

## The Secret of Love, Harmony and Respect in Married Life

One of the most unique relationships that Allah (swt) has set for humankind is the relationship between the man and woman. This relationship is the origin of other relationships which form the family structure. Hence, it is vital that it works in a successful manner. Allah (swt) says, ﴿هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا لِيَسْكُنَ إِلَيْهَا﴾ **“It is He Who has created you from a single person, and He has created from him his wife, in order that he might enjoy the pleasure of living with her”**. [7:189]

Allah (swt) has given regulation for all the affairs of humanity, so that the people find a way out of despair into clarity. They will achieve success or failure in this Dunya, and be rewarded or punished in the Akhira according to their adherence to these regulations. One of the reasons that the Islamic family works is because of its clearly defined structure, where each member of the household knows his or her role. The most beautiful thing about the interpersonal relationships in Islam is, that the person maintains them for the sake of Allah (swt), be it the relationship between husband and wife, parents and children or the whole family ties. Fulfilling them in accordance to the Commands of Allah (swt) is an important Islamic duty and will create love, harmony and respect within marriage and the whole family structure.

The Prophet (saw) had an extraordinarily close and warm relationship with his wives and his family. Allah (swt) says, ﴿لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا﴾ **“There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often”**. [33:21]

Ibn Maja reported that the Prophet (saw) said: «خَيْرُكُمْ خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِهِ وَأَنَا خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِي» **“The best amongst you are the ones who are best to their wives, and I am the best of you to my wives.”**

In the marriages of the Prophet (saw) was love, harmony and respect. The Prophet (saw) was righteous to his wives and not dictatorial, for justice is the most important duty of a man to his wife. He had a very honorable relationship with them, played, joked, helped in the household when he could, and taught them lessons. Narrated by Saheeh al Bukhari “He always joined in the housework and would at times mend his clothes, repair his shoes and sweep the floor. He would milk, tether and feed his animals and do household chores.” The Prophet (saw) was a protector and guardian over his wives, as Allah (swt) says: ﴿الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ﴾ **“Men are the protectors and guardians over women”**. [4:34]

In addition, the Prophet (saw) stressed respectful and attentive treatment of children and the elderly. He (saw) said, «لَيْسَ مِنَّا مَنْ لَمْ يَرْحَمْ صَغِيرَنَا وَيَعْرِفْ شَرَفَ كَبِيرِنَا» **“He who does not show compassion to our young, nor honor our elders, is not from us.”** (Abu Dawood, *Al-Tirmidhi*) And Allah (swt) says: ﴿وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا إِمَّا يَبُلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أَفٍّ وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا \* وَآخِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أَفٍّ وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا \* رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيْتَنِي صَغِيرًا﴾ **“And treat your parents with kindness. If one or both of them attain old age in your care, never say to them a word (suggesting) disgust, nor reproach them, but address them with reverent speech. And humble yourself**

out of mercy before them, and pray: ‘My Lord! Be merciful to them for having cared for me in my childhood.’” [Quran 17:23-4]

The most important feature about a wife where the man really finds happiness and peace is her Iman. The Prophet (saw) said: «شَتَّحُ الْمَرْأَةُ لِأَرْبَعٍ لِمَالِهَا وَلِحَسَبِهَا وَلِجَمَالِهَا وَلِدِينِهَا فَافْظُرْ “A woman is married for (one of) four reasons: her wealth, her status, her beauty and her religious devotion. So marry the religious woman, else you be a loser.” (Saheeh Al-Bukhari)

A God-conscious wife sees one of her most important tasks in marriage as obedience to and pleasing her husband, for Allah (swt) has imposed it on her as a duty. It does not mean, of course, that the wife should not have an opinion of her own and should not discuss with her husband or give advice on matters. Rather, it means that she should accept her husband as the decision-maker of the house and strive to achieve his satisfaction. This duty does not put the woman lower than the man, but is a duty for which she receives her reward from Allah, just as the husband will receive the reward for his righteousness, good treatment of his wife, and providing and caring for her to the best of his ability. The Prophet (saw) said: «إذا باتت المرأة هاجرة فراش زوجها لعنتها الملائكة حتى تصبح» “If a woman spends the night away from her husband’s bed then the Angels curse her until she returns.” And he (saw) asked a woman: «أَدَاتِ بَعْلٍ أَنْتِ؟» قُلْتُ: نَعَمْ، قَالَ: «...فَإِنَّهُ جَنَّتُكَ» “Do you have a husband?” She replied: ‘Yes.’ He said: “...Then he is your Paradise (Jannah) and Hellfire (Nar).”

It is evident from the Prophet's tradition that observance of the rights and duties between spouses is the conclusion of a successful marriage and, as a result, a peaceful family life as well as upbringing of the children and cohesion of the whole family ties. Thus, the Prophet (saw) is the best role model for Muslims in all matters of life. Because the Prophet (saw) demonstrates that the Taqwa and sincerity is about fulfilling Allah's laws in the best way. He (saw) shows us what it means to be willing to sacrifice and what it means not to be the slave of his own desires and his pride. So if the Muslim, be it a man or a woman, performs their duties in marriage and gives their full rights to their partner, then Allah (swt) will put love, harmony and mutual respect into their marriage.

﴿لَيْسَ الْبِرُّ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ وَآتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ﴾

“Righteousness is not that you turn your faces toward the east or the west, but [true] righteousness is [in] one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets and gives wealth, in spite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler, those who ask [for help], and for freeing slaves; [and who] establishes prayer and gives zakah; [those who] fulfill their promise when they promise; and [those who] are patient in poverty and hardship and during battle. Those are the ones who have been true, and it is those who are the righteous.” [2, 177]

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Amanah Abed