

An-Nisaa'

L a j n a I m ā i l l ā h C a n a d a
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'Our Lord, grant us
of our wives and
children the delight
of our eyes, and
make us a model for
the righteous.'

(HOLY QUR'AN, CH.25, V. 75)

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In the Name of Allāh, the most Gracious, the ever Merciful!

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An-Nisaa'

Volume:32 Issue: 2
May — August 2020

Holy Qur'ān/Hadīth	1
A Note from the Editor	2
Spiritual Treasures from the Writings of the Promised Messiah ^{as}	3
Summary of Friday Sermon by Hazrat Khalifatul-Masīh V ^{aa}	5
Life and Character of Hazrat Khadija ^{ra}	9
A Reflection of a Beautiful Match: Hazrat Ammān Jān Hazrat Nusrat Jahān Begum ^{ra} and Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad ^{as} 's Blessed Union	10
"They Are A Garment For You..."	15
Above All Else, Choose Taqwa	16
Pre and Post Perspectives of Marriage in Islām	18
How to Lead your Children towards a Successful Marriage	21
Rights and Responsibilities of a Spouse	23
Simple Recipe for a Successful Marriage	24
What to Look for in a Partner	26
Every Lajna's Pledged Sacrifices	27
Women Mentioned in Holy Qur'ān	28
The Purpose of Creation and the Role of Marriage	30
Marital Rights and Obligations	32
What is a "Deal-Breaker" for you in a Marriage!	33
Responses to Allegations	34
A Bouquet of Flowers	35

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From the Holy Qur'ān

The English translation of the Arabic verses is rendered by Maulvi Sher Ali Sāhib^{ra}.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا
زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ
الْأَرْحَامَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا ﴿٢﴾

O ye people! fear your Lord, Who created you from a single soul and created therefrom its mate, and from them twain spread many men and women; and fear Allāh, in Whose name you appeal to one another, and *fear Him particularly respecting ties of relationship*. Verily, Allāh watches over you. (4:2)

Ahadīth: Saying of the Holy Prophet^{sa}

Choose Your Wife for Her Religious Piety

Narrated by Hazrat Abū Hurairah, Allāh be pleased with him: Said the Prophet of Allāh (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him):

“In marrying a woman, a man’s choice of a spouse is determined by the consideration of her wealth, her family and her physical beauty and her religious piety, but thou shouldst make thy life happy, prosperous and successful, by choosing a spouse, on account of her religious piety, otherwise thy hands will ever remain in dust.” (Bukhārī)

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessing of Allāh be upon him) has, in this Hadīth, after stating the considerations that determine the selection

of a wife, enjoined on Muslims that their choice of a spouse should be governed primarily by consideration of religious piety and moral endowments. As a consequence of this, he says, their family lives will be happy and full of bliss. Otherwise, they may enjoy a temporary and superficially pleasant break, but they cannot have true and abiding felicity. This saying of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) is pregnant with deep wisdom, for, through this not only a way to basing the home life of Muslims on happiest foundations has been opened, but also provision has been made for the well-being and security of the coming generations.

(Forty Gems of Beauty, pages 80-81, Hadīth No. 16)

A Note from the Editor

“The relationship between a husband and wife should be like two true and sincere friends. After all, it is the wife who is the primary witness of a man’s high moral qualities and his relationship with God Almighty. If his relationship with his wife is not good, how can he be at peace with God?”

[Malfūzāt, vol. 5, pp. 417-418 — Essence of Islām, Vol. 3, pg 323]

In the quote above, the Imām and *Hakam* of our age, the Promised Messiah^{as} has summed up the true essence of a husband and a wife’s relationship. Two people who are each other’s confidant and witness of moral and spiritual status! Further, if the relationship of a husband and a wife is strained, the Promised Messiah^{as} says that those people will not have a peaceful relationship with God. Indeed, if one fails to discharge *Haququl-Ibad* (rights of Allāh’s servants) properly, from which the rights of a spouse are paramount; then one cannot claim to discharge the rights of Allāh, or *Haququl-Allāh*, as well.

A true friendship requires respect, honesty, compassion, selflessness and care for each other’s sentiments. Our beloved Imām, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{aa} has provided this guidance to life-partners:

“Enjoining husband and wife to find good qualities in each other, the Holy Prophet^{sa} said that if you see a flaw in the other or dislike a habit of theirs, there would be many things about them that you may like and admire. These favourable aspects should be kept in view to selflessly create a harmonious air and milieu of conciliation.”

(Friday sermon delivered on 2 July 2004 at International Centre, Mississauga, Canada. Published in Al Fazl International, 16 July 2004 -)

Allāh the Almighty, has also instructed us to pray for our spouses:

‘Our Lord, grant us of our spouses and children the delight of our eyes and make each of us a leader of the righteous.’ (25:75)

With reference to this prayer, Huzoor^{aa} advised:

“While this prayer is significant for men it is also significant for women so that both men and women become the delight of each other’s eyes. When they will both be praying to become the delight of each other’s eyes they will also be mindful to be kind to each other and will overlook each other’s drawbacks and will keep each other’s good qualities in view. Sometimes newly married couples come to me for advice. Just as I mentioned these days the situation with divorce and *khula* (divorce initiated by the wife) is very worrisome, so what I tell them is to overlook each other’s weaknesses and keep each other’s good qualities in view. [I tell them] that now that they are married they should honour the relationship and also pray to Allāh the Exalted to make them the delight of each other’s eyes. When prayers and efforts are put in Insha’Allāh’ relationships are successful. When both husband and wife will be the delight of each other’s eyes, then seeing the good example of the parents the next generation will also try to become the delight of the parents’ eyes.”

(Address to ladies delivered on 25 June 2011 at Jalsa Salana Germany. Published 13 April 2012)

The guidance from our spiritual father tells us that the relationship of a husband and a wife is a very delicate and subtle bond, and should be nurtured with prayers, good conduct and affection.

The current issue of An-Nisaa’ is focused on the topic of Marriage. I am grateful to all the members who submitted excellent essays, some of which are reflections of personal experiences. I am confident that you will enjoy reading them.

May Allāh enable all of us to truly follow the beautiful teachings of Islām.

Sadiqa Hifsa

Spiritual Treasures from the Writings of the Promised Messiah^{as}

The following excerpts are taken from The Essence of Islām: Volume III, pg. 311 — 313, 314—316, 323—324 (available online at www.alislam.org/books); a compilation of extracts from the writings, speeches, announcements and discourses of the Promised Messiah^{as}, translated into English by Hazrat Chaudhry Muhammad Zaf-rulla Khan^{ra} and revised by Munawar Ahmad Sa'eed .

Kind Treatment of Women

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) is the perfect example for us in every aspect of life. Study his life and see how he conducted himself in relation to women. In my esteem, a man who stands up against a woman is a coward and not a man. If you study the life of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) you will find that he was so gracious that, despite his station of dignity, he would stop even for an old woman and would not move on until she permitted him to do so.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 4, p. 44]

Do not ever consider women to be contemptible and insignificant!! Our perfect guide, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) has said: **‘The best among you is he who is best towards his wife.’** How can one claim to be pious when he does not behave well towards his wife.... It is unacceptable to get furious or hit one's wife on the slightest pretence. There have been instances where an enraged husband hit his wife over some slight matter... and mortally wounded her. This is why God Almighty has said concerning them:

‘Consort with them in kindness.’—(4:20)

There is no doubt that admonition is necessary if a woman behaves improperly. A husband ought to impress upon his wife that he will not tolerate anything which is contrary to the faith, and yet he is not a tyrant who will not overlook any mistake on

her part. For a woman, her husband is a manifestation of the Divine. According to a Hadīth, had God been pleased to enjoin prostration before anyone but Himself, He would have enjoined upon a woman to prostrate herself before her husband. Hence a man should be both hard and soft suiting the occasion.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 3, p. 147]

[Divine revelation to the Promised Messiah^{as}]

‘Such behaviour is not appropriate; ‘Abdul Karim, the leader of Muslims, should be dissuaded from it.’

[Promised Messiah^{as}'s footnote about the above revelation]: ...This revelation contains guidance for the whole Jamā'at, that they should treat their wives with kindness and courtesy. Your wives are not your slaves. In point of fact, marriage is a covenant between man and woman. Try therefore not to break this covenant. God Almighty says in the Holy Qur'ān [in Surah An-Nisaa', verse 20]: ‘Lead a life of kindness and equity with your wives.’ And it is mentioned in a Hadīth: ‘The best among you is he who is best towards his wife.’ Therefore, be good to your wives both spiritually and physically. Keep praying for them and avoid divorce. A person who is hasty in divorce is sinful in the eyes of God. Do not hasten to break like a dirty vessel that which God has brought together.

[Tohfah-e-Golarhviyyah , Rūhānī Khazā'in, vol. 17, p. 75]

A Woman's Right to Divorce

This is not all. The law of Islām has not left the matter of divorce entirely in the hands of the husband; women too have been given the right to seek divorce through the relevant authorities. Such divorce is designated in Islāmic Shairah as khulā'. In case a husband ill treats his wife, beats her unreasonably, or is otherwise unacceptable, or is not capable of discharging his obligations towards her, or if he changes his religion, or it becomes difficult for the wife to live with him on account of some incompatibility; in all these situations, she or her guardian ought to report to the judge. If he finds that the complaint is justified, he would decree dissolution of the marriage. The judge is, however, also bound to summon the husband and ask him why the wife should not be allowed to leave him. Just as Islām does not approve of a woman marrying without the consent of her guardian, i.e., her father, brother, or other near male relative, likewise it does not approve of a woman to separate from her husband on her own. It orders even greater care in case of divorce, and enjoins recourse to the authorities to protect her from any harm she may do to herself on account of her lack of understanding.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūhānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, pp. 286-289]

Propagation of the Human Race through Marriage

Again, the critic alleges that, according to the Qur'ān, women are merely a means of sexual satisfaction and are like fields to be tilled. Just look how far this ill-thinking Hindu has gone in his malicious accusations, and how he fabricates words and ascribes them to the Holy Qur'ān! To such a one we can only say: The curse of Allāh be on the liars. What the Holy Qur'ān has said is only that:

Your wives are your tilth for the purpose of procreation, so approach your tilth as you may desire, but keep in mind the requirements of tilth, that is, do not have union in any manner that might obstruct the birth of children.... (2:224) Of course, if the wife is ill, and it is certain that pregnancy would put her life in danger, or if there is some other valid reason, these will count as exceptions. Otherwise, it is strictly forbidden in the Shariah to obstruct the

birth of children. Every sensible person can appreciate that a woman is described as tilth because children are born of her. One of the purposes of matrimony is that righteous servants of God may be born who remember Him. Another Divine purpose is that husband and wife may safeguard themselves against illicit looks and conduct. There is a third purpose, which is that, because of their mutual attachment, they should spare themselves the pangs of loneliness. All these injunctions are present in the Holy Qur'ān, we need not elaborate any further.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūhānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, pp. 292-293]

Importance of Inculcating Piety in Ahmadi Women

It is incumbent upon the members of my Jamā'at that they should inculcate piety in their women in order to ensure their own piety, otherwise they will be guilty of a sin. If a wife is in a position to point out the shortcomings of her husband to his face, how can she have fear of God? If the parents are not righteous, their children would not be pure. Piety of children requires a long line of virtues; without it, the children would be bad. Therefore, the men should repent and should set a good example for the women. A woman keeps a watchful eye on her husband, and a man cannot hide his faults from her. Moreover, women are wise without showing it. Do not ever think that they are fools. In a subtle way, they are influenced by everything you do. If the husband is righteous, she will not only be respectful to him but also to God.... The wives of the Prophets and the righteous were pious, because they were the recipients of their husbands' benign influence. The wives of the wicked and vicious are also like their husbands. How can the wife of a thief ever think of getting up to pray Tahajjud in the latter part of the night, when she knows that her husband has gone to steal. This is why it is said:

'Men are guardians over women.'—(4:35)

Women are influenced by their husbands. To the extent that a husband excels in piety and righteousness, his wife will also partake of it. Similarly, if the husband is wicked, the wife too will share his evil.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 5, pp 217-218]

Summary of Friday Sermon

Marital Rights and Responsibilities

This perfect and blessed model of the Holy Prophet^{sa} also encompasses marital issues and we observe the supremely excellent standards that he set in this regard.

The matrimonial relations should not be decided on emotions; rather they should be decided after careful consideration and seeking the help of God who is All-Embracing.

Source: Friday Sermon Archives from www.alislam.org

Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V (May Allāh be his Helper) delivered his Friday Sermon on May 15, 2009 at Baitul Futuh Mosque. Huzoor^{aa} gave a discourse on the Islāmic teachings on marital rights and obligations with reference to the Divine attribute Al-Wasi (The Benevolent, the All-Embracing).

Huzoor^{aa} said today he would cite various subjects that relate to our daily life as well as to our moral and spiritual state. By virtue of His All-Embracing knowledge God is aware of our each action and by mentioning these subjects He has guided us so that we may, in accordance to our individual capacity, make endeavours to attain beneficence and seek His pleasure. The aspects that guide us range from marital matters to societal issues to reformation of our religious ways, to adapting our moral and spiritual condition in accordance with the pleasure of God. Allāh has also commanded humans to adopt His attributes on a human level and has thus enjoined to espouse the attribute of Al-Wasi to expand and enhance one's spiritual

state to attain God's pleasure. He has also informed us that He is indeed well aware of our capacity and therefore whatever He has assigned us is not beyond our capacity. Indeed capacity varies from person to person and His commandment is also in accordance to this; however, it is not for man to determine the limits of one's capacity; this God alone knows. Therefore, it cannot be said about His commandments that they are beyond one's capacity. He has granted hidden capacity to everyone and it is man's task to bring it out and develop that capacity.

God also gave us the perfect model of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and enjoined us to tread in his footsteps. He was indeed the only perfect man who had tremendous capacities. Reflecting on any aspect of his blessed model one observes exceedingly great standards. We are enjoined to aspire to follow his blessed model. This perfect and blessed model also encompasses marital issues and we observe the supremely excellent standards that he set in this regard.

The Holy Prophet^{sa} once said, ‘The best of you, is the one who is best to his wives, and I am the best of you toward my wives.’ He also said if there is any quality a husband dislikes in his wife he should be mindful of another that he likes and thus generate an environment of harmony.

Huzoor^{aa} stated that this commandment is applicable to both men and women. The blessed wives of the Holy Prophet^{sa} were witness to the fact that his deportment with them was most excellent in all aspects of daily life. Yet he would pray to God that indeed He was aware that as far as human limitations allowed he was just and fair with all his blessed wives. However, he had no control over his heart, and if his heart was inclined to one of them more than the others due to a particular quality, he sought God’s forgiveness. Explaining to Hazrat Aishah^{ra} the qualities of Hazrat Khadija^{ra}, the Holy Prophet^{sa} said that she had become his companion when he was all alone and helpless. She gave him all her wealth and bore him children. When the world rejected him, she validated him. Despite the presence of living and young wives, indeed the presence of his beloved wife, who was beloved because he had received most of his Divine revelations whilst in her apartment and who wondered why the Prophet^{sa} often remembered the elderly Khadija^{ra}, he responded by lovingly telling them not be narrow-minded, to inculcate fortitude and explained the reasons why he reminisced about his early wife.

Huzoor^{aa} remarked that do those who make baseless allegations on ‘my master’ not observe this excellent model? While his evident deportment with his living wives was fair and equal, with no control over his heart that was inclined to his first wife who had made immense sacrifices in the early days — he explained this was because he was appreciative and if he was not grateful in this regard he could not be a grateful servant of God, Who had never left him wanting. His kind and gentle deportment with his wives was in obedience to God’s commandment of fairness.

Huzoor^{aa} explained that the Islāmic injunction of

marrying more than one wife is conditional and is not cruelty on women as it is commonly perceived. Huzoor^{aa} cited verse four of Surah An-Nisa’:

And if you fear that you will not be fair in dealing with the orphans, then marry of women as may be agreeable to you, two, or three, or four; and if you fear you will not deal justly, then *marry only one* or what your right hands possess. That is the nearest way for you to avoid injustice. (4:4)

Huzoor^{aa} said this verse safeguards orphan girls and ensures that their emotions are taken care of after marriage and so that someone is watching over them. Elucidating this verse and citing the taking of more than one wife the Promised Messiah^{as} used the phrase ‘even if the need is felt’, thus confirming that one’s personal need to take more than one wife is not of significance, rather, the key aspect is the peace and concord of society.

Huzoor^{aa} said at times he receives complaints that despite having families men want to bring a second wife. Huzoor^{aa} said if one cannot be fair then one should not marry a second wife. If one has no choice but to marry a second wife then one has to take care of the first wife more than before – unlike the instances that one hears of where the rights of the first wife are slowly eroded in flagrant disobedience of God’s commandments. Indeed one has to be very wary that there is no unfairness in the financial and other rights of the first wife because any such injustice has been likened by the Promised Messiah^{as} to a trial.

Huzoor^{aa} reiterated that the Holy Prophet^{sa} would pray to God that on an apparent level he tried to fulfil the rights of all his wives, however, if due to a quality of a certain wife, at times he expressed about it, he sought God’s forgiveness. Huzoor^{aa} said this is precisely in accordance with human nature and God knows everything, He created man and gave the permission of more than one marriage and has declared that a situation can arise that one may be more inclined towards one wife. In such an instance He commands that it is

imperative that the apparent rights of all wives are fulfilled. It is stated in verse 130 of Surah An-Nisa’:

And you cannot keep perfect balance between wives, however much you may desire it. But incline not wholly to one so that you leave the other like a thing suspended. And if you amend and act righteously, surely Allāh is Most Forgiving, Merciful. (4:130)

Huzoor^{aa} said indeed the welfare of a wife is completely the obligation of a husband. He said he receives complaints from wives that husbands do not pay attention to their needs and are predisposed to the other. In instances where there is only one wife, husbands maintain that they will neither leave the wife nor look after her. Then matters are unnecessarily lengthened in *Qadha*; some do not give divorce so that in desperation the wife seeks ‘*khula*’ and the man thus escapes paying the *Haq Mehr* (dower). All these matters distant one from *Taqwa* (righteousness). If one seeks God’s mercy then one has to demonstrate mercy, if one wishes to partake a measure of God’s mercy one has to expand one’s mercy. Huzoor^{aa} said the verse following the aforementioned verse states, ‘**And if they separate, Allāh will make both independent out of His abundance; and Allāh is Bountiful, Wise.**’ (4:131). Here God commands that if there is no way to reconcile then do not leave them suspended, rather separate in the best manner. Ahādīth cite divorce as a most unpleasant act, however, if a relationship cannot be maintained on *Taqwa*, then God knows what is in hearts and if separation is sought while inclined to Him, the All-Embracing God makes bountiful arrangements for all concerned. Huzoor^{aa} said this verse also establishes the principle that matrimonial relations should not be decided on emotions; rather they should be decided after careful consideration and seeking the help of God who is All-Embracing. Such matches are blessed by God and He graces them with great scope.

Huzoor^{aa} said as he mentioned earlier, at times men make matters of divorce drag on. There are clear and distinct commandments regarding the rights of the wife after marriage that has lasted a period of time and also where there are children. However, God commands man to fulfil the rights of a wife in the instance of a divorce even where the ‘going-away’ (*rukhsati*) ceremony has not taken place and the marriage has not been consummated. It is stated in Surah Al-Baqarah, ‘**It shall be no sin for you if you divorce women while you have not touched them, nor settled for them a dowry. But provide for them — the rich man according to his means and the poor man according to his means — a provision in a becoming manner, an obligation upon the virtuous.**’ (2:237).

Huzoor^{aa} explained that the Holy Prophet^{sa} was most specific about this matter. Once the matter of an Ansari man was brought before the Prophet^{sa}. The man said that he had divorced his wife before settling on *Haq Mehr* and without consummating the marriage. The Prophet^{sa} asked him if he had paid anything to the wife out of kindness. The man replied he did not have anything to give. The Prophet^{sa} told him if he had nothing else to give then he should give her the cap that he wore. This illustrates the significance of the rights of women in marriage. This of course is an instance where *Haq Mehr* was not settled on. In the instance where it is settled but the marriage has not been consummated then the command is to pay half of it.

Huzoor^{aa} said there are thus clear and unambiguous commandments pertaining to the rights of wives and children as well as the rights of husbands. In citing these commandments God states that they are not beyond one’s capacity therefore they should be fulfilled. Huzoor^{aa} said there is another detail about this which he would not cite; two matters were sufficient. Firstly, the blessed model of supremely excellent treatment of wives to follow and secondly the significance to put this

blessed model in practice by every Ahmadi Muslim, especially the obligations given to men.

Another issue, which although is not common, but which can be heard of at the odd place in our Community is the matter cited in the verse 153 of Surah Al-An`am, **‘And approach not the property of the orphan, except in a way which is best, till he attains his maturity. And give full measure and weight with equity. We task not any soul except according to its capacity. And when you speak, observe justice, even if the concerned person be a relative, and fulfil the covenant of Allah. That is what He enjoins upon you, that you may remember.’** (6:153). Huzoor^{aa} said this verse declares that no responsibility is given to one beyond one’s capacity. The All-Embracing, All-Knowing God is fully aware of our capacities and thus gives us commandments well within our capabilities. The verse commands to only handle the property of the orphan in a good, kind way. Those in whose care the property of the orphan comes are its trustees. A few verses preceding this verse state that the endeavour should be to protect the property of the orphan and their upbringing should be afforded by those looking after them but if one cannot afford to do so then one should avail of the property of the orphan for this purpose most carefully. The rightful

dues are paid in this instance when one has the same empathy for the property of the orphan as one has for one’s own property. Huzoor^{aa} said those who are unjust in handling the property of the orphan should remember that by doing so they will never be able to enhance their property. Even if they make a temporary gain in this life, they will come under the warning of, **‘Surely, they who devour the property of orphans unjustly, only swallow fire into their bellies...’** (4:11). It is therefore a matter to be most cautious about. People who help those who usurp the property of orphans are also culpable.

One should always try and have the mind-set that whatever God commands us is within our capacity and with this mind-set one should do one’s best to put into practice all Divine commandments. If we are able to do this we may be included in the people about whom God states: **‘But as to those who believe and do good works — and We task not any soul beyond its capacity — these are the inmates of Heaven; they shall abide therein.’** (7:43). May God make it so that we always turn to Him and obey Him. Our limitations are obvious but He has commanded us in accordance — and His mercy is boundless, of which He has given us glad-tiding. May we continue to do good works, may God enable us so.

Announcements / Request for Prayers

An-Nisaa’ Team would like to express our immense gratitude for submitting your materials for publication. Every effort has been made to include every writing— for those articles which could not be included in their entirety, a selection of writings has been included under the title “Bouquet of flowers”. Please continue to write for An-Nisaa’, and accept our apology in case your name/article has been mistakenly omitted. Please remember our entire team in your prayers. Jazak’Allāh.

Mrs. Uzma Babar and Mr. Falah-ud-Din Babar of Winnipeg Jamā’at were blessed with a child on July 30, 2020, who has been named Zohan Babar. Prayers are requested for the long and healthy life of the child.

Life and Character of Hazrat Khadija^{ra}

By: Basima Shaikh, Woodbridge North

Today, we see women all around the world making headlines for their strength and admirable acts. However, what people don't recall are the powerful women in Islām who have been role models for us Muslims for centuries. The Holy Prophet^{sa}'s first wife Hazrat Khadija^{ra} was an exceptional woman of her time who was the first woman to accept Islām and was devoted in supporting the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa} in spreading the message of Islām.

Since childhood, Hazrat Khadija^{ra} had been a very pious and intelligent woman with commendable moral values. Due to her noble characteristics, the people of Makkah called her "Tahira" meaning pure or virtuous.

Before marriage with the Holy Prophet^{sa}, Hazrat Khadija^{ra} had married twice and had been widowed both times. After the demise of her father, Khuwalid bin Asad, she decided to live independently and ran her father's business herself to provide for her children. She broke all stereotypes of women in the work field and became one of the most admirable women in the town with her successful business. At this time, she received a lot of proposals for marriage, but she rejected them all. She did not wish to remarry until she heard about the Holy Prophet^{sa}.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa} had been known in the town as *Al-Saadiq*, the truthful and *Al-Āmīn*, the honest. People were impressed by this man and his pious character, so Hazrat Khadija^{ra} offered him a job. He was sent to Syria for trade with one of Hazrat Khadija^{ra}'s servants and upon their return, the servant reported that Muhammad^{sa} had carried out business in the perfect manner. He could not stop praising the Prophet^{sa} and upon hearing this, Hazrat Khadija^{ra} was very impressed. She later sent a proposal to Prophet Muhammad^{sa}, requesting his hand in marriage. At this time,

Hazrat Khadija^{ra} was a 40-year-old, wealthy woman while Prophet^{sa} was only 25 years old, but for Hazrat Khadija^{ra}, all that mattered were his pious qualities.

After Hazrat Khadija^{ra}'s marriage to the Holy Prophet^{sa}, she was always there by his side. Even when the entire tribe of Makkah was against the preaching of Islām, she supported the Prophet^{sa} and accepted Islām, not fearing the consequences. As the Holy Prophet^{sa}'s devotion and love for Allāh, Almighty increased, he began going to cave Hira to worship. On one occasion, Hazrat Khadija^{ra} was looking for the Holy Prophet^{sa} in the cave when she met angel Gabriel^{as} who began questioning her about Prophet Muhammad^{sa}. Hazrat Khadija^{ra} found Prophet Muhammad^{sa} and told him about her encounter with the angel to which he responded,

"That was Gabriel^{as} and he said to give his *Salam* (greetings of peace) to you. He brings glad tidings of a resting place in paradise for you, a place where there shall neither be noise nor trouble."

Hazrat Khadija^{ra} was so devoted in supporting the Prophet of Allāh that Allāh himself was impressed by her efforts and guaranteed her a place in heaven.

Before Hazrat Khadija^{ra}'s demise, she spent 3 years in great pain and difficulty as the Holy Prophet^{sa} and his people were boycotted. They stayed in Shi'b Abi Taalib which had very poor living conditions. Unfortunately, shortly after their return from the Shi'b, Hazrat Khadija^{ra} passed away at the age of 65 years in the month of Ramadan. She was buried in the Mekkan cemetery of Hajoan where Prophet Muhammad^{sa} himself, placed her body into the grave.

(Continued on page 20)

A Reflection of a Beautiful Match:

The Blessed Union of Hazrat Nusrat Jahān Begum^{ra} and Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}

Compiled by: Alia Kanwal, Caledon Brampton West

Note: Most of the information in this essay has been taken directly from the book titled *Hazrat Ammān Jān^{ra}—An Inspiration to us all. A Tribute to Hazrat Sayyedah Nusrat Jahān Begum^{ra}, The Wife of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} – The Promised Messiah^{as}*, by Munavara (Nabbo) Ghauri.

It is indeed a fascinating tale to discover and recount the way Allāh Almighty arranged the union of Hazrat Ammān Jān^{ra}, Sayyedah Nusrat Jahān Begum, with the Promised Messiah^{as}, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad!

The families of Hazrat Ammān Jān^{ra} and the Promised Messiah^{as} belonged to two very different cultures and lived in different parts of the country. Ammān Jān's family belonged to a family of Sadaat from Dehli, while the Promised Messiah^{as} was from a Mughal family of Qadian, Punjab. There was a very little chance of the two families getting acquainted let alone becoming related to each other. However, Allāh had destined it so!

A striking coincidence yet Divinely planned!

Mirza Ghulam Qadir Sāhib, who was the elder brother of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} became friends with Hazrat Mir Nasir Nawab Sāhib.

Ms. Gauri relates in her book and writes:

“Whilst Hazrat Ammān Jān's^{ra} father Hazrat Mir Nāsir Nawab Sāhib^{ra} was involved in the construction of a canal in Moza Tatla, his wife Sayyedah Begum became unwell. Mirza Ghulām Qadir, who had become his good friend, often passed through Tatla on his way home from Gurdaspur. On one such trip, he recommended that Mir Nāsir Nawab Sāhib^{ra} bring his wife to see his father Mirza Ghulām Murtaza for a diagnosis, as he practised medicine. Consequently, Mir Nāsir Nawab Sāhib^{ra} arrived at the Promised Messiah^{as}'s father's house in Qādiān. On arrival at Mirza Ghulām Murtaza's house, Hazrat Ammān Jān's^{ra} mother has related her first memory of the Promised Messiah^{as} to her grandson Hazrat Mirza Bashīr Ahmad^{ra}:

On the ground floor, your uncle was sitting entertaining a gathering, and in a tiny room your father (i.e. the Promised Messiah^{as}) was sitting near a window reading the Holy Qur'ān, and on the upper floor was your grandfather.”¹

This is how the two families became acquainted. After the demise of his father, Mirza Ghulām Qadir Sāhib suggested that the family of Mir Nāsir Nawab Sāhib^{ra} come and occupy his house in Qādiān as it was unhealthy for his wife to continue staying in Moza Tatla. Mirza Ghulām Qadir assured his friend that he would hardly be affected by this move as he spent most of his time in Gurdaspur with his work.

He also reassured Mir Nāsir Nawwab^{ra} that his younger brother Mirza Ghulām Ahmad^{as} would not be a disturbance for his family, as he lived a life of seclusion.²

Following, in 1876 the family of Mir Nāsir Nawab's^{ra} temporarily moved to Qadian. Ms. Gauri relates this period in these words:

“By Allāh Almighty's design, they came to live in the very house of the Mahdī and Messiah of the Age. The families began to exchange gifts. Mirza Ghulām Qadir would often return from Gurdaspur with a gift of “paan” (betel leaf) for Sayyedah Begum. In exchange, she would prepare appetising meals for him on his return to Qādiān, sending them to his quarters.

“On one such occasion, Sayyedah Begum had prepared some delicious kebabs for Mirza Ghulām Qadir's homecoming, only to discover that he had already returned to Gurdaspur. Rather than waste the food, Sayyedah Begum decided to send the food to his reclusive younger brother, Mirza Ghulām Ahmad^{as}. Sayyedah Begum's servant returned expressing Mirza Ghulām Ahmad^{as}'s extreme gratitude for the gift of food. He had left his routine meal to eat the kebabs prepared by Sayyedah Begum. Affected by his appreciation, Sayyedah Begum would then often send Mirza Ghulām Ahmad^{as} food every second or third day, until his sister-in law learned of her kindness and objected.

“During this period, Mir Nāsir Nawab became acquainted with Mirza Ghulām Ahmad and commented to his wife, *‘Mirza Ghulām Qadir's younger brother is a very righteous and pious man.’* In 1877, Mir Nāsir Nawab Sāhib's family was posted to Lahore. Within a few months, his family also moved there. The young Nusrat Jahān was then 13 years old. Mirza Ghulām Ahmad^{as} left a lasting impression on Mir Nāsir.”³

Divine inception leads to tying the knot!

During this time, Mir Nāsir Sabhib would often write to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} for prayers for his

family. One such time he asked Huzoor^{as} to pray for his daughter's proposal. At this time, Huzoor^{as} had been having dreams regarding his second marriage and that it would be in a *Sayyed* family. When Huzoor^{aa} received the letter requesting prayers from Mir Nasir Nawab Sāhib, Hazrat Mirza Ghulām Ahmad^{as} sent his own proposal for his daughter and urged Mir Nāsir Nawab Sāhib to take time to consider the sincere proposal.

It is narrated in the book by Ms. Gauri:

“Mir Nāsir Nawab initially hid Mirza Ghulām Ahmad^{as}'s letter from his wife Sayyedah Begum. He was aware that she would have reservations due to Mirza Sāhib's first marriage (which in practical terms had ended), and the age difference. Meanwhile, other proposals came for Nusrat Jahān Begum^{ra}, but Sayyedah Begum was not completely satisfied with any of them, despite some being from affluent families. Muhammad Hussain Batalavi (a contemporary and fellow student of Mirza Ghulām Ahmad^{as}) wrote to Mir Nāsir Nawab, strongly recommending Mirza Sāhib as a pious and noble man of a good family. However, Mir Nāsir Nawab still refrained from showing the proposal to Sayyedah Begum. Apart from any personal objections she may have had, relations between the people of Delhi and the Punjab were often not amicable, also giving him doubts about the feasibility of the match.

“A proposal came from a man in Ludhiana which Mir Nāsir Nawab Sāhib thought to be promising. However, after investigating his family, Sayyedah Begum was not satisfied and rejected the match. At this point, Mir Nāsir Nawab Sāhib expressed his frustration that his daughter who was now 18 years old may be left a spinster if his wife continued to reject all her suitors. In response, Sayyedah Begum replied, *“Better than any of these would be Mirza Ghulām Ahmad^{as}.¹”* At this point, her husband promptly showed her Mirza Ghulām Ahmad^{as}'s letter and said that she should now make a decision quickly. She replied, *“Very well, you may write to him.”* Hence, Mir Nāsir Nawab immediately took out his pen and did so.”⁴

Thus was arranged this blessed union, which God had ordained Himself. The wedding of Hazrat Sayyedah Nursrat Jahān Begum Sahibā^{ra} and Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} took place on November 17, 1884 in Delhi.⁵

A Long Lasting Union begins!

The Promised Messiah^{as} cared for Ammān Jān^{ra} immensely, and valued her opinion above everyone else's. It was not so just because she was his young wife, but his deep love for Ammān Jān^{ra} was based on the recognition that she was a Divine blessing from Allāh Almighty, and the mother of a Divine progeny.

Hazrat Ammān Jān^{ra} would often affectionately remind the Promised Messiah^{as} that *With my living in your house, the period of your blessings began!* — at which the Promised Messiah^{as} would respond smiling, *'Yes, you are right'*.⁶

Hazrat Ammān Jān^{ra} was also a very doting and caring wife. One such incident which shows her willingness to adapt to her new surroundings and to please is the below incident:

"An incident illustrating this kind conduct that is often related was when Hazrat Ammān Jān^{ra} made sweet rice for the Promised Messiah^{as}. The couple were newly married. Hazrat Ammān Jān^{ra} learnt that sweet rice was one of the favourite dishes of the Promised Messiah^{as}, so she endeavoured to make some. (It was to be a lifetime habit of Hazrat Ammān Jān^{ra} to strive to make the particular foods that her husband liked). She specially ordered some rice and cooked it. However, she accidentally added four times as much sugar as was required in the recipe. To her horror, she ended up with a thick, glutinous mixture hardly recognizable as rice! She was deeply upset as she took the rice out of the pan. It was already dinner time and there was no time for a second attempt. The Promised Messiah^{as} arrived. Hazrat Ammān Jān^{ra} relates how she felt like crying, (indeed ladies—haven't we all felt similar at some point during a culinary disaster?). The Promised Messiah^{as} must have read her thoughts. Instead of scolding her, he

pleasantly consoled her, "What, are you upset about the rice? No, these are very nice, they are the kind I like." Then he graciously ate them smilingly, and talked so cheerfully that Hazrat Ammān Jān^{ra} soon forgot the embarrassment of her cooking disaster."⁷

Similarly, another incident shows how much the Promised Messiah^{as} cared for his wife and her sentiments:

"Hazrat Umme Nāsir^{ra} (his daughter-in-law), relates that once Hazrat Ammān Jān^{ra} was indisposed. The Promised Messiah^{as} visited and gave her a medicine to drink. In her unwell state, Hazrat Ammān Jān^{ra} exclaimed words to the effect; *Oh, I will die!* The Promised Messiah^{as} responded tenderly; *"After you, what will I do alive?"*, as if suggesting that his existence in this present life without Hazrat Ammān Jān^{ra} seemed inconceivable. Hazrat Umme Nāsir^{ra} recalls that there were many such occasions when the Promised Messiah^{as} said similar gentle and heartwarming words to his wife, expressing his deep affection for her."⁸

A Hadīth of the Holy Prophet^{sa} states:

"The best among you is he who is best to his wife." (Tirmidhī)

The life of the Promised Messiah^{as} was a practical example of these words of his beloved Master^{as}. The Promised Messiah^{as}'s consideration for Hazrat Ammān Jān^{ra} was apparent from the beginning of their marriage. One such example of this is illustrated from this account:

"Hazrat Ammān Jān^{ra} has related that when she arrived as a new bride in Qādiān, she could not fall asleep without the light on. Conversely, the Promised Messiah^{as} was in the habit of sleeping in the dark. So, once Hazrat Ammān Jān^{ra} fell asleep, he would turn out the lamp. If Hazrat Ammān Jān^{ra} awoke, he would relight the lamp. However, eventually the Promised Messiah^{as} became accustomed to sleeping in the light. Eventually, lights were installed in all the rooms and above the stairs. The Promised Messiah^{as} even employed someone to be responsible for keeping the lights on. Hazrat

Ammān Jān^{ra} relates how she joked with the Promised Messiah^{as} (to whom she referred to as “Hazrat Sāhib” or “Mirza Sāhib”), *“Do you remember that time when you could not sleep in light, and now unless every corner of the house is filled with light you cannot sleep!”*⁹

These are beautiful reflections of two revered individuals in the history of Ahmadiyyat who have shown that the way of Islāmic living is simple and brings great comfort for those who choose to make them the standards of their living.

A simple and excellent example!

Now let’s look at a glimpse of Hazrat Ammān Jān^{ra}’s character, her virtue and piety. Hazrat Ammān Jān^{ra} was the wife of a prophet, and the mother of a blessed progeny. As such, she had a highest spiritual status, excellent morals and unwavering reliance on God.

Hazrat Ammān Jān^{ra} gave the utmost importance to the five daily prayers, and to nawafil (the voluntary prayers). She was most particular about the punctual observance of these prayers, in addition to which she rose regularly for Tahajjud (i.e., the midnight prayer), and she was also very regular in the Zuhar prayer.¹⁰ She was so punctual in her prayers that once her baby son (Bashir Ist) was critically ill. Once she realized that the death of her beloved son was imminent and Divinely Decreed, she left her son in his critical condition to offer her daily prayers! How many of us can leave an ill, let alone, a dying child to offer their prayers. Indeed, the love Ammān Jān^{ra} had for her Creator was unmatched.¹¹

Hazrat Ammān Jān^{ra} also was a great supporter of her beloved husband, the Promised Messiah^{as} in all his endeavours. Many a times, she sacrificed her jewellery and her own property to provide means for the propagation of Islām.

Ms. Gauri describes in her book:

“Hazrat Ammān Jān^{ra} was always at the forefront of making financial sacrifices for the Jamā‘at. A

most remarkable example of this was when on May 28, 1900, the Promised Messiah^{as} made an appeal to raise funds for the building of Minaratul Masih in Qadian. He estimated that 10,000 rupees would be required and so appealed for 100 people to ideally contribute 100 rupees each to fulfil this target. Hazrat Ammān Jān^{ra} immediately responded by selling the property of her inheritance in Delhi. She gave 1000 rupees for this noble cause, excelling others in fulfilling this appeal- a great proof of her faith in the Promised Messiah^{as}.¹²

“The Promised Messiah’s own knowledge of Hazrat Ammān Jān’s great capacity for material sacrifice is illustrated on one occasion at the time of an early Jalsa. These initial gatherings were personally funded by the Promised Messiah^{as}. One day Hazrat Mir Nasir Nawab informed the Promised Messiah^{as} that there was no food for the guests that evening. He immediately told Hazrat Mir Nasir Nawwab^{ra} to go to Hazrat Ammān Jān^{ra} (his own daughter), and ask her to spare some jewellery and sell it. Hazrat Ammān Jān^{ra} instantly gave some jewellery to her father. Hazrat Mir Nasir Nawwab^{ra} sold it and subsequently the money was used for the catering of Jalsa guests.”¹³

Hazrat Ammān Jān’s^{ra} marriage with the Promised Messiah^{as} was indeed Divinely Decreed. This union produced blessed progeny as per the prophecy of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, which carried on the mission of the Promised Messiah^{as} and is still continuing to do so in the personage of our beloved Imam Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{aa}.

Indeed, everything about this blessed couple cannot be summarized in this short essay. I end this essay with this glad tiding which was given to the Promised Messiah^{as} regarding his marriage to Hazrat Sayyedah Nusrat Jahān Begum^{ra}, which was fulfilled in its entirety:

Your house will be filled with blessings and I shall fulfil My favours upon you, and from the blessed ladies some of whom you will be blessed with later...your offspring will be abundant and I will increase your

offspring profusely, and will bless them...but some of them will die at a young age, and your offspring will spread copiously in many countries, and every branch of your ancestral brothers will be cut off (i.e. those who do not accept the Promised Messiah^{as}), and they will soon become childless and be terminated... Allāh Almighty will spread your blessings around and will revive a barren house through you, and a bleak house will be filled by blessings. Your progeny will not be cut off and will flourish; until the last day.

Allāh will sustain your name with honour until the world reaches its end, and will spread your message to the corners of the world.”¹⁴

References

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10. Ahmad, Mirza Bashir, translated by Niaz, A.Q., *Seerat-i-Tayyaba*, pg. 52, <https://www.alislam.org/library/books/Seerat-i-Tayyaba.pdf>
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12. Ibid, pg. 68
13. Ibid, pg. 68
14. Ibid, pg. 14-15, Majmu,ah Ishtiharat, vol. 1, p. 102

Prayers of Hazrat Amma Jan^{ra} as Expressed by the Promised Messiah^{as}

The Promised Messiah^{as} wrote a **poem** on behalf of Hazrat Amman Jam^{ra}, in praise and gratitude to Allāh Almighty. A portion of this poem is presented below. Addressing God, the Promised Messiah^{as} says:

“No one is lost
Who really seeks Thee,
Nor is he ever disgraced.
Whosoever surrenders himself
In the fullest obedience
To Thy commands.
Angels from heaven
Come to his help
In this world itself
He is as if he were
In paradise –
He who becomes Thy guest
In full and absolute
Reliance on Thee.
O my Lord God,
Make all my children such:
Vouchsafe to them a clear
Vision of Thy sweet face.
Give them long lives,
With security and health;
And above all, bless them
With comprehension
And understanding in regard
To Thine Own Self!”

Source:

Ahmad, Mirza Bashir, translated by Niaz, A.Q., *Seerat-i-Tayyaba*, pg. 52-53, <https://www.alislam.org/library/books/Seerat-i-Tayyaba.pdf>

“I affirm that I shall always be ready to sacrifice my life, property, time and children for the cause of my faith and the community.”

Pledge of member of Lajna Imāillāh—read about it on page 27 of this issue!

“They Are A Garment For You...”

By: Maria Iqbal Brampton Flowertown

لِبَاسٍ لَّكُمْ وَانتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَّهُمْ

“They are a garment for you and you are a garment for them” (2:188).

According to the Short Commentary of the Holy Qur’ān, these words discuss “the object and significance of marriage.”

Now we know in Christianity, a spouse is a support for their mate, who vows to be there “for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do [them] part.”

So what does the Holy Qur’ān *mean* when it compares a spouse to a *libaas* or “garment”? Allāh Almighty states:

قَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا يُؤَارِي سَؤَاتِكُمْ وَرِيشًا

“We have indeed sent down to you raiment to cover your shame, and to be an elegant dress” (7:27).

Here, the word *libaas* is given two purposes. Firstly, garments cover our nakedness. Likewise, spouses should cover each other, and hide each other’s weaknesses. This way, both protect one another’s reputations and win the pleasure of Allāh. The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa} has stated:

“A Muslim who covers the faults of another person in this world, Allāh will cover his faults in the hereafter” (Bukhārī).

The second purpose of garments is that they serve as an “elegant dress.” Just as our clothing brings out our outer beauty, both members of a married couple should bring out the best in each other.

This is supported by the prayer in chapter 25, verse 75 of the Holy Qur’ān:

رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا ذُرِّيَّتًا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا

“Our Lord, grant us of **our** spouses and children the **delight** of **our** eyes, and make us a model for the righteous.” (25:75)

My dear sisters, what other function do garments serve? In verse 82 of Surah An-Nahl, Allāh Almighty states:

وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ سَرَائِجَ الْخَزْوَ سَرَابِجَ تَقِيكُمْ بَأْسَكُمْ

“and He has made for you garments which protect you from heat, and coats of mail which protect you in your wars.” (16:82)

Clothing can serve as a physical protection from heat and the dangers of battle. In the same way, marriage is the armour which protects us from spiritual harm. The Holy Prophet^{sa} has instructed that those youth who can afford to marry should do so, because marriage, I quote, “*keeps the eyes cast down and keeps the man chaste*”.

In addition, when clothing protects us against harsh temperatures, they become a source of comfort. So another purpose of marriage is that we may find comfort in the companion that Allāh provides us. The Holy Qur’ān states:

خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً

“He has created mates for you from among yourselves that you may find peace of mind in them, and He has put love and tenderness between you” (30:22).

(Continued on page 17)

Above All Else, Choose Taqwa

By: Sidra Abid Alexander, Ahmadiyya Abode of Peace

"Verily you have in the Prophet of Allāh an excellent model." (33:22)

Growing up in an Ahmadi household listening to references like the above, children learn who to emulate as their exemplar. Even as a little girl, all I wanted to be was strong in faith like the first Muslims: Hazrat Khadija^{ra} and Hazrat Abu Bakr^{ra}.

In a Hadith, the Holy Prophet^{sa} explains that a man usually marries a woman for one of four reasons: beauty, wealth, ancestry, or Taqwa (righteousness). The Holy Prophet^{sa} advises us to choose Taqwa above all else. I wanted my marriage to be founded on a mutual love of Allāh and unwavering dedication to the Jamā'at. I wanted to choose Taqwa when marrying a man. So, Istikhara and prayers became my support during the very difficult time of Rishta Nāta meetings. It felt like a train going by with one family after another, and the more the prayers were relied upon, the more it seemed that the train was only going by faster. That is, until one day my Allāh sent an Adam to our mosque.

No one knew him, no one invited him. He just wanted to use the mosque for his prayers. Of his own accord, Adam decided to become an Ahmadi and wanted to get married. He wanted his marriage to be founded on a mutual love of Allāh and unwavering dedication to the Jamā'at. So far, I had only heard about this new convert who would stay late at the mosque for Nawafil after Taraweeh.

When my father discussed Adam as a prospect with me, the feeling of peace and contentment was overwhelming. At the time, I was a professional, working towards a second degree. Some elders tried to highlight the significant differences in our levels of education, income, future prospects, etc., upon

which all I could say was, "It's okay, it's okay, it's okay." I had made my decision!

In that moment, I wanted to be like Hazrat Abu Bakr^{ra} when he returned to Makkah and the people told him that Muhammad^{sa} had claimed to be a prophet of God. At that time, instead of listening to reasoning from the Prophet Muhammad^{sa}, Hazrat Abu Bakr^{ra} wanted his feelings of peace and contentment to be his guide.

In a 2016 Q/A session, one Wāqifa asked Huzoor^{aa} if marital matches are pre-determined by Allāh. Huzoor^{aa} responded, **"Allāh knows ultimately who will end up with whom ... but when there is shortfall in prayers and mistakes are made by humans, problems can arise."**¹ Such became the case in our "match made in heaven".

We had found our common interests in religious dialogue and interfaith networking, so our weekly entertainment would include attending church services, AMSA exhibitions, and interfaith dialogues wherever possible. Of course, we also had the usual spread of regular dinner, coffee, movie, and/or Dairy Queen dates, too. But the vast differences in our upbringing, lack of self-awareness and emotional intelligence, societal pressures for "achievement," and becoming the "perfect couple" added much stress to our marriage. I was a proud, independent, self-sufficient feminist. I had internalized the societal expectation that strong women were the epitome of perfection, deserving of only "perfect" men, while never yielding to any man's will.

Meanwhile, my husband had the pressures of being the strong, un-emotional, "successful" provider for the family—no weaknesses allowed! It felt like no

one understood our challenges and we couldn't talk to anyone about our problems. There was so much stigma attached to having any marital problems and it felt taboo to discuss. Our relationship fell into a whirlwind of constant shame and blame, resentment and depression, leaving no room for empathy, forbearance, trust, or patience.

Even after achieving higher education, health, prosperity, and children, the discontent in our relationship only increased until any efforts to reconcile seemed futile. At our beginning, we had chosen Taqwa above all else, but now we had given up on Taqwa above all else.

It was only the sheer grace of my Allāh, whose *Raheemiyat* I did not deserve, that He decided to save our marriage from doom and destruction. My Allāh allowed events to take place that shook me to my core, forcing me to question my pride, "status", and "successes". It felt like Judgement Day—*Yaum-id-Deen*, and I was to take account for my actions in front of my Malik. Hell was no longer a physical place; it was the anguish I felt in disappointing my Creator.

Our Qur'ān tells us that Heaven is permanent while Hell is only temporary. Hell is not a punishment; it is only a place for recovery. It is a place where we get to burn off all spiritual sickness so we can enter our heavens and be worthy of the company of our *Rabbul Aalameen*.

So the next few months became my spiritual recovery. My *Rahmaan* started waking me up in the middle of the nights, reminding me of our purpose and our commitment in our marriage. My *Wahhaab* would bestow ideas about emotional and social intelligence and how to develop skills for strong relationships. One sleepless night after another, my *Hadi* would guide me back to my marriage by reminding me of His traits of *Al-Ghaffaar*—that forgiveness was possible. Second chances were possible.

Happy marriages build the groundwork for a healthy society. The extraordinary work of building a happy home, a stable marriage can neither be taken lightly, nor as secondary. The current state of our world is reflective of this fact. Good will, open

communication, kindness, patience, and forbearance are the skills upon which strong marriages are built. But the hard work of implementing these skills in your daily life are only possible when we **"seek help with patience and Prayer"** (2:46) and when we, above all, choose Taqwa.

Reference:

1. Waqfat Nau Class, Sweden held on May 13 2016, Published in Alfazl International, July 8, 2016

(Continued from page 15)

This is where we find the Christian concept of marriage I mentioned earlier. The Christian wedding vows emphasize the comfort one spouse offers the other in times of trial. However, in Islām, comfort is just a single thread in the *garment* of marriage.

It's amazing such a simple phrase, "They are a garment for you and you are a garment for them" contains such deep teachings. It is a claim which, when opened, reveals the bright pearl of Islāmic marriage.

But of course, garments come in all styles, fabrics, and sizes. Each garment is unique, as is the person who wears it. So I wonder, which garment is best in providing the benefits mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān?

The key lies in chapter 7, verse 27:

وَلِبَاسُ التَّقْوَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ

"but the raiment of righteousness — that is the best." (7: 27)

We cannot expect to receive all the benefits of a garment unless we are willing to *become* such garments.

May Allāh enable each of us to become righteous garments and to receive such garments ourselves. After all, that's the garment, in the sight of Allāh, we look best in, and the one which never goes out of style.

Pre and Post Perspective of Marriage in Islām

By: Lubna Yousaf, Peace Village Center East

By the grace of Allāh, I have been married for 11 years now. Today I have been given the opportunity to share some of my pre and post marriage experiences with you. While I share my story, I will share some questions and answers from [*Ask a Murrabi*](#), an excellent book written by Maulana Rizwan Khan. A little on the background of my marriage — it was an arranged marriage with the consent of both marrying parties. My spouse and I knew each other before our marriage as we are also cousins. We both are of Pakistani descent, but I grew up here in Canada and he grew up in Pakistan.

Question: When looking for a spouse, how much can we interact in courtship while staying within the boundaries of purdah (veiling)?

Answer: “Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh IV^{ra} described the extent of communication there can be between a couple before marriage. He stated that according to Islām, if the suitor is invited to dinner with the family of the girl he is interested in, there is no harm in him sharing the table with the girl in the presence of her parents.”

Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh IV^{ra} referring to the Holy Qur’ān, Surah An-Nur, verse 62, stated:

“Why is eating together mentioned? In fact, Siddiq is a friend of the family who is true, honest, and trustworthy. This word does not refer to just anybody who visits. It is not permitted to invite visitors and to start eating with them in the presence of our family. This is not what the Holy Qur’ān says. Siddiq means a regular friend of the family who has respect, who has honor, and who has trust. If such people can be invited to share the table if the parents decide, then why not the suitor who has in fact requested to be a member of the family? In such

cases, invite the one who wishes to marry your daughter and sit with him and your daughter respectfully, without showing her beauty, and let her judge for herself. That much is permitted.” (Liqā Ma’al Arab, August 17th, 1995).

“Some Muslim couples have begun using their engagement to justify dating, even though a mangni (engagement) is not a formal Islāmic relationship. A mangetar (fiancé) is still someone who we observe veiling from. It is not against veiling for the couple to sit together with her parents, whether before or after the engagement. However, the mangni is not a formal Islāmic relationship where veiling no longer applies.”

Let’s continue with my story. My Nikāh ceremony took place in Pakistan for which I traveled back home. During my time there, I couldn’t help but notice that my soon-to-be husband was very punctual in offering his 5 daily prayers and seemed to be very close to his creator. To be very honest, I was the opposite. I started yearning that close connection he had with Allāh Almighty and soon enough, I too became regular in my daily prayers. Alhumdolillah! My Rukhsati (see-off ceremony) took place in Canada one year later after the sponsorship process was complete.

Question: Should spiritual shortcomings be disclosed to the other party when considering a rishta?

Answer: “We are taught not to publicize our sins, as the Holy Prophet^{sa} stated:

‘All the sins of my followers will be forgiven except those of the Mujahirin (those who commit a sin openly or disclose their sins to the people).’

(Sahīh al-Bukhārī, Book 78, Hadīth 99; Sahīh Muslim Book 55, Hadīth 68)

“However, we are also taught not to conceal testimony even if it is against ourselves, as Allāh Almighty states:”

O ye who believe! be strict in observing justice, and be witnesses for Allāh, even though it be against yourselves or against parents and kindred. (4:136)

“If we reveal a sin when there is no need to reveal it, then we publicize sin and harm the morals of society. If however, we conceal a sin when there is a need to reveal it, then we deprive someone of their due right just to save ourselves. Someone who is considering us as a future spouse has the right to know those shortcomings of ours that are relevant in making a life decision that is best for both parties. If we decide to hide something important, the other will inevitably find out and may feel betrayed.

As to which shortcomings are relevant and significant enough, and when to reveal them, this has to be decided with Taqwa. Also, we must respect the privacy of the other party and not tell anyone else what they confided in us about any of their shortcomings.”

One more question I would like to share before I continue with my story.

Question: How much interaction is appropriate between a couple after their Nikāh and before Rukhsatī?

Answer: “After nikāh, the couple are officially considered husband and wife and the Islāmic commandment of veiling no longer applies between them. However, during the period between the Nikāh and Rukhsatī, it is better to still maintain some distance for the betterment of the relationship. This is despite the precaution that if the husband was to end the relationship, he would have to take responsibility for paying half the dowry to the woman (Holy Qur’ān, 2:238). Still Hazoor^{aa} has advised that:”

‘After the nikāh and before Rukhsatī, it is better that some distance remain (Fiqhī Masā’il, #61).’

“From this advice we can also understand the extent of communication there should be between a couple even before the nikah has taken place. Before the nikah, the man does not have to take any responsibility for choosing to end the relationship by paying part of the dowry, so greater precaution is needed.”

At the time of my marriage, I was an educated, independent, career-oriented individual. My husband, on the other hand, helped run his family’s business. Although he was educated, he had a tough time securing employment in Canada. For some time, I worked while my husband struggled between different jobs.

Question: Should men be stay-at home dads and homemakers?

Answer: “Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh IV^{rh} wrote:

“Those men are *qawam* (maintainers) who financially provide for their wives. Those useless men who live off the income of their wives are not at all *qawam*’ (Holy Qur’ān Urdu with simple Translation, p.134).

“One reason why Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh IV^{rh} called such men useless is that they fail to fulfill their primary responsibility to their family. If a man supports his wife, he is not doing her any favors. In reality, his wife has a right over his income. On the other hand, if a wife supports her husband, she is doing him a favor because as per Islāmic teachings her husband has no right over her income. Hazoor^{aa} said:”

‘Every married man is the guardian of his family, and looking after their needs is his responsibility. Man has been made the *qawam*, and to provide for the expenses of the home and the education of the children are his responsibility. However, unfortunately, in the Jamā‘at there are some men who, rather than providing the expenses of the home, instead ask their wives to pay their expenses. However, they have no right on the income of

their wives. If a wife pays some expenses, then that is her favor to her husband.’ (Khutbat-e-Masroor 2004, p.184, March 5, 2004).

If a man is stay-at-home dad, he is not fulfilling his Islāmic role of being qawam of his household. Hazoor^{aa} further says:

‘Those men who look to their wives’ wealth should remember that this responsibility is theirs, and they have no right on the woman’s money.

Men are themselves responsible for fulfilling the financial needs of their wives and children. Therefore, whatever the circumstances, even if they have to do labor to meet the expenses of the home, it is their obligation that they meet the expenses of the home. If they pray along with this effort, Allāh places blessings and creates ease.’ (Khutbat-e-Masroor 2004, p.455, July 02, 2004).

‘One point that is important to remember is that the Holy Prophet^{sa} was always the head of his household, and all of his wives were stay-at-home mothers and homemakers. Hazrat Khadija^{ra} was only a career woman up until her marriage to the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Property was the means of business in Mecca, and merchants managed that wealth. After marriage, she gave all of her property to the Holy Prophet^{sa} and he was the provider for the family. Hazrat Musleh Mau’ud^{ra} wrote:

‘Marriage between the Prophet^{sa} and Khadija^{ra} was settled and solemnized. A poor man orphaned in

childhood had his first peep into prosperity. He became rich. But the use he made of his riches is an object-lesson to all mankind. After the marriage, Khadija^{ra} felt that she was rich and he was poor and that this inequality between them would not make for happiness. So, she proposed to take over her property and her slaves to the Prophet^{sa}. The Prophet^{sa}, making sure that Khadija^{ra} was in earnest, declared that as soon as he had any of Khadija^{ra}’s slaves, he would set them free. And he did so. Moreover, the greater part of the property which he received from Khadija^{ra} he distributed among the poor.’” (Life of Muhammad, p.8).

For about 5 years into my marriage my husband struggled to find a decent job that could support our growing family. During those five years, I worked alongside my husband to support our family. By the grace of Allāh, and by the prayers of our Khalifa, our struggles paid off and my husband landed an incredible job.

Each and every marriage has a story of its own, but our guidance come from one source and that is Allāh Almighty. How he delivers the guidance is up to him, but we need to remember that it is up to us to seek guidance and try to follow it to our very best. The purpose of this article was to share the perspective of marriage in Islām. This topic cannot be covered in a small article but with the help of our amazing literature, I tried to shed some light on a few of its aspects!

(Continued from page 9)

Hazrat Khadija^{ra} was a brave, loyal, honourable and righteous woman who the Holy Prophet^{sa} could never forget. Even after her demise, he spoke very highly of her saying, “she believed in me when no one else did: she accepted Islām when people rejected me. She offered me compassion and loyalty with her wealth when everyone else had abandoned me.”

May Allāh enable us all to follow Hazrat Khadija^{ra}’s footsteps and may He enable us to be generous, loyal, honest and devoted in spreading the message of Islām. Ameen.

Reference:

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How to Lead Your Children towards a Successful Marriage

By: Sadaf Shah, Bradford

In our post-modern world, whether we live in the west or the east, we are bombarded with images of love, love at first sight, and especially for young girls, expectations of a 'prince charming' who will supposedly sweep them off their feet and into a life full of everlasting love and 'happily ever after'.

This is the biggest myth we, as parents, need to free our children from. Such fantasy ideas of love are all around us, from social media to movies and songs and our cultures in general. If we want our children to have successful marriages, we need to start teaching them from a young age regarding what to expect for their marriages. This article will present a few ideas/practices that parents can engage in to help their children learn when choosing a life partner. These are not novel suggestions. They have been taught to us by the Holy Prophet^{sa}, his obedient servant the Promised Messiah^{as}, and repeated many times by the Khulafā' of Ahmadiyyat.

First and foremost, parents themselves need to re-evaluate themselves. Are we presenting a good role model for our children? Do we adopt righteous actions over frivolous ones? How do we behave at home with our spouses? Are we loving and respectful towards our spouse and our children? Do we respect our in-laws and show them the same love that we show to our own families? How did we choose our own spouses? Many of these questions will determine what our children are unconsciously learning from our behaviour.

Parents, please look within. Introspection will reveal many contradictions that need to be overcome before we can even start advising our children. Thus, first and foremost, parents should start by cleansing themselves of any/all contradictions in their character. This practice should start even be-

fore conceiving a child, but at the very latest, right after conception.

After overcoming our own weaknesses, we can start by praying. The Holy Qur'ān has taught us the following prayer:

“And those who say, ‘Our Lord, grant us of our wives and children the delight of our eyes, and make us a model for the righteous.’” (25:75)

Secondly, when children reach the age of around 10-12 years old, they should be advised to pray two *nafl* for their future married life. At this age, many of us do not have the sense to pray for what is truly meaningful, but the point is to start at least. We can also help our children by talking to them openly about qualities in a good partner and encourage our children to pray for themselves. I remember when I started praying my two *nafl* at the age of 12 years, I started by praying that I wanted my husband to be very handsome, with broad shoulders, and a good sense of humour. This was my personal conversation with God. As I matured, I started changing the qualities I was looking for. I started praying for character traits, rather than physical traits. As I got even older, I remember specifically that I prayed for my husband to be more righteous than me. I knew my weaknesses. I knew if I had a husband who was not spiritually fit that I would myself have suffered in my faith. Instead, I prayed for a husband who would help inspire me towards righteousness. As parents, let your children have the freedom to pray for whatever they want. Rest assured that Almighty Allāh Himself will guide them, insha'Allāh. Our job is to keep the lines of communication open, and help steer our children towards long lasting character qualities that they

should adopt and ones that they should look for in a potential partner.

One of the best things to pray for is simply, “*whatever Allāh deems best for us.*” Often times what we pray for may be limited in terms of the blessings associated with it. If we leave our trust in Allāh, as He knows us best, then we open ourselves up to an infinite number of blessings that we could never even have imagined!

‘...And in Allāh then should the believers put their trust.’ (9:51)

In this regard, I would like parents to also be mindful of their duties when they search for a *rishta* for their child. I will often have mothers call me to tell me about their daughters or sons and ask for me to keep an eye out for a suitable match. When I refer them to someone, they will find faults such as, “she is not pretty enough” or “the boy does not have a decent job”. Rarely do I come across parents who say they want someone who has a beautiful character. This is one of the reasons why so many girls and boys in our Jamā‘at are facing challenges in terms of their marriage. Beauty, financial position or a good job are all superficial things that are not a guarantee of anything. Beauty fades, finances can go up or down within an instant, and a man with a great job can become unemployed as we have seen with the recent pandemic worldwide.

We have all heard the famous Hadīth of the Holy Prophet^{sa} about how to choose a suitable wife:

“A woman is married for four things, i.e., her wealth, her family status, her beauty and her religion. So you should marry the religious woman (otherwise) you will be losers.” (Sahīh Bukhārī)

In terms of choosing a suitable husband, the Holy Prophet^{sa} has advised:

“When someone with whose religion and character you are satisfied asks to marry your daughter, comply with his request. If you do not do so, there will be corruption and great evil on earth. He was asked: “O Messenger of Allāh, even if he falls short with regard to wealth and compatibility?” The Ho-

ly Prophet^{sa} responded, repeating himself three times: “If there comes to you one with whose religion and character you are pleased, then give (your daughter) to him in marriage.” (Tirmidhī)

We are reminded in this Hadīth to give precedence to faith and good character in our search for a suitable match for our daughters. The consequences of ignoring such characteristics will lead us to a heavy loss and we may be regretful of our decision. The first Khalifa of the Promised Messiah^{as}, Hazrat Hakeem Nooruddin^{ra} emphatically supplemented the guidance of the Holy Prophet^{sa} at one point when he advised a very wealthy man to give his daughter’s hand in marriage to a young poor man. The wealthy man refused citing the difference in financial status and asked how his daughter would survive. Huzoor^{‘aas} response was:

“If fate has provisions ordained for your daughter, then an empty house will fill up on her arrival, but if fate has not ordained provisions for her, then a full house will become empty should she go and live there.”¹

Remember, provisions, health and status are all under the control of Allāh. True piety and true faith of a believer are traits that will help nurture true love in marriage. Love is a skill that needs to be learned and developed. If it is based on looks or provisions, it is bound to fade.

These are just some of the things we need to do as parents in order for our children to have a successful marriage: align our own character with righteousness which means to clear our character of contradictions, pray for our children and ask our children to pray as well, and finally, to seriously consider rishtas based on good character traits. May Allāh enable us to make the right decisions at the right time and follow in the foot steps of his most beloved Prophet Muhammad^{sa}, may countless blessings of God be upon him forever. Ameen!

Reference:

1. *Finding Our Spouse – Completing Our Faith*, Speech delivered by Ousman Mbowe – Jalsa Salana USA West Coast 2019 – December 20, 2019

Rights and Responsibilities of a Spouse

By: Nuzhat Dogar, Hamilton South, Canada

The rights and responsibilities of a spouse in Islām are numerous, and are designed by Allāh to ensure love and mercy stays within a marriage. One Islāmic term I find very beautiful, specifically in regards to this is:

“They are a garment for you!”

Allāh refers to the relationship between a husband and wife using the metaphor of clothes and garments. He says in Surah Al-Baqarah:

“They are a garment for you and you are a garment for them” (2:188).

The metaphor of the garment is a very powerful one. It should create in the mind of every girl and boy a crystal-clear picture of what is the key element for a happy and healthy relationship. Describing men and women as each other's garments emphasizes the importance of mutual support, mutual comfort, and mutual protection in a relationship just like a garment both shows and conceals.

Clothes have many qualities and functions. They are close to your skin and protect you from the elements of outside environment. Similarly, a husband is the maintainer of his wife and the wife protects her husband's home and property.

Clothes beautify you. A husband and wife complement each other, and bring out the best in each other.

Clothes give comfort. When one is around their spouse, they should feel at ease and their hearts at rest. One should find comfort in their spouse and their words when they are in difficulty.

Clothes hide and screen you. A husband and wife

should not discuss each other's faults with anybody outside of their house, or complain to others about their spouse. A marriage is indeed in a sorry state if a spouse is the centre of ridicule in the presence of the others, and the other spouse does nothing about it.

Even worse is when a spouse starts devaluing their partner, and disclosing their shortcomings and imperfections in public. It is in line with Prophetic practice that the spouse should conceal each other's imperfections. Like the way our clothes conceal our physical imperfections, similarly we should conceal the imperfections of our spouses.

Our beloved Huzoor^{aa} mentioned in one of his Friday Sermons:

“Similarly, when a man and a woman commit themselves to the pact of marriage then their utmost efforts should be to make a success of it. This would entail covering of mutual shortcomings. Ah-madī married couples should complement each other and be exemplary” (Excerpt from Friday Sermon, April 3, 2009).

Conflict Resolution

Obviously, being human there are bound to be disagreements in a marriage. There is a saying that ‘marriage is a bed of roses’ so it is likely that there will be many thorns. However, it is a test of characters as to how one rises up from these problems. Once in a while our clothes get dirty, and as a result we wash our clothes in order to clean them. We may also add fabric conditioners for extra softness.

(Continued on page 29)

Simple Recipe for a Successful Marriage

By: Naheed Khokhar, Brampton Heartlake

When my Nanijaan (maternal grandmother) [may Allāh raise her station in heaven] approached my

with a rishta, I was confused and happy at the same time. Being the eldest granddaughter, I felt blessed that my Nanijaan was helping me with the marriage process; a process that seemed very daunting to myself and my mother. And confused that she would be thinking of me sitting so many miles away in England; yet happy that she was blessing the next journey of my life.

When I met my future spouse for the first time, it was not fireworks or a feeling of butterflies as we read about in novels. Something better happened. I was overwhelmed with a feeling of calm and contentment that made me say YES to the proposal. I said to myself: 'With the blessing of my elders, sincere efforts on my part, and holding strong to the rope of Allāh, I can make this work! Insha'Allāh. I was to learn later that my spouse was also blessed with elders who wanted the best for him. [may Allāh raise the station of our elders in heaven. Ameen.]

My dear daughters, I wanted to share that sincere faith and full commitment to oneself and Allāh are key features in making a marriage work. It is a simple recipe for which we try and complicate the processes a great deal.

What are the ingredients we use when we make decisions in our lives: we base them on 1. what we know, 2. who we trust and, 3. and also what we do not know.

1. We seem to think we know ourselves better than anyone.

2. We trust Allāh first and foremost; and we trust our elders as they are always looking out for our best interests.

3. And the third point is what we do not know; which is the **change** that is a **constant** in any relationship. We need to accept that change is inevitable in our new relationship – and that all obstacles that come our way will be manageable and all struggles can be resolved. Insha'Allāh.

When two parties agree to proceed with a marriage relationship – we agree to spend the rest of our lives together – we agree to face all ups and downs together. We enter the marriage union with an open mind and heart and commit to ourselves to make the best of the new found union.

In the Holy Qu'ran we are told in Chapter 4 verse 20:

O ye who believe! it is not lawful for you to inherit women against their will; nor should you detain them wrongfully that you may take away part of that which you have given them, except that they be guilty of a flagrant evil; **and consort with them in kindness; and if you dislike a thing wherein Allāh has placed much good. (4:20)**

The last part of this verse has helped me learn that my vision is one dimensional as it is only influenced by my opinion. Allāh the Almighty has a 360 degree view of the world. I have learned that I need to give every thought a second understanding; and every reaction a second chance. No one said the path is paved with only roses. The thorns are present to remind us that we are not alone and

Allāh will catch our fall.

The journey of marriage should be approached with an open mind and heart. Honestly speaking, the journey is not always easy. But the bumps in the road are what make you and your spouse stronger.

A true understanding of the verses recited during the Nikāh ceremony help to set the stage for a blissful marriage:

O ye people! fear your Lord, Who created you from a single soul and created therefrom its mate, and from them twain spread many men and women; and fear Allāh, in Whose name you appeal to one another, and fear Him particularly respecting ties of relationship. Verily, Allāh watches over you. (4:2)

O ye who believe! fear Allāh, and say the right word. (33:71)

He will bless your works for you and forgive you your sins. And whoso obeys Allāh and His Messenger, shall surely attain a mighty success. (33:72)

O ye who believe! fear Allāh; and let every soul look to what it sends forth for the morrow. And fear Allāh; verily Allāh is Well-Aware of what you do. (59:19)

These verses teach us that one should:

- ◆ Fear Allāh out of sheer love for Him; respect the person He has given you, as a gift, to care for while living in this world
- ◆ Speak the truth at all times; your actions will be judged by Allāh and only He can forgive your sins.
- ◆ Your present actions will determine your future rewards; the upbringing of your family is paramount in setting the stage for your exit into the eternal life with Allāh.

My humble suggestion to my daughters who are about to venture on the next journey of their lives is to:

Pray for yourself, pray for both families and ask Allāh to guide your decision by bringing you closer to Him and strengthen your bond with Khilafat.

May your journey be filled with many life lessons that strengthen your bond with one another. Ameen.

I pray that may Allāh bless all my sisters and daughters with a spouse who is a source of comfort and peace; someone who will help bring them closer to Khilafat and attain the bounties of Allāh's love. Ameen.

(Continued from page 31)

day to day life like earning for sustenance, children's upbringing, management of house and responsibilities towards parents, relatives and society in general. Pious spouses join in the offering of Salāt, observing fast, giving zakat and charity, and eventually through following the commandments of Allāh help to bring each other closer to God and away from worldly pursuits, passions and desires. It is through such pious marriages that one can achieve righteousness as well as rewards in the hereafter:

“But for him who fears to stand before his Lord

there are two Gardens —” (55:47).

Therefore, it is through true understanding of the purpose of our creation that we can sincerely understand the role of marriage in completing our faith. May Allāh enable us to understand the true purpose of our creation and bestow us with pious spouses and progeny to achieve nearness and love of Allāh. Ameen.

Reference

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What to Look for in a Partner

By: Sadia Ahmed, Malton

When it comes to finding a life partner, social media and modern society influences the thinking, expectations and requirements of many people. Being impressed by the financial status of others, people fail to realize that wealth does not guarantee a happy married life. Another common requirement is the physical appearance of a person. We often forget that beauty is temporary and will eventually fade away. Instead, it is a pious character that will last longer and keep the bond of marriage strong. It's also important to choose a partner from the same religion because we are also choosing a parent for our future children who shouldn't have to battle the confusion of belief differences among the parents.

When choosing a life partner, we must prioritize a pious character over financial status. We know that financial circumstances will never remain constant. Being wealthy also does not guarantee a happy, prosperous married life neither does it help us attain the real purpose of having a life partner. The following Hadith supports the preference of character over wealth.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa} said:

“When someone with whose religion and character you are satisfied asks to marry your daughter, comply with his request. If you do not do so, there will be corruption and great evil on earth. He was asked, ‘O Messenger of Allāh, even if he falls short with regard to wealth and compatibility?’ The Holy Prophet^{sa} responded, repeating himself three times: ‘If there comes to you one with whose religion and character you are pleased, then give (your daughter) to him in marriage.’” (Tirmidhī 1084).

We need to seek the underlying wisdom and understand the beautiful teachings of Islām. Similarly, we should keep in mind that the higher educa-

tional level does not take precedence over the goodness of a character.

Social media is also playing a role in portraying unrealistic beauty standards for women and men. The reality is far from it. The idea marketed by social media is that physical beauty matters more than anything. This thinking is why it has become common to seek out a beautiful life partner. However, we must understand that a spouse is supposed to help us cover our weaknesses, flaws, guard our dignity, and look beyond our imperfections. There is no doubt that all of us want to be accepted for who we are. The Holy Qur’ān calls spouses each others’ garments (2:188) — this verse elucidates that the purpose of a partner is to shield us from all types of harm. We must look beyond the physical appearances and understand the real reason for having a life partner.

Lastly, when choosing a partner we are also choosing a parent for our future children. We must choose somebody within our religion because both parents highly influence the lives of their children. We must teach them what we know and what we strongly believe. It is their due right to learn the good that the parents know. Therefore, they deserve to have parents who share the same beliefs and values.

On one occasion, a young boy approached the second Khalifa of Islām – Hazrat Umar^{ra} and asked him: “what right does a child have over his father?” Hazrat Umar^{ra} responded, **“to choose a good mother for the child, preferring the righteous woman, to give him a good name, and to teach him the Qur’ān.”**¹

No child deserves to go through the confusion of belief differences between their mother and the father.

We must not allow societal pressure to come in

the way of choosing our life partner. We must first understand the true purpose of marriage, in light of Islāmic teachings. We must not get carried away by the norms of society, understand that financial status changes over time and that no one is perfect. We must look beyond physical appearances. There is nothing more peaceful than sharing the same religion as your partner. So, your children can learn from both the mother and the father. It

also keeps unity within the family and helps us attain peace, love, and brings us closer to our creator – thus fulfilling the ultimate purpose of life.

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1. *Finding Our Spouse – Completing Our Faith*, Speech delivered by Ousman Mbowe – Jalsa Salana USA West Coast 2019 – December 20, 2019

Every Lajna's Pledged Sacrifices

By: Basima Iftikhar Shaikh, Woodbridge North

“I affirm that I shall always be ready to sacrifice my life, property, time and children for the cause of my faith and the community.”

We as members of Lajna Ima'illah take this pledge at every occasion, but have we pondered upon the sacrifices we have promised to make? As reminded by our beloved Khalifatul-Masīh V^{aa}, all of these can only be accomplished if we **give precedence to faith over all worldly matters**.

Sacrificing life and time: We should always make time to regularly offer prayers on time and recite the Holy Qur'ān daily. We should seek further religious knowledge by listening to Huzoor^{aa}'s Friday sermons, attending our Majlis's general body and Talim & Tarbiyyat meetings. Furthermore, we should be active in volunteering and serving the Jamā'at in any capacity we can. Looking at the exemplary life of Hazrat Nusrat Jahān Begum^{ra}, the blessed wife of the Promised Messiah^{as} we see how beautifully she carried out all her duties in life. Not only did she spend time with her family and manage her household, but she also regularly offered prayers, recited the Holy Qur'ān and spent time with Lajna to assist with their moral and spiritual training (Ghauri, 2011).

Sacrificing our children: If we can inculcate these practices in our daily lives, we can then easily ensure the moral training of children as actions

speak louder than words. Children observe their environment very closely; they monitor their parents' routine and behaviour and emulate them. Hazrat Musleh Maud^{ra} once said, “If a woman decides that she is going to make the future generation righteous rather than barbaric, then how can Satan capture them?” (Ghauri, 2011). If women can make their children righteous servants of Allāh, there is no power in the world that can lead them astray. Children should be active in their Nasirat or Atfal classes and parents should inculcate the desire to serve the Jamā'at in their children.

Sacrificing property: We should also partake in the blessed schemes of our Jamā'at such as Al-Wasiyyat. Allāh the Almighty says in the Holy Qur'ān, **“Never shall you attain to righteousness unless you spend out of that which you love; and whatever you spend, Allāh surely knows it well”** (3:93). We should not hesitate to sacrifice our properties in the name of Allāh, our Creator, as our material wealth will be left behind in this world. Thus, one should aim to seek the pleasure of Allāh during one's lifetime by donating to His causes. May Allāh enable us all to make the sacrifices that we have pledged, and may He accept all our efforts. Ameen.

Reference

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Women Mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān

By: Maria Iqbal, Brampton Flowertown

We're living in a time of great sensitivity towards women's rights. We're seeing calls to end harassment through the #MeToo movement and demands for equal recognition and equal pay. At the same time, religion is thrown aside, seen as promoting backwards and anti-feminist attitudes from bygone times. Yet significantly, Islām, was one religion which, even 1400 years ago, recognized the important role women play in society and gave them due guidance and recognition in the Holy Qur'ān.

The Holy Qur'ān names specific women from the history of humanity—who lived even before the advent of Islām, as an example for all believers, men and women.

Allāh sets forth for those who disbelieve the example of the wife of Noah and the wife of Lot. They were under two righteous servants of Ours, but they acted unfaithfully towards them. So they availed them naught against Allāh, and it was said to them, 'Enter the Fire, ye twain, along with those who enter.' (66:11)

And Allāh sets forth for those who believe the example of the wife of Pharaoh when she said, 'My Lord! build for me a house with Thee in the Garden; and deliver me from Pharaoh and his work, and deliver me from the wrongdoing people;' (66: 12)

And the example of Mary, the daughter of 'Imran, who guarded her private parts — so We breathed into him of Our Spirit — and she fulfilled in her person the words of her Lord and His Books and was one of the obedient. (66:13)

I will focus on the example of Hazrat Maryam (may Allh be pleased with her), or Mary.

Mary represents those people who attain true sub-

mission to Allāh. Her example can be followed by both men and women. She was a chaste woman, a recipient of Divine revelation, and the honourable mother of a Prophet of Allāh. The Holy Qur'ān mentions her high status, **And remember when the angels said, 'O Mary, Allāh has chosen thee and purified thee and chosen thee above the women of all peoples. (3:43)** Indeed, an entire chapter of the Holy Qur'ān is named after her.

But there's a reason why the Holy Qur'ān would preserve the name of these women for all times to come. The Promised Messiah^{as} writes that the verse quoted from Surah At-Tahreem means that there would be people among the Muslims who would resemble Mary. And the soul of Jesus would be breathed into this person. He writes, this means that "someone from among this Ummah would first be conferred the station of Mary and then the soul of Jesus^{as} would be breathed into him... That is to say, the attributes of the person who resembles Mary would be transformed into those of Jesus^{as}... In this way such a person would be referred to as 'the Son of Mary'." (Noah's Ark, pp. 78 -79)

This person turned out to be the Promised Messiah^{as} himself who was given the title Mary by Allāh, and later the title of Jesus^{as}. This shows us what truly high status Islām has given to Hazrat Maryam, that her name is used to refer to the spiritual status of a Prophet of God.

In addition to telling us about women who have existed in the past, the Holy Qur'ān addresses us women living today and women to come in the future still. The Qur'ān refers to "men" and "women," laying out the rewards for women doing good works, exactly on par with men. For instance, in the Holy Qur'ān, Allāh says,

Surely, men who submit themselves to

God and women who submit themselves to Him, and believing men and believing women... Allāh has prepared for all of them forgiveness and a great reward. (33:36)

Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{aa} said in the concluding address at the 2018 Waqifat Nau Ijtema UK, **“If we look at other religions, some have claimed that women do not even have a soul, whilst others have taught that women are born sinners or that women are the root of evil. Many other derogatory and entirely unjust claims about women have been made by other religions during the course of time, yet Islāmic teachings are completely different and are crystal clear that women are not inferior to men in any way whatsoever. Thus, where the Holy Qur’ān mentions**

‘believing men,’ it also mentions ‘believing women.’ This is true equality.”

Therefore, we see in the Holy Qur’ān that women have responsibilities as Muslims just as men do, and if we fulfill them, we too will be recipients of God’s rewards. May Allāh Almighty help each of us reform ourselves, so that we may be among those people who are addressed in the Holy Qur’ān:

And the believers, men and women, are friends one of another. They enjoin good and forbid evil and observe Prayer and pay the Zakat and obey Allāh and His Messenger. It is these on whom Allāh will have mercy. Surely, Allāh is Mighty, Wise. (9:71)

Ameen!

(Continued from page 23)

Conflict resolution is an art which needs to be mastered. One needs to have an understanding for the other’s point of view, listen to them attentively and try to understand their grievance.

A righteous and pious spouse, who is God fearing, should protect their partner behind their back from humiliation and ridicule from everyone including their own respective families. We sometimes end up emphasizing more on a wife’s duty in a relationship but here Allāh puts the same expectation on the husbands’ in a relationship. It is wrong for a spouse to reveal to others, the flaws and faults Allāh has kept hidden, or their secrets and personal matters to anyone else, even parents or best friends. The Qur’ān demands this in a marriage by calling them garments (*libaas*) for one another.

Last but not least, a married couple should turn to each other for moral and emotional support during a crisis. Just as a favourite garment be-

comes softer and more comfortable over time, the spouse becomes a solid supporting rock to which one clings during life’s intermittent upheavals and storms.

Both husbands and wives can cover up the faults and shortcomings of each other if they suppress their ego and anger and have fear of Allāh in their hearts. This is the reason Allāh Almighty has drawn attention in the Holy Qur’ān towards the term ‘raiment of righteousness (*Libaas-ut-Taqwa*)’ (7:27).

I would like to end with a citation of beloved Hu-zoor^{aa} taken from his Friday sermon: “I say this to every Ahmadī man and woman that the best clothing is the clothing of Taqwa, try and keep it on so that God’s attribute of being Sattar always covers you...If you have faith and you have accepted the Imām of the age, then you will have to make special effort to protect yourself from satanic temptations and cover yourself with the covering taqwa.” (Friday Sermon, April 3, 2009)

May Allāh enable us to achieve this goal, Ameen.

The Purpose of Creation and the Role of Marriage

By: Aisha Tasneem, Bradford

Marriage is a contract recognized by most religions, cultures and laws when two individuals make their relationship as husband and wife public and in presence of a person with authority to pronounce this relationship. The institution of marriage has been given great importance in Islām. Allāh Almighty says in the Holy Qur'ān, **“And He it is Who has created man from water, and has made for him kindred by descent and kindred by marriage; and thy Lord is All-Powerful”**(25:55). Similarly, most religions, including Islām, and cultures consider pre/extra marital relations as a sin.

Binding oneself in the bond of marriage is something that distinguishes humans from other animals. We see that animals also find mates for themselves due to natural desire or condition bestowed on them by their Creator. Then how can the finding of a mate in humans be thought of as any different or of any great importance? The Promised Messiah^{as} describes this concept, “So long as his natural conditions are not converted into moral conditions, man deserves no praise, inasmuch as they are to be found in other animates and even in solids also.” ([The Philosophy of Teachings of Islām](#), pg. 18). Therefore, it is not the marriage or the mere fact of finding of a mate which distinguishes us from animals but how our moral and spiritual conditions are affected by this bond!

In the Holy Qur'ān, Allāh the Almighty has elaborated on our natural conditions and the proper relationships between men and women. He has instructed us on whom we can or cannot marry and has laid great emphasis on chastity and modesty. The teachings of lowering of gaze for men and Purdah for women, segregation of sexes, marriage and fasting for those unable to marry are but a few of the ways Allāh has shown us to safeguard our chastity. It is by following these commandments that a

marriage becomes more than just a bond between two humans. The Holy Prophet^{sa} said “Marriage is my precept and practice.” (Ibn Majah) and at another occasion, he^{sa} said “When a man has married he has completed half of his religion”. (Tirmidhī) Therefore by following the commandments of Allāh marriage becomes a religious practice like Salāt or fasting and thus a source of blessings.

In the race towards progress, the distinction between humans and other animal species is diminishing. Many people see dignity, chastity, and piety as ancient concepts or signs of backwardness. Humans have started mating in the manner of animals where cohabiting without care for consequences and responsibility is quite acceptable. Women are losing the most, where in the name of freedom they wear invisible shackles. Despite having the right to education, inheritance and earning they are objectified. Their freedom has reduced to dressing less modestly, cohabiting with whom they like, abortion to deal with the consequences of cohabitation, and doing away with the need of guardian. The media plays a great role in creating such ideals. We see that cautionary tales like Red Riding Hood, Snow White, Cinderella and Rapunzel have been transformed by Disney into fairy tales selling the idea of love at first sight, finding true love in the minds of young children. The children grow up searching for these fantasies in the real world. The latest trend in the media is the promotion of homosexuality and acceptance instead of shunning same sex marriages.

We must look towards the guidance in the Holy Qur'ān, the Holy Prophet^{sa} and the Promised Messiah^{as}. The Holy Qur'ān contains detailed instructions on the rights and responsibilities of males and females. It impresses upon the believers the importance of chastity, modesty, marriage and most importantly the purpose of their creation. Allāh Almighty states in Qur'ān, “I have not created

the Jinn and the men but that they may worship me” (17:79). If a person does not understand this teaching, all other teachings become hard to follow. The biggest dilemma facing the world is that they do not understand the true purpose of their creation. Some think that the purpose is to excel in wealth, intelligence, beauty, strength, and/or other worldly achievements.

The western society wants us to think that the purpose of marriage is to find a person whose only love is you and he/she takes care of you, your needs, wishes, is loyal to you and gives precedence to you over all others in his or her life.

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masīh V^{aa} said in Friday sermon delivered on March 3, 2017, “Although God the Almighty has made permissible for us many worldly pursuits, that does not infer that we spend our entire lives indulging in them excessively. We should not for example, give absolutely all our time, energy and attention to only spending time with our wives. For that would mean our marriage would be setting up partners with God as equals, since the Qur’ān says a quality of the servants of Allāh is that they “spend the night before their Lord, prostrate and standing.” In short we need to avoid putting all our energies into fulfilling merely worldly desires at the expense of developing a closer bond with Allāh. Although the Holy Prophet^{sa} had many wives he would spend his entire nights in worship.”

Therefore, only when a person understands and knows the purpose of his/her life then he can make the purpose into his reality by following all the possible ways of achieving this goal. For example, a person who wishes their child to become a doctor, they develop their interest in learning about the living things, igniting their curiosity while instilling the discipline required to take on the extensive studies to become a doctor. Similarly, achieving the goal of true worship and submission to God requires early guidance, developing the curiosity to find the true God and discipline to achieve such a high goal.

What is the purpose of marriage and why have religions including Islām laid so much emphasis on it? The Promised Messiah^{as} ex-

plains in his book *The Philosophy of Teachings of Islām*, “The Holy Word of God has classified man’s natural faculties and desires and urges, as natural conditions. These, when they are consciously regulated and controlled and are brought into action on their proper occasions and places, become moral qualities. In the same way, moral conditions are not entirely distinct from spiritual conditions. When moral conditions develop absolute devotion to God and complete purification of self and, cutting asunder from the world, turn wholly to God and to perfect love and complete devotion and full serenity and satisfaction and complete accord with the Divine will, they become spiritual conditions.” (The Philosophy of Teachings of Islām, pg. 18)

When we apply this wisdom to the concept of marriage, we understand that God has created us with desires and urges to find a partner. When we regulate these urges and know when, where, and with whom these desires or urges may be expressed, we learn to behave morally. The final stage of spirituality is achieved when we understand the purpose of our life – which is to love our Creator and worship Him only; and that marriage is one of the ways in which we, along with our spouse, can achieve this purpose. This is the very reason the Holy Prophet^{sa} advised us to choose our spouses by looking at their piety. A pious spouse can help us to become pious and the progeny from such a marriage may be blessed with the love of Allāh. It is these who will:

Say, ‘My Prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are *all* for Allāh, the Lord of the worlds. (6:163)

In a Friday sermon, Huzoor^{aa} relates that the Promised Messiah^{as} said, “Remember that one who marries more wives purely out of sensual and carnal desires is distant from the true essence of Islām.” (Friday sermon March 3, 2017)

Therefore, marriage when performed as a religious duty saves us from indecent behaviours, provides us with a partner to share the responsibilities of

(Continued on page 25)

Marital Rights and Obligations

By: Sarah Siddiqui, Calgary NW

Islām has set out various rights for both men and women in regards to consent for marriage. Firstly, it should be noted that a marriage is only valid when both parties give their full consent. However, women are required to have a guardian to consent on their behalf for the arrangement. The purpose is to safeguard their rights and to maintain their modesty.

In order to promote a respectful society Islām has set guidelines regarding marriage. A Muslim is not permitted to marry their mother, father, sister, brother, aunts, uncles, nephews, nieces, and some other relations (see the Holy Qur’ān, 4:24). This restriction is to ensure that a loving, comfortable and pure relationship can prevail in households. Furthermore, cousin marriages are permissible, which is a concept that causes controversy in Western society.

Moreover, before Islām, it was common for men to have multiple wives without any restrictions or care for women’s rights. However, Islāmic teachings limited men to only having four wives at one time. This often raises misconceptions among non-Muslims, as in the present world it is seen as a lustful practice solely for the advantages of men. It should be noted here that the permission to marry four wives comes with strict guidelines. A man is not encouraged to have more than one wife; the permission to marry more than once is only allowed under specific circumstances. Allāh says:

“...and if you fear you will not deal justly, then marry only one or what your right hands possess. That is the nearest way for you to avoid injustice.” (4:4)

A man who has more than one wife must ensure equal and fair treatment of all wives in all aspects of life including his wealth, attention, and time. Women are permitted to only have one husband at a time to ensure that her husband is held accountable for his responsibilities as a husband and

father.

One right within marriage that Islām has provided for the wife is dowry. This is a sum of money that a husband provides his wife following their Nikāh, which is in proportion to his income. The dowry is entirely for the wife to spend as she pleases, however in the case of a *khulla* it should be returned. Furthermore, equal rights have been given to women and men in terms of divorce. Although, divorce is permitted in Islām it should be noted that according to a Hadīth, it is extremely displeasing in the eyes of Allāh.

Guidance has also been provided in the Holy Qur’ān regarding marriages for those who are less privileged such as orphans, slaves, widows, and divorcees. The Holy Prophet^{sa} also demonstrated the status of divorcees in regards to marriage through his own example, as he himself was married to four divorcees. Through his marriages to divorcees he exhibited that they should not be considered inferior in terms of status and that there should not be refusal to marry them simply for that reason. Additionally, it is prescribed that widows can remarry just as much as it is emphasized that unmarried women should marry, although it is not considered to be compulsory.

It is very evident that Islām encourages the institution of marriage for the enhancement of society. Contrary to misconceptions of the western society, Islām is a religion which ensures that both parties have rights to consent to marriage and any type of force on them is not permitted. Islām provides guidelines for Muslims regarding choosing the right partner, as well as the duties and responsibilities a husband and wife should share to ensure they have a happy and prosperous union.

Source:

The Pathway to Paradise—A Guidebook to Islām, Chapter 3: The Islāmic Marriage System.

What is a “Deal-Breaker” for You in a Marriage!

By: Ambreen Manzoor, Mississauga West

“What is a deal-breaker for you in a marriage?” These words from the new show “Indian Matchmaking” on Netflix resonated in my mind and made me think about my own wedding. “What would have been a deal-breaker scenario for me when I was getting married?

This year in August, my husband and I celebrated 20 years of our marriage, by the Grace of Allāh. Looking back, on my Nikkah ceremony, I remember having only one prayer in my heart, which was: “O Allāh, bless this union for me, my husband, our families and the Jamā‘at.”

In the Holy Qur’ān Allāh says, “...Verily, the most honourable among you, in the sight of Allāh, is he who is the most righteous among you...(49:14).” This is the core of Islāmic teachings – the purpose of marriage also is to attain righteousness and piety. Though, for a lot of people, instead of righteousness, cultural practices, financial stability, or job security comes first. That is a deal-breaker for them!

When I got married in Pakistan, I was working as a Principal of a Hifz school in Pakistan, while my husband was unemployed. How did I and my family accept the proposal? Was this not a deal-breaker for us? No! Actually, I never gave this any consideration. The only thing worth considering for me and my family was my husband’s piety!

In Jamā‘at Ahmadiyya, the Haq Mehr for a bride is decided according to the annual salary of the groom. The Haq Mehr amount is usually set at the six months salary of the groom. Since, my husband was unemployed, my Haq Mehr was set according to my salary. This was also not a deal-breaker for me as I never gave the amount of Haq Mehr any

thought or sought to get more amount. By the Grace of Allāh, only three days after my Nikah, my husband got a job which was ten times more than my monthly salary! This is how Allāh, the Ar-Razzaq (the Provider) shows His mercy and strengthens our faith. A week after my Nikah, I also saw a dream in which I saw a clear, shiny brook of water, which was fresh and pure, and free of any impurity. When I relayed this dream to my late mother-in-law, she told me that it was a blessed dream and signified a happy life”! Alhamdulillah!

For some people, “mental compatibility” can also be a point of contention. My husband and I have different personalities and different likes and dislikes; for example, he is an introvert, while I am an extrovert. He looks at the big picture, while I am a detail-oriented person. We even differ in the food we like! However, through all the years of our marriage, we have learned to love and embrace each other’s preferences. This has come about because of our respect for each other, and the right to exercise freedom of expression without any judgments.

The Holy Prophet^{sa} said,

“The most perfect believer in the matter of faith is he whose behavior is best; and the best of you are those who behave best to their wives.” (Tirmidhī) By the Grace of Allāh, my husband has been a true follower of this Hadīth!

For worldly people, indeed there are many deal-breakers, but for the people of a blessed Jamā‘at like ours, the only hindrances in making relationships should be lack of righteousness, virtue, and piety.

Responses to Allegations

Response to Allegations – Death of Hazrat Isa^{as}

By: Sameen Haider, Windsor

We, as Ahmadi Muslims, believe Hazrat Isa^{as} to be a prophet of Allāh, who died like all other humans. A large number of Muslims believe that Hazrat Isa^{as} was taken to heaven by Allāh and another section believes that he was crucified by the Jews instead. The idea that Isa^{as} floated into the sky towards heaven has no support in the Holy Qur'ān, making it quite clear that Hazrat Isa^{as} has naturally passed away. According to the Qur'ān, all humans must live and die in this world. Heaven is a spiritual state which our souls enter after death. It is not a set location one can travel to when they wish.

If any human being was able to go to heaven physically, it would have been our beloved Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa}. All prophets have fully lived and died on the earth. Allāh says in the Holy Qur'ān, addressing Hazrat Isa^{as}:

“When Allāh said, ‘O Jesus, I will cause thee to die a natural death and will exalt thee to Myself, and will clear thee from the charges of those who disbelieve, and will place those who follow thee above those who disbelieve, until the Day of Resurrection; then to Me shall be your return, and I will judge between you concerning that wherein you differ.’ (3:56)

An important word used in the above verse is *mutawaffi*, from *tawaffa*. *Tawaffa* means to take away the soul, when death is upon a person. It has been used in other places in the Qur'ān to indicate death, and has been used for Hazrat Isa^{as} in the above verse. Another important word is *rafaa*, which means raising and honor. When the *rafaa* of a man towards Allāh is mentioned, it means spiritual elevation and exaltation. For example, the Qur'ān relates about a Prophet (Hazrat Idris^{as}) in Chapter 19 Verse 58.

In conclusion, prophets, like us, are humans and endure hardships such as hunger, pain, death, etc.

in their lives. To say that Hazrat Isa^{as} is alive today, 2000 years after his birth is to define him as an immortal being. The Laws of God do not change.

Source:

Jesus—a Humble Prophet of God, Death of Jesus, <https://www.alislam.org/articles/death-of-hazrat-jesus/>

Islāmic Teachings Regarding Women

By: Taniya Hashmi, Windsor

The Islāmic teachings regarding women are some of the most misunderstood. The media portrays the stereotype of fully covered Muslim women as oppressed, dominated by their husband and deprived of any rights. However, this is a complete contrast to Islām's true teachings. In chapter 4, verse 2 of the Holy Qur'ān, the creation of the human race is mentioned, and it states that Allāh created humankind from a “single soul”, and that He “created therefrom its mate”..

O ye people! fear your Lord, Who created you from a single soul and created therefrom its mate, and from them twain spread many men and women;..(4:2)

In the Bible, a woman is said to have been created from the rib of Adam^{as}. On the contrary, Holy Qur'ān, clarifies that woman is not created out of the body of a man or from his rib. Rather, the Qur'ān testifies that men and women were created from a single soul and are of the same kind and species, and it cannot be said that one is dominant over the other. Both men and women have feelings and emotions, and both would be accountable before Allāh for their deeds.

Sources:

- <https://www.alislam.org/articles/womens-rights-and-equality/>
- <https://www.alislam.org/articles/high-status-of-women-in-islam/>
- <https://www.alislam.org/book/pathway-to-paradise/womens-issues/>

A Bouquet of Flowers!

Please see a selection of writings from the articles submitted on this issue's theme:

The choice of a spouse is indeed a difficult matter. We are fortunate as Muslims that we have been guided to uphold piety and good character above all other characteristics, which simplifies the decision making process for both children and parents. With prayer, the decision becomes even simpler. The Holy Prophet^{sa} has advised us to resolve all marriage related issues through prayer, as only Allāh has perfect knowledge about everything and nothing can be hidden from Him. The Holy Prophet^{sa} has also instructed us to offer Istikhara prayers to seek guidance from Allāh.

Sidra Tahir, Windsor

The relationship men and women have in a marriage is of equal partnership. The husband has been appointed as the guardian or *qawam* in the marriage to protect the wife, whether this means financially or physically. However, there is no reason to use this as an excuse to abuse women in any shape or form—in fact, no sort of abuse should take place in marriage from both sides. The Holy Prophet^{sa} constantly advised his followers to treat their wives with kindness. The Holy Prophet^{sa} treated his wives with great respect and honour which provides the perfect example for us.

Sosun Mubbashar

According to the Islāmic point of view, marriage is not an ordinary union of two opposite sexes, nor is it meant to only quench one's sexual desires. It is rather a holy bond of two life companions on whose virtues or vices lies the prosperity or the disaster of human society. According to this tradition it is quite clear that the purpose of marriage in Islām, as far as society is concerned, is to keep so-

ciety chaste, healthy and pure from grossness and immorality.

Dr Fareeha Asghar, Mississauga West

In Islām, adultery and fornication are grave sins and are forbidden, unlike the western society in which these ill practices are on the rise. The Islāmic System of marriage makes two people pass through a legal contract of marriage which carries additional responsibilities. Allāh says in the Holy Qur'ān: “....and men who guard their chastity and women who guard their chastity,... – Allāh has prepared for all of them forgiveness and a great reward.” (33:36). Here Allāh the Almighty highlights features of those men and women whom He is prepared to forgive and reward. If chastity is so important for a Muslim, then unchaste behaviour is an extremely ill vice. Instructing us to avoid any path that may lead us astray, Allāh says: “Follow not the footsteps of Satan.” (2:209).

Salma Saeed, Mississauga West

Entering the union of marriage has become difficult in the modern world. Many families are concerned about their son or daughter's marriages, each with a different worry of their own. Some have economical challenges, others are widowed, divorced, some are at a marriageable age, some want to remarry but cannot and some place their education above the idea of getting married. This list can go on and on, but the key is that once we place our trust in Allāh, all these worries should go away. Allāh states, “..And he who puts his trust in Allāh — He is sufficient for him...” (65:4). So why should we be afraid of what is not in our control?

One important factor we should remember when searching for a spouse is the well-dressing of the man and woman. Islām puts a great emphasis on the garments we should wear as Muslims. Not only

for women, but importantly for men as well. Oftentimes, being well-dressed for men means they are fully clothed, however, the same men want women's attire to be revealing and some women prefer this as well. Hazrat Khalifatul-Masīh V^{aa} states that, “such women do not have fear of Allāh, and have no covering of garment that portrays their righteousness” (Friday Sermon, April 3, 2009). It is upsetting to know that men desire their women to wear clothes that are up to the latest fashions and be seen by the society. However, believers both men and women, are to remember that they should always have fear of Allāh and should wear clothes that will please our Lord. This is only possible if we wear the “Garment of Taqwa”, which is when the husband becomes a garment for his wife and vice versa.

Dania Ashraf Chaudhry, Woodbridge North

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masīh V^{aa} was requested to shed some light on the concept of ‘true love’ and ‘love at first sight’ during an interview. He was also asked about how this concept fits into the Islāmic concept of marriage. Huzoor^{aa} shared an interesting anecdote in response. He said, “There was a beautiful girl, with long, flowing hair, who was fair and in pristine health. A boy became deeply infatuated with her and proposed marriage. The father of the girl was fiercely against this union and told the boy, “You do not truly love my daughter; rather you only love her outward beauty and features.” The boy insisted, “No, no, this is not the case; I do truly love her.” And so, the father decided to give his daughter a treatment that resulted in her falling quite ill. Her stomach became upset and she became very frail, scrawny, and sickly. The father then cut locks from the girl’s hair with scissors. In short, the girl’s physical and outer appearance fell into a terrible condition. Then the father said to the boy: “Now look here, this is my daughter. Do you still love her? If you do love her, then, by all means, go ahead and marry her.” Upon this, the boy started to offer excuses to not proceed. Thus, the father placed all the girl’s hair he had cut off into a bowl. He then said to the boy, “Now that all

her hair has been cut and her apparent beauty has been removed, you say that you do not love her. So here, take this bowl with her hair and have these things, because these are the features that you really ‘love’. So, go now, and take all of this with you.” (‘True Love’ and the ‘Perfect’ Life Partner...?” [Review of Religions](#), April 2020).

Therefore, it is important to fully understand the purpose of marriage, and not consider its sole function to be the fulfillment of one’s carnal desires. Instead, one should base the marriage on Taqwa, protection of one’s self from social ills and raising God-fearing progeny.

Annum Dawood, Mississauga West

Mutual respect and co-operation are essential to producing a good relationship between the husband and wife. The Holy Qur’ān teaches us to make every effort in creating a happy environment at home and offer prayers to Allāh to achieve this goal. The Promised Messiah^{as} said, “The relationship between a husband and wife should be like two true and sincere friends. After all, it is the wife who is the primary witness of a man’s high moral qualities and his relationship with God Almighty. If his relationship with his wife is not good, how can he be at peace with God?” (Malfūzāt, Vol V, pp. 417-418).

The biggest and foremost role of a husband and wife is their parenthood as they must prepare future generations. Peace and happiness reign supreme in the family unit as long as parents remain their guide.

Sumaira Khalid Sharma, Mississauga West

Righteousness is the most important quality to look into a potential life partner. When a couple is righteous, they will approach all aspects of their marriage according to the teachings of the Holy Qur’ān. Prayer is also an essential tool that a Muslim should use when deciding on a life partner. Muslims are taught the Istikhara Prayer to seek Allāh’s guidance in making this important decision. May Allāh make it easy for those who are

looking to get married and grant them a pious and righteous spouse, which will help them to attain nearness to Allāh. Ameen!

Hina Zahid, Hamilton Mountain

A marriage can only be successful if a couple spends their life according to the teachings of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and the Promised Messiah^{as}. The foundation of a successful marriage is built on mutual trust, and care for each other. Both husband and wife should perform their respective roles within the family with the element of affection in it. A couple should also not be shy to compliment each other, and should try to focus on each other's qualities. Last but not the least we should always write letters to Huzoor^{aa} regularly for prayers.

Imrana Faisal, Brampton East

Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{aa} recited the verses read at the time of nikah before his Jalsa Salana UK 2011 address. Then, Huzoor^{aa} said in his address:

“After coming together in the relationship of husband and wife, they become a unit. This is the relationship and the bond from which the next generation ensues. If this unit and couple does not have righteousness, then there is also no guarantee for the righteousness of the next generation. There is also no guarantee for the high morals and righteousness of society, because it is from the multiplication of that very unit that society expands.” (*Domestic Issues and Their Solutions*; pg. 19)

Atiya Nusrat, Brampton Flowertown

Islām strongly advocates the wedded couple to attain righteousness and piety in their course of life. Through the Islāmic system of marriage one can reap a lot of spiritual blessings when founded on the principles of seeking purity. For example, if one spouse falls down spiritually, the other can help him/her get up. As it has been explained in a Hadīth:

Narrated Abu Huraira^{ra} that the Holy Prophet^{sa} said, “May Allāh show mercy to a man who gets up in the night and prays and wakes up his wife, and, if she refuses, splashes some water in her face. May Allāh show mercy to a woman who gets up in the night and prays and wakes up her husband, and if he refuses, splashes water in his face.” (Abu Dawud)

Farheen Syed, Flowertown Brampton

Marriages in Islām are a right of passage in following the Sunnah (tradition) of our beloved Master - the Holy Prophet^{sa}. It is the agreement of two consensual adults with their parents' permission. It is a solemn covenant that should not be taken lightly as it demands commitment and patience and a lot of care. Allāh the Exalted says “And *one* of His Signs is *this*, that He has created wives for you from among yourselves that you may find peace of mind in them, and He has put love and tenderness between you. In that surely are Signs for a people who reflect. .” (Qur’ān 30:22)

Atiyatul Aziz Nusrat Shams, Ottawa West

A healthy marriage is the nuclear core of a healthy society. Not only is a healthy marriage necessary for the protection of children and to raise happy children, its goodness transcends into the society and keeps it from falling apart.

The Holy Qur’ān refers to a spouse as a garment and indeed, like a garment, its role should be to keep each other safe, to provide warmth, to hide each other's weaknesses, to beautify. Just like a fitted garment, one's endeavour should be to fit around each other's lives, to try to adjust from both sides, to become one, so that the resulting garment is neither too loose or too tight.

May Allāh enable us to understand the importance of marriage and bless us all.

Parsa Sahi, New Market