

Study Guide for “Lesson on Islam and Women”

(See also Lesson and Study Guide on *Building Bridges with Muslims*)

Notices: The Study Guide and video lesson on this subject contain adult content. Viewer, reader, and parental discretion are advised.

Due to the broad topic and documentation, this study guide is long. Group Leaders may want to select portions for study and group discussion.

Summary and Notes:

Quick Summary: Islam and Women is a huge subject. It would take many lessons to fully cover how Muslim women vary as individuals and by subcultures, and the special ways to build bridges, share truth, challenge their thinking, and bring them to Christ. We only cover a few here.

For this video lesson we have as our guest Dr. Wafa Sultan. Sultan is a psychiatrist from the Middle East. Although largely unknown to Americans, she is one of *Time Magazine’s* “most influential people in the world.” She is an outspoken former Muslim human rights advocate, and critic of Islam.

The Study Guide for this lesson is divided into Two Parts:

Part 1, a Review of the video lesson with Wafa Sultan. This lesson focuses on 5 important Women’s Rights issues in Islam that we think are important for Western Christians to know. We include the relationship between the Islamic Principles and these Practices. Are the abuses simply cultural?

Part 2, an Appendix of References, one of the largest English listings of authentic Qur’anic, Sunni, and Shiite references on women’s issues in Islam.

Part 1: Islam and Women with Guest Dr. Wafa Sultan

“I invite the advocates of the multicultural society to acquaint themselves with the suffering of the women who, in the name of religion, are enslaved.”

Somali former Muslim Ayan Hirsi Ali, from The Caged Virgin

“Every Muslim country abuses women,” said Huda, the woman Dr. C disciples for this series. *“That is why I am so poor after my divorce. I came to America to start a new life.”*

Our PALM Project training teaches us to:

Build Bridges

Share Truth

Challenge Falsehood

Today’s lesson focuses on challenging an aspect of Islam: Women’s rights.

The video lesson presents **Five of the Worst Abuses** faced by Muslim women. These are:

- The claim that women are “Lacking in Mind and Religion”
- Women’s Testimony being worth half a man’s
- Polygamy
- Wife-beating
- Male domination of Women

It discusses these in the context of the Qur'an and authoritative traditions, (the sahih hadith), and answers the question, are these abuses due to *Culture or True Islam?*

Meet Dr. Wafa Sultan

Dr. Sultan has a fierce international reputation for her courage to speak out against the violence and human rights abuses of the Muslim world. She jumped to worldwide fame through an interview on Al Jazira television, but her convictions did not arise overnight.

Born and raised as a Muslim in Syria, Sultan saw and experienced many abuses against women, and observed Islam's anger toward other people groups. In her culture, it was accepted without question that Islam was right. In that case, she thought, the abuses must be because her country did not correctly practice Islam.

Then she met the man who became her husband. He was Muslim, but he knew of another worldview – Christian. Little by little he convinced Wafa that the things they both disliked in their culture were a result of Islam. She began to see that it was true. And she began to doubt the existence of God.

Because of her excellent command of Arabic, when she moved to America, Sultan began writing articles for Syrian publications on what it was like to live here. Although she did not become a Christian, little by little her observations of America showed her a culture that was based around the belief in a God who loves. This made a stark contrast to A God Who Hates, her view of the God of Islam, and the title to her book on the subject.

“The righteous are bold as a lion,” says Proverbs 28:1.

That describes the righteous indignation of Sultan in facing the system and leaders who exploit those trapped in the Muslim World. Yet on a personal basis Sultan is warm and full of Middle Eastern hospitality. You see this warm side as she welcomes Dr. C at the beginning of the interview.

(Note: Dr. Sultan is controversial. Some of our Muslim and former Muslim followers may already know her. Many admire her, including Muslims we know who have left Islam, partly because of her. However, perhaps you are offended by her and her message. If so, we ask you to overlook that and focus on the material we present as objectively as possible.)

Women and the Prosperity of Muslim Nations

Dr. Sultan starts out by telling us. “If women in the Muslim world were treated the way they are in America, every nation there would be as wonderful as America.”

“I believe the situation of any country is a reflection of the way its women are treated. How can a nation prosper,” Sultan asks, “if half of its citizens are mistreated? Several times during the interview she comes back to this theme – that a nation cannot do well if its women are abused.

The importance of ISLAMIC SOURCES in the Treatment of Muslim Women

Dr. C gives the references which set the foundation for the abuses that women face in the Muslim World. Dr. Sultan shares her experience with the reality of how they are practiced.

Since the West is constantly told that the mistreatment of women in regions dominated by Islam is cultural, not based on Islamic teachings, Wafa and Cynthia want to be sure that we know that the authentic documents of Islam prove that there IS a relationship.

It is true that there are a wide variety of Islamic sources, and they are of variable authenticity. Dr. C takes care to use the most authentic – the ones that are undeniably accepted by Muslims of Sunni and Shiite sects: the Qur’an and high level, or *mutawater*, hadith (for example *Sahih Al Bukhari*, and the *Sayings of Ali*).

When we see what the Islamic documents teach, and compare it with how the women under Islam are treated, we cannot reasonably deny that there is a connection:

The Teachings cause the Treatment, or

Islamic Principles = Islamic Practice

Pastor George Saieg, who is featured in several other lessons, told Dr. C off screen that when these principles are taught in Muslim countries, like where he was raised, the documentation is not given.

“Everyone accepts what is being taught, so the references are not necessary,” he says. “It is when Westerners want to understand or expose these teachings that the references must be used.”

That is our situation here, so we will give the references.

Are WOMEN LACKING in MIND and RELIGION?

Dr. C presents one of the worst principles against women in Islam: that they are ***Lacking in Mind and Religion***. This concept is at the highest authority level of any teaching in Islam and cannot be denied by either Sunnis or Shiites. To deny a teaching with this level of authority would be similar to denying other major teachings of Islam, such as how many times a day to pray.

ISLAM TEACHES: Women are lacking in Mind and Religion

- Sunni Sahih Al Bukhari DuS # 304 (in seven books with indisputable transmission)
- Shiite Sayings of Ali (*NaHjul Balagha*)
- Both of which refer back to Qur’an Surah 2:282
- (see references in Appendix)

Mohammed said,

“Do not you see that two women’s witness is equal only to one man’s witness? ...Then, this is women’s deficiency of intelligence. Do not you see that the menstruating woman could neither fast nor perform prayer? ...This is her shortage of religion.”

Ali said in Sermon 79,

"Women are deficient in Faith, deficient in Shares and deficient in Intelligence... So beware of the evils of women. Be on your guard even from those of them who are (reportedly) good. Do not obey them even in good things so that they may not attract you to evils."

ISLAM TREATS: Women as lacking in Mind and Religion

Dr. Sultan's response: When asked if she agrees that women are lacking in mind and religion, Dr. Sultan responds to the question as if it is ridiculous. "You are asking Wafa Sultan if women are lacking in mental ability? Of course, we're not!" She goes on to add that to her, the role a woman plays in building a nation by building good families is highly dependent on women and their intelligence.

The belief that women are lacking in mind can be seen with American Muslims as well. Take for example, "Student S," a Muslim undergraduate that Dr. C met at the University of California at Davis. Although born in Yemen, she was raised in America. When asked by Dr. C what she thought of women lacking in mind and religion, S answered,

*"It is proven that women's memories are not as good as men's.
That's why their testimony is only worth half a man's in court."*

The idea expressed in the Sunni and Shiite hadiths that women are lacking in mind and religion is based on the instruction in Surah 2:282 of the Qur'an,

*"And if there are not two men, then a man and two women, such as you agree for witnesses,
so that if one of them err, the other can remind her."*

Even highly intelligent Muslim women in America are under this misunderstanding:

- A pre-law Student at the University of California Berkeley
- Ph.D. Pharmacist Dr. O, and
- an Islamic Newspaper publisher from the Midwest

These three women from strategic fields all told Dr. C on separate occasions:

"It is right that a woman's testimony is worth half of a man's."

Dr. C finds this astounding. First, it is shocking to hear these points of view from educated women in America. Secondly, because women are NOT proven to have worse memories than men. In fact, some studies show that they have better memories. Dr. C presents evidence which supports the positive view of women's intellectual abilities and religious devotion.

In the video lesson Dr. C says that these three women should know better. It is this sort of thinking that demonstrates why she is not happy with the thoughts of Sharia Law coming to America and Europe. Look at what it does in just two countries overseas:

PRACTICE: Status of Women Before the Law

- *Women's Testimony in Iran* (Shiite) is worth half a man's

- Bahrami of Iran said regarding the publicized court case of her blinding with acid, “Each man is worth two women. They are not the same.”
- Mahnoush of Iran said, “I am protesting that in any instance I am considered only half a man...maybe I am more effective than a man so why should my rights be half his?”
- **Afghan Constitution** (Sunni) made under the “direction/protection” of the United States government says:
 - *Woman is worth half a man*

EVIDENCE that Women are NOT intellectually below Men:

Studies show:

- Women have **higher IQs** than men and
- **Better memories** than men
- More **university students** in America are women, and they are more likely to graduate with a degree

Also: women in at least one Middle Eastern university have higher **admission requirements**, as affirmative action for men, reportedly because male applicants have lower grades. (Dr. C has confirmed this claim by viewing the university’s admission requirements chart.)

Looking Down on them:

There actually are a few ways in which women might appear less intelligent than men, but they are not valid:

- Generalizing from the example of a simple, stupid, or obnoxious woman to claim that all women are that way.
- Keeping education from women, and then accusing them of being uneducated (Egyptian Muslim reformer Nawal Al Saadawi, also a physician points this out concerning village women in her writings.)
- Marrying girls at a young age before their education is complete, and diverting their attention to raising children.
- Telling women that their value is in providing sex and children, and then wondering why, as Islamic literature claims, they are mostly interested in sex and children.

Regarding Women Lacking in Religion: Lacking in Religion, or Religious Ritual?

Islam considers women unclean during their menstrual periods. This means they cannot attend the mosque. They cannot touch the Qur’an. They cannot even pray. They can not fast. When they are pregnant and breast-feeding children they also do not fast.

Women cannot pray in the same mosque zone as men. It is preferred if they have their own prayer room (which is never as large or grand as men’s), or in some situations they can pray behind all the men. While raising small children, they are excused from mosque attendance.

Set up for failure. With all these restrictions upon women, you can see how easily they fall behind in religious ritual. In a religion like Islam, which so heavily weighs religious rituals, being denied opportunities to perform them is a big strike against one’s religious progress. Theoretically, women can make up some of these prayers and fasting on other days. But the daily obligations are so many, that it is nearly impossible to make up additional rituals.

In the hadith, Mohammed said that women were lacking in religion. Why? Because of these ritual limitations. Is it fair to put ritual limitations upon women, and then call them lacking due to them?

Excepting Islam, Dr. C has seen that on several continents, regardless of the culture or religion, it is women who are the most frequent visitors to places of worship, apply rituals, and tend to pass on teachings of faith to the next generation.

The Pew Research Center agrees. Possibly the most prestigious organization studying religious trends over decades, it has collected much data that supports her view. In March 2016 it published, “The Gender Gap in Religion Around the World,” which says,

“Based on these wide-ranging and comprehensive datasets, this study finds that globally women are more devout than men by several standard measures of religious commitment.”

In Islam, however, the study noticed that although men and women are equally religious, men attend mosque more often, because of “religious norms.” And you now know what the “religious norms” are – discriminatory laws.

Having PROVEN our Point: that Women are Lacking in NEITHER Mind nor Religion MEANS:

- Women should be considered men’s equals in every culture
- Women deserve equal rights with men
- **We see that Islam’s teachings are inaccurate**

Deuteronomy 18:22 tells us not to follow a prophet who has spoken something that has been proven to be untrue. The Qur’an and both Sunni and Shiite hadiths strongly assert the falsehood that women are lacking in mind and religion.

Therefore, based on the above evidence, and applying Deuteronomy 18:22, Dr. C asserts that exposing the error of this teaching alone is enough to prove that Islam itself is not true. That means it is not from God.

Any Muslim, man or women, who is familiar with logic or can reason, should reflect on this, and consider leaving Islam.

Put in the terms of a **Logical Argument:**

Premise 1: We should not follow a prophet who speaks untruth (Deuteronomy 18:22)

Premise 2: Mohammed spoke untruth (about women lacking in Mind and Religion)

Therefore: *We should not follow Mohammed or Islam*

WHY do educated Muslim women accept this FALSE stereotype?

Dr. Sultan makes another very strong statement, “I always say that education without values is of no value.” Without women being appropriately valued, how can they be expected to fulfill their roles to improve society?

Dr. Sultan explains that growing up in Islamic society being told this, influences the way women think. They have never even considered that they might be the equals to men.

LEAVING the CAGE:

Dr. Sultan says, “The worst form of slavery is when the slave thinks they are free.”

Noted reformer Ayan Hirsi Ali comments on this too,

“Psychological conditioning is very powerful...Muslim girls ... have internalized their subordination, they ... never succeed in escaping from the cage. They are like prisoners suffering from Stockholm Syndrome... comparable to slaves ... who prefer the certainty of their existence in slavery to a freedom that they perceive as treacherous.”

from The Caged Virgin

POLYGAMY

“Marry of the women, who seem good to you two, or three, or four...” Qur’an Surah 4:3

Quoting this, Sultan says, “Muslim men can have four wives.” She asks how that makes a woman feel? It makes them feel that they are not adequate to fulfill the needs of their husband and raise his family.

“There is no doubt that the woman who has...one forth is better off than the one who has no husband at all,” says a contemporary law book from Saudi Arabia.³

Certainly, we disagree with this baseless claim. Dr. C’s Muslim students have expressed hoped that their marriage contract could prevent subsequent wives. But this Saudi book makes that doubtful. When addressing a woman’s complaint that she had kept her part of the marriage contract, yet her husband wanted another wife, the legal advice is:

“You do not have the right to prevent him from marrying again no matter what your activities toward him. He may desire more children or he may feel that having only one wife does not keep him completely chaste.”

So, what Christians call adultery, these Sunni leaders call “chaste.”

The Impact of Polygamy

Another former Muslim, Noni Darwish exposes the broad impact of polygamy:

“Men do not even have to exercise their right to additional wives for the damage to be done. By allowing men to be “loyal” to up to four wives, the stage is set for women always to distrust their husbands. Nor can they trust their friends.”

Darwish states that polygamy indirectly results in:

- making Muslim women adversaries
- single women seeing married men as available
- wives vulnerable if childless
- preventing support groups to help women

- manipulative wives

Since polygamy is respected, and divorce by pronouncement is easy, to avoid divorce, women may:

- Endure beating
- Endure husband's women in their house/bed
- Pay money to husband

Did you know that Muslim polygamy goes on in America? Only the first wife is considered legal. Second marriages can occur in the mosque, and are considered valid by Muslims, but have no legal standing. As reported by co-workers, extra wives obtain government support as single mothers. (There is much more about polygamy and temporary marriages that we do not cover in this lesson.)

One Man One Woman?

The movement to establish this as the definition of marriage in America failed. A concern of those working with Muslims is that the erosion of the traditional American version of marriage could allow for the legalization of polygamy in America. As we hope you now see, that would be a big step backwards for women's rights in America, and for the world.

"If Islam gains power in America," Huda told Dr. C., "women will become nothing again."

WIFE BEATING

"In Islam," Dr. Sultan tells us, "a man can beat his wife, and they practice this." She tells us that beating a person takes away their dignity, and treats them as less than human.

PRINCIPLE: *"As to those women on whose part you see ill conduct, admonish them, and BEAT them."*
Qur'an Surah 4:3

Current **PRACTICE:** *My husband used to beat me until my whole side was blue," a Muslim woman told Dr. C. "My mother told me to stay with him. It would be shame if I did not."*

Because this verse is actually in the Qur'an, Muslims in the West cannot deny that men have the right to beat their wives, something which is never granted in the Bible.

This is disastrous for Islam's public relations with the West. To get around this, Dr. C has heard them attempt to soften the shock of the verse by claiming that it simply means, "slap them to bring them to their senses," like something we might see in an old TV comedy.

But that is not the way it is practiced. And the truth is far from humorous.

There is an important book called, Reasons for Sending the Verses from God by al Sayuti, which explains the circumstances in which verses of the Qur'an were revealed to Mohammed.

When we look up the situation described for Surah 4:34, which allows a man to beat his wife, the situation becomes worse, not better: A woman came to Mohammed complaining of being beaten. Mohammed inquired of Allah, and Allah said that the man had the right to do this.

“My husband beat me and left some marks on my face. In spite of that the man was not punished, though Mohammed wanted to do so.”

Also consider these other **Examples from the Qur’an and Mohammed:**

Example 1

In the Qur’an, Job is commanded to beat his wife, in Surah 38:44

Example 2

A woman, greener than her veil from being beaten, complained to Mohammed. Regarding this, Aisha, Mohammed’s favorite wife said,

“I have not seen any women suffering as much as the believing women.”

Hadith Sahih Al Bukhari DuS # 5825

Example 3

on another occasion, because she left the house without his permission, Aisha said Mohammed,

“Struck me on the chest, which caused me pain.”

Hadith Sahih Muslim 11:35:103 (4:2127)

(Note: Sahih Muslim is another collection of highly regarded Sunni hadith, second only to Al Bukhari, and perhaps equal to it in esteem.)

The argument could be made that children need discipline. Some Westerners spank their children. Islam allows men to marry children (pre-pubertal girls), so they might need spanking, right? But does that make Islam’s treatment of women sound better or worse?

The PR and the Reality of Wife-Beating

While much effort is made in the contemporary English writings, especially on line, to soften the blow of these verses (literally), and to come up with hadiths which would suggest nice treatment of wives is better.

One hadith says the “best of men” treat their women well. We don’t think it should be only the best of men. We think all men should treat women well, and their religion should tell them that. For example, the Bible says all Christian men must love their wives like their own bodies, and as much as Jesus loved the church he died to save.

Internationally the domestic violence statistics do not show Muslim wives being treated well:

- **Pakistan:** Many studies out of Pakistan report that up to 95% of women suffer domestic violence, so much so that they consider it a normal part of married life.
- **Afghanistan:** According to a 2013 HRW Report, 85% of Afghani women have experienced violence. 60% suffer serial violence. Afghanistan is the only country in the world where female suicide tops male.
- **Egypt and Jordan:** A UN Study in 2012 found 33% of Egyptian women, and 20% of Jordanian women experienced physical domestic violence.
- **Bangladesh:** The UN in the 1990s found that 45% of Bangladeshi women had experienced domestic violence.

- Other high figures are reported from Turkey, Iran, Syria and Palestine

Remember that this rough treatment will leave deep psychological scars and behavior patterns, at times even Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome. Some women are starting to report the abuse they experience, but in their shame-and-honor cultures it is extremely difficult to get a response or see progress.

MALE DOMINANCE

“Men have a status above women. God is Majestic and wise.”

Qur’an Surah 2:228 (Muhammad Taqi Usmani Translation)

“Men are in charge of women, because Allah hath made the one of them to excel the other, and because they spend of their property.”

Qur’an Surah 4:34 (Pickthall translation)

Surah 4:34 sets up for woman to be under the domination of males for her entire life, including her:

- Father
- Husband
- and even her Juvenile son

Several experts believe that the key to improving Muslim societies is to empower women with the courage and skills to raise their sons to respect them and other women. This means not letting the son, even little boys, boss them around, as happens in so many Muslim homes.

One expert says allowing sons to boss adult mothers not only undervalues them, but it leads to a misunderstanding of how things work. When a boy tells his mother to do something, and she does it, he gets the idea that saying = doing. Whereas, the reality in life is far different. Saying it does not get it done. Effort is needed to bring goals into reality.

Male custody of children is based on this verse as well.

In the West primary, custody of children in a divorce is granted to the mother, unless she has significant problems. The thinking is that she most loves them, and has their best at heart. Notice that this is the opposite view of Islam. Although Sharia may allow the children to be with the mother for a while, for example two years for a boy for nursing, and seven years for a girl, the ultimate custody belongs to the father.

We know of an example where the father took custody of a boy, out of his mother’s house, and turned him over to another wife. The boy was overlooked by both the dad and stepmother. Both neglected to educate him. He later went back to the birth mother as a barely literate older teen, struggling to survive in society because of his neglect.

“Not Without My Daughter,” a film starring Sally Field, as an American mother trying to get custody of her daughter from a Muslim husband. Based on a true story, it is a not uncommon example of situations that can result when international Muslim marriages break up. (In the video lesson *Should Christians Marry Muslims?* George Saieg strongly recommends this film for women considering marrying Muslims.)

What about decisions regarding herself? Some Muslim countries the husband can notify airports not to let his wife leave the country.

“The man has to have the upper hand!” affirms Sultan in today’s video lesson. He needs to control every aspect of a woman’s life. She cannot even attend her own father’s funeral unless her husband gives permission. If she cannot make even simple decisions regarding herself, Sultan asks, how can she be expected to make the kind of important decisions that impact those around her and the world?

Tina, a successful business woman working in the Middle East, told Dr. C that “Muslim women have difficulty making decisions. They have not learned how to do it – make a choice and take responsibility for the results. There is always someone making the decisions for them – a father, brother, or even juvenile child. After time, some of these women get tired of being bossed around, and rebel. That can start other problems.”

In Tina’s country, women have the opportunity to be educated and get jobs. “But they have no practice in how to make decisions,” she says. “So, society is now facing a group of educated women who insist on having their own way; but because of their lack of experience, make bad decisions and mess up their lives.”

(Note: Tina is not her real name. She asks to remain anonymous)

There is one area where women are considered equal in Islam: before the law in responsibility for performing the duties imposed upon them. As it says in the Qur’an,

“Whoever works righteousness, whether male or female while a true believer... we will bestow on such their reward according to their actions.” Surah 16:97

and Islamic Fatawa Regarding Women says,

“So Allah has stated that the woman is an equal partner of the man in terms of reward and punishments for their actions.... Yet, as a class, men are superior to women in general.”

Are these Abuses Cultural, or related to Islam?

“They are NOT cultural!” insists Dr. Sultan.

Sultan says these abuses are a result of Islamic teachings. “And I can prove it!” she says. She points out that in her country, Syria, there are Christians. Muslims and Christians there share the same broad culture. But, the Muslims have “honor killings” of women who are felt to disgrace Islam and family.

The Muslims in Syria hold this custom in common with Muslims elsewhere, like Pakistan. However, she has never heard of honor killing among Christians. Because of Islam, she says, Muslims in Syria behave more like Muslims in Pakistan than with their own Christian neighbors.

Dr C agrees with Dr. Sultan: the abuses Muslim women face are primarily due to Islam. Why? Because Islam teaches them. These abuses could be considered cultural only in the sense that the culture of Muslim countries is based on Islam, which originates and authorizes these mistreatments.

So – is there a relationship between:

the PRINCIPLES regarding women and the PRACTICES regarding women in Islam?

Yes, the Teachings of Islam give rise to the Treatment of women in Islam.

In his well-documented book, Why I Am Not a Muslim, Ibn Warraq states,

*“The horrendous behavior toward women, non-Muslims, heretics, and slaves manifested in Islamic civilization was a **direct consequence** of the principles laid down in the Koran and developed by the Islamic jurists.”*

Dr. Cynthia thinks that **understanding this relationship is probably the most important message to get out of this lesson.**

The Presentation of Islam and Women to the West

Dr. C has attended many presentations of Islam to Americans in person, as well as many others online and in the media. In these, spokespersons paint a bright picture of women in Islam. They say,

“Islam puts women on a pedestal. We honor them. We do not treat them like sex objects, making them expose their bodies. We do not treat them like slaves, expecting them to work outside of the home, as well as having children and raising a family.”

This chart summarizes how Islam explains the treatment of its women, compared to the way most in the West would find it:

| | Islam’s Presentation | West’s View (Reality) |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| STATUS: | Pedestal | Cage |
| TREATMENT: | Respect | Suppression |
| OPPORTUNITY: | Honor | Limitation |
| DRESS: | Modesty | Imposition |
| MORALITY: | Example | Scapegoat |

On American university campuses, it is common for the Muslim students to put on “Women in Islam” presentations. As part of these, they often have a panel of Muslim university students, and at times educated Muslim women who share their positive experiences as women in Islam.

Egyptian reformer Nawal Al Saadawi sees through the pedestal presentation. From her long experience she says,

“When fundamentalist movements become powerful, it is women, especially poor women, who suffer most. These movements direct their attack against

women and minority groups... In the name of protection, honor, sacred motherhood, women are degraded and exploited inside and outside the home."

Dr. Sultan responds to this situation in the video lesson, explaining that what they present to the West is not representative of Islam around the world.

"Those women live in America," she says. "They are protected by the United States Constitution. No one can beat them, no one can abuse them."

She encourages them to visit or live in a strict Muslim country to see how pure Islam treats women.

Herstory in Islam

Considering all of the above, Dr. C explains to us that *HerStory*, **The Story of Women in Islam** has the shape of ____, a flat line.

Most of us find that,

A Good Story Has:

A Beginning, Middle, and End

Drama: Good vs. Evil

Reversals of fortune

A Happy Ending!

In Islam, there was no lovely **beginning** for women; meaning that there is no evidence that Eve was ever equal with Adam. Throughout **their lives**, Muslim women suffer great indignities and pain, sadly much of it is authorized and institutionalized by Islam. And what end do Muslim women have to look forward to? One of these options:

Islam's Eternally Bad Option for Women:

- They have a greater chance of being in hell than men (most of those in hell are women)
- They get hell because they are disrespectful or ungrateful to their husbands (This puts a woman's eternal destiny at her husband's pleasure; not something appealing to Western women. They would prefer an objective judge – like God.)

Islam's Eternally "Good" Option for Women:

- Believing women who do good are promised paradise in Islam, but there is no specific description of its delights for them.
- They could end up as one of 2-72 perpetual virgins servicing a man (depending on how many he merits)
- A Saudi cleric, trying to soften the prospects for believing women, told one of our students that the wife could be a social secretary of sorts, scheduling the women's sex nights with her husband.
- Is it any wonder that one of the first things that attracted her to Christianity was the Bible's description of heaven without marriage?

As Dr. C points out in the video lesson, perpetual virginity would not be a pleasant thing for the virgin. It might be good for the man; but since a woman's first experience of sexual intercourse is usually uncomfortable, she would face continual suffering (especially if she had had female genital mutilation).

By way of contrast, the **Story of Women in Christianity** is the shape of a **W**. Women start out equal with men, experience a disastrous fall, but rise greatly with Jesus. After Jesus, women still face consequences of the curse; but believing women are assured a beautiful future in heaven with God, when the curse haunts them no more, and they again share equal status with men.

Muslim DENIALS of the Sources and Abuses:

Denials of the Sources

In a Western setting, Muslims will not readily admit what the abundance of authoritative Islamic literature says about women. Some will respond by saying they believe only the Qur'an. But how does that really improve things when all these abuses are set up through the Qur'an?

We are presenting only the strongest and earliest claims about women here. These are documented so well that to be a true Sunni or Shiite you must accept them. Later Islamic commentators, like the respected expert Al-Ghazali, say utterly atrocious things about women, which could perhaps be denied – but not the Qur'an itself and hadith.

As Christians, we cannot deny that historical church leaders have said terrible things about women too, and have negatively impacted women's equality and rights throughout history. The difference is that the Holy Scriptures we rely on for our faith, when properly viewed, disprove those statements and practices. Whereas, in Islam, the documents which must be accepted to be a Muslim, firmly assert the inferiority and suppression of women.

Dr. C thinks **most Muslims are unaware** of many of the specific teachings, especially women. That is why she hears views like Wafa had before she left Islam – that Islam is true, but simply not practiced right.

This was also the view of Huda and other women we know who left Islam after fully realizing Islam's teachings. As Nabeel Qureshi said, "I had read the words multiple times since childhood, never stopping to consider what they meant."

When speaking with educated Muslim women on American university campuses, Dr. C finds that even they are ignorant of the weight of Islamic literature against them. If they do come across something which they are uncomfortable with, their leaders give them a very soft interpretation of it – one which fits with American life, but would not be practiced in an Islamic country. Dr. C encourages these women to become experts in what Islam has written about women, the scriptures on which the leaders base the rules, in order to be better able to serve their fellow Muslim women.

At a Muslim convention Dr. C asked one of the leaders, an extremely knowledgeable Muslim man, how he would explain their doctrine that women are lacking in mind and religion. Since Dr. C knew the documents, he could not deny them as he otherwise might.

Instead, he paused, then “punted,” as Americans would say, meaning he tried an entirely different approach:

“I suggest,” said the leader, avoiding the question,
“that you fall in love with the Prophet Mohammed.”

Dr. C was dumbfounded. “Does he really think that would work with me?” she thought, “knowing what I do about Islam, and what I must know about Mohammed? He is certainly desperate for something to say without telling me to my face that yes, in his religion says I am lacking in mind and religion.”

Denial of the Abuses

If you ask a Muslim woman how Islam treats her, she will almost always say, “Very well. I like it,” Dr. C tells us from her experience. But she says in the video lesson that this claim is less convincing when you know that is what they must say.

In a highly authoritative book of Sunni Law, Reliance of the Traveler, # w52.1(384) tells Muslims they must cover embarrassing things about Muslims/Islam. If not, it is “an enormity,” a major sin.

Most of us respect someone who does not gossip about their loved ones. For anyone to share something sad like abuse, they usually have to know a person well. This is especially true in shame-and-honor cultures.

So, it is good for those befriending Muslim women to know that their natural reluctance to share negative experiences is underlined by Islamic law forbidding it.

Dr. C tells us that in the West, we have found that the first step towards progress is to admit there is a problem. For example, this is the case with drug/alcohol and domestic violence situations in the United States. The reluctance of Muslim women to admit the problem, understandable as it is, makes it more difficult for Muslim cultures to progress toward better treatment of women.

SUMMARY OF WOMEN in ISLAM:

- **True Islam truly represses women**
- Westernized Islam can be similar to secular America.
- **The great women of Islam are great in spite of Islam**, not because of it
- The more a religion favors man, the less it is of God
- **Down deep, most Muslim women know they are treated wrong in Islam because *Their conscience is better than their religion.***

An Inescapable CONCLUSION

Perhaps we could explain away a few problems are misunderstood/mistranslated verses, such as is the case with Christianity. However, this is not the case with Islam. The Islamic writings are weighted down with many harsh rules and insults against women (see reference list in Appendix). Although newer translations try to lessen the impact, you do not have to look hard in the Qur’an or hadith to find many harsh sayings and laws regarding women.

That means that **either or both of these statements must be true:**

- The authoritative documents of Islam *teach the suppression* of women
- After 1400 years, *Islam* – which controls all the minute details of the lives of its followers – *is powerless to bring about the fair treatment of women.*

The Best, and possibly Only HOPE

- **Individually** - inner freedom through Jesus, and to carry the hope of heaven in their hearts
- **Culturally** – redeemed, as more and more Muslims come to know the truth of the loving God personally, and apply the Bible to their culture
- **“Jesus said, ‘If you hold to my teaching, you really are my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.’”** John 8:31, 32

(Note: See secular options in the section on “Is there Hope for Peace” in the Study Guide on *Islam and Violence*, also apply here.)

What Can We DO About these Abuses?

“Do you have to be mistreated, raped, locked up, and repressed yourself in order to put yourself in someone else’s position? Is it not hypocritical to trivialize or tolerate those practices, when you yourself are free?”

Ayan Hirsi Ali, from The Caged Virgin

In the video lesson, Dr. C tells us that Christians are authorized by the Bible to do something about these abuses. It might seem difficult, or unpleasant, but we are instructed to Expose, and Reform them. Read what the Bible says:

Expose darkness and bring people into the light:

*“Take no part in the worthless deeds of evil and darkness; instead, **expose them.**”*

Ephesians 5:11 (NLT)

Reform women’s rights in Muslim cultures:

*“**Speak up** for those who cannot speak for themselves; ensure justice for those being crushed.”*

Proverbs 31:8

So Exposure and Reform should be our goals.

The Style we use to do this is of great importance:

- We must remember to speak the truth in love, and with gentleness and respect.

- We must not be overcome by the power of evil. We must overcome evil with good. (Ephesians 4:15, 1 Peter 3:15 and Romans 12:21)
- We must be humble, and guard against falling into sins (1 Corinthians 10:12, Galatians 6:1)

Then, you might ask, **will it work?** Will we be wasting our time? Perhaps we should simply spend more time with our families or at church activities? Consider these examples:

RESULTS of EXPOSURE with INDIVIDUALS:

Classic Example from the Past:

Pandita Ramabai – In India, over 100 years ago, her high caste father broke the traditions of his religion: he allowed brilliant Pandita to read the Vedas, the high-holy books of Hinduism forbidden to women. When she saw what the books of her religion really said about women, she was shocked and hurt, and knew they could not be true.

So, Pandita left Hinduism. After more study she eventually became a Christian. A century later, India issued a stamp in her honor for the good work she did rescuing child widows from wandering the streets and starving. These children were traditionally shunned in Hindu culture, for it was believed that their bad karma had brought bad luck and death to their husbands.

Note: The example of Pandita Ramabai shows the power of a person reading for themselves the harsh writings of a religion against them. Following this example, rather than us saying these harsh things, whenever possible we like to let Islam speak for itself. We have found it powerful to tag these references in an Islamic book with post-its, and give them to a receptive Muslim to read on their own. That way the insult comes directly from Islam, not the Christian.

Contemporary Examples:

- **Former Muslims Nabeel Qureshi, and Ismael of Canada**

left Islam partly due to its principles and practices regarding the treatment to the women (Surah 4:24, 23:6 & 70:30) (See Nabeel and hear his testimony in the *Lesson on The Place of Miracles*.)

- **Middle Eastern student “F”**

lost faith in Islam at age 14 when she discovered their teaching on women and became a Christian in USA over a decade later when she heard the gospel (see her written testimony in the “Testimonies” section of our website)

- **Two Shiite students in USA**

Became very disillusioned after being shown what Ali said about women, and they became less and less strict in Islam, eventually became Christians. (see their written testimony in the “Testimonies” section of our website)

RESULTS of EXPOSURE on a CULTURE: Example India’s elimination of SUTTEE

The practice of *suttee*, **burning Hindu widows alive with their husbands**, has now largely disappeared from India, thanks to exposure and reform. Reformers worked against it from both cultural and legal angles, both inspired by Christian values.

English ruler in India, Sir Charles James Napier, when told by Indian locals it was their custom to burn widows alive with their husbands, responded that it was his “custom to hang at dawn” those burned widows alive.

Using the cultural angle, missionary William Carey convinced high caste Hindus to join him in fighting suttee. They assured the people that burning widows was not necessary Hindu practice.

If Exposure and Reform worked with Hinduism, why not Islam?

As David told Solomon,

*“Be strong and courageous and do the work.
Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord, my God, is with you.”*

1 Chronicles 28:20 (NIV)

- - - - -

Note: List of Important Issues regarding Islam and Women not covered in this Lesson:

Women in leadership, no women prophets, hijab, covering and its consequences, the many types of Muslim marriages, double standard for sex, female blame for male sexual misconduct, temporary marriages, incorrect assumption that women are more sexually oriented than men, rape, conquest rape, and gang rape, “rape capitals,” “outcasts,” traumatic or repeated abuse leading to post traumatic stress disorder, divorces, secret marriages and secret divorces, child marriage, selling in marriage, bride baiting for greater dowry, “only boys count,” female illiteracy, female infant mortality rates, honor killing, cooler white clothing reserved for men, forbidding wigs, infidel and attractive fashions prohibitions, female genital mutilation (“female circumcision”) and whether Christians and Muslims should marry (See Lesson and Study Guide on *Should Christians Marry Muslims?*). *Some references for these can be found in Part 2, the Appendix.*

Scripture References for this Lesson:

II Corinthians 5:17

Ephesians 5:11-13 and 4:15

Proverbs 31:8

I Peter 3:15

I Corinthians 10:12

Ephesians 4:15 & 5:11

Proverbs 31:8

I Peter 3:15

Romans 12:21

I Corinthians 10:12

Galatians 6:1

I Chronicles 28:20

Other References:

The Qur’an, mostly from:

The Noble Qur’an, Darussalam Publishers, Riyadh & Houston, 1996

Sunni and Shiite Hadith Collections:

Al Bukhari’s Sahih. Dar Al-Kotob Al-Ilmiyah, Beirut, Lebanon, 2003

Sahih Muslim. Dar Al-Kotob al-Ilmiyah, Beirut, Lebanon, 2005

Ali, Imam Ibn Abu Talib. NaHjul Balagha: The Peak of Eloquence. Tahrike Tarsile Qur’an Inc, New York, 1985

Books and Articles:

1. Ali, Ayaan Hirsi. The Caged Virgin. Simon & Schuster, New York, 2006. & Infidel 2007
2. Darwish, Noni. Now They Call Me Infidel. Sentinel Publishers, New York, 2006
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5. Ward, Olivia, "Worst Countries for Women" Toronto, Canada 2008
6. Al-Fauzan, Saleh. Rulings Pertaining to Muslim Women. Darussalam Publishers, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 2003
7. Al-Sistani, Ayatullah. Islamic Laws: English Version of Taudhidiul Masae'l. World Federation Publisher, Lebanon, 1994
8. Human Rights Watch, "Afghanistan: Ending Child Marriage and Domestic Violence" 2013
9. Harrison, Frances, "Iranian Women Struggle for Equality," BBC News, Tehran, 2009
10. Al-Musnad, Muhammad bin Abdul-Aziz. Islamic Fatawa Regarding Women. Darussalam Publishers, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 2003
11. Wikipedia "Islam and Domestic Violence" 2019
12. Rose, Mark, et al. "Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder," NetCE, September 2015, Vol. 141, No.4
13. An-Naisaburi, Abu Al-Hassan. Reasons and Occasions of the Revelation of the Holy Quran. Dar al-Kotob al-Ilmiyah, Beirut Lebanon, originally written about 1000 AD
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15. El Saadawi, Nawal. The Nawal El Saadawi Reader. Zed Books, New York, 1998
16. Merinisi, Fatima. The Veil and the Male Elite. Perseus Books Pub, New York, 1991
17. Qureshi, Nabeel. Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus. Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 2014

Study Questions:

1. Dr. Sultan believes the situation of any country is **a reflection of the way its women are treated**. We think this is a strong point.

- Do you think she made this point clearly?
- What reasons did she give to support this claim?
- Thinking it over, do you agree or disagree?
- What else might be needed to make a nation prosper? (see Proverbs 14:34)

2. **The TREATMENT of women in Islam is based on the Teachings of Islam**.

Or, as Dr. C says, ***Principles = Practice***

- Do you think this video lesson made a solid case for that claim?
- Have you heard the Muslim claim that the mistreatment of women in Islamic countries is based on culture, not the principles or teachings of Islam?
- What was some of the evidence Wafa and Dr. C gave to support this claim?

3. **True Story for comparison:** Jaycee Lee Dugard was kidnapped at age 11. She was discovered in Antioch, CA, in August 2009, at age 29. Jaycee had been used as a sex slave for 18 years by Phillip Garrido and his wife Nancy. It was called "**an unfathomable crime**" in USA.

- Do you think it would have been better if –
- *the stepfather were paid?*
- *the parents agreed?*
- *she were taken during war?*

A situation like this in the Muslim world is not unimaginable. Islam today still has child marriage and sex slaves. If any of the above conditions were met in the Islamic world, the situation would have been acceptable. Basically, since women belong to men, as long as there is no man forbidding this practice it is acceptable; or if the female is taken as “booty of war,” even married women. (By the way, according to strict interpretation, all Western women are declared “booty of war” because the West has attacked Muslim countries.)

- Since it is culturally acceptable in Islam, should we consider that it would not be “an unfathomable crime” if done there?
- Since it is acceptable under Sharia’ Law, should it be acceptable in Europe and USA in areas where Sharia’ Law is now practiced?
- What does it say about the differences in the Western and Muslim world views that one considers as an unfathomable crime” what the other world view could find acceptable?

4. Which 5 Women’s Rights ISSUES did today’s lesson cover?

- Which issue do you feel is most important?
- If you are Muslim, do you have experience with any of these?
- What related to these abuses might women in the West have experienced to some degree?

5. Regarding Women LACKING in Mind and Religion:

- Do you recall why Islam says women lack these?
- Do you think we present solid evidence that women do not lack these?
- Do you think that the evidence suggests that since Islam is incorrect about these, it might be unreliable in other things as well?

6. Did you realize that the Qur’an, and thus **Sharia Law**, state that a woman’s TESTIMONY is worth half of a man’s?

- How does that make you feel about Sharia Law?
- Knowing that Sharia Law also allows polygamy and grants child custody to the man, how do you feel about Sharia Law being allowed in any areas of the West?

7. Regarding **POLYGAMY**: At creation, God established one man and one woman as a married pair. Jesus affirmed this during his ministry. Although never approved by God, polygamy existed in the Old Testament. Some experts that the verse forbidding sister-wives means co-wives, more than one (Leviticus 18:18).

- How do you feel about polygamy?
- Polygamy is being used to recruit men into Islam. Can you see the appeal in that?
- When prophets like Mohammed and Joseph Smith re-instate polygamy, does it seem that they are going forward or backward in spiritual progress?
- How would you feel if you were a woman who discovered her husband was getting another wife?
- How would you feel if polygamy becomes legal in America?

8. “J,” one of our volunteers, was having lunch with Dr. C and a Muslim student. She was surprised when he told her that his father had several wives. “That’s just wrong!” exclaimed “J.”

- Do you agree with her?
- Is that the way you would approach the situation?

- What might you say?

9. Try to imagine a religion designed to mistreat women.

- What sorts of principles and practices would the religion include?
- How would this differ from Islam as you learned today (including the references in the appendix)?

10. Regarding Muslim women discovering the teachings of Islam about them:

- Why do you think this lesson says it is better for Muslims to read it for themselves than for a Christian to tell them?
- Does this mean that a Christian should never tell them?
- How would you feel if you unexpectedly came across writings by your religion which said you were very low, and probably going to hell simply because of something beyond your control, like your race, size, or gender?

Study Guide Part 2

Appendix: Islamic References Regarding Women

from the Qur'an, and Authoritative Sunni and Shiite Hadiths

NOTES:

Note 1: This is the most complete list we know of anywhere of authoritative references on the problems of women in Islam.

Note 2: Surah designates the book, or chapter, of the Qur'an. The books also have names as well as numbers.









Note 3: *Sahih Al Bukhari* is generally considered the highest level of Sunni Hadith, and required to believe/follow for Sunni Muslims. Dr. C has run into at least 5 numbering systems for Sahih Al Bukhari, none of which is always used. This could cause you confusion. The DuS # we use here is the Dar us-Salam number, which is good.

Note 4: If you want to look up references, an online source for multiple sources of hadith and different numberings, and commentaries is <https://quranx.com>, which uses three systems, including DuS.











Note 5: Some hadith about women are getting more difficult to find online due to political correctness.

Note 6: The Sayings of Ali, NaHajul Balagha, are highly respected by Shiites.








Authoritative Quran and Sunni References:

-  Men superior to women – Surah 4:34, Surah 2:22, 228
-  Women are a man's field to plow as he wishes – Surah 2:223
-  Women are a desirable "possession" - Surah 2:223 & 3:14
-  Woman's testimony worth half a man's - Surah 2:282
-  News of the birth of a daughter depresses a man – Surah 43:15-17
-  Women are lacking in Mind and Religion –
 -  Al Bukhari DuS # 304 (USC-MSA 1:6:301; 6:9, 2:541; 3:286), & Sermon 79 from the *Sayings of Ali, NaHjul Balagha*
 -  Surah 2:282 is the basis

- No women prophets or leaders – Surah 16:43
 - “Those who entrust their affairs to a woman will never know prosperity.” – commonly quoted, attributed to El Bukhari
- Inherit from father half of a man’s share - Surah 4:11
- Inherit from husband only 1/4 if he is childless, and 1/8 if he has children – Surah 4:12
- Status before the law is different for women and slaves than men – Surah 2:178
 - interpreted by Muslim jurors that in cases of manslaughter, the financial compensation for a woman is half of that of a man
- Sex slaves, “booty of war,” permitted - Surah 4:3, 24
- Four wives permitted Muslim men – Surah 4:3
- Can beat women –
 - wives - Surah 4:34, Sahih Muslim 11:35:103 (7:2127)
 - daughters – Al Bukhari DuS # 6845 (Aisha’s father beat her violently)
- No women suffer like Muslim - Al Bukhari DuS # 5825 (USC-MSA vol 7 book 72 #715)
 - They are green from being beaten – also 5825
- Don’t have sex with wife after you beat her like a slave – Al Bukhari DuS # 5204
- Pre-pubertal child wives acceptable - Surah 65:4
- Mohammed married Aisha when she was six and consummated it when she was nine, so child marriage is ok – Al Bukhari DuS # 5133, 5134, & 5158
- Temporary Marriage
 - Surah 4:24
 - Al Bukhari DuS # 5118, 5119
- Forced Prostitution Acceptable - Surah 24:33
- Seclusion of Women – Surah 33:33 & 53
- Covering of Women – Surah 33:59, 24:31
- Women lower gaze – Surah 24:31
- Beware of women’s voices – Surah 33:32 & 53 and other
- Men are sexually weak and need to be indulged – Surah 4:28
- Husband’s permission for visitors to home – Al Bukhari DuS # 5195
- Husband’s permission for wife to fast – Al Bukhari DuS # 5195
- Mohammed’s wives complaining? No great loss, Allah will send better! - Surah 66:5
- Pronounce or text divorce - Surah 66:5
- Husband originates divorce, and can take dowry back – Surah 2:229
 - No official means for a woman to instigate divorce, although some branches now accept it under certain conditions.
- “The Legalizer” *al mohalil*, is the man who “marries” a divorced woman so she can remarry a husband who has divorced her by triple pronouncement – Surah 2:229, 230
- A woman can pay her husband to prevent him from being cruel or divorcing her – Surah 4:128
- Most in hell are women - Al Bukhari DuS # 304 & 5197 (and 8 other places in this source)
 - Because ungrateful to husbands Al Bukhari DuS # 5197
- No women prophets or leaders –Surah 16:43

-  Touching a woman makes a man unclean for prayer - Surah 4:43
-  Mohammed married his daughter-in-law by divine revelation - Surah 33:37,28
 -  this incident led to the outlawing of adoption in Islam
-  Mohammed's wife Sawda, gave her night to Aisha to stay married – Al Bukhari DuS # 5212
-  Women are like a bent rib, and cannot be straightened – Al Bukhari DuS # 5185
-  Women are evil omen - Al Bukhari DuS # 5093 (7:30)
-  Nothing more harmful to men than women – Al Bukhari DuS # 5096 (7:33)
-  Angels curse wives who decline sex – Al Bukhari DuS # 5193
-  No society will prosper with woman leader – Al Bukhari vol 4:226
-  **Note: Honor killing** – derives secondarily from men's authority over women, and punishments for immorality and apostasy.

Somewhat lower Sunni authority, but still strong and current:

-  Female genital mutilation is indirectly referred to, but unfortunately this seems to be adequate to continue the custom –
 -  weakly connected to Surah 30:30
 -  Al Bukhari 58:89, & 64:17, & 77:106;
-  Don't ask why a man beats his wife - Hadith Abu Dawood 11:2142 (somewhat lesser authority Sunni hadith collection than Al Bukhari, but also authoritative)
-  Women may not leave town without a near relative accompanying – Reliance of the Traveler m10.3
-  Lying to wife ok - Reliance of Traveler r8:2
-  OK to keep rival wives secret – Reliance of the Traveler r8.2

NaHjul Balagha, Peak of Eloquence (Shiite)

By the fourth **Caliph, Ali** ibn Abu Talib as translated into English by Sayed Ali Reza, 1975
 Although Dr. C's Shiite students told her that the Shiites honored women because Ali loved Mohammed's daughter Fatima so much, these "Sayings of Ali" about women are just as bad or worse as the Sunni.

Sermon 79, page 204

"O ye peoples! Women are deficient in Faith, deficient in Shares and deficient in intelligence... So beware of the evils of women. Be on your guard even from those of them who are (reportedly) good. Do not obey them even in good things so that they may not attract you to evils."

The commentary says "The second weakness is that their natural propensities do not admit of full performance of their intelligence... nature has given them the power of intelligence only in accordance with... child care and household affairs..."

Sermon 152, page 313

"Beasts are concerned with their bellies. Carnivores are concerned with assaulting others. Women are concerned with the adornments of this ignoble life and the creation of mischief herein."

The commentary says that if men try to satisfy bodily needs like these beasts, they will be "like a woman, because in a woman both these passions act side by side and because of these she is extremely eager of adornment and is active in fanning mischief and disturbance."

Saying of Ali #61, page 583

"Woman is a scorpion whose grip is sweet."

Saying of Ali #124, page 595

"The jealousy of a woman is heresy, while the jealousy of a man is part of belief."

Saying of Ali #235, page 618

"The best traits of women are those which are the worst traits of men, namely: vanity, cowardice, and miserliness. Thus, since the woman is vain, she will not allow anyone access to herself; since she is miserly, she will preserve her own property and the property of her husband; and since she is weak-hearted, she will be frightened with everything that befalls her."

Saying of Ali #239, page 619

"Woman is evil, all in all; and the worst of it is that one cannot do without her."

Saying of Ali #267-8, page 630

Encourages men to stay away from women because they weaken their enthusiasm for Jihad.

Saying of Ali #362, page 653

"Do not devote much of your activity to your wife and your children, because if your wife and children are lovers of Allah then He will not leave His lovers uncared for, and if they be enemies of Allah then why should you worry and keep yourself busy about the enemies of Allah."

Saying of Ali #61, page 583

"The eyes of these men are covetous and this glancing is the cause of their becoming covetous. Whenever anyone of you sees a woman who attracts him, he should meet his wife because she is a woman like his wife."

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