



VOICE FOR VOICELESS: THE VISION OF THE HOLY QURAN

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ABSTRACT

*In this research paper I have made an attempt to study the glorious **Quran** in the light of feminism and Marxism. Recently it was narrated that Islam does not give equal rights to women as it has given to man. The burning issue of triple divorce was highlighted in electronic and print media. It was tried to define that Islam confines woman by limiting her area around the kitchen. Those who do not know about Islam or have not read the holy **Quran**, only they create such false stories. Islam as a religion gives rights not only to women but every human being or animal living in this world anywhere. The concept of Zakat, one of the five pillars of Islam enrich the poor, down-trodden and suppressed people of the world. Islam does not believe in caste, creed, community and colour and on these grounds no discrimination should be done with anyone.*

KEYWORDS: *The Quran, Feminism, Marxism, Zakat, Islam.*

INTRODUCTION :

Since Delhi's rape case electronic and print media, social reformers, activists and politicians of the nation are discussing over the issues of women's freedom and equal rights. This is to claim that they have not been given equal proportion of rights to men. They have been exploited and suppressed. They are living a subjugated life. It is accused that patriarchal structure of society is responsible for the poor situation of women. Always men decide what women have to do and what not. Their dress, manner, and conduct is constituted by patriarchy.

Against such exploitation and suppression feminist movement emerged in 1960. It was an attempt to describe and interpret women's experience as depicted in various kinds of literature. It questions the long-standing, dominant, male, phallogocentric ideologies, patriarchal attitudes and male interpretations in literature. It attacks male notions of value in literature by offering critiques of male authors and representations of men in literature and also by privileging women writers. In addition, it challenges traditional and accepted male ideas about the nature of women and about how women feel, act and think or are supposed to feel, act and think and how in general they respond to life and living.

It is said that human beings are the greatest creature of God. They have ration, reason and wit. They have power to imagine, feel and create. They are the true soldiers of this beautiful earth. But some questions lurk in my mind. Why do then the problems of caste, creed, subjugation and discrimination occur? Why do men make slave women? Why do they exploit one another? Why do they go against law and order? How can they be the greatest creature of God if they are involved in these negative actions.

The answer of these questions is that man is a selfish creature of God. This trait lies in his blood since the very dawn of civilization. For their selfishness they misinterpret the holy books as the *Geeta*, the *Quran* and the *Bible*. For it they disobey the preachings of prophets. They plough and cultivate a civilized society

but they are not civilized inwardly. Many revolutions and wars broken out from time to time to eradicate these problems but the result was in vain. Only for saying our age is the age of science and technology. Only for saying we have universities and scholars. But we are still pursuing the same path which Arabians followed before the coming of Islam or which Eliot mentioned in his masterpiece *The Waste Land*. All over the world ethical and moral degradation are the burning issues of postmodern age.

In this paper, an attempt has been made to raise the voice for voiceless whether women or workers in the light of the holy *Quran*. The paper traces out to what extent the holy *Quran* makes strong to women whose rights have been snatched by men. It also makes clear how much Quranic doctrines are modern and outdated.

Before highlighting the holy *Quran* in the light of feminism and Marxism, it is essential to provide the objective of the *Quran*. The objective of the *Quran* is to make man aware of the creation plan of God. That is to tell man why God created this world, what the purpose is of settling man on earth, what is required from man in his pre-death life span and what he is doing to confront after death. Man is born as an eternal creature. When God created man as such, he divided his life span into two periods, the pre-death period, which is time of trial and the post-death period, which is the time for receiving the rewards or punishment merited by one's actions during one's lifetime. These take the form of eternal paradise or eternal hell. The purpose of the *Quran* is to make man aware of this reality. The secret of man's success in this life is to understand God's creation plan and map out his life accordingly.

Feminist Approaches in the Holy Quran: The rights of women versus those of men spring from sexual, biological and social relations not from romantic idealism unnoted in scientific facts. A civilization's attitude towards women is largely determined by its total pattern of life and particularly by the view it takes of sex life in all its manifold manifestations. The importance of sex life and its general influence on men's conduct was not fully realized until very recently modern researches on sex psychology have drawn attention to the wide ramifications of the sexual impulse in everyday life. In this respect Islam anticipated much of what the modern man has recently learnt. No other religion realized to the same degree the importance of sex in moulding human conduct for good or ill. For, it is clear that sex like economics, is one of the most vital determining factors in moulding the future of a people. A civilization which can successfully regulate its sex and economics is able to endure longer than one which leaves them unregulated or regulated them badly

The *Quran* is a book of God. It is beyond doubt. It constitutes and regulates lives of men and women. It reveals how life became possible on the earth. It consists political, economic and cultural rights of women. In Surah Hujurat, Chapter No.49, Verse No.13, Almighty says:

“O humankind, I have created you from a single pair of male and female, and have divided you into nation and tribes, so that you shall recognize each other, not that you shall despise each other, and the most honored in the sight of Allah is the person who has Taqwa –and Allah is all knowing, full of knowledge and well acquainted with all things.”

This verse of the glorious Quran says, “O humankind, we have created you from a single pair of male and female”-that means the whole human race originates from a single pair of male and female. All the human beings in the world have a common grandparents and Allah says that he has divided the human race

into nations and tribes, so that they shall recognize each other, not that they shall despise and fight amongst themselves.

And the glorious *Quran* in Surah Israa, Chapter No.17, Verse No.70 says, "Allah almighty God, has honored the children of Adam." Allah does not say that he has honored only the Arabs or the Americans or a particular race, but all the children of Adam, irrespective of race, caste, colour, creed or sex.

However, these are some faiths which say that it is because of the sin of the women that is Eve, that the human beings are born in sin. And they put the blame only on the woman, that is Eve, for the downfall of human beings. In fact, the *Quran* speaks about the story of Adam and Eve at several places, but at all the places, the blame is equally put on both of them- Adam and Eve. And if you read surah Araf, Chapter No.7, Verse No.19 to 27, it says, "Adam and Eve are addressed more than a dozen of times." And the *Quran* says that 'Both of them disobeyed Allah- Almighty God- both of them repented and both were forgiven.' Both are equally blamed for the mistake. There is not a single verse in the glorious *Quran*, which puts the blame only on Eve.

Certain faiths say since Eve disobeyed Allah, she is responsible for the sin of humankind, which Islam does not agree. They also say that Allah cursed the woman and said that she would bear labour pains. That means pregnancy is curse, according to some people- which Islam does not agree at all. Almighty says in Surah Nisa, Chapter No.4, Verse No.1, which says, 'Respect the womb that bore you.' In Islam, pregnancy does not degrade a woman- it uplift a woman.

The greatest misconception that the west has about Islam is that they think that 'Paradise in Islam, is meant only for the male – it is not meant for the female.' This misconception can be removed by quoting from Surah Nisa, Chapter No.4, Verse No.124, which says: "If any of you do deeds of righteousness, whether it be male or female and has faith, they shall surely enter Paradise and not the least injustice shall be done to them."

A similar thing is repeated in Surah Nahl, Chapter No.16, Verse No.97, which says: "If any of you perform good deeds, be it a man or a woman and is a believer I shall give you good life and I should reward you for all your good works."

Coming to the social rights given in Islam to a daughter- Islam prohibits female infanticide- the killing of female, children is forbidden in Islam. It is mentioned in Surah Taqveem, Chapter No.81, Verse No.8 and 9, which says, "When the female child is buried alive and when she questions you, for what crime was she killed." In Surah Anaam, Chapter No.6, Verse No.151, God says, "kill not your children for want of sustenance, for it is Allah that will provide sustenance to you and your children, for killing of children is a major sin." According to a Hadith in 'Ahmad', the prophet said, "Anyone who brings up two daughters properly and takes good care and brings them up with love and affection, will enter Paradise."

The *Quran* refers to the women as 'Mohsana' i.e. a 'fortress against the devil.' And if a woman, who is good and marries a man, she prevents him from going on the wrong path and keeps him on the 'seeratulmustaqeem'- that is the correct path.

In Islam, not even the father can force his daughter to marry against her wishes. Almighty Allah in Surah Nisa, Chapter No.4, Verse No.19 says, "You are prohibited to inherit women against their will"- means to marry, the permission of both the parties are required. It is compulsory that the man and woman- both should agree to marry. No one- not even father can force his daughter to marry against her wishes.

It is mentioned in Surah Baqrah, Chapter No.2, Verse No.187, which says: "Your wives are your garments, and you are their garments." What's the objective of garments – it is used to conceal and to beautify. The husband and wife should conceal each other's faults, and they should beautify each other. It's a relationship as hands and gloves. The *Quran* mentions: "Even if you do not like your wife, you should treat her kindly." It is mentioned in Surah Nisa, Chapter No.4, Verse No.19, as thus: "Treat your wives on a footing of equity and kindness even if you dislike her – for you may be disliking a thing for which Allah has made good for you."

The only thing above respect to mother, is the worship of Allah. It is mentioned in the *Quran*, Chapter No.17, Verse No.28-29, which says, "Allah has ordained for you that you worship none but him, and

to be kind to your parents. And if anyone or both of them reach old age, do not say a word of contempt or repel them but address them with honour, and speak to them with kindness, and lower your wing of humility and pray to Allah – My lord, bless them as they have cherished me in childhood.”

In Surah Alaq, or Surah Iqra, Chapter No.96, Verse No.1 to 5 Allah Almighty says, “Read, recite or proclaim in the name of the lord, who has created the human being from a congealed clot of blood, a beach like substance. Read, the lord is most bountiful who has taught the use of the pen who has taught the human beings that which he knew – not .”

The first guidance given in the Quran shareef to the humankind was not to pray, fast or give charity, it was to read. 1400 years ago, when the women were ill treated and were only used as chattles – leave aside being educated, Islam asked the women to be educated. The best example of educate women of that time Bibi Ayesha who was the daughter of Abu Bakar, the first khalifa(Caliph) of Islam, and the wife of our beloved prophet Muhammad (S.A.W). She gave guidance even to the Sahabas(Companion of prophet) and Khalifa(Caliph).

Feminist approaches of the holy *Quran* is timeless. Since the dawn of civilization to the ‘Day of Judgement’ its significance and utility will be appreciated. The holy *Quran* raises the status of women in the form of wife and mother. Like post – modern feminism it strengthen them and it also guards them not to pass the life like a wild beast. Milton’s line, “He for God only, she for God in him” will be cited as an example of the almost universally held assumption that man’s purpose in life is to serve God, the state, society, not least his own self advancement, while woman’s purpose is to serve man. Man is seen as the norm, woman as the ‘other’ not merely different, but inferior lacking. Personality traits are distinguished in terms as polar opposites of masculine and feminine. Men are considered to be bold, strong, assertive, independent, aspiring, rational, logical. Women on the contrary are considered to be timid, yielding, gentle, dependent, self sacrificing, emotional, intuitive. Though all cultures claim to praise and value the ‘womanly’ quality, one can cite an equal number of passages degenerating women while the verbal praise marks the actual relegation to a secondary position. Literature of course amply reflects these stereotypes. But the holy *Quran* goes against such description of women.

MARXIST APPROACHES IN THE HOLY QURAN:

Marxism is an attempt to raise the voice of downtrodden people. It discards class struggle, injustice and inequality. It believes in classless society which is beyond caste, creed, color and religion. It emphasizes upon equal division of economy and natural resources among persons. Marxism owes its existence to Karl Marx(1818 – 83) the 19th century German philosopher whose seminal work *Das Capital* (1867) is the Bible of the communist movement. Marx also wrote critical essays on Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe and William Shakespeare.

In the holy *Quran* Almighty Allah has instructed to mankind to use and distribute natural resources on the basis of equality. By the consequence the world could be regulated harmoniously. The concept of ‘Zakat’ in Islam brings equality and prosperity among mankind.

The concept of Almighty God in Islam strengthens Marxist principles. In Islam it is not said that Almighty God – Allah is the deity of particular race or a particular group of people. But the *Quran* says in Surah Fatihah, Chapter No.1, Verse No.2 ‘Praise be to lord of worlds’ and the glorious *Quran* also says in Surah Baqrah, Chapter No.2, Verse No.168, “O humankind, eat of what is on the earth, good and lawful for you, and follow not the footstep of the devil, for he is to you an avowed enemy.”

The above verse of the Quran reveals that Almighty is the lord of humankind not particular race or particular people. And all the things provided by God to mankind is for everyone not the people of particular class. In other words it proclaims the equal division of natural resources that is also the basic principles of Marxism.

On humanitarian ground, Islam unites human beings. It never classifies them on the ground of caste, color and creed. *The Quran* in Surah Maidah, Chapter No.5, Verse No.32 says, “If anyone kills a person unless

it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land, it is as though he has killed the whole nation – all the people. And if any person saves a life, it is as though he has saved the whole of humankind – all the people.”

The system of Zakat in Islam also supports Marxist doctrines. Any rich person who has a saving of more than the Nisab level, 85 grams of gold, he or she should give 2.5 percent of the saving, every lunar year in charity. If every human being in the world gives Zakat, poverty will be eradicated from this world. There will not be even a single human being to die of hunger.

The glorious Quran says, “You should love and help your neighbours.” The Quran in Surah Ma’un, Chapter No.107, Verse No.1 to 7 says, “Seest thou not the person who denies the Day of Judgement, and deals the orphan with harshness, and encourages not the seeding of the indigent. Woe to those who are neglectful of their prayers, Woe to those who pray only to be seen of men, who do not even provide neighbourly assistance.” Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) says, “He is not a Muslim, who sleeps with his full stomach while his neighbours are hungry.”

Islam decides ethical code for human beings. It does not allow any one to pass comment on any person. It discards back biting entirely. In Surah Hujurat, Chapter No.49, Verse No.11 and 12, the glorious Quran says, “Oh ye who believe, let not some men among you laugh at others – You may never know that the latter may be better than the former. Let not some women among you, laugh at other – You may never know that the latter may be better than the former. Do not defend one another nor be sarcastic or call each other with nicknames. Avoid suspicion, for in many cases suspicion is a sin. Do not spy on one another behind their backs. Are you ready to eat the dead meat of your brother?”

To sum up, the holy Quran is not only a book but the whole constitution which constitutes the life of men and women. Almighty Allah says that the Quran is a book which is doubtless. In other words every word of the Quran is the word of God that is unchallengeable. It reveals that how men and women can pass their lives to make the world beautiful and also the life which will come after the death. It also maintains that how liberty, equality and fraternity can be established on this land. It also exhorts to shape a society that goes beyond caste, color, creed and any type of discrimination.

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