



## A muslimah is like a white-footed raven

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It is reported that the Prophet said:

A believing woman is the same among women as a *white-footed* raven among the ravens. <sup>1</sup>

Christian missionaries argue that the text of this narration indicates that women are spiritually inferior to men. They cite this hadith as so-called evidence for their claim that Islam insults women.

### Response:

This hadith uses the rhetorical figure of hyperbole to say that the virtuous woman is incomparable and exceptional, as stated literally in al-Tabarani's version of the very same narration. This is also the condition of virtuous men as established by the next authentic narration in Sahih Bukhari, see:

The Prophet said “..My followers in comparison to the other nations are like a *white hair* on a black ox..” <sup>2</sup>

In another hadith we read:

The Prophet said: “..stand out among the people [ due to your excellence ] like a mole on the face..” <sup>3</sup>

In other words all believers in comparison to the non-believers are like a white-footed raven among the ravens, or like a white hair on a black ox. It is therefore incorrect to claim that the hadith in the Musnad of Imam Ahmad indicates that women are spiritually inferior to men, or less good.

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1: Musnad Ahmad, 17698.  
2: Sahih Bukhari, Vol. 8, Book 76, Nr. 536.  
3: Sunan Abu Dawud Book 32, Nr. 4078.