garments because they claim it draws attention to themselves. If they expose their hair and dress in modest western dresses no one will look at them. It is true that the *hijaab* does provide a level of anonymity, as many of the woman's physical details will be hidden. However, the intent is not to prevent men from looking. When men see a nun in her habit, fully covered like a Muslim woman in full *hijaab*, they will turn their heads and stare at her. Similarly, when they see a woman walking in a bikini, they will also turn their heads and stare. However, the first stare is different from the second. The first is out of curiosity, having seen something unusual, while the second is out of lust and aroused sensuality. The

consequence of the second is the molestation of women on a national scale while the first causes respect.

The penalty in the Islaamic state is very severe for rape in order to further guarantee protection for females. Where weapons of any type are used in the rape, the punishment is death. The death penalty has also been introduced in Philippines and it is being called for in India currently. However, to allow women to expose themselves and then kill those who react unduly is not practical. The law should be balanced. The circumstances, which might encourage rape, should first be removed from the society, then a severe penalty may be enacted.

It may be said that even in societies where women are fully covered, they may still be approached and molested. However, if the vast majority of those who are molested are not properly covered, the principle of protection still applies. Even in the society of the Prophet, one thousand four hundred years ago, some women were molested and raped.

Some people question the imposition of *hijaab* by the Islaamic state. Is it a personal choice of women or a legal obligation? It is the responsibility of the head of every family to insure that the women of his household leave the home in a legally acceptable state of dress. The state is further responsible to prevent any women who appear in public in a state of undress in order to protect public dignity and morality. The West has set its own limits for dress which change according to the mood of society. At one point in time, strip joints were illegal. Now many bars have topless waitresses and dancers. In most states, a woman may not appear in public topless. However, a woman recently contested the law in Florida and won her case. Complete nudity remains public crime throughout the West, though nudist camps and nudist beaches have sprung up in different locations in Europe and America.

There are conditions which must be fulfilled for the *hijaab* to be acceptable. a) It should be wide and loose so as to not show the shape of the woman's body; b) it should be made of thick material which will not reveal what is underneath; c) It should not be colorful and ornamented so as to attract sexual admiration.

Where the *hijaab* has become a cultural norm and women comply out of fear of embarrassment, it will not be worn properly. It may become transparent, or worn tight exposing the curves of the body, or it may become so ornamented as to be attractive by itself. It may be short so as to expose the dress underneath, or the face may be covered and the front of the hair exposed. Such practices are the result of women wearing *hijaab* for the wrong reasons. They should be educated to realize that it is for their benefit and for the benefit of the society.

## **DOUBLE STANDARD IN INHERITANCE**

**The unequal division of inheritance between men and woman is sometimes cited as an example Islaam's oppression of women.**

1. Before looking at the division of inheritance in Islaam with regard to women, one needs to look at Western inheritance laws. The right for women to inherit and own property was only given to women in the West at the turn of the century, whereas that right was given to women in Islaam 1,400 years ago. Furthermore, in the West, a person may legally write a will giving all of their wealth to their dog or cat and exclude their wife, children and other relatives. In the Islaamic system, the rights of wives, children and relatives to inherit are protected. Set portions of the inheritance to be given to them are identified in the Qur'aan. No one can write a will and cancel or modify what is due to them. A will can be written to give up to a maximum of one third to those who would not inherit by law. As to leaving even the third of one's wealth to animals, the Muslim State could step in on behalf of the inheritors and cancel such a will as it obviously indicates some form of mental disorder. The third would then be divided up among the natural inheritors.
2. In Islaamic society men are responsible for the maintenance women. For example, if a son, a daughter and a mother inherit, the son also has the additional responsibility of looking after his sister and his mother. Consequently, based on the male role, Islaamic Law awards the son twice the portion of the daughter.<sup>3</sup>
3. However, the two to one division is not applied in all cases. For example, the Qur'aan states (4: 11): "If a man or woman [died and] left neither descendents for ascendants, but left behind a brother or a sister, each gets 1/6<sup>th</sup>; and if they are more than two, they equally share 1/3<sup>rd</sup>."

## **TWO WOMEN EQUAL TO ONE MAN**

**The finger is also pointed at Islaam as considering women inferior since the witness of one man is equal to that of two women.**

1. The Qur'aan does state in *Soorah al-Baqarah* (2: 282): "**Get two of your men as witnesses. But if two men are not available, then get a man and two women agreeable to you as witnesses, so that if one of them makes a mistake, the other can remind her...**" However, this principle is not applied in all cases. This is specific to business contracts as the beginning of the verse indicates. Since women in Muslim society generally stay at home and men work outside the home, they tend not to be that familiar with business dealings and as such they may forget some of the details – as the verse explains.
2. This consideration may seem quaint in the West where women have been a part of the work force for much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Women entered the work force as a product of the need for them in the society and the munitions factories during the two World Wars. Millions of men in their prime were sent overseas to fight and their jobs had to be filled by women. Once the wars ended, many refused to return to their homes and the feminist movement was born. Eventually, many women came to look at

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<sup>3</sup> The mother would receive 12.5% (1/8<sup>th</sup>), the daughter 29.2% (1/3 of 7/8) and the son 58.3% (2/3 of 7/8).

fulfillment in the work place and not at home. Even if her job was only that of a secretary, harassed by her boss, smiling sheepishly to keep her job, she felt it was better than being stuck at home cooking, washing dishes, changing diapers and preparing bottles of milk. Many Western women became familiar with business dealings, so the previously mentioned considerations would seem to them irrelevant. However, even in America, the vast majority of women are housewives, spending most of their lives in their homes, while their husbands work and bring home the bread.

3. In areas of female expertise, the witness of a single woman is sufficient. For example, when ‘Uqbah ibn al-Haarith complained to the Prophet that a former slave woman informed him that she had wet-nursed both himself and his wife, Umm Yahyaa bint Abee Ihaab, he replied, “ **كَيْفَ وَقَدْ قِيلَ** How can you object when it has already been stated?”<sup>4</sup> According to Islaamic law, those who suckled from the same breast before the age of two become suckling brothers and sisters and are not allowed to marry. Consequently, their marriage was annulled on the basis of a single woman’s testimony.

### **BLOOD-THIRSTY MUSLIMS**

**Animal lovers in the West have often pointed the finger at the Muslim practice of slaughtering animals, especially on the occasion of ‘Eed al-Ad’haa. The French actress Bridget Bardot had made a number of disparaging remarks about Muslims in France for which she was fined in court. It is considered to be cruelty to animals.**

1. This is a case of irrational sentimentality. Aborting millions of human fetuses yearly is perfectly fine, but cutting an animal’s neck is considered inhumane. The Society of Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) has attempted to prohibit Muslims from slaughtering animals in many locations in the West.
2. The Western method of slaughtering involves rendering the animals unconscious prior to cutting off their heads. Smaller animals like chickens are stunned by electrocution while larger animals are stunned with a stun gun. The stun gun contains a piston which strikes the skull of the animal and knocks it unconscious. Anyone who has ever received an electric shock will confirm that it is not a pleasant experience at all. A jolt sufficient to render an animal unconscious will be quite painful. Whacking someone in the head with an iron bar is, without a doubt, an extremely painful experience. Both of these methods are in no way humane. They cause the animals to suffer incalculable pain and are, in fact, geared to facilitate production line slaughter of large numbers of animals.
3. Muslim slaughter which specifies that the knife should be razor-sharp is not felt by the animal. The Prophet (...) said, “...*Whenever you slaughter, make the knife sharp and relieve the animal.*” Only the jugular veins and the esophagus are cut allowing

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<sup>4</sup> *Sahih Al Bukhari*, vol. , p. , no. .

the animal's heart to pump out most of the blood. The lack of blood to the brain causes the animal to eventually fall into unconsciousness and die gradually. The preferred method of suicide among many Westerners is to cut one's wrists with a sharp knife or razor-blade as it is relatively painless.

4. As for the argument of vegetarians that humans were not meant to eat meat, it is scientifically false. Humans are neither herbivores who do not have the necessary enzymes to digest meat, nor are they carnivores who do not possess the enzymes to digest vegetable matter. They are omnivores, capable of processing both vegetable and meat. The real force behind vegetarianism is the Hindu belief in *karma* which leads Hindus to believe that the goat you eat may be your reincarnated relative.
5. Slaughtering animals in order to use their fur for clothing, though objectionable in the West today, is perfectly valid according to Islaamic law. The animals were submitted to humans for benefit. If their skins and fur provide humans with warmth in winters, they may kill them for it. However, the method of slaughter should be humane. Currently, the animals are killed by clubbing them to death which would be *haraam* (prohibited) according to Islaamic law.

### **ISLAAM WAS SPREAD BY THE SWORD**

**The common image of Islaam being spread by an Arab on camel back riding in off the desert with a Qur'aan in one hand and a scimitar (a curved sword) in the other offering a choice of either accepting Islaam or losing one's head.**

1. As mentioned earlier under the issue of apostasy, forcible conversion is prohibited in Islaam. The religion did not spread by the sword. There were military confrontations between the Muslim state and the existing world powers of Rome and Persia. However, the areas conquered were put under Muslim administration and the populations were free to maintain their own beliefs. Muslims ruled Egypt, Palestine and Lebanon from the 8<sup>th</sup> century and sizeable Christian communities continued to exist over the past 13 centuries. Muslims ruled Spain for 700 years and India for 1000 years without the vast majority of the population converting to Islaam.

The largest Muslim country in the world today is Indonesia, having over 200 million citizens, never saw a Muslim soldier. Islaam spread there and in Malaysia and Philippines by trade. That was also the case of Islaam's spread in West African countries like Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal, Chad and Niger. Also, Islaam is the fastest growing religion in America today with anywhere between 300 and 500 converts daily. This is taking place without any soldiers or even missionaries.