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*The following Q & A's are taken from 'The Qur'an Project' English translation of the Qur'an.*

**Q: Is it true that Muhammad is the last Prophet and the last Messenger? If yes, how come?! Don't you think that we need more Prophets today?**

A: Yes! Muhammad is the last Prophet and the last Messenger of God to all mankind. His teachings are meant for Christians, Jews, Buddhists, Hindus and others. You may need another Prophet if his teachings were distorted or lost. The originality, totality and authenticity of the Qur'an are well documented and proved to be intact. The teachings of Islam are meant for all human beings. This was not true to the previous Prophets who came for a particular tribe, nation, or even for a particular era and area. The Qur'an was revealed as the last testament to mankind.

**Q: If everything is pre-ordained and decided, where is the free will?**

A: The question of 'fate and freewill' has baffled people for many centuries; but Islam has given a clear answer. The first point to be noted in this respect is that the Islamic concept of Qadar and Qadha' is quite different from fatalism, determinism and predestination, as understood by most people. In Arabic, the words Qadar and Qadha' are often used for fate and destiny. The word, Qadha' means to decide; to settle; to judge. A Qadhi is a judge who decides a matter between disputants. From the Islamic view, the events of the world take place within God's Knowledge and Will. Read the following verses:

1. *"And not an atom's weight in the earth or in the sky escapes your Lord, nor what is less than that or greater than that, but it is (written) in a clear Book."*  
(Al-Qur'an 10:61)

2. *"No disaster strikes upon the earth or among yourselves except that it is in a register before We bring it into being – indeed that, for God, is easy – In order that you not despair over what has eluded you and not exalt [in pride] over what He has given you. And God does not like everyone self-deluded and boastful."*  
(Al-Qur'an 57:22-23).

The above verses speak of God Almighty's power and control over His creation, as well as of His will and plan. This is one aspect of His Qadar. There is also another aspect of Qadar, which is concerned with human freewill.

B: On human freedom and responsibility read the following verses:

1. *“Corruption has appeared throughout the land and sea by [reason of] what the hands of people have earned so He [i.e., God] may let them taste part of [the consequence of] what they have done that perhaps they will return [to righteousness].”* (Al-Qur’an 30:41)

2. *“...The truth is from your Lord, so whoever wills - let him believe; and whoever wills - let him disbelieve.”* (Al-Qur’an 18:29)

The above verses speak of the special status of humans as beings with a role and mission. God’s power over His creation and His fore-knowledge of all our actions and their results do not preclude that status. God’s Qadar and Qadha – which could be loosely rendered as ‘Divine decree and human destiny’ – include a certain amount of freedom for humans. We may say that God Almighty has willed that we must have the freedom to choose between good and bad, and take the course of action we decide, i.e. to the extent we are permitted. It is God Who created us with all our talents and gifts, and if we do not have the freedom to use them, what would be the meaning of those blessings? And remember that God gave us, not merely our intellectual faculties but also the power of moral judgment. And what is more, He sent us His Guidance through His chosen Prophets and Books, to help us make the right choices. So in Islam, there is no contradiction between belief in Divine Preordainment on the one hand, and the freedom of man on the other.

### **Q: Why do bad things happen?**

A: First of all, God has not made this a permanent world. This is a temporary world and everything here has a time limit. Neither the good things of this world are forever, nor the bad things eternal. We are here for a short time and we are being tested – those who pass the test will find an eternal world that is perfect and permanent. *“And when We let the people taste mercy, they rejoice therein, but if evil afflicts them for what their hands have put forth, immediately they despair.”* [Al-Qur’an 30:36]

Things we consider bad may happen for a number of reasons:

1. As a punishment where the laws of God have been violated as in the case of the people of Noah and Lot: *“Has there not reached them the news of those before them - the people of Noah and [the tribes of] ‘Aad and Thamud and the people of Abraham and the companions [i.e., dwellers] of Madyan and the towns*

*overturned? Their messengers came to them with clear proofs. And God would never have wronged them, but they were wronging themselves.” (Al-Qur’an 9:70)*

2. Sometimes God allows people to be afflicted by the consequences of their actions as a sign and reminder in order that they have the opportunity to repent and reform themselves. *“Corruption has appeared throughout the land and sea by [reason of] what the hands of people have earned so He [i.e., God] may let them taste part of [the consequence of] what they have done that perhaps they will return [to righteousness].” (Al-Qur’an 30:41)*

*“And whatever strikes you of disaster - it is for what your hands have earned; but He pardons much.” [Al-Qur’an 42:30]*

3. Suffering can also be a test and trial for some people. God allows some people to suffer in order to test their patience and steadfastness. Even God’s Prophets and Messengers were made to suffer. Prophet Job is mentioned in the Qur’an as a Prophet who was very patient. Through these trials and tribulations, one has the opportunity to draw closer to God.

4. God sometimes allows some people to suffer to test others, how they react to them. When you see a person who is sick, poor and needy, then you are tested by God to test your charity and faith. God says in a [Hadith Qudsi], *‘Verily, Allah will say to his slave when He will be taking account of him on the Day of Judgement, ‘O son of Adam, I was hungry and you did not feed me.’ He will answer: ‘How could I feed you? You are the Lord of the worlds!’ He will say: ‘Did you not know that my slave so and so who is the son of so and so felt hunger, and you did not feed him. Alas, had you fed him you would have found that (i.e. reward) with Me.’ ‘O son of Adam, I was thirsty and you gave Me nothing to drink.’ He will reply: ‘How could I give You drink? You are the Lord of the worlds!’ He will say: ‘Did you not know that my slave so and so, the son of so and so felt thirsty and you did not give him drink. Alas, if you had given him, you would have found that (i.e. reward) with me.’ ‘O son of Adam, I became sick and you did not visit Me.’ He will answer: ‘How can I visit You? You are the Lord of the worlds!’ He will say: ‘Did you not know that my slave so and so, the son of so and so became sick and you did not visit him. Alas, had you visited him, you would have found Me with him.’*

### **Q: What does Jihad mean – linguistically and practically?**

A: Jihad linguistically means the process of ‘exerting the best efforts,’ involving some form of ‘struggle’ and ‘resistance’ to achieve a particular goal. In the Qur’an this word has been used in different connotations – entailing to struggle in the way of God, verbally, monetarily and physically. In the context of war, the Qur’an legislates the performance of Jihad in order to make His word the highest in the land, defend or establish the religion, remove oppression from weak men, women and children and to remove turmoil and corruption. A point to note – there are strict laws governing the engagement of the enemy and the treatment of prisoners of war – all of which was laid down by God and demonstrated by His Prophet.

### **Q: Can you explain the Shari’ah and secularism in Islam?**

A: Islam teaches that the Believer cannot make any agreement with any person or government to displease God; they cannot make any deal with any group to decide any matter against what God has already decided. In Islam, State and Religion are to abide their total life according to the teachings of God. No one has the right to separate the state from religion - otherwise, we are creating two gods: one god for our daily life and one god for the spiritual life. This type of approach is totally rejected and unacceptable. In Islam, God created the whole universe. He is the Real Legislator of all systems of life for us and He knows exactly what we need. He legislated the Shari’ah (Islamic Law) - that we should abide by. Then and only then we will live in peace and harmony in this life and the hereafter.

*The following Q & A’s are taken from ‘Answers to non-Muslims’ common questions about Islam’ by Dr. Zakir Naik.*

### **Q: Why is a man allowed to have more than one wife in Islam? (i.e. why is polygamy allowed in Islam?)**

A: 1. Definition of Polygamy

Polygamy means a system of marriage whereby one person has more than one spouse. Polygamy can be of two types. One is polygyny where a man marries more than one woman, and the other is polyandry, where a woman marries more than one man. In Islam, limited polygyny is permitted; whereas polyandry is completely prohibited. Now coming to the original question, why is a man allowed to have more than one wife?

2. The Qur'an is the only religious scripture in the world that says, *"marry only one"*.

The Qur'an is the only religious book, on the face of this earth, that contains the phrase 'marry only one'. There is no other religious book that instructs men to have only one wife. In none of the other religious scriptures, whether it be the Vedas, the Ramayan, the Mahabharat, the Geeta, the Talmud or the Bible does one find a restriction on the number of wives. According to these scriptures one can marry as many as one wish. It was only later, that the Hindu priests and the Christian Church restricted the number of wives to one.

Many Hindu religious personalities, according to their scriptures, had multiple wives. King Dashrat, the father of Rama, had more than one wife. Krishna had several wives. In earlier times, Christian men were permitted as many wives as they wished, since the Bible puts no restriction on the number of wives. It was only a few centuries ago that the Church restricted the number of wives to one. Polygyny is permitted in Judaism. According to Talmudic law, Abraham had three wives, and Solomon had hundreds of wives. The practice of polygyny continued till Rabbi Gershom ben Yehudah (960 C.E to 1030 C.E) issued an edict against it. The Jewish Sephardic communities living in Muslim countries continued the practice till as late as 1950, until an Act of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel extended the ban on marrying more than one wife.

\*(Interesting Note:- As per the 1975 census of India Hindus are more polygynous than Muslims. The report of the 'Committee of The Status of Woman in Islam', published in 1975 mentions on page numbers 66 and 67 that the percentage of polygamous marriages between the years 1951 and 1961 was 5.06% among the Hindus and only 4.31% among the Muslims. According to Indian law only Muslim men are permitted to have more than one wife. It is illegal for any non-Muslim in India to have more than one wife. Despite it being illegal, Hindus have more multiple wives as compared to Muslims. Earlier, there was no restriction even on Hindu men with respect to the number of wives allowed. It was only in 1954, when the Hindu Marriage Act was passed that it became illegal for a Hindu to have more than one wife. At present it is the Indian Law that restricts a Hindu man from having more than one wife and not the Hindu scriptures.)

Let us now analyse why Islam allows a man to have more than one wife.

3. Qur'an permits limited polygyny.

As I mentioned earlier, Qur'an is the only religious book on the face of the earth that says 'marry only one'. The context of this phrase is the following verse from Surah Nisa of the Glorious Qur'an:

*"Marry women of your choice, two, or three, or four; but if ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly (with them), then only one."* [Al-Qur'an 4:3]

Before the Qur'an was revealed, there was no upper limit for polygyny and many men had scores of wives, some even hundreds. Islam put an upper limit of four wives. Islam gives a man permission to marry two, three or four women, only on the condition that he deals justly with them.

In the same chapter i.e. Surah Nisa verse 129 says:

*"Ye are never able to be fair and just as between women...."* [Al-Qur'an 4:129]

Therefore polygyny is not a rule but an exception. Many people are under the misconception that it is compulsory for a Muslim man to have more than one wife.

Broadly, Islam has five categories of Do's and Don'ts:

- (i) 'Fard' i.e. compulsory or obligatory
- (ii) 'Mustahab' i.e. recommended or encouraged
- (iii) 'Mubah' i.e. permissible or allowed
- (iv) 'Makruh' i.e. not recommended or discouraged
- (v) 'Haraam' i.e. prohibited or forbidden

Polygyny falls in the middle category of things that are permissible. It cannot be said that a Muslim who has two, three or four wives is a better Muslim as compared to a Muslim who has only one wife.

4. Average life span of females is more than that of males.

By nature males and females are born in approximately the same ratio. A female child has more immunity than a male child. A female child can fight the germs and diseases better than the male child. For this reason, during the paediatric age itself there are more deaths among males as compared to the females. During wars, there are more men killed as compared to women. More men die due to accidents and diseases than women. The average life span of females is more than that of males, and at any given time one finds more widows in the world than widowers.



5. India has more male population than female due to female foeticide and infanticide.

India is one of the few countries, along with the other neighbouring countries, in which the female population is less than the male population. The reason lies in the high rate of female infanticide in India, and the fact that more than one million female foetuses are aborted every year in this country, after they are identified as females. If this evil practice is stopped, then India too will have more females as compared to males.

6. World female population is more than male population.

In the USA, women outnumber men by 7.8 million. New York alone has one million more females as compared to the number of males, and of the male population of New York one-third are gays i.e sodomites. The U.S.A as a whole has more than twenty-five million gays. This means that these people do not wish to marry women. Great Britain has four million more females as compared to males. Germany has five million more females as compared to males. Russia has nine million more females than males. God alone knows how many million more females there are in the whole world as compared to males.

7. Restricting each and every man to have only one wife is not practical.

Even if every man got married to one woman, there would still be more than thirty million females in U.S.A who would not be able to get husbands (considering that America has twenty five million gays). There would be more than four million females in Great Britain, 5 million females in Germany and nine million females in Russia alone who would not be able to find a husband.

Suppose my sister happens to be one of the unmarried women living in USA, or suppose your sister happens to be one of the unmarried women in USA. The only two options remaining for her are that she either marries a man who already has a wife or becomes 'public property'. There is no other option. All those who are modest will opt for the first.

Most women wouldn't like to share their husband with other women. But in Islam when the situation deems it really necessary Muslim women in due faith could bear a small personal loss to prevent a greater loss of letting other Muslim sisters becoming 'public properties'.

8. Marring a married man preferable to becoming 'public property'.

In Western society, it is common for a man to have mistresses and/or multiple extra-marital affairs, in which case, the woman leads a disgraceful, unprotected life.

The same society, however, cannot accept a man having more than one wife, in which women retain their honourable, dignified position in society and lead a protected life. Thus the only two options before a woman who cannot find a husband is to marry a married man or to become 'public property'. Islam prefers giving women the honourable position by permitting the first option and disallowing the second.

There are several other reasons, why Islam has permitted limited polygyny, but it is mainly to protect the modesty of women.

### **Q: If a man is allowed to have more than one wife, then why does Islam prohibit a woman from having more than one husband (Polyandry)?**

A: A lot of people, including some Muslims, question the logic of allowing Muslim men to have more than one spouse while denying the same 'right' to women. Let me first state emphatically, that the foundation of an Islamic society is justice and equity. Allah has created men and women as equal, but with different capabilities and different responsibilities. Men and women are different, physiologically and psychologically. Their roles and responsibilities are different. Men and women are equal in Islam, but not identical. Surah Nisa' Chapter 4 verses 22 to 24 gives the list of women with whom Muslim men can not marry. It is further mentioned in Surah Nisa' Chapter 4 verse 24 "*Also (prohibited are) women already married*"

The following points enumerate the reasons why polyandry is prohibited in Islam:

1. If a man has more than one wife, the parents of the children born of such marriages can easily be identified. The father as well as the mother can easily be identified. In case of a woman marrying more than one husband, only the mother of the children born of such marriages will be identified and not the father. Islam gives tremendous importance to the identification of both parents, mother and father. Psychologists tell us that children who do not know their parents, especially their father undergo severe mental trauma and disturbances. Often they have an unhappy childhood. It is for this reason that the children of prostitutes do not have a healthy childhood. If a child born of such wedlock is admitted in school, and when the mother is asked the name of the father, she would have to give two or more names! I am aware that recent advances in science have made it possible for both the mother and father to be identified with the help of genetic testing. Thus this point which was applicable for the past may not be applicable for the present.

2. Man is more polygamous by nature as compared to a woman.

3. Biologically, it is easier for a man to perform his duties as a husband despite having several wives. A woman, in a similar position, having several husbands, will not find it possible to perform her duties as a wife. A woman undergoes several psychological and behavioral changes due to different phases of the menstrual cycle.

4. A woman who has more than one husband will have several sexual partners at the same time and has a high chance of acquiring venereal or sexually transmitted diseases which can also be transmitted back to her husband even if all of them have no extra-marital sex. This is not the case in a man having more than one wife, and none of them having extra-marital sex. The above reasons are those that one can easily identify. There are probably many more reasons why Allah, in His Infinite Wisdom, has prohibited polyandry.

### **Q: Why does Islam degrade women by keeping them behind the veil?**

The status of women in Islam is often the target of attacks in the secular media. The 'hijab' or the Islamic dress is cited by many as an example of the 'subjugation' of women under Islamic law. Before we analyze the reasoning behind the religiously mandated 'hijab', let us first study the status of women in societies before the advent of Islam.

1. In the past women were degraded and used as objects of lust.

The following examples from history amply illustrate the fact that the status of women in earlier civilizations was very low to the extent that they were denied basic human dignity;

a) Babylonian Civilization:

The women were degraded and were denied all rights under the Babylonian law. If a man murdered a woman, instead of him being punished, his wife was put to death.

b) Greek Civilization:

Greek Civilization is considered the most glorious of all ancient civilizations. Under this very 'glorious' system, women were deprived of all rights and were looked down upon. In Greek mythology, an 'imaginary woman' called 'Pandora' is the root cause of misfortune of human beings. The Greeks considered women to be subhuman and inferior to men.

Though chastity of women was precious, and women were held in high esteem, the Greeks were later overwhelmed by ego and sexual perversions. Prostitution became a regular practice amongst all classes of Greek society.

c) Roman Civilization:

When Roman Civilization was at the zenith of its 'glory', a man even had the right to take the life of his wife. Prostitution and nudity were common amongst the Romans.

d) Egyptian Civilization:

The Egyptian considered women evil and as a sign of a devil.

e) Pre-Islamic Arabia:

Before Islam spread in Arabia, the Arabs looked down upon women and very often when a female child was born, she was buried alive.

2. Islam uplifted women and gave them equality and expects them to maintain their status.

Islam uplifted the status of women and granted them their just rights 1400 years ago. Islam expects women to maintain their status.

Hijab for men: People usually only discuss 'hijab' in the context of women.

However, in the Glorious Qur'an, Allah (swt) first mentions 'hijab' for men before 'hijab' for the women. The Qur'an mentions in Surah Noor:

*"Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that will make for greater purity for them: and Allah is well acquainted with all that they do."* [Al-Qur'an 24:30]

The moment a man looks at a woman and if any brazen or unashamed thought comes to his mind, he should lower his gaze.

Hijab for women: The next verse of Surah Noor, says:

*"And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what (must ordinarily) appear thereof; that they should draw veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons..."* [Al-Qur'an 24:31]

## **Q: Why are non-Muslims not allowed in the Holy cities of Makkah and Madinah?**

A: It is true that non-Muslims are not allowed in the holy cities of Makkah and Madinah, by law. The following points will serve to elucidate the possible reasoning behind such a restriction.

1. All citizens are not permitted in the cantonment area.

I am a citizen of India. Yet, I am not permitted to enter certain restricted areas like the cantonment. In every country there are certain areas where a common citizen of that country cannot enter. Only a citizen who is enrolled in the military or those who are connected with the defence of the country are allowed in the cantonment area. Similarly Islam is a Universal Religion for the entire world and for all human beings. The cantonment areas of Islam are the two holy sites of Makkah and Madinah. Here only those who believe in Islam and are involved in the defence of Islam i.e. the Muslims are allowed. It would be illogical for a common citizen to object against the restriction on entering a cantonment area. Similarly it is not appropriate for non-Muslims to object against the restriction on non-Muslims against entering Makkah and Madinah.

2. Visa to enter Makkah and Madinah.

a) Whenever a person travels to a foreign country he has to first apply for a visa i.e. the permission to enter that country. Every country has its own rules, regulations and requirements for issuing a visa. Unless their criteria are satisfied they will not issue a visa.

b) One of the countries which is very strict in issuing a visa is the United States of America, especially when issuing visas to citizens of the third world. They have several conditions and requirements to be fulfilled before they issue a visa.

c) When I visited Singapore, it was mentioned on their immigration form - death to drug traffickers. If I want to visit Singapore I have to abide by the rules. I cannot say that death penalty is a barbaric punishment. Only if I agree with their requirements and conditions will I be permitted to enter the country.

d) The Visa – The primary condition required for any human being to enter Makkah or Madina is to say with his lips, La ila ha illallah Muhammad ur Rasulullah meaning that ‘there is no God but Allah and Muhammad (pbuh) is His Messenger.’

## **Q: Why are two witnesses who are women, equivalent to only one witness who is a man?**

A: Two female witnesses not always considered equal to one male witness. There are no less than three verses in the Qur'an which speak about witnesses without specifying man or woman.

a) While making a will of inheritance, two just persons are required as witnesses. In Surah Maidah chapter 5 verse 106, the Glorious Qur'an says: *"Oh you who believe! When death approaches any of you, (take) witnesses among yourself when making bequests, – two just persons of your own (brotherhood) or others from outside if you are journeying through the earth and the chance of death befalls you."* [Al-Qur'an 5:106]

b) Two persons endued with justice in case of talaq. *"And take for witness two persons from among you, endued with justice, and establish the evidence (as) before Allah".* [Al-Qur'an 65:2]

c) Four witnesses are required in case of charge against chaste women *"And those who launch a charge against chaste women, and produce not four witnesses (to support their allegations) flog them with eighty stripes; and reject their evidence even after: for such men are wicked transgressors"* [Al-Qur'an 24:4]

2. Two female witnesses is equal to male witness only in financial transaction. It is not true that two female witnesses are always considered as equal to only one male witness. It is true only in certain cases. There are about five verses in the Qur'an that mention witnesses, without specifying male or female. There is only one verse in the Qur'an, that says two female witnesses are equal to one male witness. This verse is Surah Baqarah, chapter 2 verse 282. This is the longest verse in the Qur'an and deals with financial transactions. It says;

*"O you who believe! When you deal with each other in transactions involving future obligations in a fixed period of time reduce them to writing and get two witnesses out of your own men and if there are not two men, then a man and two women, such as you choose for witnesses so that if one of them errs the other can remind her."* [Al-Qur'an 2:282]

This verse of the Qur'an deals only with financial transactions. In such cases, it is advised to make an agreement in writing between the parties and take two

witnesses, preferably both of which should be men only. In case you cannot find two men, then one man and two women would suffice.

For instance, suppose a person wants to undergo an operation for a particular ailment. To confirm the treatment, he would prefer taking references from two qualified surgeons. In case he is unable to find two surgeons, his second option would be one surgeon and two general practitioners who are plain MBBS doctors. Similarly in financial transactions, two men are preferred. Islam expects men to be the breadwinners of their families. Since financial responsibility is shouldered by men, they are expected to be well versed in financial transactions as compared to women. As a second option, the witness can be one man and two women, so that if one of the women errs the other can remind her. The Arabic word used in the Qur'an is 'Tazil' which means 'confused' or 'to err'. Many have wrongly translated this word as 'to forget'. Thus financial transactions constitute the only case in which two female witnesses are equal to one male witness.

3. Two female witnesses equal to one male witness even in the case of murder.

However, some scholars are of the opinion that the feminine attitude can also have an effect on the witness in a murder case. In such circumstances a woman is more terrified as compared to a man. Due to her emotional condition she can get confused. Therefore, according to some jurists, even in cases of murder, two female witnesses are equivalent to one male witness. In all other cases, one female witness is equivalent to one male witness. In all other cases, one female witness is equivalent to one male witness.

4. Qur'an clearly specifies that one female witness equal to one male witness.

There are some scholars who are of the opinion that the rule of two female witnesses equal to one male witness should be applied to all the cases.

This cannot be agreed upon because one particular verse of the Qur'an from Surah Noor chapter 24, verse 6 clearly equates one female witness and one male witness:

*"And those who launch a charge against their spouses, and have (in support) no evidence but their own - their solitary evidence can be received."* [Al-Qur'an 24:6]

5. Solitary witness of Ayesha (May Allah be pleased with her) is sufficient for Hadith to be accepted.

Ayesha (May Allah be pleased with her) the wife of the beloved Prophet has narrated no less than 2220 Ahadith which are considered authentic only on her solitary evidence. This is sufficient proof that one witness of a woman can also be accepted.

Many jurists agree that even one witness of a woman is sufficient for the sighting of the crescent of the moon. Imagine one woman witness is sufficient for one of the pillars of Islam, i.e. fasting and the whole Muslim community of men and women agree and accept her witness! Some jurists say that one witness is required at the beginning of Ramadan and two witnesses at the end of Ramadan. It makes no difference whether the witnesses are men or women.

6. Female witnesses are preferred in some cases.

Some incidents require only female witness and that of a male cannot be accepted. For instance, in dealing with the problems of women, while giving the burial bath i.e. 'ghusl' to a woman, the witness has to be a woman.

The seeming inequality of male and female witnesses in financial transactions is not due to any inequality of the sexes in Islam. It is only due to the different natures and roles of men and women in society as envisaged by Islam.

### **Q: Under Islamic law, why is a woman's share of the inherited wealth only half that of a man?**

A: 1. Inheritance in the Qur'an.

The Glorious Qur'an contains specific and detailed guidance regarding the division of the inherited wealth, among the rightful beneficiaries.

The Qur'anic verses that contain guidance regarding inheritance are:

- \* Surah Baqarah, chapter 2 verse 180
- \* Surah Baqarah, chapter 2 verse 240
- \* Surah Nisa, chapter 4 verse 7-9
- \* Surah Nisa, chapter 4 verse 19
- \* Surah Nisa, chapter 4 verse 33 and
- \* Surah Maidah, chapter 5 verse 106-108

2. Specific share of inheritance for the relatives.

There are three verses in the Qur'an that broadly describe the share of close relatives i.e. Surah Nisah chapter 4 verses 11, 12 and 176. The translation of these verses are as follows;

*"Allah (thus) directs you as regards your children's (inheritance): to the male, a portion equal to that of two females, if only daughters, two or more, their share is two-thirds of the inheritance; if only one, her share is a half. For parents, a sixth share of the inheritance to each, if the deceased left children; if no children, and the parents are the (only) heirs, the mother has a third; if the deceased left brothers (or sisters) the mother has a sixth. (The distribution in all cases is) after*



*the payment of legacies and debts. You know not whether your parents or your children are nearest to you in benefit. These are settled portions ordained by Allah; and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.*

*In what your wives leave, your share is half. If they leave no child; but if they leave a child, you get a fourth after payment of legacies and debts. In what you leave their share is a fourth if you leave no child but if you leave a child they get an eighth after payment of legacies and debts. If the man or woman whose inheritance is in question has left neither ascendants nor descendants but has left a brother or a sister each one of the two gets a sixth but if more than two they share in a third after payment of legacies and debts so that no loss is caused (to anyone). Thus it is ordained by Allah and Allah is All-Knowing, Most Forbearing”*  
[Al-Qur’an 4:11-12]

*“They ask you for a legal decision. Say: Allah directs (them) about those who leave no descendants or ascendants as heirs. If it is a man that dies leaving a sister but no child she shall have half the inheritance. If (such a deceased was) a woman who left no child her brother takes her inheritance. If there are two sisters they shall have two thirds of the inheritance (between them). If there are brothers and sisters (they share) the male having twice the share of the female. Thus does Allah (SWT) make clear to you (His knowledge of all things).”*  
[Al-Qur’an 4:176]

3. Females sometimes inherit the same or more than male counterpart. In most of the cases, a woman inherits half of what her male counterpart inherits. However, this is not always the case. In case the deceased has left no ascendant or descendent but has left the uterine brother and sister each of the two inherit one sixth.

If the deceased has left children, both the parents that is mother and father get an equal share and inherit one sixth each.

In certain cases, a woman can also inherit a share that is double that of the male. If the deceased is a woman who has left no children, brothers or sisters and is survived only by her husband, mother and father, the husband inherits half the property while the mother inherits one third and the father the remaining one sixth. In this particular case, the mother inherits a share that is double that of the father.

4. Females usually inherit half the share of that of the male counterpart. It is true that as a general rule, in most cases, the female inherits a share that is half that of the male. For instance in the following cases:

1. Daughter inherits half of what the son inherits,
2. Wife inherits 1/8th and husband 1/4th if the deceased has no children.
3. Wife inherits 1/4th and husband 1/2 if the deceased has children
4. If the deceased has no ascendant or descendent, the sister inherits a share that is half that of the brother.
5. Male inherits double than the female because he financially supports the family.

In Islam a woman has no financial obligation and the economical responsibility lies on the shoulders of the man. Before a woman is married it is the duty of the father or brother to look after the lodging, boarding, clothing and other financial requirements of the woman. After she is married it is the duty of the husband or the son. Islam holds the man financially responsible for fulfilling the needs of his family. In order to do be able to fulfill the responsibility the men get double the share of the inheritance. For example, if a man dies leaving about Rs. One Hundred and Fifty Thousand, for the children (i.e one son and one daughter) the son inherits One Hundred Thousand rupees and the daughter only Fifty Thousand rupees. Out of the one hundred thousand which the son inherits, as his duty towards his family, he may have to spend on them almost the entire amount or say about eighty thousand and thus he has a small percentage of inheritance, say about twenty thousand, left for himself. On the other hand, the daughter, who inherits fifty thousand is not bound to spend a single penny on anybody. She can keep the entire amount for herself. Would you prefer inheriting one hundred thousand rupees and spending eighty thousand from it, or inheriting fifty thousand rupees and having the entire amount to yourself?

*The following Q & A's are taken from 'Common Questions People ask about Islam' by Shabir Ally.*

**Q: What are some of the rights given to women in Islam?**

A: The Qur'an places men and women on a similar relationship before God and promises both the final goal of Paradise for those who believe and do right. The Qur'an also speaks of similarity in terms of creation. God tells us that He created a single soul and from it its' mate, then He made countless men and women from those two. The Qur'an does not contain the belief that the man alone is created in the image of God. Because of this fundamental similarity between men and women, the Qur'an declares that women have rights similar to the rights against them according to what is equitable.

In a time when women were devalued and female infants were buried alive, the Qur'an raised the value of women and prohibited female infanticide. Due to the Qur'an, this practice was abolished but in recent times advances in the science of genetic selection has encouraged some unbelievers to practice a modern form of female infanticide.

The Qur'an also abolished the practice whereby inheritance went only to the oldest male heir. Instead, a woman can inherit from her father, her husband and her childless brother.

In Islam when a woman gets married she does not surrender her maiden name but maintains her distinct identity. Some Muslim women have adopted the surnames of their husbands but this is due to cultural influence and not Islam.

In a Muslim marriage the groom gives a dowry to the bride, not to her father. This becomes her private property to keep or spend and is not subject to the dictates of her male relatives. Any money she earns or receives is similarly her very own.

Under Islamic Law a woman cannot be married without her consent. She has final approval on a marriage partner and she can repudiate a marriage arranged without her consent. She also has the right to initiate a separation from marriage if her rights under marriage are not being granted.

Divorcees and Widows have the right to remarry and they are in fact encouraged to do so.

The Qur'an places on men the responsibility of protecting and maintaining their female relatives. This relieves women of the need to earn their own living. It also means that a man must provide for his wife even if she has money of her own. She is not obligated to spend her money in the maintenance of her family. Incidentally a woman is also not required to cook for her family although she may do so out of love and compassion. The example of our noble Prophet (pbuh) is that although he was such a great leader, he assisted in the housecleaning and mended his own clothes.

In return for the added responsibility, the Qur'an gives men the degree of leadership. This does not mean that men should dominate women but rather that they should deal with them in kindness.

## **Q: What does Islam say about domestic violence?**

Islam condemns domestic violence. Once a number of women came to the Prophet (pbuh) to complain that their husbands had beaten them. The Prophet announced that men who beat their wives are not good men. The Prophet also said; *“Do not beat the female servants of Allah.”*

Allah knows that life is not always a bowl of cherries. And so He stipulates that a man must be kind to his wife even if he happens to dislike her. Allah offers a good reason as to why men should not dislike their wives and Allah says that He has placed much good in women.

In this regard the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said that no believing man should hold a grudge against a believing woman. So what is a husband to do if he dislikes some things about his wife? This is bound to occur since no human being is perfect. The Prophet instructed that men should look for the agreeable traits in their wives rather than focus on their faults.

Once the Prophet (pbuh) was asked what are the obligations of husbands toward their wives? He replied; *“Feed her when you eat and provide her clothing when you provide yourself. Neither hit her on the face nor use impolite language when addressing her.”* (Mishkat)

The Prophet equated perfect belief with good treatment to ones’ wife when he said; *“The most perfect believer is one who is best in courtesy and amiable manners and the best among you people is one who is most kind and courteous to his wives.”* (Tirmidhi)

*The following Q & A’s are taken from ‘Clear your doubts about Islam’ by Saheeh Intl.*

## **Q: Why does Islam demand harsh punishments for sex outside of marriage?**

A: Punishment in Islam has a social purpose which is to dissuade others from committing the same crime. People nowadays, especially Westerners are opposed to the Islamic punishment for fornication and adultery because they see it as too harsh or disproportionate to the offence. A basic problem is the difference in standards by which the severity of a crime is measured.

The Western view of man-woman relationships is usually that of permissiveness, one that accepts extramarital and illicit relationships as normal. There is an increasingly driving passion for more money, more comforts and more pleasure,

particularly physical pleasure. The greatest casualty of irresponsible sexual behavior has been the family, in particular the children.

Islam views sexual relationships outside of marriage as a very serious matter because they destabilize the family and thus contribute to the breakdown of the entire social system. Islam emphasizes protection of the family by imposing severe punishments for activities that threaten the family foundation. These punishments are the same for men and women and only a legitimate Islamic government has the right to implement them. Moreover the prescribed punishments are only one aspect of a complete system which in addition to providing prohibitive obstacles in the path of unlawful relationships, strongly encourages and facilitates lawful marriage. In cases of confirmed incompatibility or dissatisfaction, a wife as well as a husband may request separation, enabling each to seek a more harmonious union.

### **Q: Why does Islam oppose homosexuality? Where is freedom of choice?**

A: In the West today, homosexuality and lesbianism have come to be seen as an alternative lifestyle subject to personal preference. It is no longer considered an abnormality that requires restraint and treatment, and is being actively promoted by its adherents and their sympathizers as a legitimate way of life. Arguments in favour of tolerance toward same sex relationships are based on the assumption that homosexual behavior is biologically based and not merely learned from society.

Islam considers homosexuality to be the result of human choice. Human beings are not robots that do only what they are programmed to do. They choose how to behave and God holds them responsible for their choices. It is inconceivable that God would have made some people homosexuals then declared it a punishable crime. To accept such a proposition is to suggest that God is unjust.

Inclinations can exist within humans toward a variety of natural acts and unnatural ones such as rape, pedophilia or bestiality. These inclinations may arise from media influence or direct contact but it does not mean that free reign should be given to them. Muslims are under obligation to control and overcome such inclinations in obedience to God. It should be noted that Islam did not introduce anti-gay legislature to the world. The texts of the Torah are replete with clear condemnation of such practices. But among the things foretold by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is this; "Immorality will not appear among a people to the extent that they publicize it but that painful diseases will spread among them which were not known to their predecessors."

Sexually transmitted diseases are steeply on the rise in permissive societies. In particular, HIV/AIDS, which causes loss of acquired immunity and usually leads to death. The early spread of AIDS was first observed among homosexual communities. Later it entered the heterosexual community through so-called bisexuals as well as blood transfusions and intravenous drug usage and now it continues to spread among promiscuous heterosexuals. AIDS remains incurable and infections continue to increase in gay and bisexual men who accounted for more than half of HIV infections in 2006.

God has created everything in due proportion. He established the means for populating the earth and maintaining life by the creation of male and female, not only in man but among almost all living things. Islam considers deliberate efforts to change this nature as rebellion against the Creator.

Islamic teachings emphasize the distinctions between male and female. Islam instructs parents to separate their children in their beds by the age of ten in order to avoid sexual experiences which may result from childhood experimentation. Such experiences are often reinforced by contacts in school or through abuse from perverted adults. Islam also encourages early marriage in order to facilitate lawful sexual relations for young people as soon as possible and keep them away from unlawful and unnatural ones.

### **Q: Does Islam accept slavery?**

A: Sometimes people ask why Islam did not abolish slavery. They tend to forget that other religions did not do so either. In fact, there are several passages in the Bible that order slaves to serve their masters well. It is well known that when Europe made contact with Africa, the black people of that continent were faced with a major calamity of human misery that lasted more than five centuries. Slavery was not abolished worldwide until the year 1953 through a resolution issued by the United Nations.

At the time of the Qur'an's revelation, slavery was a universal institution upon which the economics of every civilization were dependant. There were many ways by which a slave could be obtained such as poverty (forcing one to sell himself or his children into slavery), debt (when a debtor could not pay off his debt he became a slave), kidnapping and raids. Islam limited the sources that existed previously to one and that was the capture of enemy prisoners during war whilst all others became prohibited.

Actually Islam is unique in its concern for the peaceful elimination of this practice.

Due to His perfect knowledge and wisdom, God did not order slavery abolished outright since the economy of every civilization on earth was based and dependent upon this system, not only would the Muslim community have been put at great disadvantage by the immediate emancipation of all slaves but the slaves themselves would have been unprepared for release into society without homes or means of support. Mercifully, God made the freeing of slaves within Islam a gradual transition. Manumission by the state and by individual Muslim was encouraged as a righteous deed greatly rewarded in the Hereafter. The Qur'an stated that obligatory Zakah and charity funds could be used for the purchase of slaves to be freed and freeing a slave is cited therein as expiation for breaking an oath and for the commission of particular kinds of sins and errors. Moreover, a slave could enter into a contract with his master to earn his freedom. Thousands of slaves requested and were granted contracts of emancipation by their Muslim owners.

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) repeatedly emphasized good treatment of the slaves who remained, severely rebuking those owners same quality of food and clothing as their masters, they were not to be overworked, their dignity was to be preserved and they were to be treated with justice and kindness. Often slaves became members of the Muslim families and refused freedom. Only under Islam did the slave enjoy a unique position as a member of the household and community worthy of respect. In many cases a slave would become a close friend and advisor of his master or the master would even regard him as a son. It was not uncommon for slaves to be given precedence over free men regarding religious or worldly matters in which one of them excelled. For example, a slave well versed in the Qur'an could lead the prayer and Muslims were ordered to obey if a slave should be appointed in charge of their affairs.

Islam has always encouraged the emancipation of slaves with the objection of gradually diminishing their numbers and integrating them into society. As a result of Islamic teachings, slavery was almost completely eradicated from many areas of the Muslim world, peacefully and without bloodshed. Now can any other religion or civilization make such a claim?

*The following Q & A's has been written by members of Nottingham Islam Information Point.*

## **Q: How can you justify the marriage of the Prophet Muhammad to Ayesha?**

A: First and foremost before we justify the marriage to Ayesha at such a young age we must first establish that it wasn't the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) who initiated the marriage. It was Allah (God) who initiated it. The two controversial marriages to Ayesha and Zaynab were not initiated by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) but that he was commanded to marry them by Allah.

Surah al-Ahzab, Ayah 37 commands the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) to marry Zaynab who was the divorced wife of the Prophet's adopted son, Zaid ibn Haritha. In that time amongst the Arabs it wasn't befitting for someone to marry the divorced wife of an adopted son because the adopted son is seen as a real son to the father. But in reality the adopted son will never be the real son to the ones who adopted him so Allah wanted to take away this notion and concept from amongst the Arabs of that time. And so it was Allah who commanded the Prophet to marry Zaynab and the Prophet did not have a choice in the matter. Similarly with the marriage to Ayesha, the Prophet says in Bukhari and this Hadith is narrated by Ayesha herself. It says; *"Ayesha (RA) said that the Prophet (SAW) told her: "You were shown to me twice in a dream. I saw that you were wrapped in a piece of silk, and it was said, "This is your wife." I uncovered her and saw that it was you. I said, "If this is from Allah then it will come to pass.""*

This happened to him for 3 nights. The Prophet (pbuh) saw Ayesha in the dream and Angel Gabriel is telling the Prophet Muhammad; "This is your wife." And the dreams of the Prophets are Wahy (Inspirations/revelations) from Allah.

These two marriages that seem controversial today were initiated by Allah and this was something that was divine. That's the first point.

Secondly, his marriage to Ayesha was acceptable in the community at the time. According to the norms of that age it was an acceptable thing to do or else we would find the hypocrites or the disbelievers trying to tarnish the image of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). So it was acceptable at the time. Just like the marriage of King John of England in 1207 he married Isabella of Angoulême who was also 9 years old. And that marriage was acceptable to the English and the French at the time. It was the norms of the society in that time for someone to marry a young girl at that age.



Furthermore the Bible states that Abraham married his half-Sister Sarah and that it was the norms of the society in that time. It was acceptable to marry a half brother or sister in that time. It reads in the '**Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary**' under the name Sarai, "*Sarah, first called Sarai, had the same father as Abraham. Marriages with half brothers were not uncommon in her time.*"

Thirdly, this marriage to Ayesha is the best thing that has happened to the Muslims. This marriage is the greatest marriage to the Muslims as far as we are concerned. If the Prophet wasn't married to Ayesha how much of the religion we would have lost. Ayesha is ranked no. 4 in the most prolific narrators in Hadith. Abu Hurayrah is number one and then you have Abdullah ibn Umar and Anas ibn Malik and then Ayesha comes fourth. 2210 Ahadith Ayesha (RA) has narrated.

There is no book of Fiqh that doesn't have the narrations of Ayesha (RA). There is no book of Tafsir or book of Hadith that doesn't mention the name of Ayesha. And as Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani says; "*She is the greatest female scholar of the Muslim nation.*" In fact she's probably the most greatest female scholar to have ever lived. In terms of Islamic knowledge all of the scholars agree that Ayesha is more knowledgeable than Khadija bint Kuwaylid (who was the Prophet's first wife) and every other woman throughout the Islamic history. Our religion would have been different if the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) did not marry Ayesha.

And this is a quote from Shaykh Mashoor Hasan al-Salmaan who was a student of the great scholar Shaykh Albanee;

*[She is the most senior of the female Hadith Scholars of her time and renowned for her intelligence, precision and eloquence. She had a major role and deep influence in spreading the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). She carried the flag of knowledge and understanding during her time and she carried the gleaming lamp for the people of knowledge and the students. Scholars and senior Companions used to go to her and ask her about obscure and problematic aspects of knowledge and she would answer them satisfactorily with the spirit of deliberation and verification which is only attained by one who has reached an elevated status of knowledge.]*

Ayesha said; "*The Sahaba (Companions) used to listen to what the Messenger of Allah would say and they would immediately go and apply it. They would not enquire about it and ask why. However when the Prophet would say something to me I would ask and discuss with him.*" Meaning when the Prophet would tell the Sahaba to do something with regards to Islamic rituals the Sahaba would straight away apply it and not ask why and what is the wisdom behind it and so on.

But when the Prophet would tell me, because I had that intimate relationship with the Prophet I would question it and ask him for the wisdom. *“Why is it this way? How is it like that?”* And so on. Ayesha had this inquisitive mind.

The young nature of Ayesha gave her the strength of memorisation and the Islamic religion is a religion of memorisation. And the best age to start memorising is 6 years and above. And that’s why Ayesha comes fourth in the ranks of narrators in Ahadith. Ayesha has narrated more Ahadith than her father, more than Umar bin al-Khattab, more than Uthman bin Affan and more than Ali ibn Abi Talib. Why? Because she started out at a very young age. And Ayesha died very old at the age of 66 and so she was teaching the next generation of Muslims. The generation after the Sahaba (Companions) which were called Tabi’een.

Fourthly, everything that the Prophet Muhammad did was beneficial to the promotion of Islam. The Prophet contracted many things with the intention of spreading the religion of Islam.

In the time of the Prophet there was a lot of adultery that could be committed. Ayesha tells us in that time in the Arabian Peninsula, there were brothels that use to have flags attached to them indicating that it was a brothel and men could come into these houses and commit adultery with the prostitutes. She told us that a woman could cohabit with many men and when she becomes pregnant she would look at the child and see which one of these men would resemble the child and say she’s yours. Then that man could not reject that. And various other forms of committing adultery, so Mecca at that time was a very corrupt society. And the Prophet Muhammad was living in that society. It was a society where there were no limits on the number of women a man could marry. It was a society where the young could commit adultery and fornication without any restrictions. But the Prophet Muhammad up until the age of 25 was away from all of this corruption. And when he decided to marry, being from the noble family of Quraysh he could have chosen a beautiful woman from Quraysh, the youngest and he could have married as many as he wanted to. Nevertheless the Prophet had chosen to marry a lady who was 15 years his senior. And he never married any woman in addition to her during her life. When the Prophet married her he was 25 years old and Khadija was 40. And he would remain married to her for 25 years. Khadija died at the age of 65 years old when the Prophet Muhammad was 50 years of age. So this image that the enemies of Islam try to depict of the Prophet does not fit reality. The Prophet Muhammad was not after fulfilling his desires.

Khadija was wealthy so her money would be used to benefit the religion of Islam. Khadija was a patient woman so she would support the Prophet psychologically.

Khadija was instrumental in the early stages of Da'wah. And the Prophet never forgot her faithfulness and was very grateful to Khadija. And he would say Khadija believed me when everyone else rejected me. Khadija supported me when everyone else was against me. She supported him with her wealth and her soul. And Allah has blessed me with children through her. So this marriage to Khadija was for the benefit of Da'wah (spreading the religion of Islam). And then after Khadija passed away the Prophet did not marry for a few months and then he married Sawda. Sawda was a widow because her husband passed away. Sawda was in her 50's and older than the Prophet Muhammad. Then he married Ayesha and after that he married other woman. So when the Prophet passed away he had 9 wives. So what's the wisdom behind the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) having many wives? And how come it suddenly happened? For 25 years the Prophet was married to only one wife and then after that he married multiple wives. What's the wisdom? When the Prophet Muhammad was in Mecca, Khadija provided him with all of this support he needed. Back then the Prophet was not at the level where he had to expand his base until he made hijra (migration) to Medina and there he was establishing the Islamic state and so he married some of the women to establish ties with other tribes. Like his marriage to Juwayriah from Banu Mustaliq which ended up having her whole tribe becoming Muslims. Also the Prophet wanted to be connected to all of the four Khulafa Rashideen (Successors). And this is very important that the Prophet be related to all four of the Khulafa. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was married to the daughters of Abu Bakr as-Siddique and Umar bin al-Khattab. Their names were Ayesha and Hafsa. And the Prophet Muhammad married his daughters to Uthman bin Affan and Ali ibn Abu Talib. Their names were Fatima and Ruqayya. And when Ruqayya had passed away Umm Kulthum then married Uthman. So all of the four Khulafa had some family relationship with the Prophet Muhammad. The Prophet also married a former Christian and a former Jew. To show that he is the inheritor of the message of the former Ambiya (Prophets). Maria al-Qibtiyya was a Christian who became Muslim and Safiyya bint Huyeyi ibn Akhtab was a Jew who became a Muslim. And another reason to have multiple wives when the Prophet died is to have multiple chains of narrations. Because if we are to follow the Sunnah (examples) of the Prophet in everything, to follow his Sunnah as a political leader, to follow his Sunnah as a teacher, to follow his Sunnah as an Imam, one of the most important aspects of Muhammad is to follow the Sunnah as a family man. You can only learn about this aspect from the wives of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). How did Muhammad treat his wives, how was he romantic, how did he care for them etc. You can learn all of this from the wives of the Prophet.

And going back to learning the Sunnah of the Prophet as a military leader only pertains to a few Muslims in the Ummah who are in that field. Learning the Sunnah of the Prophet as an Imam only pertains to a few Muslims in the Ummah who are in that field. But learning the Sunnah of the Prophet as a family man pertains to all of the Muslims in the Ummah. And that is one of the most important aspects of his Sunnah. So you have the Sunnah of the Prophet as a judge implemented by a few Muslims like Ali ibn Abu Talib, Zaid ibn Thaabit, Abdullah ibn Umar and then later on Abu Yusuf who was the student of Abu Hanifa and then you want the Sunnah of the Prophet as a family man that this should only come from one source? One wife?

This is why the honourable Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) can marry nine or more wives and the rest of the Ummah can only marry up to four. Think about it. Why do you think Allah allowed the Prophet Muhammad to marry that many women when the rest of the Ummah can only marry up to four? It is to preserve the Sunnah of the family life of the greatest man to have ever lived.

So you can see that by marrying multiple wives this helped implement the Shari'ah, the governance of the Muslim state teaching how men and women should behave as a member of the family and how to bring up a successful Muslim home.

Nearly all of the Hadiths that relate to marriage and how intimate one can be with their spouse are related by Ayesha. Not one of the Hadiths out of 2210 does Ayesha ever talk bad about her husband Muhammad. Not one Hadith. But in every other marriage a wife can write essays on how bad their husbands are and how they are not treating them right. This is a common fact amongst all couples. And Ayesha never considered even looking at another man after the death of her husband Muhammad (pbuh).

She never married after his death and remained a widow from 18 years up to 66 years old when she had passed away. Thus she remained unmarried for 48 years which is something very hard for a woman to do especially if she doesn't have any children because Ayesha never had any children.

## **Q: How can you justify the expulsion or killing of the Jewish Tribes of Qaynuqah, Nadir and Qurayzah?**

A: In summary, all three of the Jewish tribes had betrayed the Muslims in one way or another. Only because of this treachery the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) had to punish them accordingly from banishing some out of Medina to executing those who committed treason.

Concerning Banu Qaynuqah;

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) had a treaty with the Jews and Christians of Medina and the Muslims always kept to their side of the agreement. Eventually the Jews of Banu Qaynuqah were the ones who broke the agreement by one of their men who was a goldsmith, provoked a Muslim woman whose private parts became exposed because the Jewish merchant had tied the edge of her garment to her back. A fellow Muslim happened to be there and straight away killed the Jewish merchant out of honour for his fellow Sister. The Jews retaliated and killed the Muslim. When the Prophet Muhammad heard about this incident he marched out with his soldiers and laid siege to the Jewish forts for 15 days. Eventually no fighting occurred but the Jewish tribe of Qaynuqah handed over their weapons and they were banished out of Medina to a town called Azru'a in Syria. [This story can be found in Ar Raheeq al-Makhtum (The Sealed Nectar) by Safi ur Rahman al Mubarakpuri on pages 238-239].

Concerning Banu Nadir;

The Jews of Banu Nadir conspired to murder the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) by dropping a large millstone from above his head whilst him and his Companions were sitting under a wall one day. Angel Gabriel had notified the plotting against the Prophet and so the Prophet and his Companions quickly hurried back to Medina. There in Medina, the Prophet delegated Muhammad ibn Maslamah to give an ultimatum to Banu Nadir to the effect that they should evacuate Medina within ten days or else they will be fought and executed. After consoling with some hypocrites from amongst the Muslims, Banu Nadir decided to hold their forts and stand their grounds.

So the Prophet and his soldiers seized their forts for 6 nights and skirmishes had arose. Banu Nadir were on the roofs of their forts firing down their arrows upon the Muslims whilst using the palm trees as their shields. So the Muslims had to burn the palm trees down in order to fire back at the Jews. Eventually the Jews of Banu Nadir finally gave up and laid down their weapons. The Prophet then banished them out of Medina allowing them to take as much belongings as their caravan can carry and half of them went to Khaibar and the other half went to Syria. [This story can be found in Ar Raheeq al-Makhtum (The Sealed Nectar) by Safi ur Rahman al Mubarakpuri on pages 301-305].

Concerning Banu Qurayzah;

The issue with Banu Qurayzah is quite lengthy and one has to read the whole story found in Ar Raheeq al-Makhtum (The Sealed Nectar) by Safi ur Rahman al Mubarakpuri on pages 311-324. Banu Qurayzah was another Jewish tribe that had broken the agreement they had made with the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in the first year of the hijra. It was Banu Qurayzah who initiated the Battle of the Trench by going to Mecca and rallying up the Quraysh to fight another battle with the Muslims. They also went further into the desert to rally more people to fight against the Prophet Muhammad. These tribes included Kinanah, allies of Tihama, Banu Saleem, Ghatfan and Murrah thus coming to a total of 10,000 soldiers to fight the Muslims. After a month of fighting, the confederates (disbelievers) decided to end the battle and go back to their homes. Straight away the Prophet Muhammad and his soldiers headed for the habitations of Banu Qurayzah and laid siege on them. They all surrendered and wanted the punishment be brought upon them but according to their Torah. So the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) told Sa'd bin Mu'adh to decide on Banu Qurayzah's fate according to their Scriptures and the verdict was to execute all the men of Banu Qurayzah, their women and children to be taken as prisoners and their wealth be divided among the Muslim fighters. The Prophet accepted this judgement for their ugly treachery they had harboured against the Muslims. Trenches were dug and between six to seven hundred male Jews were executed for treason against the Islamic State in the time of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

Similarly we find in English history, Guy Fawkes committed treason to the King and country in 1605 where he had planned to assassinate King James I and restore the Catholic monarch to the throne. When caught by Royal soldiers, Guy Fawkes was sentenced to death. Likewise in today's modern times, treason against any of the British Royal family is punishable with life in prison and before 1998 was punishable with the death penalty. *[The penalty for treason was changed from death to a maximum of imprisonment for life in 1998 under the Crime and Disorder Act. Before 1998, the death penalty was mandatory, subject to the royal prerogative of mercy.]* **Crime & Disorder Act 1998**

You have to understand that the Jews of Banu Qurayzah were anarchists in that they wanted the Prophet Muhammad and the rest of the Muslims dead even though the Muslims were governing the state. If someone was to go to Iraq now whilst the British and the Americans are in there occupying that country and I was to gather the people of Iraq and start encouraging them to fight the Americans and its' coalition and to kill them wherever you see them in their army uniforms what will happen to me when I get back to the UK? One way plane ticket to GITMO Bay where electric shock therapy and water boarding awaits the person.

### **Q: Why is Taqiyya (Deception) used in Islam?**

A: The word Taqiyya literally means "*Concealing or disguising ones' beliefs, convictions, ideas, feelings, opinions, and/or strategies at a time of eminent danger, whether now or later in time, to save oneself from physical and/or mental injury.*"

The most well-known aspect of Taqiyya is to use deception in times of eminent danger such as persecution by the enemies of Islam or in times of war which both happened greatly in the time of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). One has to read the biography of the Prophet Muhammad to find many examples where Taqiyya had to be used and how it was justified. The best biography to read is 'Ar-Raheeq al-Makhtum' - The Sealed Nectar by Safi ur Rahman al Mubarakpuri. Similarly the West uses Taqiyya in many situations primarily to make their country safe from their enemies. For example the West will deploy ' Sleeper Cells' who setup base in a certain region or country and disguise themselves as normal members of the community whilst infiltrating and obtaining information for their

country's security. At times these Sleeper Cells may marry and not reveal their real identities to their partners so the community will not get suspicious. Another example is used when spying on a particular group of people i.e. radical Muslims. Muslim spies will be hired and told to infiltrate the radical groups, extract information and then the Police will move in and make arrests. Taqiyya is openly used by many countries throughout history and not just by Muslims. This can be used as a tactic to enhance the country's security and establish peace within society.

Taqiyyah in the Bible;

Abraham, the Patriarch, the father of the Prophets tells two lies in his story within the Bible to escape certain death. In [Gen. 12:13] Abraham and his wife Sarah lies to the Egyptian King and tells him that he is Sarah's brother and not husband thus using a deceptive plan. And in [Gen. 20:2] again we find Abraham and his wife Sarah lying to King Ambilech telling him that Abraham is Sarah's brother and not her husband. We don't find Almighty God reprimanding Abraham or Sarah in any way, telling them that this is wrong and that they both shouldn't commit lies because these are situations of life and death and one is allowed to lie if they wish if their life is at stake.

Rachel steals her father's idol whom he had been worshipping for years and she runs off with Jacob into the wilderness in [Gen. 31:34]. When Laban, Rachel's father pursues them he starts checking in their luggage and property for the stolen idol but doesn't find it. Rachel then deceives her father again by telling him not to come too close to her for she is on her menses because Rachel was hiding the stolen idol from under legs. So Rachel plays deception in her story and we don't find Almighty God reprimanding her and telling her that it is wrong to steal her father's idol.

Joseph places the cup in Benjamin's luggage when he is just about to leave Egypt to return back to his father in [Gen. 44:2]. Joseph does this to mainly teach his half brother's a lesson.

These acts of Taqiyya are committed in the Bible with the righteous men of God but it is done only for the greater good and advancement of their religion.



## **Q: Why is the Muslim who wants to commit Apostasy sentenced to death?**

A: If someone wants to convert out of Islam and become a member of another faith or religion then that is a matter of choice. Know that he or she will be among the losers in the Hereafter and that is the belief in Islam. As far as the death penalty in Islam is concerned is that there are two different of opinions from amongst the Scholars of Islam. The harshest opinion is that if a person after converting propagates his new faith and speaks against Islam then the penalty of death is to be applied. Because from an Islamic point of view this person is causing corruption in the land and has to be stopped. Similarly if someone had committed espionage to a particular country such as America or England and learnt the secrets about those countries and then leaked the information to other countries that are considered as foe then the perpetrator would be sentenced to a very harsh penalty either death or a life-sentence in prison. This is the constitution of many countries across the world whether democratic or communist. Those perpetrators committing espionage will receive a very harsh penalty if caught. So in an Islamic country that governs by the full Islamic Shari'ah anyone apostating from the religion of Islam and then causes conflict with the religion of Islam or Muslims then that perpetrator will be brought to trial by an Islamic Court and receive its' due sentence.

Another example is given to the one who deserts their ranks during combat that his or her punishment would also be quite harsh. In recent times, the penalty for deserting the ranks in the British army or American army is that they would serve a few months in prison. But that was not the case a hundred years ago because the British army would have served a death penalty to the one who leaves his ranks during combat.

*[Court Martial - Between August 1914 and 31 March 1920, just over 3,000 men was sentenced to death in British army courts martial. Offences included desertion (by far the most common capital crime), cowardice, murder, espionage, mutiny and striking a superior officer.]* ([www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/research-guides/army-courts-17th-20th.htm](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/research-guides/army-courts-17th-20th.htm))

One of the reasons why the British army had to inflict such a harsh penalty on those who deserted their ranks due to cowardliness or religious reasons was so that the rest of the British soldiers were not influenced by the talk of the deserting officers thus leading a fatal failure in winning the battle or war. So instead of having someone beside you edging you on in combat trying to gain ground, there'll be someone putting doubts in your heart encouraging you to flee thus putting the country and monarchy in danger.

### **Q: Why was there Concubinage in Islam? And does it apply today in modern warfare?**

Most Scholars of Islam and their respected students state that concubinage would not take place in today's modern warfare like it did many years ago. However those men, women and children deemed to be combatants will either be taken as prisoners of war or executed. This would be down to the discretion of the military leader at the time.

When Islam was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad, slavery was a worldwide common social phenomenon and was much older than Islam. Civilizations such as Ancient Greece, Rome and China as well as the religion of Judaism practiced concubinage for thousands of years. Slavery was deeply rooted in every society to the extent that it was impossible to imagine a civilized society without slaves. Concerning having slave women, we would like to let you know that it happens to be a practice necessitated by the condition in which early Muslims found themselves vis-a-vis non-Muslims as both parties engaged in wars. Slave women are referred to in the Qur'an as "Those whom your right hand possesses" they are those taken as captives during conquests and subsequently became slaves, or those who were descendants of slaves. Thus, it was a war custom in the past to take men and women as captives and then turn them into slaves. Islam did not initiate it rather it was something in practice long ago before the advent of Islam. When Islam came, it tried to eradicate this practice bit by bit. So it first restricted it to the reciprocal practice of war, in the sense that Muslims took war captives just as the enemies did with Muslims. But as it aimed at putting an end to such issue, Islam laid down rules which would eventually lead to eradicating the practice. So it allowed Muslims to have intercourse with slave women taken as captives of just and legitimate wars.

In so doing, the woman would automatically become free if she got pregnant. What's more, her child would also become free.

Not only that, Islam also ordered a Muslim to treat the slave woman in every respect as if she were his wife. She should be well fed, clothed and given due protection. In the family environment, she had the opportunity to learn about Islam and was free to accept it or reject it. She also had the opportunity to earn her freedom for she could be ransomed.

In the light of the above-mentioned facts, and the nature of the question posed by people, it's clear that some people misunderstand the wisdom behind the permissibility of having female slaves and think that it is meant to unleash men's desires and give them more enjoyment. Never! That is not the point! It is rather, means of freeing slaves and this is clarified above in the fact that if a master got a female slave pregnant then he could neither sell her nor give her away as a present. And if he died she would not be considered part of his property. She'd receive her freedom and her baby would also be free.

But we have to stress that this case should not be confused with that of female servants or maids for they are free and not slaves. Therefore, it is forbidden to engage in sexual relations with them except through an Islamic marriage.

Slavery has been abolished by international conventions and goes in line with the aims and objectives of Islam as it has called for centuries ago.

This manual has been produced by Nottingham Islam Information Point in order to help those Du'at convey the message of Islam with ease. Sometimes we are approached with uncomfortable questions from non-Muslims and we wouldn't have the correct answers for them thus sometimes leading us to question our own beliefs. But by the Will of Allah the Most High we want to tackle this problem in order to add more proof that Islam is the solution to mankind's problems. This manual is to be used as a guide with some of the major points to be memorised so whether you are at the Da'wah table or having a dialogue with someone on your travels, your conversations can bring non-Muslims closer to Islam by using the logic and reasoning stated in these answers. We thank Almighty Allah for aiding us in this publication.

We at Nottingham Islam Information Point like to stand with honour by one of the great verses in the Holy Qur'an; ***"And who is better in speech than one who invites to Allah and does righteousness and says 'Indeed, I am of the Muslims.'"***

[Al-Qur'an 41:33]

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