

Staying Single

One of the things that is clear from Lory's story, at the end of the last chapter, is that people from traditional Muslim societies expect women to marry. For most women deciding to live as a single woman is not even something to be considered. In these cultures, a woman's identity is strongly tied to her husband. This "bull of inequity" is shared with the West, though in the West there has been a great deal of progress in this area.

In current Western society, the requirement to be married is no longer very strong. In fact I have known many successful and happy women who have decided not to marry, or who have been married and divorced and have consciously decided not to remarry.

Though the Quran encourages marriage, it certainly does not require it. God deals with us as individuals, as well as couples:

*Say, "I ask you to do one thing:
Devote yourselves to God,
in pairs or as individuals....
(Quran: The Final Testament 34:46)*

Ultimately we are totally responsible for our own souls. We will stand before God alone:

*All...will come before Him
on the Day of Resurrection as individuals.
(Quran: The Final Testament 19:95)*

Each of us is responsible for our own decisions, our own guidance. God has given us what we need to make our own choices:

*You shall not accept any information,
unless you verify it for yourself.
I have given you the hearing,
the eyesight, and the brain,
and you are responsible for using them.
(Quran: The Final Testament 17:36)*

Knowing this, it makes no difference whether we are married or single. We are the ones who make the decision whether or not to be guided. Besides, being married, even to a messenger of God, does not guarantee either one's guidance or any help against punishment:

*God cites as examples of those who disbelieved
the wife of Noah and the wife of Lot.
They were married to two of our righteous servants,
but they betrayed them and, consequently,
they could not help them at all against God....
(Quran: The Final Testament 66:10)*

On the other hand, Pharaoh's wife was married to one of the greatest tyrants of all time and was such a good believer that God uses her as an example of the believers:

*And God cites as an example
of those who believed the wife of Pharaoh....
(Quran: The Final Testament 66:11)*

Immediately after citing Pharaoh's wife as an example of the believers, He cites Mary as a second example:

*Also Mary, the Amramite. She maintained her chastity,
then we blew into her from our spirit.
She believed in the words of her Lord
and His scriptures; she was obedient.
(Quran: The Final Testament 66:12)*

The Quran tells of Mary's obedience and submission to God, even as a child:

Her Lord accepted her a gracious acceptance, and brought her up a gracious upbringing, under the guardianship of Zachariah. Whenever Zachariah entered her sanctuary he found provisions with her. He would ask, "Mary, where did you get this from?" She would say, "It is from God. God provides for whomever He chooses, without limits."

*That is when Zachariah implored his Lord: "My Lord, grant me such a good child; You are the Hearer of the prayers."
(Quran: The Final Testament 3:37-38)*

Thus, even as a child Mary was a good example of a believer, and inspired her guardian, Zachariah, to pray for a child who would be as good as she was. As she grew into womanhood that goodness did not diminish:

*The angels said, "O Mary, God has chosen you and purified you. He has chosen you from all the women."
(Quran: The Final Testament 3:42)*

God chose her from all the women and also uses her, this single woman, as an example to us of a believer. From this example, He clearly does not require us to be married to be acceptable to Him.

The Quran gives us quite a bit more information about Mary. In fact, it gives us much more information about Mary than it does about most of the messengers and prophets. Not only that, the Quran has a whole chapter named for her, Chapter 19. Please see Appendix 2 for the rest of Mary's story, including the virgin birth, in the Quran.

In the New Testament, it is not just the example of Mary that makes it clear that we need not be married to be acceptable to God. In fact Paul seems to indicate that it may be better to remain single:

...And the unmarried woman and the virgin are anxious about the affairs of the Lord, so that they may be holy in body and spirit; but the married woman is anxious about the affairs of the

world, how to please her husband.

(1 Corinthians 7:34 – New Revised Standard Version Bible)

From all of this it is clear that we are not required to marry. Staying single and being a submitter to God (Muslim) are perfectly compatible.



There are many reasons that people decide to remain single. I have many single Muslim friends, some of whom would like to be married, and some of whom like being single and would not consider getting married. All of them are good Muslims. None are more courageous and loving than the sister who shares her story here.

Muslim and Homosexual

There is conflicting evidence as to whether there is a human gene which predisposes a person to homosexuality. I believe there is, because of my own personal experience. I believe the gene is the same as genes that predispose people to certain addictions. Two people may drink the same amount of alcohol, yet one will become alcoholic and the other will simply be a heavy drinker. The heavy drinker, as things change in his life and he becomes older and more settled, will likely slow down his consumption, and may even stop altogether. The alcoholic will consume more and more, until the alcohol becomes the most important thing in his life. With help from an organization like AA, he may be able to stop drinking and turn his life around, but he will always be an alcoholic; the addiction will always be part of him.

I think the same thing exists with “sexual preference.” Most of my fellow Muslims would probably disagree, but I say this because I believe that I have that predisposition.

So, does that mean I am a lesbian? Yes and no. I think that, had God not saved me, that’s where I would be now—in a

destructive, difficult, unhealthy lifestyle. But God did save me. He taught me right from wrong, weakness from strength. God condemns homosexuality. Not mildly, but strongly. He calls it an abomination [*Editor's note: see Quran 7:80, 29:28, etc.*].

So why would God incline certain people toward a lifestyle that's destructive and goes against His commands? It's a test. The same as the alcoholic or the drug addict or the compulsive gambler. All of those addictions are against God's commands, yet it's recognized that those addictions are part of a person's genetic makeup. The alcoholic can *choose* not to drink; the drug addict can *choose* not to snort cocaine; the gambler can *choose* not to bet. I can *choose* not to participate in the lesbian lifestyle. And I do choose that, because of God's mercy in showing me the right way. I thank Him every day that He showed me the Truth and gave me the strength to say, "Yes, I'm a homosexual, but I *choose* not to practice something that will hurt my soul."

God doesn't condemn homosexuals, anymore than He condemns alcoholics. He condemns the actions, and rewards those who fight and pass the test. It's turned out to be an easy test for me. I don't need sexual acts of any kind to make me a whole woman. I just need God. And I know that He is there for me.

– *Evah, U.S.A.*

