

Al Mar'atus Saalihah

THE PIOUS WOMAN



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Introduction

'Al Mar'atus Salihah – The Pious Woman – is a short treatise of Naseehat (advice and admonition) presented to Muslim women. It is the perfect wedding gift which will ensure for the bride a life of blessing and happiness if she gives practical expression to its advices which are the advices of the Qur'aan and Sunnah.

This compilation is not a book of rights and obligations due to a woman. It does not explain, neither sets out the Shar'i right to which a Muslim wife is entitled. Rather, it is a treatise of Naseehat which takes into account the prevailing unhappiness and misery in which so many marriages are floundering. Numerous women, as well as men, communicate their marital problems and unhappiness to us, seeking the advice of the Shariah applicable to their individual and peculiar situations arising from the combination of ignorance of Shar'i laws, western indoctrination and the lack of Islaah (reformation) of the nafs.

Under the prevailing circumstances of ignorance and intransigence, the wife, if she desires a happy and successful married life, has to cast a blind eye in the direction of her rights and dues. She has to act in terms of the moral advices given to her by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). It is in this sphere that this treatise speaks to her. For her own happiness and the prosperity of her children she has to make sacrifices and be tolerant when her husband fails to observe her rights.

The path to happiness in married life is not the way of demand i.e. demanding fulfilment of rights. Rigid adherence to one's demands, especially in these times of Deeni indifference and moral deficiency, will crack the marriage bond and may even rent it asunder. The way to achieve happiness is for the wife to offer humble submission to her husband – a submission which is within the confines of the Shariah's

moral code as expounded in the Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). A submission which violates the commands and prohibitions of Allah Ta'ala is not advocated, for Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has declared:

“There is no obedience for any creation in (anything) which brings about disobedience to Allah.”

Lest ignorant husbands misinterpret the Naseehat sounded in this treatise, we must inform them that this book is not a licence for the perpetration of zulm (injustices) on women. This Naseehat is for the benefit of women, not for men to find latitude in the assertion of domination and authority. The attitude and behaviour of husbands towards their wives shall, Insha Allah, be expounded in another treatise which shall, be named ‘Az-Zaujus Salih’ or the Pious Husband. Wives are an Amaanat (sacred Trust) about which Allah Ta'ala will demand a reckoning on that Day which every atom which zulm and abuse will be manifested.

May Allah Ta'ala grant us all the taufeeq and hidaayah to follow the Sunnah of Allah's Beloved Nabi, Muhammadur Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wassallam.)

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The Sanctity of Nikah

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wassallam) said:

“Nikah is half of Imaan.”

Numerous Ahadith narrations testify to the sanctity of the Nikah (marriage) bond. The above is one such hadith from which the sanctity and importance of Nikah are abundantly clear. As a result of the holy culture of Islam, Nikah has always been regarded and treated with due respect and reverence by Muslims. Unlike liberal and materialistic cultures, Islam emphasises the strong relationship between Nikah and Taqwa (piety and divine fear – the fear which engenders obedience of the commands of Allah Ta’ala.) In fact, Islam teaches that Nikah is the factor which vastly improves the degree and quality of taqwa.

The Nikah bond envisages the establishment of a home of piety – a home in which moral excellence, spiritual loftiness and humanity will achieve a high degree of perfection. While this was the blessed condition of the Ummah in its early days, it has to be observed that the gradual adoption by Muslims of the ways of alien cultures has seriously eroded the transcendental quality and value of the Nikah bond.

Divorce which was an extremely rare occurrence in Muslim society, has now become an incremental practice. The greater degree of Muslim abandonment of Muslim culture – the Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wassallam) – the higher the incidence of divorce in the Muslim community. Divorce, separation, futile disputes, unnecessary arguments, lack of parental control, delinquency, failure to fulfil marital rights and obligations, infidelity, misery and heartache have gripped numerous Muslim families in these days of modernity, liberalism and abandonment of the Sunnah.

For these evil consequences of the libertine Muslim culture to find their way into Muslim homes, there is no need for surprise. Such baneful effects are the natural consequences of the elimination of the sanctity which once reigned supreme in the Muslim home. It was not possible for Muslims to retain their healthy and holy family – structure with their assimilation by the liberal western culture which in practice shows scant regard for the bond of marriage as a union of piety and holiness.

The evils which have smitten western society and annihilated its soul are now at work in the Ummah and to a large extent have made calamitous inroads in society. It is imperative for Muslims to understand the valuable and vital role which Nikah plays in the development and progress of Muslim society. The efficacy of the Nikah in regard to the achievement of happiness, love and piety is dependent on giving practical expression to the advices, and admonitions of the Sunnah. The marriage will be successful and happy only if it is conducted along the lines chalked out by Islam. Muslims should therefore introduce the ways of Islam into their homes so that the Nikah bond can exercise its impact and effects to bring into greater realization the perfection of Imaan as stated in the Hadith: “Nikah is half of Imaan.”

General Guidance for the Muslim Wife

It is essential that the Muslim woman understands that of all people, be it parents or children, her husband commands her first and highest allegiance. He is the pivot of her salvation in both worlds. He is her ruler, guard and guardian here on earth. This is what the Qur'aan Majeed declares in the following aayat:

“Men are the rulers over women because of the excellence which Allah has granted to some of them over others and because of that which they spend of their wealth (to maintain women).”

And, this is what Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) declared in his statement:

“O woman! Look! Verily, he is either your Jannat or you Fire.”
(Tabqat Ibn Sa'd)

Some Ahadith emphasising the superior rank of the husband and the essential need for the wife to obey him shall now be presented so that the Muslim wife understands well the attitude and conduct which she has to adopt in her relationship with her husband. Rectitude in relationship and conduct in home affairs produces enduring love, peace and happiness in the home.

Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

(1) *“The la'nat (curse) of Allah is on a woman who is angry with her husband”.*

(Dailami)

(2) *“A woman who dies whilst her husband is pleased with her, will enter Jannah”.*

(Ibn Majah)

(3) *“A woman who asks her husband for divorce, the fragrance of Jannat becomes unlawful for her”.*

(Tirmizi)

(4) *“The best of women is she who makes her husband feel happy when he glances at her; she obeys him when he instructs her and she does not oppose him in regard to herself and her wealth by doing what he dislikes”.*

(Baihaqi)

(5) *“The similitude of an adorned woman in the company of strangers (i.e. ghair mahram males) is like the darkness of the day of Qiyaamah. There is no noor for her”.*

(Mishkat)

(6) *“When the husband calls his wife to bed and she refuses, causing him to sleep displeased (with her) then the Malaaiqah (Angels) curse her until morning”.*

(Bukhari)

(7) *“There are three types of persons whose Salaat is not accepted nor does any of their good deeds rise (towards heaven).....” (Among these three, one is) “A woman whose husband is angry with her”.*

(Baihaqi)

(8) *“If I had to order anyone to make Sajdah for another person, I would have commanded the wife to make Sajdah to her husband”.*

(Ahmad)

(9) *“If the husband orders her to transport stones from a yellow mountain to a black mountain and then from the black mountain to a white mountain (i.e. from one mountain to another), then it will be proper for her to do it”.*

(Ahmad)

(10) *“Whoever has been given four things, verily, he has been given the best of the world and the Akhirah: a grateful heart; a tongue engaged in thikr’, a body patient in adversity and a wife who does not betray him, neither with regard to herself nor his wealth”.*

(Mishkat)

These Ahadith of Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) adequately illustrate the kind of behaviour the Muslim wife has to adopt in her relationship with her husband. These divinely statements of our Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) form the framework of conduct for the Muslim wife. From these narrations, the Muslim women will understand her role as a wife.

“He is either your Jannat or your Fire” – you Paradise or your Hell-fire. In otherwords, Allah’s pleasure and displeasure in so far as the wife is concerned, are dependent on her husband’s pleasure and displeasure. Thus, for attaining happiness in this world and the Akhirah, it behoves her to court her husband’s pleasure at all times. She must necessarily abstain from all things and every kind of behaviour which find disfavour with her husband.

She should mould herself to wholeheartedly submit to his whims and fancies. His likes must become her likes and his dislikes, her dislikes. She must acquaint herself with his moods and act accordingly to cultivate his pleasure. She should step out of her way to comfort him and to console him in his worries and distress. She should never do anything to augment his worries. On the

contrary, she should strive to be a source of comfort for him. After all Allah Ta'ala has created her for her husband's comfort and peace. Stating this fact, the Qur'aan Majeed says:

“He created from it (the one life) its pair so that he (man) may find solace (peace and comfort) in her”.

Thus any activity or behaviour of the wife, even if permissible and meritorious in the Shariah, but which conflicts with the lawful wishes, desires, whims, fancies, likes and dislikes of the husband will be negatory of her role of wifehood and in contradiction of the aim and the purpose of which Allah Ta'ala had created her. This aim is declared in the aforementioned Ayat and is further conformed by the creation of Hawwa (Alaihas Salaam) to provide companionship and solace to Aadam (Alaihis Salaam) whose loneliness – in spite of his presence in Jannat at the time – was the overt reason and cause of her creation.

Lest anyone seeks to question the contention that the husband's lawful wishes in relation to his wife, enjoy priority over even lawful Shar'i acts of merit, we tender the following hadith of Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam):

“It is not permissible for a woman to fast (Nafl fast) while her husband is present except with his consent”.

Nafl Salaat and Nafl Saum (fasting) are among the highest acts of Ibaadat. However, notwithstanding the importance and merit of these acts of Ibaadat which are greatly encouraged by the Shariah, Islam had ordained obedience to the husband to be an act of greater importance and higher merit. Nafl Ibaadat is not only permissible, it is exhorted by Islam which elaborately explains its virtues and significance. Despite this fact, the wife is ordered by

Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wassallam) to refrain from engagement in Nafl Ibaadat if she had not obtained the consent of her husband. From this will be abundantly clear that the Shariah has accorded the husband the highest degree of authority over his wife. Likewise it will transpire that the wife has to offer the higher degree of submission to her husband, hence the Qur'aan Majeed decrees:

"Men are the rulers over women....."

The Wife's Anger

The Muslim wife has to understand that her anger directed at her husband constitutes la'nat (Allah's Curse) for her. Ahadith numbers 1 and 6 (see page 5) issue the grave warning of la'nat.

It does not behove her to display anger and displeasure in the face of her husband regardless of any dislike she may have for any of his acts. With humility and patience should she tolerate his shortcomings and even his injustice. Her humble acceptance of her husband's excesses will bring the Pleasure of Allah Ta'ala cascading on her.

The wife has much to gain by her patience. Her demonstration of anger and displeasure will never benefit her in any way. On the contrary, she will turn her husband's heart away from her. She will, by means of showing anger, extinguish his feelings of love and affection for her.

Let alone anger, the Muslim wife should not even sulk or show indifference or demonstrate any type of attitude or feeling which

clouds the pleasure of her husband. Ill-temper is not compatible with a true Muslim wife.

It is the incumbent duty of the wife to always make the husband happy. She has to ensure that he stays happy, for his happiness is her happiness. Her happiness is inseparable from his happiness. This attitude is the basis of her piety and the means for her to gain the proximity and the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. Hence Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

“The best woman is she who makes her husband feel happy when he glances at her.....”

Unfortunately gross ignorance of the Shariah, further aggravated by the adoption of the liberal ways of western culture have transformed the Muslim woman and she is increasingly becoming defeminized in the same way as her western counterpart. Thus, far from being a solace and a source of happiness, she on the contrary, clouds his happiness, mars his peace and brings about frustration and despondency in him by her western – acquired attributes of “emancipation”, liberalism, self-expression and self-projection – all baneful qualities in diametric confrontation with the Islamic concept of wifehood.

The consequences of a wife's attitude of unpleasantness and ill-temper are spiritually calamitous for herself. Apart from the darkness which settles over the home, neither her Salaat nor any of her righteous deeds is accepted by Allah Ta'ala. The woman who angers her husband invites the Wrath of Allah Ta'ala, hence her deeds of virtue are rebuffed and find no entry into the heavens. (See Hadith No. 7, page 6). By non-acceptance of Salaat is meant the non-availability of thawaab (reward). Her bad attitude towards her husband destroys the thawaab of her good acts. Non-acceptance here does not mean, that the Salaat is not valid, hence to be performed

again. The Salaat remains valid inspite of it being shorn of the blessings and thawaab. Thus, her roohani (spiritual) success is also tied to her efforts directed towards achieving her husband's pleasure. Her husband is in fact the key to her success of her Deen and Dunya.

Women's Voice

The voice of a female also falls within the limit of the Shariah. It is not permissible for a woman to unnecessarily make heard her voice to males. This purdah for the voice can be gauged from the Shariah's instruction to a woman who rectifies the Imaam. If women happen to be performing Salaat in Jamaat, and the Imaam commits an error in recitation, a woman cannot rectify the Imaam by reciting the relevant portion. The method the Shariah has chosen for her on this occasion is the clapping of hands. She should draw the attention of the Imaam to his error by clapping her hands once. Such clapping which is an excessive act in relation to Salaat is not permissible for men. However, in view of the restrictions the Shariah places on a woman's voice too, clapping hands even in Salaat has been tolerated for them, but not reciting the relevant part of the Qur'aanic aayat aloud. This order of clapping hands applies even if the Imaam happens to be her husband or any other mahram.

The Wife Adorning Herself

Among the evil ways of the Kuffaar acquired by “liberated” Muslim women of these times is the evil habit of adorning and beautifying themselves for others. While Islam commands the Muslim wife to adopt adornment solely for her husband, the modern Muslim wife has chosen to do just the opposite. She will reserve adornment for others when she has to leave the home precincts. But with regard to her husband, she is not at all concerned with her untidy and shoddy appearance.

It is the obligatory duty of the wife to beautify herself for her husband. On the other hand, it is haram for her to embellish herself for others. A woman who adorns herself for others is severely reprimanded and criticized by Islam. Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has compared such a wife to *“the darkness of the day of Qiyaamah”*. Such a woman, says Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), is without any Noor. In one narration, Nabi-e-Kareem (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

“A woman who applies perfume and passes by a gathering is like an adulteress”.

Among the rights which the husband holds over his wife is her adorning herself for his sake. He possesses the Islamic right to compel her to beautify herself for his sake. Explaining this rule of the Shariah, the authoritative book of Islamic jurisprudence, Kabeeri, says:

“He has the right to beat her if she refuses to beautify herself when he so desires....”

Showing Ingratitude

Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "O assembly of women! Give charity, for verily, I have seen you to be the majority of the inmates of the Fire".

Someone asked:

"O Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam): "Why?"

Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

"You curse in abundance and you are ungrateful to your husband".

Ingratitude is a common ailment among women. Instead of showing appreciation for the flavours of the husband, they will, on the contrary, exhibit their displeasure implying thereby dissatisfaction. This ungrateful attitude of the wife brings much grief to the husband. Even if she is not pleased with the gift, never should she show by her demeanour even an inkling of dissatisfaction or displeasure.

Her expression of pleasure to her husband for the "little" presents which he brings her is a source of great pleasure and happiness for him.

Never should she make any demands on him. She should maintain expenditure within his means. Spending more than his income or depleting the entire income leads to much corruption and turmoil in the home. A spendthrift wife will repeatedly exhibit an ungrateful attitude. She will annoy and displease her husband. Her demands for items of luxury will sour her relationship with her husband. Even if he happens to be wealthy, she should desist from making demands. Patience and satisfaction, contentment and pleasure for the husband should be her permanent qualities.

Nagging

Among the abominable actions of wives is their habit of nagging. Nagging in fact is a manifestation of ingratitude. The habit of nagging indeed vile and destructive to the happiness of the home. It diverts the husband's heart from his wife. It hardens his feelings and he then becomes insensitive towards her. Under no circumstances should the wife ever nag. Little do wives realise the ruinous consequences of their nagging. Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has exhorted and ordered the Muslim wife to adopt a countenance which will ignite the face of even a gloomy husband with pleasure and happiness. But nagging produces the opposite effect.

“The best of womankind is she who makes her husband happy when he glances at her.....” (Hadith)

Her glance at him should be sufficient to make him radiant with happiness. Only a woman conscious on Allah Ta'ala, of the Akhirah, and who strives to conduct her life along the lines of the Sunnah, will succeed to achieve this feat of Ibaadat viz; maintaining his happiness and the pleasure of her husband – a feat which secures for her more thawaab than that which men obtain in Jihad in the Path of Allah Ta'ala. Her first and best Path of Allah – her supreme Jihad – is her striving to please her husband and to guard her home and children with the love, care and aptitude which are exclusive to only women of the Sunnah.

The following narration illustrates the value and merit of a woman's activities within the confines of her home. Hadhrat Ibn Abbas (Radhiyallahu Anhu) narrates:

“A woman came to Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and said: ‘O Rasullullah! I have been delegated by the women to come to you. Allah has made this Jihad obligatory on males. If they succeed, they

are rewarded; if they are slain, they remain alive and are given sustenance by their Rabb. But we women remain in their service. What then is there for us?’ Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: ‘Convey to any woman whom you meet that obedience to the husband and acknowledging his rights are equal to Jihad. However, few among you do so”.

Thus, the Muslim wife should realize that her homely duties, caring for her children and her loving attitudes and responses to her husband although ostensibly acts in mundane form, are in fact deeds of the highest virtue on par with, if not superior, to Jihad Fi Sabeelillah (in the Path of Allah) waged by men.

Since the home affairs are acts of high merit which invite the Pleasure of Allah Ta’ala, it behoves her to exercise much Sabr and restraint when she is confronted with things which are displeasing and frustrating to her. Every Muslim is required to strive against his/her nafs (lowly desires). This process of striving is known as mujaahadah (striving against the nafs). Woman’s sphere of mujaahadah is her home – her husband and children. She achieves roohani (spiritual) progress with her mujaahadah (striving against the nafs) in this field. She should now meditate that the pleasure of Allah in regard to herself is coupled with the pleasure of her husband. Her constant contemplation of this reality will make easy for her to bear even the wrongs and injustices of her husband. While the husband has no licence to treat his wife unjustly, in the interests of her happiness and her home, she should cast a blind eye to her own rights. In contrast, she should offer more than the obligatory rights demanded from her by the marriage. To capture her husband’s love, it will be necessary for her to offer sacrifices in various spheres.

Imposing on the Husband

Allah Ta'ala says in the Qur'aan Hakeem:

“Men are the rulers over women....”

“And for men is a rank above then (women)”.

According to the Qur'aan Hakeem men are the rulers of women and they have a superior rank. The superiority of the husband's rank is such that Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) described him as the wife's *“Paradise or Hell”*. Obedience to him ensures Jannat for the wife. In contrast, disobedience to him invokes the Wrath of Allah, justifying her entry into Jahannum.

From this, it will be simple to understand that the rank of the husband enjoys exceptional superiority over the woman. Despite the man's natural attitude and temperament which accompany his rank and rose as a husband many wives commit the fatal folly of attempting to dictate to their husbands. At times they obstinately strive to impose their will on their husbands. They fail to discern that their intransigent desire of gaining control of their husbands' mind is always doomed to failure. We are not considering here the type of husband described as dayyooth (cuckold) by Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Such weak-minded men controlled by wives are not in the scope of this discussion. Here we are concerned with the husband who by nature knows and acts as the *“ruler of women”*.

The wife's desire to dominate her husband necessarily leads to conflict which corrupts the peace and well-being of the home. This attitude of the wife holds disastrous consequences for the happiness of the marriage. She should understand and appreciate that the dominant temperament of the man will by nature not permit him to

submit to her demands. An aggravating factor is that in the majority of cases the wife's demands are inordinate and occasioned by petty, lowly, and selfish motives.

She strives to manipulate her husband to secure his subservience by devising schemes and adopting despicable methods and attitudes wholly unbecoming of a true Muslim wife. Her lack of full intelligence deludes her into believing that her intransigent attitude and her devious schemes will ultimately beat her husband into submission. Her miscalculation produces the fatal consequence of divorce which is so rife in today's society.

The wife's attempt to dominate, dictate and control her husband is in fact an inversion of the respective natural and Islamic roles of husband and wife. While it is the husband's right and role to dominate and dictate, it is the duty of the wife to submit and serve. Misery and calamity are only the natural consequences of behaving unnaturally and un-Islamically.

The wife should understand that she can never conquer her husband by confrontation and seeking to set herself up as his equal or superior. The way to win him over is for her to retain her femininity, submission and docility being vital constituents of true and pure femininity. She can win the heart of her husband by introducing into her life the advices and prescription offered by Nabi-e-Kareem (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). She should abandon her attempt of conquering her husband by competing with him, by dictating to him and by forceful assertion of what she considers to be her right.

Even in the attempt to secure her lawful rights and her justifiable requirements and desires, she should not resort to demands and confrontation. Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) enumerated among the qualities of noble women, their sacrifice of their life and

wealth in the effort to gain the pleasure of their husbands. Hence, Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

“The best of women is she who gladdens her husband when he glances at her; she obeys him when he commands her and she does not oppose him regarding herself and her wealth by doing what he dislikes”.

It is significant that inspite of the wife remaining the sole owner of her wealth – the husband has no Shar’i right of claiming her wealth – Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) encourages her to put her wealth at his disposal and pleasure. Of what use are her wealth and existence if she lacks the ability and the intelligence to utilize these gifts to procure the love and pleasure of her husband? With her wealth and life she purchases her husband’s pleasure. In exchange, she achieves Jannat. Thus, Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said that Jannat is secured for the wife whose death occurred during the state of her husband’s pleasure – when she died she was well-pleased with her.

Women should, therefore, realize the evil of their attitude to dominate the husband. Domineering and demanding must be totally eliminated from their lives. Tenderness and simplicity are the salient features of true Muslim women. Hence, the Qur’aan Majeed laudingly speaks of them as “al-ghafilat” (simple, pure and innocent).

Demanding Her Rights

There is no disputing the fact that Islam has imposed rights and duties on the husband in relation to his wife and children. While it is incumbent on the husband to discharge the rights of his wife, she should not labour under such rights from an errant husband. Every

husband is not an embodiment of piety. Many husbands fail to honour the rights of their wives. A wife will miserably fail to achieve her aim of securing her rights by making demands on her husband. On the contrary, she will only alienate him and he will feel justified to neglect her rights, although he has not Shar'i right to do so.

The wife should, therefore, approach the situation with understanding patience and concern for her husband. She must not adopt a legal stand and technical attitude, demanding from her husband perfect and total moral excellence. Putting forth demands even though legal, is nugatory of the love which is so vital for the success for a marriage.

The wife has to remember that despite her husband's failure to fulfil his duties to her, she is under Shar'i obligation to obey her husband in all lawful things. It is incumbent on her to submit to his permissible orders and wishes even if she has to forgo her legal rights. This fact is abundantly clear from the following Ahadith of Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam):

"She does not oppose him in regard to herself and her wealth by doing what he dislikes".

It is noteworthy that in this narration it is said that the wealth belongs to her. In spite of the wife being the owner of her wealth, she is exhorted by Islam to refrain from utilizing it contrary to her husband's wishes.

"If the husband orders her to transport stones" from one mountain to another mountain, "it will be proper for her to do so".

She should not engage in abundance of Nafil Salaat without her husband's consent. Thus she cannot bring into operation her lawful right of performing Nafil Ibaadat without the consent of her husband,

notwithstanding the fact that the actual and prime purpose of man's creation is Ibaadat:

"I (Allah) have not created jinn and man, except that they render Ibaadat to Me".

When Islam has ordered the wife to even accord priority and preference to her husband's wishes over and above acts of Ibaadat, the high degree of obedience to the husband should be quite apparent. Therefore the wife should never regard her obedience and her service to her husband in mundane acts as a worldly matter of no significance. In executing his wishes she should understand that she is obeying the command of Allah Ta'ala who has made incumbent on her this total obedience.

The Muslim woman should not adopt the evil attitudes of the 'liberated' women of the west. The so-called emancipated women of immoral western would consider the Muslim wife's holy act of obedience as slavery imposed on her by the man. This western attitude is a deception of Shaitaan.

Obedience to the husband is a vital constituent of the Muslim woman's taqwa (piety), she can never be pious if she lacks the treasure of obedience. It is for this reason the Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

"O Woman! Look! Your husband is either your Jannat or your Jahannum".

When the Husband Calls

It is incumbent on the wife to answer the call of her husband. Even if she happens to be involved in cooking or any other work, her husband's call has priority. She should not delay in answering his call. She has to rather postpone whatever else she happens to be engaged in. Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

“When the husband calls his wife to bed and she refuses, thus causing him to sleep displeased (with her), the Mala'ikah curse her until the morning”.

It is, therefore, of utmost importance that the Muslim wife understands the necessity and incumbency for her to disengage herself from any activity immediately her husband calls her. The curse of the Mala'ikah is tantamount to the Wrath of Allah Ta'ala being invoked.

The Qur'aan Majeed mentions that the purpose of the wife is to provide solace and peace for her husband. Should she then act in any way which conflicts with this purpose, she will be failing in her sacred duty to her husband.

“It is He who has created you (mankind) from one life (person, viz. Aadam) and He created from it (that life) its pair (Hawwa) so that he (Aadam) may find solace with her”. (A'raf)

Her Relationship with Her In-Laws

For her own happiness and for the sake of her husband it is essential that the wife maintains good relationship with her in-laws. Many marriages have broken down as a result of the wife's spiteful attitude towards her in-laws. Sometimes the fault lies with the in-laws, but on account of the wife's refusal to adopt humility and patience, misery and heartache follow for all in the house.

The wife should understand that in having married, she has accepted to abide by the new life-style and conditions of her new home. It is, therefore, wrong for her to impose herself on her in-laws or to dictate terms to her husband. Some wives to great lengths in their endeavour to drive a wedge between her husband and his relatives. She introduces schemes and invents stories in her bid to alienate her husband from his mother, sisters and brothers. Such attempts are despicable and invoke the Wrath of Allah Ta'ala.

Even if a wife succeeds in evil attempt and imposes her haraam desire on a weak husband, she should not labour under the notion of having won over her husband. On the contrary the husband will detest her in his heart, but due to his weakness and natural disposition of humbleness he may not voice himself. His docility will constrain him to accept her unjust and spiteful attitudes with silent disgust and heartache. While she may have succeeded in physically alienating her husband from his relatives, she must remember that she has also alienated love and respect for her from his heart.

Wives – there are of course exceptions – have a burning, jealous and greedy desire to lay claim on the total wealth of their husbands. The husband will spend lavishly on his wife, buying luxuries to bring happiness to her. His efforts and wealth are directed to bring maximum comfort and pleasure. His love for her causes him to slave

for her. He invites difficulty upon difficulty in order to keep her smiling. But, when occasionally the husband wishes to financially assist any of his relatives she behaves as if he failed in upholding her rights. Her grossly unjust, selfish and spiteful attitude creates misery and heartache for her husband. She steers him into the unenviable position of having to abandon acts of *silah rahmi* (kindness to relatives). She asserts her spiteful desires with her selfish attitudes and deceitful displays which cause the husband to succumb to her wishes. He conforms to her wishes to maintain the peace at home.

This 'victory' a wife achieves, of course, over a weak husband. It is a hollow and a vile 'victory' which effaces love from his heart and contributes towards the infidelity of a husband who is not conscious of the Akhirah. The wife who acts in this spiteful way, therefore, has nothing to gloat about. Her 'victory' is in fact a great calamity for her in both worlds, for in having asserted herself in this unlawful and despicable way she has courted the displeasure of her husband and the Wrath of Allah Ta'ala. The husband's pleasure is the way to her Paradise while his displeasure is her path to Hell, hence, Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

"O woman! Look! He is either your Jannat or your Fire".

The Muslim wife should bring her emotions under control by means of mujaahadah (striving against the nafs). No matter how great the demands of the lowly nafs may be, reflect and make a decision with the intelligence. Let not the lowly emotion – the nafs – be the arbiter. Seek the judgement of the intelligence imbued with Imaan. Succumbing to the dictates of the nafs will bring her fleeting pleasure – a pleasure which will be short-lived and replaced by enduring grief and heartache since the husband's love will no longer be for her. The un-holiness of her life will be further darkened by the displeasure of Allah Ta'ala.

The true and intelligent Muslim wife will understand the need to perpetually maintain the happiness of her husband. Her happiness is inextricably interwoven with his happiness. By embarking on an attitude which casts shadows in his happiness, the wife wrecks her own happiness. She must understand that she can never acquire her husband's love if she attempts to disrupt his relationship with his mother, brothers, sisters and other relatives. The maintenance of such a relationship – aiding relatives and being kind to them-is a sacred command. Disruption of family ties is among the worst of major sins.

In a number of Ahadith, Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has warned us against the dastardly act of wrecking family ties. Acts of *silah rahmi* (kindness of relatives) are Wajib (compulsory) deeds of exceptionally high merit. The punishment for the crime of breaking family ties is severe. Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) stated that Allah Ta'ala has taken an oath by His Splendour, Might and Glory that He will break and destroy those who break and destroy family ties. Yet it is observed that numerous wives suffer from this severe malady. Permitting envy and malice to run havoc with their minds and hearts, they cast overboard the commands of eth Shariah and give vent to base emotions. Blinded by jealousy, she pursues her baneful desire to secure the total alienation of her husband's relationship with his relatives.

In this despicable manner she not only derives her husband of tremendous thawaab in the Aakhirah, but she invites also the curse of Allah Ta'ala; effacement of her husband's love and misfortune in the home. The wife should understand well that among the many spiritual maladies from which women suffer, that a degree of envy and malice which drive her to scheme the disruption of her husband's relationship with his relatives is haraam, sinful and evil in the extreme. Baneful attributes such as envy and malice are natural propensities in

human beings. However, as long as the dictates of these lowly qualities are controlled and not permitted to find expression, sin will not be involved. Thus the true Muslim wife should not give vent to the base desires, promptings and demands of these attitudes. She must necessarily strive to curb her jealousy and never allow the evil of jealousy to dominate her mind.

When jealousy and malice seek to assert themselves, she should call Allah Ta'ala to remembrance, recite Istighfaar and convince herself to the wrongs of her desires. No matter how envious she may feel of her husband's assistance and kindness to his relatives, she should never exhibit the slightest vestige of displeasure, discontent and jealousy. She should not give him any grounds for even suspecting or detecting any trait of jealousy and malice in her. His pleasure should become her pleasure and his displeasure, her displeasure. In this way he Jannat is assured. In this way she will bring Allah's Rahmat perpetually cascading on her.

The Wife's Right of Separate Living Quarters

Among the rights granted to the wife by Islam is separate living quarters. Undoubtedly, it is the incumbent – the Wajib – duty of the husband to provide separate living quarters for his wife even if more than one family happen to be living in the same house.

Her bedroom is her private chamber over which she has full control. It is within the scope of her Islamic right – her legal right – to prevent her husband's parents and even her own parents from entering her bedroom.

While this is her acknowledged right, wives should understand that not all husbands are conscious of the laws of the Shariah. Especially in these times of Deeni indifference and ignorance, many husbands lack Deeni understanding. They are consequently intolerant and prone to be dictated by nafsani emotions. The intelligent wife should therefore understand that she will not achieve happiness in the home not her husband's love by pressing her legal rights. Obstinate demands for the fulfilment of rights will alienate the love and affection of the husband.

Sometimes, due to adverse circumstances, the husband is unable to immediately provide separate living quarters. The wife should act with understanding and patience. She should not nag and insist that her husband acts immediately to fulfil her demand.

Some wives deliberately scheme to create problems with their in-laws with whom they may be living, so that the husband whose peace is wrecked by the never-ending spiteful and petty wrangling becomes compelled to relocate and break ties with his close relatives solely to maintain the "peace". In succumbing to the malicious machinations of his scheming wife he invokes the Wrath of Allah Ta'ala by bringing to an end his former acts of kindness and assistance to his relatives.

The Muslim wife must fear Allah Ta'ala and remember that she will have to answer in the Divine Court. Therefore, in her attempts to acquire her rights she should not be disobedient to her husband; she should not seek to commit the haraam act of driving a wedge between him and his relatives. She must remember that the desire to obtain her lawful rights does not justify the perpetration of the haraam acts of displeasing and disobeying her husband. In her desire to obtain her rights, she should act wholly in the light and spirit of Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) exhortations to offer total obedience to her husband.

She must necessarily call to mind that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

“O woman! Look! He is either your Jannat or your Fire.”

“The noblest woman is she who makes her husband feel happy when he glances at her; she obeys him when he orders her and she does not disobey him regarding herself and her wealth by doing what he dislikes”.

Some women, from the very first day of their marriage, resolve to demand a separate home. They are not prepared to even attempt to live happily with their in-laws. They embroil themselves in schemes to achieve their wishes. In the process they quarrel, fight, and bring misery to their husbands and in-laws. No stone is left unturned to achieve their aim. They do not show the slightest care for the feelings of their husbands and in-laws. They are not prepared to wait patiently for the right opportunity to arise. They seek immediate fulfilment of their demands and rights. This attitude does not augur well for the marriage. She has a life ahead to live with her husband, but her impatience and intransigence set in the process of misery from the beginning.

They should bide their time. Patience and Dua should be adopted. It is unintelligent, callous and un-Islamic for a wife to press for her right of separating from her husband's parents when heartache and confrontation between her husband and his parents will be the result. A good Muslim wife will not drive her husband into a situation where he is forced to make a choice between his parents and his wife.

The Shariah's Command to Obey the Husband

In some quarters there exists the misconception that the wife need not obey her husband in such wishes of his which have not been compulsorily imposed on her by the Shariah. Thus, we find some misguided learned men fanning the audacity of women by proclaiming that since it is not a compulsory duty of the wife to do the cooking and other household chores, it is not necessary for her to obey her husband's wishes in this regard. It is the arrangements for the cooking, etc. Therefore, the wife being the queen in the home should act imperially and not become subservient to such wishes of her husband.

Those who propagate to women along the lines are extremely short-sighted. They act irresponsibly and childishly in thinking that a successful and happy married life is built on demands and observance of only fardh (compulsory) duties. While it is acknowledged that certain domestic acts are not compulsory duties imposed on the wife by the Shariah, she should not lose sight of the fact that numerous things rendered by the husband to make her happy – to make her comfortable – likewise are not compulsory on the husband. He provides comforts and luxuries for his wife purely out of love. The Muslim wife should thus not resort to demanding her rights not

should she refrain from any domestic work merely on account of it not being her incumbent duty.

Obedience to the husband is incumbent on her in all lawful things even if the Shariah has not decreed such things obligatory on her. Something may not be obligatory on her initially. However, the husband's instruction has the effect of incumbency. Since Islam has ordered the wife to submit to the authority and command of her husband, she is obliged to obey him in all lawful things even if these have not been imposed on her initially by the Shariah.

Thus we observe that she is not allowed to engage in Nafil fasting and abundance of Nafil Salaat without her husband's consent. She is ordered by Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) to please her husband in regard to her own wealth.

Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) emphasised obedience to the husband in all things lawful, even though the Shariah has not initially imposed such things as compulsory duties on the wife. Therefore, while it is permissible, for the wife to engage in trade, for example, from her home or in a way in which Islam's Hijab rules are not violated, it will not be permissible for her if her husband prohibits her. Similarly, while it is permissible for the wife to visit her relatives at any time and any number of times provided that Shar'i Hijab is observed, she is obliged by the Shariah to obey her husband if he prohibits her from such visits.

If she is interested in pursuing a lawful profession, e.g. mid-wifery, or she wishes to pursue higher Deeni Knowledge under strict Purdah (Hijab) conditions she will not be able to do so if her husband forbids her.

Since obedience to her husband is foremost and of vital concern, her wishes and desires are subservient to his wishes and orders. It is for this reason that Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) informed women that their husbands are either their Jannat or their Jahannum. Obedience to the husband will ensure the everlasting happiness of Jannat for her, while disobedience will assign her to the misery of Jahannum. The Muslim wife should therefore understand the importance and significance of obeying her husband.

Obedience to the husband is incumbent on her. She should not commit the grave error of minimizing its importance and incumbency. Her failure to understand the lofty and superior rank of her husband will cause her to manifest ingratitude – a malady from which women suffer acutely. In this regard Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said to the women:

“O assembly of women! Give charity, for verily, I have seen women to be the majority of the inmates of the Fire.”

When Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was asked of the reason for women being in majority in Jahannum, he replied:

“You curse in abundance and you are ungrateful to your husbands.”

The wife should regard as incumbent on her total obedience to her husband in all things, whether these happen to be rights and duties imposed on her directly by the Shariah or whether they are not compulsory rights initially commanded by the Shariah but devolved as incumbent by virtue of the husband’s wishes and instructions.

Allah Ta’ala has appointed the man as the ruler of his family. The Qur’aan makes explicit reference to his superior rank and his role as the ruler of his wife. She should, therefore, understand well the rank

which Allah Ta'ala has conferred on him. Her value and her rank rise by Allah Ta'ala by virtue of her submission to her husband. Such submission will be described as slavery by modernists and westernized Muslims. But, the Muslim wife should not allow herself to be misled by the irreligious and immoral attitudes of those whose relationship with the Deen is slack.

The Muslim woman can never be part of a culture which "liberates" woman from the bonds of morality and honour. The submissive attitude of the Muslim woman – the attitude which modernists may label 'slavery' to the husband – is in fact her holy natural role established for her by Allah Ta'ala. And in the faithful discharge of this role for the sake of Allah Ta'ala will she be elevated. Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

"Whoever adopts humility for Allah's sake, Allah will elevate him (or her)."

Submission and humility to the husband are by Allah's command.

The Pious Muslim Wife

Hadhrat Abu Umamah (Radhiyallahu Anhu) narrates that Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

"The best of goodness for a man after the Taqwa of Allah is a pious wife. If he commands her, she obeys him. If he looks at her, she makes him happy. If he takes an oath vouching for her, she upholds him, and when he is away from her she guards herself (her chastity) and his wealth".

In another narration, Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

“The entire world is a temporary benefit and the best of temporary benefits is a pious wife”.

The best of treasures is a pious wife. The piety and value of a Muslim woman are not gauged in terms of supererogatory (Nafl) acts of Ibaadat. In addition to general acts of piety and worship, a woman's rank and piety are increased by her obedience to her husband. A woman who brings displeasure to her husband is not described as a pious woman (*Al-Mar'atus Salihah*) even if she engages in abundance of Nafl acts and Thikr. In the hadith cited here, some of the attributes of the pious woman are mentioned. These are: obeying the husband; showing love and affection for him; moral integrity; faithfulness and chastity. Thus, the wife who is a source of comfort and happiness to her husband is the woman of piety – *Al-Mar'atus Salihah* – who is spoken of so highly in the Ahadith of Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). A woman without these attributes (viz. those mentioned in the aforementioned hadith) is devoid of piety even if she engages in an abundance of Nafl acts of Ibaadat.

It is significant that for the woman's attainment of piety the hadith does not speak of abundance of Nafl acts of Ibaadat. According to the Ahadith, her piety is interwoven with her role as the wife and the mother. A woman who executes her obligatory acts of Ibaadat and strives to keep her husband happy by means of her acts, service and attitudes is *Al-Mar'atus Salihah* (the pious woman) praised so much by Islam.

The Muslim woman should understand her role well. She should never act belligerently towards her husband. She should not argue with her husband in vindication of her rights. When her husband becomes angry, she should not justify her actions even if she is convinced that he is at fault for displaying anger and impatience. It is negatory of her quality of piety to stand up against her husband's scolding and

reprimanding. Never should she engage him in a slanging match. Let him blow his top. The Muslim wife should bear everything in silence and with patience. Her dignified attitude of submission will put him to shame. He will realize his error and regret. In fact, her silence, obedience and submission will 'enslave' him to her. This is the way to win him over. A husband cannot be won over by a wife who nags and grumbles. On the contrary, if she displays ill-temper and adopts an argumentative stance, she will only succeed in alienating her husband. The pious woman will be occupied the greater part of the day in her home affairs. It is, therefore, understand that she cannot find much time for rendering Nafl acts of Ibaadat in abundance. However, she should not imagine herself as being deprived of the tremendous thawaab yielded by Nafl Ibaadat. Her involvement in her home duties and her faithful service and expression of true love for her husband ensure for her great thawaab, the type of thawaab men obtain by participation in Jihad. These are the ingredients in the Islamic conception of woman's piety.

A vital dimension of a Muslim wife's piety and Deeni success is her successful, faithful and loving execution of her duties to her husband and her total obedience to him in all lawful things, even if these have not been imposed on her initially by Islam. A wife of this quality and degree of spiritual elevation will truly be the woman described by Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) as '*Al-Mar'atus Salihah*' and she will constitute the most valuable treasure of all the transitory treasures of the world. Thus, Nabi-e-Kareem (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

"The world – all of it is temporary benefit. And the best of the transitory benefits is Al-Mar'atus Salihah (or the pious woman)."

She will then also be the best goodness and fortune for man after Taqwa of Allah as stated in the Hadith:

“.....the Muslim – for him after Tawqā of Allah, the best of goodness is a pious wife.....”

For the pious wife, Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) offers the following glad tidings:

“The woman who performs the five daily Salaat, fasts the month of Ramadhaan, guards her chastity and obeys her husband, can enter Jannah by whichever portal she desires.”

All eight portals of Jannat are thrown open for the pious, obedient wife. Her short life lived here on the transitory abode in submission to the lawful wishes, whims and fancies of her husband will liberate her truly in the Aakhirah. She will inherit the treasures of Jannat and be the envy of numerous others who will observe her grand and glorious entry into Jannat by whichever portal she wishes. She will not be directed to any specific gate by the Mala’ikah of Jannat. With honour will she find her ultimate and lofty state of freedom when every portal of Jannat is opened up for her, signifying the end of all worldly restrictions which were necessarily imposed on her by the Shariat.

Advice by Hakimul Ummat Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (Rahmatullah Alaih)

Understand well that the relationship between husband and wife is a life-long affair. If both hearts remain united in love and understanding, there is then no greater blessing and boon for this holy relationship. On the other hand, if a defect develops and disturbs this relationship, then there is no greater misfortune for the husband and wife. Hence, it is of the utmost importance that you, the wife, endeavour your very best to capture the heart of your husband. Always be at his beck and call.

Remember well that once you have embittered your husband, the impression will remain in his heart even after you have regretted and apologised. The damage has been done. The relationship will no longer be the same unblemished bond which had existed initially. The love will not be the same. Afterwards, whenever any slight misunderstanding occurs, the earlier biting and acid remarks will come to your husband's mind, casting a cloud on the relationship. Therefore, be very careful when you speak to your husband. Think that the pleasure of Allah and His Rasool (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is linked with your husband's pleasure.

An intelligent wife need not be directed at every turn. She should of her own accord understand what to say, when to say and how to say.

Do not ask for maintenance which is above his means. Be satisfied with whatever he gives. If sometimes you fancy some jewellery or garments, then do not hanker after it if your husband cannot afford it, nor regret for not being able to acquire it. Never give him the slightest idea that you are discontented. By insisting to have to items, your husband will feel that you have utterly not consideration for him and that you are thoughtlessly and selfishly making demands which are beyond his means. In fact, as far as possible, never ask for anything. Let him ask you. Making demands will lower your esteem.

Never be obstinate. Even if you know that you are right, do not obstinately cling to your view even if your husband's attitude goes against your grain. Wait for an opportune moment to present your case to him. And, when you do, do so nicely, with respect and humility.

If you find it difficult at your husband's home, do not show discontent. Bear it with patience. Always express happiness so that your husband suffers no grief on your account.

Do not say: "I don't like this". "This is not nice". "It should have been so", etc. By such statements of dissatisfaction you will constrict his heart. He will then not be inclined to present you with gifts. When he brings something for you, express your happiness and appreciation even if you are not pleased with the item. Do not give him the faintest idea that the gift is not of your liking. By accepting his gifts with thanks and praises, you will encourage him further and endear yourself to him. He will then bring something more and better.

It comes in the Hadith Shareef that Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said that the inmates of Jahannum consist mostly of women on account of two things: they curse in abundance and they are ungrateful to their husbands. Indeed, ingratitude is an evil attribute and so is the habit of cursing others.

When your husband is angry with you for some reason, do not speak in a way which will increase his anger. Watch his moods and speak accordingly. If at any time he is annoyed with you, then do not also puff up your face, adopting an uncaring attitude. On the contrary beg forgiveness of him, express your regret and profound apologies and in whatever way you are able to, endeavour your utmost to dispel the cloud so as to restore the peace and love. Consider it your pride to submit to him.

The bond between the husband and wife is not sustained with only love. Together with love, respect for the husband is essential. It is a grave error for the wife to think of herself as her husband's equal. Never extract any service from your husband. Do not ask him to do any household chores. Even if he offers to assist out of love, then too,

lovingly refuse and do everything yourself. Will you extract service from your father? Now ponder! Your husband's rank is higher than that of your father. Therefore, be mindful in your acts and behave respectfully and with dignity.

When your husband returns from a journey, go out of your way, to make him comfortable and happy. Don't discuss financial matters with him on this occasion. Don't ask: "What have you brought for me?" if he has brought something, he will obviously present it to you.

If your husband leaves all his money in the custody of his parents, do not take offence. In fact, if he hands over his wages to you, intelligence demands that you advise him to leave it in his parents' custody. By your acceptance and control of his money, his parents may become ill-disposed towards you. They will feel that their daughter-in-law has gained control of their son and that he is dancing to her tune.

As long as your mother-in-law and father-in-law are alive, consider it your incumbent duty to serve them. Do not demand separation from them. In most cases this demand is the root of ill-feeling between the daughter-in-law and her in-laws. Have consideration for your in-laws in this regard. Understand that after having struggled to rear their son, it will come as a rude shock to them when their daughter-in-law prevails upon her husband to separate from his parents. Now in their old-age they are deprived of the comfort and companionship which they had hoped would come with their son's marriage. When the mother-in-law realizes that her daughter-in-law schemes to create a wedge between them and their son, the mischief spreads.

Live with all members of your in-laws with respect and friendliness from the very beginning. Be kind to the juniors and respectful to the seniors. Do not impose any of your duties onto others. Do not let any

of your things lie about. Assist your in-laws with their work without them even having requested you. Love for you will be generated in their hearts. When two persons are involved in a private conversation, separate yourself. Excuse yourself. Do not linger to overhear their discussion.

If you dislike the living conditions and atmosphere of your in-laws' home, never display your dislike. Convince yourself of the need to adapt and accept. Do not display a glum look.

If you find things not to your liking at your in-laws' home, do not gossip about it when you visit your parents. It is despicable to reveal the private affairs of your in-laws. This is also a cause for quarrelling and ill-feeling. There is not benefit in narrating the affairs which prevail at your in-laws' home.

Arrange your husband's belongings systematically. Pay attention to cleanliness and tidiness. Do not wait for your husband to prod you to attend to your home duties. Do not scatter things all over the show.

Never speak lies, not ever deceive. Do not conceal from your husband any wrong which you have done. He will lose confidence in you if you behave deceptively. Then, he may not believe you even when you are speaking the truth.

When he scolds you in anger, bear it with patience. Never retaliate with back-chat. No matter what he says, sit in silence. When you adopt this dignified and honourable stand, you will then observe him regretting after his anger has subsided. He will feel ashamed of himself and will endeavour to live happily with you. But, if you retaliate, then the consequences of the confrontation will be extremely harmful for the marriage bond.

How to Deal with a Husband Having an Affair with another Woman

When a husband has been afflicted with the great misfortune of having fallen into the trap of an extra-marital affair, it calls for considerable patience and intelligence from his wife. Such a development is extremely delicate and is fraught with calamitous consequences for the marriage bond. The course which the marriage will take largely depends on the attitude and reaction of his wife. If she behaves intelligently and demonstrates considerable patience, she can assist her husband in his predicament and save her marriage. On the contrary, if she loses her mind and gives vent to her emotional feelings, she will only achieve the alienation of her husband. She will drive him away from herself and wreck her marriage.

The wife should understand well that she will never be able to induce her husband to abandon the other woman by displaying anger and by hurling accusations and insult at her husband. When a wife discovers that her husband is having an affair with another woman, the first thing she should do is to arrest her emotional feelings and understand that she will not succeed to separate her husband from the other woman by anger and argument. By adopting anger and a stance of confrontation, her husband will only become more obstinate. Whatever little love and feeling he still cherishes for his wife will be eliminated by her confrontation with him. She will only drive him closer to the other woman.

The husband involved with another woman is emotionally disturbed. His wife's rough and harsh attitude will convince him that the other woman possesses qualities of love and charm which his wife lacks. Her fighting attitude – which wives usually display when they hear of their husband's extra – marital affairs – will make her appear as a hag, and

a witch to him. Her harsh confrontation with him will eliminate any guilt feelings which he had hitherto cherished in his heart. He will now feel that the other woman is offering him love and happiness which he cannot obtain from his wife. An intelligent wife who desires to salvage her husband and keep intact her marriage, will not allow the situation to deteriorate to this level.

The woman of intelligence and understanding should face this delicate situation with great patience (Sabr), supplicating to Allah Ta'ala to guide her husband and to open his mind so that he wakes up and becomes alert to the dangerous and sinful trap into which he has allowed himself to become ensnared. She should discuss the matter with him intelligently and respectfully without adopting an argumentative and obstinate attitude. She should endeavour to explain to him his folly, wrong and sin. She should endeavour to win over his heart with love and tender tones reminding him of the Law, Fear and Punishment of Allah Ta'ala. If the husband rebuffs her Naseehat, she should not give up home. Leave the matter for a while and resume the Naseehat respectfully, humbly and intelligently at another time when he is in a better mood.

She should bear her grief within herself, seeking solace in the Thikr of Allah Ta'ala. The Qur'aan Shareef says:

“Those who have Imaan, their hearts find peace with Thikrullah. Verily, with the Remembrance of Allah do hearts find peace.”

She should resign herself to Allah Ta'ala and make Dua earnestly and constantly. She should understand that in the final analysis, whatever Allah Ta'ala chooses for her will be in her best interests. She should, therefore, not allow her grief – which is just normal and natural – to give rise to frustration, impatience, and un-Islamic behaviour. An intelligent wife facing up to this delicate situation with courage,

understanding and patience will put her husband to shame by means of her noble and dignified reaction. His indulgence in his error will be self-devouring. He will feel guilty and his injustice will torture his soul. He will feel mediocre in his own heart. His conscience will be smitten with guilt and regret. A good man will soon see his folly and return to his wife humbly and full of shame and regret.

On the other hand, if the wife attempts to alienate her husband from the other woman by adopting a bullying, quarrelling, nagging and un-woman-like attitude, then the result will be the opposite. It will lead to the breakdown of the marriage. A wife should learn a very important rule, viz. that a husband cannot be tamed and won over by nagging and quarrelling. To achieve success for her marriage the wife must be submissive, humble, and walk the path of piety. If she seeks to emulate her western Kuffaar counterparts in the movement of liberalism and female 'emancipation and equality', then she should understand that she is treading the road to divorce which is a daily occurrence among western couples.

Asking for Divorce

Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

“A woman who asks her husband for divorce without a valid reason – on her the fragrance of Jannat is unlawful”.

Sometimes women, because of their impatience blurt out demands for talaq. This is a serious misdemeanour. Such women have been warned in the Hadith of Allah's Wrath. They will be deprived of the fragrance of Jannat, which means that immediate entry into Jannat will be denied to them.

Divorce is not a simple matter. Women should understand this fact more since they stand to lose more and suffer more in the event of talaq. A woman's eyes open to reality only after divorce. But then alas! It will be too late for regret, especially if the husband had reacted ignorantly and issued three talaqs which sever the Nikah finally and irrevocably.

A woman should understand well that her presence in even her parents' home after talaq is most unwelcome. A divorced woman will never be at peace in her parents' home in the same way as she was before marriage. In fact, she will be a burden, a liability and an embarrassment to her people once she has been divorced. At least, in her husband's home, even if he is uncaring and even unloving towards her, she is still her own boss. In her husband's home she will not be under anyone's obligation and favour. In contrast, a divorcee in even her parents' home will be under the obligation of several people – her parents, her brothers and sisters-in-law. She will be regarded as an imposter and an intruder. She becomes a centre for gossip among the women of the neighbourhood. In short, she will soon realize the terrible mistake of divorce and the greater unhappiness which ensue in its wake.

All this unhappiness is besides the lasting misery, hardship and instability which her children will suffer in the heart-rending process of divorce.

A wife should, therefore, never ask or think of divorce. Regardless of the unhappiness she experiences in her husband's home, such unhappiness is always the lesser evil when compared to the evils which result in the wake of divorce. Divorce, Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, is the most detestable of the lawful things.

Divorce is absolutely the very last resort. A woman should not hastily ask for divorce on account of her husband's occasional neglect, misconduct and failure to provide luxury and comfort. Even his desire for a second marriage does not justify her asking talaaq.

Haste is always regretted. Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

"Haste is an act of Shaitaan".

A shaitani act will necessarily be regretted. But sometimes, a hasty act prompted by Shaitaan is of such severity that regret after the deed will not avail. Once divorce has taken place, especially if it is of the Baa-in and Mughallazah type, (final and irrevocable divorce which is the effect of giving three talaaq) the damage is irreparable.

Islamic culture is a divine culture. It is widely from western and other Kuffaar cultures. A woman should not view marriage and the home through the coloured glasses of western ideas and liberalism. The demands of Islamic virtue and chastity are very lofty. A Muslim wife should not besmirch her chastity and ruin her sacred attribute of innocence by misappropriating her mind, eyes and body. She is and has to be a beacon of virtue, modesty, chastity and faithfulness.

The Qur'aan Majeed speaks highly of a Muslim woman's chastity and honour. The Shariah has commanded a severe penalty for those who impugn her reputation and honour. Her worth, her nobility, and the sanctity of her reputation are accorded an exceptional degree of importance and priority, hence the Qur'aan commands:

"Those who slander (accuse falsely with the sin of zina) chaste (pure and holy) women, and fail to produce four witnesses, flog them eighty lashes (each) and then never accept their testimony (in an Islamic court):

(Surah Noor)

Again the Qur'aan Majeed reiterates:

“Verily, those who slander chaste women who are innocent and believing, they are cursed in this world and the Aakhirah”.

(Surah Noor)

Islam does not tolerate her reputation being besmirched. Those who slander her are punished by a flogging of eighty lashes. Her moral integrity and chastity demand such severe punishment for her slanderer.

In contrast, such punishment is not meted out to a person who slanders a man. This indicates the greater sanctity and loftiness of a Muslim woman's reputation.

The Qur'aan Majeed describes Muslim women as innocent-devoid of deceit and deception. The term used in the Qur'aan Shareef to indicate these noble virtues in them is *Al-ghafilat*. The Muslim wife should live up to this description of her given by Allah Ta'ala. She should not taint and besmirch her honourable reputation of purity, chastity and innocence with acts of infidelity, unfaithfulness and betrayal of her husband whom Islam has made as her crown, her king, her master and her means of success and salvation in both worlds.

In these modern times when Islamic values and teachings are trampled underfoot, mingling with men is hardly frowned on. A woman will freely appear in front of her brothers-in-law, neighbours and friends of her husband or other male relatives of the *ghair mahram* category. She will converse with them freely and in alluring tones. She will come into their presence adorned with fine garments and perfumed. Such women have been described as adulteresses by Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

NOTE: Baa-in talaq means a talaq which severs the Nikah. The husband cannot recall his wife after a Baa-in Talaq. Should they wish to live together, a Nikah will again have to be performed. Once Baa-in Talaq has taken place, the woman is free to marry her former husband or refuse marriage to him.

Mughallazah Talaq (final and irrevocable divorce which is the effect of giving tree talaq) is the severest and most destructive Talaq. Once three Talaqs have been issued in any way whatever, whether all three at once or whether over a period, the divorce is known as Mughallazah (final and irrevocable divorce which is the effect of giving three talaqs). In this case Nikah can no longer be performed between man and woman. Their marriage is finally and irrevocably severed. Nikah between them can only be possible if the woman marries another man then he divorces her after consummation of the marriage. However, it is not permissible to arrange a marriage with a view to obtain divorce to enable a re-marriage with the former husband.

A Faithful Wife

Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

“A man who has been given four things, verily, he has been given the best (things) of this world and the hereafter: a grateful heart; a tongue engaged in Thikr; a body patient in trials, and a wife who does not betray him with regard to her body and his wealth”.

A faithful wife who never betrays her husband, neither in thought, gaze or deed, is among the best and noblest treasures bestowed to a man by Allah Ta’ala.

The outstanding virtue of a true Muslim wife is her total faithfulness to her husband. Her mind, her heart, her gaze and her body are only for her husband. Infidelity does not form part of the character of the Muslim wife. While the highest degree of infidelity is adultery, even a glance at another man is considered infidelity and an act of unfaithfulness.

It does not behove the Muslim wife to cast her eyes on any man other than her husband. It is entirely negatory of the holiness and purity of her position as a wife to even bring to mind thoughts of other men. Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said that even the eyes, the ears and the mind commit zina (fornication). A faithful wife – and every Muslim woman has to be a faithful wife – cannot allow herself to stoop to the heinous and degraded levels of infidelity and unfaithfulness to her husband. Entertaining thoughts of other men in the mind is infidelity in Islam. Glancing at other men is infidelity. Speaking to other men is infidelity. Infidelity and unfaithfulness to the husband are not confined to adultery. By such un-Islamic acts of shamelessness, she enters the confines of infidelity. These are the stepping stones for the break-down of many marriages. The ultimate act of unfaithfulness to the husband has its origin in a thought in the mind – a thought which has planted nurtured by the violation of Islam's laws of Hijab.

All the laws of Hijab (Purdah) are designed by Islam to protect man and woman and to guard the purity, honour and reputation. Relaxation of these divine laws will most certainly plunge a woman into a situation in which her faithfulness to her husband will be shattered.

The worst calamity which can befall a woman and her home is unfaithfulness and infidelity on her part.

If the Husband Marries Again

If the husband happens to marry a second wife, the first wife should not think and behave like a non-Muslim woman to whom polygamy is unthinkable. Remember that Allah Ta'ala has permitted polygamy. A man is fully within his Islamic rights to marry more than one woman.

The first wife should not behave as if the world and life has ended if her husband marries again. While she may naturally feel hurt and saddened, she should face the situation with understanding, intelligence, maturity and patience. She should suppress her *nafsani* (sensual egoistical man's lowly desires, generally activated by Shaitaan) urges and never vent her emotional feelings. Should she choose to deal with this development by displaying ugly attributes of jealousy, hatred, vindictiveness and spite, then she should understand that her condition and the situation will only deteriorate. She will not succeed in her attempts to alienate her husband from his second wife. By behaving despicably, she will only harden her husband's feelings and to him she will start to appear like a witch. There is therefore, absolutely nothing to be gained by putting up a revolting display of despicable behaviour.

The first wife must accept her husband's second marriage and behave with respect and dignity. She cannot fight Allah's law. She should not attempt to interfere with a right which Allah Ta'ala has granted her husband.

By accepting her husband's decision with dignity and resignation she will gain her husband's respect and love. Besides this, there is in store for her tremendous thawaab and the Pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. She will not lose. She only has to come to terms with the new development by suppressing her *nafsani* (sensual, egoistical man's lowly desires, generally activated by Shaitaan) and emotional promptings. The fight

and struggle against the nafs, are in fact the acts for which Allah Ta'ala has sent us here to earth.

Mujaahadah (striving) against the nafs is an obligatory duty which every Muslim – male and female – must uphold as long as he/she lives on earth. A Muslim is not allowed to give vent to such emotions which Islam proscribes. The first wife should understand that her reaction is motivated purely by jealousy. It is incumbent on her to fetter her jealousy and suppress it in obedience to Allah's orders. Remember that a Mu'min is not free in this world to do and say as he/she wishes. It is on account of the numerous divine restrictions imposed on our living, our behaviour and our emotions that Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

“The world is a prison for the Mu'min and a paradise for the Kaafir”.

The true Muslim woman will respect her husband's other wife. She should behave with decorum and kindness towards her, not matter how difficult emotionally it seems to her. By behaving in Islamic fashion, her relationship with the other wife will develop into a healthy bond of respect and understanding.

She should not speak to her husband sarcastically and derisively about his other wife. By so doing she will not achieve her design of driving a wedge between her husband and his other wife. On the contrary, she will only succeed in further cementing the bond of affection between her husband and his other wife. He will despise his first wife for her unjustified *gheebat* and his inclinations will strongly favour the other wife whom he will regard as the wronged one.

A wife who speaks ill of the other wife makes herself stupid and demeaning to her husband as well as to others. While her despicable attitude brings grief to her husband, she makes a laughing-stock of

herself to others who view with mirth her envious feelings and eruptions.

In the final analysis, her husband's second marriage was willed by Allah Ta'ala. She should, as a true Muslim woman of piety, resign herself to the will of Allah and be contented. She has much to gain in adopting this honourable attitude.

Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

"A woman who is patient when her husband marries another woman, will obtain the thawaab of a Shaheed (martyr)".

When this is the tremendous gain and the lofty rank which she will acquire for her Sabr and dignified acceptance of an inescapable reality, then there is no reason for frustration and depression which will set her marriage in the direction of the rocks of destruction. After all, this worldly abode is a place of toil, trial and struggle which assumes various forms with which a Muslim must learn to come to terms with. Perfect happiness cannot be found here. Its abode is only Jannat.

Step Children

In the majority of cases the relationship between a woman and her husband's children by a previous marriage is deplorable and heart-breaking.

When a woman marries a man with children, she must tread with excessive care. In the beginning most children, especially in these times of ignorance, will view her as an intruder. Being ignorant and deficient or lacking in Islamic moral training, they do not know not can they easily understand the lofty rank which their father's wife has

over them. They generally behave disobediently, wrathfully, rudely and un-Islamically towards their step-mother whom they believe to be unkind, cruel and uncaring of them. It is their mental picture which the step-mother should endeavour to dispel from their minds. This cannot be achieved overnight. She has to win their confidence. She has to devise ways to win over their hearts. This requires much tolerance and understanding.

She should not complain to their father whenever his children falter or are disobedient to her. This is the surest and quickest way to harden their feelings and to transform them into her enemies. If there arises a real need in a serious situation to inform her husband of his children's misdemeanours, she should do so in privacy without the children knowing about this. She should also impress on her husband to refrain from divulging to the children that she has informed on them. Their father should deal with them without her participating.

At times she should mildly remonstrate with her husband when he scolds them. He will not mind such mild remonstrations since he will understand that his children will incline towards their step-mother if she puts up a protective front for them. In similar other ways should she try to win over the children.

A woman only needs to use some intelligence and patience when dealing with step-children. By pursuing an intelligent course, she will win over the children and save herself and her husband from many miseries which generally afflict homes where there are step-mothers and step-children.

Some women behave most dishonourably by attempting to drive a wedge between her step-children and their father. She seeks to alienate her husband's feelings and love from his children. This is most

despicable, cruel and sinful. In the long term the misery will settle over her.

Her step-children are an Amaanat (Trust) which she should love, understand, respect and protect. She should not envy or compete with them. Sometimes a step-mother competes with her grown-up step-daughters. Such an attitude is most unbecoming of a woman who is supposed to occupy the position of a mother.

She should never put her husband in a situation where he has to choose between her and his children. Even if she feels that her husband is treating his children partially favouring-them, she should neither object nor even show the slightest attitude of displeasure. Reacting with maturity and patience will enhance one's dignity and esteem.

The Husband's Business Affairs

The wife should remember that her Nikah to her husband does not entitle her to interfere in his business affairs. Many women entertain the wrong notion that their husbands should reveal their business affairs to them and confide in them in this respect. This is a grave error.

She should not attempt to appoint herself as the controller of his finances. It is not of her business on whom her husband spends his wealth. As long as he fulfils the rights and obligations of the Nikah, she has no grounds of complaint. A weak husband may submit to her imposing demands, but he will despise her in his heart. In contrast, a man with a strong character and firm disposition will display his resentment and refuse her unjustified demands. The result will be

conflict, argument and ill-feeling. All this misery can be avoided if the wife remains within the limits of her rights. Transgression of limits always leads to disruption and corruption.

Allah Ta'ala says in the Qur'aan Shareef:

“These are the limits of Allah. And whoever transgresses the limits of Allah, verily, he has wronged his soul”.

If the husband is involved in un-Islamic business activities, she should endeavour to persuade him with love, affection and humility to refrain from such misdeeds.

Sometimes, there may arise severe trials in this regard. If the husband brings haraam items into the home or he procures food, etc. with haraam money, then obviously it will not be lawful for the wife to make use of such haraam. She should reason with him as best as she can. In such matters she will not be able to obey him and accept, wear and eat the haraam food and haraam garments he brings her. It will be a situation of conflict between her husband's wishes and Allah's commands. The only choice open to her is to submit to Allah's commands and accept the consequences with patience, dignity and resignation to Allah Ta'ala. Allah Ta'ala will be sufficient for her. He will be her Protector.

When she is driven into a corner on such rare occasions where she has no alternative by to disobey her husband in obedience to Allah Ta'ala, she should not be disrespectful, rude and arrogant to her husband. Her justified and necessary refusal to submit to his unlawful demands and activities should be with humility and keeping in mind his superior rank. On such occasions she should say:

“Allah is sufficient for us and He is a wonderful Protector; a wonderful Friend and a wonderful Helper”.

The Husband’s Admonition

There will be times when the husband becomes annoyed with his wife. He might voice himself angrily, loudly and even aggressively. The wife should always keep in mind that Allah Ta’ala has made him the ruler in the house. He holds a higher rank. The Qur’aan Majeed says:

“Men are rulers (appointed) over women”.

When he voices his annoyance and scolds, she should not retaliate in any way. Even if she feels that he is in error and unjustified in displaying temper, she should be humble and apologize.

It is highly improper for her to sulk and display annoyance. If he is angry, hasten to gladden him. Don’t allow pride to detract you from humility. Think of the exhortations of Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) – that he has ordered a woman to submit to, and obey her husband even if his demands are excessive and unjust. In humbling yourself and imploring your husband for forgiveness, you are not belittling yourself. On the contrary, your rank by Allah rises because your humility and obedience shown to your husband are for Allah’s sake.

Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

“Whoever adopts humility for the sake of Allah, Allah raises his (or her) rank”.

Your humility will endear you to your husband who will respect and honour you. Never let him remain angry with you. A woman who allows her husband to remain angry with her, is detested by Allah Ta'ala. Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said that there are three types of people whose Salaat is not accepted by Allah Ta'ala nor does any of their good deeds rise towards the heaven. Among these three, one such person is:

“A woman whose husband is angry with her.....”

A wife should not concern herself with the right or wrong of her husband's anger and scolding. If he requires an explanation, explain the matter respectfully and humbly. Do not embark on an argument of self-vindication. Concentrate on transforming his anger into pleasure. Apology, regret and humility will calm his temper and restore the peace.

She should try to understand her husband fully. She should not do things or say things which annoy him or bring grief to him.

A woman who is unable to gladden her husband should examine herself for deficiencies. There will surely be something wrong and lacking in her attitude and approach. Although there are exceptions, generally most husbands will be overwhelmed by the humble attitude shown by their wives. Their anger can be very quickly substituted by pleasure. It only requires the wife to react as a true Muslim woman of piety should. She should leave no stone unturned in order to cultivate her husband's pleasure. The pleasure of Allah in so far as a wife is concerned is coupled to the pleasure of the husband.

The Right of the Husband

Allah Ta'ala has made the husband responsible for his wife and children. The Qur'aan orders him:

“Save yourselves and your families (wives and children) from the Fire”.

Thus, it is the husband's incumbent duty to organize and supervise the Deeni, spiritual and moral teachings and training of his wife and children. In the execution of his sacred obligation he may use methods and tones which may appear strict or too demanding to the wife. Be this as it may, she should never object, not be an impediment in his path to teach and guide her and the children.

Some wives, lacking in Islamic knowledge and not having been Islamically disciplined in their parents' home, become obstacles in their husband's efforts to create an Islamic environment in the home. They find their husbands' Deeni measure too 'strict'. To thwart and frustrate his efforts, the wife will initiate arguments and refuse to co-operate. This attitude which is very un-Islamic will most certainly lead to conflict and the disruption of the happiness in the home.

The wife should understand that her husband cannot abandon his Deeni obligations to soothe her fancies and desires. On the contrary, she must co-operate fully with her husband to produce a holy and a Deeni home environment. If she stubbornly seeks to induce him to abandon his Deeni right and obligation, then she is looking for trouble and heading the way of sure disaster.

Allah Ta'ala commands the husband in the Qur'aan Shareef:

“And command your wife and children with Salaat...”

The Shariah has ruled that the husband enjoys the right of even beating his wife if she obstinately neglects her duties; not only Salaat, by other matters of importance as well. Thus, the following is said in the authoritative Kitaab Kabeeri:

“The husband has the right to beat his wife if she neglects Salaat and Ghusl.....just as he is entitled to beat her if she refuses to adorn herself when he wishes this; when she refuses to come to his bed when he calls her and when she leaves the home without his consent. If she does not desist (from her misdemeanours) with beating, then he may give her talaq”.

The right of beating the wife after all other methods have failed to reform her, is also stated in the Qur’aan Majeed:

“And, beat them.....”

When all methods of love, persuasion, admonition and separation from the marital bed have failed to reform her, then the husband is permitted to lightly beat his wife. Perhaps her eyes will open by this method and the marriage will be saved. The wife should understand well this right and obligation of the husband.

Rearing and Training Children

A mother is the most favourably positioned person who can direct and determine the role and character of her children. Speaking about her role of responsibility as the guide and overseer of her children, our Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

“And, the woman is the Shepherdess of the home of her husband and of his children. All of you will be questioned about their flock”.

Many famous men of Islam attained Wilaayat (sainthood) at the hands of their mothers. As a result of the sublime maternal efforts expanded in the moral and spiritual training of children, they attained the lofty ranks of spiritual elevation.

The Deeni Ta'leem of a Muslim child commences from the day it has entered into this ephemeral world. The Athaan and Iqaamah are proclaimed in the ears of the infant, arousing in its mind the Pledge of Imaan which was taken from it long before it or its parents were created.

While most mothers nowadays believe that their maternal duties are confined to feeding and clothing their children, Islam expects and commands much more – of greater importance than physical care, is the spiritual care of the children. It is her incumbent and sacred duty to direct her full attention towards the Deeni, spiritual and moral training of her children.

The love which most parents nowadays show their children is no true love. Such love is in fact fatal poison. A love which leads the children to Jahannum is cruelty and injustice of the highest kind. Parents should submit and bend their love in whatever direction the Shariah points.

Children are a wonderful treasure and an Amaanat – a sacred trust which dare not be abused. Parents who abuse this Amaanat by failing to carry out their parental duties and obligations in the way Islam requires, are among the worst criminal and perpetrators of treachery, for they pave the way for future ruin of their own offspring.

Some important advice with regard to rearing and training children will be enumerated here.

1. Remember well that habits acquired in childhood are enduring. Good or bad traits are attributes acquired by the child will remain with him/her life-long. It is, therefore, imperative to maintain a diligent eye on the habits which a child picks up and develops in his character.
2. Never frighten a child. Some mothers, in order to induce obedience in the child, scare the child by speaking of ghosts, etc. This is exceptionally bad. The child will grow up with a weak heart. Instead of inculcating courage, parents very ignorantly induce cowardice in their children.
3. Have fixed times for their eating. Do not spoil their habits and their health with irregular eating habits.
4. Let them use a miswaak from an early age. Let them wash their mouths after everything they eat, even after having drunk milk.
5. Teach children all the Islamic etiquettes of eating, drinking, sleeping, wearing garments, entering and leaving the toilet, etc.
7. When the child is able to talk, teach it first the Name of Allah Ta'ala. Even long before it can talk, parents should recite Qur'aanic verses, the Names of Allah and the Kalimah to the child. The infant's mind is receptive and it retains what it sees and hears.
8. Parents should not become nude in the presence of even a six-month baby.
9. Do not create in the child love for luxury and adornment. Styles and fashions should be banished. Imbue in them simplicity.
10. Now and then clothe children with patched garments even if you are wealthy.

11. Until a girl has not attained the age of puberty, do not adorn her with jewellery. The love for adornment and luxury will be spawned in her from childhood.
12. Inculcate generosity in children. Let them give food, etc. with their own hands to the poor.
13. Share things among brothers and sisters. Let the eldest of the children arrange the division under your supervision.
14. Always speak derisively of over eating to them.
15. Do not succumb to the obstinacy of children. To do so is fatal for their moral and spiritual development.
16. Prevent them from screaming and speaking at the top of their voices.
17. Never allow them to mix with other children. Brothers and sisters should play together within the home confines where their statements and actions could be kept under constant parental observation and supervision.
18. Never allow them to wander around the neighbourhood.
19. The most destructive is undoubtedly television. Think of the future of your children. Think of their success and salvation in the Hereafter and for their sake never introduce this evil into the home.
20. Do not give them toys which are in the form of people or animals nor toys which images of people or animals are painted.

21. Inculcate aversion in the child for falsehood, greed, envy, pride, hatred and all attributes. Monitor the child's development and constantly advise, admonish and reprimand him/her.
22. Do not scream at children. Point out their wrongs and explain the evil as best as you can.
23. Never punish the child in a state of anger. If the child requires punishment for a misdemeanour, devise a suitable punishment and administer it after anger has subsided. Do not punish the children simply to cool your anger. To do so is an act of injustice.
24. Discourage the child from excessive speech and loud laughter.
25. Whenever the child commits a misdeed or misbehaves, immediately call him/her to attention.
26. Punish the child if he/she fights with another. Do not overlook such misdeeds. Ignoring a child's perpetration of bullying tactics is tantamount to destroying your child.
27. Create in the child the habit of rising early.
28. At the age of seven ensure that the child performs Salaat regularly. By the age of ten if he/she has not yet developed the habit of performing Salaat regularly, mete out suitable punishment. It is essential to ingrain the practice of regular and punctual Salaat in the child from an early age.
29. Never permit your children to read comics, picture-magazines or other similar western books and magazines which corrupt morals and character.

30. Encourage children to read good Islamic books.

31. Parents should gather their children and read to them reliable Islamic books daily. Stories of the Ambiya and Auliya should be read and told to them.

32. Never give children money to waste on un-Islamic things such as fireworks, etc.

33. Do not allow children to play games of gambling such as marbles in which there is winning and losing. Such games are described as 'maisar' (gambling) in Islam

34. Reprimand them if they mock or make fun of people-of their looks or their deformities. Explain to them that everyone is the creation of Allah and all creation is by Allah's Will and Wisdom.

35. Inculcate in children the habit of doing their own work. Let them tend to their own beds, clothing and room. Teach them to be clean and tidy. Never tire of drawing their attention to their carelessness and untidiness. Untidiness and carelessness are just natural with children. Parents should repeatedly train their children with regard to tidiness and cleanliness without becoming frustrated.

In matters of this nature, parents should not beat their children. Constant reminding will eventually have the desired effect.

The child must be taught to refrain from strewing thing hither and tither.

36. Never permit children to do things surreptitiously or concealing from their superiors. When a child does something secretly, not wanting his/her superiors to know, then it indicates that the child

knows it to be wrong. In this way the child will grow up with dishonesty.

37. Teach the child to be humble. Do not allow him/her to praise any of his/her possessions.

38. When a child accomplishes something good, congratulate him/her and occasionally reward him/her with a prize.

39. Parents should not quarrel or argue with one another in the presence of their children.

40. The mother should always teach the children to love, fear and respect their father.

41. Do not allow your children outside the home after Maghrib. The hadith forbids this. The Shayaateen emerge in abundance after Maghrib and children form a desirable target for their mischief.

Breast-Feeding

In the rearing of her children, breast-feeding plays an important role. There can be no substitute for the mother's milk. The maximum period of breast-feeding is two Islamic (lunar) years.

Numerous mothers nowadays refrain from breast-feeding their infants. Selfish personal motives induce them to deny the child's right of being breast-fed. In refusing to breast-feed her child, the mother renders a grave act of injustice to her baby.

The hadith emphasises breast-feeding and speaks glowingly of women who execute their natural and holy duty of breast-feeding their babies. In this regard Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

“.....For every gulp of milk sucked by her baby, she (the mother) acquires a good deed. If the mother is constrained to remain awake at night on account of her baby, she receives the reward of emancipating 70 slaves in the Path of Allah”.

In another hadith, Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

“When a woman breastfeeds her baby, then for every gulp of milk sucked by the baby, she receives thawaab equivalent to the thawaab of reviving a dead person. When she weans her baby, a (special angel) congratulates her (on the successful execution of the holy obligation of breast-feeding). And he says: ‘All your past sins are forgiven’.

Now after having been informed of Islam’s emphasis of breast-feeding and the great thawaab for this duty, no Muslim woman conscious of her duty to Allah Ta’ala can afford to abstain from breast-feeding her children.

Although non-Muslim medical experts have written considerably on the value and benefits of breast-feeding, the true Muslim woman does not require any inducement other than the exhortation of Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) for the execution of an act which is her natural and Islamic obligation. For Muslims it is sufficient that the Qur’aan Majeed proclaims:

“Whoever obeys the Rasool, has obeyed Allah”.

Ibaadat

From the various Qur'aanic verses and Ahadith it is abundantly clear that the household duties and service to the husband are acts of tremendous thawaab equated to Jihad. The wife's involvement in her husband's service is one continuous act of merit and reward.

Notwithstanding the importance and high merit of her home service, there is also the need for pure acts of Ibaadat besides her mundane domestic activities. While it is of great importance for the wife to be in the service of her husband, there is also a great need for maintaining a fresh and strong roohani (spiritual) bond with Allah Ta'ala. The purpose of life is to worship Allah Ta'ala. The Qur'an Majeed states:

"I have not created jinn and man except that they worship Me."

Besides Thikrullah (Remembrance of Allah), all the activities are of secondary importance. Every Mu'min is required to perpetually and constantly remember Allah Ta'ala.

Permanent Thikrullah does not require withdrawal or dissociation from mundane activities and duties. While engaging in worldly duties the Muslim is required to remember Allah Ta'ala. The Qur'an Shareef commands that the tongue be engaged in Thikr in all states of activity, whether walking, sitting, reclining or working.

Thikrullah does not require Tahaarat – wudhu and Ghusl. One has to involve the tongue and heart in Thikrullah whether one is with or without wudhu and whether one requires Ghusl or not.

The Muslim woman should not become neglectful in this respect. She should not think that her obligations are confined to domestic duties. Along with her household activities she should, in addition to constant Thikr, set aside some time for Nafil Ibaadat.

Besides the fact that her piety will exercise a strong Deeni influence on her children, she needs to strengthen her bond with Allah Ta'ala to gain His Pleasure in the Aakhirah and for barkat (blessing) to permeate her home. The pious influence which her Taqwa will exercise on her children will be enduring and will play a decisive role in their lives. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

“Rejuvenate Imaan with Laa-ilaaha illal-laah.”

Adopt the Thikr of *Laa-ilaaha illal-laah* as a permanent and constant practice. In all states and circumstances maintain this Thikr. After every few utterances of *Laa-ilaaha illal-laah*, add *Muhammadur Rasulullah*. Besides this Tahleel, you may adopt any other form of Thikr.

Your Ibaadat programme, besides the constant Thikr which should be maintained throughout the day, should consist of the following acts:

1. Tilaawat of the Qur'aan Majeed. This is very important. A heart devoid of Tilaawat is like a dead heart. Even if it is just a Ruku' a day, the Tilaawat will exercise its beneficial effect on the heart. However, do endeavour to recite as much as possible. After Fajr recite Surah Yaaseen.
2. A few minutes after sunrise, perform four rak'ats Ishraaq Salaat.
3. A few minutes after Ishraaq, perform Salaatud-Dhuhaa (Chaasht) which is from four to twelve rak'ats. It could be performed at any time after Ishraaq until just before Zawaal time.
4. After Zuhr Namaaz, recite Surah Ar-Rahmaan.
5. After Asr Namaaz, recite Surah Naba'

6. After Maghrib Namaaz, perform Salaatul Awwaabeen which is from six to twenty rak'ats.

7. After Maghrib and Awwaabeen Namaaz recite Surah Waaqiah.

8. After Isha Namaaz recite Surah Mulk.

9. After Fajr and after Maghrib, recite each of the following Surahs thrice: Surah Ikhlāas, Surah Falaq and Surah Naas.

10. Every night recite Aayatul Kursi and the last ruku' of Surah Baqarah. This is very effective for protection against all shaitani and evil influences.

11. Every Friday recite Surah Kahaf, preferably the whole Surah. If this is not possible, then recite as much of this Surah as you are able to.

12. Every night when you are about to sleep, think for a few minutes about the day's activities. For every wrong or un-Islamic act or statement you recall, seek forgiveness from Allah Ta'ala. For every good deed or statement you recall, express shukr to Allah Ta'ala and ask Him to increase you in virtue.

Think about Maut (death) and the events which will follow death.

These forms meditation (Muraaqabah) are essential for true Taqwa. The reality of the Akhirah and the futility of this world become vivid concepts ingrained in the Mu'min's heart by these Sunnah forms of meditation.

13. After every Namaaz supplicate to Allah Ta'ala (make dua) for your needs and wishes in particular and in general. Learn some Masnoon

and Qur'aanic duas. In addition, express your heart's wishes and needs in your own language.

14. Your Ibaadat programme should also include Durood Shareef and Istighfaar.

15. Tahajjud Salaat is of great importance. This Salaat consist of 12 rak'ats. However, one may perform even less. If you are just not able to rise in the later part of the night for Tahajjud, then before going to bed perform four rak'ats Nafil with the niyyat of Tahajjud. However, there is no real difficulty if one strives a bit against the nafs. Get up about three quarters of an hour before Subh Saadiq and after Tahajjud Salaat perform Fajr (i.e. after Fajr time has entered). If this is too difficult, then get up even a few minutes before Subh Saadiq to enable you to perform just two rak'ats Tahajjud.

16. The most important Nafil Saum (fasting) is:

9th and 10th or 10th and 11th Muharram.

15th Sha'baan.

9th Zil-Hajj.

The six fasts of the Month of Shawwaal. For these Nafil fasts, take the consent of your husband.

17. Of vital importance is abstention form sin and futility. Be diligent in you struggle against the nafs – Guard your eyes, ears and tongue. Gheebat (back-biting) and gossiping are great calamities in which many women indulge. Be exceptionally careful in this regard. These evils nullify and neutralize the efficacy and benefits of Ibaadat.

18. Read reliable Islamic books. For piety, it is necessary to improve you knowledge of the Deen.

Your home syllabus, for yourself and your family, should consist of the following necessary books:

1. Kitaabul Imaan
2. Kitaabut Tahaarah
3. Kitaabus Salaat
4. Kitaabus Saum
5. Masnoon Duas
6. Shariat and Tasawwuf

These books are available from:

In addition, the book Hikaayatus Sahaabah (Stories of the Sahaabah) by Hadhrat Maulana Zakariyya (Rahmatullah Alayh) is also important and very necessary to inculcate enthusiasm and Deeni fervour which facilitates in practising the teachings of Islam.

The mother should read these books on a daily basis to her children. It is essential that she spends few minutes every day, reading and explaining to her children. She must act as their spiritual mentor. Their spiritual training and moral development are, in the first instance entrusted to the mother. There can be no better trainer and guide for children than a mother – such a mother whom Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) designated ‘Al-Mar’atus Saalihah’ (a Pious Woman).

19. Endeavour to be constantly with wudhu. Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: ‘Wudhu is the weapon of the Mu’min.’ The benefits of wudhu are great.

20. During haidh do not abandon Thikrullah. Abandonment of Thikr creates hardness in the heart and dulls the lustre of the spiritual heart. Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said:

“Verily, the furthest person from Allah, is a person with a hard heart.”

During haidh continue with Thikrullah as usual. Only Salaat and Tilaawat are not permissible. Take wudhu at the time of Salaat as usual. Sit down on your musalla (prayer mat) and spend a few minutes in Thikr, Istighfaar and Dua.

Do not oversleep Fajr time when you are in the state of haidh. It is extremely reprehensible for a Muslim to sleep while the sun is rising.

Childbirth

Childbirth is a momentous occasion in the Muslim home. Allah Ta'ala has ordained woman as the repository of life. She is the sacred receptacle for a sacred Amaanat (Trust) which Allah Ta'ala sends to earth via her medium. She undergoes much travail in the course of bearing and delivering this Amaanat – her child. Thus the Qur'an Majeed says:

“His mother bore him with much difficulty and delivered him with much difficulty.”

Her reward for serving as the Bearer of the Trust is tremendous. Pregnancy increases her stock of thawaab and on giving birth to the child she emerges totally purified of sin. Her domestic duties and her service to her husband secure for her the thawaab of Jihaad. From this could be gauged the tremendous thawaab a woman receives for childbirth. To acquire the thawaab of childbirth, it is imperative that the woman abstains from transgression on this occasion.

In this modern era of loose morals most women displease Allah Ta'ala by shamelessly violating Islam's Hijab (Purdah) rules on the occasion of childbirth. The age-old, respectable and Islamic system of childbirth taking place in the privacy of the home has been largely abandoned. Most women in the western countries opt for giving birth to their children in hospitals where they are attended to by male physicians.

They are required to undergo un-Islamic, shameless and haraam medical tests and check-ups. They have to shamelessly expose themselves to male doctors. In this evil process they invoke the Wrath of Allah Ta'ala.

Western indoctrination has blinded the intelligence of many Muslims. It is believed that giving birth in hospitals and supervision by male physicians are necessary. But this is a shaitani myth peddled by the Kuffaar medical establishment. Countless millions of women in 'Third World' countries and many Deeni conscious Muslims in western countries as well as numerous non-Muslim women who still have natural modesty in them, give birth at home, attended by female midwives.

Giving birth in hospitals and attend by male physicians are among the most shameless and immoral misdeeds which violently militate against the Islamic code of modesty and Hijaab. Muslim women must revolt against this vile practice. Their childbirth is shorn of blessings (barkat) by their submission to the immoral and haraam practices of the Kuffaar medical establishment.

Muslims should rid themselves of the plague of western Kuffaar notions and theories spawned by minds smitten with kufr and haraam. A natural propensity of kufr is inclination towards haraam, impurity and immodesty. We, therefore, find that despite there being millions of lawful and pure things in Allah's creation, the Kuffaar medical establishments loves to explore and experiment with haraam and najaasat. Of course, there are no restrictions of modesty or immodesty in minds which do not accept the Divine Code.

It is not permissible for Muslim women to adopt this nude and vulgar system of childbirth, the supposed virtues of which are propagated and extolled by western medical science. While there are always

exceptions under grave circumstances which must be confirmed by a pious, Deeni-conscious Muslim physician, Muslim women should understand well that it is haraam to give birth in hospitals under the present immodest, immoral and haraam conditions which require total exposure of the female and attendance by male physicians.

The virtues and merits of childbirth are obtainable at home, in Islamic, respectable and modest conditions. At home, there will be greater barkat (blessings) in the childbirth, in the offspring and generally in the home. A woman returning from hospital, returns after having submitted to a shameless, immodest and haraam system of childbirth. She does not come home with Islamic honour nor is she blessed with the aura of Noor which diffuses the person of a woman who measures up to the designation – ‘Al-Mar’atus Saalihah’.

The pious woman will take courage and feel honoured by the following statements of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam):

1. A woman who dies during childbirth obtains the rank of a Shaheed (martyr).
2. A woman who exercises Sabr (patience) when her child dies will enter Jannat immediately.
3. Even the partly-formed child in a miscarriage with take its mother to Jannat. (Miscarriage too, is a blessing for a Muslim woman. Difficulties and calamities should not, therefore, lead to impatience, frustration and ingratitude).

Another evil and immodest practice which has reared its ugly head even among Muslims, is the western custom of the husband viewing his wife giving birth. The western medical establishment, being a forerunner in immodesty and haraam, is advocating the virtues of this

un-Islamic practice. But Islam does not accept such shamelessness. It is not permissible for Muslim husbands to degrade themselves by submitting to the immoral and lewd practices of the west.

Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam's) Praise

Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) spoke highly of women with the following two qualities:

- a) Loving and intelligent care for her children.
- b) Protecting her husband's wealth.

It is a great pity that most women today, reeling under the impact of the liberal and kufr cult of the west, are sorely deficient in these two qualities so necessary for the Pious Muslim Woman. Babies are assigned to the care of non-Muslim maids who utterly lack any *akhlaaq* and honour. Muslim children must necessarily suffer great moral harm in the care of non-Muslim maids.

Some mothers again, dump their infants in a nursery school while they are off to participate in unjustified worldly activities. Every reason presented in justification of assigning children to the care of others, is rejected by Islam. The trust (Amaanat) of children is given by Allah Ta'ala to parents, not to maids or nursery establishments which are systems of the Kuffaar. It is indeed a grave crime for parents to abandon their Amaanat and assign their children into such custody which is viewed by Islam as being unauthorised.

It is imperative for a Muslim baby to grow up in the lap and bosom of its mother, not in the custody of people devoid of Islamic morals and enveloped in spiritual najaasat (kufr) and physical najaasat (hadth, janaabat, etc.)

The place of the growing Muslim child is in its parent's home under the watchful and affectionate eyes of its mother. Its place is not in some nursery school or crèche functioning along a hybrid Kaafir-Muslim system. It is the obligatory (Wajib) duty of a Muslim woman to take personal charge of her children and relentlessly and patiently lead and guide them along the lofty paths of morality and knowledge the Shariah has ordained for all Muslims.

It is also a great pity that women of today always express ingratitude for the favours bestowed on them by their husbands. Their complaints with regard to money for the acquisition of luxuries are never-ending. The income of the husband is never enough. His wealth is squandered in unnecessary avenues and to acquire items which he cannot afford.

The wife's nagging and hankering after dispensable luxuries induce a weak husband to fall into the snare of credit and even riba (interest) to satisfy her insatiable demands. By, Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) described the pious woman as a woman who guards her husband's wealth. Women of Islam should be diligent in this respect.

Greed and impatience disrupt the happy home relationship and the barkat which should always be in a Muslim home disappears.

Once Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) saw a woman with two children. She was carrying one in her arms and holding the other by his hand. On observing this tender scene, Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) commented:

“These women firstly bear (in travail) these children within their wombs; then they give birth (in travail) to them; then they care for them with great love and affection. If their relationship with their husbands is not bad, then, those among them who perform regular Salaat will certainly enter Jannat”.

Loving care for children, faithful and loving service to the husband and steadfastness in the obligatory acts of Ibaadat are the essential requisites for the qualification of ‘*Al-Mar’atus Salihah*’.

Ahadith in General

Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaih Wasallam) said:

1. “Allah Ta’ala has mercy on a woman who rises for Tahajjud Salaat and also wakes up her husband for Tahajjud”.

If the husband is Deeni-conscious and does not have an ill-temper, the Hadith advises the wife to sprinkle some water on her husband’s face, if necessary to wake him up for Tahajjud.

2. “A wealthy widow who, despite her wealth, sacrifices her energies for rearing her children until they grow up and live apart or die, will be with me in Jannat as close as the forefinger and the middle finger”.

Thus, if a widow feels that marriage again will lead to the neglect of her children, it is then best for her to tend to her children. The hadith does not deprecate the marriage of widows.

The hadith also does not mean that this high honour of proximity in Jannat with Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is reserved for wealthy widows. Even poor widows will qualify for this great honour.

However, since it is usual for people of wealth widows to remarry even if their little children become scattered and neglected in consequence, the hadith singles out the wealthy widow for this honour.

3. Someone said:

“O Rasullullah! As certain woman performs Nafil Salaat, keeps her fast and give charity in abundance, but her tongue causes hurt to her neighbours”.

Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

“She will enter Jahannum”.

The same person then said:

“A certain woman does not engage much in Nafil Salaat, Nafil fasting nor gives much charity, nut she does not hurt her neighbours with her tongue”.

Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

“She will enter Jannat”.

Guarding the tongue and refraining from causing hurt to neighbours in particular, and to all others in general, are necessary requirements for the Muslim woman of piety.

4. “There is not Jihad, no Juma’ and no accompaniment with the Janaazah for women”.

They acquire the great thawaab of these lofty deeds simply by remaining at home. Islam has bestowed great latitude for women. The Thawaab which men obtain for undergoing difficulties, hardships and

sacrifices is obtainable to women simply by them remaining indoors within the Islamic bounds of Hijab.

5. “Allah Ta’ala loves a woman who is loving to her husband and who protects herself from other men”.

Modesty, chastity and honour are essential and lofty requirements for the pious Muslim wife.

6. “A woman who adopts Sabr when her husband marries another woman, will obtain the thawaab of a Shaheed”.

Women should remember well this hadith. Should a husband take a second wife, the first wife should meditate on this hadith and make Sabr her mantle.

7. “The evil (immorality) of an evil woman is the equivalent of the evil of a thousand evil men while the virtue of a virtuous woman is equal to the Ibaadat of seventy Auliya”.

This hadith indicates the lofty rank of the pious Muslim woman. A little effort vouchsafes for a woman the great and abundant thawaab which seventy Auliya gain after arduous toiling along the Spiritual Path.

Commencing on the tremendous thawaab which a woman gains for a little exertion, Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (Rahmatullah Alaih) says:

“When a woman adheres to the necessary (incumbent) acts of the Deen, then there is no need for her to practise such Ibaadat which requires great efforts. The thawaab which is acquirable by the execution of difficult acts of (Nafli) Ibaadat, could be secured by a

woman by her obedience to her husband, her service and care of her children and by doing her domestic duties”.

8. “O Assembly of Muslim women! Do not hold in contempt anything sent (to you as a gift) by a woman who is a neighbour, even if it is the hoof of a goat”.

Hasad (envy) sometimes constrains women to despise something sent by other women. They speak sarcastically about the simple items sent and so not honour these gifts sent out of kindness. The hadith instructs us that even the insignificant things sent by as neighbour should be well-accepted.

9. “When a woman becomes pregnant by her husband and he is pleased with her, she obtains the thawaab of a person engaging in fasting for Allah and a person spending the night in Ibaadat”.

10. “When she goes into confinement neither the inhabitants of the heaven nor of the earth know of the wonderful joys and comforts there are in store for her (in Jannat)”.

11. “A woman, from the time of pregnancy until childbirth and weaning the baby (taking it off the breast when the breast-feeding time ends) is like the Mujahid who is stationed on the frontiers of the Islamic land. If she dies during this period, she dies the death of a Shaheed (martyr)”.

Relaxation of Purdah Misery and Heartache

Transgressing the Shariah restrictions of Hijaab (Purdah) has led to much misery and heartache for many people. Those who in the end

suffer the misery and heartache are usually for the ones who ridiculed the Islamic injunctions pertaining to the separation of the sexes of those who could not bother about giving Allah's Law a second thought. The Shariah laws of Hijaab have been divinely designed for our own progress, protection, happiness and purity of heart and body. The Qur'aan, in outlining the Islamic Hijaab law, explains the basis for the restrictions:

"That (Hijaab) is purer for their (the males') and your (the females') hearts". In stating its reasons for the need of Purdah the Qur'aan declares:

"That (observance of Hijaab) is so that they (pure and pious women) may be recognized and not be molested". This aayat mentions the factor of protection.

Another verse after commanding the restriction of the eyes – preventing the eyes from deliberately gazing at ghair-mahaareem, explains the reason for this prohibition:

"That (restraining the gaze) is purer for them".

In short, our own welfare – both spiritual and physical – underlines the Islamic Purdah restrictions. Those who reject these Divine Commands or rebel against them will soon find themselves caught up in a web of misery and heartache which ensue in the wake of non-observance of Hijaab. "The Majils" has many letters in its files from men and women – boys and girls who have been caught in such webs of misfortune. And, the worst sufferers are in most cases the girls who have been spiritually and physically wrecked by the bestial demands of their courting partners. One girl from somewhere in the Transvaal writes:

"I find myself in a great predicament. My heart is torn with misery. A Muslim man was courting me for 11 months. My intention was to marry him, and I believed that this was his intention as well. We were even engaged. But, a short while before our wedding I discovered that I was going to have a baby. Everything then turned sour. The boy's

parents said that they will not allow their son to marry me. He simply dropped me and we stopped seeing each other. I know that I am guilty of great sin, by night and day pray to Allah to forgive me my folly.

I am writing this letter to you in the hope that you will publish it so that others may take a lesson from my misery”.

If this girl as well as numerous others in similar circumstances had heeded the Command of their Rabb they would not have found themselves in such a disastrous and miserable condition. The men responsible for such misery and cruelty, although spiritually corrupt and morally bankrupt, usually escape the villainy which they have perpetrated against the girls. But, the girls too are not to be exculpated. Allah Ta’ala has commanded the observance of Purdah for both men and women – for women to even a greater degree since they stand to loose to a greater extent in the immorality which follows in the wake of non-observance of Purdah. Hence, the girls who find themselves in this miserable situation should blame none besides themselves. Allah Ta’ala has endowed them will sufficient intelligence and commanded all to equip themselves with the requisite spiritual knowledge to safeguard themselves from the snares of Shaitaan and the bestial nafs. Besides intelligence, Allah Ta’ala has granted women a natural weapon against men of bestiality and immorality who are out to plunder their chastity. This natural weapon guarding females form the lascivity of men is the natural “HAYAA” (shame and modesty) of women. However, women is casting overboard Purdah annihilate this Hayaa. The consequence of this expulsion of Hayaa is the entry of shamelessness and audaciousness which fill the vacuum. When a natural quality is eliminated, its opposite asserts itself. It is then, the destruction of natural Hayaa wrought by non-observance of Allah’s Commands of Purdah which has brought misery and heartache to many women.

Girls – Muslim girls – should realise that the social problems stemming from non-observance of the Purdah restrictions of Islam are extremely complex and intractable. Imaan and intelligence never justify a few moments of carnal pleasure which brings its wake misery, heartache, transgression, social problems and Divine Wrath. These problems are such that no easy solutions based on amicability are forthcoming. Most girls who flouted Allah’s Commands and who were subsequently ditched by their ‘lovers’ and ‘fiancés’ have already tasted the bitter results of such misery and are laboured in these social problems.

Muslim society hot in pursuit of western norms and customs of immorality is increasingly experiencing the decadent social problems of the Kuffaar. Muslims who are enslaved to modernity which is the antithesis of Islamic Hijaab and Hayaa, reject Allah’s restrictions, but then sooner or later they discover social calamity has overtaken them and they then wonder of the cause which brought about such misery. Many are cases which have witnessed where parents scoffed at the ‘orthodox’ and ‘fanatical’ Islamic Purdah restrictions. Modernity and western laxity controlled their life-style. Instead of stock and shame, they felt proud and enamoured at the haraam courtship which their sons and daughters had struck up in imitation of the Kuffaar. These very parents later had to shed bitter tears and lament at the pillage of the children’s chastity, honour and shame. Such cases are unfolding daily. But, most remain blind. Allah Ta’ala says in His Qur’aan Majeed: *“Verily, only those of intelligence take lesson”*.

The intelligence spoken of in the Qur’aan Majeed is the intelligence which spring from the foundation of Imaan nourished by the Sunnah of our Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

Those who have suffered the hardship of misery and heartache brought about by the rejection of the Shariah’s Purdah restrictions have written to us many letters posing a number of questions with

which they are faced in this plight. For the benefit of those who are plunging headlong in this same abyss of misery and transgression, we will mention here some of these questions with some Islamic advice which if heeded will save them from spiritual, moral and physical plunder and pillage by agents of bestiality.

(1) Does Shariah order that something like this be publicized or kept secret?

The one who posed this question refers to her unlawful pregnancy – a pregnancy for which some unscrupulous lout was responsible. Our condemnation of the male responsible for this villainous act is not to be construed as exculpation of the girl. She is equally responsible. She jointly participated in the transgression against the Law of her Creator,

Such matters of shame should never be revealed or publicized. The Shariah's teaching in this regard is to conceal one's evil, shame and sin. The matter should be hushed up as far as possible.

(2) Does Shariah allow me to claim maintenance for the baby?

A girl who contravened the Shariah's Purdah commands was made pregnant by some coward who promised to marry her. At the last moment he ditched her, refusing to marry her and he sought refuge from this girl whom he ravaged by concealing under his parents' 'refusal' to allow him to marry her. She is not left with the 'fatherless' baby. *Can she claim maintenance for the baby?*

Let it be known to all in similar circumstances and to those who are still audacious in their destruction of Allah's Purdah Commands that an illegitimate baby is the RESPONSIBITLY of the mother in terms of the Shariah. The mother is responsible for the maintenance of the child. The 'father' (who is legally not the father) is not bound to provide the maintenance. The illegitimate baby's parentage is not related to the 'father' – to the man who was responsible for the baby by way of fornication. If the man claims that "this is my child", then its parentage will be established and he will have to provide for it. But, if

he denies, then according to the Shariah the responsibility of maintenance is that of the mother.

(3) Does the Shariah allow me to claim maintenance through a court or law? This seems to be the normal procedure followed in South Africa?

The Shariah does not permit such claims. Any such maintenance imposed by a non-Muslim court will be illegal in the Shariah. The woman must realise that her child is illegitimate, hence it is deprived of the benefits which accrue from the relationship of piety, viz. from the Nikah bond.

(4) What was the duty of the boy (who caused her pregnancy) and his parents towards me?

They have no legal and binding duty to you. All of you – the boy, yourself and the parents (if they permitted the haraam courtship) – are guilty of transgressing against Allah’s Law. All of you have sinned, by you, the girl, are the chief sufferer here on earth for the haraam pleasure in which all had a share. This is the stark reality – the naked truth – the misery with which you will have to live. But Allah is Merciful. Only He will help and eliminate such misery. The boy is a coward since he failed to fulfil his promise of marrying her although he is responsible for the pregnancy. The parents, if they were aware of the haraam courtships, but instituted no measures to terminate the affair, are greater cowards for engineering the spiritual wreck of their son and the spiritual as well as physical destruction of another’s daughter. *What would their attitude have been if it was their daughter?*

We condemn such boys, men and their parents, but such condemnation will not assist the girls who have been ravaged and those who are heading along the same path of spiritual and physical annihilation. Let them, therefore not derive any latitude of pleasure in our condemnation. Let them not justify their predicament by our

condemnation of cowards and acts of villainy. The only safeguard which girls have is to surrender themselves, not to the bestial demands of the nafs, but to the Hijaab restrictions imposed upon them by Allah Ta'ala. In so doing, they will be saved a life-long of misery and heartache. Let them remember that disregard of Allah's Law of Purdah will temporarily promise them some bestial carnal and pleasure. For a while they will be transported to the moon and wander in dreamland. But, once the vice which follow in the wake of non-observance of Purdah had been enacted they will be rudely awakened from their dreams and brought back from the 'moon' to be deposited on the hard and cold ground of reality, misery and heartache. May Allah Ta'ala guide and save us all.

The Qur'aan Majeed in rounding off a discussion on Islamic Purdah proclaims:

“AND, TURN (in repentance and seeking aid) TO ALLAH ALL OF YOU, O BELIEVERS! SO THAT YOU MAY PROSPER”.

Allah Ta'ala in these holy verses couples our prosperity and success with the observance of His Commands concerning Purdah. Sensible people, intelligent people, people of Imaan will not fail in turning towards Allah Ta'ala and heeding His Call.

Naseehat

Addressing the womenfolk, Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

“O Assembly of women! Spend in charity, for I have been shown that the majority of the Fire are you (women)”.

The women asked: “O Rasullullah! What is the reason for this?”

Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) replied: “You curse in abundance and you are ungrateful to your husbands. I have not seen anything of imperfect intelligence and Deen being able to capture the intelligence of a wise man so much as one of you (women) can”.

The women asked: “What is the imperfection of our Deen and intelligence, O Rasullullah?”

Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: “Is the shahaadat (evidence) of a woman not equal to half the evidence of a man?”

The women replied: “Yes”.

Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: “That, then is the imperfection (nuqsaan or defect) of her intelligence. What! When she is in the state of haidh does she not perform Salaat not fast?”

The women replied: “Yes”.

Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: “That, then is the imperfection of her Deen”.

(Bukhari and Muslim)

In this hadith Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) mentioned five defects of women, viz.,

- Defects in intelligence
- Defect in Deen
- Abundance of cursing
- Ingratitude to the husband
- Overwhelming the intelligence of a wise man, thus causing him to think defectively.

The first two defects or weakness are natural and are not by the volition of women. Over these two weaknesses they have no control. The latter three defects are by volition or will.

In regard to the volitional (the last three), women should recognize theses and be concerned with ways and means of curing themselves. The defects which are not volitional (the first two) are not cureable by any remedy. However, reflecting on these natural imperfections and defects will go a long way to eliminate pride and vanity in one.

Women suffer greatly from the disease of pride. They consider as great the least bit of excellence in them. Pride is always the result of jahaalat (ignorance). A great Aalim always considers himself to be insignificant. He recognizes his weakness and his limitations. His gaze is focussed on the last stage of perfection, hence he will always discern himself bereft of such perfect excellence. A person whose gaze is focussed on the Knowledge of Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) can never consider himself to be an Aalim.

Nowadays there exists the craze of self-esteem. On account of the slightest excellence of virtue acquired people hold themselves in the highest esteem. They consider themselves to be of high rank. This malady is more marked among women. A woman engaging in some extra nafl Ibaadat Salaat and Saum thinks of contempt. One of the reasons for this loathsome attitude is that she was not reformed under someone's guidance but she inclined towards the Deen merely by reading books. She does not wish to submit to the guidance of someone who may reform her nor has she such desire, hence her habits remain uncured. She thus considers herself to be perfect and par excellence. Whatever comes to her mind, she acts accordingly.

...Pride is the result of jahaalat (ignorance). Since there is a dearth of aql (intelligence) in woman the disease of pride is greater in her. By

reflecting on the non-volitional defects the disease of pride in woman will decrease. If she thinks about her weaknesses which are natural in her, her pride will decrease. The non-volitional defects mentioned earlier are dearth of intelligence and defect in Deen. The sign of her imperfect aql according to Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is the fact that the evidence of two women is equal to the evidence of one man. This then establishes that there is defect in her aql. The defect in her Deen was explained by Nabi-e-Kareem (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) to be that fact that on account of haidh she performs less Salaat and Saum.

Although it is beyond one's power to eliminate the natural and non-volitional defects, it is within one's ability to treat and remove the volitional three defects. These three defects in women as mentioned earlier are her ingratitude to her husband, overwhelming the intelligence of men and cursing in abundance.

It is futile to attempt the rectification of the defects over which one has no power. In fact, the hadith prohibits such futile pursuit. Thus when Hadhrat Umme Salalmah (Radhiyallahu Anha) after hearing of the superiority and significance of men yearned that she also was a man so that she could also aspire to the rank of men, the following ayat was revealed:

“Do not yearn for that (natural excellence) with which Allah has granted some superiority over others”.

From this it may appear that even if women strive in righteous deeds, they will remain imperfect or attain less reward than men. This is not so. Allah Ta'ala orders that His Fadhl (Grace) should be asked for. If women in addition to their striving, ask Allah Ta'ala for His Grace they can even surpass men in the obtainal of thawaab. It is for Allah Ta'ala to perfect our imperfect offerings.

...It is observed that woman succeeds in casting her influence over an intelligent man. She casts her influence over him and he is caught in her snare of deception. This is not because she has greater tricks and deception. Thus, in privacy the wife strives to turn her husband's heart away from all so that he inclines towards her only. She weaves her web of deceptions most subtly. The very first things which a new wife generally does is to create a rift between her husband and his parents. She endeavours to alienate him from his mother who had suffered with him for many years. She strives to break his connection with his father who had toiled and sweated for him. Should she succeed in this plot of hers, she will not be contented. She will now conspire to prevent the husband from making gifts to his parents. If she succeeds in this scheme, she still will not be satisfied. She will now turn her attention of her husband's brothers and sisters. She will work hard with her deception to drive a wedge between her husband and his brothers and sisters. If her husband happens to have children by a previous marriage, she will strive to alienate him from them as well. She is involved in such schemes and plots night and day. Her wish is to capture the full attention of her husband and to turn him away from all others. As far as she is concerned only herself and her children exist. As a result of the wife many families break up. Ill-feeling and disunity overtake the relatives. Men are lax in this regard and act according to the promptings of their wives.

There are two reasons for woman's ingratitude to her husband and her attempt to despoil and overwhelm the intelligence of the man. The first: She considers herself to be equal to her husband. She feels that she is not inferior to her husband. This attitude is displayed even in an argument with her husband. She endeavours to have the upperhand in any dispute with him. She always has a ready answer for whatever he says. She will not leave any statement of his unreplied even if she angers and displeases him in the process of her back-talk. She will speak even if her statement is ridiculous or impregnated with

ingratitude. The majority of arguments with her husband stems out this very attitude and feeling of equality which she assumes to have with her husband.....

(Extracts from Tasheelul Mawaaiz, Part 2)

Conclusion

We shall now conclude this treatise of Naseehat with an episode of a truly Pious Muslim lady. Her name was Tuhfah. Hadhrat Sirri Saqati (Rahmatullah Alayh) narrated this touching and wonderful story of a woman who was truly '*Al-Mar'atus Salihah*' (Pious Woman).

Hadhrat Sirri Saqati, the renowned saint, narrates:

"I once visited the hospital. To my surprise, I saw a young girl fettered in chains. Sobbing, she recited in grief verses of love. I enquired about her condition from the Superintendent of the hospital. He announced: "She is insane". Hearing this, the girl shed more tears and said:

"I am not insane. I am in love".

I asked: 'With whom are you in love?'

She replied: 'With the One who bestowed so much bounties on us and Who is at all times to us (viz. Allah Ta'ala).

Suddenly her master appeared. (Tuhfah was a slave girl), and enquired from the superintendent of the whereabouts of Tuhfah. He directed the master to Tuhfah. Seeing me, the master showed respect. He honoured me. I said to Tuhfah's master:

"She deserves more respect than myself. Why have you made her condition like this?"

Tuhfah's master said:

"I have expended all my wealth on her. I had purchased her for 20.000 dirhams (silver coins). I had hoped to derive much profit by selling her, but she neither eats nor drinks. Night and day she sheds tears".

I said: "Sell her to me". Tuhfah's master: 'Hadhrat, you are a pauper. How will you raise so considerable a sum?'"

I returned home and supplicated with great fervour and humility to Allah Ta'ala. Suddenly, someone knocked at the door. On opening the door I saw standing there a man with a bag of dirhams. I asked:

'Who are you?'

He replied: 'Ahmad Bin Al-Muthanna. I was commanded in a dream to bring this money to you'.

In the morning I happily hastened to the hospital with the money. At the same time Tuhfah's master appeared, sobbing profusely. I said to him:

'Do not worry. I have brought the money. I am prepared to pay you twice the price'.

Tuhfah's master said:

'Even if I am given the entire world, I shall not sell her. I set her for the sake of Allah Ta'ala'.

I asked:

'What has transpired?'

He replied:

'I was reprimanded in a dream. You be witness that I have given all my wealth in the Path of Allah'.

Suddenly I saw Ahmad Bin Al-Muthanna appearing he too was sobbing profusely.

I asked:

'What has happened to you?'

He said:

'I gave all my wealth in the Path of Allah'.

I said: 'Subhanallah! All this is because of the barkat of Lady Tuhfah. These men have acquired hidayat (to become pious) as a result of her virtue'.

Meanwhile, the emancipated Tuhfah arose and left the hospital crying. The three of us (Hdhrat Saqati, Tuhfah's ex-master and Ahmad Bin Al-Muthanna) also followed her direction. Within a short while, we lost trace of her. Allah Alone knows where she disappeared. The three of us set off to Makkah.

Along the journey to Makkah, Ahmad Bin Al-Muthanna died. Tuhfah's ex-master and I reached Makkah. While making Tawaaf we heard a heart-breaking sigh of grief. I went near to the sighing person. Subhanallah! I beheld that it was Tuhfah.

I asked her:

"What have you acquired (i.e. in the spiritual realm)?"

She replied:

"He (Allah) has joined my heart with Him and has effaced others from my heart".

I said: 'Ahmad Bin Al-Muthanna has passed away'.

Tuhfah said: 'He has acquired lofty ranks'.

I said: 'Your master too is here'.

I then heard her mumbling something and when I looked again, what did I see? She had died.

When Tuhfah's master beheld her in death, he was beyond himself with grief. I saw him collapse. When I felt him, he too had passed beyond the confined of this earthly realm'.

This is the episode of the life and death of a lady who was truly 'Al-Mar'atus Salihah'. While others cannot emulate Tuhfah's high degree

of piety and divine love, all women can at least walk in her Shadow, striving to practise the essentialities of the Deen.

May Allah Ta'ala guide you and grant you the taufeeq to make this Naseehat your guide in daily life so that you too will qualify for the lofty title of '*Al-Mar'atus Salihah* – The Pious Woman. **Ameen.**

The whole of the world is
an object of benefit and
the best of the benefits
of the world is Al-
Mar'atus Salihah (The
Pious Woman)
(Hadith – Muslim)

Women and Driving

Undoubtedly, for the Muslim women to drive cars is contrary to the spirit and teaching of the Qur'aan and Sunnah. The Qur'aan Shareef commands Muslim Females: "AND REMAIN WITHIN YOUR HOMES AND MAKE NOT A DISPLAY (of yourselves) LIKE THE DISPLAY OF EHT (TIME) OF JAAHILIYYAH."

The Qur'aan and the Ahadith place restrictions upon the emergence of females from the home. Islam exhorts and commands its female adherents to conceal themselves, hence Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "Woman is aurah' (i.e. to be concealed). When she emerges (into public), Shaitaan casts surreptitious glances (evil glances) at her."

Islam emphasises Purdah – concealment – for women, but western culture in a variety of ways and means (of which women driving cars is one) emphasises "self-expression" – i.e. exhibitions of jaahiliyyah. Islam stresses upon modesty and shame. (Hayya) whereas driving destroys the Hayaa of women. By means of driving, woman places herself in the forefront of exhibition. She barter away her Hayaa by aping the ways and mannerisms of males in the driving seat. Her place is not in the driving seat to wander around, putting herself up for public gaze and display. Her place is the home – to live in dignity, respect, Hayaa and honour. The greater her self-exhibition, the greater the destruction she brings to her natural modesty. And, about Hayaa, Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "Hayaa is a branch of Imaan."

It is virtually impossible for a woman who drives, to observe the Islamic laws of Hijaab. Even if she is a bit conscious of Islamic Purdah restrictions, her constant projection and exhibition which driving entails corrode her Hayaa and reduces her to utter shamelessness. She then qualifies for Qur'aanic description of "tabarruje jaahiliyyah" (exhibitions of the times of ignorance).

The arguments advanced in favour of women driving, are all fictitious and designed to appease the lowly nafs of man. Those women who are observant of the Divine restrictions and prohibitions – those women who remain within the confines of Islamic Hijaab will, Insha Allah, not be confronted with the fictitious "emergencies" and exigencies imagined and sometimes confronted by the women of exhibition. Those who have Trust (Tawakkul) in Allah Ta'ala will be well cared for.

Faatimah (R.A.) and Purdah

HAYAA (shame and modesty) are integral parts of Imaan, hence Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

“Hayaa is a branch of Imaan.”

Hadhrat Faatimah (Radhiyallahu Anha) excelled in the qualities of shame and modesty. Her observance of the highest form of Purdah (seclusion and concealment from males) indicates the strict demands of Islam regarding the observance of Purdah. Once, Hadhrat Ali (Radhiyallahu Anhu) asked Hadhrat Faatimah (Radhiyallahu Anha): “What is best for women?” Faatimah (Radhiyallahu Anha) replied: “They should not gaze at men nor men at them.” When Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) heard this reply of Faatimah (Radhiyallahu Anha) he (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) approved of it and made Du’aa on behalf of Faatimah (Radhiyallahu Anha). In one Hadith it appears that upon hearing this reply of Faatimah (Radhiyallahu Anha) Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: “Faatimah is part of my flesh.” This answer of Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) indicates the correctness of the answer and that it was exactly the view of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). When females are buried, the Islamic requirement is for their bodies to be concealed by a sheet held over as the body is being lowered into the grave. This practice is observed despite the fact that the female body is covered in “kafan” consisting on five different sheets wrapped around the body. The entire body from above to head to below the feet are draped in five garments and totally concealed from the gaze. However, despite this total covering, Hadhrat Faatimah (Radhiyallahu Anha) made “wasiyyat” at the time of her death that her body must be hidden totally from the gaze of males. This wish was carried out and the Sahaabah enacted “Ijma” (consensus of opinion) that this practice of Purdah for the dead female body be instituted as a Shar’i practice at all time. Hence, we find today the Ummah strictly observing this practice of Purdah for the dead female body initiated by Faatimah, the beloved daughter of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wassallam).

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