

# Social Behaviors in Islam

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## Meaning of Social Behavior

All kinds of actions we do in between ourselves and with the creatures of Allah are called social behaviors. There are some other synonyms of it. These are: transactions, communications, connections, business, contact.. etc. In Arabic it is called *Mu'amalah* (معاملة), which means behaviors, conduct (towards others), manners, treatment accorded to others, social intercourse, social life, association (with one another), transaction, mutual relations, business relations.. etc.

The word ‘*Mu’amalah*’ derived from ‘*amala* (عامل), and the word ‘*amala* derived from ‘*amal* (عمل). And ‘*amal* means work, act, action, activity .... etc. So, when any action or activity done by two persons or two groups, it’s called *mu’amalah* (inter-dealings).

We can also say that *Mu’amalah* means inter-relationships and inter-behaviors among the peoples. And the work done by taking help from others increases the relationship between two persons and it makes them closer to each other; because, they share with one another in the sacrifice as well as in the benefit.

## Importance of Social Behaviors/ *Mu’amalah* / Dealings

In Islam, social behaviors or *Mu’amalah* is a very wide and important thing. Because all the deeds we do in our lifetime are related with others. It is related either with our Lord Allah (SWT), or with any of His creatures. The things related with Allah (SWT) are called ‘*Ibadah* (عبادة); and the things related with His creatures are usually called

*Mu'amalah*. Though, all ‘Ibadah are also *Mu'amalah*; but there are some *Mu'amalah* outside ‘Ibadah. Everything we do with any of Allah’s creatures is either good or bad. The good dealings which we do with Allah’s creatures are also ‘Ibadah; because Allah (SWT) likes them and He will reward us for them. Here we see that the *Mu'amalah* is wider than *Ibadah*. On the other hand, all the things related with the creator are called ‘Ibadah or ‘*Haqqullah*’ (حَقُّ اللَّهِ); and all of them related with the creatures are called *Mu'amalah* or ‘*Haqqul ‘Ibad*’ (حَقُّ الْعِبَادِ). Moreover, if there is any lacking or shortcoming in *Ibadah*, it is very easy to repentance from it; but it is not easy to repentance from a mistake of *Mu'amalah*.

Islam states various terms and conditions for inter-dealings. Various laws and acts had been formalized during the era of Prophet Mohammad (SAW) to carry out the *Mu'amalah* in a meaningful and correct way. Most of the *Hadith* of Prophet (SAW) indicates and describes about how to be the behaviors of a person with others. In the holy *Qur'an*, the Almighty Allah tells to the whole mankind about the way, how a person behaves with others and what his duty towards others is.

Islam is a complete code of life; Islam has said about our duty towards others (i.e. *Mu'amalah*) after the main duty towards Allah (i.e. ‘Ibadah). It also given the second one (social behaviors/*Mu'amalah*) a great importance for the well-being of the humanity. Thus, by the learning of the Islamic ruling on social behaviors (*Mu'amalah*) and practicing those in our daily life we can easily make a good and sound society.

## Family Life in Islam

### Introduction:

Family is the basis of the Islamic society. Its origin goes back to the beginning of the creation of man and woman- *Adam* and *Hawa*. Therefore, it is an institution founded by Allah's will. Allah (SWT) says in the holy *Qur'an*:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً .

“O mankind! Be mindful of your duty to your Lord Who created you from a single soul and from it created its mate and from the two created many men and women”.<sup>1</sup>

وَاللهُ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَزْوَاجِكُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ وَحَدَّدَهُ وَرَزَقَكُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ أَفِإِلْبَاطِلِ يُؤْمِنُونَ وَيَنْعَمُونَ اللَّهُ هُمْ يَكْفُرُونَ .

“And Allah has made for you *Azwaj* (mates/wives) of your own kind, and has made for you, from your wives, sons and grandsons, and has bestowed on you good provision. Do they then believe in false deities and deny the favor of Allah (by not worshiping Him)”.<sup>2</sup>

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ .

“And among His signs is this, that He created for you wives from among yourselves, that you may find repose in them, and He has put between you affection and mercy. Verily, in that are indeed signs for a people who reflect”.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Al-Qur'an: Sura An-Nisa, 4:1*

<sup>2</sup> *Al-Qur'an: Sura An-Nahal, 16:72*

<sup>3</sup> *Al-Qur'an: Surah Ar-Room, 30:21*

## **Marriage is the Basis of an Islamic Family**

Marriage is the basis of the Islamic family. A good and sound society can only grow if a man and a woman are bound in a solid relationship through the sacred contract of marriage. The *Qur'an* states:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ مِنَ الْمَاءِ بَشَرًا فَجَعَلَهُ نَسِبًا وَصِهْرًا وَكَانَ رَبُّكَ قَدِيرًا .

“And it is He Who has created man from water, and appointed for him relatives by blood, and relatives by marriage. And your Lord is Ever All-Powerful to do what He wills”.<sup>4</sup>

Marriage develops love, care, and co-operation between the husband and wife. It gives peace of mind and provides a secure atmosphere for the growth and progress of the whole human race. Without marriage the human race would come to vanish. Marriage was the practice of all Prophets and Messengers including Muhammad (*SAW*).

In Islam, marriage is a religious and social institution and not simply a sexual relationship. Marriage makes a relation between the husband and wife; but it is not merely the conjugal relation of them, it is a relation of two greater societies. It is not the relation for the time being, it is a kind of relation, which will continue forever. Thus, if any of them died, another one will get inheritance from his/her wealth. Then he/she can marry another one afterward. Also if both of them died, their relatives will stay as they were before their death. Their children will stay connected with their paternal and maternal relatives.

Marriage is a sacred social contract between a groom and a bride. A great deal of thought is necessary therefore before the couple decides to marry. Because the matter is permanent; not temporary, It is a communal matter; not

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<sup>4</sup> *Al-Qur'an: Surah Al-Furqan, 25:54*

individual. It has a far-reaching effect on the life of the couple in here and hereafter.

### **Who will select the bride and groom?**

There are three opinions regarding who will select the bride and groom: (a) Parents or guardians will select them, (b) They will select themselves and (c) There will be a proper combination between themselves and their parents. Here a question will take place that whose selection will come first.

Islam supports the third opinion and emphasizes the parents to make the primary selection; but the final say lies with the boy and the girl. They must sit together before take decision. Islam did not allow the guardians to enforce their decision on them. Once a woman came to the Prophet (SAW) and said, "*My father has married me to my cousin to raise his social standing and I was forced into it.*" The Prophet sent for the girl's father and then in his presence gave the girl the option of remaining married or nullifying the marriage. She responded, "*O Messenger of Allah, I have accepted what my father did, but I wanted to show other women (that they could not be forced into a marriage).*"<sup>5</sup>

In our society Muslim marriages are traditionally arranged by parents, but the final say lies with the bride and groom. Islam does not allow free mixing of grown-up boys and girls; nor does it allow any sex outside marriage. The Islamic way of life does not approve of the boy-friend/girl-friend system, or mixed parties of the grown-ups and the like.

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<sup>5</sup> *Sunan Ad-Dara Qutni* (3106, 3107), *As-Sunan Al-Kubra* (5242), *Musannaf A. Razzaque* (10001), *Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaibah* (12004) and *Sunan Ibn Majah*.

## How to select a bride and a groom?

Piety should come before all other considerations. Allah's Messenger (SAW) said: Do not marry only for the sake of beauty, may be the beauty becomes the cause of moral decline. Do not marry even for the sake of wealth; may be the wealth becomes the reason of disobedience. Marry rather on the ground of religious devotion.

The Messenger of Allah says in another place (to the guardian of brides):

إِذَا جَاءَكُمْ مَنْ تَرْضَوْنَ دِينَهُ وَخُلُقَهُ فَرِزْقُهُ، إِلَّا تَفْعَلُوهُ تَكُونُ فِتْنَةً فِي الْأَرْضِ وَفَسَادٌ عَرِيضٌ .

If you heard a proposal of marriage from a groom, you are satisfied about his character, do not reject him but marry with him, otherwise it will be a reason of moral disorder.<sup>6</sup>

قَالَ رَجُلٌ لِلْحَسَنِ: إِنَّ عِنْدِي ابْنَةٌ لِي وَقَدْ حُطِبْتُ إِلَيْهِ، فَمَنْ أَزْوَجَهَا؟ قَالَ: زَوْجُهَا مَنْ يَخَافُ اللَّهَ، فَإِنْ أَحَبَّهَا أَكْرَمَهَا وَإِنْ أَبْغَضَهَا لَمْ يَظْلِمْهَا .

A man asked Hasan ®: I have a daughter; I want to marry her, whom I select? If there is more than one proposal. He replied: Merry her to the person who fears Allah most. Because if he likes her, he will give her proper respect and if he dislikes her, he will not depress/oppress her.<sup>7</sup>

Regarding the selection of bride the holy Prophet (SAW) said:

تُنكحُ الْمَرْأَةُ لِأَرْبَعٍ: لِجَمَالِهَا، وَلِمَالِهَا، وَلِحَسِيبِهَا، وَلِدِينِهَا . فَأَظْفَرْ بِذَاتِ الدِّينِ، تَرِبَتْ بِذَاتِ الدِّينِ .

Usually a bride has chosen for the following four criteria's:  
For her beauty, for her wealth, for her social status and for

<sup>6</sup> Narrated by Imam At-Tirmidhi and he said: the Hadith is *hasan*. Imam Albani also accepted it as *hasan*.

<sup>7</sup> (النفقة على العيال لابن أبي الدنيا 125)

her piety. But you should give priority to her piety, then you may become gainer.<sup>8</sup>

A Muslim man is expected to marry a Muslim woman, although in some cases he can marry Jewish and Christian chaste women. But a Muslim woman is not allowed to marry a non-Muslim man.

Islamic society is based on submission and obedience to the will of Allah. Husband and wife, bound by marriage are Allah's servants and representatives. Marriage must not conflict with the purpose of life (seeking Allah's pleasure), but rather should lead towards its achievement.

### **Divorce in Islam**

Marriage is a pure sacred social bond and permanent relation of a man and a woman. Islam does not like to bring out the couple from this bond. It does not permit the discontinuity of this relation for any simple cause. Divorce is allowed in Islam; but is regarded as the least desirable of all lawful acts. Our holy Prophet (SAW) said:

أَبْغَضُ الْخَلَالِ إِلَى اللَّهِ الْطَّلاقُ .

The most undesirable of all permissible things to Allah is divorce.<sup>9</sup>

Allah (SWT) doesn't like divorce; so, we also don't like it. That is why Islam encourages us to proper selection of bride and groom. We desire and hope to the Almighty Allah to grace us ability to proper selection of spouse. Then we may never to be bound to practice divorce.

Islam encourages adjustment and happiness. But when living together is impossible, the Islamic law does not

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<sup>8</sup> Sahihul Bukhari and Sahih Muslim.

<sup>9</sup> Abu Daud.

stand in the way of divorce. However, the mentionable things in this regard are as follows:

- To avoid the situation to divorce Islam emphasizes the matter of selecting bride and groom.
- To decrease the number of divorce Islam emphasizes both bride and groom to maintain their own responsibilities to others.
- To avoid the situation of it Islam advised the couple to tolerance and patience.
- When there is no way to avoid divorce Islam suggested the couple to maintain the chronological order of the notice of divorce and to maintain the rules of it up to go to the final decision.

In this regard, the holy *Qur'an* prescribed us to follow some procedures to preserve the relationship of couple before going to the final verdict of divorce.<sup>10</sup>

Islamic law of divorce is based on practical considerations. The process of separation is basically a matter of husband and wife. However, when conflict arises, attempts should be made for reconciliation. The husband is allowed three chances, that is to say, three pronouncements or acts of divorce in three different occasions. Each divorce is pronounced during the time when the wife is in the period of purity (when she is not in her menstrual time). A husband may divorce his wife once and let the *Iddat* (the period of waiting after divorce) pass. During the waiting period, they have the option of being reconciled. If however the waiting period passes without reconciliation, they stand fully divorced.

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<sup>10</sup> For details please see: *Al-Qur'an: Surah An-Nisa*, 4:34-35 and *Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:229-232

If after the first divorce the husband is reconciled with his wife but the hostility and conflict begins all over again, he may divorce her a second time in the same manner as stated above. In this case, also he can return to her during the *Iddat* (or waiting period). If however, after second reconciliation, he divorces the wife the third time, he cannot take back the wife during the *Iddah*. She is totally prohibited for him. The woman thereafter can marry any person she likes according to her choice.<sup>11</sup>

The wife also can divorce her husband if this condition is stipulated in the marriage contract. This kind of divorce is called 'Delegated Divorce' (*Talaqut Tafwiz*). The marriage can also be dissolved through mutual consent. This is called *Khula'*.<sup>12</sup> Narrated Ibn 'Abbas ®: The wife of *Thabit bin Qais* came to the Prophet (SAW) and said: O Allah's Messenger! I do not blame *Thabit* for defects in his character or his religion, but I being a Muslim, dislike to behave in an unislamic manner (if I remain with him). On that Allah's Messenger (SAW) said (to her): will you give back the garden which your husband has given you (as *Mahr*)? She said: yes. Then the Prophet said to *Thabit*: Accept your garden and divorce her once.<sup>13</sup>

One of the consequences of the divorce is the commencement of waiting period for the wife. This usually lasts three months. If there is a pregnancy, it lasts as long as pregnancy lasts. The waiting period is basically a term of probation during which reconciliation can be attempted.

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<sup>11</sup> For more detail you may go to 'The Lawful and the prohibited in Islam' by Dr. Yusuf Al-Qardawi and 'The family structure in Islam' by Dr. Hammudah Abdul Ali.

<sup>12</sup> *Khula'* means the parting of a wife from her husband by giving him a certain compensation.

<sup>13</sup> *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Vol. 7, *Hadith* No. 197

Maintenance of wife during the waiting period is on husband. The wife cannot be expelled from her place of residence and she cannot in any way harass her. In case of divorce, the young children remain in the custody of their divorced mother. However, the father has to provide the cost of maintenance of young children though they remain under the custody of their mother.

Islamic law on divorce if followed in true spirit will enhance the dignity of man and woman, reduce conflict and ensure justice.

### Polygamy in Islam

There are two terms for marriage with more than one: Polygamy and Polyandry. Polygamy is marriage of a man with more than one woman. And Polyandry is marriage of a woman with more than one man. The normal Muslim practice is monogamy -one man married to one wife-; polygamy is the exception.

Islam is a practical religion. It can answer all human problems. Islam allows restricted polygamy- marriage to more than one woman, to the maximum of four. It does not allow polyandry. The *Qur'an* has imposed strict conditions for marrying several wives. Allah (SWT) says:

وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَا تُقْسِطُوا فِي الْيَتَامَىٰ فَانْكِحُوهُ مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِّنَ النِّسَاءِ مُثْنَىٰ وَثُلَاثَةٍ وَرُبَاعٍ . فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً أَوْ مَا مَلَكْتُ أَيْمَانُكُمْ ذَلِكَ أَذْنَنَ أَلَا تَعْوِلُوا .

“And if you fear that you will not deal fairly by the orphans, marry of the women who seem good to you, two or three or four; and if you fear that you cannot be fair to so many, then one only or (the captives) that your right

hands possess. Thus it is more likely that you will not do injustice".<sup>14</sup>

This Ayah says that to marry more than one woman, a man must be able to be fair and just to each of them. If he is not able to do so, he should marry only one wife. In another Ayah of the Qur'an Allah (SWT) says:

وَلَنْ تَسْتَطِعُوا أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا بَيْنَ النِّسَاءِ وَلَنْ حَرَصْتُمْ فَلَا تُمْلِأُوا كُلَّ الْمُنْلٰى فَنَذَرُوهَا  
كَالْمُعْلَقَةِ وَإِنْ تُصلِحُوهَا وَتَتَقَوَّا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا

"You will not be able to deal fairly between your wives, however much you wish. Yet do not turn completely aside (from one) so that you leave another in suspense, if you maintain proper conduct and do your duty, Allah is ever Forgiving and Merciful".<sup>15</sup>

This Ayah further emphasizes fair treatment to the co-wives. It also means that if the fairness is not possible, the polygamy is unnecessarily not very much desirable. But in some special circumstances Islam allows polygamy. These circumstances are:

- When a wife is barren and cannot bear children, but the husband wants children. It is better to have a second wife than to divorce the barren one. But a barren wife has the option to seek separation from her husband if she wishes, on the grounds of the second marriage of her husband. She can also seek separation if her husband is barren or chronically ill. So would it not be more considerate on her part and better for him that he marries a second wife who can bear him children, while retaining the first wife with all her rights guaranteed?

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<sup>14</sup> Al-Qur'an: Surah An-Nisa, 4:3

<sup>15</sup> Al-Qur'an: Surah An-Nisa, 4:129

- There may also be the case of a man whose desire for sex is strong, while his wife has little desire for it, or who is chronically ill, has long menstrual periods, or the like, while her husband is unable to restrain his sexual urge. Should it not be permitted to him to marry a second wife instead of his hunting around for girlfriends?
- Islam strictly forbids any sexual relationships outside marriage. There is no such thing as a mistress in Islamic society. Islam has given dignity to women by marriage and has protected them from the exploitation of greedy and selfish men. Having more than one wife is better and more dignified than having a number of mistresses.
- A woman who is going to be second wife could refuse to marry the man because he already has a wife. But if a woman happily consents to her husband marrying again and the second wife agrees, why should anyone else object to it?
- Furthermore, it is possible for a man to live with more than one wife and have children from all of them, but for a woman to please more than one husband seems almost impossible. A woman can bear children from only one husband.
- The proportion of women to men increased considerably in the countries taking part in the First and Second World Wars. A solution to such a situation is the marriage of more than one woman by those men who are able to and can be fair to each wife. This is better than leaving a large number of unmarried women. Polygamy may be the solution to the problems of a society which has more women than men. This happens especially after war. The

Ayah in the *Qur'an* allowing more than one wife was revealed after the battle of *Uhud* in which many Muslim men were martyred.

- In such a situation, when women outnumber men, it is in the interests of the society and of women themselves that they become co-wives to a man instead of spending their entire lives without marriage, deprived of the peace, affection and protection of marital life and the joy of motherhood for which they naturally yearn with all their hearts.
- There are only three possible alternatives exist for such surplus women who are not married as first wives:
  1. To pass their whole lives in bitter deprivation,
  2. To become sex objects and playthings for lecherous men; or
  3. To become co-wives to men who are able to support more than one wife and who will treat them kindly.

Unquestionably, the last alternative is the correct solution, a healing remedy for this problem, and that is the judgment of Islam. The *Qur'an* states: "And who is better than Allah in judgment, for a people who have certain faith"?<sup>16</sup>

- Actually, the majority of Muslims are monogamous; they have only one wife. The fact that a few Muslims have more than one wife has become a matter for propaganda against Islam. Moreover, such propaganda can give a misleading impression of the Islamic way of life. This is especially so when it is non-practicing Muslims who are

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<sup>16</sup> *Al-Qur'an: Sura Al-Maidah*, 5:53

highlighted on the issue of being married to more than one wife.

- As opposed to polygamy, the case of polyandry (having more than one husband by a woman) may be raised. The case of polyandry is impractical and it creates problems rather than solves them. Such as the paternity, fatherhood and inheritance how would be decided? Somebody may tell that by the DNA test we can easily recognize the father. Then, another problem will arise that if other husbands also want to get child in the period of the same pregnancy? ... etc. That is why polyandry is forbidden in Islam.

**Conclusion:** Islam is a practical way of life. It has responded to reality and necessity. It has put a check on human tendencies and ensured balance. Its system is full of wisdom and is perfectly scientific, completely logical. Allah (SWT) has prescribed what is best for us. We should not be apologetic in our approach. Islam provides the best answer to all problems. We cannot blame Islam if we do not know it or fail to understand it. We need to look at Islam as a whole, not only at a part of it. This is because Islam views our life as a whole, as a unit.

### **Rights and Obligations of Husband and Wife**

**Introduction:** Islam is a religion of peace. It established by its rules all over the society love, honor, respect and affection. Islam puts a great stress on the relationship of the husband and wife. It has laid down the respective rights and obligations of both of them to avoid the confusion and complication in this regard.

## **Basis of the relationship of husband and wife:**

The basis of husband wife relationship is love and compassion. In this regard, the Almighty Allah states in the holy *Qur'an*:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْواجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً  
إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ.

“And among His signs is this that He has created mates from among yourselves, that you may live in comfort with them, and He has put love and compassion among you (Husband and Wife). Surely in that are signs for those who think”.<sup>17</sup>

## **Rights and obligations of them towards each other:**

The husband has been made the head of the family in Islamic family system. It is the duty of the wife to obey the husband in lawful matters. However, Islam has enjoined on all Muslims to manage their family affairs by mutual consultation. And in case of disagreement the head of the family should be obeyed.

The role of husband normatively revolves round the principle that it is his solemn duty to Allah to treat his wife with kindness, honour and patience, to keep her honorably or free her from marital bond honourably, and to cause her no harm or grief. The Almighty Allah states:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَرِثُوا النِّسَاءَ كَرْهًا وَلَا تَغْضِلُوهُنَّ لِتَذَهَّبُوا بِيَغْضِ  
مَا عَطَيْتُمُوهُنَّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُبِينَةٍ وَعَاسِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ فَإِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ  
فَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوْ شَيْئًا وَيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا.

“O you who believe! You are forbidden to inherit women against their will, and you should not treat them with harshness, that you may take away part of the *Mahr* you

<sup>17</sup> *Al-Qur'an: Surah Ar-Room*, 30:21

have given them, unless they commit open illegal sexual intercourse. And live with them honorably. If you dislike them, it may be that you dislike a thing and Allah brings through it a great deal of good".<sup>18</sup>

Allah (SWT) states the wife's position compared with her husband in a clear saying:

وَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرْجَةٌ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِحَكِيمٍ .

"And they (women) have rights (over their husbands as regards living expenses, etc.) similar (to those of their husbands) over them (as regards obedience and respect, etc) to what is reasonable, but men have a degree (of responsibility) over them. And Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise".<sup>19</sup>

The husband in Islamic law is under obligation to maintain her wife. This maintenance includes the wife's right to lodging, clothing, feeding, care and well-being. The wife has a right to enjoy all these things according to her status and according to capacity of her husband.

The wife has also the right to receive *Mahr* from the husband at the moment of marriage. The *Mahr* is a gift of husband to his wife. This symbolizes an assurance of economic security from the husband towards wife. The amount can be big or small depending on mutual agreement and economic condition of the two parties. However, this is not the price of sexual enjoyment; because the sexual enjoyment is not a one-sided affair.

The main obligation of the wife as a partner in a marital relationship is to contribute to the success and blissfulness of the marriage as much as possible. She should be

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<sup>18</sup> Al-Qur'an: Sura An-Nisa, 4:19, for more detail see also: Al-Qur'an: Sura Al-Baqarah, 2:229-232

<sup>19</sup> Al-Qur'an: Sura Al-Baqarah, 2:228

attentive to the comfort and well being of her mate. The *Qur'an* mentions good wife as ‘comfort of eyes’ of her husband. Allah (SWT) states:

وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا فَرَّةً أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا .

“And those who say: Our Lord! Bestow on us from our wives and our offspring the comfort of our eyes, and make us leaders of the *Muttaqun* (the pious)”.<sup>20</sup>

Husband alone has the right of sexual intimacy with wife. So, the wife must not allow any other person to have access to that which is exclusively the husband’s right.

**Conclusion:** Islam has given the correct principles and instructions regarding rights and obligations of husband and wife. These principles if obeyed in true spirit would ensure better family and social life.

### **Status of women in Islam and in other Religions**

Women have a very important place in Islamic society. Unlike a number of other religions, Islam holds a woman in high esteem. Her importance as a mother and a wife has been clearly stated by the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). He said: “Your Paradise lies at the feet of your mother”.<sup>21</sup> Once a person asked the Prophet (SAW): Who deserves the best care from me? The Prophet replied, your mother (He repeated it three times), then your father and then your nearest relatives.<sup>22</sup>

In the holy *Qur'an* Allah (SWT) says:

وَصَيَّبْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلْتُهُ أُمَّهُ وَهُنَّا عَلَىٰ وَهُنِّ وَفِصَالُهُ فِي عَامِينِ أَنِ اشْكُرْ لِي  
وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ .

<sup>20</sup> *Al-Qur'an: Sura Al-Furqan*, 25:74

<sup>21</sup> *Sunan Ahmad and Nasai*.

<sup>22</sup> *Sahihul Bukhari and Sahih Muslim*.

“And We have made it a duty for man to be good to his parents. His mother bears him with one fainting spell after another fainting spell, while his weaning takes two years. Thank Me as well as your parents; towards Me lies the Goal”.<sup>23</sup>

If any man falsely questions a woman’s chastity, that man is declared unfit for giving evidence. The *Qur'an* states:

وَالَّذِينَ يَرْمُونَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَأْتُوا بِأَرْبَعَةٍ شُهَدَاءَ فَاجْلِدُوهُنَّ مُثَانِيْنَ جَلْدَهُ وَلَا تَقْبِلُوهُنَّ شَهَادَةً أَبَدًا وَأَوْلَئِكَ هُنَّ الْفَاسِقُونَ .

“And those who accuse chaste women, and produce not four witnesses, flog them with eighty stripes, and reject their testimony forever. They indeed are the *Fasiqun* (liars, rebellious, disobedient to Allah)”.<sup>24</sup> This *Ayah* shows how a woman’s honor is safeguarded from false accusations.

In his farewell address at *Arafah* in the tenth year of *Hijrah*, the Prophet (SAW) said: “O people! Your wives have certain rights over you and you have certain rights over them. Treat them well and be kind to them, for they are your partners and committed helpers. The Prophet (SAW) also said: “The best among you is the one who is the best towards his wife”.<sup>25</sup>

These sayings clearly prove the important position given to women in Islam. One of the rites of *Hajj* is a fast walk between *As-Safa* and *Al-Marwah*, which is observed to remember the event of *Hajirah*, mother of Prophet *Ismail* (A), who ran between these two hills to find water. This is another proof of the importance given to women by Islam. But there are still people, especially in the west, who have misgivings about the status of women in Islam. To these

<sup>23</sup> Al-Qur'an: Sura Luqman, 31:14

<sup>24</sup> Al-Qur'an: Sura An-Nur, 24:4

<sup>25</sup> Sunan Darami and Tirmidhi.

people, the Muslim woman is seen almost as a ‘prisoner in the four walls of the house’, a ‘non person’, and as someone who has no rights and is living always under the domination of a man. These nations are totally wrong, and are based on ignorance rather than knowledge of Islam.

**In order to judge these false ideas held by western people, it would be useful to survey the attitudes to women in different societies in the past.**

**For example:**

- During the Roman civilization, a woman was regarded as a slave.
- The Greeks considered her a commodity to be bought and sold.
- Early Christianity regarded women as temptresses, responsible for the fall of *Adam*.
- In India, the Hindus until recently considered their women worse than death, pests, serpents or even hell. A wife’s life ended with the death of her husband. In the past, the widow had to jump into the flames of her husband’s funeral pyre.
- In the pre-Islamic state of Arabia, a woman was regarded as a cause for grief and unhappiness, and baby girls were sometimes buried alive after birth.
- In France in 587 CE, a meeting was held to study the status of women and to determine whether a woman could truly be considered a human being or not.
- Henry VIII in England forbade the reading of the Bible by women, and throughout the middle ages the Catholic Church treated women as second class citizens.

- In the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford, male and female students were not given the same rights until 1964. Before 1850, women were not counted as citizens in England, and English women had no personal rights until 1882.

**Conclusion:** If we keep this picture in mind and look into the position of the women in Islam, we must conclude that Islam liberated women from the dark age of obscurity, fourteen hundred years ago.

Islam is a religion of common sense and is in line with human nature. It recognizes the realities of life. This does not mean it has recognized equality of man and woman in every respect. Rather, it has defined their duties in keeping with their different biological make up. As the *Qur'an* states:

وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرْجَةٌ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِحَكِيمٍ .

“And they (women) have rights (over their husbands as regards living expenses, etc.) similar (to those of their husbands) over them (as regards obedience and respect, etc) to what is reasonable, but men have a degree (of responsibility) over them. And Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise”.<sup>26</sup>

Man and woman are not exactly equal in Islam. They have different physical and biological features. Islam recognizes the leadership of a man over a woman, but it does not mean domination. Thus, Allah (SWT) has not made man and woman identical. So it would be against nature to try to have total equality between a man and a woman.

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<sup>26</sup> *Al-Qur'an: Sura Al-Baqarah, 2:228*

# Rights of Women in Islam

## Introduction:

Allah (SWT) has created every living being in pairs- male and female including humankind. He states in the holy *Qur'an*:

وَمِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَا زَوْجَيْنِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ

“And of everything We have created pairs, that you may remember (the Grace of Allah)”.<sup>27</sup> Allah (SWT) has honored the children of *Adam*- both male and female. He declared in the holy *Qur'an*:

وَلَقَدْ كَرَمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَىٰ كَثِيرٍ مِمْنُنَ حَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا.

“And indeed We have honored the children of Adam, and We have carried them on land and sea, and have provided them with *At-Taiyibat* (lawful good things), and have preferred them above many of those whom We have created with a marked preference”.<sup>28</sup>

## Rights of Women in Islam:

- **Equal Reward & Equal Accountability:** Allah (SWT) will reward both men and women in the life after death. He told:

فَاسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَئِنَّ لَا أُضِيقُ عَمَلَ عَامِلٍ مِنْكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَى بَعْضُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ فَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَأُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأَوْذُوا فِي سَيِّلٍ وَفَاتَلُوا وَقُتِلُوا لَا كُفَّرُنَّ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَلَا دُخْلُنَّهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ثَوَابًا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حَسْنُ الشَّوَّابِ

<sup>27</sup> Al-Qur'an: Sura Az-zariyat, 51:49

<sup>28</sup> Al-Qur'an: Sura Al-Isra, 17:70

"So their Lord accepted of them (their supplication and answered them), "Never will I allow to be lost the work of any of you, be he male or female. You are (members) one of another, so those who emigrated and were driven out from their homes, and suffered harm in My Cause, and who fought, and were killed (in My Cause), verily, I will remit from them their evil deeds and admit them into Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise); a reward from Allah, and with Allah is the best of rewards".<sup>29</sup>

Men and women who believe are protectors of one another. The *Qur'an* states:

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أُولَئِكَ بَعْضٌ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَاونَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ  
وَيَقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَيُطْبِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ سَيِّدُهُمْ هُنَّ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ  
عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ .

"The believers, men and women, are *Auliya'* (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another, they enjoin (on the people) *Al-Ma'ruf* (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do), and forbid (people) from *Al-Munkar* (i.e. polytheism and disbelief of all kinds, and all that Islam has forbidden); they perform *As-Salat* (*Iqamat-as-Salat*) and give the *Zakat*, and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah will have His Mercy on them. Surely Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise".<sup>30</sup>

- **Right to financial independence:** A woman is the owner of her earnings. In Islam, she has a distinct

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<sup>29</sup> *Al-Qur'an: Sura Aal-e-'Imran, 3:195*

<sup>30</sup> *Al-Qur'an: Sura At-Taubah, 9:71*

and separate identity. Islam has given her a right to own property. No one (father, husband or brother) has a right over them. She can dispose of her earnings and property, as she wishes, within the bounds of *Halal* (lawful) and *Haram* (unlawful). The Almighty Allah says:

وَلَا تَتَمَنَّوْا مَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بِهِ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ لِلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِمَّا أَكْتَسَبُوا وَلِلنِّسَاءِ  
نَصِيبٌ مِمَّا أَكْتَسَبْنَ وَسْأَلُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا .

“And wish not for the things in which Allah has made some of you to excel others. For men there is reward for what they have earned, (and likewise) for women there is reward for what they have earned, and ask Allah of His Bounty. Surely, Allah is Ever All-Knower of everything”.<sup>31</sup>

The holy Prophet’s wife, *Khadija*, was not only the first convert to Islam (a woman!) but also a financially independent businessperson.

- **Equal right to gather knowledge:** In Islam, both men and women are equally encouraged to seek knowledge. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said,

طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيضَةٌ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ .

“Education is compulsory for every Muslim”. In addition, great female Muslim Scholars existed at and around the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Some were from his family and others were his companions or their daughters. Prominent amongst them was Aisha, the wife of the Prophet (peace be upon him) through whom a quarter of the Islamic law has been transmitted.

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<sup>31</sup> *Al-Qur'an: Sura An-Nisa, 4:32*

Other females were great scholars of jurisprudence and had famous male scholars as their students.

Allah (SWT) says:

وَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِحَكِيمٍ .

“And they (women) have rights (over their husbands as regards living expenses, etc.) similar (to those of their husbands) over them (as regards obedience and respect, etc) to what is reasonable, but men have a degree (of responsibility) over them. And Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise”.<sup>32</sup>

- **Right of Inheritance:** Islam has given women a right to inheritance. She has a part in the property of her dead father, mother, husband, childless brother and children. Allah (SWT) declared in this regard:

لِلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ مِمَّا قَلَّ مِنْهُ أَوْ كَثُرَ نَصِيبًا مَفْرُوضًا .

“There is a share for men and a share for women from what is left by parents and those nearest related, whether, the property be small or large- a legal share”.<sup>33</sup>

In another Aya Allah (SWT) says:

يَسْتَفْتُونَكَ قُلِ اللَّهُ يُفْتِنُكُمْ فِي الْكَلَالَةِ إِنِ امْرُؤٌ هَلَكَ لَيْسَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ وَلَهُ أُخْتٌ فَلَهَا نِصْفٌ مَا تَرَكَ وَهُوَ يَرِثُهَا إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ وَلَدٌ فَإِنْ كَانَتَا اثْنَتَيْنِ فَلَهُمَا الثُّلُثَانِ مِمَّا تَرَكَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا إِخْوَةً رِجَالًا وَنِسَاءً فَلِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ الْأُنْثَيَيْنِ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ أَنَّ تَضِلُّوا وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ .

“They ask you for a legal verdict. Say: Allah directs

descendants nor ascendants as heirs). If it is a man that dies, leaving a sister, but no child, she shall have half the inheritance. If (such a deceased was) a woman, who left no child, her brother takes her inheritance. If there are two sisters, they shall have two-thirds of the inheritance; if there are brothers and sisters, the male will have twice the share of the female. (Thus) does Allah make clear to you (His Law) for fear that you go astray. And Allah is the All-Knower of everything".<sup>34</sup>

- **Equal Right to Choose a Spouse:** A woman has right to choose her husband. No one can impose a decision on her against her will. She has a right to seek separation (*Khula'*) from her husband if their marriage becomes impossible to sustain. The *Qur'an* asks the Muslims to treat women kindly-

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَرِثُوا النِّسَاءَ كَرْهَهَا وَلَا تَغْضِلُوهُنَّ لِتَذْهَبُوا بِعَصْبِ مَا عَاهَدْتُمُوهُنَّ إِلَّا أَنْ يُأْتِيَنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُّبِينَةٍ وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ فَإِنْ كَرْهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَى أَنْ تَكُرْهُوْهُ شَيْئًا وَيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا .

"O you who believe! You are forbidden to inherit women against their will, and you should not treat them with harshness, that you may take away part of the *Mahr* you have given them, unless they commit open illegal sexual intercourse. And live with them honorably. If you dislike them, it may be that you dislike a thing and Allah brings through it a great deal of good".<sup>35</sup>

It makes Muslim husbands responsible for their wife's maintenance. The women, in return, are

<sup>34</sup> *Al-Qur'an: Sura An-Nisa, 4:176*

<sup>35</sup> *Al-Qur'an: Sura An-Nisa, 4:19*

expected to remain obedient and chaste. Allah, the Almighty states:

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ إِمَّا فَضَلَّ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُنَّ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَإِمَّا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِنَّ  
فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَاتِنَاتٌ حَافِظَاتٌ لِلْغَيْبِ إِمَّا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ وَالَّذِي تَحْافُزُونَ نُسُورُهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ  
وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ فَإِنْ أَطْعَنْتُمُهُنَّ فَلَا تَبْغُوْنَ عَلَيْهِنَّ سَيِّئًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْهَا  
كَبِيرًا .

“Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has made one of them to excel the other, and because they spend (to support them) from their means. Therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient (to Allah and to their husbands), and guard what Allah orders them to guard (e.g. their chastity, their husband's property, etc.). As to those women on whose part you see ill-conduct, admonish them (first), (next), refuse to share their beds, (and last) beat them (lightly, if it is useful), but if they return to obedience, seek not against them means (of annoyance). Surely, Allah is Ever Most High, Most Great”.<sup>36</sup>

Islam has honored women by giving them the right to choose a spouse and keep their original family name once married. Additionally, many have the impression that parents force their daughters into marriage. This is a cultural practice, and has no basis in Islam. In fact, it is prohibited. At the time of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), a woman came to him and said, “My father has married me to my cousin to raise his social standing and I was forced into it.” The Prophet sent for the girl's father and then in his presence gave the girl the option of

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<sup>36</sup> Al-Qur'an: Sura An-Nisa, 4:34



remaining married or nullifying the marriage. She responded, "*O Messenger of Allah, I have accepted what my father did, but I wanted to show other women (that they could not be forced into a marriage).*"<sup>37</sup>

- **Right to do work and develop talents:** A woman has a right to develop her talents and to work within the limits of Islam. Islam when allows Muslim men to marry Jewish or Christian chaste women it also allowed those non-Muslim married women to retain her religion and her husband cannot interfere in this freedom.

A socio-biology expert, Edward O. Wilson of Harvard University, said that females tend to be higher than males in verbal skills, empathy and social skills, among other things, while men tend to be higher in independence, dominance, spatial and mathematical skills, rank-related aggression, and other characteristics.

- **Right to perform 'Ibadah:** Islam also allowed Muslim women to perform all kinds of 'Ibadah like *Salah, Sawm, Zakah* and *Hajj* as per conditions applied to them. Even if they performed any optional slot of *Ibadah* (like congregational prayer, *Jumu'a* and Eid prayer, fasting outside *Ramadan*, optional charity, 2<sup>nd</sup> *Hajj* etc.) they also get the same reward and same benefit as well as the men.

Men and women worship Allah in the same way, they worship the same God (Allah), perform the same acts of worship, follow the same scripture, and hold the same beliefs. Allah (the Arabic word for

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<sup>37</sup> *Sunan Ibn Majah.*

the One true God of all creation), judges all human beings fairly and equitably. Allah (SWT) emphasizes the just treatment and reward due to both men and women in many verses of the *Qur'an*:

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَكَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَمَسَاكِنٌ طَيِّبَةٌ فِي جَنَّاتٍ عَذْنٍ وَرِضْوَانٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ .

“Allah has promised to the believers, men and women, gardens under which rivers flow, to dwell therein, and beautiful mansions in gardens of everlasting bliss (Eden Paradise). But the greatest bliss is the Good Pleasure of Allah. That is the supreme success”.<sup>38</sup>

- **Equality in learning *Qur'an* and following the guidance of it:** The holy *Qur'an* is the actual speech of Allah (SWT) handed down through Mohammed (SAW) between 610 and 632 CE. Its original text is in Arabic. The *Qur'an* contains 114 chapters on a variety of different topics, all meant to instruct humanity on how to live on this earth. Allah's guidance through the *Qur'an* always addressed to his believers, both men and women equally. Both are required to learn it, required to follow the same laws of Allah, and will be rewarded the same.

### Conclusion:

Before Islam, women were considered shameful; female children were buried alive; prostitution was widespread; divorce was only in the hands of the husband; inheritance was only for the strong and oppression was common. Islam came and abolished these practices. Even now, in the

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<sup>38</sup> *Al-Qur'an: Sura At-Taubah*, 9:72

developed countries, women are not granted respect, dignity and honor, let alone equal pay for equal work. Islam, however, regards women as precious and valuable, not to be disrespected or disgraced. The mistreatment of women in some Middle-Eastern countries or Muslim families is due to cultural factors that some Muslims wrongly follow, not because of Islam. Why would many women around the world willingly enter Islam if it were an oppressive religion?

We like to end with the words of our Lord, the Creator and the Sustainer of all men and women:

إِنَّ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْقَانِتِينَ وَالْقَانِتَاتِ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّابِرِينَ وَالصَّابِرَاتِ وَالْخَاسِعِينَ وَالْخَاسِعَاتِ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقَاتِ وَالصَّائِمِينَ وَالصَّائِمَاتِ وَالْخَافِظِينَ فُرُوجُهُمْ وَالْحَافِظَاتِ وَالْدَّاکِرِينَ اللَّهُ كَثِيرًا وَالْدَّاکِرَاتِ أَعَدَ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا .

“Surely the men who submit and the women who submit, and the believing men and the believing women, and the obedient men and the obedient women, and the truthful men and the truthful women, and the patient men and the patient women, and the humble men and the humble women... Allah has prepared for them forgiveness and a great reward.”<sup>39</sup>

### Duties of a woman in Islam

Islam is a fair and a balanced system of life. While it specifies the rights of women it also lays down duties. A Muslim woman is expected to observe the following duties:

1. Belief in *Tawhid* and the practice of Islam come first. A Muslim woman must perform her *Salah*,

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<sup>39</sup> *Al-Qur'an: Sura Al-Ahzab*, 33:35

observe *Sawm*, pay *Zakah* on her own wealth (if it is applicable), and go on *Hajj* (if she can afford it). She is exempted from *Salah* and can defer *Sawm* during her period, but she must make up the days lost afterwards. Friday prayer (*Jumu'ah*) is optional on women.

2. She is required to maintain her chastity all the time. She must not have any extra-marital relationships. The same is the case with men.
3. She is the queen of the family and in charge of domestic life. It is her duty to bring up children according to the needs of Islam. She has to look after the family and has almost absolute control over domestic affairs, although the family is run by mutual consultation and co-operation.
4. She is her husband's helpmate. A faithful wife is like a garment, a source of peace, happiness and contentment for her husband. The *Qur'an* states:

هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَهُنَّ .

“They are *Libas* [body cover, or screen, or *Sakan*, (i.e. you enjoy the pleasure of living with her] for you and you are the same for them”.<sup>40</sup> The *Qur'an* also states:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوْدَةً وَرَحْمَةً  
إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ .

“And among His signs is this, that He created for you wives from among yourselves, that you may find repose in them, and He has put between you

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<sup>40</sup> *Al-Qur'an: Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:187*

affection and mercy. Verily, in that are indeed signs for a people who reflect".<sup>41</sup>

5. If she is asked to go against the commands of Allah, she must defy even her husband, father or brother.
6. She should dress modestly and should put on *Hijab* (covering clock) while going out, meeting adult males beyond her close relatives. And she should not wear men's clothing. Allah (SWT) says:

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغْضُبُوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَخْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ذَلِكَ أَزْكَى لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ حَبِيرٌ عَمَّا يَصْنَعُونَ . وَقُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُبْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَخْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبَدِّلْنَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَاهَرَ مِنْهَا وَلَا يُضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَى جُيُوبِهِنَّ وَلَا يُبَدِّلْنَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبَعْوَلَتِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَاءِ بَعْوَلَتِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَائِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَاءِ بَعْوَلَتِهِنَّ أَوْ إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِي إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِي أَخْوَانِهِنَّ ..

"Tell the believing men to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts, etc.). That is purer for them. Verily, Allah is All-Aware of what they do. And tell the believing women to lower their gaze, and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts, etc.) and not to show off their adornment except only that which is apparent and to draw their veils all over *Juyubihinna* (i.e. their bodies, faces, necks and bosoms, etc.) and not to reveal their adornment except to their husbands, their fathers, their husband's fathers, their sons, their husband's fathers, their sons, their husband's sons, their brothers or their brother's sons, or their sister's sons .....".<sup>42</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Al-Qur'an: Surah Ar-Room, 30:21

<sup>42</sup> Al-Qur'an: Surah An-Noor, 24:30-31

7. She is expected to protect her husband's property and belongings in his absence.

Islam views husband and wife as complementary to each other. None of them will dominates the other. Each has his or her individual rights and duties. Together they form a peaceful and happy family, which is the basis for a sound and prosperous society.

## Economic System of Islam

**Introduction:** The economic aspect is one of the most important parts of our life, while not being the whole of it. The Islamic system is balanced and places everything in its right place. Islam has given detailed regulations for the conduct of our economic life, which concerns mainly the earning and use of wealth. Therefore, Islam suggests us to follow the required rules of earning and expenditure, which is mainly related with quality and quantity.

### To maintain the quality and quantity is must

The Almighty Allah states us by addressing the holy Prophets:

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ كُلُّوا مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَاعْمَلُوا صَالِحًا إِنِّي عَمَلْتُنَّ عَلَيْنِمْ .

“O (you) Messengers! Eat of the *Tayyibat* [all kinds of *Halal* (lawful) foods] and do righteous deeds. Verily! I am Well-Acquainted with what you do”.<sup>43</sup>

Our holy Prophet (SAW) said in a tradition:

عَنِ الْمَقْدَامِ بْنِ مَعْدِيْ كَرْبَ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: مَا مَلَأَ آدَمِيْ وِعَاءً شَرًّا مِنْ بَطْنِ، بِخَسْبِ ابْنِ آدَمَ أَكْلَاتْ يُقْمَنَ صُلْبَهُ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَا حَالَةَ فَثُلْثٌ لِطَعَامِهِ وَثُلْثٌ لِشَرَابِهِ وَثُلْثٌ لِنَفْسِهِ .

<sup>43</sup> Al-Qur'an: Surah Al-Mu'minun, 23:51

Narrated *Miqdad Ibn M'adikarab* ®: I heard the holy Prophet (SAW) said: A human being never fill up any container worse than the stomach. For standing with his backbone erectly, he just needs a few mouthfuls. But if he needs more, he may take one third of his stomach food, one third water and one third for respiration.<sup>44</sup>

By the above mentioned *Aya Allah* (SWT) ordered us to maintain quality of things and by the *Hadith* our beloved Prophet (SAW) indicates to follow the quantity. Islam ordered us to select the *halal* things for our living and to take from that *halal* things as much as we need.

Islam states that ‘Men need bread for living; but they don’t live for bread alone’. Thus, earning and spending money is essential for our living; but we do not live only for this. We have a greater purpose of life. We not only have a body; but we have a soul and a conscience as well. Without soul and conscience, we would be considered little more than the animals.

Everything in Islam is for the benefit and welfare of mankind. The Economic system of Islam aim at establishing a just society wherein every one will behave responsibly and honestly, not for getting as big a share of something without regard to honesty, truth, trust, decency and responsibility.

### **Principles of Islamic Economic System:**

The Islamic Economic System is based on the following five fundamental principles. Those are:

#### **1. Earning and Expenditure by *Halal* means:**

Islam has prescribed laws to regulate earnings and expenditure. Muslims are not allowed to earn and spend

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<sup>44</sup> Narrated *Abu 'Isa At-Tirmidhi* in his *Sunan* and said: this *Hadith* is *Hasan* and *Sahih*.

in just any way they like. They must follow the following rules of the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*:

- a. Any earnings from the production, sale and distribution of alcoholic drinks are unlawful, as are earnings from gambling, lotteries and from interest transactions also unlawful. (For details please see: *Al-Qur'an*, 5:90-91, 2:275)
- b. Earning by falsehood, fraud, theft, robbery etc. are unlawful. Deceitful acquisition of orphan's property has been particularly banned. (For details please see: *Al-Qur'an*, 2:188, 4:2, 6:152, 7:85)
- c. Hoarding of food stuff and basic necessities, smuggling and artificial creation of shortages are unlawful. (For details please see: *Al-Qur'an*, 3:180, 9:34-35)
- d. Earning from brothels and from such other practices which are harmful to society are also unlawful. (For details please see: *Al-Qur'an*, 24:23)

Islam strikes at the root of evil and wants to establish a just and fair society. A Muslim must earn his living in Halal ways and he should always bear in mind that whatever he does, is known to Allah (SWT). He will be accountable for his actions on the Day of Judgment. He cannot hide anything from Almighty Allah.

Unlawful expenditure is also not allowed in Islam. It does not at all befit a Muslim to spend money irresponsibly. His actions should be responsible and meaningful. Extravagance and waste are strongly discouraged in Islamic Economic System. (For details please see: *Al-Qur'an*, 7:31, 17:26, 19:27-31, 25:68)

## **2. Right to Property and Individual Liberty:**

Islam allows a person to own his earnings. The Islamic State does not interfere with the freedom of speech,

word and earnings of an individual provided this freedom is not harmful for the greater good of society. Every individual will be answerable to Allah for his or her actions. (For details please see: *Al-Qur'an*, 4:7, 36:71, 16:111)

### **3. Maintaining the System of *Zakah*:**

The compulsory payment of *Zakah* is one of the main principles of an Islamic economy. Every Muslim who owns wealth more than his needs, must pay the fixed rate of *Zakah* to the Islamic State. *Zakah* is a means of narrowing the gap between the rich and the poor. It helps fair distribution of wealth. It is a form of social security. The Islamic state is responsible for providing basic necessities of food, clothing, housing, medicine and education to every citizen. No-one should have any fear of insecurity or poverty. (For details please see: *Al-Qur'an*, 9:69, 103 and 98:5)

### **4. Prohibition of Interest (*Riba*):**

An Islamic economy is free of interest. Islam prohibits all transactions involving interest. It allows zero rate of interest. Allah (SWT) has allowed trade and prohibited interest (For details please see: *Al-Qur'an*, 2:275). So there is no option to take interest in any means or in any quantity from any person. A Muslim should give up what remains from interest, if he is really believer. Moreover, if he does not do it, then Allah and His Messenger has warned him of war with them (For details please see: *Al-Qur'an*, 2:278-279).

Interest is neither a trade nor a profit. It is a means of exploitation and concentration of wealth. It is the basis of modern capitalism. It is completely opposite to *Zakah*. *Zakah* channels wealth from the rich to the

poor, while interest takes away wealth from the poor and hands it over to the rich.

### 5. Islamic Law of Inheritance (*Meerath*):

Islamic Economic System interferes in the proper distribution of wealth even after the death of a person. The *Surah An-Nisa* of the holy *Qur'an* deals with the law of inheritance in great detail (For details please see: *Al-Qur'an*, 4:7-12 and 176). Islamic law of inheritance is a wonderful system of stopping concentration of wealth. It provides very detailed laws regarding the rights of dependents over the property of the deceased person.

### Conclusion:

In addition to the above basic principles, Islam has laid down many more rules about our economic life. An Islamic state must bring all productive resources into use, including unemployed manpower, unused land, water resources and minerals. Islam takes steps to root out corruption and all harmful pursuits even if they are economically lucrative. Even individual's freedom sometimes may have to be sacrificed for the social good.

## How to bring up our Children (Duties of Parents towards their Children)

**Introduction:** The duty of bringing up the children is that of the parents, teachers and the society. They will be responsible before Allah for educating the young generations. If they do well in this respect, they will please Allah and will be happy in this world and the Hereafter. But if they prove negligent, they will be sinful and punished in the Hereafter. Allah (SWT) says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوْلُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِئُكُمْ نَارًا .

“O you who believe! Guard yourselves and your households against a Fire”.<sup>45</sup>

The Prophet (SAW) said: “All of you are responsible and all will be questioned about their responsibilities”. (Agreed upon) So it is good news to all guardians (Parents and teachers etc.) who are dutiful regarding their responsibilities. The Prophet (SAW) said: “If Allah guides anybody to Islam through your effort, it will be better for you more than red camels (i.e. better than any amount of wealth)”. (*Bukhari* and *Muslim*) The Prophet (SAW) also said: “When one dies his (chance of doing) good deeds (and gaining reward) come to an end, but three things will go on benefiting him. They are: an ongoing charity, some useful knowledge and a pious son (who supplicates for his parents)”. (*Sahih Muslim*)

### **How to start?**

Start by being pious yourself to set an example for your children/students as they will consider, whatever you do as good and what you do not as bad. Therefore the behavior and conduct of the parents and teachers are the best lessons for the children. So, every parent and teacher should follow the following instructions:

#### **1. Teach the children about *Iman*:**

- a. First of all teach them utter- ﴿لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ﴾ “There is no *Ilah* except Allah and Muhammad (SAW) is Allah’s Messenger”. Later on help them understand the meaning of this declaration as Allah alone is the true *Ma’bud*/Worshiped) who deserves our worship.

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<sup>45</sup> Al-Qur'an: Surah At-Tahrim, 66:6

- b. Implant in the mind of your children the meaning of *Tawhid* and its perfect requirements that there is no *Ilah /Ma'bud* except Allah and Muhammad (SAW) is His Messenger. Therefore, he/she should not worship but Allah and not obey but His Messenger.
- c. Put in the hearts of your children the love of Allah and belief in Him. Allah only can help and rescue us in any situation. He has no partner in His actions.
- d. Create in your children a strong desire for Paradise and make them love it and work for it.
- e. Teach them to ask Allah alone for whatever they need and to hope for His answer. The Prophet (SAW) said: "If you ever ask, ask Allah and if you need help, seek Allah's help". (*Al-Bukhari*)

## **2. Teach them (*Salah*) Prayers:**

- a. Teach your children how to perform prayer so that they may observe it when they grow. The Prophet (SAW) said: "Teach your children prayers at seven and beat them for it (if required) at ten". (*Musnad Ahmad*)
- b. Teach them to love the *Qur'an* and to read it. Make them to understand the meaning of the *Qur'an* and its explanation with fulfill its demands in whole life.

## **3. Warn them against the Unlawful:**

- a. Children must be guided to be cautious against the unlawful. They should not to say or do anything that is unlawful, not to use word of curse, bad manes or obscene language. It is cause of entering Hell.

- b. Children not should be accept or even try to own any unlawful property, because illegal earning will not be fruitful to them.
- c. Children should be discouraged from reading obscene magazines, sex stories and seeing naked pictures. They should be strictly warned against smoking and any other alcoholic drinks.
- d. The merits of being truthful both in word and deed should be demonstrated by the parents for the children. Should not tell lies, not break promise even if jokingly.
- e. One must not feed his children by illegal earns and not to be in any way invoke (appeal to) Allah against of the children.
- f. The children must be strictly warned against the *Shirk*, because it is a dangerous sin that involves human being in Hell.

#### 4. Significance of Veiling (*Hijab*):

- a. Daughters need special care from the beginning in making them used to putting on well-covering dresses that do not disclose their beauty. If she learns to use this type of dresses while a youngster, later on she will feel proud to wear modest dress in obedience to Allah. A young Muslin girl should not mix with general men and should avoid the chance of youth temptation. She has to cover her whole body by suitable enough loose dresses. The *Qur'an* says: "O prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and women of the believers to draw their cloaks (veils) all over their bodies".<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> *Al-Qur'an: Surah Al-Ahzab*, 33:59

b. Encourage your children to wear their respective sex dresses so that they may be distinguished from the children of alien cultures. The prophet (SAW) said: "Cursed are those men who imitate women and those women who imitate men.. (Al-Bukhari)

##### 5. Morals and Manners:

- a. Greet the children with Islamic greeting "Assalamu `Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu".
- b. Children should be taught to use their right hands for all actions except toilet only.
- c. Children should not be given chance to mingle (combine) with vicious companions, not be allowed to stand in the street, not be allowed to throw rubbish in the street.
- d. Advice the children to respect the elder man, the neighbors and to love the younger. They also be advised to receive the guests hospitably (friendly) and honorably.

In addition to the above mentioned guidelines we should say to the Almighty Allah as we taught in the holy *Qur'an*:  
وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَرْوَاحِنَا وَدُرْيَاتِنَا قُرْةً أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا .

"And those who say: Our Lord! Bestow on us from our wives and our offspring the comfort of our eyes, and make us leaders of the *Muttaqun* (the pious)".<sup>47</sup>

That was the invocation of the slaves of the Most Gracious, Allah (SWT). When we follow the upper mentioned guidelines we will get a extraordinary generation we need.

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<sup>89</sup> *Al-Qur'an: Surah Al-Furqan*, 25:74

## Islamic Law Regarding Dress

### **Purposes of dress in Islam:**

Islamic law has provided mankind with appropriate instructions and guidelines regarding dress for men and women. Islam wants to achieve two things through appropriate dress.

**Firstly**, to cover human body properly as it is not right to expose human body indecently.

**Secondly**, to perform the purpose of beautification and adornment. The *Qur'an* states in this regard:

يَا بَنِي آدَمَ قَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا يُوَارِي سُوءَاتِكُمْ وَرِيشًا وَلِبَاسُ التَّقْوَىٰ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ .

“O children of Adam! We gave sent down to you clothing in order to cover the shameful parts of your body and serve as protection and adornment. And the best garment is the garment of piety”.<sup>48</sup>

So, there should be a balance between appropriate covering of body and adornment. If this balance is destroyed, this will be a deviation and following the way of devil. That is why the *Qur'an* stated:

يَا بَنِي آدَمَ لَا يَفْتَنَنُكُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ كَمَا أَخْرَجَ أَبْوَيْكُمْ مِّنَ الْجَنَّةِ يَنْزَعُ عَنْهُمَا لِبَاسَهُمَا لِرُبَّهُمَا سُوءَاهِمَا .

“O children of Adan! Let not *satan* seduce you in the same way as he caused your first parents to be driven out of the heaven and stripped them of their garments in order to expose their shameful parts before each other”.<sup>49</sup>

### **Dress code of Islam:**

There is no dress named Islamic dress; but there are some code regarding Islamic dress, these are as follows:

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<sup>48</sup> *Al-Qur'an*: Surah Al-A'raf, 7:26

<sup>49</sup> *Al-Qur'an*: Surah Al-A'raf, 7:27

**To distinct between men and women:**  
Islam has not permitted the use of same type of dress or garments by men and women. Islam wants to maintain the distinction between man and woman. It is not proper for men or women to imitate the other sex in respect of dress. The Prophet of Islam has said: "It is prohibited for men to dress like women and it is prohibited for women to dress like men" (*Ahmad, Abu Dawood, Ibn Majah*) The Prophet of Islam has also cursed such kind of people (*Bukhari*).

### **Showiness is prohibited in Islam:**

Islam has prohibited show and pomp in the matter of dress. The *Qur'an* stated: "Allah does not like any proud person". (57:22) The Prophet (SAW) said: "Any person who will unnecessarily lengthen his dress to touch the ground only to show his pride, Allah will not look to him on the Day of Judgment". (*Bukhari*)

### **Islam upholds cleanliness:**

Dress should be very clean as Islam has emphasized on cleanliness. The Prophet of Islam has said: "Adopt cleanliness because Islam is a religion which upholds cleanliness" (*Ibn Hibban*)

### **Wearing gold and silk:**

Islam has permitted use of gold ornaments and silk for women, not for men. The reason probably is that these are more suitable for women nature and not for men. Prophet (SAW) said: "Indeed, he who wears silk in this world (will) have no share in it in the life after death". (*Bukhari* and *Muslim*)

The Prophet also said: "Gold and silk are lawful to the women of my *Ummah* and forbidden to the men". (*Tirmidhi, Nasa'i*)

## **Covering the body properly:**

Men and women should wear decent dress. It is the *Sunnah* of the Prophet that men and women should cover their body properly. However, men are allowed to expose their body except the portion between navel and knee for the need of work or otherwise. And women should cover their body very properly. The Prophet (*SAW*) has said that: “It is not appropriate for a grown up girl to expose any part of her body except face and forehead (to any male who is not her husband or close relative)”. (*Abu Dawood*). The Prophet (*SAW*) has also said that women are not permitted to wear any thin garment through which their body can be seen. (*Sahih Muslim*)

## **Extra outer garment for women:**

Islam believes in the dignity of women and wants to protect her from lustful eyes of evil persons. Islam, therefore, prescribed that women should put on a flowing outer garment (gown) over her normal dress while going out to do work or for other purposes. The *Qur'an* has stated:

“O Prophet! Ask your wives, daughter and women of the believers to put on a flowing outer garment (covering their bosom and head). This is better for recognition of good women so that they will not be bothered”. (33:59)

## **Conclusion:**

If mankind follows the principles of dress given by Islam, it will indeed ensure dignity of women and men and also help to establish a decent society. Therefore, Islam wants to ensure the balance between appropriate covering of body and adornment; between cleanliness and showiness.

