

Women After Marriage - Part 3

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Duties Towards Parents After Marriage

There are various incidents in our society when the husband refuses to allow his wife to visit her parents. What right does a man think he has over his wife's feelings and duties to stop her from seeing her parents. Does he, by chance, think that by marrying her he has come to own her. Does he put her in the same category or the same relationship to a goat he buys. If so, he is certainly mistaken. From the Islamic point of view, the relationship between a man and his wife is one between two human beings of equal status. Each of them has certain duties, but neither of them can negate the independent personality of the other.

It is simply unacceptable from the Islamic point of view that a husband should consider that the marriage divides his wife's life into two separate stages and that each stage is completely isolated from the other. If he tries to impose this situation, then he will have a wife who is disillusioned, broken-hearted and totally lacking in the ability to impart to her children the proper values of kindness to family relations and dutifulness to parents. How could she, when she herself is denied the right to maintain her relationship with her parents.

The fact is that dutifulness to parents is a duty imposed by Allah on all children, boys and girls, men and women, single or married. This dutifulness does not stop at any particular stage in anyone's existence. It extends throughout the parents, and the children's lives. Being dutiful to one's parents is not considered to have been completed when they die. Their children are required to continue to show dutifulness to them by showing respect and kind treatment to their friends and relatives, supplicating on their behalf, praying to Allah to have mercy on them, reciting the Holy Quraan and giving Sadaqah or charitable donations on their behalf, etc. When parents have such a claim against their children, how is it possible that a husband prevents his wife from visiting her parents.

If he does, then he is certainly unjust to her, unless he has a very good reason for his action that can only be imagined in isolated cases. A man should consider what his feelings would be like if her unreasonable husband prevented his sister from seeing their parents. He should extend to his wife the same treatment he would like to see extended to his dearest sister.

If an elderly couple has only daughters and they all are married, and the couple needs to be looked after, then their daughters should try their best to look after them. Islam does not accept that such elderly parents should be abandoned simply because their daughters are married.

If a husband threatens his wife with divorce for visiting her parents, he is unjust to her and to them. Injustice is forbidden in Islam. Almighty Allah says in a Qudsi Hadith: "My servants, I have forbidden injustice and have made injustice forbidden to you. Do not be unjust to one another."

Nor is it permissible for a Muslim to obey anyone encouraging him to be unjust to his wife, not even his parents. If your parents insist that you treat your wife harshly or unjustly, you should realize that injustice represents disobedience to Almighty Allah. The Holy Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) says: "No creature may be obeyed in what constitutes disobedience to the Creator."

The Best Wife

The best wife is she,

1. Who considers attending her husband as her foremost duty.
2. Who never leaves any requirement of her husband unfulfilled.

3. Who appreciates the merits of her husband and neglects his demerits.
4. Who takes pains in comforting her husband.
5. Who does not put any demand before her husband that is beyond his capacity and leads a life of contentment.
6. Who never looks at strange and unknown men nor allows them to look at her.
7. Who lives in Pardah and keeps her chastity safe.
8. Who safeguards the wealth, the property and other belongings of her husband including herself.
9. Who proves her dedication to her husband by sacrificing everything to salvage her husband from any calamity.
10. Who keeps patience over the atrocities inflicted to her by her husband.
11. Who is looked upon respectfully both in her father's house and in her husband's house.
12. Who is humble and kind to the neighbors and whose humility everyone appreciates.
13. Who carries out her religious duties with punctuality and fulfills the rights of the Creator and creatures.
14. Who tolerates with cool mind the bitterness of the members of her husband's family.
15. Who first feeds the other members of the house and eats herself in the last.

Conflict with mother-in-law

This is one of the darkest chapters in human history. The conflict between mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law has been a centuries old tradition. Almost every house faces this crisis. How surprising is the matter that the mother brings up her son with utmost care and love. She longs for her son to grow up soon and when the son reaches his youth, she as the mother sets out to choose a suitable bride for her son. In the process of matchmaking she insists on the most beautiful girls of the world to be her daughter-in-law.

But when that most beautiful girl leaves her father's house and enters her new house, the mother of her husband suddenly appears as an avowed enemy. The reason of this conflict is purely a psychological one. The mother, who has been reigning over this house for the last so many years, suddenly finds that a new woman has come to share not only the monopolistic authority of this house but also the love and affection of her son. The newcomer woman not only diverts the attention of her father-in-law but also the attention of other male members of the house. The son also gets more involved in her newly-wed lady than his mother. He does not call her mother for attending his requirements. The father-in-law also gets immense pleasure to call his daughter-in-law for his needs. This becomes unbearable for the old lady and she develops a feeling of jealousy against the new comer. Gradually, this feeling takes the shape of severe hatred. The newcomer lady is quite young and enthusiastic in her approach to life. She wants to bring about some innovation in the old style of the house. The mother cannot tolerate this as she thinks that the house still belongs to her. She is not prepared for being neglected by the members of the family. Thus, starts a cold war between the old lady and the new lady. Slowly and quite unknowingly the entire house gets involved in this conflict.

The only way to end this conflict is that all the parties of this conflict - the mother, her son and the daughter-in-law should appreciate their respective rights and duties.

How the Mother-in Law should behave

Every mother-in-law should treat her daughter-in-law as her own daughter. If the daughter-in-law, due to her inexperience, commits a mistake, she should not be rebuked or admonished. Rather, the mother-in-law should gently teach her the correct way of doing things. The old mistress of the house should always bear in mind that this new lady has come to this house by leaving her parents and relatives and friends. She is facing a new environment here with so many strange faces around. The old lady should come forward and become a useful companion of the new comer. She should accept the wife of her son as her own daughter. Once this relationship develops between the two ladies, the house will surely turn into a heaven on earth.

How the Daughter-in-Law should behave

Every daughter-in-law should treat her mother-in-law as her own mother. She should pay due respect to her, obey her commands and attend to her needs. If the old mistress of the house rebukes her on some matters, she should not answer back. Similarly, she should treat her father-in-law as her own father and look after his requirements. During the lifetime of her husband's parents, she should never think of dividing the family by raising the demand of a

separate house for herself and her husband. She should be kind to other ladies in her husband's family such as the wives of her husband's elder and younger brothers. She should be friendly with the sisters of her husband.

How the son should behave

The son should treat his bride with love and kindness. But at the same time, he should not neglect his parents. He should show the same vigor in loving his parents as was before his marriage. He should not make his mother feel that her authority has been minimized following the arrival of a new lady member. He should carry out all transactions through his mother. He should also instruct his bride not to undertake any work without the permission of his parents. This would give the mother a confidence that she is still the mistress of the house and both the son and the daughter-in-law have allegiance to her authority.

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