

Az-Zaujus Saalih

THE PIOUS HUSBAND



Published by:
The Mujlisul Ulama of South Africa
PO Box 3393
Port Elizabeth, 6056
South Africa

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And live with them (women) in a beautiful manner. If then you are displeased with them, (then know) perhaps you dislike something while Allah has created abundant goodness in it.

(Qur'aan, Surah Nisaa')

Introduction

This book, *Az-Zaujus Salih* or *The Pious Husband* is in fulfilment of our promise made in the Introduction of our book, *Al-Mar'atus Salihah* or *The Pious Woman*. We express our gratitude to Allah Ta'ala Who alone has made possible the fulfilment of our promise so quickly just months after the publication of *Al-Mar'atus Salihah*. All praises are due to Him.

Just as *Al-Mar'atus Salihah* was prepared exclusively for the benefit and guidance of women, so too, is *Az-Zaujus Salih* written for the exclusive benefit of husbands in general and in particular for those husbands who believe that their superior rank is a licence for abusing wives.

The lasting success of a marriage – the Muslim marriage – is not confined to only the fulfilment of the minimum legal *huqooq* (rights and obligations). It requires much more. While both partners in the marriage have to make sacrifices, the major part of the responsibility of ensuring that the marriage remains an enduring episode of happiness and success devolves on the husband who Allah Azza Wa Jal has appointed the *Qaim/Haakim* (ruler) of the home. The success of the marriage cannot be achieved by the husband wielding only the coercive powers of his *hukoomat* (reign) over his wife. A happy married life relies heavily on the pure and true love which Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) has exhorted us to develop.

This book teaches husbands the Sunnah attitudes which they have to adopt in their relationship with their wives. This is not a book in Fiqh and it does not discuss the legal rights of the husband. Rather, it is the prescription – the Islamic prescription – for a happy and successful marriage, the blessings and rewards of which extend into even the Hereafter.

This book is not a licence for disobedient wives for achieving their desired goal of domination over their husbands. While husbands should study *Az-Zaujus Salih* (The Pious Husband), wives should do likewise with *Al-Mar'atus Salihah* (The Pious Woman). Both partners should implement their respective roles in practical life. These two treatises, viz. *Al-Mar'atus Salihah* and *Az-Zaujus Salih*, constitute the alchemy of marital happiness and success. May Allah Azza wa Jal accept our humble effort and may He grant readers the *taufeeq* to act in accordance with the Islamic advises and admonitions contained herein.

Rabiul Aakhir 1413 – October 1992

The Husband as the Ruler

“Men are the rulers over women because Allah has bestowed ranks to some of them above others and because they (men) spend of their wealth (for the maintenance of women).”

(Surah Nisaa', Aayat 34)

In describing the man, Allah Ta'ala in this aayat, mentions the word qawwamoon which is the plural of qawwaam. In Arabic, qawwaam refers to someone who has the responsibility of administering a system. He is in charge of executing the affairs and operation of the system which has been entrusted to him. A qawwaam is, therefore, a ruler. The Qur'aan-e-Hakeem uses this term in this very meaning. Thus, Allah Ta'ala says that, “Men are the rulers of (or over) women.”

Just as a community or a nation requires a ruler for proper and efficient functioning of the affairs of society, so too does the home unit stand in need of a ruler to ensure that the home affairs progress smoothly and correctly along the divinely-ordained pattern conceived in by the Shariah. The man in the house has, thus been appointed the ruler or overseer. While Islam has bestowed many rights to women, the Qur'aan-e-Hakeem confirms his superior rank and announces his appointment as the ruler of women.

There is no gainsaying that man is the ruler/guide/overseer in the home. The Qur'aan Majeed is explicit in this declaration and the Ahadeeth of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) are replete with his significance and superiority over woman.

While this is indisputably so, the husband should not commit the grave error of assuming that his superiority and his appointment as the ruler/leader permit him to rule his family at his whimsical and temperamental behest. It is essential that the husband understands that along with his rank and position comes responsibility of a grave and sacred nature. His appointment as *Ruler of Woman* is not a licence for misdirecting authority. His position as the head of the family does not entitle him to introduce a reign of misery in the home. His superiority over his wife does not bestow to him the right of enslaving her. The wife's obedience to her husband, emphasised and made incumbent by Allah Ta'ala, does not allow him to adopt a master and slave relationship at home. His elevated rank is not permission for violating, denying and neglecting the rights (*huqooq*) which Islam orders for women and children.

On the contrary, all such violations and behavioural attitudes not conducive for the correct functioning of an Islamic home, are heavily proscribed by the lofty office he as the husband/father occupies. In short, the husband is not allowed to adopt a bullying attitude. He does not enjoy the right to impose on his wife his wishes, whims and fancies just as he desires and in any way he feels.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Every one of you is a shepherd and every one of you will be questioned about his flock.”

The husband is the Shepherd of his home. On the Day of Qiyaamah he will have to answer in the Divine Court how he treated his flock. Their rights and obligations he has towards his wife and children are sacred injunctions ordained by Rabbul Aalameen (Allah – the Creator and Sustainer of all the worlds). An account of the reign of his home will be demanded from him. Thus, he should understand that commensurate with his rank as the ruler, is the sacred and weighty responsibility of correctly and adequately discharging the *amaanat* (sacred trust) imposed on him by Allah Ta’ala. On that Day of Terror – Yaumul Qiyaamah – when the unjust and cruel husband who had misused his lofty position and misdirected his authority here in this transitory abode, will be hauled to stand trial in Allah’s Court of Justice, he will wish that he never was a husband nor a father nor the ruler in the home. About the awful state of that Day of mighty upheavals, terror and fear, the Qur’aan Majeed says:

“(That Day) will be a day when a man will flee from his brother, his mother, his father, his wife and his children.”

It is, therefore, imperative that the husband/father takes a reckoning of his rule of the home before a reckoning will be demanded from him at a time when he will be ill-prepared or wholly incapable of submitting and appropriate account of his worldly conduct. This is precisely the purport of Rasulullah’s (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) saying:

“Take a reckoning (of yourself) before a reckoning will be demanded (from you).”

The Ruler is the Servant

Hadhrat Umar (Radhiyallahu anhu) said:

“The ruler/leader of a community is their servant.”

This holds true for every group which has a leader or a ruler. Far from misusing a position and a rank of superiority, the Muslim ruler/husband/leader is under Shar’i obligation to benevolently serve his subjects and subordinates who are all units of trust assigned to his care by Allah Azza wa Jal.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and the Sahaabah have given the Ummah practical lessons in family matters – material affairs and home affairs. Thus, we find Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) assisting his wives in such simple home chores as sewing, mending, sweeping, washing, milking the goat, etc. When Muhammad (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), the highest and noblest of creation, considered it necessary to involve himself with these little domestic acts, then it behoves all Muslim husbands to emulate his noble example. In this regard, the Qur’aan Majeed says:

“Verily, there is for you in the Rasul of Allah, a beautiful model (character, way, style) – for him who has hope (in meeting) Allah and the Last Day.”

It is waajib (compulsory) on every Muslim to implement the model of the Rasul (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) in his daily life. Partial implementation of the Sunnah is not expected for the true Mu’min although it has to be conceded that the Ummah, by far and large, has abandoned the noble Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and substituted in its place the satanic systems of the kuffaar.

A king or ruler, although enjoying Shar’i superiority, authority and jurisdiction over his subjects, will be regarded as an evil oppressor and tyrant if he exercises his authority harshly or if he utilizes his rank in his self-interest. Similarly, a husband – the ruler of the home – who misdirects his authority and comes down harshly and inconsiderately on his family will be considered unjust and a tyrant by Islam. The rank which the Shariah has bestowed to him is not for self-interest. It is not for the Muslim husband to

flaunt his rank and authority in an attempt to gain the subservience of his wife for the benefit of his whimsical and sometimes inordinate desires, and in an attempt to pressurize her to forego the *huqooq* (rights) which the Shariah has granted her.

The husband's superior rank demands that he served his wife and children in ways and methods which keep them firmly on the Path of Deen. With wisdom, *naseehat* (advice) and admonition, devotion, sacrifice, kindness and love should the Muslim husband pave the way of Jannat for his family – always sacrificing and giving, but never demanded fulfilment of his personal rights.

Kindness Towards Women

The Qur'aan Majeed commands:

“Deal with women correctly and with kindness. If, then you dislike them, then it is possible that you dislike something while Allah has created abundance of goodness in it.”

(Surah Nisaa, aayat 19)

This Qur'aanic aayat as well as other verses and Ahadeeth define man's role as the ruler of the wife. Arrogance and harshness have no role in a husband's discharge of his duties in his capacity as the ruler. The Qur'aan compulsorily imposes on him justice and kindness. In fact, the kindness and toleration which the husband has to show, should accommodate all the petty indiscretions and outbursts of the wife. The husband is not permitted to react violently or harshly because of the hurtful and cutting statements which his wife stupidly makes. He must understand that Allah Ta'ala has created her *naaqisul aql* or of deficient intelligence. A woman by nature is extremely short-sighted. On most occasions she is blind to the consequences of her statements, attitudes and misdeeds. In contrast, the husband has been endowed with superior *aql* (intelligence). He should not demean his intelligence by reached vindictively in womanish style.

Some husbands, unable to tolerate the indiscretion of their wives, react violently. In a fit of temper they do not hesitate to manhandle, mishandle and cruelly assault their wives. It is essential that such husbands understand

that their display of violence on their wives is not an act of heroism. On the contrary, they are disgracefully exhibiting their cowardice. There is absolutely no honour in silencing a wife by means of violence and abuse.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Strength is not by overwhelming (an adversary) in combat. Verily, a strong man is one who controls his nafs at the time of anger.”

The poor wife is not even an adversary!

The Muslim husband is thus commanded to react with dignity, honour and kindness. He is under Shar’i order to swallow his anger and acquit himself like a true ruler who keeps in mind the Ruler of all rulers – Allah Azza wa Jal. Tomorrow, on the Day of Qiyaamah, he will have to answer for his abuse and injustice perpetrated against his helpless wife who is a sacred *Amaanat* (Trust) assigned into his care by the Creator of that *Amaanat*.

The husband must at all times remember that his wife is not his property. She is the property of Allah Ta’ala. She has been made lawful to man on the Name of Allah Ta’ala. This was the declaration announced by Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) on the occasion of *Hajjatul Widaa* (the Last Hajj). The husband should now reflect and realize that he has no licence to unleash the fury of his temper on the Property of Allah Ta’ala. He has to respect, honour and treasure the *Amaanat* which Allah Ta’ala has awarded to him for his comfort, peace and rest in this ephemeral earthly abode.

In one Hadith, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Piety is a beautiful character.”

A man attains piety with his beautiful moral and spiritual character. Minus an uprighteous character he is a demon, surpassing the lowly beasts in bestiality. According to Nabi-e-Kareem (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) the Muslim who is kindest to his wife, is the one with the best character.

Undoubtedly, some traits and attributes in women are detestable to men. But, the Qur’aan Hakeem says that Allah Ta’ala has created much good in her. The Qur’aan Hakeem exhorts the husband to overlook her detestable

attributes and look rather at the abundance of goodness which Allah Ta'ala has created in her.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) instructed the husband:

“The Mu'min (husband) should not harbour enmity for his wife. If he dislikes something in her, then surely, he will be pleased with another quality in her.” (Muslim)

The husband should expect disobedience and indiscretion from his wife. If he keeps in mind this expectation, he will not be frustrated and disappointed when his wife acts in conflict with his wishes. When she annoys him with her inconsiderate behaviour, he should dispel his anger and annoyance by recalling her goodness and by remembering that she is a free person, not a slave who could be handled and abused according to the husband's desire.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“The Mu'min with the most perfect Imaan is one who has the best character and *who* is the kindest to his wife.”

A requisite for the perfection of Imaan is kindness to one's wife. It is abundantly clear from the Ahadeeth of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) that kindness to the wife is an independent act of virtue.

It is not a reciprocal deed dependant on the wife's obedience. It is not the effect of the wife's loving and obedient attitude to her husband. The husband has to behave honourably and kindly towards his wife at all times notwithstanding her intransigence, obstinacy and indiscreet behaviour. Insha Allah, much of his sins will be forgiven by virtue of his kindness towards his wife.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“The best among you are those among you who are the best to their wives.”

Thus, a man's nobility is linked to his kind treatment of his wife. An unkind and an uncaring husband cannot be a pious man even if he engages in

abundance of *nafil* acts of ibaadah (worship). His piety will be a true piety only if his attitude towards his wife is noble.

Kindness towards the wife is an act of *thawaab* (reward) even to the extent of placing a morsel of food in her mouth. Overlooking her faults, assisting her in her home duties, giving her presents, seeing to her needs in general, refraining from imposing unnecessary demands and duties on her and generally showing her a happy and cheerful disposition are all meritorious acts of reward exhorted by Islam.

On the occasion of his last Hajj, Rasulallah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) commanded:

“Be kind to women for verily they are prisoners by you...”

The wife is fully under the jurisdiction and control of her husband. She is entirely dependent on him. She goes out of her way to please her husband and see to his needs and comfort. It, therefore, does not behove the Muslim husband to exploit her by maltreating her. It is only a cowardly man, lacking in moral excellence, who will ill-treat his wife and ignore Rasulallah’s (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) command to show kindness and love to his wife.

THE HUSBAND’S TREASURE

A treasure to value, honour and be grateful for!

Rasulallah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“After the Taqwa of Allah there is no better treasure for the Mu’min than a pious wife.”

The Husband's Role

“O People of Imaan! Save yourselves and your families (wives and children) from the Fire (of Jahannum).”

(Surah Tahreem)

“And, command your family with Salaah, and be steadfast on it.”

(Surah Taha)

The husband's role is not restricted to the provision of the material needs of his family. Islam imposes the spiritual, moral and educational welfare as incumbent obligations on the husband/father in the same way, in fact to a greater degree than the obligation of providing food and clothing. While the material requirements are for man's temporary needs in this transitory earthly life, spiritual and moral requirements are necessary for his success and salvation in the everlasting abode of the Aakhirah. It is, therefore, of utmost importance for the husband/father to attend to the Deeni and Roohani training of his family. This obligation is his topmost priority.

The vital need of Deeni, Roohaani and Akhlaaqi (moral) development is among the huqooq (rights) which the man compulsorily owes to his family. But, today, most men have abandoned this obligation. They deceive themselves into believing that they have correctly absolved themselves of their duties by seeing to the material needs of their families. The greater part of their lives expended in worldly pursuits which in most cases are not only futile, but destructive in terms of the Aakhirah.

In the mad desire to improve and enhance their worldly status, people blindly lose themselves in the pursuit of wealth to the lamentable detriment of their families. The Qur'aan and Ahadeeth command and exhort the man to save his family from the everlasting perdition of Jahannum. But, the husband/father, far from being conscious of his role as the Deeni ruler of the home, paves the path to Jahannum for his family by his abandonment of the Deeni rights of his wife and children.

Allah Ta'ala has appointed the man as the Haakim (ruler) of his family. In this role he is under Shar'i obligation to train and guide his family along the Path

of Deen. This is a lifelong obligation on the husband/father. His duty – sacred obligation – towards his family begins from the time he opens his eyes in the morning until the time they all retire for the night. His role as the Benevolent and Wise Ruler demands that he be ever alert and diligently applies his mind, efforts, time and wealth to secure the success of his family – Deeni and Roohani success which will culminate in the best of stations in the Aakhirah.

The husband/father has been appointed the ruler so that he guides his family and steers them along Siraatul Mustaqeem (the Straight Path of the Qur’aan and Sunnah). His superiority brings along with it the sacred responsibility of protecting his family – not only from physical harm – but from the myriad of nafsani and spiritual dacoits and scoundrel waiting in ambush along the meandering and difficult road leading to Jannah. The road to salvation and Jannat is strewn with obstacles and adorned with nafsani snares in beautiful and deceptive forms, most alluring to man. The dangers luring him from the Road of Salvation are encircling him at all times.

In such a turbulent world has Allah Ta’ala appointed the husband as the guide, guardian and ruler of his family. Man is thus obliged to discharge his sacred responsibility of guiding his family wisely, benevolently and lovingly to see them through to their destination – Jannah.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“The Fire (Jahannum) is covered with delights and Jannah is veiled in miseries and hardship.”

Allah Ta’ala has not sent man to get lost and destroyed in deception. The quest of wealth and worldly status and perfection are not man’s goals. Hankering after the objects of nafsani desire are great and grave impediments in the Deeni Path. The prime duty of the husband is to ensure the spiritual and moral safety, progress and perfection of his family. Alas! How many husbands are truly concerned with the Deeni progress of their wives? How many fathers have the Imaan of their children truly at heart? If they make an honest appraisal of the condition in their hearts, they will not fail to discern that the everlasting happiness of their families occupy a very low priority.

Undoubtedly, the first and foremost priority of most husbands/fathers is their quest for wealth and worldly status. It is for this reason that a man labours all day in his business. In the evenings he is either too tired, sometimes real and sometimes imagined, or he has to attend some get-together with his friends and associates, leaving his family neglected and exposed to the onslaughts of Shaitaan. Every Muslim husband/father should sincerely and honestly evaluate his domestic life to discover how much exactly he cares and does for his wife and children. Contemplation will remove some of the veils blocking the understanding with which a Muslim has to approach all his affairs. By taking a reckoning of his relationship with his family, the husband – the ruler of the home – will observe himself not as the benevolent ruler executing the rights and obligations of his family commanded by Allah Ta’ala. On the contrary, he will – if he honestly appraises himself – see himself as a tyrant, a zaalim (oppressor), a khaa-in (abuser of trust) and a man motivated by selfish desires of a nafsani sort. He simply has elected to smother his conscience by shutting out from his mind the reality of his gross dereliction of the divine trust assigned to his care and jurisdiction in his office as the Haakim of his home.

The husband will produce a plethora of imagined arguments and self-imposed worldly and nafsani responsibilities – which in fact are all destructive liabilities – to justify to himself his abdication from his position as the ruler of women. He will utilize his rulership, control and jurisdiction over women largely in avenues and acts for which the Shariah has not mandated him.

The businessman justifies the spiritual and moral neglect of his family on the basis of his involvement in his shops and factories. He is so occupied with making money and expanding his imagined commercial empire that he cannot find time to get involved with the Deeni and moral training of his family. Yet Allah Ta’ala has not despatched him to earth for carving out a financial empire.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“The (search) for halaal earnings is the incumbent duty after the fardh salaah.”

Man is, thus, under Shar'i obligation only to the extent of earning sufficient halaal earnings to see him comfortably through the earthly journey. He has absolutely no freedom and no right to embark on any project, whether worldly, the deeni, to the degree of failing to carry out the duties of his office of Rulership of the home. On the Day of Qiyaamah when he shall have to answer in Allah's Court for the Deeni ignorance and the moral corruption of his family, his arguments will not avail him. He will not be able to escape the misfortune of his neglect by presenting his business and other worldly occupations and professions as excuses for his failure to tend to the Deeni affairs of his family.

While those hankering after worldly perfection and success neglect their roles as husbands and fathers on the pretext of earning a livelihood and other mundane pursuits; the muballigh (the one involved in tabligh – the Moulana, the Madrasah teacher, the Tabligh Jamaat worker and others) soothes his conscience by convincing himself that he is justified in neglecting the Deeni training of his wife and children because of his involvement with the work of Allah – in the Path of Allah. Little do they understand the colossal deception in which they are dwelling.

Their first and prior tabligh and Path of Allah are their wives and children. The Qur'aan Majeed commands:

“O People of Imaan! Save yourselves and your families from the Fire.”

The Shariah does not permit a husband/father to involve himself in tabligh to others to the degree of neglecting his family. They have a greater huqooq over him than others. When there is a variety of huqooq of different people of various classes, the Muslim is required to attend to all such obligations on the basis of the principle of priority ordained by the Shariah. Thus, the parents have huqooq over their son, and his wife and the children have huqooq over him. His brothers have huqooq over him and so has his neighbours.

It will be un-Islamic and unlawful to accord priority and greater importance to the huqooq of parents, for example, when fulfilment of their rights entails neglect or abandonment of the rights and obligations of the wife and children. In fact, there is generally no conflict of huqooq. Rights and

obligations of different persons are of varying degrees of priority and importance. On account of ignorance and a misconceived idea of huqooq, most people presume a conflict between the rights of different parties. Unable to resolve the crisis, they accord undue importance to the wishes of one party, so much so, that the rights of the other party are either only partially upheld or abandoned entirely. Insha Allah, this grave aspect will be further discussed later in this treatise.

The muballigh cannot Islamically justify his neglect of his family's spiritual and moral training on the grounds of his participation in Deeni service to the community. In the whole community, his own family constitutes the most important unit. The obligation of providing Deeni guidance and moral training for one's own family is a sacred trust which Allah Ta'ala has imposed squarely on every haakim (ruler) of a family. Instead of the haakim of the house involving himself in the discharge of his sacred duty of tabligh to his wife and child, we witness the spectacle of greater concern and priority shown to others on the basis of the deception that 'we must have feeling for the Ummah' – 'we must sacrifice for the Ummah'. Shaitaan approaches man even under Deeni guise to deceive him and cast him into deviation. He will compromise with man by taking him away from an Ibaadat of greater importance and put him into an Ibaadat of lesser importance and then, by degrees blur his vision until he ultimately succeeds in ensnaring man into his clutches.

While it is an Islamic truth that 'we must have feeling for the Ummah' and 'we must sacrifice for the Ummah', we must not forget that our immediate family in so far as we are concerned constitutes a very important segment of the Ummah. A man who inverts his priorities and pays greater attention to others while assigning his family a backseat, does not know the meaning of sacrifice and feeling for the Ummah. He labours in deception.

Allah Ta'ala instructed Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam):

"And, warn your close family..."

A tabligh and a service to the Ummah which constrain a man to neglect the Deeni teaching and moral training of his family is not a true tabligh nor a true Deeni service. Likewise, a pursuit for wealth and hankering after a profession which occasion the neglect of abandonment of the Islamic training (tarbiyat)

of the family are beyond the limits of legitimate earning of a halaal livelihood.

Man's mission on earth is not to create an empire of wealth and fix earthly comfort and assumed worldly perfection as his goals. The ultimate goal of man is the Aakhirah. Spelling out man's goal, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Verily, the world has been created for you, and you have been created for the Aakhirah.”

Man must, therefore, take from this temporary abode only that much which is adequate for his needs and for his journey to the Aakhirah.

Man must understand that it is not for no reason that he has been appointed as the ruler of women. He is the haakim in the home in which dwells his subjects and subordinates. He is indeed most foolish to ignore his subjects or to neglect their welfare because of his preoccupation with those who are not his first and direct responsibility.

A husband/father should understand that if he does not fully apply himself to the tarbiyat of his family, he will be grossly failing in his sacred and fardh obligation. He will then be abdicating and abandoning the office of government of the home which Allah Ta'ala has entrusted to him.

Zulm (Injustice and Cruelty) by the Haakim of the Home

The husband/father has been divinely awarded with the rank of dominance to enable him to guide his family in the raging torrents of worldly corruption and *fitnah* until they have become spiritually and morally strong enough for them to fend for themselves. Allah Ta'ala has not appointed the husband/father as the *haakim* to perpetrate *zulm* on his family. The husband has absolutely no Shar'i right of abusing, pushing around and mishandling his wife. His superiority does not entitle him to behave tyrannically nor to ride rough-shod over the rights of his wife.

It is of utmost importance that husbands understand that their dominance is not permission for extracting service from wives by coercion, pressure, abuse

and command. Many husbands labour under the false notion that because they are the *qawwaamoon* (rulers) women, they possess the right of enslaving their wives. This attitude is repugnant to Islam. It is an attitude of *zulm* which the Shariah does not allow. It is true that the Shariah commands woman to obey her husband and tolerate patiently his excesses. But, this Shar'i command does not permit the husband to take advantage of his superiority to make a servant of his wife.

Husbands do not restrict their injustice to only the imposition of tasks and duties on their wives. They transgress the limits further by abusing, insulting and physically assaulting their wives. Such dastardly behaviour of *zulm* does not or should never form part of the Muslim husband's character. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Abusing (i.e. verbally swearing – using vulgar language) a Muslim is fusooq (an immoral act of transgression) and fighting with a Muslim is an act of kufr.”

By their general behaviour, husbands imply that good behaviour and civil conduct apply only to outsiders. It is, therefore, generally observed that a husband who behaves like a brute at home, adopts a good disposition and shows good moral behaviour – at least superficially – in his relationship and dealings with those who are not his family members. He will act with discretion, swallow his pride and restrain his temper in his dealings with outsiders. But, when he deals with his wife and children, he shows intolerance and displays his annoyance and vents his anger.

In this un-Islamic exhibition of bestial attributes, the husband is not motivated by any altruistic intentions for the Deeni and worldly well-being of his family. He simply answers the call of his *nafs*. At the behest of his *nafs*, he blows his top. He abuses, swears and even resorts to violence. He only succeeds in embittering the home relationship, polluting the environment and alienating his family. A Muslim husband is not permitted to behave so callously and seek to solve domestic problems by a demonstration of *zulm*.

It is necessary that there be uniformity in the conduct of a Muslim man. Acting the role of an oppressor at home while presenting a benign and benevolent attitude outside the home is a type of hypocrisy. A man's behaviour in both public and private should be the same. Internally and

externally the Muslim husband should be an embodiment of virtue and responsibility.

Many husbands do not even consider their unjust actions towards their wives as *zulm*. They feel that they are entitled to treat and maltreat their wives as they please. They do understand and acknowledge injustice perpetrated against others. But, their wives are not regarded in the same light. Since the wife is the subordinate on, the husband feels that he will not be held liable for his maltreatment of her. This is a grave error which he is guilty of. Hadhrat Umar (Radhiyallahu anhu) said:

“Verily, we have been forbidden from assaulting those who perform Salaat.”

In addition to her performance of Salaat, the wife enjoys a bond of love with her husband. Besides this, the husband should consider the following very important and significant issues:

She slaves for him, executing a variety of duties which the Shariah does not compulsorily impose on her. Be she sick or tired, she is perpetually on call and duty.

He derives comfort and rest in her. The Qur’aan states this fact.

She has been made lawful for his comfort, rest and pleasure on the Name of Allah Ta’ala. She is, therefore, an Amaanat assigned to the husband’s care by Allah Ta’ala. She is Allah’s property, not man’s property. Allah Ta’ala gave her to the man in good condition. He will, therefore, be answerable to Allah Ta’ala for any abuse which he commits in this sacred trust.

She ensures his moral and spiritual purity by saving him from immorality. Hence, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Nikah is half of Imaan.”

With what heart can a man then abuse, insult and assault his wife? When it is *haraam* to assault even a complete stranger simply because he performs Salaat, how is it possible for a Muslim husband to abuse and assault his wife who possesses all the noble qualities enumerated above? He must

remember that on the Day of Qiyaamah he will not escape the Divine Reckoning. Let him also remember that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Beware of the call of the *mazloom* (the oppressed one), for verily, there is no barrier between Allah and the du’a of the *mazloom*.”

Every misdirected statement, every unjustified display of anger, every insult and abuse are acts of *zulm*. The husband has no Shar’i right to respond with anger and abuse when his wife commits little blunders, speaks to him indiscreetly and annoys him with her laziness and lack of responsibility. He has to remedy such conduct with wisdom and kindness.

When she violates his rights, he should not become demanding. He is under Shar’i obligation to forgive her and overlook her faults. Most assuredly, she has a higher status than her servant. It is incumbent that the husband treats her with the highest degree of love, consideration and understanding. When the Shariah has ordered benign treatment for a servant, then it will not be difficult to understand the type of attitude a husband should at all times have for his partner of love.

Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Umar (Radhiyallahu anhu) narrates:

“A man came to Nabi (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and said: ‘O Rasulullah! How many times should we forgive the servant?’ Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) remained silent. The man repeated his question and again Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) remained silent. When the man repeated the question the third time, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: ‘Forgive him seventy times every day.’”

Husbands should examine their attitude towards their wives in the light of this Hadith. If the servant has to be shown so much toleration and kindness, how much understanding should we show to our wives? Instead of showing kindness and seeking to solve a problem with wisdom, the husband reacts vengefully, callously and in a most un-Islamic manner.

Understanding Women

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Be kind to women, for verily they have been created from a rib. The most crooked rib is the uppermost one. If you seek to (entirely) straighten it, you will break it and if you leave it, it will remain crooked. Therefore, be kind to women.” (Bukhari and Muslim)

“Verily, a woman is like a rib.” (Bukhari)

“A woman is like a rib (crooked). If you straighten her, you will break her. If you derive benefit with her, you will derive it from her while there is crookedness in her.” (Bukhari)

“I have not seen any person of greater deficiency in intelligence and Deen than anyone of you (women). You (are capable) of capturing the intelligence of a wise man...” (Bukhari)

In these Ahadith, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is not imparting lessons in physiology. While stating the origin of woman and her psychological and physiological weakness, the aim is to draw man’s attention to her natural disposition and way of thinking so that he conditions his own mind to counter her shortcomings with a great measure of toleration and wisdom.

That woman was created from the left rib of Aadam (Alaihis Salaam), is a literal and an Islamic truth, no matter how unpalatable it may seem to western tastes. And, no matter how detestable it may appear to the thinking of westernized Muslims and the vociferous proponents of the equality of sexes, the Islamic truth is that Allah Ta’ala has created woman with deficient intelligence. In relation to man, her thinking is defective, hence Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) draws our attention to the primordial origin of woman. Her primeval crookedness described by Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) permeates her whole being just as the baseness of man’s primordial substance, viz. sand, manifests itself in the lowly and bestial conduct of man.

Man having been created from sand, cannot entirely shed himself of lowliness and base attributes. Similarly, a woman who was created from a crooked rib will not be entirely without some crookedness in her natural disposition and thinking even if she has attained an elevated moral and spiritual rank.

In the Ahadith mentioned in this context, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) informs us that:

1. There is obstinacy in woman's natural disposition.
2. She cannot be expected to rise fully to man's expectations.
3. She is short-sighted, i.e. she generally does not foresee the consequences of her rashness.
4. If man comes down on her harshly, seeking to remedy her natural crookedness and defective thinking, he will break her. This, according to Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), means *talaaq*. The marriage will break down irretrievably.
5. The husband should proceed with her *Deeni tarbiyat* with wisdom, understanding and toleration, never expecting too much from her.
6. It is not possible to achieve her full co-operation and obedience.
7. In spite of her weaknesses and defects, man should correctly utilize the benefits, virtues and goodness which Allah Ta'ala has created in her.

It is with this frame of mind and conception of woman that a man must enter the bonds of marriage. It is essential that he fully comprehends the formidable problems which await him in marriage. So many marriages, so soon after *nikah*, end up on the rocks. Frustration, despondency and shock are experienced by husbands in their relationship with their wives because they conceived marriage as a pure and perpetual bed of roses – of love, comfort, mutual understanding and bliss. Such fantasies are highlighted by the stupid conceptions of love propounded by westernism which has overwhelmed the minds and lives of so many Muslims.

When a man has some understanding of the problems he will inevitably confront in married life at the hands of a woman who is *naaqisul aql* (deficient in intelligence), short-sighted and obstinate, then he will be better equipped to deal with the problems which her natural disposition will spawn. He will then understand that he cannot remedy his wife's intransigence and obstinacy by himself reacting with intransigence. He will understand that he

cannot cure her of her indiscretion by retaliating abusively and violently. On the contrary, he will only succeed to give further impetus to her natural crookedness which will culminate in divorce.

In the programme for woman's *tarbiyat* Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) has stressed kindness, toleration, understanding and benign behaviour. Hence, he said that even a morsel of food lifted with love to the mouth of the wife is an act of *sadqah* (charity).

The husband should now understand that he has brought into his home and under his control the daughter of parents who love her, who have borne and cared for her in travail upon travail. They have given their beloved daughter to you on the Name of Allah. She has, thus, entered under your domination as a sacred Trust to be protected, respected and cared for. She has not come to your home as a servant to labour under the weight of impositions not ordered by the Shariah nor has she come to you to be abused, insulted and man-handled like so many husbands are guilty of.

Every act of *sabr*, kindness, understanding and wisdom which the husband shows at home is a deed of charity for which the reward is great. If the husband understands his role and her limitations and weaknesses, he will then, at every step respond with affection and mercy, not with wrath and intolerance.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Whoever has no mercy, mercy will not be shown to him.”

Therefore, in your dealings with your wife and children fear Allah.

The Meaning and Limits of Toleration

Undoubtedly, the Shariah stresses much the adoption of toleration in the process of the family's *tarbiyat* (spiritual and moral training). But toleration should not be confused with obedience. In the Muslim home the husband/father is the ruler. For the proper and successful *tarbiyat* of his family it is essential that he remains the ruler. If an inversion of roles should overtake the home, the consequence will be disorder, matrimonial breakdown and failure of the process of *tarbiyat*. A husband who abdicates

his role and submits to the dictation of his wife, paves the path of Jahannum for his family.

The Shariah does not order obedience for the husband. He is not asked or commanded to obey his wife. On the contrary, the wife is commanded to be obedient to her husband.

The principle governing a husband's toleration of his wife's attitudes is the Shariah. A husband is not expected to permit his family latitude to the degree of Shar'i violations. When the wife's desire is to commit transgression, the husband is not permitted to appease her. It is his duty to ensure that his family conforms to the Shariah. If he shirks in his duty, he will be held liable by Allah Ta'ala for dereliction of duty. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“The man is the shepherd of his family and he will be questioned
(about his family).”

Just as a father is under Shar'i obligation to ensure that his children perform Salaat and adhere to the laws of the Shariah, so too, is it incumbent on the husband to ensure that his wife performs Salaat and observes the laws of the Shariah. If he overlooks her failure to observe the laws of the Shariah, such condescension will not be described as legitimate toleration. Rather, it will be said to be neglect and abandonment of one's incumbent responsibility.

If the wife, for example, does not perform Salaat regularly, the husband should be immensely concerned. But he should not react violently and abusively in an endeavour to compel her to perform Salaat regularly. If he does, in all likelihood he will not succeed. He should adopt gentle *naseehat* (Deeni advice and admonition). He should explain intelligently her folly. After repeated *naseehat* if she refuses to perform Salaat regularly, he should voice his displeasure in a dignified way. If she persists in her neglect of Salaat, he should refuse to eat the food she prepares. If this measure too fails to yield results, the husband should separate himself from her bed. In most cases there will not arise the need to adopt extreme measures. Most wives will mend their ways after *naseehat* and a display of some displeasure. However, if she is beyond reformation, which her intransigent refusal to perform Salaat will confirm, then the best course will be the ultimate step of *talaaq*. A

Muslim cannot live with a woman who hovers on the brink of kufr by her rejection of Salaat.

If the wife insists on abandoning *hijab* or *purdah*, the husband cannot meekly accept such evil and submit to her desires. He will have to resort to all means of dignified persuasion he is capable of in a bid to make her conform to the demands of Islam. Since he is the *haakim* (ruler), there is no reason why he will fail. He will succeed in convincing her of her folly. But, most husbands who claim failure in this regard, have themselves to blame. Either they adopt corrective measures abusively, scornfully and violently or they themselves set no example in the home. They themselves lead un-Islamic, immoral and despicable ways of life, hence their *naseehat* makes no impact on their families.

A man who requires his wife and daughter to be servants in his shop where they come into contact with all and sundry, must not expect them to adopt *hijab* and piety. When *ghair mahram* (male strangers) are attracted to them or vice versa, this *dayyooth* (cuckold) husband/father should not be mystified and react with shock and surprise. Illicit contact and relationships nowadays are in vogue in places where *Shar'i Hijab* has been abandoned.

If a wife is so brazen as to leave the home without the consent of her husband, only he is to be blamed. If his *naseehat* and other dignified measures of convincing her of her folly fail to keep her at home, then obviously it will signal the parting of the ways. There is no need for abuse and violence. In conformity with the Qur'aan, the husband should simply opt out of such a disastrous marriage and honourably set the woman free to go her own way. When the wife has resolved to flagrantly violate the Shariah and all measures of reforming her prove unproductive, then the best option is:

“...release with honour.” (Qur'aan)

If the wife is adamant in any un-Islamic demand, e.g. she insists on a television, the husband should under no circumstances condescend. He is not allowed by the Shariah to comply with any of her haram wishes and fancies. His tolerance is limited by the commands of the Shariah. Any tolerance which overlaps the limits of the Shariah is not permissible. The

Qur'aan Majeed says: *"These are the limits of Allah, therefore, do not transgress them."*

The Cuckold Husband

While the Shariah stresses greatly kindness, love, tolerance and understanding towards the wife, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) criticized the husband who lacks manly honour and permits his wife free mingling with other males. Such a husband has been described by Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) as a *dayyooth* (cuckold).

Such a man is disgraceful and dishonourable. Despite having been divinely appointed the *haakim* (ruler) of the home, the *dayyooth* not only abandons his obligation of protecting the morals and modesty of his wife, but he also brings spiritual ruin onto himself.

A man who lacks the honour and will of protecting his wife's modesty by permitting her to speak and associate with males, destroys his Deen and oversees the destruction of the Deen of his family. Allah Ta'ala says in the Qur'aan Majeed:

"O People of Imaan! Verily, some among your wives and your children are your enemies, therefore, beware of them."

When wives and children induce the husband to flout the laws of Allah Ta'ala then they effectively play the role of enemies. There is no greater enemy than the enemy of Imaan and Deen. A husband should not allow his family to deflect him from the Shariah. He should not concede to the un-Islamic demands of his wife and children. He should not buckle under the nagging and insistence of his wife. For the sake of maintaining a false idea of peace, he should not relent and fulfil the un-Islamic and haram desires of his wife and children.

The limit of the husband's tolerance and submission to the wife's indiscretion is the confines of the Shariah. In the matter of his rights, he should accept her failings and shortcomings. When she backchats and passes indiscreet remarks he should show tolerance. But, when she demands and desires things which Allah Ta'ala has forbidden, then the husband should refuse with such resoluteness which will not crack under her nagging. In the

matter of obedience to the Shariah he should leave no ambiguity. From the very inception his attitude in this regard should be well understood by the wife. A woman who refuses to submit to the Shariah is prepared to ruin her marriage. Let the decision be hers. If she refuses to live as a Muslim wife, let her opt out of the marriage. A Muslim man cannot pass his life in the company of one whom the Qur'aan has designated an enemy.

A Beautiful Standard

The Qur'aan Majeed states:

“For them (women) are (rights) similar to those on them, according to the beautiful standard.”

Man here is told that just as there are rights and obligations due to the husband, so too, are there rights and obligations due to the wife. The man should not labour under the misconception that being the *haakim*, he alone holds the monopoly of rights and obligations – that the wife is his slave, at his mercy and to be content with whatever treatment he metes out to her as his whims and fancies dictate. The Qur'aan dispels this notion.

Although the Qur'aan rejects the notion of equality of man and woman, it calls man's attention to the rights which Allah Ta'ala has granted her and which man is obliged to honour. Lest the modernists deny the inequality of the sexes, we cite the relevant Qur'aanic aayat:

“For them (women) are (rights) similar to those on them, according to the beautiful standard. And, for men is a rank above them (women).”

(Surah Baqarah, Aayat 228)

This aayat, while rejecting the notion of the equality of man and woman, also rejects the idea of woman being devoid of rights. It reminds the husband of her rights – of his sacred duty of executing the rights which Allah Ta'ala has granted her. His superiority over her is not a licence to maltreat her and to subject her to his indiscriminate will and whim. In extracting his rights from her and in honouring her rights he should proceed in a beautiful manner, adorning the crisp and dry legalities with the moral (*akhlaaqi*) code of Islam

and the *Uswah Hasanah* (Beautiful Character) of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). While the legal requirement is to provide the bare necessities and provisions of the home, the husband should not confine himself to the legal minimum. He should spend with an open heart, in a beautiful manner, without wasting, to gain the love and pleasure of his wife and children.

When the need arises to reprimand his family, he should proceed with dignity, decorum and do so honourably. In all aspects of her rights, he should honour them diligently, honourably and always giving more while at the same time not behaving like a tyrannical ruler when the wife fails to correctly fulfil the rights due to him. The standard which the husband should adopt must be *beautiful*, i.e. the example of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Patience, toleration and understanding constitute the essential ingredients of the *Beautiful Standard* the Qur'aan orders for husbands in the role as the *Qawwamoon* (rulers) of women.

The husband should adopt a beautiful attitude in his relationship with his wife in all acts, requirements and demands, whether from his side or emanating from her. A beautiful attitude should permeate all aspects of the husband-wife relationship. Conjugal relations, provisions of the house, providing Deeni ta'leem, enforcement of Shar'i rules, relationship with the wife's relatives, the wife's indiscretion and whatever other situation there may be attached to the home-relationship should all be subjected to beautiful dealings. Sternness and exercise of his legal prerogatives to enforce his decisions should be only as a last resort when the situation justifies such action in the Deeni or worldly interests and welfare of his family.

As long as there is not infringement of Allah's laws, the husband should demonstrate toleration. A man cannot be a pious husband as long as he does not learn to act honourably towards his wife and children.

Imposing Hardships on the Wife

Some husbands believe that by marriage they have gained a free servant – in fact a slave. The wife is expected, in addition to her domestic duties, to tend to the business as well. In violation of the Shariah, wives are expected to stand in the shops of their husbands, exposing themselves to all and sundry. A great cause for the breakdown of husband-wife relationship and the moral ruin of the children is to take the wife out of her natural home-keeping role

and casting her into an unnatural occupation. Standing in the shop or going out to earn is not her duty. It is unnatural and an unjust hardship which the husband imposes on her.

Along with such an imposition being haraam, it is beyond her natural physical and mental capabilities to act out the role of both man and woman. It is cruel for the husband to expect her to share a responsibility which the Shariah squarely places on only him. By subjecting the wife to this unjust and unlawful imposition, her mental and physical health suffers, the children are neglected, the home is neglected and the Divine Law of Hijab is flagrantly violated. The Wrath of Allah overtakes the home. A variety of calamities settle over the family. The *barkat* from the business and the home disappears. The introduction of this free, unpaid 'servant' into the business, far from being beneficial, ultimately leads to ruin in both the home and shop. No venture of a Muslim will succeed if the Commands of Allah Ta'ala are disregarded.

The wife will be acting perfectly within the scope of her rights by refusing to comply with the husband's wish or order for them to work in his shop or go out to earn. In fact, she is under Shar'i obligation to refuse such haraam instructions of her husband. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“There is no obedience for creation in disobedience to the Creator.”

In other words, any instruction or desire which conflicts with the Law of Allah cannot be accepted whether such an order is issued by the husband or parents. A man should, therefore, understand that if he is annoyed by his wife's refusal to accept any of his unlawful commands, his annoyance is in fact, directed against the Command of Allah Ta'ala.

Another hardship which some husbands impose on their wives is excessive cooking for an inordinate number of guests. Guests in the home and a pleasure and hospitality towards them is an Islamic teaching. A good wife will not refuse to assist her husband in being hospitable to his friend and guests. However, some men have extended their contacts – business and otherwise – to such an extent that there is a continuous flow of people into their homes. The wife is expected to cater for large numbers of people. She is expected to slave in the kitchen, preparing sumptuous dishes for her husband's acquaintances. Great strain is put on the wife. In fact, in some

cases the wife is reduced to misery by such slavery which has become a way of life in some homes.

The husband remains insensitive and reacts with anger if his wife should complain about these unjust impositions. He should understand well that he has no right of imposing such tasks on her. While most wives are only happy to cater for guests, the husband must understand that he has no Shar'i right of imposing such tasks on his wife. Cooking for his friends and guests is not among his rights. She is not obliged to do so. Thus, if a wife refuses to obey her husband with regard to such tasks and impositions which she finds difficult, he should not be offended. He will have to make his own arrangements for feeding the large and continuous retinue of his guests, friends and acquaintances.

Among the hardships which husbands impose on their wives is the task to look after their (husbands') parents. A wife, out of love for her husband, will voluntarily tend to her husband's parents. However, some women are not inclined to be permanent nurses for their husbands' ailing or invalid parents. Caring for in-laws is not among the rights and obligations of Nikah. If the wife refuses to tend to her husband's parents, he has no Shar'i right of compelling her. The husband should, therefore, not expect her to remain at attention to his parents, answering to their beck and call. Marriage to a man does not legalize the imposition of such tasks on a woman which the Shariah has not included in the list of the husband's rights to be observed by the wife.

Ignorance of each other's rights (*huqooq*) leads to much friction and bitterness. When the husband understands the limits of the Shariah, then he will realize his error and refrain from expecting his wife to submit to his every whim, fancy and order. If she is not inclined to look after his parents or refuses to do any task imposed on her by her husband, he should not take offence nor quarrel with her nor behave vengefully even though the task may be meritorious and ordinarily considered to be a duty to be rendered by the wife. If the Shariah has not imposed a task on her as a demand or right of nikah, the husband is not entitled to compel her to accept his wish in this regard. No matter how much he is grieved by her refusal, he should mentally accept it and behave as if he is not affronted by her attitude.

When a husband reacts honourably, the wife will sooner or later be put to shame. When in spite of her shortcomings, laziness and disinclination, the

husband continues to observe his duties and obligations, a wife with any sense of honour is sure to feel ashamed of herself. The Qur'aanic injunction:

“Ward off evil with what is better.”

should be applied in the relationship with the wife as well. Display of good mannerism is not only with outsiders. *Akhlaaq* (good character) should begin at home in one's relationship with one's family.

The duty of caring for parents devolve on their children, not on the wives of their children. Among themselves, children should care for their parents. They should not impose this duty on their wives if they are unwilling. To do so is unjust and oppression.

Some husbands do not regard as *zulm* (injustice and cruelty) the excesses they commit on their wives. They do understand the evil of injustice, but the wife, is excluded from the scope of this understanding. The man has convinced himself that the wife is here to obey, submit and slave. The notion of injustice does not occur to some husbands in regard to their dealings with their wives. *Zulm* in a variety of forms is, therefore, perpetrated on defenceless wives who were made lawful for the rest, comfort and pleasure of husbands in the Name of Allah Ta'ala.

It is essential for husbands to understand that all impositions of hardship on wives and the imposition against their will of tasks which are not obligations of the *Nikah* are *zulm*. For such injustices the husband will be arraigned in the Divine Court in the *Aakhirah*.

Husbands oppress their wives in a variety of ways without even understanding their acts to be *zulm*. In this regard the following comments and *naseehat* (advice and admonition) of Hadhrat Maulana Masihullah are most appropriate:

“Oppressing wives is a common form of *zulm* among numerous people. Husbands mete out injustice to them in many ways. People tend to understand that wives are slaves, hence maltreatment of wives is widespread. Husbands are not prepared to tolerate the slightest inconvenience or displeasing little acts emanating from their wives. The husband expects that his wife will never back-answer him. Should she back-

answer him, he flares into a fit of abuse and vulgarity which at times lead to talaq. The lightest argument leads to strain in relationship and the husband suspends talking to his wife. He sulks in her presence and the atmosphere is transformed into a state of mourning. Little does he realise that among the rights of the wife is that the husband should tolerate her little acts of misbehaviour and impatience. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that woman was created from a crooked rib. There is, therefore, some crookedness in her character. If one attempts to straighten her completely, she will be broken. Man is required to bear with her and to derive benefit from her while tolerating her weaknesses and defects.

The question of *Huqooqul Ibaad* (the rights and obligations towards creation) is not a simple or an insignificant matter. Trampling on the rights of a person brings about destruction even in this earthly life. In addition, punishment awaits the violator of *huqooqul ibaad* in the Akhirah. There are many ways in which these rights of others are violated e.g. the rights of the wife. A wife has many rights over her husband. Numerous husbands among us fail to uphold these rights and oppress their wives.

“Some husbands suspend their relationship with their wives and strike up a connection with other women. This is indeed an act of grave oppression (*zulm*). Husbands should refrain from such dastardly cruelty and adopt a cheerful and loving relationship with their wives. It is essential for the husband to adopt a cheerful attitude with his wife. He must fear Allah Ta’ala and never resort to *zulm* against his wife. Allah Ta’ala has power over him. If the husband is not careful in this respect, it is quite possible that Allah Ta’ala will overtake him with some calamity. Someone who will oppress him may be appointed over him in retribution for his injustice committed against his wife.

“In most cases the consequences of *zulm* are experienced here on earth. In bygone times (among nations prior to the advent of Islam) punishment for oppression was divinely meted out on the spot immediately on perpetration of the injustice. Such punishment would be there for all to be seen. In view of the special mercy of Allah Ta’ala on this Ummah, the punishment is not inflicted openly for all to see. The punishment arrives in a veiled form, hence people do not understand that it (the punishment) is in fact the consequence of the oppression which was committed. People overlook the causes and attribute such resultant calamities merely to their

material and mundane causes when in actual fact it is the punishment for the *zulm*, especially when the oppressed had cursed the oppressor. The call of the oppressed is readily accepted by Allah Ta'ala. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

'Beware of the curse of the *mazloom* (oppressed), for verily, there is no veil between it and Allah.'

In the holy institution known as *home* created by the sacred Nikah Bond, the wife is the *amaanat* (trust) of Allah Azza wa Jal assigned into the custody of the husband. He is undoubtedly the *haakim* (ruler) of his wife and the home. But, with what face will he stand in the presence of Allah Ta'ala on the Day of Qiyaamah with the burden of abuse, ill-treatment and *zulm* which he had perpetrated on the *amaanat* which he took for his benefit and comfort in the Name of Allah?"

The Wife's Right to Separate Living Quarters

This is a very contentious and delicate issue. It leads to much disappointment and bitterness. Marriages too break up on this issue. The husband should understand that *separate living quarters* is the wife's Shar'i right. It is her inviolable right. The husband is under Shar'i obligation to provide his wife separate living quarters if she insists on this right of hers.

The excuse of the husband's parents insisting on their daughter-in-law living together with them is not tenable in the Shariah. The husband will be committing a grievous sin if he refuses to fulfil this *wajib* (compulsory) right of his wife. Separate living quarters do not necessarily mean a separate house. If the house is big enough, her quarters should be demarcated with the keys in her possession.

Privacy in the home is her inalienable right and, in fact, necessary. Many a time, the mother-in-law intrudes in the daughter-in-law's privacy. She considers such unlawful intrusion justified and her right simply because the girl happens to be the wife of her son. But the Shariah does not give the mother-in-law any such right by which she is entitled to invade the privacy of her daughter-in-law. The wife has the Shar'i right of debarring her mother-in-law from entering her room. While good wives treat their mothers-in-law with utmost respect, the latter should not take advantage of their daughters-

in-law. They should respect them and seek permission before entering the room of their daughter-in-law.

Some mothers-in-law consider it their right to even open the cupboards and wardrobes of their daughters-in-law to examine the contents. This is a despicable invasion of privacy, a show of scant respect and unlawful in terms of the Shariah.

Commenting on the wife's right to live separately, Hadhrat Maulana Masihullah says:

“It should be borne in mind that it is not permissible to obey any person who violates Allah's Law and acts contrary to the Shariah. Thus, if the wife wishes to live apart from her in-laws, it is only her right which the husband is bound to fulfil. In fact, in these times there is greater benefit in living separately. Arguments, disputes, ill-feeling and misery are usually the consequences of living together with in-laws. In the majority of cases, old ladies harass their daughters-in-law. If it argues that daughters-in-law nowadays are very ill-mannered and rude to their mothers-in-law, then too, the situation requires living apart to avoid the friction which leads to calamitous results. In living apart, the man will be in a better position to serve correctly both his mother and wife.”

Living separately does not mean that the man should sever his ties with his parents. If this is the demand of his wife, then obviously he cannot accept such unlawful demands.

Living apart will even engender a greater bond of affection between the daughter-in-law and her mother-in-law. Each one will be living in her own domain without the scope of one abusing and usurping the rights of the other. The scope for incompatibility will be narrowed mutual friction which gives rise to bitterness in which the man is trapped between two evils, is thus eliminated or at least, vastly reduced.

If the wife insists on living separately and the husband refuses, she is entitled to apply to an Islamic court which will compel the husband to fulfil her *haq* (right). Although there are no Islamic courts nowadays in our country to enforce Shar'i laws, husbands should not forget that the day when they will be hauled to stand trial in Allah's Court is not too distant. Rasulallah

(Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that the intelligent Mu'min is he who makes preparation for the Aakhirah. It, therefore, does not behove any Muslim to go into the Divine Presence loaded with the despicable burden of *zulm*.

The man is not permitted by the Shariah to obey such wishes and orders of his parents which lead to the violation of his wife's rights.

Home Expenses

Husbands, sometimes on the instructions of their parents, withhold adequate maintenance from their wives. Times and norms change. Standards of expenditure which had prevailed during the days of parents do not hold good in the present day. However, some parents whose ideas have not adjusted to the times regard the expenditure of their daughter-in-law to be excessive and wasteful. Although there may not be any wasteful expenditure involved, the mother-in-law interprets her daughter-in-law's spending to be lavish. She attempts to influence her son and to exercise control over his income. Some husbands mistakenly believing that absolute obedience to parents in all aspects is essential, allow their mothers to be in charge of the financial expenses of the home. Commenting on this unlawful state of affairs, Hadhrat Maulana Masihullah said:

“Some husbands withhold adequate maintenance from their wives while others again unjustly assault their wives. Another wrong perpetrated against the wife is that the husband hands over his total earnings to his parents while the wife is held under the obligation of his parents who, at times, are insensitive to her wants and needs.”

In the matter of expenses, neither should there be waste nor miserliness. The husband has to take into consideration the standard of living his wife enjoyed in her parents' home. It is his duty to keep her comfortable and happy by spending on her within his means. Squandering and spending more than one's budget are neither advocated nor permissible. But many wealthy husbands curtail expenses because of stinginess. They are inconsiderate of the needs and desires of their wives.

Spending on bare necessities is not sufficient for love and a happy home.

It is *wajib* (compulsory) that the husband provides a maid to assist his wife.

In making available these provisions to keep his wife comfortable and happy, the husband should not feel that he is making too much of a sacrifice. When a man brings a woman – someone else’s daughter – into his home as his wife, he must understand that he has not engaged a servant. He has brought her for love and comfort which he expects of her and she of him. The Qur’aan describes this mutual love and comfort of husband and wife most beautifully in the following terms:

“They (women) are a garment for you, and you are a garment for them.”

For the maintenance of this love and comfort, the husband should spend on his wife with an open heart, but within the limits of his income.

The husband should also remember that his wife too goes out of her way to make him comfortable. Despite her weaknesses and indiscretions, she has her husband’s rest and pleasure uppermost in mind. In this regard Hadhrat Maulana Masihullah comments:

“Women’s indiscretion is also sometimes due to her simplicity. She thus lacks guile and deceit. Such women are generally very chaste and honourable. In spite of their indiscretion they are obedient to their husbands. It is observed that many wives, although themselves sick, will go out of their way to nurse their sick husbands. For the sake of their husbands’ comfort they are prepared to sacrifice their own health, comfort and rest. They become oblivious of their own sickness in the interests of their husbands. Their main concern is for the health, rest and comfort of their husbands. Another very laudable trait in such simple, chaste and modest women is their habit of eating last. They will first serve their husbands, the children and guests. Only thereafter will they sit down to eat. At times when the husband returns at midnight from a journey, she sacrifices her rest and sleep purely in love for her husband and tends to his needs. It should be remembered that women who make such sacrifices of love for their husbands are the simple and chaste ones. It, therefore, does not behove the husband to repay such sacrifice, kindness and love of his wife with harshness and impatience. He should not demonstrate anger nor rebuke her for every little thing which goes against his grain or which does not meet his approval.”

Talaaq (Divorce)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“The most detestable of lawful things by Allah is talaaq.”

“Allah has not created anything on earth more detestable to Him than talaaq.”

The word ‘*talaaq*’ is a term from which husband should recoil. It is not to be treated lightly. Nowadays many husbands, due to ignorance, rashly pronounce talaaq to their wives. Some husbands react dreadfully in an argument with their wives and in anger they fail to restrain themselves. In a blind rage they utter three *talaaq* simultaneously. The marriage is thus irrevocably and finally terminated. After their anger subsides they regret their pronouncement, but then it is too late for tears. Irreparable damage has already been done and there is no way in which the couple can again unite once three divorces have been administered. Every man who has pronounced *talaaq* in anger was smitten by regret later. The husband who issued three simultaneous *talaaq* regrets and sheds tears for the rest of his life. There is no way in which the damage can be undone. He loses his loving wife and his children are deprived of a home providing the protection and guidance of united parenthood.

Although three simultaneous divorces are effective and valid, issuing *talaaq* in this despicable way is among the major sins. The following Hadith in Nasaai Shareef amply illustrates the gravity of issuing three simultaneous divorces:

“Mahmud Bin Labeed narrated that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was informed about a man who had given three talaaq together (all at once). Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) stood up in anger and exclaimed:

‘What! The Kitaab of Allah Azza wa Jal is being taken for a plaything while I am yet present among you?’

A man stood up and said:

‘O Rasulullah! Should I kill him?’

Rasulullah’s (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) wrath prompted a Sahaabi to request permission to slay the man who had uttered three *talaaq* simultaneously. Yet, nowadays, husbands have taken the Qur’aan and the Laws of the Shariah as ‘playthings’. Many men have ruined their marriages with three divorces uttered in a rage during some stupid argument. Some men display greater imperfection of intelligence than even women.

Allah Ta’ala has created women ‘*naaqisul aql*’ – defective in intelligence – according to Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Hence, the right of pronouncing *talaaq* is vested in only the husband. If the woman had possessed the right to pronounce divorce, marriages would have been ended daily. Her defective intelligence precludes her from realizing the consequences of her actions. But, in these days many males also display defective intelligence. A man who allows his anger to blind him and cause him to issue three simultaneous *talaaq* cannot have an *aql* superior to the intelligence of women.

Divorce is a destructive act which is to be given effect intelligently after great reflection and as a very last resort. When the marriage has irretrievably broken down and there no longer exists any hope for reconciliation, then only should the question of divorce be considered. If after much reflection the man resolves to divorce his wife, he should pronounce only one *talaaq* during her state of *tuhr* (when she is not in the state of *haidh* or menses). One divorce is sufficient to sever the *Nikah Bond*. However, in the event of a reconciliation the couple can again unite in marriage.

In the present age, due to great ignorance of the Shar’i laws of divorce, some husbands regard the word *talaaq* lightly. In the slightest argument with the wife, *talaaq* is blurted out. Sometimes *talaaq* is pronounced many times over a period, without the man realizing that his *Nikah* no longer exists and that he lives with the woman in an adulterous state. It is, therefore, essential to explain the laws of divorce in some detail. These rules should be studied well and the gravity of *talaaq* be understood.

The Effects of Talaq

It is of utmost importance that people understand the delicate nature of *talaq* (divorce) and that they acquaint themselves with certain *masaa-il* pertaining to *talaq*. Many people due to ignorance are living in sin, their *Nikah* having been terminated by *talaqs* which they had blurted out in fits of rage. *Talaq*, whether uttered in anger or a joke, hatred or love, takes effect and can never be totally effaced. In certain cases the effect of *talaq* is immediate while in other cases the effect is delayed or suspended and comes into operation when certain circumstances apply. However, once a *talaq* has been issued, it can never be obliterated.

It is vital that it be understood that *talaq* is a razor-sharp weapon – a loaded firearm – which cannot be tampered with. The weakling who succumbs to his anger and in an emotional fit blurts out *talaq*, must remember that the damage is done. He cannot undo the harm. Once a *talaq* has been given, it remains. In this article we shall, Insha Allah, in very simple terms explain so much of the *talaq* question, the knowledge of which is essential for everyone. Without this knowledge of *talaq*, people are liable to lead lives of sin, living in adulterous states. Therefore, study this article well and repeatedly at different times so that you may remember the *masaa-il* and thereby maintain the purity of your life. Now understand firstly that there are two classes of *talaq*, viz.

Talaq Sareeh and Talaq Kinaayah

Talaq Sareeh

Talaq Sareeh is a clear-cut, straightforward divorce uttered. In this class of divorce, the word *talaq* or any other word derived therefrom, e.g. *taliq*, *mutallaqah*, *tatleeq*, is uttered. If the Arabic term *talaq* is not used, but its equivalent in any other language is used, e.g. divorce, divorce, divorce, then too the divorce will be in this category of *Talaq Sareeh*. Example: the husband says to his wife: “*Talaq*,” or “You are a *mutallaqah*”, or “I have given you *talaq*.” All such statements will be *talaq Sareeh*.

The effect or result or consequence of *Talaaq Sareeh* is called Raj'i which means that the *talaaq* can be revoked. If a Sareeh Talaaq is given, the husband can recall his wife. The conditions for calling her back are:

1. He must recall her within her *iddat* which is a time period of three *haidh* according to the Hanafi Math-hab, and according to the Shaafi Math-hab a period of three *tuhrs* (i.e. periods of purity. *Tuhr* is the period of purity between two *haidhs*). He cannot recall her after her *iddat* has expired. If her *iddat* expires and he did not as yet call her, then the effect of the Sareeh Talaaq no longer remains Raj'i (revocable), but is changed into another effect of result known as *Baa-in*. once a talaaq becomes *Baa-in*, the woman is no longer his wife, but becomes a stranger. She is now free to marry anyone she wishes. If her previous husband wishes to take her back and she agrees, then a new *Nikah* will have to be performed. He cannot live with her without *Nikah* since she no longer remains his wife because the *talaaq* is now *Baa-in*.
2. The number of *talaaqs* must not be more than two. Even if two Sareeh Talaaqs were given, the same rule as explained in condition no.1 above, will apply. He can recall here, without renewing *Nikah*, but within her *iddat*. Once her *iddat* ends and he did not yet recall her then both these Raj'i *talaaqs* become *Baa-in* which sets the woman free because the *Nikah* is broken.

Important

- The validity of talaaq is not dependant on the presence of witnesses. *Talaaq* does not require witnesses like *Nikah*. A talaaq uttered verbally, even in solitude, even in the absence of the wife, is valid and comes into force.
- If three *Sareeh Talaaq* are given, the effect will no longer be Raj'i nor will it be *Baa-in*. Three talaaqs will be *Mughallazah* which is explained further on in this article.
- Talaaq Sareeh to be valid does not depend on *niyyat* or intention being of no significance in this class of *talaaq*. So beware!

Talaaq Kinaayah

Talaaq Kinaayah is such a divorce in which the word or statement uttered is ambiguous, i.e. it can be interpreted in several ways. It contains the meaning of divorce as well as other things. Example: A man says to his wife in anger: 'Get out of my house!' or 'Go live with your mother,' or 'I have no relationship with you,' etc. etc.

These types of statements are dependent on the *niyyat* or intention of the husband. If the husband says that in making these statements his intention was divorce, then it will be *talaaq*. If he says that his intention was not divorce, then it will not be divorce. Where he meant divorce, the effect of the *talaaq* will be *Baa-in*. The effect, result or consequence of *Talaaq Kinaayah* is *Baa-in*.

The meaning and effect of *Baa-in* is the complete severance of the *Nikah* bond. The *nikah* breaks. The husband in this case cannot recall the woman without renewing the *nikah*. If he wishes to recall her and she too agrees to go back to him, *nikah* will have to be performed. If she agrees to remarry him, the *nikah* between them can be performed even in her *iddat*. However, if she decides to marry another man, she will have to wait until after her *iddat*.

Important

- In *Talaaq Kinaayah* too, he can remarry her only if the number of *talaaqs* is not more than two. If he had given her three *talaaqs*, no matter of which kind, be it *Sareeh* or *Kinaayah*, effect will be *Mughallazah* which is explained hereunder.

Mughallazah

Mughallazah is the effect, result or consequence of THREE *talaaqs*, irrespective of the class and kind of *talaaqs* given and no matter in which way and at what time the three *talaaqs* were given, whether tree were given on one sitting in a single statement or whether the three *talaaqs* were scattered over a period of a number of years and no matter whether the three *talaaqs* were given in the state of *haidh* or pregnancy. It is entirely

another matter that issuing three *talaaqs* in contravention of the Shariah is sinful. Nevertheless the three *talaaqs* become *Mughallazah*.

The consequence of *Mughallazah Talaaq* is the total immediate and permanent breaking of the *nikah*. The man cannot remarry her, except in one case, viz. if she marries another man and he, after having consummated the marriage, i.e. after having had sexual relations with her, divorces her. Only in this case can she remarry her previous husband.

Important

- A *talaaq*, no matter of which class or kind always remains suspended. It is never cancelled out. If a man has given one *talaaq* ten years ago, for example, and today gives one *talaaq*, then two *talaaqs* will be suspended. Now, if at any time in the future he again issues one *talaaq*, the three *talaaqs* will come into operation. These three will now be *Mughallazah*.

A Grave Eye-Malady

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

“(O Muhammad!) Say to the Mu'mineen (the believing men) that they should lower their gaze and guard their privacy (i.e. abstain from all haraam sex). That is purer (holier) for them.”

Gazing at females is a widespread evil. Indulgence in this spiritually destructive evil is so rampant that it is not even considered to be wrong. It is a malady which dulls the lustre of Imaan. This disease is a serious spiritual offence for which severe punishment is sounded in the Ahadeeth of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Among the evil effects of this malady is diversion from one's wife. The husband's attention is diverted from his wife. Shaitaan and the nafs cause him to see his wife as being unattractive.

Once a man came to Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) complaining that he does not find his wife any longer attractive. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) instructed him to withhold his gaze from other women. It is clear from this advice of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) that the sickness of casting surreptitious glances at women, in addition to weakening one's

Imaan, has a detrimental effect on the husband-wife relationship. The man will progressively lose interest in his wife with far-reaching destructive consequences to his Imaan and marriage.

Muslim males should understand that his malady is serious. It should not be treated lightly. The fleeting pleasure derived by a haraam glance brings no benefit. On account of unrestrained indulgence in this evil, men are deceived by the *nafs* into believing that it is not possible to refrain from casting glances at females. But this is a shaitaani thought. There is a need to exercise only slight pressure on the *nafs* in order to curb the gaze straying in the wrong direction. While an unintentional glance is not sinful, the deliberate glance is a serious and a punishable offence. Rasulallah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) explicitly stated this to Hadhrat Ali (Radhiyallahu Anhu).

Criticizing the lustful gaze, Rasulallah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Every eye is an adulteress.”

The one who intentionally casts a glance towards a female is guilty of zina (adultery) of the eye.

Hadhrat Jabir Bin Abdullah (a Sahabi) narrates:

“I asked Rasulallah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) about a sudden (an accidental or unintentional) glance. He commanded me to divert my gaze.”

In one Hadith, Rasulallah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that a man who restrains his gaze will experience the sweetness of *Imaan*. The Shariah thus places great emphasis on the guarding of the eyes.

Misdirecting the eyes is at the same time a form of *zina* and infidelity towards one’s wife. This type of infidelity is also a kind of *zulm* (injustice) perpetrated on the wife. Just as the husband expects faithfulness from his wife, so too, does she expect him to be faithful. Undoubtedly, it will cause her much grief if she had to know of the ‘*zina of the eyes*’ her husband constantly commits.

A man should ponder at his acts of infidelity. How would he react if he discovers his wife casting surreptitious glances of *zina* at other men?

How can a man of honour hold his head high in the presence of his wife after having indulged in the vice of the *zina* of the eyes – glancing at other women? With what conscience can he stare his innocent wife in the face after having polluted his eyes, mind and heart with *zina* of the eyes? It is necessary to fear Allah. Call Him to remembrance and remember His chastisement when the nafs directs one to disregard Allah's prohibition. Allah Ta'ala is fully aware of the surreptitious glances of mischief cast slyly by the eyes.

The lustful gaze is the first stepping-stone towards the ultimate abomination of *zina*. The starting point of moral depravity is the haraam glance, hence the Qur'aan warns:

“Do not approach near zina.”

All acts which lead towards fornication are prohibited by the Qur'aan-e-Hakeem.

The Muslim husband should also understand that if he casts lustful gazes at the wives and daughters of others, then besides the various forms of punishment in the *Aakhirah* and in this world, one other punishment here is that other men will cast evil gazes at his wife and daughters.

Lustful and haram gazes also contribute towards sexual weaknesses even though the kuffaar medical establishment is unable to discern the link and is unable to understand such weakness being an effect of haraam gaze.

Corruption in the mind caused by the introduction of haraam through the agency of the eyes darkens the *rooh* (soul).

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“When a Muslim whose gaze fell the first time (i.e. unintentionally) on the beauty of a woman, lowers his gaze, then Allah will grant him such an act of Ibaadat, the sweetness of which he will experience.”

This is the wonderful spiritual reward even here on earth for curbing the gaze and diverting it from the prohibitions of Allah Azza wa Jal.

Having Extramarital Affairs

Among the worst acts of *zulm* on a wife is a man's involvement with another woman beyond the confines of Nikah. Some men to soothe their conscience and to justify or at least minimize the notoriety of extramarital affairs will produce a number of utterly baseless excuses. The nagging of the wife, her laziness, her quarrelsome attitude, her disobedience, etc. will be cited as reasons for the man's affair with another woman. Let them understand that even if their wives are truly disobedient, there is no permission and no justification for initiating a haraam affair.

These western ideas are not tenable in Islam. How will a man feel if he discovers his wife having an extramarital affair?

A husband who involves himself in such spiritual contamination betrays his wife, his children and his Deen. He must think of his wife, faithfully at home, doing her best for his comfort. She waits for him eagerly to come home. She hero-worships him. She slaves for him when he is ill. She sacrifices her rest, pleasure and comfort to ensure that he gets the maximum of rest and comfort. She tends to his food and clothes. She looks after his children. While she happily and faithfully busies herself for his benefits, he most despicably and heartlessly stabs her in the back by 'enjoying' himself in a *haraam* way with another woman. This is not among the ways of an honourable husband. This is not the way of a *Pious Husband*.

In pursuing this abominable path like a miserable sewer rat, the husband must tell himself that he is accountable for his misdeed to Allah Azza wa Jal – he is accountable for his betrayal to his wife, he is accountable for his *zulm* to his children.

A husband caught up in the wretched trap of an extramarital affair needs to rudely and harshly break from the woman in whose clutches he has become entrapped. If he is sincere and remorseful, and if he sincerely seeks Allah's aid, he can extricate himself from the quagmire of this heartrending situation and spiritual pollution.

Taking a Second Wife

Undoubtedly, Islam permits a man to marry four women. This is his indisputable right ordained by Allah Ta'ala. The conditions for the permissibility of polygamous marriages usually advanced by modernists are a lot of apologetic drivel conjectured to appease western thinking. A man, in terms of the Shariah, has the right to marry a second, third and a fourth wife. It is his prerogative right with which no authority can tamper.

In spite of this inviolable right which a man enjoys, he has to understand that another marriage brings about a duplication of responsibilities, added responsibilities, greater worries and curtailment of man's freedom.

Furthermore, the razor-sharp path of justice and equality between wives which a husband has to compulsorily follow is no simple task. To a man who is conscious of the Hereafter, the price to pay in a variety of ways for a second marriage is extremely high. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that a husband who does not mete out justice and equality to his wives, will rise on the Day of Qiyaamah with half of his whole body paralyzed. And this is not the end of his punishment.

In these times it is observed that most men fail to correctly discharge the *huqooq* (rights and obligations) of even one wife and one set of children. They fail in the proper execution of rights in all fields. When such men who are defective in a variety of ways, take second wives, there results a greater failure in the ability to observe the rights of now two wives and two sets of children. They embroil themselves in a situation of frustration, hardship and failure. They become saddled with numerous problems from which they cannot extricate themselves.

Soon the burdensome problems and responsibilities of two marriages become overwhelming and in consequence the second wife becomes just as ordinary as the first wife. Just as the glamour of the first wife has become concealed because of familiarity, so, too will be the fate of the second wife. The man then regrets his rash decision of having barged into the second marriage.

A man should, therefore, never rush into a second marriage. Only when there is a real and demanding need, should one venture into a second marriage.

It is incumbent on the husband to give both his wives equal expenses and equal nights. Even if one wife is not in need of an item, the husband will compulsorily have to procure it for her if he has given such an item to the other wife. An equal number of nights must be spent with both wives. In these matters he has absolutely no choice.

If a man spends three nights with one wife, he is obliged to spend three nights with the other wife. If he spends one week with one wife, he has to compulsorily spend one week with the other wife as well. If he went to one wife from the time of Maghrib, it is compulsory to begin the other wife's nights also from Maghrib. It will be a sinful act of inequality to commence from Isha when the one wife's time had begun from Maghrib.

In every aspect of financial expenditure, the man is obliged to mete out strict equality. If he buys a pair of shoes for one wife, he is compelled by the Shariah to buy a pair of shoes of the same quality and price for the other wife even if she is not in need thereof. In these matters he is not allowed to show preference to any one wife even if he loves her more than the other wife.

In view of the exceptionally high standard of equality and justice demanded by the Shariah, taking two wives is not an easy and pleasurable exercise. The responsibilities of two wives descending on a man are too much for most men weak of Imaan and defective in virtuous deeds. The consequences of inequality and injustice are very grave in this world and worse in the Akhirah.

The Limits of a Husband's Admonition

It does not behove a good and responsible husband to sleep out of the home if his wife has angered him. Once a man came to Rasulallah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and asked:

“What is the right of the wife over the husband?”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) replied:

“He should feed her when he eats, he should clothe her when he wears and he should not separate from her (in wrath) except in regard to the bed...”

In other words, if the situation has deteriorated to a level that corrective measures are deemed necessary to remedy her disobedience, the husband is allowed to separate himself from her bed. He is not permitted to leave the house in anger. Some husbands storm out of the home in anger and even sleep out to punish the wife. Such action is not permissible.

Although the Qur’aan-e-Hakeem permits the husband, as a last resort, to punish his grossly disobedient wife by even beating her, he is not allowed to injure her or slap her in the face or beat her with a stick or use his fists on her. The aim of the beating is not to injure, but to jolt her into realisation of the gravity of the situation.

While admonishing her, he is not permitted to abuse her, insult her or use vulgar language. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Do not assault her and do not abuse her.”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) also said:

“To abuse a Muslim is an act of immorality and to fight him is an act of kufr.”

This Hadith applies in general to all Muslims. However, the wife is taken so much for granted that husbands regard very lightly their acts of abuse and assault against their wives. While they accept the hadith in relation to others, they feel that by virtue of their superiority their abuse of their wives is not an issue of much significance. But, in reality the strictures mentioned in the aforementioned hadith have greater relevance when a husband abuses and assaults his wife. In addition to being a Muslim, she is associated with him by virtue of Allah’s Name. She came into his reign and custody as a sacred Amaanat (Trust) by way of the holy Nikah bond. The husband’s respect and concern for her should, therefore, be greater. He should remember that she

being an *Amaanat*, having being acquired and made lawful on Allah's Name, he cannot treat and ill-treat her as he pleases.

When a man uses vulgar language to abuse his wife, he must understand that he is showing scant respect for Allah Azza wa Jal. He brought her into his home and she has been placed at his mercy in the Name of Allah. Allah's *Amaanat* should not be abused and insulted. By adopting such vile behaviour the husband is, in fact, making a demonstration of his ingratitude to Allah Ta'ala. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

"...The best of the benefits of the world is a pious woman."

When a virtuous wife is such a wonderful *ni'mat* (bounty) which Allah Ta'ala has bestowed on the husband, then undoubtedly, abusing her will tantamount to ingratitude to Allah.

A wife's indiscretion and other habits which the husband may not prefer do not negate her virtue in relation to the husband since he has already been forewarned by Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) that:

- She was created from a crooked rib, hence some of her habits will be crooked.
- She is *naaqisul aql* – imperfect of intelligence
- He has a rank above her. Thus she is naturally weaker than him.

While, undoubtedly, her infidelity and gross neglect of her waajib obligations contaminate and destroy her virtue, her traits and habits which are displeasing to the man do not justify his abuse, anger and maltreatment. He should endeavour to transform her detestable attributes such as laziness, indiscretion, carelessness, etc. with advice and admonition executed with wisdom, patience and practical example.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) warned husbands:

"Fear Allah regarding women (wives), for verily, they are by you helpless. They have no control of anything for themselves (in your custody). Verily, you have taken them as an *Amaanat* of Allah and you have made them lawful for conjugal relations with the Word of Allah..."

Thus, when a husband feels like abusing his wife, he should remember the Being Whose Amaanat she is. And, when he desires to exhibit his anger against her, he should understand that Allah Azza wa Jal, Whose trust she is, has greater power. There is no refuge from His Wrath. A pious husband is a man of courage and magnanimity. He reacts with noble tolerance and honour.

The Solace of the Wife

The Qur'aan Shareef states:

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

Among the aims of marriage is the provision of solace – comfort, peace and rest – for the man. Providing a servant in the house is not among the aims of Nikah. In return for the solace she provides, the Shariah has commanded the husband to compulsorily fulfil her material and spiritual needs.

The scope of the solace she has to offer excludes duties which the Shariah has not ordained as *huqooq* (rights) due to the husband. The husband, therefore, has no Shar'i rights to impose his whims and fancies on her. He cannot order her to earn a living nor can he take her along to assist him in his business. He cannot compel her to wash clothes or cook food. Although most good wives take care of all domestic work, the husband cannot command them with such tasks. It is his duty to make the necessary arrangement for maids/workers according to his position and lifestyle.

Some husbands expect their wives to stand in the shop, cook the food and tend to the children and other domestic chores. This is an unjust imposition. The husband, in doing so, takes undue and unlawful advantage of his wife at his mercy.

Some husbands may say that their wives are bored at home and insist on going to the shop or to assist in the business. This excuse is unacceptable in the Shariah. Since this demand of the wife to participate in the business appeases the husband, he will find some excuse to accommodate her haraam wish. If the husband condescends and allows his wife to enter the

public domain with him in the shop, both of them will be sinners. The husband is, therefore, obliged to ensure that his wife remains at home.

A good wife attends to domestic duties and tends to her in-laws because of love for her husband. She sets aside her likes and dislikes to bring happiness and pleasure to her husband. In so doing, she bestows favours in abundance on her husband. She undertakes more than what she is obliged to do under Shar'i obligation by way of the husband's huqooq (rights). The husband should, therefore, be grateful to her. He should not unnecessarily find fault with her nor criticize her petty defects such as imperfect cooking, impatient and rash talk, etc. a man has to compulsorily tolerate the indiscretion and rashness of his wife.

When a husband feels dissatisfied with the slight imperfections of his wife, he should call to mind her role and position in the home. He should reflect on the warnings and advices given by Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) regarding the attitude he should adopt with his wife. If a man refuses to reflect and contemplate, his intelligence will remain blighted and incapable of controlling the inordinate dictates of the lowly nafs.

In view of the fact that Allah Ta'ala has made the wife a source of comfort and solace for the husband, he should gratefully honour this divine bestowal and conduct himself in a manner which shows that he is worthy of this favour of Allah Ta'ala. He should not unnecessarily exhibit superiority. He should not project at every turn the image of being the haakim (ruler and boss) in the house. He should listen with love to even the nonsensical talk and advice of his wife without submitting to anything any desire which conflicts with the Shariah. Superior rank, order and command should be summoned only when confronted by the intransigence of the wife in matters of Shar'i concern.

The Wife's Property

Western concepts such as community of property have no validity in Islam. Any property/wealth belonging to the wife remains her property whether she acquired the wealth before the nikah or during the subsistence of the marriage.

The husband's role as the *haakim* does not entitle him to assume control or ownership of her wealth. Some husbands exert haraam pressure on their wives to gain control of their personal wealth. They manipulate the wealth of their wives as if they have become the owners. In such action husbands should not labour under any misunderstanding. They should not regard their control of their wives' property justified on account of them being husbands. Usurpation and extortion perpetrated in regard to the wife's personal property are just as unlawful as usurpation and extortion committed in the wealth of others.

A husband who utilizes and misused his position to pressurize his wife so as to extract her personal property is guilty of a heinous act of *zulm* (injustice), the consequence of which are inescapable on the Day of Qiyaamah.

A husband who refuses to pay his wife's *mehr* (dowry) will be resurrected on the Day of Qiyaamah as an adulterer.

Debt owed to the wife remains an incumbent obligation on the husband in the same way as he is indebted to other creditors. If he has not paid her debt during his lifetime nor has she absolved him, then her right to claim her due will extend to his estate. If her rightful claim is not satisfied here on earth, it will have to be paid on Qiyaamah. However, some husbands are exceptionally indifferent with regard to monies which they owe their wives.

According to Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), a *shaheed* (martyr) will be forgiven for all his sins, but debt. Since debt is a *haq* (right) related to others, the obtainal of pardon is dependent on the payment of the debt or the voluntary absolution by the creditor. This rule applies to the debt owed to the wife as well.

Some husbands descend to the despicable level of using their wives as a lever to extract money from her wealthy parents. This dastardly action is downright extortion and a cruel manipulation of the wife. They pressurize their wives to seek money from her parents. Should the parents refuse to submit to the repeated, excessive and unjust demands of their son-in-law, he does not hesitate in showing his annoyance and unjustified displeasure to his wife. This cruel attitude is most unbecoming of a Muslim husband.

Repossessing Gifts

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that a person who repossesses a gift which he had made, is like a dog which licks up its own vomit.

In many cases, when a marriage breaks down, ending in divorce, the husband goaded on by his parents, reclaims the expensive gifts such as jewellery which he has made to his wife in happier time. This is abominable and completely at variance with Muslim moral character. Repossessing gifts given to the wife is not permissible. She becomes the owner of the items which were gifted to her. It is, therefore, not lawful for the husband or the wife's in-laws to retain her jewellery, etc.

Expensive gifts of the wife usually remain in the custody of the husband or his parents for safe-keeping. When the marriage ends in divorce, they refuse to hand over the wife's property, the sole motivation for their haraam usurpation being spite. When the heart-breaking event of *talaaq* (divorce) takes place, it is the incumbent duty of the husband to soften the blow. Divorce is a great tragedy which should not be manipulated for commission of injustice to the woman. Her property should be handed over to her without any problems. The husband should honourably absolve himself of his wife's or ex-wife's *haq* and not ignorantly drag the awful burden of *zulm* with him into his grave. He has nothing to gain by reacting spitefully and maliciously. He should not contaminate his soul by behaving *like a dog licking up its own vomit* – i.e. repossessing gifts which he had made out of love to his wife in happier times. Allah Ta'ala says in the Qur'aan Majeed:

“O People of Imaan! Do not devour your wealth among you in baatil (ways)...”

Among the ways of *baatil* is to withhold the wealth of others – to refuse the right of the wife – to repossess her gifts either because of spite or greed. Severely condemning the evil practice of repossessing gifts made to the wife, the Qur'aan Majeed says:

“And if you decide to change one wife for another wife (i.e. divorce a wife and marry another woman) while you had already given them abundant wealth, then do not take back from her anything.”

What! Do you repossess it by way of usurpation and flagrant transgression?

And how indeed can you take it back after having mutually met (i.e. after having consummated the marriage) and after they (women) have obtained from you a sacred pledge?"

(Surah Nisaa)

When Divorce Takes Place

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

"Either retain (wives) according to Shar'i law (Ma'roof) or set (them) free with kindness."

When a marriage breaks down irretrievably and the couple decides on divorce, the Shariah orders that the process of *talaaq* be effected judiciously and without mutual recrimination, malice and spite. The tragedy should not be compounded with dishonourable behaviour and attitude unbecoming of Mu'mineen. The wife should be given her freedom *with kindness* so that both man and woman may go their own paths to start afresh.

It is not lawful to terminate the Nikah bond in anger and with malice. To do so is in conflict with the Qur'aanic injunction of granting the wife her freedom with kindness. It is part of the Sunnah to bestow some gifts to the woman who leaves the husband's home as a divorcee. Allah Ta'ala states:

"When the women whom you have divorced reach (the end of their) iddat, then either retain them according to the law (of the Shariah) or set them free in a beautiful manner."

In another verse, the Qur'aan Majeed commands:

"For divorced women there is some benefit (material benefit) according to law (of the Shariah) – this is an obligation on the Muttaqeen (those who truly fear Allah Ta'ala)."

In addition to the expenses for the *iddat* period, the man should award her some gifts to cushion the blow of *talaaq*. Some Sahabah bestowed expensive gifts to their wives when divorce had occurred.

The occasion of divorce is not a time for exposing mutual secrets and for washing dirty linen in public as is the practice in western society – a practice which westernized Muslims have unfortunately adopted. The command of Islam on such tragic occasions is:

“...set them free with kindness.”

The Bond of Holy Love

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“The noblest of you are those who are the noblest to their families...”

“Verily, among the most perfect Believers in *Imaan*, are those who are best in character and kindest to their wives.”

Even lifting a morsel of food to the mouth of the wife has been given the significance of an *ibaadat*. It is an act of love by which the husband derives *thawaab* (reward in the Hereafter).

It was part of the *Uswah Hasanah* (Noble Character) of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) to engage in light-hearted talk with his wives. Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (Radhiyallahu anhu) said:

“Allah loves a man who caresses his wife. Both of them are awarded *thawaab* because of this loving attitude and their *rizq* (earning) is increased.”

A man is rewarded for even a drink of water he presents to his wife. According to Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) the *rahmat* (mercy) of Allah Ta’ala cascaded on a couple when the husband glances at his wife with love and pleasure and she returns his glance with love and pleasure.

When a husband clasps the hand of his wife with love their sins fall from the gaps between their clasped fingers. Even mutual love between husband and

wife serve as a *kaffaarah* (expiation) for sins. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“When a man enters his home cheerfully, Allah creates, as a result of his happy attitude, an angel who engages in *istighfaar* (prayers of forgiveness) on behalf of the man until the Day of Qiyaamah.”

The holy bond of *Muhabbat* (love) which a husband is obliged to foster with his wife does not permit a pious husband to howl and scowl at his wife. A husband’s superiority and excellence preclude such depraved attitudes. His attitude and behaviour should be calculated to engender pleasantness in the home. Pleasantness invites the mercy of Allah Ta’ala.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that when a loving husband sets off from the home in the service of his wife and children, he is blessed with a rank of spiritual elevation for every step he takes. On accomplishing the service, his sins are forgiven. Among the acts of *thawaab* and special significance to be rendered by the husband on the Day of Aashura (10th Muharram), is to spend lavishly on his family. Lavishly should not be understood to mean wasteful expenditure. Within the husband’s means he should spend on them in greater measure on the Day of Aashura.

It is the husband’s duty to sustain the holy bond of family love. The bond should not be disrupted by him showing impatience, annoyance and anger whenever his wife acts childishly, stupidly and with indiscretion. His heart must be big enough to absorb all such pettiness exhibited by his wife. After all, Allah Ta’ala has awarded him a higher rank, a higher intelligence and greater restraint and willpower than the woman who has been created *naaqisul aql* (imperfect in intelligence).

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“The love created for lovers (husband and wife) by the likes of Nikah has not been seen.”

In Islam, true and enduring love comes after marriage. Such love is holy and blessed by Allah Ta’ala. It is a love sanctioned by Allah Ta’ala. It is a love which spiritually improves the condition of the husband and wife, hence Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Nikah is half of Imaan.”

The husband should cherish and treasure the love which is spawned by the Nikah. This holy love is sufficient to overcome the mutual differences of husband and wife. But it is only a man of piety – a man who possesses understanding of the Sunnah – who will subdue his emotions and honour the demands of the holy love produced by the Nikah bond by overlooking the slight incompatibilities resulting from the differences in the temperament and disposition of the husband and wife. For the sake of sustaining the love which is mentioned in the aforementioned hadith, the pious husband will constantly overlook and forgive the little and ineffectual outbursts of his wife. His patience secures spiritual ranks and his sins are forgiven.

Among the physical benefits of the true love between husband and wife is increase in the strength of the eyesight. Citing a hadith of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), Allamah Sakhawi (Rahmatullahi alaih) says that a glance cast at the face of the wife is beneficial for the eyesight.

Only a husband with good Islamic moral character will be able to offer the best love to his wife. The love which a pious husband can show to his wife by virtue of his excellent moral character can never be acquired by wealth, physical comfort, luxury and worldly ranks. Such holy love cannot be gained and sustained by only discharging the bare minimum legal rights of the wife. The husband will have to provide more than just rights. He will have to make sacrifices and in particular restrain his temper when the wife angers him with her indiscreet and sharp remarks. The Auliya have said that a husband who adopts *sabr* (patience) when he is confronted with the intransigence of his wife attains the rank of a *ghazi* or a Mujaahid who returns victorious from the battlefield. This is in line with the following Ahadith of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam):

“The true mujahid is he who wages Jihad against his nafs.”

“A powerful man is not one who overpowers another in physical combat. Verily, a powerful man is one who controls his nafs at the time of anger.”

Woman as Naaqisul Aql

Modernists whose intelligence has been deranged by western ideas of the equality of sexes take umbrage when they hear that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had designated women *naaqisatul aql*, i.e. having imperfect or inferior intelligence in relation to men. Since this Islamic notion spelled out by Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is not viewed with favour by the proponents of the equality of the sexes and by the advocates of female 'emancipation', our modernist Muslim brethren enslaved to western thinking suffer spasms of mental agitation and descend to ludicrous levels to provide justification for their un-Islamic claims. In the attempt to bolster the western concept of man and woman's equality, they expose themselves to kufr by refuting the authentic Ahadith of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

Some reject the relevant authentic narrations on this subject while others tender queer misinterpretations which have no Islamic validity. In a hadith, while addressing a group of ladies, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“... 'I have not seen any *naaqisat-e-aql* and deen like any of you (women) capable of absconding with the intelligence of an intelligent man.’

The women said: 'What is the defect of our deen and aql, O Rasulullah!'

He replied: 'Is not the testimony of a woman equal to half the testimony of a man?'

The women replied: 'Yes.'

Rasulullah: 'That, then is the defect of her intelligence. Does she not abstain from Salaat and Saum when she menstruates?'

The women said: ‘Yes.’

Rasulullah: ‘That, then is the defect of her deen.’”

(Bukhari Shareef)

This hadith is authentic and is also recorded in Muslim, Nisaai, Ibn Majah and other books of the Shariah. Denial of the authenticity of this Hadith is kufr.

In this narration, Rasullullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) describes females as being *naaqisatul aql* (imperfect or defective in intelligence) and *naaqisatud deen* (imperfect or defective in deen). In mentioning the imperfection of women’s intelligence, Rasulallah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was not criticizing or rebuking them. In this regard, Qustulani (Rahmatullahi alaih) says in *Irshaadus Saari*:

“The object of mentioning *nuqs-e-aql* and *deen* (imperfect of intelligence and deen) in women is not to insult them on account of these (attributes) because it (this imperfection or defect) is an integral part of their creation.”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was merely forewarning women of their attributes of ingratitude and verbal cursing and that they should exercise caution in their relationship with their husbands.

The imperfection of woman’s intelligence in relation to the man’s *aql* is not meant as a slur against her. It also does not mean that on account of this imperfection she cannot attain divine proximity as men do. In fact, there will be many women holding elevated ranks superior than many males in the Hereafter. The question is, thus, not one of insulting women. The statement made by Rasulallah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is simply a statement of factual reality which only ignoramus will dispute.

Leaving all things aside, the simple truth is that Rasulallah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that women are *naaqis-e-aql*. And, this suffices for the *Mu’mineen*.

The Creation of Women from the Rib of Aadam (Alayhis salaam)

Islam teaches that Hawwa (Alaihas salaam), the first woman, was created from the rib of Aadam (Alaihis salaam). This fact is very unpalatable and embarrassing to our modernist brethren. This truth stated by Rasulallah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is incompatible with the kufr theories of man's origin conjectured by the atheist scientists to whom modernists are mentally enslaved. Since those defective in Imaan are at a great and embarrassing disadvantage on this question, they opt for the kufr of refuting Rasulallah's (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) Hadith rather than being confronted by their atheist masters of science who express their mirth when told of transcendental truths which their kufr-impregnated minds cannot comprehend.

But, those who believe in the absolute *Qudrat* (Power) of Allah Azza wa Jal know that nothing is beyond His Power and that whatever has been reliably transmitted as being the spoken words of Rasulallah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), is the Truth from Allah Ta'ala.

The hadith in question which the modernists deny states:

“...Treat women kindly, for verily, they have been created from a rib. And the most crooked rib is the upper rib...”

When Allah Ta'ala by His Power brought the entire creation into existence from the state of pure non-existence, what then limits His power to prevent Him from creating a human being from a rib? He created man from sand and from a sperm dot!

This narration is recorded in the two most authentic Books of Hadith, Bukhari and Muslim. It does not behove a Muslim to deny the sacred words of Rasulallah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) merely to appease those who refute Imaan and the existence of Allah Ta'ala.

Hadhrat Umar's Tolerance

Ameerul Mu'mineen Hadhrat Umar (Radhiyallahu anhu), the second among the Khulafa-e-Rashideen, is famous for his nocturnal rounds, inspecting the condition of the Ummah. He was also famous for his sternness and steadfast execution of the laws of the Shariah. With regard to the Law of Allah Ta'ala, he was incomparable in his attitude of firmness.

Once Hadhrat Umar's wife sharply remarked:

"I know the motive for your nocturnal wanderings. Your motive is only to peer into peoples' homes to view the young damsels."

This was indeed a baseless accusation which must have aroused the anger of Hadhrat Umar (Radhiyallahu anhu). However, he did not display the slightest anger. On the contrary, he calmly replied:

"Allah Ta'ala knows best that your allegation is not true."

Here is a great lesson of Sabr for husbands.

A Wife's Rights

- It is incumbent on the husband to provide separate living quarters for his wife.
- The quarters provided for her should not be occupied by any members of the husband's family. She must be able to enjoy total privacy without interference from anyone.
- If the wife of her own accord prefers to live with her in-laws, then this will be permissible.
- Separate quarters for her may be provided in the same building or house occupied by others. However, she must be able to have complete control over her quarters with no one else having the right to intrude in her domain. The lock/keys of her quarters should be in her possession.
- The wife's in-laws have no right of demanding to enter her quarters and to inspect her rooms and belongings as is the habit of some misguided mothers-in-law.

- While the wife is entitled to separate living quarters, she cannot demand that she wants to live in a particular house, area or town. She has to be satisfied with the quarters made available to her by her husband.
- Just as the wife has the right of preventing her in-laws from intruding into her home, so too has the husband the right of debarring his in-laws from entering the home.

Generally husbands fail in fulfilling the important and incumbent rights of the wife in regard to separate accommodation. In most cases they are under pressure from their parents who insist on their married children living together with them under one roof and in the same house over which the parents have full control while the daughter-in-law has to live in subservience to her in-laws. This is Islamically an unjust and unlawful setup.

Parents of the husband should realize that in this unjust attitude they are usurping the rights of their daughter-in-law – rights which the Shariah has granted her. While it is to the advantage of the in-laws and perhaps to the husband as well to live together, they have no right to act selfishly for their own advantage when the matter concerns the rights of others. A daughter-in-law is under no Islamic incumbency to serve her in-laws. It is entirely another matter if she does. In doing so she will obtain great Thawaab. But, service to in-laws cannot be imposed on her, neither by her in-laws nor by her husband. This Mas-alah should be well understood.

Many mothers-in-law are the cause of misery for their daughters-in-law. They apply unlawful and inconsiderate pressure on their sons in an attempt to secure the domination of their daughters-in-law. This attitude leads to conflict, misery and sometimes homes break up. If the rights of the wife are considered from the very inception many marital problems will be avoided.

Parents-in-law should reflect that after marriage when a woman no longer serves even her own parents, how can she be expected to serve her parents-in-law? If she does, it will be only her goodness and a demonstration of her love for her husband.

Many sons are in a quandary when it comes to a conflict in the demands of parents on the one side and their wives on the other. The wife wishes to live separately while her in-laws insist that she lives with them. In such cases of

conflict, the son should measure the conflicting demands on the standard of the shariah. If by fulfilling the wishes of parents the son is compelled to violate or discard the waajib haq of his wife, then it will not be permissible for him to obey his parents in this respect. While others can advise the daughter-in-law to exercise patience and submit to the wishes of her husband provided that the Shariah is not transgressed, the usurpers of her rights cannot tender such naseehat to her. They have to rather take stock of their own transgression and their injustice committed against their daughter-in-law. On the Day of Qiyaamah the daughter-in-law will have a claim against her husband and her parents-in-law for the violation of her rights – rights which Allah Ta’ala has ordained for her.

A Husband’s Cruelty

Undoubtedly, Allah Ta’ala has appointed the husband as the ruler in his home. In this regard, the Qur’aan Shareef says: “Men are the rulers over women...” But, this appointment is no licence for the commission of zulm (injustice and cruelty) on the female servants of Allah Ta’ala. It is indeed heartrending to read the many letters of wives pouring out their stories of husband-cruelty. In a very recent case, a wife (let us call her Saabirah) writes that her husband assaulted her in the street, dropping her into the street gutter in full public view because she committed the indiscretion of trying to ascertain whether he was in the company of another woman. Saabirah is a decent lady from a respectable home. She has been tyrannized and persecuted by her husband. He left on Hajj without informing her. Although she had offered to finance her own trip, he was not interested in taking her along. What type of Hajj is he performing?

He left her without any maintenance while it is his fardh. Her story of woe and sorrow is long and heartrending, but the heart of the zaalim remains unmoved. His Hajj is no Hajj!

The case of Saabirah is just one example in many such cases of husband-cruelty. Let husbands not delude themselves with the idea that they will escape the Wrath of Allah Ta’ala. Husbands should remember that when they wrong their wives, they will not escape the burden of their villainy as long as they have not sought the pardon of their wives and obtained forgiveness from them. The position of rulership in the home does not permit injustice, harshness and cruelty. In their attitude of zulm, husbands

are acting in violation of everything tender and merciful which Rasulallah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) has commanded in the husband and wife relationship.

Some husbands are of the opinion that they may treat and maltreat their wives without there being the need to apologise, make amends and obtain forgiveness from their wives. Remember that just as it is necessary to seek forgiveness from others for hurt and harm caused to them, so too is it necessary in the case of wives who have been wronged. Beating, assaulting and abusing wives are not permissible. Such treatment is not permissible in regard to even animals. The Shariah instructs husbands to tolerate the indiscretions of their wives. As long as no Islamic law is violated, husbands should be tolerant of the little slips and errors of their wives. A man introduces the daughter of others into his home as his wife for a noble and lofty purpose. She did not become his wife to suffer his maltreatment. She sacrificed her parents and her family for the man's comfort, rest and pleasure. The purpose was not to bring her as a servant to cook, wash and suffer under the husband's cruel domination. She will cook and wash and generally attend to the housework out of love for her husband and her children, but the cruel husband is blind to her sacrifices. She is there at his beck and call, but he remains indifferent, ghastly and unfeeling. While she faithfully cares for the home, he wanders in evil pursuit after other women to pamper his evil nafs. This is never the attitude of a Muslim husband.

Incidents such as these are not isolated examples. There are numerous accounts of wife-bashing which we continuously receive from wives who are subjected to the tyranny of their husbands these cruel episodes are the consequences of the drift away from Islam and the adoption of the lifestyle of the immoral and decadent west.

Baseless Suspicion of the Wife

Once a village-dweller came to Rasulallah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and said:

“My wife gave birth to a dark-coloured boy and I have denied him (i.e. denied being the child's father).”

Rasulallah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: ‘Have you any camels?’

Villager: ‘Yes.’

Rasulullah: 'What are their colours?'

Villager: 'Red.'

Rasulullah: 'Are any among them fawn in colour?'

Villager: 'Yes.'

Rasulullah: 'From whence has this colour come into them?'

Villager: 'There must have been a camel of this colour among its ancestors.'

Rasulullah: 'Perhaps there was someone of dark colour among the child's ancestors.'

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihi was sallam) refuted the man's contention. He was not permitted to deny parentage on the basis of a flimsy argument or suspicion. It is not permissible to cast aspersions against the wife on the basis of conjecture. It is indeed a most serious crime of slander to impugn the honour of one's wife on the grounds of baseless suspicion. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

"The man who (baselessly) denies his child, Allah will be concealed from him (in the Hereafter) and Allah will disgrace him in the multitudes of people (on the Day of Qiyaamah)."

The punishment in the Aakhirah is severe for a man who baselessly accuses his wife of infidelity. Differences in the physical features of the child and its parents do not constitute a valid basis for suspecting the wife of infidelity.

A Pious Husband is a Benevolent and Concerned Father

The sacred responsibility of providing Islamic teaching (moral and spiritual) to children devolves firstly on the father. Although the mother plays a prominent and vital role in the Islamic upbringing of the children, this duty is entrusted to the father in a much greater degree. The Qur'aan Majeed orders husbands/fathers:

"O People of Imaan! Save yourselves and your families (wives and children) from the Fire (of Jahannum)."

The goal of life is Allah Ta'ala and the Aakhirah, not material prosperity and worldly perfection. The world has been created only as a means for the *Roohani* (spiritual) development of mankind, hence Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Verily, the world has been created for you, while you have been created for the Aakhirah.”

When the Mu’min’s final destination is the Aakhirah and his sojourn here on earth is fleeting, he should understand that his priority is not worldly success and perfection. It is wrong, un-Islamic and unintelligent, therefore, to apply oneself to worldly pursuits to such an extent that one’s spiritual life and the Islamic training of one’s family suffer detrimental consequences.

It is not lawful for the father to involve himself so much in business or other worldly occupations that he cannot find adequate time to tend to the Deeni Ta’leem and moral training of his children. In relation to his mundane pursuits, the Deeni Ta’leem of his family has greater priority and by far outweighs the importance of his business, profession and employment.

Most fathers mistakenly believe that by discharging their duties pertaining to food, clothing and residence they have fulfilled their paternal obligations. They delude themselves with the notion that the mother is in charge of the children’s moral and spiritual welfare. This attitude and misconception have resulted in gross neglect of fatherly responsibilities. Children are being spiritually and morally destroyed by paternal abdication from the sacred responsibility entrusted to them (fathers) by Allah Ta’ala. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that a father has not awarded his child anything better than good *Akhlaaq* (manners/character).

Making money does not at all feature among the goals of life. Mundane pursuits should be restricted to needs and some comforts. These pursuits should not be fixed as the goals of life to be chased after to the detriment of our *Roohani* (spiritual) life for whose development and perfection Allah Ta’ala has despatched man to earth for a temporary stay.

While many great Auliya had attained their distinguished pedestals of *Wilaayat* (sainthood) as a result of pious mothers who had spared no effort and pain in the spiritual and moral development of their children, there is no gainsaying that most mothers are highly deficient in adequately controlling and training their children along Islamic lines. Fathers who are engrossed all day long and even during the nights in their worldly activities cannot find time to tend to and supervise the *akhlaaq* and *ta’leem* of their children. In this selfish and inconsiderate way they have adopted, fathers are rendering a

grave injustice to their families and paving the path of ruin for the whole family – ruin in this world and in the Aakhirah.

If a father feels that he cannot give his children greater attention and concern than what he gives to his worldly pursuits, then at least he should give them equal concern. It is indeed a crying shame and a colossal abuse of trust that a man who has completely abandoned the Deeni training of his children on the pretext of his profession/business, can find time during the evenings and on weekends to spend time with friends in pleasure and sporting activities. All excuses which parents present to justify their parental neglect and to soothe their conscience are deceptions of the nafs. The Qur'aan-e-Hakeem informs man of his tricks:

“But, in fact, man has insight over his nafs even though he puts forth excuses.”

The miserable pretexts parents, especially fathers, advance for the abandonment of their children's *roohani* development will be inadmissible in the Divine Court in the Hereafter.

It is imperative for the father to diligently supervise the Islamic training of his children. He perpetrates gross dereliction of his sacred responsibility by expecting the mother to administer this difficult task single-handedly. He must necessarily take off time from his business to organize the training programme of his children. At least, as a very minimum requirement, he should spend much of his free time with his children – not with friends enjoying himself while his children are involved in some satanic pursuits of enjoyment during his absence.

Man's function regarding children is not only procreation. *Insaan* (the human being) is not a lowly beast which simply satisfies its sexual appetite thereby becoming an unconscious agent for the perpetuation of its kind. Man has sacred responsibilities to discharge. Among these, a vital responsibility is the Deeni training of his family.

The entire Ummah has been destroyed and is today wallowing in degeneration and corruption in every field. The prime cause for the Ummah's abject state of disgrace is parental neglect and their abuse of the *amaanat* of children. Society consists of family units. If every parent executes

correctly his/her duty of *Amr Bil Ma'roof Nahi Anil Munkar* and *tabligh*, every family unit will become a spiritually and morally healthy force. With a preponderance of families enjoying high moral fibre, the Nation of Islam will become a powerful *Ummah*. Alas! Parents, especially fathers, have abandoned their *fardh tabligh*. Those who possess some Deeni inclinations expect others to tend to the spiritual reformation of their children. Dwelling in such deceptions, they are the engineers of their children's ruin.

In our book *Al-Mar'atus Salihah* (The Pious Woman), a chapter with the heading, *Rearing and Training Children*, offers beneficial advice in this sphere. The advice is not only for women. Men – fathers – too should ensure that the training programme is diligently followed. Rearing and training children are a joint responsibility with the man acting the major role.

Withholding Talaaq

Even when a marriage has irretrievably broken down and all hope of reconciliation has long ago faded, some husbands spitefully refuse to issue *talaaq* solely to punish the woman. Such callous action is cowardly and does not befit a man of Imaan. The husband has nothing to gain from this spiteful attitude which brings only more heartache and complications. The Qur'aan-e-Hakeem instructs husbands:

“Either retention with beauty (and justice) or release with kindness.”

When there is no hope of reconciliation and the husband intelligently discerns that he will not be able to retain his wife correctly whether because of his fault or her fault, then the honourable solution is to release her from his *nikah* with kindness. Mutual recrimination and spite are most dishonourable and in conflict with the Qur'anic command to *release the wife with ihsaan (kindness)*.

If the husband refuses to fulfil the rights of the *Nikah*, the wife can have recourse to the Ulama who can, after due investigation, annul the marriage and set the woman free from the clutches of a spiteful husband who withholds *talaaq* solely to persecute his wife. However, if the woman is a *naashizah* (disobedient) and for no valid reason leaves the marital home without the consent of her husband, and furthermore, refuses to return

despite the husband's insistence, then no authority is empowered by the Shariah to annul the marriage. Since the woman is clearly at fault, a decree annulling the marriage cannot be issued. In such cases, some women whose Deeni ties are slack are not bothered by the Shariah's ruling. They stubbornly refuse to return home and even strike up relationships with other men. She passes her days in sin with absolutely no benefit accruing to the husband.

The husband should understand that as long as he refuses to issue talaaq to a grossly disobedient wife who has abandoned the marital home, her adultery will rebound on him. Any children she begets in consequence of an adulterous affair will be regarded legitimate by the Shariah. Since the child thus born, would have been conceived in the state of wedlock – still being his wife – the Shariah decrees that it is the child of the husband, not that of the man who had illicitly fathered it. Both the woman and the child will inherit in the estate of the husband. It, therefore, does not pay to behave spitefully and unintelligently by withholding divorce from a woman who refuses to make a home with her husband.

The husband will only be adopting the honourable and intelligent course by ending the marriage with talaaq. There is no sense in flogging a dead horse. The pious husband who fears Allah Ta'ala, will act in his best interests, as well as in the best interests of the woman regardless of the hurt and grief she has caused to him. The Qur'aan-e-Kareem says:

“Verily, he who forgives and adopts patience, most assuredly, that is of the great (noble) things (of virtue).”

The pious husband should overcome his emotions and release with kindness a grossly disobedient wife who wants to be separated. Allah Ta'ala will reward him with a pious wife for the consideration and patience he displayed

The Balanced Way

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“The best of things are their balanced (middle) ways.”

In Islam there are no extremes. Islam shuns excesses. Moderation – the middle path – is always advocated by the Shariah. The thrust of Rasulullah’s advice and admonition to husbands is on kindness towards wives and toleration. This should not be confused with obedience to the wife. There is a distinct difference between kindness to wives and obedience to wives. While the former is obligatory and laudable, the latter is not permissible and repugnant.

Obedience to the wife, according to Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is among the lesser signs heralding the event of Qiyaamah. In the later times of evil and corruption, husbands will be subservient to their wives. They will trample on the rights of their parents in obedience to the wishes of their domineering and errant wives. The Shariah does not order husbands to submit to the un-Islamic and unlawful desires, fancies and instructions of wives.

The Hadith of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) brands as a *dayyooth* (cuckold) a husband who submits to the whimsical fancies of his wife who freely mingles with strange men while the husband remains a meek onlooker. Thus, obedience to the wife is not an Islamic teaching.

While the Shariah emphasises obedience to the husband, it exhorts kindness to the wife. The husband has to be tolerant and kind towards his wife, not submissive. He should know exactly where and when to draw the line between kindness to the wife and submission to the wife. The dividing line is the Shariah. If the wife’s wishes conflict with the Shariah, the husband’s acceptance of such wishes will be unlawful obedience to the wife. His patience when she acts with indiscretion towards him or when she fails to correctly fulfil his rights, will be a laudable tolerance and kindness towards her.

At home the man should not behave like a lion because a fierce and harsh attitude is nugatory of the kindness and benevolence instructed by the

Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). But his kindness and toleration should not merge into submissiveness, which causes him to obey his wife's unlawful inclinations and to follow her lead. Such a despicable attitude negates his superior role as the divinely appointed *haakim* (ruler) of the home.

There is a great difference between harshness and firmness. Most husbands display harshness and lack firmness. When the wife commits an error in a mundane matter or behaves somewhat indiscreetly, the man is quick in reacting with anger. This is repulsive harshness. On the other hand, when the wife flouts the Shariah, the husband maintains silence or shrugs off her disobedience. Even if he chooses to advise her regarding her folly, he exhibits a conspicuous lack of firmness. While he will not tolerate her squandering his money, for example, he does tolerate her Shar'i violations.

A husband's lukewarm attitude towards the Deen provides further impetus for a woman to violate the Laws of Allah. It is vital that the husband spells out unambiguously the pattern of life which his family will have to follow. That pattern is the Shariah – the Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Her tantrums and naggings should never be allowed to bring about deviation from the *Siraatul Mustaqeem* – the Straight Path, viz. the Shariah. If the husband remains firm on the Shariah with dignity, the wife will necessarily get the message soon and she will voluntarily submit. After all, submission and obedience to the husband are her natural attributes.

A husband's 'toleration' which permits his wife to discard *Hijaab* (purdah), to attend un-Islamic and bid'ah functions, to neglect Salaat, to introduce television into the home and to do anything which Allah Ta'ala has prohibited, is not the kindness which Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) instructed the husband to show to his wife. Such misdirected 'toleration' is evil, unlawful and an obedience to the wife which is Islamically reprehensible.

Submitting to the wife's desire that he severs his ties with his parents is not showing kindness to the wife. Such rupture of sacred ties is haraam and constitutes a major sin. The *keep the peace* with his wife, the husband is not permitted to violate the *huqooq* of others or to perpetrate any act of transgression.

The pious man is expected to submit his emotions and attitudes to the Shariah. His kindness, firmness, anger and toleration must be in the state of equilibrium (*I'tidaal*) for them to be acceptable expressions of virtue in the Shariah. Equilibrium is only within the confines of the Shariah. Thus, the Shariah constitutes the criterion of *Az-Zaujus Salih* (the Pious Husband).

Conclusion

“...They (women) have taken from you a formidable pledge.”

(Surah Nisaa)

The ‘formidable pledge’ mentioned in this Qur’aanic verse is the Pledge of Nikah. The wife is made lawful to the husband by virtue of the sacred Pledge of the Nikah contract. The Nikah Khutbah is recited to solemnize the Nikah Contract, indicating thereby that this Nikah is a sacred Pledge which is sanctified in the Name of Allah. It is not a purely mundane contract like other commercial dealings. Hence, Allah Ta’ala describes Nikah as *Mithaaqan Ghaleezan* – a formidable, strong, powerful and sacred Pledge.

The responsibility of the *Amaanat* (Trust), viz. the wife, is entrusted to the man by virtue of a sacred and solemn Pledge (the Nikah) which the husband faithfully declares to Allah to honour. Thus, in his relationship with the wife, he must never lose sight of this holy pledge enacted in the Name of Allah and that he is in charge of Allah’s *Amaanat*.



The Qur'aan Majeed commands:

“Deal with women correctly and with kindness. If, then you dislike them, then it is possible that you dislike something while Allah has created abundance of goodness in it.”

(Surah Nisaa, aayat 19)