

Women in Islam

Allaah (swt) says: **“And among His Signs is that He created for you spouses from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has placed love and compassion between your (hearts): verily in that are Signs for those who reflect”** (Ar-Roum: 21)

ومن آياته أن خلق لكم من أنفسكم أزواجا لتسكنوا إليها وجعل بينكم مودة ورحمة إن في ذلك لآيات لقوم يتفكرون

Woman’s need for man is just like his need for her. Their wedded union brings each of them more love and tranquility.

Men and women complement each other, their perspectives and roles may vary depending on their circumstances. They are not required or expected to always have the same perspective or see matters from the same angle. We should know that just as Allaah, exalted is He, created night and day, He created man and woman. Moreover, He mentioned each one separate from the other in two consecutive verses, to show that they differ from each other in nature and in the tasks for which they are best suited. Their difference in nature is mentioned in Allaah’s words: **“By the Night as it conceals (the light); By the Day as it appears in glory; By (the mystery of) the creation of male and female; Verily, (the ends) ye strive for are diverse.”** (Al-Layl: 1-4).

والليل إذا يغشى والنهار إذا تجلى وما خلق الذكر والأنثى إن سعيكم لشتى

The difference between man and woman is likened to the difference between night and day as the night is the time for rest and sleeping, and the day the time specified for work and striving for earning a living; in other words, their roles are opposite, but complementary. Almighty Allaah thus addressed Aadam, peace be on him: **“Then We said: “O Adam! Verily, this is an enemy to thee and thy wife: so let him not get you both out of the Garden, so that thou art landed in misery.”** (Taha: 117). Aadam alone was addressed with this.

إن هذا عدو لك ولزوجك فلا يخرجنكما من الجنة فتشقى

We should also bear in mind that no Muslim should accept the view of those ignorant persons who claim that Aadam was driven out of paradise because of Eve. No one was driven out of paradise because of Eve. Anyone with a good understanding of *The Quran* will realize that they both faltered and they both repented, as Allaah says: **“They said: “Our Lord! We have wronged our own souls: if Thou forgive us not and bestow not upon us Thy Mercy, we shall certainly be lost”** (Al-A’raaf: 23). In another verse Allaah attributed the crime to Aadam only and says: **“In the result, they both ate of the tree, and so their nakedness appeared to them: they began to bring together, for their covering, leaves from the Garden; thus did Adam disobey his Lord, and allow himself to be seduced.”** (Taha: 121). This was because he was responsible for his wife.

قالا ربنا ظلمنا أنفسنا وإن لم تغفر لنا وترحمنا لنكونن من الخاسرين



وعصى آدم ربه فغوى

Moreover, one should know that taking care of a girl makes a man enter paradise for the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alaihi wasallam* said: **“Anyone who is blessed with a female child and does not harm or insult her nor give his son priority over her, she will be his pass to enter Paradise”** (Ahmad & Abu Daawood). He, *sallallaahu 'alaihi wasallam*, also said: **“He who raises two female children till they reach puberty, I will be as close to him in Paradise as these two (pointing to his index and middle finger).”** (Muslim & Tirmithi).

Children are also to be treated equally when given anything, for the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alaihi wasallam*, said: **“Do justice when you distribute something to your children. Were I to prefer some children over some others, I would give preference to girls”** (At-Tabaraani).

It is a woman's right to accept or refuse suitors. In this respect the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alaihi wasallam*, said: **“A virgin can never be married unless her permission is sought, and a previously married woman cannot be married unless her consent is obtained.”** They asked: *How could we know this?* He, *sallallaahu 'alaihi wasallam*, answered (in the case of a previously unwed woman): **“If she keeps silent (and does not raise an objection), it is her consent”** (Bukhaari & Muslim). No marriage is valid unless the woman gives her consent. A woman came to the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alaihi wasallam*, and said: **“O Allaah's Messenger! My father wants to marry me to his nephew so as to elevate his status for he is inferior to me”**. The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alaihi wasallam*, gave her the option to decide whether to marry him or not. Then, she said: **“I accept my father's recommendation but I just wanted to make it known to women that fathers have no authority over their consent”** (Ahamad & Abu Daawood).

Moreover, Islam commands us to take care of our wives. **“The best among the believers is the person who perfects his morals and the best amongst you is the best to his wife”** (Tirmithi). As a mother, a woman is given preference for the company of her adult children over the father because the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alaihi wasallam*, said: **“Your mother, your mother, your mother. Then, your father”** In addition to this, paradise lies beneath righteous mothers' feet. **“Mu'awia Alsilmi, may Allah be pleased with him said: I went to the messenger of Allah, peace and blessings upon him and said: O messenger of Allah, I would like to strive with you seeking the Face of Allah and the Afterlife. He (peace and blessings upon him) said: Woe to you, is your mother alive? I said: yes, O messenger of Allah. He (peace and blessings upon him) replied: Woe to you, stick to her foot, there is paradise. (authenticated by Al Albany).**

Some question Islam's guidance with respect to inheritance. The system of inheritance is not a simple half shares for females. There are situations where the woman may have a higher share than the man and others where the man will have a higher share, these all depend on circumstances and responsibilities. Islam wants families to remain intact before or after the death of a loved one, Islam places a high regard for families and the responsibilities of family members towards each other, for



this reason Allah, Ta'ala has guided us with a detailed system of inheritance that works to keep families as well as society together. Former Grand Mufti of Egypt Dr Ali Gomaa explained:

- A – Four categories of relations where the male inherits more than the female.
- B – Eleven categories of relations where the female's share of the inheritance is the same as the male.
- C – Fourteen categories of relations where the female's share is greater than that of the male.
- D – Five categories of relations where the female inherits whereas her male counterpart does not receive any share of the inheritance.

Islam strongly discourages divorce, however, Islam also acknowledges that not all marriages are successful, for this reason, God gave conditions under which a divorce becomes permissible. These conditions are there to protect the happiness and well-being of both women and men.

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