

The Quran and its Message

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Joseph A Islam www.quransmessage.com

سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ

Salamun Alaikum (Peace be upon you)

SEXY FEMALE VIRGINS FOR MEN IN PARADISE - REALLY?

Joseph A Islam

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Quite extravagant and graphic portrayals of female virgins are found in [Islamic secondary sources](#). Female virgins reserved specifically for men in heaven constitute one such example.

SO WHAT DOES THE QURAN REALLY SAY?

The term 'Hur' is one of the most abused and graphically portrayed concepts in [Islamic secondary sources](#). Its restricted interpretation to denote female virgins finds no support in the Quran, or for its male-centric bias.

The Arabic word 'Hur' is the plural of both the word 'Ahwar' (Masculine) and 'Hawra' (Feminine). It literally translates as "white-eyed", or persons distinguished by 'Hawar', signifying the intense whiteness of the white of an eye and intense black of the pupils.

Generally, it has the significance of 'whiteness', 'purity', or 'pure beings'. It is not 'gender specific' for a male audience as it is more commonly known. A better and correct rendering is 'companions pure'.

أَحْوَرٌ, (ح,) applied to a **man**, (تأ,) *Having eyes characterized by the quality termed حور as explained above: (ح :)* and so حوراء, [the fem.,] applied to a **woman**, (س, م, ح, ح:*) **pl. حور.**

حور *Intense whiteness of the white of the eye and intense blackness of the black thereof, (Ṣ, Mṣb, K,) with intense whiteness, or fairness, of the rest of the person : (K :) or intense whiteness of the white of the eye and intense blackness of the black thereof, with roundness of the black, and thinness of the eyelids, and whiteness, or fairness, of the parts around them : (K :) or blackness of the whole [of what appears] of the eye, as in the eyes of gazelles (AA, Ṣ, Mṣb, K) and of bulls and cows : (AA, Ṣ :) and this is not found in human beings, but is attributed to them by way of comparison : (AA, Ṣ, Mṣb, K :) Aṣ*

Source: Edward Lanes Lexicon [2]

Therefore : **Ha-Waw-Ra** (Ha-Alif-Ra) is:

The white around the eye, intense whiteness of the white of the eye and intense blackness of the black* not found in humans but attributed to them by way of comparison. Or it is applied to one bearing the following significations: one who is freed and cleared of every vice, fault or defect, one who has been tried and proved time after time and found to be free of vices, faults or defects. A thing pure. One who advises/counsels or acts sincerely/honestly/faithfully, friend/assistant, fair woman/man.

*likened to the eyes of gazelles

044.054

“Even so (it will be). And We shall wed them to fair ones with wide, lovely eyes (Arabic: Hur'in)”

كَذَلِكَ وَزَوَّجْنَاهُمْ بِحُورٍ عِينٍ

Hur'in

Illustration - Joseph Islam

055.70 -72

“In them will be fair (Companions), good, beautiful;- Then which of the favours of your Lord will ye deny?- **Companions** restrained (as to their glances), in (goodly) pavilions”

حُورٌ مَّقْصُورَاتٌ فِي الْخِيَامِ

Hur'un

Illustration - Joseph Islam

The root Ha-Waw-Ra has also been used in other parts of the Quran.

A DESCRIPTION OF THE GARMENTS OF THE COMPANIONS OF PROPHET JESUS ^(pbuh)

The definition denotes one who whitens clothes/garments by washing them or is applied as a signification of one who is free from vice, faults or defects proven time after time. Again, the underlying significance of **pure** and **clean** is apparent. This is supported by further analysis of examples from early Jewish sects at the time of Prophet Jesus ^(pbuh) such as the Essenes, who, adopted the use of white clothing and were referred to as the 'brethren in white clothing'. This was possibly as a mark of their insistence on purity.

"The white garment given to the novice accords well with Josephus' previous statement in J. W. 2 §123 that the Essenes were always dressed in white (Note 187)" [3]

A fuller discussion of the Essenes within the ambit of academic literature and history, including further evidence found from the Dead Sea scrolls, is outside the scope of this particular article. However, readers are encouraged to research this interesting area of study.

حُورٌ, inf. n. as above, He whitened clothes, or garments, (Ṣ, Mṣb,) and wheat, or food: (Ṣ:) and حَارٌ, (Ḳ,) aor. يَحُورُ, inf. n. حَوْرٌ, (TA,) he washed and whitened a garment, or piece of cloth; (Ḳ;) but حُورٌ is better known in this

Source: Edward Lanes Lexicon [4]

Source: Edward Lanes Lexicon [5]

Please note that a true rendering of 'Hawariyun' (ROOT H-W-R) as 'white garbed ones' is often **removed** from translations and replaced by 'Disciples'

003:052

When Jesus found Unbelief on their part He said: "Who will be My helpers to (the work of) God?" Said the disciples (**Arabic: Hawariyuna**): "We are God's helpers: We believe in God, and do bear witness that we are Muslims.

قَالَ مَنْ أَنْصَارِي إِلَى اللَّهِ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ

Hawariyuna

Illustration - Joseph Islam

THE FAMOUS MISINTERPRETED SURAH WAQIA VERSE

The out of context references to these verses is unfortunately abused by both Muslims and polemicists of the Quran.

Read in context and carefully analysed, one notes that there is **no** reference to 'Hurs' in these verses and the complete purport of the message is a reference to **all** of the companions of the **right hand**, both **male** and **female** (Those that will inherit the kingdom of heaven) (56.27).

These verses inform the reader, that the people of the right hand will be recreated as a new creation (56.35) as virgins untouched (56.36) and of similar age (56.37). All this is for the people of the right hand (56.37).

Let us note the verses in context.

056.027-34

“The Companions of the Right Hand,- what will be the Companions of the Right Hand? (They will be) among Lote-trees without thorns. Among tall trees with flowers (or fruits) piled one above another. In shade long-extended, By water flowing constantly, And fruit in abundance. Whose season is not limited, nor (supply) forbidden, And on Thrones (of Dignity), raised high”

056.035

‘Lo” We have created **them** a (New Creation)”

There is no support from the verse for the often mistranslations that this is referring to the virgin wives of the believing men. The verse is clear that it is dealing with the companions of the right hand and it is them that are being recreated as a new creation.

Inna (Indeed we/ Lo) Inshanahunna (We have produced them) Inshaa (Into a creation)

056.036

“And we have made them virgins (Arabic: **Abkaran - Root BKR**)”

BKR - A virgin - anything untouched, new, fresh.

056.037

Devoted (Arabic: **Uruban**) Equal in age / well matched (Arabic: **Atraban**)

056.038

For the companions on the right hand (Arabic: **Ashab-ul-ameen**)

The verse continues to inform us that these righteous people of the ‘Right Hand’ will be from the company of a former people (**both** men and women) and from a company of later generations (Again both men and women).

056.039

A company of the former people (Arabic: **Thulathun mina Awaleen**)

056.040

And a company of the later people (Arabic: **Wa Thulathun minal Akhireen**)

THE FINAL BALANCE

We have clearly noted that the term ‘Hur’ is for **all** companions of paradise and remains genderless. Therefore, the best rendering of this term is ‘pure companions’. This further underscores the doctrine that all rewards of paradise are **equally** for both men and women.

009:072

"God has promised the believers, both men and women (**Lit., waalmuminoona (male believers) waalmuminatu (female believers)**), gardens through which running waters flow, therein to abide, and goodly dwellings in gardens of perpetual bliss: but God's goodly acceptance is the greatest [bliss of all] -for this, this is the triumph supreme!"

ARE THERE ANY SPECIFIC REFERENCES TO FEMALE COMPANIONS IN THE QURAN?

Yes

We do indeed find **a** reference which is an allusion to represent a ‘female’ entity.

078.033

“And youthful women (Kawaiba) of equal age (well matched)”

Despite the popular understanding of the word ‘Kawaiba’ as a reference to youthful women, it should also be noted that the root – ‘K-AYN-BA’ has an underlying connotation of prominence, splendour, something which is physically prominent, of nobility, glory or anything elevated. It is also a reference to a square chamber or building. What will come as a surprise to many is that the same root is used in the word ‘KABAH’ in the Masjid Haram, the Holy sanctuary. Hence, some commentators continue to render ‘Kawaib’ as ‘splendid companions’ or ‘companions’. However, given the general usage and feminine plural noun of the word, there is support that this may be a reference to a female entity.

Nevertheless, this does not imply therefore, that ‘Hurs’ are to be interpreted as females. There is **no justification** to make use of one verse to interpret the remaining genderless ‘Hurs’ as females which are clearly similitudes for **all** companions of Heaven irrespective of gender. This point is often completely missed. As we note, there is **also** a reference to **male** companions explicitly to balance the argument.

MALE COMPANIONS

076.019

“There wait on them youthful boys, whom, when you see, you would take for scattered pearls”

‘And will circulate (WaYa Tufo) among them (Alayhim) young males (Wildanun) made eternal (Mukhalladuna) when (Idha) you see them (Ra-aytahum) you would think (Hasib-tahum) pearls (Lu’lu-an) scattered (Manthuran)’

As is now clear, there is **no** justification to interpret ‘Hurs’ to be females based on verse 78.33 as there is to interpret ‘Hurs’ to be males based on the verse above (76.19).

016:097

"As for anyone - be it man or woman [Arabic: Lit., min (from) thakarin (male) aw (or) ontha (female)] who does righteous deeds, and is a believer - him shall We most certainly cause to live a good life, and most certainly shall We grant unto such as these their reward in accordance with the best that they ever did"

FINAL THOUGHTS

- All similitudes are for **all** companions of heaven.
- There is no neuter gender in Arabic. 'Gender' is a function of language convention and not necessarily 'physiology'. For example, the feminine 'shams' in Arabic (sun) or the masculine 'qamar' (moon) is merely a function of language convention as understood by the Arabs where such genders are assigned. Similarly, the Quran presents similitudes of a world that is as yet, unknown to humans. Therefore, references to a creation such as 'Hur' are arguably not best understood in terms of earthly concepts of gender, physical attributes etc, especially when the Quran is explicit that we will be formed into a new creation (56:35-37) in a spiritual world that is only presented to us in similitudes. Hence, 'Hur', a plural formation of both a male (Ahwar) and female (Hawra) counterpart is best rendered as '**pure companions**' even though in the Arabic language convention, it is assigned a female gender.
- The 'Houris' are mentioned in several places in the Quran and though in plural, **no** specific numbers are allocated. They are available to **all** Muslims (regardless of gender).
- Amongst other verses, both verses 78.33 and 76.19 also balance the argument further, underscoring the notion that Quranic similitudes are for **all** companions.
- There are no verses in the Quran which describe the graphic details found in [Islamic secondary sources](#). The Quran furnishes no information as to what the nature of these relationships will entail other than companionship of some kind. These entities will be pure and undefiled much like the righteous who also will be recreated as a new creation. There are also references in which the righteous will be joined with their righteous counterparts on earth (40.8; 52.21).

052.021

"And those who believe and whose offspring follow them in faith, We will join their offspring with them and We will not deprive them anything of their deeds: Each individual is a pledge for that which they have earned"

REFERENCES

[1] LANE. E.W, Edward Lanes Lexicon, Williams and Norgate 1863; Librairie du Liban Beirut-Lebanon 1968, Volume 2, Page 666

Highlights marked in red on the lexicon excerpt are my own insertions. They have no bearing on the original text other than they emphasise relevance to the topic at hand. These are merely illustrations and have solely been utilised for educational and explanatory purposes.

[2] Ibid.

[3] BEALL. Todd S., Josephus' Description of the Essenes Illustrated by the Dead Sea Scrolls, Cambridge University Press, First Published 1988

Page 155, Note 187 Reads: "See discussion above, p. 46 (2 §123). J. Danielou's statement that "the practice of dressing the newly baptized in a white robe inevitably recalls the description in Josephus of the white garments worn by those who were newly admitted to the Essenian community" (The Dead Sea Scrolls and Primitive Christianity [Baltimore: Helicon, 1958], 42) ignores the fact that according to Josephus all Essenes wore white, not simply the novices"

[4] LANE. E.W, Edward Lanes Lexicon, Williams and Norgate 1863; Librairie du Liban Beirut-Lebanon 1968, Volume 2, Page 665

Highlights marked in red on the lexicon excerpt are my own insertions. They have no bearing on the original text other than they emphasise relevance to the topic at hand. These are merely illustrations and have solely been utilised for educational and explanatory purposes.

[5] Ibid., Page 666

[Joseph Islam](#)

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