

Principles Of Marriage & Family Ethics

by
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The human society is comprised of families. Islam attaches great importance to real pleasure and prosperity of human beings through Islamically balanced, highly ethical, well-educated and well-behaved families and happy homes. Like in all the fields of human activity, Islam has laid down clearly and in detail the rights and duties of men and women, husbands and wives and also parents and children. The happy homes having pleasant environment, in which husband, wife, children and other relatives live together merrily with good mutual understanding, tolerance and respect as well as fulfilling their respective duties towards each other, is indeed an index of the highest status the Almighty Allah has blessed, among the creatures, to all human beings.

Unfortunately, the lack of appreciation about these aspects, particularly by husbands and wives, leads to many problems for themselves as well as for the children-the future generations. In advanced and western countries, with more and more progress, greater technological and scientific achievements and very fast and ultramodern way of life, the rate of divorces and separations is alarming.

Considering the importance of the subject, the IPO is taking the privilege of publishing this book (originally in Persian language) written by an eminent Islamic scholar, a noted author and a senior professor of Islamic Jurisprudence at, *Hawzah Ilmiyyah* (Islamic Theological Centre), Qum, Iran, Hujjatul-Islam Ibrahim Amini. The author has taken great pains in conducting research and deep study on the subject of family ethics and husband-wife relationship. The first part deals with duties of women and the second part contains duties of men. Along with the duties, rights of husbands on wives and those of wives on husbands have also been described quoting relevant verses of the Holy Qur'an and *Ahadith* (traditions). It is hoped that the book would be found very useful for all and every home would treasure this to derive the maximum benefit for creating and maintaining the serene and pleasant environment, full of Allah's blessings.

THE DUTIES OF WOMEN: The Purpose of Marriage

Marriage is a natural necessity for every human being. It bears many good outcomes of which the most important ones are:

- (1) The formation of a family through which one can find security and peace of mind. A person who is not married resembles a bird without a nest. Marriage serves as a shelter for anyone who feels lost in the wilderness of life; one can find a partner in life who would share one's joy and sorrow.
- (2) The natural sexual desire is both strong and significant. Everyone should have a partner for satisfying their sexual needs in a secure and serene environment. Everyone should enjoy sexual satisfaction in a correct and proper manner. Those who abstain from marriage often suffer from both physical and psychological disorders. Such disorders and certain social problems are a direct consequence of the abstinence of youth from marriage.
- (3) Reproduction: Through marriage the procreation of mankind is continued. Children are the result of marriage and are important factors in stabilizing the family foundations as well as a source of real joy to their parents.

A great deal of emphasis has been given in the Holy Qur'an and the Traditions to both marriage and having children. The Almighty Allah states in the Holy Qur'an:

"And among His signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves,..." (30:21).

"The Prophet (SA) stated: 'There is no better structure founded in Islam other than marriage'."[\[1\]](#)

"Imam Ali (AS) stated: 'Engage in marriage; because this is the tradition of the Prophet (SA) of Allah.'"[\[2\]](#)

"The Prophet (SA) of Allah stated: 'Whoever chooses to follow my tradition must get married and produce offspring through marriage (and increase the population of Muslims) so that on the day of resurrection I shall confront other Ummah (nations) with the (great) numbers of my Ummah'"[\[3\]](#)

"Imam Rida (AS) stated: 'The greatest gain for a man is a faithful woman who, when she sees him, becomes happy and protects his property and her own honour in his absence'."[\[4\]](#)

What has been dealt with so far in this chapter has been only the worldly and animalistic side of marriage which the animals also share: the Benefits of companionship and reproduction. As such the true purpose of marriage for the human race is of a different kind. Mankind is not meant to have entered this world solely in order to eat, drink, sleep, seek pleasure or act lustfully, and then to die and be destroyed. The status of man is higher than such deeds. Human beings are meant to train themselves and their souls by gaining knowledge, committing good deeds, and behaving with good manners. Man is meant to take steps along the straight path to achieve nearness to Almighty Allah. Mankind is a creation that is able to cleanse his soul and by avoiding evil deeds and exercising good behaviour reach a level of such high status that even the angels are not able to attain. Man is a creature that is eternal. He has come to this world so that by the guidance of the prophets and the implementation of the programs set by the religion (of Islam), to secure his happiness in this world and the Hereafter; so that he could live a peaceful life in the next world eternally.

Therefore, the purpose of marriage should be searched for in this spiritual context. The aim of marriage for a religious person should be a means of avoiding evil deeds and purging one's soul of sins. It should be a means of acquiring nearness to the Almighty Allah. It is in this context that a suitable and good partner assumes an important role. When two believers, through marriage, form a family, their sexual relationship would benefit them in strengthening their mutual love and kindness, for such a couple, there would not exist any dangerous threats of sexual perversion, dangerous addictions or unlawful deeds. The Prophet (SA) of Islam and all of the Imams (AS) have laid great emphasis on the institution of marriage.

"The Prophet (SA) stated: 'Whoever gets married, has safeguarded half of his religion'."[\[5\]](#)

"Imam Sadiq (AS) stated: 'Two Rak'ats (units) of a married person's Salat (prayer) are better than seventy Rak'ats offered by a bachelor'."[\[6\]](#)

A faithful, pious, and harmonious partner plays a crucial role in having a respectable and honest life. Indeed having such a partner is an important factor when wanting to avoid evil deeds and enables the commitment of oneself in performing the obligatory acts of worship. A pious couple, not only would not meet with any obstacle in achieving religious goals, but would be a source of encouragement to each other .

Is it really possible for a faithful man of Allah to gloriously fight in His way, without the approval of his wife? Is it possible for any pious person to earn his living lawfully, observing all religious aspects, paying statutory religious alms to avoid extravagance, and to spend on charitable deeds without the consent of his wife?

A pious person would always invite his partner to goodness, just as a corrupt person would tempt his partner towards corruption. It is then reasonable that, in Islam men and women, who want to get married, are advised to regard the piety and good manners of their future partners, as essential conditions.

"The Prophet (SA) stated: 'If I were to bestow all the good of both worlds upon a Muslim person, I would endow him with a humble heart, a tongue which continuously utters his praises, a body patient enough to withstand all calamities; and I would give him a pious spouse who, when she sees him, becomes happy ,and protects his property and her own honour in his absence'."[\[7\]](#)

"One person went to the Prophet (SA) and said: 'I have a wife who always welcomes me when I come home, and escorts me to the door when I leave. When she finds me sad and unhappy, she then, by consoling me says: 'If you are thinking of sustenance, then do not despair, because Allah provides sustenance; and if you are thinking about the next life, then may Allah increase your intellect and efforts. Then the Prophet (SA) stated: ' Allah surely has functionaries and agents in this world and your wife is one of those. Such a woman would be rewarded half as much as a martyr'."[\[8\]](#)

"Imam Ali (AS) was thinking the same when he spoke of Hadrat Zahra (AS). He stated that she was the best help for worshipping the Almighty Allah. History tells us that the Prophet (SA), one day after the wedding of Imam Ali (AS) and Hadrat Zahra (AS), went to congratulate them in their house and know about their welfare. He asked Imam Ali (AS): 'How do you find your spouse?' The Imam replied: 'I found Zahra as the best help in worshipping the Almighty Allah.' The Prophet (SA) then asked the same of Zahra (AS), and she replied: 'He is the best husband'."[\[9\]](#)

Imam Ali (AS), in one sentence, introduced the best woman in Islam and expressed the main purpose of marriage.

REFERENCES

- [\[1\]](#) Wasa 'il al Shiah, vol 14, p 3.
- [\[2\]](#) *Ibid.*
- [\[3\]](#) *Ibid.*
- [\[4\]](#) *Ibid*, p 23.
- [\[5\]](#) *Ibid*, p 5.
- [\[6\]](#) *Ibid*, p 6.
- [\[7\]](#) *Ibid*, p 23.
- [\[8\]](#) *Ibid*, p 17.
- [\[9\]](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol 43, p 117.

LIVING WITH HUSBAND

The task of a wife is to maintain and take care of a husband. It is not an easy undertaking. Those women who are unaware of this feature of their role, may find difficulty in fulfilling the task. It is a job for the woman who is aware that the job requires a degree of sagacity, style, and ingenuity. For a woman to be a successful wife, she should win over her husband's heart and be a source of comfort to him. She should encourage him to do good deeds while dissuading him from bad ones. She should also provide adequate measures to maintain his health and well-being. The results of her efforts are directed towards making the man into a kind and respected husband who would be a proper guardian for his family, and a good father from whom the children would seek guidance and respect. Allah, the All-Knowing has endowed woman with extraordinary power. The prosperity and happiness as well as the misery of the family are in her hands.

A woman can turn the home into a lofty paradise or a burning hell. She can lead her husband to the peak of success or the dregs of misfortune. The woman with the qualities bestowed on her by Allah, who is aware of her role as a spouse, can elevate her husband to a respected man even if he had been the lowest of all men.

"One learned scholar wrote: 'Women possess a strange power in that they are able to acquire whatever they desire'. "[10]

In Islam, taking care of one's husband has an important position. It has been equated to the role of Jihad (holy war in the path of Allah). "Imam Ali (AS) stated: 'The *Jihad* of a woman is to take care of her husband well.' "[11]

Considering that *Jihad* is the struggle and holy war in the path of Allah including the struggle for advancement and honour of Islam, defending the Islamic territories and execution of social justice, it is one of the highest acts of worship. The value of fulfilling the duties of a proper spouse is also reflected upon when considering *Jihad*.

"The Prophet (SA) of Islam stated: ' Any woman who dies while her husband is pleased with her, enters Paradise'. "[12]

The Holy Prophet also stated: "If a woman does not perform her duty as a spouse, she has not done her duty to Allah." [13]

REFERENCES

[10] Dar Aghushe Khushakhfi, p 142.

[11] Bihar al-Anwar, vol 103, p 254.

[12] Mahajjat al-Bayda, vol 2, p 70.

[13] Mustadrak, vol 2, p 552

KINDNESS

Everyone is thirsty for friendship and kindness; They all like to be loved by others. The heart of a human being thrives on it. A person who is not loved by anyone regards himself as alone and deserted. Dear lady! Your husband is not any different. He is also in need of love and affection. Before his marriage the love and affection of his parents fulfilled this need, but now, he expects you to fulfill it. The man looks towards his spouse to find friendship and love, which is a requirement of all human beings. He struggles hard to earn a living and to comfort you. He shares with you all the hardships of life and as your true partner cares for your happiness even more than your parents. Therefore, express your appreciation to him and love him, he will love you. Love is a two-way relationship which unites the hearts.

A twenty-year old boy who had come to Tehran to study at the university, fell in love with a 39-year old widow who was his landlady. This was because the woman had fulfilled the empty place of his mother in his heart through her kindness. [14]

If love is mutual, the marital foundation becomes strong and the dangers of separation are averted. Do not proudly think that your husband fell in love with you at first sight, because such love is not lasting. A lasting love is through kindness and permanent affection in the form of a very close friendship.

If you love your husband and have a good friendship he will be happy and willing to strive and sacrifice himself for your well-being. A man who enjoys the love of his wife, rarely suffers from poor health or has emotional problems. If a man is deprived of a warm and friendly relationship with his spouse, he may become disheartened and may avoid his home. He may end up spending a great deal of time out of his home in search of friends and attention. He may say to himself: "Why should I work and support the people who do not like me. I might as well enjoy myself and try to find genuine friends."

A woman may sincerely love her husband, but does not show it or express it very often. It is not enough to establish the ties of friendship and take it for granted. Occasional expressions of statements such as "I love you," "I missed you," "I am happy to see you," help enormously in promoting a good relationship. When the husband is on a trip, the woman should write letters expressing that she missed him. If there is a telephone at

the man's office, the wife should phone him occasionally, but not in excess. She should praise him among friends and relatives when he is absent, and defend him if anyone is talking against him.

The Almighty Allah refers to this bond of love and affection of a husband and wife in the Qur'an: "And one of His signs is that He created mates for you from yourselves that you may find rest in them, and He put between you love and compassion; most surely there are signs in this for a people who reflect (30:21)."

"Imam Rida (AS) stated: 'Some women are blessings for their husbands who express their love and affection'." [15]

"The Holy Prophet (SA) stated: 'The best of you among women are those who possess love and affection'." [16]

"Imam Sadiq (AS) stated: 'When you love someone, let the person know'." [17]

REFERENCES

[14] Ittela'at, 20th Esfand, 1348 Solar Hijri*, no. 13140.

[15] Mustadrak, vol 2, p 532.

[16] Bihar al-Anwar, vol 103, p 235.

[17] *Ibid*, vol 74, p 181.

THE HUSBAND'S RESPECT

The desire for respect is an inherent one, but not everyone is willing to give it readily. Your husband is in contact with many people during the day while away from home. Some may be impolite and insulting him which eventually can upset the person. As his wife, he expects you to show respect and encouragement at home and thereby boost his trampled ego.

To honor and respect your husband does not belittle you, but it provides energy and inclination to struggle to make a better life. You should always greet him, and with your greeting, give him a feeling of veneration. Do not interrupt him when he is talking. Be courteous and polite when you are talking to him and do not shout at him. Let him enter first when both of you are going to a meeting. Praise him in front of others. Ask your children to respect him and reprimand them if they are discourteous towards him. Be respectful of him in front of guests and be attentive to his needs, as well as the guests. When he is knocking at the door you should try to open the door with a smile and a happy expression. This small act of happiness has such an effect that it refreshes the man's tired spirits. Some women may think that such behaviour is strange. Imagine greeting your husband as if he was a guest. This is not the correct attitude because the man has been struggling all the day for the well-being of his family and he deserves some consideration and respect when he returns home. That first greeting makes a big impression and what's good for a guest is good for the family members.

"The Holy Prophet (SA) stated: 'The duty of a woman is to answer the call at the door and welcome her husband'." [18]

"Imam Sadiq (AS) stated: 'A woman who respects her husband and does not harass him, will be fortunate and prosperous'." [19]

"The Holy Prophet (SA) stated: 'A wife is duty-bound to arrange for a basin and towel to wash her husband's hands'." [20]

Be careful not to humiliate him, do not talk to him harshly, do not abuse him, do not be inattentive to him, and do not call him by any obscene titles. If you offend him, he, in turn, will insult you. Eventually, the spirit of love and trust will erode. Consequently, you will have constant quarrels and arguments which may lead to a divorce. Even if you continue to live together, your lives will surely be filled with many turbulent moments. Feelings of antagonism and psychological disturbances may build up to the point that it becomes hazardous to the couple's life in that it may lead to crime. The following stories, illustrate some of these points:

"A twenty-two year old man, stabbed his 19-year old wife to death after he was abused by her. In the court he said: 'I was married to this woman a year ago. At the beginning my wife loved me very much. But it was not

long before she changed and started to humiliate me. She would use abusive language with me on every possible occasion and over the smallest issue, would make fun of me. Due to a squint in my left eye, she used to call me a "blind ass". One day she called me a "blind ass" and I became so furious that I stabbed her fifteen times with a knife'."[21]

"A seventy-one year old man who had killed his wife, explained: 'Suddenly her manners towards me changed and she started to ignore me. Once she called me "an intolerable man". I realized that she did not love me any more; I became suspicious of her and killed her with two blows of an axe'."[22]

REFERENCES

[18] Mustadrak, vol 3, p 551.

[19] Bihar al-Anwar, vol 103, p 253.

[20] Mustadrak, vol 3, p 551.

[21] Ittela'at, 14th Urdibahisht, 1351 Solar Hijri, no 13787.

[22] *Ibid*, 1st Azar, 1350 Solar Hijri, no 13652.

COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

There is not anyone who does not have problems and grievances with regard to daily life. Everyone likes to have a sympathetic person with whom he can confide and who will listen to his problems. But the point to remember is that "there is a time and place for everything". One should realize the proper time and occasion to complain. Some ignorant and selfish women do not realize that their husbands are very tired and nervous after a long day's work. Instead of waiting an hour or two for him to regain his spirits, they start attacking him with a barrage of complaints. For instance the wife may say:

"You have left me with these damned kids and rushed off. Ahmad has broken the glass in the door of the front room. Our daughters have been fighting. I am going crazy with the noise of the kids outside. Hasan does not study at all and he has secured poor marks. I have been working so hard today and I am exhausted. Nobody listens to my cries!

These kids don't help at all in the house-work. I wish I didn't have any children at all! By the way your sister was here today. I don't know what was wrong with her; she acted as if I had swallowed her father's inheritance. May God save me from your mother! She has been talking ill about me behind my back. I am fed up with all of them. Also, I cut my finger badly with a knife today.

I wish I'd not gone to Muhammad's wedding yesterday. You should have seen Rashid's wife! What an outfit! Allah should give me the same luck! Some men really love their wives and buy them beautiful things. They are real husbands. When Rashid entered, everybody respected him. It's true that people are only interested in what you're wearing. What has she got that I haven't? Why should she show off in front of me?! Oh yes, she is fortunate to have a husband who loves her, he isn't like you !

I can't stand this damned house any longer, looking after your and your children. So do what you like!"

This sort of attitude is incorrect. Women of this sort think that their husbands are going on a picnic or pleasure-ride every morning. Men confront hundreds of problems everyday. Dear lady! you do not know what your husband has gone through when he is at work. You do not know what rude and obnoxious people he has had to deal with all the day. So, when he comes home, you should not present all of your complaints at the same time. He should not feel guilty of being a man. Be fair and be considerate to him. If you, by grumbling and nagging, add to his worries and anguish, then he may either start a row or just leave the house and go to a cafe, cinema, or even walk around the streets.

Therefore, dear lady! for the sake of Allah, give up this habit of complaining at inopportune moments. Find a suitable time and then present him with your genuine problems, not by complaining, but in a consultative type of way. In this way, you do not create antagonistic feelings in him and the family bonds remain secure

"The Prophet (SA) of Islam stated: 'The prayers of a woman who teases her husband with her tongue, are not accepted (by Allah) even though she fasts everyday, gets up for the acts of worship every night, sets free a few slaves and donates her wealth in the way of Allah. A bad-tongue woman who hurts her husband in this way, is the first person who enters hell'." [23]

"The Holy Prophet (SA) also stated: 'The women of Paradise say to those women who abuse their husbands in this way: 'May Allah kill you. Do not misbehave with your husband. This man (the husband) is not yours, and you do not deserve him. Soon he will leave you and come towards us'." [24]

I do not know what such women want to achieve by their grumbling. If they want to attract their husband's attention or to show off, then surely they achieve the exact opposite and exasperate him. If they intend to distress him, to create for him psychological problems and to lead him towards fatal artificial addictions, then they are on the right track.

Dear lady! if you care about your husband and your family, then you should give up this improper and illogical attitude. Have you ever thought that your misconduct may lead towards breaking up your family life?

"One doctor testified in court: 'I have not yet seen my wife act like a proper housewife during all my married life. Our house is always in a mess. She is always shouting and abusing. I am fed up with her'. After paying her a lump sum money, he received divorce. He said joyfully: 'If she had wanted and had asked for all my wealth and even my medical degree, I would have given it to get rid of her sooner'." [25]

REFERENCES

[23] Bihar al-Anwar, vol 76, p 363.

[24] Mahajjat al-Bayda, vol 2, p 72.

[25] Ittela'at, 13th Dey, 1350 Solar Hijri, no 13689.

PLEASANT DISPOSITIONS

Anyone who is good-natured with a pleasant disposition would also face the hardships and problems of life in the same manner. These are the kinds of personality that people are attracted to and continually seek. The pleasant disposition and attitude of a person would be immune to psychological disorders since their outlook to life is to overcome their hardships in the best feasible manner.

"Imam Sadiq (AS) stated: 'No life is more agreeable than the one which is of a pleasant nature.'" [26]

But an ill-natured person would likewise find life unpleasant since the relationship of such people promote anxiety and tension. Such a person enjoys complaining and voicing one's dissonance with life. This type of attitude is avoided by most people whereby the person ends up with very few friends, These are then the conditions which are susceptible to various psychological problems, and other illnesses due to the anxiety and emptiness with which the person with a bad attitude views life.

"The Holy Prophet (SA) stated: 'A person with a bad disposition and attitude would be in permanent agony and suffering'." [27]

A good and pleasant attitude is essential between all people in general and between couples in particular since the couple must be together to form a joint life.

Dear lady! if you want to enjoy a pleasant life with your husband and children, make your attitude and disposition pleasant and agreeable. Be good-natured and not quarrelsome. You have the ability to turn your house into a lofty paradise or a burning hell. You can be an angel of mercy whereby your husband and children can find peace through you. Do you know what a beautiful impression you would leave on their souls with your smiling attitude and good language. The pleasant impression is fresh in their minds as they start off to school or work and helps them to make a good start of the day.

Therefore, if you care about the quality of your life and the relationship you have with your husband, do not be negative in nature. Be positive in your attitude and disposition since the best supportive pillar of security to marriage is a good set of ethics leading to a pleasant disposition.

Most instances of divorce are due to the incompatible nature of man and wife. The statistics on divorce conclusively indicate that the compatible attitude, moral values and disposition was non-existent in the couples. The main source of family rows and discord is due to the incompatible character of the couple's ethical principles and values. The following set of data is of interest:

"In the year 1968, 12,760 cases out of a total of 16,039 cases of marital complaints brought to court were based on incompatible moral foundations. In 1969, 11,246 cases out of a total of 16,058 cases, were based on the same reason. It is therefore evident that more than seventy per cent of family rows were due to this factor'."[\[28\]](#)

"A woman complained to the Council that her husband always ate his lunch and dinner outside. The husband then explained that the reason he ate outside was because his wife had absolutely no constructiveness in her and she was the worst of all the ill-disposed women in the world. The wife suddenly got up and started beating her husband in front of the judges'."[\[29\]](#)

This foolish woman thought that by complaining, abusing and beating, she could bring him back home. But she did not use the simple and intelligent method which was to be more considerate and to observe appropriate conduct.

"Another woman reported to the court that her husband has not been talking to her for 15 months and that he was paying for living expenses through his mother. The husband replied that he had enough of his wife's ill-disposed attitude which made him decide not to talk to her for 15 months'."[\[30\]](#)

Most of the family conflicts may be resolved with kindness, compassion and a pleasant disposition. If your husband is unkind, if he goes out for dinners alone, if he is abusive, wastes away all his wealth, speaks of divorce and separation or a number of reasons for family conflict, there is only one way to resolve them. The way is by being kind and good-natured. The results of exercising such behaviour are miraculous.

"Imam Sadiq (AS) stated: 'Allah Almighty will grant a well-disposed person a reward equivalent to the blessings of Jihad. He will endow many blessings onto him day and night'."[\[31\]](#)

"Imam Sadiq (AS) stated: 'Any woman who bothers her husband and distresses him is distant from the blessings of Allah and any woman who respects her husband, is obedient and does not cause him sorrow, is blessed and prosperous'."[\[32\]](#)

"There is a tradition reported that the Holy Prophet (SA) was informed of a good woman who fasted everyday and worshipped Allah every night, but she had an ill-disposed character and would hurt her neighbours with her sharp tongue. 'The Holy Prophet (SA) stated: 'There is no good in her and she is an inhabitant of hell'."[\[33\]](#)

REFERENCES

[\[26\]](#) Bihar al-Anwar vol 71, p 389.

[\[27\]](#) *Ibid*, vol 73, p 298.

[\[28\]](#) Ittela'at, 15th Azar, 1350 Solar Hijri.

[\[29\]](#) *Ibid*, 3rd Bahman, 1350 Solar Hijri.

[\[30\]](#) *Ibid*, 3rd Shahriwar, 1349 Solar Hijri.

[\[31\]](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol 71, p 377.

[\[32\]](#) *Ibid*, vol 103, p 253.

[\[33\]](#) *Ibid*, vol 103, p 253.

WRONG EXPECTATIONS

Dear lady! you are the mistress of your household. Be wise and understanding. Keep an account of your expenses. Budget your expenditures in a way that it is not detrimental to your wealth and honour. Do not compete with others and be envious of them. If you see a nice dress on a woman, or if you become interested in some furnishings that you have seen at a friend's or relative's house, do not compel your husband to purchase them which is beyond his financial means and would force him to borrow. Isn't it better to wait until

your budget is higher or there is some extra saving to make non-essential purchases?

It is mostly the ignorant and selfish women who succumb to extravagance and rivalry. These women force their husbands to be under debt and they become exhausted and disgusted in trying to satisfy the insatiable demands of their wives. Sometimes, the only solution to these problems for the men is to go for a divorce or even commit suicide.

The women who have not perceived the true purpose and meaning of marriage and instead they regard it in terms of bondage where the husband is acquired to fulfill their childish desires and material needs. They want a husband who will serve them like a slave and will not object to their way of spending. These women sometimes even go further. They make their husbands spend more than their means which may entail bankruptcy, murder, and other disastrous consequences.

Such women are a disgrace to other women. If her high expectations lead to divorce, the woman will be deprived of the love of her children, and will have to live a life of loneliness. For these women remarriage will not happen easily. Even if it does happen, it is not certain that the marriage will work out since most human beings do not like to be kept in unreasonable bondage and the new husband may not be able to meet their demands any better than the previous one.

Dear lady! instead of being covetous, try to be reasonable. Spend more time and effort for the well-being of your family and husband rather than trying to imitate everyone. If your husband spends lavishly, then stop him and curb his unnecessary expenses.

"In a tradition, the Holy Prophet (SA) stated: 'Any woman who is not compatible with her husband and persuades him to act beyond his capacity, then her deeds would not be accepted by Allah. She would taste the wrath of Allah on the Day of Resurrection'."[\[34\]](#)

In another Tradition, the Holy Prophet (SA) stated: "Any woman who is not compatible with her husband, is not content with what Allah has blessed them with, and treats her husband harshly by demanding him to give more than he is able, then her acts (or worship) are not acceptable by Allah and He will be angry with her'."[\[35\]](#)

"In other tradition, the Holy Prophet (SA) stated: After having faith in Allah, there is not any greater blessing than to have a compatible spouse'."[\[36\]](#)

REFERENCES

[\[34\]](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol 71, p 244.

[\[35\]](#) *Ibid*, vol 76. p 367.

[\[36\]](#) Mustadrak, vol 3, p 532.

BE A COMFORT FOR YOUR HUSBAND

The burdens of life weigh heavily upon the shoulders of men since they are responsible for maintaining and supporting their families. In fulfilling this responsibility, the man of the household must confront many problems and obstacles outside of the home. Some of these problems may be the pressures of work, the hassles of traffic and commuting from the office to home, concerns over economical and political issues of the day, empathy and concern for friends and colleagues, and the pressures of trying to improve the living conditions of his family. The amount of preoccupations and pressures upon a responsible man is enormous and multifaceted. It is no wonder that the average lifespan of a man is less than the woman.

In order for the human being to be able to cope with the burdens of life it is necessary to have someone to listen to and sympathize with him. Your husband is no exception. He may feel alone and in need of finding refuge and comfort amidst these pressures. It is natural that the man looks towards his wife and family as a source of comfort and relief. Therefore, anticipate his expectations and needs. Be cordial and warm when he first returns home after working and have refreshments or let him feel that you are at his disposal to care for his needs. Try not to overwhelm him with criticizing him the minute you see him. Let him rest and recover his strength before putting up the demands of the family's personal issues.

When your husband comes home, try to have a smile and a warm greeting for him. Attend to his physical needs of fatigue, hunger, and thirst. Then ask him about his problems. If he is not willing to talk, be a good listener and sympathize with him. Try to express your genuine concern and then help him realize that the problems are not as impossible and huge as he had thought. Give him encouragements of support to help him cope with the issues. You can say something like this: These problems are being faced by many people. With a strong will-power and patience, it is possible to overcome the difficulties as long as one does not let the problems get the better of you. These problems, as a matter of fact, are tests as well as builders of the true character of a person. Do not despair. You can solve them through determination and perseverance.

If you have some ideas on handling the problems, share them with your husband. If not, may be you can suggest a good friend who is more qualified.

Dear lady! at times of difficulty, your husband is in need of your attention and love. You should come to his aid and nurse him like a sympathetic psychiatrist and wife. What a psychiatrist could give the amount of care that you would give? Do not underestimate your ability to soothe and strengthen him. There is no one more devoted and concerned over your husband's well-being other than yourself. He would be able to draw strength from your devotions to him and cope with his problems which will relieve his emotional and mental pressures. Consequently, the mutual bond of respect and love would also be greater which can only lead towards strengthening your marital relationship.

"In a tradition, Imam Sadiq (AS) stated: 'There is nothing better in the world than a good wife. And a good wife is the one whose husband, becomes glad upon seeing her'."[\[37\]](#)

"In a tradition, Imam Rida (AS) stated: 'There are a group of women who raise many children. They are kind and sympathetic. They support their husbands in times of difficulty and in the affairs of this world and the next. These women do not commit any acts which would incur a loss upon their husbands nor multiply their difficulties.'"[\[38\]](#)

REFERENCES

[\[37\]](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol 103, p 217.

[\[38\]](#) Mustadrak, vol 2, p 534.

BE APPRECIATIVE

If a person is generous and charitable with the wealth that he has acquired from hard work, the appreciation and notice given in response to such acts will warm that person's inner feelings and give him a feeling of accomplishment. Acts of goodwill may then become second nature to the person whereby it becomes a habit to spend and share one's wealth for those in need. However, if the acts of goodwill are taken for granted and unappreciated, the person may lose the desire and drive to do good. It would be natural for a person to conclude that it was a waste to give away his hard earned money when it was unappreciated.

Gratitude and appreciation are admirable characteristics in a person and it is the secret by which one may attract charitable acts. Even Allah has mentioned that gratitude for His blessings are conditional on the continual perpetuation of his grace upon mankind:

"And when your Lord made it known: If you are grateful would certainly give to you more, and if you are ungrateful, My chastisement is fully severe"(14:7)

Dear madam! your husband is also human. Like everyone else, he enjoys being appreciated. He is willing to support his family and regards it as a moral and lawful obligation. When he is thanked and appreciated for doing his duty, those duties no longer seem to be a burden.

Whenever he buys home appliances or something like clothes and shoes for you and the children, be happy and thank him. Show your gratitude for the trivial things he does such as buying groceries, taking the family

on trips and gives you your allowance. By showing your appreciation, you will make your husband feel good and rewarded for the trouble he has taken. Be careful that you do not take his duties for granted and become indifferent towards his contributions to the family. He may become disheartened about the welfare of the family. He may prefer to spend his money elsewhere or on himself.

If a friend or relative presented you with a pair of stockings or a bunch of flowers, you would thank them repeatedly. So it is only natural and fair to show appreciation to your husband for his consideration and thoughtfulness. Do not think that you would be belittling yourself by demonstrating your appreciation. On the contrary, you would be loved and cared for more because you appreciate the efforts of your husband whereas snobbism and selfishness can only lead towards great misfortunes.

The following are some Traditions referring to the characteristics of gratitude:

"Imam Sadiq (AS) stated: 'The best women among your women are those who show appreciation when their husbands bring home something and are not discontented if nothing is brought home'."[\[39\]](#)

"Imam Sadiq (AS) also stated: ' Any woman who says to her husband that she has not seen any good things from him then she has fallen in her credibility and has voided her acts of worship'."[\[40\]](#)

"The Messenger (SA) of Allah stated: 'Whoever does not thank the people who help him is, in fact, not showing his gratitude to Allah for His Blessings'."[\[41\]](#)

REFERENCES

[\[39\]](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol 103, p 239.

[\[40\]](#) Shafi, vol 2, p 139.

[\[41\]](#) Wasa'il al Shiah, vol 11, p 542.

DO NOT LOOK FOR SHORTCOMINGS

Nobody is perfect. Some are too tall or too short, or too fat or too skinny, have a big nose or a small one, talk too much or are too silent, are bad-tempered or too easy-going, have a very dark complexion or a very fair complexion, or eat too much, or too less, and the list can continue. Most men and women have some of these shortcomings. It is the hope of every man and woman to find a spouse who is perfect but such hopes are unrealistic. It is unlikely to find a woman who regards her husband as perfect.

Those women who are in search of faults in their husbands will undoubtedly find them. They would find a trivial shortcoming and exaggerate it by dealing on the matter to the point that it becomes an unbearable impediment. This defect then replaces all the merits of the husband. They always compare their husbands with other men. They have established a so-called ideal man in their imaginations whose standards do not fit in their husbands. Therefore, they are always complaining about the shortcomings in their marriage. The women regard themselves as unfortunates and failures which gradually turn them into spiteful women.

What does such behaviour in a woman do to her husband? He may be a very patient person who can tolerate her rudeness but most likely he will become insulted and develop a grudge against her. This would likely lead towards mutual arguments and elaborations of the shortcomings in each other. They will both become contemptuous of each other and their life will turn into a series of rows and arguments. Thus, they will either live in misery together or go for a divorce. In either case, both will lose, especially when there is no guarantee that another marriage may prove otherwise.

It is a pity that some women are ignorant and obstinate in their ignorance. It is possible that they may shatter their family life over a trivial matter. The following are some illustrative cases of such women:

"A woman left her husband and went to her father's house because her husband had bad breath. She was not prepared to go back home until he corrected his problem. On the basis of the husband's complaint, the court reconciled the couple and the wife returned to him. When the couple went home, the wife could still smell his bad breath so she went into another room. The husband went crazy and killed her'."[\[42\]](#)

A female dentist divorced her husband because he was not on the same level as her; he had graduated three years after her'.^[43]

A woman applied for a divorce because her husband used to sit on the floor and eat with his fingers, did not shave everyday and did not know how to socialize with others'.^[44]

Of course all women are not like this. There are those who are intelligent, realistic, and aware enough that they do not foolishly jeopardize their marriage and happiness by exaggerating the shortcomings of their husbands.

Dear madam! your husband is a human being like you. He is not perfect, but he may have many merits. If you are interested in your marriage and your family then do not set out to find his weaknesses. Do not regard his small defects as important. Do not compare him with an ideal man whom you have established in your mind. There may be some faults with your husband which are not present in others. But you should remember that other men may have other defects which are non-existent in yours. Be satisfied with his merits. You will consequently see that his merits outweigh his faults. Besides why should you expect a perfect husband when you are imperfect yourself. If you are proud enough to think you are perfect, then ask others.

"The Prophet (SA) of Allah stated: 'There is nothing worse for human beings than to seek the faults of others, while ignoring their own flaws'.^[45]

Why should you exaggerate a trivial fault? Why should you shatter your life for the sake of something unimportant?

Be wise? Stop being frivolous! Ignore the faults and do not mention them in front of or behind your husband. Try to create a warm atmosphere in your family and enjoy the blessings of Allah. However, there may be flaws in your husband's character which you may be able to correct. If so, then you can succeed only by behaving considerately and with patience. You must not criticize him or start a row, but approach him in a friendly manner.

REFERENCES

^[42] Ittela'at, 7th Azar, 1350 Solar Hijri.

^[43] *Ibid*, 17th Bahman, 1350 Solar Hijri.

^[44] *Ibid*, 8th Esfand, 1350 Solar Hijri.

^[45] Bihar al-Anwar, vol 73, p 385.

DON'T LOOK AT ANYONE OTHER THAN YOUR HUSBAND

Dear lady! before your marriage you may have had other offers of matrimony. These offer may be from rich, educated, handsome men, etc whom you may have wished to marry. Such expectations were natural before your marriage. But now that you have chosen your partner and signed a sacred covenant with him to be together for the rest of your life, then forget the past altogether. You must put aside your past wishes and forget those past offers. Do not think of any men except your husband and find peace with him. If you do otherwise you will place yourself in a strained condition.

Now that you have agreed to live with your husband, why should you be constantly noticing other man? Why should you compare him with others? What do you achieve by looking at other men except putting yourself in a permanently miserable state and cause mental anguish for yourself?

"Imam Ali (AS) stated: 'Whoever leaves his eyes at liberty, will always suffer through his nerves, and will be trapped in a permanent state of envy'.^[46]

By looking at other men and comparing your husband with them, you will find a man who does not have your husband's faults. You might then think that man is perfect, because you are not aware of the deficiencies of such a man. You regard your marriage as a failure and this thought might lead to disastrous ends.

"Mrs..., an 18-year old woman who had run away from home was arrested by the police last night. In the police station the woman said that, after three years of marriage, she gradually felt that she did not love her

husband. She said: 'I m used to compare my husband's face with other men and I regretted my marriage with him'.^[47]

Dear madam! if you are interested in an everlasting marriage; if you do not want mental distress; and if you want to conduct a normal life, then stop being selfish and forget your vain hopes. Do not make compliments for other men. Do not think of any man other than your husband. Do not think to yourself:

"I wish I had married so and so;"

"I wish my husband looked like...;"

"I wish my husband's job was...;"

"I wish...," "I wish..." "I wish..."

Why should you imprison yourself with these thoughts? Why should you upset the foundations of your marriage? If any of those wishes had come true, how would you know that you would have been more satisfied? Are you sure that the wives of those so-called "faultless" men are satisfied with them?

Dear madam! if your husband suspects that you show interest in other men, he would be disheartened and would lose interest in you. You must not cut jokes with other men or keep company with them. Men are so sensitive that they cannot even tolerate their wives to show an interest in a picture of another man.

"The Holy Prophet (SA) stated: 'Any married woman who looks at other men, would be subject to the vehement wrath of Allah'.^[48]

REFERENCES

^[46] Bihar al-Anwar, vol 104, p 38.

^[47] Ittela'at, 3rd Esfand, 1350 Solar Hijri.

^[48] Bihar al-Anwar, vol 104, p 39.

ISLAMIC HIJAB

Men and women, although having many aspects in common, also possess unique characteristics. One such characteristic is that women are a delicate, beautiful, and likable beings. They are charming, attractive, and lovable; whereas men are charmed, attracted by and love women's qualities.

When a man marries a woman, he wishes all his wife's beauty and affection to be reserved for him. He wishes to be the only one who benefits from her charm, affection, coquettishness, beauty, sense of humour, etc and to strictly avoid men. Man is, by nature, very ardent and intolerant of another man either looking at his wife or having any kind of relationship with her. He would regard a close relationship between his wife and other men to be a violation of his lawful right. He expects his wife to observe Islamic Hijab (statutory Islamic dress for women) and by adapting herself to Islamic behaviour and ethics she cooperates in maintaining his lawful rights.

Any faithful and fervent man would have such a wish. A woman's social behaviour, which is based on Islamic ethics, would set her husband's mind at rest; he would then work enthusiastically to provide for his family and his affection for his wife would increase. Such a man would not be attracted to other women. On the contrary, a man whose wife is not concerned m with Islamic Hijab and displays her beauty to other men or socializes with them, would seriously become upset. He would regard his wife as responsible for trampling over his rights. Such a husband would always suffer from distress and pessimism and his love for his family may gradually fade away.

It is therefore in the interest of society and women that they should be dressed modestly and behave humbly; they should appear in public without any make-up and should abstain from showing off their beauty to others. Observing Hijab is an Islamic duty. The Almighty Allah says in the Holy Quran:

"And say to the believing women that they should cast down their looks and guard their private parts, and not display their ornaments except what appears thereof, and let them wear their head coverings and not display their ornaments except to their husbands or their fathers. or the father of their husbands, their sons. or the

sons of their husbands or their brothers or their brother's sons or their sisters' sons, or their women, or those whom their right hands possess, or male servants not having need (of women), or the children who have not attained knowledge of what is hidden of women; and let them not strike their feet so that what they hide of their ornaments may be known; and turn to Allah all of you, so that you may be successful (24:31)."

Islamic Hijab and its observance in society is beneficial to women in many aspects:

(1) They can protect both their social worth and inner values much better, and guard themselves against just being an object on display.

(2) They can prove both their faith and love for their husbands more effectively and thus help create and maintain a warm family atmosphere while preventing ill-feelings and family rows. In short, they can win their husband's hearts and establish themselves in their families.

(3) By observing Islamic Hijab, unlawful flirtation looks by such people as oglers would cease and help in lessening the amount of rows, strengthening the family roots, and as a result create an atmosphere of tranquility within its circle.

(4) Islamic Hijab of women would also help prevent young unmarried men, from deviating from the right path. Thus forestalling harm to the young men, which would also benefit the women of the society.

(5) If all women observed the regulation of Islamic Hijab, then all women could rest assured that their husbands, when not at home would not encounter a lewd woman who might draw his attention away from the family.

Islam is aware of woman's specific nature of creation and regards her as a very important base of society with responsibilities towards it. It demands her to make sacrifices to carry out her responsibility by observing Islamic Hijab, which in turn would forestall social corruption and deviation and go a long way in creating stability, security and glorifying her nation. But definitely the greatest reward is with the Almighty Allah for performing her divine duty.

Dear lady! if you are interested in the stability and peace of your family and your husband's continual trust in you; if you are concerned about the social rights of women; if you are interested in the youth's mental health and are worried about their deviation from moral values, if you want to take positive steps towards bringing to a halt the seduction of women by corrupt men; and if you are seeking Allah's satisfaction by being a faithful and sacrificing Muslim; then you should observe Islamic Hijab. You should not display your beauty and adornments to strangers, be it in the house with your close relations or at other social gatherings outside your own home. You must cover yourself before your brothers-in-law and their sons, sister-in-law's husbands, aunts' husbands, and cousins. Being not dressed as per Islamic Hijab before these people is a sin and may also cause great distress to your husband, even though he may never mention it.

A woman is not restricted to covering herself to the same extent before her father-in-law, her own brother, and her nephews, although it is better to observe a certain degree of Islamic Hijab before these people too. In other words women should not appear before these relatives of hers in the same way as she would make herself attractive for her husband. This is because most men dislike their wives to appear attractive by wearing attractive clothes and make up before other men; and of course it should not be forgotten that the tranquility of mind and the trust of a man in his wife is crucial to the survival and security of the whole family.

FORGIVE YOUR HUSBAND'S MISTAKES

Everyone, except those that Allah has declared as "Infallible" makes mistakes. When two people, who love together, and cooperate with each other, make mistakes, they must be forgiving. If they do not forgive each other, then their marriage will come to an end. Two business partners, two neighbours, two colleagues, two friends, and specifically, a husband and a wife need to be able to forgive each other. If the members of a family are unforgiving and pursue each other's mistakes, then either the family will separate or they will experience an unbearable life.

Dear madam! your husband probably makes mistakes. He may insult you, abuse you, tell lies, he might even hit you. Such acts might be committed by any man. If your husband, after making a mistake, regrets it or you

feel he is regretful himself for his misconduct, then forgive him and do not pursue the matter. If he is regretful but not prepared to express his apologies, then do not try to prove his mistake. Otherwise, he might feel humiliated and he may retaliate by picking out your mistakes and consequently start a major row. So it is better for you to remain silent until he condemns himself from his conscience and starts to feel remorse about it. He would then regard you as wise and devoted wife who is interested in her husband and family.

"The Prophet (SA) of Allah stated: 'A bad woman does not forgive her husband's mistake and does not accept his apology'."[\[49\]](#)

Is it not pitiful that a sacred marital covenant should be broken because a woman is not prepared to forgive some mistakes of her husband?

REFERENCES

[\[49\]](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol 103, p 235.

COPING WITH YOUR HUSBAND'S RELATIVES

One of the problems of family life is the one cause between the wife and her husband's relatives. Some women do not have a good relationship with their husband's mother, sisters, or brothers. On the one hand the wife may try to dominate her husband so that he would not be able to pay any attention even to his mother, or any other relatives and she may try to sow discord between them. On the other hand, her mother-in-law regards herself as the owner of her son and daughter-in-law. The mother tries hard to hold on to her son and is watchful that the new woman does not try to possess him fully. She may fabricate lies about her daughter-in-law or find fault in her. Such an attitude might be followed by many arguments and even occasional hostilities. The situation becomes even worse if they all live in the same house. Even though a row may occur between two women, the real anguish and distress remains with the man in the middle.

The husband is trapped in an argument where he cannot take sides. On the one hand is his wife who would like to have an independent life without any interference from outsiders. He naturally feels that he must support her and make her happy. But on the other hand, he thinks of his parents who have helped him with his life, education, and have spent their own lives in bringing him up. He feels that his parents expect him to help them in their times of need and that it would not be fair to abandon them. Besides, if he himself was in need of something, who else, other than his parents, would help him and his family. As a result, he realizes that his best and most trustworthy friends are his parents and relatives. So, the dilemma for a sensible man is either to choose the wife and abandon the parents or vice versa; but neither of these is possible.

Consequently, he has to cope with both sides and keep them satisfied which, itself, is a difficult task. The only possible way to ease the situation is that the woman should be loyal and wise. A man in this situation expects his wife to help solve the problem. If the wife respects her mother-in-law, seeks advice from her, and becomes obedient and friendly with her, then the mother-in-law will be her greatest supporter .

Is it not sad that one who can attract many people through kindness and good manners, should repulse them through stubbornness and selfishness? Do you not realize that in the ups and downs of life, one might need the help of others, and especially of relatives who would support you when everyone else deserts you? Is it not better to enjoy a good relationship with one's relatives through consideration and good behaviour? Is it really wise and fair to become friends with strangers while breaking away from your own relations?

Experience shows that when one needs the help of others, friends leave but the abandoned relatives come to help. This is because the family ties are natural and cannot be broken easily. There is a general proverb which says: "Even if one's flesh is eaten by relations, they would not throw away the bones!"

"Imam Ali (AS) stated: 'One is never able to do without his relatives, even though he may possess wealth and children'."[\[50\]](#)

One would need the respect and kindness of one's relatives. It is they who would support one physically and mentally. Relatives always come to the rescue. In times of need they could come to one's assistance faster than others. Whoever disowns his relatives will lose many helping hands.

Dear madam! for the sake of your husband and for the sake of your own comfort as well as to find many good friends and supporters, put up with your husband's relatives. Do not be selfish and ignorant; be wise and do not cause your husband any distress. Be a good and devoted wife in order to be accepted by both Allah and the people.

REFERENCES

[50] Bihar al-Anwar, vol 74, p 101.

COPING WITH YOUR HUSBAND'S JOB

Everyone has a job and jobs are different. For example, a driver who is mostly on the road and is unable to come home every night; a policeman who may have to stay out some nights; a medical doctor who has little time to spend with his family; a lecturer or a scientist who reads a great deal at nights; a mechanic whose clothes are dirty and have smell of oil; a factory worker who works at night. Therefore, there are rarely jobs which are entirely convenient and do not entail any discomfort of the family. There is not any other way of earning an honest living than working. It is necessary for the men to put up with the difficulties of their jobs. However, there is another problem which is the complaints of the family.

Women usually like their men to be nearby and prefer them to be home when it becomes dark. Women want their husbands to have a decent job with a high salary. They like to have enough time to go out in the evenings. But unfortunately, the jobs of most men do not live up to their wives' expectations, and this, for some families, is a source of rows and arguments.

A driver who has been on the road for a few nights, who has not had a decent sleep and has not been eating regularly, enters his house to rest and find peace and comfort with his family. Then his wife, without sparing a moment, starts to moan and groan: "What is this life? Why do you leave me with these kids and where have you been? I have to do all the work myself because you are not here to help. I am fed up with these naughty children. As a matter of fact driving is not a good job. You should either change your job or settle with me. I can't live like this any longer!" A poor driver who has such a wife cannot be expected to perform well on his job and may endanger his life; and the lives of those whom he transports. A doctor who, from morning to night, visits tens of patients cannot cope with the grumbling of his wife. Then how could he continue to practise medicine? A worker who works during the night shifts cannot enthusiastically pursue his job if his wife is a shrewish woman. How can a scientist be successful in his field of research if his wife is constantly nagging him? These are the tests which distinguish the wise women from the ignorant ones.

Dear madam! we cannot make the world according to our wishes, but we can adapt ourselves to the existing situation. Your husband needs to have a job to earn his family's living. His job has certain conditions which you must adapt to. You must program your family life according to his job. Why do you grumble and find fault with his job? Welcome him home with a happy face and be kind to him. Be wise and cope with his job.

If your husband is a driver who is mostly on the road, then realize that he is trying to bring money home for your sake and the children's. There is nothing wrong with his job. He is a part of society and is serving it the best way he can. Would it have been better if he was a lazy person or if he was engaged in an irreligious job? So, there is nothing wrong with him. The fault lies with you, expecting him to be at home every night and not being able or not wanting to adapt yourself to the present conditions.

Is it not wise to get used to the existing situation and live more comfortably? Would you not rather welcome him with a smiling face and persuade him to carry on in his job with a warm "Good-bye" when he leaves home for work? If you act kindly, his interest in his family would increase and he could work harder. He would not isolate himself from you; he would come home as early as possible; he would not have accidents and he would remain healthy in his morals.

If your husband is a night-shift worker, he is missing his night's good sleep in order to meet the expenses of his family. Try to get used to it and do not express your dissatisfaction. If you get bored, then you can do

