

Death of silas deane essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Refer to next paragraph. On the 11th of March, 2002, fire struck a girls school in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. Firemen and concerned citizens were quickly on the scene. However, the religious police locked the schoolgirls inside the inferno rather than let them escape into the streets without their veil and head-to-toe cloak. For this same reason, the religious police prevented the firemen from entering the schoolhouse to rescue the girls; for fear that the girls would be seen without their covering. Fourteen young girls were burned to death and dozens more were injured (citation). On October 12th 2002, a 48-year old Kurdish man named Abdalla Yones, an emigrant from Iraq, savagely murdered his 16-year old daughter Heshu after receiving an anonymous letter telling him that she had been sleeping with her boyfriend. (Asthana & Mistry). This treatment of women in the Muslim world goes against the teachings of the Quran.

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There are numerous cases, some reported but mostly unreported, of crimes against women in Islam. Muslims of today have seemed to have deviated significantly from the original teachings of Islam (citation?). Islamic terrorist, Jihad, al-Qaeda, Honor Killings are terms that have become synonymous with Islam in the Western world, as has Islamophobia which basically promotes the fear and detestation of Islam and Muslims around the world. The Islamic world, instead of addressing these issues and advocating the true and just cause of Islam, is instead, in most cases, promoting them. The Taliban of Afghanistan, Tribal militancy in Pakistan, Shia/Sunni riots, the Hamas and

other fundamental groups within Islam publicize an entirely inaccurate version of the essence of Islam.

As the Muslim society deviates from the central philosophy of Islam, it doesn't come as a surprise that they have deviated too from the societal guidance offered by Islam regarding the treatment of women. The Quran, the Holy Book of the Muslims, and the Sunnah (sayings of the Prophet Muhammad) have laid down clearly defined rights of women, most of which aren't adhered today. Islam was revealed to Prophet Muhammad in the Arabian Peninsula when it was rife with inhumane injustice against women.

Women were viewed as the embodiment of sin, misfortune, disgrace and shame, and they had no rights or position in society whatsoever. Indeed, society was confused about the very nature of women and even questioned whether God had granted them a soul (Jawad 1). Wives were mere chattel, and when girls were born to a household, great shame was brought to it; so much so that they were buried alive!

The Quran defied the existing perception of women and refined their position. It outlawed female infanticide and restored their birth rights .

Gustave Le Bon, a famous French thinker, stated:

“ Islamic virtuous deeds are not limited to honoring and respecting women, but rather, we can add that Islam is the first religion to honor and respect women. We can easily prove this by illustrating that all religions and nations, prior to the advent of Islam, caused much harm and insult to women.” (Bon 488).

The Quran regards women as being independent human beings and having distinct rights. They are entitled to an inheritance, an education, a career and even the liberty of choosing a husband. Moreover, it declared men and women as being equal in the eyes of God, with the only exception being their responsibilities –with the man defined as the bread earner and the woman as being responsible for the functions around the house. According to the Quran,

“ O you who believe! You are forbidden to inherit women against their will, and should not treat them with harshness...” (Holy Quran, Surah An-Nisa 4: 19)

The Prophet Muhammad, in this context, is said to have said,

‘ All people are equal, as equal as the teeth of a comb. There is no claim of merit of an Arab over a non-Arab, or of a white over a black person, or of a male over a female. Only God fearing people merit a preference with God’.

Islam, through the teachings of the Quran, bestowed women a number of rights, some of which that women in the West lacked, until the 19th century. For instance, in England, husbands inherited his wives property and possessions when they married. This unfair tradition continued till as late as 1882 (citation?). Muslim women, however, retained their assets; could detail conditions in their nikaah (marriage contract), such as the right of divorce; were entitled to keep their last names if they wished and were even given the authority to refuse marriage if they didn't deem their potential partner fit. The Quran laid down these injunctions in 610 A. D. (when it was first

revealed), centuries prior to the advent of a formal system of women's rights in the Western world.

Some of the fundamental rights the Quran gives women are:

1. Human Rights

Women and men are considered to be created with similar natured souls. They are considered equal to men in all spheres of life.

And for women are rights over men similar to those of men over women. (Holy Quran, 2: 226)

And

“ O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Adam), and from him (Adam) He created his wife (Eve), and from them both He created many men and women and fear Allah through Whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allah is Ever and All-Watcher over you.” (Holy Quran, Surah Al-Nisa 4: 1).

2. Civil Rights

The civil rights enjoined by the Quran on women include, but are not limited to: the right of divorce, right of keeping her maiden name after marriage, wishing or not to get married, or even choosing her own husband.

The Quran also states that there is no compulsion upon women regarding religion;

“ There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the Right Path has become distinct from the wrong path. Whoever disbelieves in Taghut [anything worshipped other than the Real God (Allah)] and believes in Allah, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break. And Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.” (Holy Quran, Surah Al-Baqarah 2: 256).

3. Independence

Women are allowed to leave the home; conduct business with men; enjoy all the other liberties open to them. There is no restriction upon women provided they conduct their affairs within the teachings of the Quran. Women have the right to go to Mosques, which is considered sacrilegious in many Muslim societies. Not only that, but women have also the right to be Muslim pastors. Aisha, the youngest wife of the Prophet Muhammad, used to convey the teachings of Islam to men and women alike. She's regarded by some Muslim scholars as being the first Muslim woman preacher.

The Quran is very clear in its laws regarding women. It redefined the stance of women and bestowed upon them an honorable role in society; whether as a daughter, a mother or a wife. Men are instructed in their fair and kind dealing towards women. According to the Quran:

“ And when the female (infant) buried alive (as the pagan Arabs used to do) shall be questioned. For what sin she was killed?” (Holy Quran, Surah At-Takwir 81: 8-9).

The Qur'an goes as far as admonishing those men who subjugate or ill-treat women:

“ O you who believe! You are forbidden to inherit women against their will. Nor should you treat them with harshness, that you may take away part of the dowry you have given them – except when they have become guilty of open lewdness. On the contrary live with them on a footing of kindness and equity. If you take a dislike to them, it may be that you dislike something and God will bring about through it a great deal of good”. (Holy Quran, 4: 19)

Early Islamic history is replete with examples of Muslim women who showed a remarkable ability to compete with men and excelled them on many occasions. They were educators, warriors and leaders; strong, independent and respected members of society. Unfortunately, that isn't the case in most of the Muslim world today.

Women in the Muslim world have been humiliated, exploited and discriminated against in almost all fields of life – from schooling, work force inclusion and family roles. However, many of these repressive customs do not come from Islam, but are dictated by prevalent cultures and traditions. Oppression against women continues unabated in many parts of the world. Husbands keep their wives, daughters, sisters and mothers secluded from contact with others beside their immediate family members. Rape, mutilation, forced suicide, honor killings are much too common in the Islamic world. In 2006, Rahan Arshad beat his wife and three children to death with a bat, because she was having an affair²⁶

Often the crime itself is followed by even more horrifying crime. For instance, in Turkey, 14-year old Nuran Halitogullari was strangled to death by her father after she had been kidnapped and raped³⁰. In certain parts of

Pakistan, women are offered as compensation for offenses committed by men. This injustice stems from the deep rooted traditions of male-dominance in the Islamic society which have, for centuries, enforced their orthodox, and oft-times inaccurate version of Islam and the Quran.