



Ramadan Daily Quran Studies, by Dr Zahid Aziz, 2024

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Study 15:

Women in Islam —

6: Reward for good deeds





- According to the Quran, women are entitled to equal spiritual reward with men for good deeds. It says:



لَيْسَ بِأَمَانِيكُمْ وَلَا أَمَانِي أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ ط

مَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا يُجْزَى بِهِ ۖ وَلَا يُجَادَلُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا ﴿١٢٣﴾



وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنَ الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ

فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ نَقِيرًا ﴿١٢٣﴾



“It will not be in accordance with your vain desires
nor the vain desires of the People of the Book.

Whoever does evil, will be recompensed for it
and will not find for himself besides Allah a friend or a helper.

And whoever does good deeds, **whether male or female**, and is a believer —
these will enter the Garden, and they will not be dealt with unjustly in the least.”

(4:123–124)



- This verse lays down the principle that “entering paradise” or receiving “salvation” is not achieved by one’s wishful thinking, i.e., that because you belong to some particular group it means you become the favoured one of God.
- It is achieved by good deeds, and God does not make any distinction in the least between a male and a female as regards bringing their good deeds to fruition.
- Similar statements are made again in the Quran:



مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً ۗ
وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٤﴾



1. “Whoever does good, **whether male or female**, and is a believer,
We shall certainly make him live a good life,
and We shall certainly give them their reward for the best of what they did.” (16:97)



مَنْ عَمِلَ سَيِّئَةً فَلَا يُجْزَىٰ إِلَّا مِثْلَهَا ۗ وَمَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ
فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ يُرْزَقُونَ فِيهَا بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٤٠﴾



2. “Whoever does evil, he is recompensed only with its like; and whoever does good,
whether male or female, and is a believer, these shall enter the Garden,
to be given sustenance in it without measure.” (40:40)



... أَنِّي لَا أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَامِلٍ مِّنْكُمْ مِّمَّنْ ذَكَرَ وَأُنْثَىٰ ۖ بَعْضُكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْضٍ ۗ

3. “...I will not let the work of any worker among you to be lost, **whether male or female**; each of you is as the other. ...” (3:195)

- The importance of deeds is shown by the fact that in all these verses good deeds are mentioned first, and being a believer is mentioned after that.





- In the verses quoted above, the addition of the words “and is a believer” **does not mean** that good deeds of an unbeliever, a non-Muslim, are not recognized by Allah.
- As a matter of principle the Quran says:

يَوْمَئِذٍ يَصَّدُرُ النَّاسُ أَشْتَاتًا ۗ يُرَوِّا أَعْمَالَهُمْ ۗ

فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ ۗ وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ ۗ





“On that day people will come forth, in diverse bodies, that they may be shown their works. So **whoever** does an atom’s weight of good will see it. And **whoever** does an atom’s weight of evil will see it.” (99:6–8)

- The least and smallest good done by anyone, whoever it may be, will bear good fruit, and the least bad done by anyone will cause harm (to them).
- The Holy Prophet Muhammad has called these verses as “comprehensive and unique” (Bukhari, hadith 2371 and 4963).



مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ خَيْرٌ مِّنْهَا
وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ فَلَا يُجْزَى الَّذِينَ عَمِلُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ إِلَّا مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾

- The Quran also says:

“**Whoever** brings good, he will have better than it;
and **whoever** brings evil, those who do evil will be recompensed only
for what they did.” (28:84)

- “Whoever” includes everyone.





- In the following verse where the whole of humanity is addressed:

...يُكَلِّبُ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شُرْعَةً وَمِنْهَا جَا^ط وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَكِنْ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ^ط إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

“... For everyone of you We appointed a law and a way.

And if Allah had pleased He would have made you (humanity) a single people,
but that He might try you in what He gave you.

So vie with one another in good works.

To Allah you will all return,
so He will inform you of that in which you differed.”

(5:48).





- In this verse all the different sections of humanity, and followers of different religions, are exhorted to “vie with one another in good works”, i.e. for each to try to excel others in the doing of good.
- This advice would be meaningless if Allah did not reward non-Muslims for their good deeds.

END OF STUDY 15

