# Topic: Inspirations from the life of Holy Prophet (S.A.W.W)

# RIGHTS OF HUMAN BEINGS

## RIGHTS OF WOMEN

Men and women all descended from a single person – the Prophet Adam (A.S). Islam does not accept for either of them anything but justice and kind treatment. Being human being women have similar rights as men. The Holy Quran declares, ***“And due to the wives is similar to what is expected of them, according to what is reasonable.” (2:228)***

### Equal Reward & Equal Accountability

Men and women worship Allah in the same way, meaning they worship the same God (Allah), perform the same acts of worship, follow the same scripture, and hold the same beliefs. Allah judges all human beings fairly and equitably. Allah emphasises the just treatment and reward due to both men and women in many verses of the Qur’an like ***“Allah has promised to the believers, men and women, gardens under which rivers flow, to dwell therein, and beautiful mansions in gardens of everlasting bliss.” (9:72)*** and ***“Never will I allow the loss of the work of any worker amongst you, male or female; you are of one another.” (3:195)***

These verses show that reward is dependent upon one’s actions and not on one’s gender. Gender does not play any part in how a person is rewarded and judged. Islam offers justice between the genders. For example, Islam dismisses the idea that Hawwa is more to blame than Adam for eating from the forbidden tree. According to Holy Quran, Adam and Hawwa both committed the mistake, they both repented and Allah forgave them both.

### Equal Right to Knowledge

Both men and women are equally encouraged to seek knowledge. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W) said, ***“Seeking knowledge is compulsory for every Muslim.”*** Also, great female Muslim scholars existed at and around the time of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W). Some were from his family and others were his companions or their daughters. Prominent amongst them was Hazrat Ayesha (R.A) through whom a quarter of the Islamic law has been transmitted.

### Equal Right to Choose a Spouse

Islam has honoured women by giving them the right to choose a spouse and keep their original family name once married. Additionally, many have the impression that parents force their daughters into marriage. This is a cultural practice, and has no basis in Islam. In fact, it is prohibited. ***At the time of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W), a woman came to him and said, “My father has married me to my cousin to raise his social standing and I was forced into it.” The Prophet (S.A.W) sent for the girl’s father and then in his presence gave the girl the option of remaining married or nullifying the marriage. She responded, “O Messenger of Allah, I have accepted what my father did, but I wanted to show other women (that they could not be forced into a marriage).” (Nasa’i, Ibn Maja)***

### Right to Inheritance

In the pre-Islamic civilizations, women were denied any right to inheritance, so that money and property would not be transferred to her from her husband. Only mature, elder sons were entitled to inheritance, since they were the ones who fought and defended their tribe in times of war. In the Islamic legislation, the issues of inheritance have been discussed in detail and include all the possible cases of inheritance.

Islam grants women the right to inherit from their parents or relatives and specifies an obligatory share for them. Allah says, ***“For men is a share of what the parents and close relatives leave, and for women is a share of what the parents and close relatives leave, be it little or much - an obligatory share.” (4:*7)**

This verse establishes a general inheritance rule for both men and women. It establishes a new norm that was not known before; that is granting women the right to inheritance.

### Love & Mercy in Spousal Relations

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W) encouraged men to treat their wives in the best way, ***“The best of you are those who are best (in treatment) to their wives.” (Tirmidhi)*** Hazrat Ayesha (R.A) was once asked how the Holy Prophet’s (S.A.W) conduct was at home. She said, ***“He was like one of you at home, yet he was most lenient and most generous … He was ready to give a helping hand to his wives in the ordinary work of the house, [he] sewed his own clothes and mended his own shoes.” (Bukhari)*** In general, he helped in whatever work his wives did.

### Lofty Positions of Mothers & Daughters

A mother has the greatest influence on a child especially in the earlier years through her affection, care and love. Undoubtedly, the success of a society is due to mothers. Therefore, it is their right to be honoured. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W) was once asked, ***“O Messenger of Allah, who among people is most deserving of my good treatment?”*** He said, ***“Your mother.”*** The man asked twice more, ***“Then who?”*** and was given the same response. Only until the fourth time did the Prophet (S.A.W) respond, ***“Then your father.” (Bukhari, Muslim)*** In another Hadith the Holy Prophet (S.A.W) said, ***“Your Heaven lies under the feet of your mother.” (Ahmad, Nasa’i)***

Reward is not only given on the good and kind treatment towards mothers. In fact, Islam has designated a special reward for raising daughters that is not granted for raising sons. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W) said, ***"Whoever has three daughters or sisters, or two daughters or two sisters, and lives along with them in a good manner, and has patience with them, and fears Allah with regard to them will enter Paradise." (Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi)***

## RIGHTS OF SLAVES

Slavery is a concept that existed since pre-recorded history. The slaves were not treated as humans and did not have any rights. Islam indeed came as a blessing to all Mankind and it was seen that slaves were given rights, something which the rest of the world never gave them.

### Treatment of Slaves

It is seen in history that slaves were mistreated in the pre-Islamic world. Not only were they verbally abused, they were physically abused as well. The master would overburden the slave and make them work all day. Slaves would wear torn and tattered clothes while the masters would dress with the finest clothes available. When it would come to food, the slaves would get leftovers or if not, very little food which would certainly not include good quality food.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W) forbade such acts. Masters could not abuse their slaves and had to give them the same that they ate and wore. According to Hadith, ***“Your slaves are your brothers and Allah has put them under your command. So whoever has a brother under his command should feed him of what he eats and dress him of what he wears. Do not ask them (slaves) to do things beyond their capacity (power) and if you do so, then help them.” (Bukhari)***

### The Lessons of Equality

Islam made it clear to every follower that the slaves had their rights which is compulsory for their master to fulfill. It teaches that slaves and masters are equal in the sights of Allah. There can be found numerous evidences in the Islamic traditions which teach us that slaves are to be treated like any other human being. People belonging to the days of ignorance would not stand next to a slave while Muslims stand next to them in prayers showing a sign of unity and uniformity in their status in front of Allah. Hazrat Bilal

(R.A) was one of the first slaves to accept Islam. He was also the first person to stand on top of the Ka’abah and give the Adhan (the Muslim call for prayer).

It is also important to note that numerous Hadiths are narrated by the slaves and freed slaves that are considered as true and followed by millions of Muslims in the world today. This means that their testimony is also recognized and accepted. We can also see from the traditions that slaves would not only stand shoulder to shoulder with others Muslims during prayer but would also lead the prayers. Narrated Ibn ‘Umar (R.A): ***“When the earliest emigrants came to Al-’Usba a place in Quba, before the arrival of the Prophet (S.A.W) – Salim (R.A), the slave of Abu Hudhaifa (R.A), who knew the Qur’an more than the others used to lead them in prayer. (Bukhari)***

## RIGHTS OF ANIMALS

Animals and other living things are created by Allah, the Lord of the Universe. They have their own independent existences and modes of living. Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an, ***“And the earth He laid [out] for the creatures.”(55:10)*** At another place it is mentioned, ***“And there is no creature on [or within] the earth or bird that flies with its wings except [that they are] communities like you.” (6:38)***

Allah loves every one of the creatures He has made, and therefore the principles of mercy and compassion are to be extended to every living creature. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W) is reported to have said: ***“All creatures are Allah’s family and the dearest to Allah are those who treat His family kindly.” (Bayhaqi)***

Allah gave us the free use of the plants and animals of this Earth. He said, ***“Allah is He who has made cattle for you so that you ride some of them and from some of them you derive food. In them there are also other benefits for you, and through them you fulfill your heartfelt need (to reach places)” (40:79-***

***80)*** But we must balance our use of animals and plants with our primary role as a caretaker on the Earth. For example, we are not allowed to harm animals or plants for no reason.

The Blessed Prophet (S.A.W) forbade people from capturing baby birds, burning ant hills and whipping animals cruelly. A group of Companions was once on a journey with the Prophet (S.A.W) and he left them for a while. During his absence, they saw a bird with its two young, and they took the young ones from the nest. When the Prophet (S.A.W) came back, the mother bird was circling above in the air, beating its wings in grief. He said, ***"Who has hurt the feelings of this bird by taking its young? Return them to her." (Muslim)***

If we use animals for our work, we must feed them and not overwork them. The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W) once passed by a camel that was so emaciated that its stomach had almost reached its back. He said, ***"Fear Allah in these beasts who cannot speak." (Abu Dawud)***

If we eat animals we are supposed to slaughter the animals according to ***Dhabiha*** rules which prevent all cruelty to animals. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W) said,

#### “Allah has ordained kindness (and excellence) in everything. If the killing (of animals) is to be done, do it in the best manner, and when you slaughter, do it in the best manner by first sharpening the knife, and putting the animal at ease.” (Muslim)

* ***The Prophet (S.A.W) said, “Whoever kills a sparrow or anything bigger than that without a just cause, Allah will hold him accountable on the Day of Judgement.” The listeners asked, “O Messenger of Allah, what is a just cause?” He (S.A.W) replied, “That he will kill it to eat, not simply to chop off its head and then throw it away.” (Nasa’i, Hakim).***