Koran And Women Essay, Research Paper

The Koran’s Attitude Towards Women

The Koran is a book following the religion of the Muslim people. In it, many aspects of their ways of life and their attitudes towards different people are addressed. It mentions the strong feelings of the true believers towards Jews and Christians, however it gives a view of women that is taken two ways. A major part of their religion is the way women should be treated. This idea is a controversial topic as seen from a person that is not a true believer, or a Muslim. Conventional thinking brought out by the media have led non-Muslim people to perceive the treatment of women as suppressive. The Koran shows the reader both sides of the coin, and therefore, the reader must form an opinion of the way they thing women are treated. After reading The Koran, one would think that it belittles women, such as the way they are treated, and the role they play in society. However, with respect to their society habits, rituals, ways of life, and their religion, Muslim women are actually treated with more respect, and with more decency.

The people of the book have very strict ideas about how society is to be run based upon their religion and culture. They are given certain rules and are expected to follow them. They have a proper understanding of how they are to live their life and how they are to treat other people. In the case of women, The Koran is very specific when it comes down to how they are to be treated and their role in life. “Women shall with justice have rights similar to those exercised against them, although men have a status above women.” As long as you are not a true believer, you will never really know what this exactly means. Obviously in The Koran, men have more rights than women. But then how is this statement to be understood? In The Koran, men and women have rights that are far more gender bias; men are guided more towards money and power, while women are guided towards a family and the home. It is a society in which the woman is in charge inside of the house while the man has more power outside. People would think of this as degrading towards women, but it is done to look after them. As a protection to women, men are forced to go outside of the house into the world that is cold and evil. They are told that they must do this everyday and bring home money to provide for their family and wife. The woman is to stay home in a safe place and take care of what she knows best. This is not mean to make women feel inferior but to make them feel safe and free from the world.

There are many reasons why people believe that women are treated without respect in the Islamic nations. First and foremost, it says in The Koran that women may be beaten:

Men have authority over women because God has made the one superior to the other, and because they spend their wealth to maintain them. Good women are obedient. They guard their unseen parts because God has guarded them. As for those from whom you fear disobedience, admonish them, forsake them in beds apart, and beat them. Then if they obey you, take no further action against them. (64)

Many people see this as wrong, but why? It is clearly stated in the Islamic religion that women may be beaten if they are disobedience. Why then, would a woman do something defiant if she knows that she will be hurt? She should realize that she must be a true believer and not be insubordinate; and if she is, then she must realize that she did something wrong, and according to her religion, she must be punished. She will know that she has done something wrong, and unfortunately will get beaten; however, if she is smart, she will know not to do it again and obey her husband. Another point that is stated in The Koran is that if a woman feels like she is being treated unfairly by her husband, either emotionally or physically, she may go to him and others of the community and ask them for help. She can make an agreement with her husband, “for agreement is best.” (74)

Another reason why the idea that women are treated fairly is disagreed with is because women aren’t given as many rights as men. A prime example of this is for divorce. When a man wants to divorce his wife he can do so with ease, whereas a woman has to pronounce it many times before it can occur. People use this case to say that men are superior to women, which is true, but the woman still has the right to divorce and if she chooses to divorce her husband, she isn’t looked down upon, and isn’t treated without respect. It says in The Koran:

Divorce may be pronounced twice, and then a woman must be retained in honour or allowed to go with kindness. It is unlawful for husbands to take from them anything they have given them, unless both fear that they may not be able to keep within the bounds set by God; in which case it shall be no offence for either of them if the wife redeems herself. (33)

In anything that a woman has the right to do, even if that right is inferior to a man’s right, she is treated with the utmost respect and love.

In the Koran it says that men are higher in status than women but that the duty of the man is to protect the woman. They are to be cherished. It says:

If you fear that you cannot treat orphans with fairness, then you may marry other women who seem good to you; two, three, or four of them. But if you fear that you cannot maintain equality among them, marry one only or any slave-girls you may own…maintain and clothe them with its proceeds, and speak kind words to them. (60)

Quite opposite from what is expected, this does not demean women but shows them respect. Men are told that they cannot marry a woman unless he can support her, feed her, clothe her, and treat her well. If he does not have the money to afford and supporting a wife, then he is not allowed to marry her. When he does marry her, he must offer a sufficient dowry as a free gift. Men are not allowed to marry more than one woman if they cannot support each of them equally. For a woman, this is reassuring. She knows that she will marry someone who cares for her, and who will support her as well as the family she might have. This is also a reason why in inheritance, men receive more than females. The men must have money to some day take care of and raise a family.

In The Koran, it may seem that men are disrespecting women, however they are not. It does say, “Women are your fields: go, then, into your fields whence you please. Do good works and fear God;” however, this does not mean have sex with any woman you please. It means that a man should treat a woman with respect and then if he likes her, he should ask her to marry him. Only then, after they are married, can they have sex as the man pleases. The Koran gives a list of women that men are forbidden to have intercourse with due to the rules of their religion, but then goes on to tell men that the ones that they can have intercourse with must be treated well.

Forbidden to you are your mothers, your daughters, your sisters, your paternal and maternal aunts, the daughters of your brothers and sisters, your foster-mothers, your foster-sisters, the mothers of your wives, your step-daughters who are in your charge, born of the wives with whom you have lain, and the wives of your own begotten sons. You are also forbidden to take in marriage two sisters at one and the same time. Also married women, except those whom you own as slaves. All other women other than these are lawful for you, provided you court them with your wealth in modest conduct, not in fornication.” (63)

It goes on to say that God is watching them and she will know if they mistreat women, or force them to do anything against their will.

In the Muslim religion, women are to be loved and respected and not thought of as a piece of meat. That is why their bodies and head are hid by a covering or clothing or cloth. The main reason for this is so the women do not tempt men, other than their husbands, if they are married. Also, they do not want women to be thought of as a sexual object but as a person. They are to be respected as a person and not thought of as an object. They cover themselves so men around the town don’t think of them sexually but get to know them personally. If they wind up marrying a woman, only then will he get to see her figure. This is very respectful for all women. It is protecting them from the everyday reality of being a woman. Whether that is to be meant as being inferior or just being something other than a man is a debatable question. However, it is up to women to make a name for themselves. It is hard however, when men whistle or make catcalls at women, or give them reputations just by how pretty they are or how good their body is. Having that said, it is very clear why Islamic women should be thought of as people and not things. They are respecting themselves as well as the people around them. They are given the chance to be whom they want to not what other people see in them.

As people of the Islamic culture, women are devoting themselves to a religion that they know of, and know well. They understand what is to be done, and not done, and know what it is that the religion asks of them. Women know their part in society, and it is up to them to decide how they want themselves to be treated. If they obey their religion, they will be treated well, but if they go against their religion or their husband, they will be punished. On the other side, Muslim women are respected overall as well looked after, and protected. They are not treated as some women all over the world are treated; like objects. They are treated as women should be treated and seen as women should be seen. They are not belittled but uplifted by both society, and their religion.