

The Reward of Obedience to the Husband is Equal to Martyrdom of Man

Yusuf Ahmed Badarani from the book العائلة قلعة "The Family is a Fortress"

Just as Allah and His Messenger (saw) commanded the man to be good in cohabitation (معاشره) with his wife, Allah (swt) and His Messenger (saw) also commanded the woman to be good in cohabitation with her husband, obeying him and guarding chastity in his absence. Aisha (ra) reported: I asked the Messenger of Allah (saw): "Which person has the most right upon a woman?" The Messenger of Allah (saw) replied: «زوجها» "Her husband." I asked, "Which person has the most right upon a man?" The Messenger of Allah (saw) replied: «أمه» "His mother." (Al-Mustadrak). Al-Husayn ibn Muhsan reported that his aunt came to the Prophet (saw), the Prophet asked her, «أدأت» "Do you have a husband?" She replied, "Yes." He said, «فأين أنت منه» "So, how do you treat him?" She replied, «مَا أَلُوهُ إِلَّا مَا عَجَزْتُ عَنْهُ» "I fulfill his rights except when I am unable to." He said: «انظري أين أنت منه فإنه جنتك ونارك» "Look to how you are with respect to him, for he is your Jannah (Heaven) or Fire (Hell)." [Ahmad].

Ibn Abbas (ra) narrated: A woman came to the Messenger of Allah (saw) and said: "O Messenger of Allah, I am a delegate [from a group of] women and there are none of them, whether she knows or does not know that I would come to you, except she would want me to come to you. Allah the Almighty is the Lord of both men and women and their Allah, and you are the Messenger of Allah, for both men and women. Allah has prescribed Jihad for men only; if they are victorious, their reward is great, and if they die as martyrs, they are alive with their Lord, receiving sustenance. [For women], which act of obedience is equal in reward to this?" The Messenger of Allah (saw) said, «أبليغي من لقيت من النساء أن طاعة الزوج واعتزافاً بحقه يعدل ذلك» "Convey to those you meet of the women: 'Indeed, the obedience to the husband and fulfilling his right is equal to that (i.e. Jihad in the Path of Allah). Nevertheless, few of you do that.'"

Islam has equated the Jihad of a man in the Path of Allah (swt), with its victory or martyrdom in battle, to the obedience of the wife to her husband and her fulfilling of the right of her husband. In this regard, it is not permissible to discuss the differences or make comparison between the horrific nature of killing and fighting, with the obedience of wife. Nor is it permissible, even for a moment, to think about the extent of women's preference over men, or the divine leniency towards women and the severity towards men, over the condition to enter Paradise. This is because the subject is not the differentiation or belittlement of the rights. Nor is the subject of facilitation or difficulty to enter the Paradise. Instead, it is the subject of responsibility assigned by the Lord of the Worlds (swt) to everyone based on his nature and ability and based on role and mission in his life.

Thus, a person, whether male or female, lives on this earth for a specified period in order to perform a specific role, with a specific ability. Accordingly, a man does not choose his mission, nor does a woman choose hers. Instead, it is an assignment and obligation from Allah (swt) upon the believers, who abide to this, by the command of Allah (swt). As for the one who chooses his role and mission in life based on what he himself opines, by Shaytan's whisperings, Allah (swt) will account him on the Day of Resurrection with reward and punishment according to his deeds. Allah (swt) says: ﴿وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُبِينًا﴾ "It is not for a believing man or a believing woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decided a matter, that they should [thereafter] have any choice about their affair. And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger has certainly strayed into clear error." [TMQ Surah Ahzab: 36].

Islam increases the protection of women against Shaytan, by prohibiting the disobedience of her husband. Islam encourages the obedience to her husband and makes it as one of the conditions for paradise as the Prophet (saw) said: «أَيُّمَا امْرَأَةٍ مَاتَتْ وَرَوْجُهَا عَنْهَا رَاضٍ نَخَلَتْ الْجَنَّةَ» "Whichever woman dies while her husband is pleased with her, then she

«The best of women is the one who pleases him when he looks at her, obeys him when he requests her, and does not dispute him in herself and her wealth in a way he dislikes.» The Prophet (saw) said, «إذا صلت المرأة خمسها وصامت شهرها وحفظت، «If a woman prays her five prayers, fasts her month of Ramadan, guards her chastity and obeys her husband, she will enter Paradise from any gate she wishes.» The Messenger of Allah (saw) equated the obligatory Salah, Fasting, abstinence from Zina and obedience to her husband, as a condition for a woman to enter Paradise by the Mercy of her Lord and all the gates of Paradise be opened for her, to enter through whichever she wishes. This hadith also means that any failure in any three of these deeds and worships do not open the gates of Paradise.

Thus, if the woman fails to perform any one of those acts, such as non-performance of Salah in her life or not Fasting during the month of Ramadan, committing Zina or illicit relations, disobeying her husband or committing indecency with verbal abuse upon her husband, all these prevent the opening of gates of Paradise for her and these would make her fate confined to those who are faced with a difficult reckoning, may Allah (swt) prevent that. Just as the Salah and Fasting are time-bound worships, obliged throughout the life, so long as the human lives and breathes, abstinence from Zina and obedience to the husband are obliged so long as a woman lives and breathes, whilst she is able to perform such obliged obedience. Also, the obedience is not obliged only in the case of mutual love between the spouses. Instead, the obedience of the wife of her husband is obliged as long as she is the wife, regardless of the state of marriage, in terms of happiness or misery. The obligation of obedience is obliged by Allah (swt) and made it an Ibadah, just like the obligation of Salah and Fasting, as long as the marriage exists.

The obligation is not suspended by any condition, as long as the marital relations exist according to the Shariah of Allah (swt). The woman has no right to set conditions for obedience, thinking that obedience is not obligatory, within some or other conditions. Just as the circumstance of life obliges the Salah and abstinence from Zina completely, the state of marriage obliges the wife to obey her husband. Women must know that; were it not for the fact that obedience of wife to her husband is amongst the fundamental obligations that connects the destiny of woman in the Hereafter with Paradise, were it not for the fact that disobedience of woman to her husband is amongst the major sins in Islam that connects the destiny of the illicit, disobedient or indecent woman in the Hereafter with Hellfire, the Messenger of Allah (saw) would have not equated Jihad and martyrdom in the Path of Allah with obedience of woman to her husband. It is narrated in the hadith of Ibn Abbas (ra) where the Prophet (saw) said: «أبلغني من لقيت من النساء؛ أن طاعة الزوج واعتراضاً بحقه يعدل ذلك» **Convey it to the women you meet, that: Obedience to the husband and recognizing his rights, are equal to that**” i.e. the Jihad and martyrdom, about which the question was asked, in the first part of the hadith. As for the hadith related to the non-acceptance of Salah by Allah (swt) from the one who disobeys her husband, the hadith is clear and explicit and doesn't need explanation or details. With regards to the hadith of Zaid bin Arqam in which the Prophet (saw) said, «المرأة لا تؤدى حق الله عليها حتى تؤدى حق زوجها كله» **No woman can fulfill her duty towards Allah until she fulfills all her duty towards her husband.**” The great reward and status for the obedience to husband in Islam and about the great sin within disobedience of the husband, such that Allah has made it amongst the major sins, is above any doubt or confusion and does not need clarification.

It has been stated in the Tafsir of Qurtubi, regarding the verse, «إِنْ تَجْتَنِبُوا كِبَائِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ، **If you avoid the major sins which you are forbidden, We will remove from you your lesser sins and admit you to a noble entrance [into Paradise].**” [TMQ Surah Nisa 4: 31]. Ibn Abbas (ra) said, «الكبيرة كل ذنب ختمه الله بنار أو غضب أو لعنة أو عذاب» **Major sin is every sin which Allah has sealed with Hellfire or Wrath or curse or punishment.**” End Quote. If we review the Prophetic hadiths related to the disobedience (of the husband), we would find that many times the Messenger of Allah (saw) warned the disobedient wife with the Wrath of Allah (swt), His Hellfire and with the curse of angels. The

comparison of disobedient wife with the one who abandons Salah, fasting and commits Zina is sufficient for the act of disobeying the husband to be amongst the major sins in the Deen of Allah (swt).

Abu Hurairah (ra) reported: The Messenger of Allah (saw) was asked: «أَيُّ النِّسَاءِ خَيْرٌ» “which of the women is best” He (saw) replied: «الَّتِي تَسْرُهُ إِذَا نَظَرَ ، وَ تُطِيعُهُ إِذَا أَمَرَ ، لَا تُخَالِفُهُ فِي نَفْسِهَا وَ لَا مَالِهَا» “The best of women is the one who pleases him when he looks at her, obeys him when he requests her, and does not dispute him in herself and her wealth in a way he dislikes.” The hadith is narrated by the people of Sunan, i.e. Nasa’ee, Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah, with sound narrations.

Making (the husband) happy is an obligation of wife:

Allah (swt) says: ﴿وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ﴾ “And of His signs is that He created for you from yourselves mates that you may find tranquility (سكينة) in them; and He placed between you affection and mercy. Indeed in that are signs for a people who give thought.” [Surah ar-Rum 30: 21]

This noble verse defines the purpose of marriage and clarifies the reality of married life. It also clarifies regarding the marriage from which there is no serenity (سكينة) arising. Serenity means tranquility, bliss and is more comprehensive and deeper than that. Such a marriage cannot be described as a marriage and marital life by which Allah (swt) has pleased with His believing servants. The verse has the implicit meaning (مفهوم) that the creation of woman from the ribs of man is a miracle, whilst making her as the mate of man, from whom he gets serenity (سكينة), is also a miracle, like the miracle of her creation. Accordingly, serenity i.e. happiness, bliss, tranquility, joy and complete surrender to the fate of Allah (swt), is altogether a gift from Allah (swt) and a blessing from the Most Merciful, the Most Gracious to man in a feminine form, which Allah (swt) has named as woman. And Allah (swt) has permitted man to get married to her.

Allah (swt) reminds us through His countless miracles, so that one may take any of them in order to ponder upon its miraculous nature, with gentleness and compassion. The noble verse clarifies to both men and women that the serenity is the fundamental condition for the continuation of marriage amongst Muslims. Accordingly, there is no happiness for a believer in marriage without serenity. Since Iman necessitates happiness and prevents misery, it is not possibly for Iman to coincide with misery. Seeking to provide serenity in marriage is an obligation for both men and women. Woe to those who do not fulfill their part in this regard. The verse clearly clarifies the nature of marital life for the Muslims, which is calm and tranquil in nature, leading to harmony and spiritual union. The verse necessitates the system of Allah (swt) for the family relationships through marriage between men and women. Such relations are only organized continuously by the system that achieves the description of Allah (swt) about the nature of this marriage.

Just as Allah (swt) has firmly made mountains as pegs upon the earth, He (swt) made basic principles for the Muslim family life, which no man or woman must deviate from. Thus, the family in Islam is established absolutely upon the taking care of the affairs by men. It is an obligation upon men and not just any right which he can choose to leave. On the other hand, it is upon woman to obey (her husband) absolutely. It is an obligation upon her which she must abide to in her life just as her Salah, truthfulness and trustworthiness. Obedience of the wife to her husband is amongst the rights of testifying “There is no god but Allah and Muhammed is the Messenger of Allah.” There is neither happiness, nor serenity nor blessings in marriage if the wife does not obey her husband. Regarding this, the Prophet (saw) said, «وَلَا تَجِدُ امْرَأَةً حَلَاوَةَ الْإِيمَانِ؛ حَتَّى تُؤَدِّيَ حَقَّ زَوْجِهَا» “A woman cannot find the sweetness of Iman until she fulfills the duties to her husband.” Thus the obedience of the wife of her husband is the basis for the happiness of the husband and the family. This is apparent in the subject of the miracle which the noble verse draws attention to by saying, ﴿وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ

﴿وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا﴾ “And of His signs is that He created for you from yourselves

mates that you may find tranquility (سكينة) in them;” [TMQ Surah Ar-Rum 30: 21]. The verse clarifies that happiness is from the wife and within the wife. It is a happiness within which the man reposes and fills his soul with tranquility, when he approaches her and is intimate with her, granting serenity.

Since the woman is the basis of happiness in marriage, Allah (swt) has legislated ahkam that necessitate the woman, either willingly or resentfully, to perform her natural role and provide happiness to her husband. Accordingly, Allah (swt) clarified His ahkam, commands and prohibitions in relation to organizing the family and the relation between the husband and wife. He (swt) assigned the role of taking care of the affairs and leadership to the man, whilst the role of obedience is assigned to the woman in matters other than disobedience to Allah (swt). The woman does not have a right to choose between accepting and not accepting the obligations of Allah upon her in obeying her husband continuously. Allah (swt) linked her obedience to her husband with her submission to Allah (swt), the Almighty. He (swt) closed the gates of Paradise, from accepting the Salah, Fasting, supplication and Dhikr (tasbih) of a woman who disobeys her husband. The Prophet (saw) said, «فإني لو أمرت شيئاً أن يسجدَ لشيءٍ لأمرتُ المرأةَ أن تسجدَ لزوجها والذي نفسي بيده لا تؤدِّي المرأةُ حقَّ ربِّها حتى تؤدِّي حقَّ زوجها» **“If I were to order anyone to prostrate himself before another, I would have ordered the wife to prostrate herself before her husband. By the One in Whose hand is the soul of Muhammad, no woman can fulfil her duty towards Allah, until she fulfils her duty towards her husband.”** There is a clear declaration from Allah (swt) in this hadith from the tongue of the Prophet (saw) that Allah (swt) will not accept the obedience or ibadah from the woman who fails to honor the rights of her husband and perform her obligations towards him. It is as if He (swt) says the paths to Paradise are cut off for a woman, who disobeys her husband or neglects in fulfilling her obligations towards her husband, whilst performing the duties to please him. Thus the acceptance of any worship or charity or supplication from a woman by Allah (swt) depends on her success and complete fulfillment of her obligations towards her husband. Otherwise, the paths to Paradise are cut for her and her obedience and worships will not be accepted. That is, she is like the one who does not pray, even if she prays, and her condition is like the one who breaks fasting in the month of Ramadan, even if she fasts. None of her charity will be counted.

Jabir bin Abdullah (ra) reported that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, «ثلاثة لا يقبلُ الله لهم صلاةً ولا يرفعُ لهم إلى السَّماءِ حسنةً: العبدُ الأبقُ حتى يرجعَ إلى مواليه فيضعَ يده في أيديهم والمرأةُ السَّاخِطُ عليها زوجها حتى يرضى والسُّكرانُ حتى يصحوا» **“There are three types of people whose prayers will not be accepted, nor their good deeds ascend to the heaven: a runaway slave, till he returns to his patrons and puts his hand in theirs; a woman with whom her husband is displeased; and a drunkard, till he becomes sober.”** [Al-Tabarani narrated it in Al-Awsat from the narration of Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Aqeel]. In another hadith, Ibn Umar (ra) reported that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said: «اثنتان لا تجاوزُ صلاتهما رؤوسهما عبدٌ أبق من مواليه حتى يرجعَ وامرأةٌ عصت زوجها حتى ترجعَ» **“Two persons whose prayers will not rise above their heads: A runaway slave till he returns to his master and a woman who disobeys her husband till she obeys”.** [Al-Tabarani narrated it with a good chain of transmission and Al-Hakim].

The primary basis for the happiness of a family lies in the woman. In the process of adapting a woman by intellect and disposition to this role of life, Allah (swt) places before women the difficult choice in life: either accepting or rejecting the servitude to Allah (swt) and what each matter leads to in every deed, particularly in the primary matters of life, true to the saying of Allah (swt): ﴿الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا﴾ **“[He] who created death and life to test you”** [TMQ Surah Mulk:2]. Since Allah (swt) linked His acceptance of monotheism and worships from a woman with her obedience to her husband, pleasing and making her husband happy, this makes her disobedience to her husband a very dangerous matter in Islam. Upon examining the public role of a woman in the life, which Allah has defined for her, we do not find any sin more dangerous than marital disobedience, except for the sin of committing Zina, which deserves Hell in the Hereafter, according to the divine texts, asserted

in the meanings of the Prophetic hadiths related to this matter, which we have mentioned elsewhere. Accordingly, the death sentence for Zina would wash away the sin and protect her from the Hell in the Hereafter by the mercy of Allah. As for the disobedience of the wife of her husband, there is neither punishment for her, nor is there washing of sins if she does not repent before her death. As for the charity that washes away the sin, it requires repentance and repentance means returning back to obedience and abandoning the disobedience. If the obedience is accepted and the disobedience is abstained from, there is no problem. Accordingly, the fundamental condition for happiness is fulfilled, which is the obedient wife, pleasing her husband and her Lord (swt).

Accepting the law of Allah (swt) means Paradise and rejecting it means Hellfire. Both men and women have a choice to choose his or her path and define his or her destiny. Initially, this matter is difficult and when a man examines his view and thinking upon it, the matter would be easy. Allah (swt) created the servant upon fear and also with greed. Accordingly, Islam brought its clarification to the Hukm Shariah, threatening those who violate it with the punishment of Allah (swt), that would shake the heart and make eyes weep. Just as Allah (swt) has warned the woman who disobeys her husband and frightened her with the hellfire, He (swt) reassures her for her obedience and prepares her for the paradise. The Prophet (saw) described a woman who enters paradise with her obedience to her husband and with the deeds of pleasing and seeking to please him. Anas bin Malik (ra) reported that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, « أَلَا أُخْبِرُكُمْ بِنِسَائِكُمْ فِي الْجَنَّةِ » **“May I inform you about your women in paradise?”** We said, “Yes, O Messenger of Allah.” The Prophet (saw) said, « كُلُّ وَدُودٍ وَوَلُودٍ ، إِذَا غَضِبَتْ أَوْ أُسِيءَ إِلَيْهَا أَوْ غَضِبَ زَوْجُهَا ، قَالَتْ: هَذِهِ يَدِي فِي يَدِكَ ، لَا أَكْتَحِلُ بِعَمَضٍ حَتَّى تَرْضَى » **“Every loving and fertile woman. When she is angry or offended or her husband is angry with her, she would say to her husband: ‘This is my hand placing on your hand, I will not apply Kohl with blindness until you are pleased.’”** [Narrated by Tabarani]

The miracles of Allah (swt) appear in His Creation, characterized as the miracle of His Mercy, the miracle of His Generosity, the miracle of His granting ease and facilitation for a woman to enter the Paradise. Allah (swt) is the Most Just and the Most Kind to the women. Above all, the Prophet (saw) told men « أَكْمَلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِمَانًا أَحْسَنُهُمْ خُلُقًا وَخَيْرًاكُمْ خَيْرًاكُمْ لِنِسَائِهِمْ » **“The most perfect man in his Iman among the believers is the one whose behavior is most excellent; and the best of you are those who are the best to their wives”** [narrated by Tirmidhi and he says the hadith is Hasan Sahih]. Thus, felicitations to the woman who obeys her husband, seeking to please him, such that she will enjoy the goodness of this world and the Paradise of the Hereafter. Indeed, she will be happy before and after death. And during the death, she will be undertaken by ar-Rahman, ar-Raheem of this world and Hereafter.

Abu Hurairah (ra) reported: The Messenger of Allah (saw) was asked: **“أَيُّ النِّسَاءِ خَيْرٌ”** “which of the women is best” He (saw) replied: « **الَّتِي تَسْرُهُ إِذَا نَظَرَ ، وَ تُطِيعُهُ إِذَا أَمَرَ ، لَا تُخَالِفُهُ فِي نَفْسِهَا وَ لَا مَالِهَا** » **“The best of women is the one who pleases him when he looks at her, obeys him when he requests her, and does not dispute him in herself and her wealth in a way he dislikes.”** The hadith is narrated by the people of Sunan, i.e. Nasa’ee, Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah, with sound narrations. Thus a woman with this characteristic is the ‘(خير) best.’ In another narration she is described as « **خَيْرٌ مَا يُكْنِزُ الْمَرْءُ** » **“The best treasure of a man,”** which clearly indicates that a wife must be good towards her husband in order for her to enter the Paradise. Happiness is part of goodness (خير), and in the narrowest meaning of goodness, happiness is the only fruit of goodness, by which Allah (swt) blesses His servant. Thus since woman was described by the Messenger of Allah (saw) with (خير) goodness, she must be the source of happiness for her husband. Otherwise, how can she please the husband if he looks at her whilst she is not a source of happiness for him?

Whatever may be the task of the wife, whether it is easy or hard, the reward for patience upon the hardship of marriage is Paradise, just as the patience upon any difficulty in life. The patience is not rewarded unless the person fulfills the rights of patience with a good character and a satisfied soul. Evil characters and resentful behaviors nullify the reward of patience as they contradict the patience.