



Marital Life: Importance and Issues

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Allah and His representatives have given us the best rules for a great marital life. They have explained every minute detail. When we do not observe these rights, do not follow the rules or cross our limits, life turns boring and marital life falls prey to differences and it will lead to all that is happening these days. Only if we would have truly act upon the Islamic teachings, behaved well with each other for the satisfaction of Allah and His Messenger (S) will we be able to have a good marriage and a good society.

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Marital Life: Importance and Issues

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ وَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ يَا وَلِيَّ الْعَصْرِ (عج) أَذْرِكُنَا

Marital life is an innate need of every human being. Allah, the Almighty, has created a suitor for everyone. The Divine system allows human beings to find their partners themselves and spend their lives fulfilling the necessities of life. Allah, the Most High, has granted man superiority over all other creatures. Accordingly, the laws and issues of the married life of man are different from all other creatures.

Allah has greatly emphasized on marriage in the life of an individual. Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) has considered marriage among those traditions (sunnah) that “one who turns away from it is not a part of his nation”. Marriage has been regarded as “protection of half of faith” and “the prayers of a married person carry seventy times more reward”.

Nevertheless, marriage is an essential and necessary aspect of a person’s life without which, life is not just incomplete but also disturbed and stressed. Marriage has been regarded as a cause of peace, tranquility, love, affection, proximity to Allah and forgiveness of sins. Living together despite different natures and customs has been considered as striving (Jehaad). Glad tidings of Paradise have been given for living a successful life. Caring for the husband has been regarded as Jehaad, nurturing children as an excellent worship, being obedient as a great fortune and leading a married life while bearing hardships and calamities has been considered as a medium of raise in grades.

Islam dislikes disputes, differences, quarrels and skirmishes. Among all things which are permissible (Mubah), divorce is the most detestable.

Despite all these admonishments, emphases and encouragements, conjugal life is a big issue these days. Previously, marriage was seen as bliss. Nowadays, it is completely converse. Reports of disputes are being heard from everywhere be it cities or villages, the issues are common everywhere. These issues are prevalent, in no less numbers, even in educated and financially sound households.

These marriage issues are more dangerous than a cancerous virus. A cancer virus affects only an individual but these issues impact two families and even the children and future generations. These issues affect even religion and faith because when these differences take the shape of complaints then things are not just restricted to narrating of facts but they result into an endless series of allegations and accusations and families are involved in sins. When sins gain a stronghold, divine blessings and bounties decrease. As a result, the differences continue to increase.

Nowadays, married life has become a victim of differences. These differences start cropping up only a few days after marriage. Another peculiarity about couples these days is that instead of resolving matters, both parties want a quick divorce. Something which Allah despises has become the first choice of people. What is the reason for this destruction? Simply sighing over issues or discussing them with someone else is not the solution. People tend to only discuss these issues in public but seldom think about resolving these disputes.

Let us try to find its causes and influencing factors by pleading in the sacred presence of Hazrat Vali-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) for his special attention and then try to look for its cure and solution. Every problem has a solution and every illness has a cure.

1. Investigation and Analysis

One of the reasons for differences is that the two parties do not investigate or inquire enough about each other before marriage. Discussions are limited to education, post, occupation, income, house and good looks. How well educated are the boy or the girl? How do they look? What is the occupation of the parents? How big is their house? At the most, the family history and lineage are enquired about. None of these are a guarantee for a successful life. The fundamental aspects which will ensure peace and tranquility in life are the morals and nature of the boy and girl and their families, and the manner in which they talk.

These days, marriages are being called off more on account of morals and behavior than money. The fact that true morals and conduct can be known only by staying together is undeniable but we can definitely get a good indication of the true character through the neighborhood and surroundings. The conduct and character of the family can definitely be known by interacting with people who know them. The environment at home does leave an impact on the children. Hence, it is important to investigate thoroughly before agreeing to the marriage.

The Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) said:

إِذَا هَمَمْتَ بِأَمْرٍ فَتَدَبَّرْ عَاقِبَتَهُ فَإِنْ كَانَ خَيْرًا فَأَسْرِعْ إِلَيْهِ وَإِنْ كَانَ شَرًّا فَانْتَبِهْ عَنْهُ

“When you intend to do anything, then ponder over its end result. If it (the end) is good then hasten towards it and if it is evil then stay away from it.”¹

Marriage means laying the foundation of a blessed family and hence the foundation needs to be strong. Especially those marriages which are being fixed via the internet require more investigation.

Youth, when they are impressed with someone, they accept each other so unconditionally that they are unwilling to accept any suggestions in this regard. It is a request to those youth to never underestimate the suggestions of their parents. Their experienced vision is capable of looking at things which young eyes cannot comprehend.

Marriage is a lifelong commitment. Hence, it needs to be carefully thought out.

2. Lack of Training

If a youth wants to drive a car then it is important for him to be completely trained on it. He can drive a car only after he has learnt it completely.

In older days, people coexisted in joint families. Grandparents, uncles and aunts all lived together. People with different natures lived in the same house. The elders would keep an eye on the children and used to train them. They would instruct them of the ups and downs, the culture of the house itself and would train them how to co-exist with people of different natures. Apart from this, girls did not receive higher education. They were seldom married immediately after their primary education or during its course. So, there was a gap of few years between completion of their education and marriage. During this period girls got an opportunity stay in joint families and practically learn the house-keeping. They learnt to cook and stitch clothes and all such things were greatly emphasized upon. The effect of this was that a girl would step into her in-laws house with experience by her side. She knew how to look after her husband as well as co-exist with people of different natures. She knew how to maintain relations. Consequentially, most marriages used to be successful.

Joint families have disappeared today. Large houses have transformed into 2-bedroom flats. There are no elders in the house. Grandparents, uncles and aunts live separate while children live separately with their parents. Hence, the training which was imparted to live with people of different natures no longer exists. The practical lessons of patience and forbearance have vanished. On the other hand, these days, girls are either married during the course of their education or are engaged. The modern education system neither has any discussion on house-keeping nor on morals and etiquette. There is no chance of learning house-keeping and looking after the husband after completing education. The result is that the vehicle of life is driven without appropriate training. It is similar to a youth driving a brand new car from the showroom without knowing how to drive. It is obvious that the consequence of this would be an accident. This accident could be major or minor. Hence, if a youth wants to drive a car on the road then along with the car being good, knowledge of driving is also a must.

Therefore, today, there is a strong need for a training course before marriage which educates on the various aspects of married life so that the vehicle of life does not meet with any accident.

3. Expectations

Before marriage, the boy and girl as well as their parents have such high expectations and pin such high hopes on each other that it hurts when expectations are not met. Questions begin to arise in each other's minds. The hearts start speaking out. Complaints start flooding in and both sides consider their grievances to be valid, which worsens the situation and spoils relations as well. In such a situation, relatives of both sides especially parents aggravate it even further; the boy's mother just can't stop lauding her son. A complaint which could have been resolved merely by a clarification, now gains strength and then one complaint gives rise to another leading to ruining of relations.

Each one feels that the other person didn't fulfill my rights and didn't submit to my wishes. Only if we thought how well have we fulfilled the rights of others and what are the rights of other people over us. On the Day of Judgment, we shall not be questioned as to how well others have fulfilled our rights. Rather we shall be asked how well have we fulfilled the rights of others upon us and what rights do others have over us. We shall not be questioned as to why did others not accept our apology and didn't forgive us? Rather we shall be asked why did we not accept apology from others and why did we not forgive them even after they sought forgiveness from us? If you are so hard-hearted that you are not ready to forgive each other despite being asked for pardon, then how can you seek forgiveness in front of Allah for your major sins?

Allah, the Almighty, says in the Holy Quran that

'if you are grateful then I shall certainly increase for you.'²

Being grateful to someone encourages that person, increases affection, values good actions and a person wants to continue performing good actions in future; rather it inspires to do better. If a couple thank each other for their good actions, it will increase the love in their hearts. A wife once said: when anything good happens in the house e.g. good food is cooked or his clothes are ironed, then he is thankful. Similarly, if he brings anything for the house, we thank him. Upon hearing this, another lady who was sitting there remarked: My husband has never thanked me irrespective of whatever I do.

No such vaccination has been invented to increase love in the hearts. There has not been any medicine called "Love of the Hearts" has been devised that eating it would result in development of love in the hearts. Love is developed through goodness and serving each other, by thanking and being grateful to the good deeds and service done to each other.

4. Marriage between equals

When we talk about service, often such things are heard: our relationship is that of equals, we are partners of each other i.e. we are both equal to each other. Then why should we serve one another? If it is a marriage between equals then why should we serve our husbands? Why should we be grateful?

These are effects of western culture. Marriage is a sacred and a lifelong relationship. Peace and tranquility in life are dependent on it. Survival of this relationship is a great fortune. The issue is not with serving each other. It is about keeping the relationship alive. A person said that if my life is affected so is hers. The question is what will we gain if someone else's life is impacted? Will we be better off if the other person is worse off? If relations sour, will it impact both or only one? If people ponder over the fact that matters can be resolved merely by expressing gratefulness and some regret, then there is no point losing sleep over something which can be dealt with kind words. It is nothing but foolishness, to worsen matters due to our 'ego' which can be resolved easily otherwise.

5. Television and Internet

It is fact that the west is far advanced in science and technology than us. But it does not mean that it is also better than us in morals and etiquette, religion and faith. Various things which are portrayed through the medium of television, internet, Facebook, etc. and the kinds of films which are shown have impacted our marital life immensely. The existence of traditional weddings is far less in the west. There are more of friendly relations. They are more like two partners of a firm. The partnership continues till the time both are deriving benefit from it, otherwise they call it quits. Marital life for them means staying together either until they like each other, or else they part ways and look for someone else.

The situation in India is unlike this. Here, religion and faith exist and so do morals and etiquette. Marriage is a sacrosanct relationship, worship, proximity to God, protection of religion and faith. Therefore, imitating the West in these matters is nothing but self-destruction. Apart from this, the mutual discord and differences shown through television programs, and the people responsible for them who get heavily paid for doing so have no connection with real life. The dialogues used are completely scripted and are alien to reality. All those stories are false and there is no truth in them. But unfortunately man is deceived by the apparent. He considers it to be true and tries to implement the same in his life.

Nevertheless, programs on television and internet which destroy morals and serials ruining religion and faith have negatively affected the lives of youth. Intellect and wisdom demand that we should refrain from such programs. We should not let our lives be impacted by false stories.

6. Worldly Attractions

One of the peculiarities of this world is that all that glitters seems gold. Advertisements which appear in television and newspapers glorify things to such an extent that it seems life is incomplete without them. We feel our problems would be solved if we have a particular thing but procuring it is never easy. The more attractive it seems in the advertisement, the tougher it is to obtain it.

Further, if that thing is not obtained, people begin to speak ill. A polite conversation gets converted to taunting and the situation starts getting worse. Interestingly, if that thing is obtained, after a few days a new demand crops up whether it is clothes, jewelry or anything else. Its importance is also lost after some days. Greed is a calamity which has no end. If the couple takes steps according to their income and necessities, the money saved shall benefit both. Bitterness of relationships can also be reduced through contentment.

7. Ignorance from the Disadvantages of Divorce

Anger is considered to be a kind of insanity. A person loses the ability to think and reflect while he is in a state of anger. He does not pay heed to the other person and by the time he is able to comprehend, it's too late. If he carefully thinks through its disadvantages and considers all perspectives, then he can remain safe from destruction, devastation, humiliation and regret. Some of the disadvantages are as follows:

a. Effect on Families

Just as marriage brings together not just two individuals but two families, similarly divorce also impacts not just the couple but also their families. Family relations are spoiled and friendship turns into enmity.

b. Effect on Children

Children are the most invaluable gifts from Allah. Their upbringing is the parents' responsibility. Both parents are important for a child. When parents part ways after a divorce, the children are either deprived of a father's compassion or a mother's love and affection. Their education, health, morals and etiquette, everything is affected. It affects their future as well. If children remain with their father, then although their expenses are taken care of but when the father is out for his work or business then who will look after them especially girls. A father's innate nature allows him to be patient only up to a certain extent. If they stay with their mother, then along with expenses they will be devoid of a guide. A mother can only look after them in the house, not beyond that. Children, who are the greatest bounty in this world, will be affected due to mutual differences. Sacrificing for something which is valuable is a sign of humanity.

c. Effect on Spirituality

The lives of both husband and wife are affected due to divorce. Sometimes the effect results in demoralization. Not a single person seems reliable and trustworthy. Everyone appears doubtful. A person becomes irritable.

d. Second marriage becomes difficult

Sometimes such people become so pessimistic that they are never prepared to remarry whereas marriage is a necessity of life. The need for a house does not cease to exist if the existing house collapses. Second marriage becomes difficult. Families are extremely cautious. Everything is questioned.

e. Dissatisfaction of Allah and the Messenger (s.a.w.a.)

Although Allah and His Messenger (s.a.w.a.) have permitted divorce under some conditions but in their view, it is the most hated and annoying among all those things which are permissible. Hazrat Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ يُحِبُّ الْبَيْتَ الَّذِي فِيهِ الْعُرْسُ وَ يُبْغِضُ الْبَيْتَ الَّذِي فِيهِ الطَّلَاقُ وَ مَا مِنْ شَيْءٍ أَبْغَضَ إِلَى اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ مِنَ الطَّلَاقِ.

“Allah, Mighty and Majestic be He, loves the house in which there is marriage and hates the house in which there is divorce. There is nothing more disliked near Allah, Mighty and Majestic be He, than divorce.”³

Hazrat Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) has narrated from Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.):

تَزَوُّجُوا وَلَا تُطَلِّقُوا فَإِنَّا طَلَّاقُ يَهْتَزُّ مِنْهُ الْعَرْشُ

“Marry but do not divorce for surely divorce makes the Arsh (Divine throne) tremble.”⁴

Islam has permitted divorce but only on the condition that it becomes absolutely impossible to stay together. Simply divorcing because of personal ego or that of the parents or due to social status or due to love for someone else, makes the Arsh tremble and its result shall not be favorable in Qiyamat.

8. Interference of Parents

One of the major reasons for issues which are observed in daily life and the relationship between the boy and the girl being spoilt is interference of parents, especially mother or some other elder member of the family.

It should be firmly borne in mind that obedience to parents is obligatory. It is necessary to treat them kindly. However, this obedience is not limitless but confined. After marriage, obedience of the husband is obligatory for a girl and not of her parents. It is very well known to all that a girl can neither step out of her house nor invite anyone as a guest without the permission of her husband. The husband, though, does not require the permission of his wife to go out of the house. But obedience of parents just to offend the wife or to torture her is not necessary. If the parents force their son to divorce his wife and threaten to disown him in case he fails to do so, even then their obedience is not obligatory and not obeying them in such a situation shall not be considered as their disobedience.

After marriage, without the permission of the husband, if a girl is forced by her parents to stay with them instead of her husband, then this is incorrect as per Islamic Shariah.

There are many incidents where girls want to stay with their husbands but their parents do not permit. In such a situation, obeying parents is not necessary rather it is obligatory to stay with the husband. According to traditions, till the time a woman is outside her house without the permission of her husband, she will be cursed by angels. Blessings and peace cannot descend at a place which is cursed.

Post marriage, it is the responsibility of the parents especially mother, to not encourage her daughter's complaints. Rather she should advise her daughter to be patient and forbearing and teaching her ways to try and win her husband's love by serving him. She should not advocate on her behalf by exaggerating her daughter's complaints in front of others.

Nowadays parents, especially mother, become advocates of their children, blow things out of proportion, consider their children as perfect and try to prove the other person as mistaken and oppressive. The situation worsens, misconceptions are converted to allegations and accusations and matters get out of control. Such things which don't even exist are spoken about each other. In such a situation, how can someone express regret for

something he/she has not done at all. If parents refrain from interfering in the married life of their children, let them live with each other, understand and adjust with each other and allow them to settle things between themselves then things will be under control.

Here, it is the responsibility of the couple to respect and honor each other, trust each other, not let things go outside the privacy of the house and not encourage those who are inquisitive about it by not divulging anything to them. It is a humble request to parents that if they wish to see a blissful life of their children then refrain from undue interference in their marital issues, encourage them to face the difficulties and calamities, don't discourage them.

9. Short temperedness

The world today is such that people are extremely short tempered, get angry very quickly and are uncontrollable. This short temper plays a vital role in today's marital life. A spark will result in a fire and there is no smoke without fire. The current system of education and training is such that levels of patience and forbearance are reducing by the day. Anger seems to increase every moment. The effect of this anger upon others is of secondary importance while man himself is deeply impacted by it. His status and position is tainted and domestic life is devastated.

Anger is a part of human nature and a portion of his innate nature as well. Without anger there wouldn't be any self-esteem and courage. But making best use of one's anger is the knack of a person. Experts say that when we are angry, we should not let out our anger immediately but delay it by 5 minutes. After 5 minutes, we are free to decide whether we need to express our anger or be patient. We will see the fruits of this approach over time. Now read this incident carefully. This is an incident of a short tempered wife and her husband.

"Since the past 3-4 years, there has been a steady increase in my anger daily. My mental condition is going from bad to worse. I'm beset by illness and disease. I've consulted many doctors including psychologists but to no avail. Getting angry with children on petty issues and quarreling with my husband has become routine. When the anger subsides, I pity myself, there is a feeling of remorse and then I turn affectionate towards my dear children.

My mother keeps telling me to not be so short tempered, I should be respectful to my husband and honor him, treat my children with mercy because such anger will not benefit anyone. There will be chaos in the house and it will spoil the children. But I would not be affected by anything. I always wanted to control my anger but was never successful. This is what happened one day:

There was a quarrel between me and my husband over a petty issue. He was just telling me that we should visit his grandmother but I refused to go. Things got so bad that I flung a slipper at my child. Although, it missed him but it broke the window and hit a person walking on the street. I can't explain the embarrassment thereafter.

Even my husband is by no means any better. When he sits with the children for their homework, he gets extremely violent and beats them up. If I try to interrupt, then he scolds me off.

Such was our routine. Every day in the house was a hazard and finally, we were left with nothing else but embarrassment. But it was all of no use. Even the children were fed up of this daily humdrum.

Coincidentally, one day there was a program on 'How to control one's anger?' They said:

"A person should try and control his anger. The bravest person is he who can control his anger. One who protects others from his anger, Allah shall protect him from His wrath and anger on the Day of Qiyamat. The woman of the house should never get angry. She should safeguard her children and her husband from her anger. I request you that next time when you get angry, just try and control your anger for 5 minutes. Believe me! You will

learn to control your anger by practicing only a few times. Just start right away.”

This had such a deep impact over me that it is inexpressible. I could recollect each and every thing of the past and wept continuously for a long time by remembering how I had wronged my children and my husband. I acted upon that advice with all seriousness. My tension has reduced and the atmosphere at home has improved. Now there is no headache or illness nor any need for a doctor, treatment or medicines. Now there is love, affection, honor and respect among everyone in the house. The anger which made my house a living hell, control over it has now transformed that same house into paradise. Now I'm in no need to visit any doctor or medicines, the atmosphere in the house is peaceful and everyone is happy.

Notes

1. Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 71, p. 342, H. 15
2. Surah Ibrahim (14): 7
3. Al-Kaafi, vol. 6, p. 54, H. 3
4. Awaali al-La'ali, vol. 2, p. 139, H. 387

Can these difficulties be resolved?

The aforementioned few points were those which impact the marital life of this generation. Bearing in mind that every pain has a cure and water quenches thirst, a question is raised as to what is the solution to such marital problems? These problems can be resolved in two ways:

1. Non-Islamic way
2. Islamic way

Both ways have been briefly explained further.

1. Non-Islamic Way

a. Magic

Some people bank on magic or filthy practices, approach various Babas and waste not just their time and money but their faith and beliefs as well.

Hazrat Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) has narrated on the authority of his grandfather Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.):

“Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said in reply to a question by a lady who asked him (s.a.w.a.) that my husband is cruel towards me. I have resorted to magic to woo him and win him over. Is this right?

Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) replied: Woe be unto you! You have disturbed the seas and earth. The greatest angels of Allah and the angels of the heavens and the earth are cursing you.

On hearing this, the lady started fasting, praying, chopped off her hair and wore coarse clothes (so that Allah would forgive her).

When the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was informed of this he said: Allah will not forgive her by all this.”¹

Such things are quite common these days. People believe in black magic, get influenced by the various advertisements which are displayed, believe in such things instead of Allah and His Messenger, keep running after it forever and make matters worse. Islam has strictly forbidden such magic. If magic could resolve problems, then there wouldn't exit so many differences and households wouldn't have been destroyed. Hence, such things should be strictly refrained from.

b. Restrictions

Some people are under a common misconception that being strict in the house would resolve issues. This is just a presumption and is far away from reality. Apart from this Islam has not permitted use of force and being oppressive.

When Allah sent Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) to a tyrant, oppressive person like Firaun, who claimed Godhood, He ordered,

فَقُولْ لَهُ قَوْلًا لَيِّنًا

Then (you and Haroon) speak to him a gentle word.

One of the characteristics of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) has been described as

وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ

and had you been rough, hard hearted, they would certainly have dispersed from around you.

When Islam emphasis on a soft behavior with disbelievers, polytheists, claimants of Godhood, then how can it permit strictness in domestic matters. Based on this –

- i. Islam has not permitted injustice and oppression
- ii. We will be answerable for our injustice and oppression on the Day of Qiyamat
- iii. Relationships will get ruined further
- iv. Fear halts the road to progress
- v. Spoils the atmosphere at home

- vi. It will result in the upbringing of children
- vii. Allah and the Prophet will be displeased
- viii. Blessings and bounties will reduce

c. Complaints and Legal Action

Some people start complaining, sometimes to relatives or sometimes they even reach the police. Matters reach the court. Things are not resolved by this. On the contrary they get worse. Those who benefit are police and lawyers and we are left with loss of time, money and self-esteem.

Apart from this, it also leads to a lot of forbidden acts such as lying, taking false oath, giving false testimony, slandering, accusations and other prohibited acts. Because as per the Indian Judicial System, a case is not considered to be strong until one truth is accompanied by a number of lies, accusations, false allegations and all these forbidden acts are to be repeatedly performed.

Islam has given an oppressed person the right to complain but has not permitted lies, accusations and false charges. Rarely and seldom are such incidents heard that the situation improves after taking the matter to the court. Rather, even a faint ray of hope dwindles away. Nevertheless, even if the court rules in favor of a divorce, then too the divorce cannot be considered valid because it does not fulfill the conditions for divorce. Marital relations are not cut-off due on account of such divorces.

2. Islamic Way

a. Dua and Tawassul

No one is more merciful upon the creatures than Allah. Allah and His Messenger never wish to see a family being destroyed. A lady came into the presence of Hazrat Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) and said: O son of the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.)! My husband does not like me. What should I do?

Imam (a.s.) replied:

عَلَيْكَ بِصَلَاةِ اللَّيْلِ

Go and recite Salat al-Layl (night prayers)

After a few days later that lady came to Imam (a.s.) and said: O son of the Messenger of Allah! I'm extremely grateful to you. Now my husband holds me dear. He does not love anyone other than me.

Imam (a.s.) said:

“May Allah have mercy on a woman who gets up in the morning and wakes her husband up as well and may Allah have mercy on a man who gets up in the morning and wakes his wife up as well (for Salat al-Layl).”²

Allah converts the hearts. Indeed, Allah has more authority over us than what we have upon ourselves. Praying to Allah results in changing of the hearts, hatred gets converted to love and enmity transforms into friendship.

b. Imagine ourselves in that position

Ameerul Momineen Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) willed to his son:

My dear son, listen to my will carefully. Make yourself as a criterion between you and others. Wish for others what you would want for yourself. Dislike those things for others what you would dislike for yourself. Do not oppress anyone just as you do not like being oppressed. Behave with others in a manner that you would want others to behave with you.³

Hazrat Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) said:

مَكْتُوبٌ فِي التَّوْرَةِ ابْنَ آدَمَ كُنْ كَيْفَ شِئْتَ كَمَا تَدِينُ تُدَانُ

It is written in the Torah ‘O son of Adam! Be the way you want to. You will be treated in the same way as you treat (others)’.⁴

I'm unable to get a good sleep since the past few days. I feel uncomfortable, don't feel hungry. I'm taking local medicines but it doesn't seem to have any effect. All of it is due to my mother-in-law. She is very ill-behaved. Her expectations are too high. Can't figure out what she wants from me. Even after doing everything she is always upset with me and keeps taunting me. When I'm not at home she opens my cupboard and starts searching for something. She scatters everything that I would have arranged. Something or the other goes on all the time. Life is a living hell.

I can't tolerate it any more. There is a limit to patience. I've already told my husband to choose either of us. I can't stay with his mother. He should look for a separate house or send his mother to his brother's place. After all even his brother has some rights. Please, have mercy on me. I just can't bear this anymore.

One day, when my 12 year old son came back from school, he puts his arms around me and said, ‘Dear mother. When I grow up I will not marry.’ I

asked why. He said, ‘because one day even I’ll have to ask you to leave this house. If my wife does not agree to stay with you then what will I do? It is quite possible that she might say either me or your mother. What will I do that day?’

I was taken aback and went breathless for a moment. I was lost in my thoughts for some time. I decided to be brave and portray the qualities of a good daughter-in-law. I changed myself.

Now I don’t allow my mother-in-law to work in the kitchen. In fact, I eat with her, bear with her, serve her, I also advise my husband to look after her and tell him that whenever he’s back home, he should first go to his mother’s room, meet her and sit beside her.

Within a few weeks of this, the atmosphere at my place changed and I became tension-free. I got rid of the medicines, life was enjoyable and at peace. All the past issues were resolved. One day my mother-in-law told me in a loving tone, ‘My dear. I used to previously consider you as my enemy but now I realize that I was mistaken.’

If we wish to see how our children will treat us in our old age, we need to see how we behave with our in-laws today. Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said: Be good to your parents so that your children are good to you.

c. Mutual Discussion

It is a fact that if the husband and wife do not wish to mend relations and stay together, the admonishments of the greatest of saints will have no effect. If the following points can be of some help:

- i. None of them are infallible. Both of them can make the biggest of mistakes and that too repeatedly
- ii. Whatever mistakes are made by both, they should seek forgiveness from each other and try to compensate for it later. Hazrat Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) said:

الْمَعْدِرَةُ بُرْهَانُ الْعَقْلِ

Seeking forgiveness is a proof of the intellect⁵ and

مَنْ أَحْسَنَ الْإِعْتِدَارَ اسْتَحَقَّ الْإِعْتِقَارَ

One who seeks forgiveness in the best way deserves to be forgiven.⁶

iii. Accepting Apology. Allah revealed to Hazrat Moosa (a.s.): O Moosa! I have done three things for you. Now you do three things in return. Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) asked: What are those things O Lord? Allah revealed:

First – I have bestowed you with numerous bounties but never bragged about it. Therefore, whenever you give anything to my creatures don’t boast about it.

Second –If you seek forgiveness from me for whatever you do, I accept your apology. When my creatures oppress you and later seek forgiveness, then accept their apology.

Third – I do not expect you to act now for the future. Even you should not seek your future sustenance now.⁷

Hazrat Ameerul Momineen Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) said:

أَعْرِفُ النَّاسَ بِاللَّهِ أَعَدَّ لَهُمُ لِلنَّاسِ وَإِنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ [لَمْ يَجِدُوا] لَهُمْ عُذْرًا

He recognizes Allah the most, the one who forgives people the most even if there is no logical reason for it (forgiveness).⁸

He (a.s.) also said:

شَرُّ النَّاسِ مَنْ لَا يَقْبَلُ الْعُذْرَ وَ لَا يُعْتَلِ الذَّنْبَ

The worst person is the one who neither accepts the apology of others and nor does he forgive sins.⁹

Hence, accepting an apology is a sign of a good person and failing to accept it is a sign of an evil person. We all want to be enumerated among the good doers.

iv. Reformation of defects

a. When you wish to recount the defects and wrong-doings to a person then begin by praising the good qualities of that person and thank him for his good behavior.

b. All the defects should not be spoken about together. Rather it should be done gradually and there should be attempts to reform them.

c. You should not speak about the defects any time and at any place. Rather, selection of time and place becomes very important. It is important to understand the mood of the other person.

d. Defects should not be made public. Talking about the defects in public and trying to advise would dent the personality of the opposite person.

e. Before speaking about someone else's defects, we should ponder over our own short comings and try to reform ourselves first. It is inappropriate to try and reform someone else before improving our own selves. It won't have any effect either and may turn out to be contrary.

Salutations on that Lady

There was a person who never prayed and nothing affected him. Once he was seen in the mosque. He became a regular in congregational prayers and in the mosque as well. People who knew him were amazed at this change. Some thought that perhaps he might be in some difficulty that has made him pray and fast. People started talking various things about him because they were aware that he didn't even know how to recite prayers and he had never recited prayers. Some people welcomed him into the mosque, honored and respected him. One day someone asked him about this sudden change. He replied:

I realized after marriage that my wife was extremely attached to prayers. She serves me a lot and treats me with honor and respect. She just had one complaint that her husband did not recite prayers and this pained her. She gradually started telling me about prayers. She began with the importance and virtues of prayers. Her words had an impact. I learnt how to pray in about a month's time. When I started reciting prayers, I enjoyed supplicating to Allah and got habituated to praying. The love for worship brought me into the mosque and I started praying in congregation. Now I don't enjoy anything as much as prayers. Indeed, such women have a high status near Allah.

d. Consulting a Religious Scholar

Islam has a high regard for consultation. When mutual relations are affected, it is beneficial to consult an experienced religious scholar. We mention the following two incidents in this regard:

1) It is my habit that if there is an issue outside the house, I get angry and spoil my mood. My tone of voice changes. I can't seem to smile even after deliberately trying to do so and I carry this mood back home. At home, my wife and children are upset because of this. The same things continue at home, the level of anger increases, mood worsens and so does the environment at home.

Suggestion – Firstly, you should be congratulated that you are attentive towards your defects and are seeking a solution to resolve it. It should be borne in mind that being attentive towards one's defects is a step towards its resolution. A person who is negligent of his defects can't reform himself. Paying attention to a disease is a step towards its diagnosis and treatment and closer to its cure.

Secondly, man by nature prefers beauty over ugliness. Everyone likes a smiling face which is more beautiful and attractive than a fully blossomed rose. No one likes a sulking and frowning face. Allah loves those who are humble with others. Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) says: Be humble in front of believers and other people (especially with family and friends). Humility increases love. Our Prophet (s.a.w.a.) used to greet people with a smiling face. His face never sulked even in the most difficult circumstances.

Thirdly, you cannot live life in the same way. Life is accompanied by ups and downs, discomfort and ease, joy and sorrow, abundance and scarcity, health and illness, etc. One who lives in this world has to go through peaks and troughs, tough and easy phases. Being upset or spoiling one's mood is not the cure for this. Rather, its cure is to face it with a smile and consider this as a part of life. We should tackle it and move ahead. Surrendering to the circumstances is not a sign of brave people. Allah, the Almighty, has given man the capacity to easily bear thousands of difficulties daily. He has the ability to smile and be cheerful even if he is surrounded by calamities. He can be stronger than mountains in his resolutions.

If you are disturbed by anything and someone has spoilt your mood, you are capable enough of not letting its signs appear on your face when you enter your house. Your humility can ensure a peaceful environment in your house.

Fourthly, when such a thing occurs which spoils your mood and makes you frown, then don't enter your house immediately. Regain yourself and restore your breath before entering the house. Be mindful of the fact that your children are eagerly waiting for you to come home. Your cheerful face will make them fresh and increase their joy. Hazrat Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) says: Goodness and good morals enlivens the house and increases the life-span.

2) One day when I returned home, I saw that my mother-in-law had some guests come over and she was complaining about me. In front of me she always praised me but was now slandering about me in my absence.

Since the time she has come home, she pays no attention to me. She doesn't take care of me at all. All that I had thought about her, she is just the opposite. I don't think this can go on for long. Let's wait and watch.

This hurt me immensely. I went straight to my room and started crying. I was deeply hurt by such hypocritical behavior of my mother-in-law. I feel infuriated whenever I think of that incident. I've started thinking about revenge. I'm mentally very disturbed and can't think of anything but revenge.

Suggestion – Go to your mother-in-law and give her a gift on Eid or any suitable occasion.

She behaved the way she did and I give her a gift?

Yes, if you wish to come out of this pain and sorrow and wish to achieve the satisfaction of Allah and His Prophet, then give her a gift.

Acting upon this suggestion was not easy for me. Nevertheless, I went to my mother-in-law with a gift on a suitable occasion. When I presented the gift it felt as if someone had poured cold water over fire. The feeling of revenge just vanished and was replaced with love. Now life is smooth, thanks to Allah.

e. Advice and Admonishment

Man, by nature, wants to scale the heights of perfection and lead a peaceful life. But evil desires and Satan do not allow him to achieve his aim. Apart from these two enemies, the environment today doesn't let man lead a peaceful life.

When marital life starts getting bitter, doubts regarding one another settle in each other's mind, relationships get rusted due to ill-thinking and undue expectations, then in such situations advice and admonishments to each other are extremely beneficial. Similarly, undue encouragement adds fuel to the fire. In such situations the role of the parents and since children normally follow what their mothers say, hence the advices of the mother can make or break marital relations.

A lady once said: Whenever I'm tired of my husband's objections and undue expectations, it is difficult to remain patient. At that time, my mother advises me thus,

There are some rights of a husband. If your house is not in order then it is his right to scold you and be upset. No one likes food which is not cooked properly every day. Be careful of these things. Don't be upset this way, be patient and organized. When I got married, there were lots of quarrels with your father in the initial stages. If I hadn't remained patient and apply my mind, then all of you would be in a mess with no education and no training. Since I acted wisely and was patient and looked after the house, life today is at peace and it feels great to see children like you.

A mother's advice always has an effect. Anger subsides, we feel recharged and life goes on in a peaceful manner. My mother comes home sometimes and helps me in the household chores and teaches me the art and method of leading a life. May Allah grant her a long life!

Even such things happen

A mother advised her daughter thus:

You have just one mother but there is no dearth of husbands. You should have your own house and your husband should take care of you. He will not find a wife better than you. Till your husband does not buy an independent house, you stay here with me. Go back only if he comes here to plead.

I had not experienced anything in life. In spite of loving my husband I used to quarrel with him and complain to him. I used to go to my mother's place by giving any excuse, sometimes even without informing him.

As a result, differences between me and my husband increased. My mother supported my actions and encouraged me further. Ultimately, we reached a point where we lived separately and finally got divorced. My small child stays with my husband. My mother is so strict that she doesn't allow me to meet my son as well.

Now I'm leading the life of a divorcee, a sorrowful life by forsaking a peaceful life. I just wish for death. I took admission in a college just to pacify my heart, tried some other things as well, but my heart is restless. Life remained full of grief and sorrow. Finally one day my mother told me that I was a burden on the society and should do some work. Now what do I do? Where do I go?

I have a younger sister. Proposals for her get rejected when people hear about me. I don't even have the courage to answer my mother now. Life is destroyed. Who should narrate my grief to?

Can anyone bring back my husband into my life again? Can I embrace my only child? Can my life be restored?

f. Family Court

The Holy Quran states:

وَأِنْ خِفْتُمْ شِقَاقَ بَيْنِهِمَا فَابْعَثُوا حَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهِ وَحَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا إِنْ يُرِيدَا إِصْلَاحًا يُوَفِّقِ اللَّهُ بَيْنَهُمَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا

“And if you fear a breach between the two, then appoint judge from his people and a judge from her people; if they both desire agreement, Allah will effect harmony between them, surely Allah is Knowing, Aware.”¹⁰

Following important points can be observed from this verse:

1. Steps should not be taken after differences crop up. Rather, when there is a feeling that there might be differences, there should be attempts to bring them closer.

2. If there is no indication of differences or division between them then there should not be any interference in their lives. Unwanted interference can make matters worse.

3. The word شِقَاقَ (breach) is used at a place where a thing is being divided into two. By using this word for a couple, the Holy Quran has emphasized that both are a single soul in two bodies. They are extremely close to each other. This proximity should be maintained.

4. There shouldn't be any time lapse in the attempt at reconciliation. The ف in فَبَاعَثُوا indicates swift action.

5. **إِنْ خِفْتُمْ** (if you are fearful) **فَابْعَثُوا** (then appoint) makes it evident that it is not an individual's responsibility but the society at large.

6. **أَهْلَهُ** and **أَهْلِهَا** indicate that relatives from both sides are responsible for the reconciliation.

7. **حَكَمًا** indicates towards a judge, a decision maker. Accepting the decision of the elders is the responsibility of the couple. They have to give preference of the other person's choice over their own choice.

8. **حَكَمًا** also indicates that the matter should not be made public. Only two representatives should decide together. There is no need to call for a Panchayat or a Meeting.

9. Instead of taking these matters to court, they should be resolved within the house quietly and should not be publicized.

10. Both sides should be present while resolving such issues.

11. **إِنْ يُرِيدَا إِصْلَاحًا** (if they both desire agreement) if their intention is good, the result will also be good. If both parties want resolution and want to live together then it will be resolved. God forbid, if both parties just wish to voice their concerns and be adamant on their stand, then it is difficult.

12. If intentions are pure and there is a will to reunite then Allah shall bring their hearts together. It also indicates that despite repeated meetings, if a solution is not arrived at then one of the reasons is that both parties do not want reunion and have not come with clean intentions.

13. **يُوفِّقُ اللَّهُ بَيْنَهُمَا** (Allah will effect harmony between them). Allah controls the hearts but our intentions matter.

14. The statement also indicates towards the fact that if things improve after these attempts then one should not feel proud but on the contrary thank Allah for He has changed the situation.

It is evident from the above that Allah wants both of them to live together under all circumstances. He never wants to see them separated. If we are servants of Allah, are living on His land and eating what He has granted us as sustenance. Hence, giving preference to His wishes over our own desires is a proof of our humanity.

It should also be borne in mind that if the relatives of both parties do not have the ability to resolve the matter, then they can also appoint someone else. As per the Islamic Jurists, accepting the decision of the arbitrator is the responsibility of both parties.

It has already been mentioned earlier that problems of the couple can be resolved only if both parties want a solution. If the couple themselves or due to someone else, do not wish to improve their situation, then all efforts will be futile. It should also be clear that the couple is matured and intelligent. Both of them are completely free to decide for themselves. No one can force them into any decision. Parents, relatives and friends can only suggest and obedience to anyone of them in such matters is not obligatory.

Parents are requested to not take undue emotional advantage of their rights upon their children related to their marital life. We request them to

control their love and let their children decide freely for themselves. Experience says that a mutual decision by the couple will solve most of the problems.

Now let us discuss a few rights of the husband and wife.

Notes

1. Wasaael al-Shia, vol. 20, p. 247
2. Ahkaam-e-Khaanvaade, vol. 2, p. 209
3. Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 77, p. 205, H. 1
4. Al-Kaafi, vol. 2, p. 138, H. 4
5. Tasneefo Ghurar al-Hikam, p. 447, H. 10234
6. Tasneefo Ghurar al-Hikam, p. 195, H. 3818
7. Al-Mawaaiz al-Adadiyyah
8. Tasneefo Ghurar al-Hikam, p. 245, H. 5011
9. Tasneefo Ghurar al-Hikam, p. 447, H. 10246
10. Surah Nisa (4): 35

Rights of Husband and Wife

While Allah, the Almighty, has emphasized on marriage and disliked anyone remaining single, He has also outlined the rights of the husband and wife. If we are mindful of these rights which Allah has defined then differences will never arise. Rather, it'll be a highly successful life.

Love is the Key to Peace

Allah, the Almighty, has discussed the importance, aim and secret to success of a marital life in the following verse:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

“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.”¹

1. Marriage is among the signs of Allah. It is Allah who has placed attraction and a charm for each other in the partner’s heart. Both are vital and essential for each other.

2. Marriage is a medium of peace and tranquility. (لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا) Both husband and wife are incomplete without each other. Peace is achieved when they come together and complement each other.

3. The key to the foundation of this relationship is not wealth, beauty or lineage. Rather, it is attributed to love and mercy. وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً means that human life stands firm based on love and mercy. If there is no love and mercy after marriage then it means that life is unstable.

Love and Mercy

The Holy Quran has used two words – love and mercy. A building does not stand firm only on the basis of strong bricks. Simply laying bricks on top of each other does not strengthen a wall. What strengthens it is the material that is placed between the two bricks which binds the two together. The strength of the materials will not allow the wall to break down even during earthquakes. It is love and mercy which binds the husband and wife together and provides strength to this blessed relationship. Life sustains this relationship despite the most difficult situations and the most unpleasant circumstances.

1. Love, in the initial stages, and mercy, when the couple grow old and weak and do not have the ability to serve each other, strengthen the relationship.

2. Love is between two adults but children grow up in the shade of mercy.

3. Love entails equality whereas mercy includes sacrifice. It means this relationship will not survive on serving each other equally. Rather, sometimes it's the feeling of sacrifice which is required. Allah has placed these emotions right in the beginning to prevent severing of this relationship.

Rights of the Wife

Hazrat Imam Zain al-Abideen (a.s.) has mentioned the rights of a wife thus:

“It is the right of your wife that you should know that Allah has made her as a medium of peace and comfort for you and a medium of attachment and love for you. Both of you are each other’s need. You should thank Allah for this great bounty and both of you should praise Him. You should know that this is a grace of Allah upon you. Hence, it is incumbent upon you that you thank Allah and have good fellowship with her. Although your rights upon her are greater and her obedience to you is obligatory in all your likes and dislikes so long as it is not a sin. So she has a right that you treat her with love, mercy, attachment and affection. She is the center of your comfort and the medium of your pleasure. She is a great bounty.”²

Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said:

“My brother Jibraeel has informed me and emphasized so much about women that I thought a husband does not have the rights to utter ‘Ugh’ to her.”³

The last will of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was:

“He emphasized for prayers twice. Do not assign your slaves and servants any responsibility beyond their capacity. For the sake of Allah! Look after the women. They are the trusts of Allah in your hands. You have sought them after you made a covenant with Allah and she became your wife in the Name of Allah.”

It is reported in another tradition:

“On the Day of Qiyamat, a servant will be stopped near the Scale. His good deeds will be as large as mountains. At that time he will be asked about how he looked after his family and how he fulfilled their rights. The second question will be about his wealth and from where he acquired it.”

In reply to these questions, all his good deeds will be exhausted and not a single good deed will remain. Then the angels will call out,

“He is that person whose wife has exhausted all his good deeds and now he is engulfed in his deeds.”⁴

The importance of the rights of a wife is evident from these traditions. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) has repeatedly emphasized on this point and has willed concerning women during the last stages of one’s life.

Alimony

It is obligatory upon to husband to pay alimony to his wife. Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said:

“Cursed, cursed is he who violates the rights of his wife.”⁵

Wife’s rights on her husband are that he should provide her with food and clothes and not find fault with her. When he discharges these duties, I swear by God, he has paid her due...”⁶

Traditions also clearly state that if the husband does not have the ability to afford his wife’s expenses then he better divorce her.

Hazrat Imam Ja’far Sadiq (a.s.) said:

“If a person can provide alimony to his wife, provide for her food and clothing and fulfill her requirements, then he should be with her, else it is better that he sets her free.”⁷

Scholars have defined alimony as follows:

“Alimony means daily necessities like bread, food, rice, meat, sugar, tea, seasonal fruits and clothes, bed and other requirements of life as per her needs and his financial and economic conditions. Nevertheless, it should at least be enough to fulfill the necessities.”⁸

“Alimony to the wife is a must. If a husband does not provide for her expenses for a long time and neither did the wife have any amount from her husband with which she could pay for her expenses, then the alimony for that period is mandatory on the husband, the wife can demand it from him.”⁹

Struggle in the Way of Allah

Fulfilling the needs of the family and looking after them is so important in the eyes of Islam that the one who works to fulfill the needs of his family, his efforts are given the status of struggle in the way of Allah. Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said:

الْكَاذِبُ عَلَى عِيَالِهِ كَالْمُجَاهِدِ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ

“The one who strives for the sake of his family is like the one who struggles in the way of Allah.”¹⁰

700 times the Reward

Pay attention to this tradition. The Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) said:

مَا مِنْ عَبْدٍ يَكْسِبُ ثُمَّ يُنْفِقُ عَلَى عِيَالِهِ إِلَّا أَعْطَاهُ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ دِرْهَمٍ يُنْفِقُهُ عَلَى عِيَالِهِ

سَبْعِمِائَةً ضِعْفٍ

“There is no servant who earns (his livelihood) and spends it on his family except that for every dirham he spends on his family Allah multiplies his reward 700 times.”¹¹

It can thus be clearly inferred that looking after one’s family, paying alimony to one’s wife, fulfilling her daily necessities is extremely valued by Allah and His Messenger (s.a.w.a.). But there are some people who are blinded due to their ego or the love for their wealth or miserliness. They are just not prepared to spend even if it results in the destruction of their home.

Rights of the Husband

Asma, wife of Ansaar, came into the presence of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). He was with his companions. She said to him:

My parents be your ransom! I have come to you as a representative of a few women. May my life be sacrificed for you. If any woman, in the east or the west, gets to know that I'm in the presence of your eminence, she would also say whatever I said.

Allah has sent you as a Messenger for men and women. We have brought faith upon you and believe in that God who has sent you as a Messenger.

We, the group of women, are confined to the four walls of the house and we stay in our houses. We fulfill your requirements and nurture your children whereas you men have a higher status than us. You participate in the Friday prayers, congregations, visit the sick, participate in funerals, perform Hajj and most importantly fight for the cause of Allah and when anyone of you steps out of the house for Hajj, Umrah or to guard the boundaries then we look after your wealth, prepare clothes for you, train your children. Will we be included in the reward with you?

Upon hearing this, Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) turned towards his companions and said:

“Have you heard anything in religious matters better than this from any woman?”

The companions replied: We can't imagine that a woman can put forth anything better than this.

Then his eminence (s.a.w.a.) turned towards her and said:

“Go back and inform all women that anyone of you who takes care of her husband, satisfies him and acts as per his wishes then it is equal to all those rewards.”

On hearing this, the woman went back in a state that her face was brimming with joy and was constantly reciting ‘There is no God but Allah’ and ‘Allah is the Greatest’.¹²

Displeasure of the Husband

Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said:

“If a woman hurts her husband through her tongue, Allah shall not accept even gold and silver from her nor any of her good deeds until she pleases her husband.”¹³

Hazrat Imam Ja’far Sadiq (a.s.) said:

“If a woman spends a night in a state that her husband is displeased with her, Allah shall not accept her prayers until her husband is pleased with her and if a woman applies perfume for anyone other than her husband, Allah will not accept her prayers till she does not perform ablution like the obligatory ablution.”¹⁴

Stepping out of the house without the Husband's Permission

Hazrat Imam Muhammad Baqir (a.s.) narrates that a woman came to the holy presence of the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) and asked for the rights of a husband over his wife.

His eminence (s.a.w.a.) replied:

“Obey him, not to disobey him, not give anything from his house as charity without his permission, not even keep recommended fasts without his permission and submit to him. She should not step out of the house without his consent. If she steps out of the house without his consent of her husband, then all the angels of the heavens and the earth, the angels of Allah's wrath as well as His Mercy, they curse her till she doesn't return home.”¹⁵

Adorning oneself for the Husband

A lady asked Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) about the rights of a husband.

He replied: There are many.

She said: Please narrate a few of them.

He replied: ... not step out of the house without his permission, perfume herself for him in the best way, wear good clothes, adorn herself, present herself to him and there are other rights apart from this as well.¹⁶

Welcoming and Seeing Off

A person came into the presence of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and asked him: O Messenger of Allah! My wife welcomes me when I come home and sees me off when I go out. When she sees me aggrieved she consoles by saying that if you are worrying about sustenance then Allah has guaranteed it and if you are pondering over the hereafter then think more (about it).

Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) replied:

“Give her glad tidings of Paradise and tell her you are one of Allah’s facilitators. Allah will grant you the reward of 70 martyrs daily.”¹⁷

Hazrat Imam Ja’far Sadiq (a.s.) said:

“A woman who prays five times a day, fasts during the blessed month of Ramadan, obeys her husband, recognizes the right of Hazrat Ali (a.s.), she can enter Paradise through any door she wants.”¹⁸

The Best of the Interceders

Hazrat Imam Muhammad Baqir (a.s.) said:

“The best interceder for a woman near Allah is the satisfaction and pleasure of her husband. When Janabe Fatima Zahra (s.a.) was martyred, Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, ‘O Allah! I am satisfied and pleased with the daughter of Your Messenger (s.a.w.a.).’¹⁹

Best and Worst Men

Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said:

“Should I not inform you who the best among you is?

The companions said: Indeed, please do.

He replied:

The best among you is the one who is most God-fearing and pious, pure and chaste, the one who is open handed, of a noble family, serves his parents and his family does not depend on anyone else.

Then he said:

Should I also inform you of the worst kind of men?

The companions said: Indeed, please do.

He said:

The one who accuses falsely, miser, of bad character, does not remain within his limitations, one who eats alone, does not welcome guests, one who beats his slaves and family members, one whose family depends on others and disloyal to his parents.”²⁰

Notes

1. Surah Rum (30): 21
2. Tuhaf al-Uqool, p. 268
3. Mustadrak al-Wasaael, vol. 14, p. 252
4. Al-Muhajjat al-Baizaa, vol. 3, p. 76
5. Oddat al-Da'ee (English), ch. 2, H. 173
6. Oddat al-Da'ee (English), ch. 2, H. 224
7. Wasaael al-Shia, vol. 21, p. 512
8. Ahkaam-e-Khaanvaade by Mohammad Waheed, vol. 1, p. 329
9. Ibid, p. 270
10. Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 96, p. 324
11. Makaarim al-Akhlaaq, p. 216
12. Tafseer al-Mizaan, vol. 4, p. 372
13. Makaarim al-Akhlaaq, p. 202
14. Al-Kaafi, vol. 5, p. 507
15. Wasaael al-Shia, vol. 20, p. 157, H. 25300
16. Al-Kaafi, vol. 5, p. 508
17. Tuhaf al-Uqool, p. 239
18. Al-Kaafi, vol. 5, p. 555
19. Behaar al-Anwaar, vo. 102, p. 257
20. Wasaael al-Shia, vol. 14, chapter 7

Only If...

Allah and His representatives have given us the best rules for a great marital life. They have explained every minute detail. If we follow the rules mentioned by Allah and the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and observe the rights which they have informed us about, then life will never be distasteful, there wouldn't be any arguments, no dissatisfaction, our homes would remain safe and children would also grow up to be the best.

But:

When we do not observe these rights, do not follow the rules or cross our limits, life turns boring and marital life falls prey to differences and it will lead to all that is happening these days. This is the result of going against the commands of Allah and His Messenger (s.a.w.a.).

Only if we would have truly acted upon the Islamic teachings, behaved well with each other for the satisfaction of Allah and His Messenger (s.a.w.a.), not worried about how the other person behaves with us rather think about how we can put forth our best and that no one should precede us in good character.

The best character, morals and etiquette, nobility and sacrifice, forgiveness and pardon, patience and forbearance... I should be the best in all aspects... Insha Allah.

Wassalaam

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ أَوْلَاوِ آخِرًا.

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ.

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى عَلِيٍّ مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَجِّلْ فَرَجَهُمْ وَأَحْصِنَا مِنْ أَعْوَانِهِ وَانصَّارِهِ بِحَقِّ أُمَّ

الْأَيْمَةِ عَلَيْهَا أَفْضَلُ الصَّلَاةِ وَالسَّلَامِ.

