**International Women’s Day Special: How Prophet Muhammad (SAW) treated Women?**

**Islam holds the position of women higher than you ever knew...**

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Yes, it’s 8th March and its International Women’s Day. Women hold a special place in Islam and in today’s world, their rights are often ignored. Yes, men and women can’t be treated equally because of the difference in their functionality in society but some rights are just taken away in the name of Islam; misusing it obviously. A writer just shared her take on this on [aboutislam](http://aboutislam.net/reading-islam/about-muhammad/how-did-te-prophet-muhammad-treat-women/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank), let’s see what she has to say:

Muslim Women Rights

I have noticed that although Islam gives women rights, [Muslims](https://www.islamicfinder.org/iqra/muslim-women-dominate-a-third-of-bbc-100-women-2018-list/) do not. And so we hear about women’s rights abuse ranging from the petty to the serious.

I must however stress here that this is not a problem that is exclusive to the Muslim community. Indeed, even in our 21st. century post-modern, post-feminism, post-globalization and post-what-have-you world, women continue to be deprived of their rights – domestic abuse, female infanticide and rape.

I also include in this list ‘less violent’ issues: reduced education opportunities, lower pay scales for women including in the West and lack of recognition of the significance of motherhood. It is deplorable that women who choose motherhood over careers are derided and seen as less successful when perhaps they are among the most successful and satisfied.

Going back to the issue of women’s rights abuse in Muslim community, I am surprised that we hear of such issues despite the example set by the [Prophet Muhammad (SAW)](https://www.islamicfinder.org/iqra/prophet-muhammad-pbuh-the-most-humble-and-modest/). His attitude towards women is characterized by chivalry, egalitarianism, love and respect, and yet it is unfortunate that we hear of unfairness towards women in the name of Islam.

I would have thought that given the example the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) set for us, Muslims would be beacons of good practice showing the world how to respect and love women. Indeed I often do hear of Muslim women who are successful in this world and hopefully in the hereafter too – who have had access to education, careers, families, motherhood, rights and respect, and also the support of their men and elders – this is great!

But then ever so often I also hear of women from Muslim communities who are denied these very same things. This is strange given that we are led by a man who respected the rights of women and who encouraged women’s empowerment and participation in society. And so every time I hear of crime against women within the Muslim community or perpetrated by sections of the Muslim community – I ask **“What would Prophet Muhammad (SAW) do?”**

• What would he do when a Muslim sister is told she cannot go to university?
• And what would he say if a young woman was told she cannot marry because there are no eligible Muslim men in her ethnic clan and she cannot marry a Muslim from a different ethnic/cultural background?
• What would he do when a woman is abused?
• What would he say when she is told she must leave a career she has worked so hard to achieve?
• And what would he say when a lady round the corner is told that being a full-time Mum is being a waste of space?
• What would he do to the young woman who is told that her complexion is not fair enough or that she is not beautiful enough?
• What would he say to the girl-child who is still buried alive in the sand?

I thought about this as I usually do and sat back to read about his life – what would he do?

Inspiration from the Seerah

I read about the man who supported his wife[**Hazrat Khadija**](https://www.islamicfinder.org/iqra/khadijah-bint-khuwaylid-mothers-of-the-faithful/)**(RA)**in business enterprises and who respected her and who loved her. I thought of the man who sought her advice when he returned from the cave of Hira after his first encounter with Archangel Gabriel. He knew Khadija (RA) would be able to help him and give him solace – she was a strong and intellectual woman whom he loved all his life. He respected her.

I remembered **[Hazrat Aisha](https://www.islamicfinder.org/iqra/aisha-bint-abu-bakr-mothers-of-the-faithful/) (RA)**, a young girl who was nurtured in the Prophetic household. She was entrusted with carrying forward the message of Islam. Intimate details of the personal manners of the Prophet were entrusted to her with the responsibility of teaching this to all future generations of Muslims to come. She was a woman who became a historically significant personality and he trusted her.

I thought about **Hazrat Fatima (RA)** and how gentle and tender her father was. How he played with her as a little girl and cared for her. How he sought her approval when one of the best men of that time sought her hand in marriage. He loved her.

These are only three cases from the Prophet’s immediate family and they illustrate relationships of trust, respect and love. We all know of other cases: women praying in the mosque in congregations led by him; women being sent teachers when they complained that they did not have access to Islamic teachings; women who fought in [battlefields](https://www.islamicfinder.org/knowledge/islam-and-sunnah/battle-of-badr-ghazwah-badr/) and women who were celebrated for being mothers – all in our Prophet’s lifetime and usually illustrated by his own egalitarian behavior towards women.

And so to conclude, every time we hear of women being denied respect and rights – whether these are Muslim women or not – as Muslims we must reflect back to what Prophet Muhammad (SAW) did. We must try in all our weaknesses and faults to emulate his style – justness, fairness, steadfastness, boldness. I say this about the Prophet in many contexts and I say it again in the context of women. Let us look back to Prophet Muhammad’s (SAW) life and his example and let us do what he did and then perhaps we shall no more hear of women being abused or deprived of rights or respect.

Let others know of this beautiful place women hold and aware those hindered of the true rights of women often negated by our society, be it a Muslim or a [Non-Muslim](https://www.islamicfinder.org/iqra/why-mufti-menk-is-followed-by-millions-of-muslims-and-non-muslims-worldwide/) one!

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