

THE MESSENGER ﷺ ENCOURAGED WOMEN TO STRIVE TO PLEASE THEIR HUSBANDS

Once we have understood the previous chapter, we can contextualise the statements and commands of Allāh’s Messenger ﷺ that single out the woman and her duties to her Lord, her husband and society.

Abu Hurairah, رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrated that Allāh’s Messenger ﷺ said:

إِذَا صَلَّتِ الْمَرْأَةُ خَمْسَهَا وَصَامَتْ شَهْرَهَا وَحَصَّنَتْ فَرْجَهَا وَأَطَاعَتْ زَوْجَهَا
قِيلَ لَهَا ادْخُلِي الْجَنَّةَ مِنْ أَيِّ أَبْوَابِ الْجَنَّةِ شِئْتَ

“Whichever woman prays her five Prayers, fasts the month of Ramadān, guards herself from fornication, and she obeys her husband—it will be said to her on the Day of Resurrection, ‘Enter Paradise through whichever of its gates you wish.’”¹⁹

This is due to her fulfilling her duties to her Lord, her husband, and herself. The pious wife recognises the nature of a man and behaves in a manner that brings about love and affection between her and her husband. He is kind to her and cares for her. When he looks at her, she pleases him; he trusts, respects, and honours her. He is happy to provide for her and loves to return home at the end of the day to be with her and their children because the home is a place of comfort, tranquillity, and a refuge from the toil and stresses of the world.

Allāh’s Messenger ﷺ explained to women the nature of men and what makes them happy. He ﷺ said:

¹⁹ Ibn Hibbān in his *Sahīh* (6/184 –*Ihsān*), and others. Graded *sahīh* by Al-Albānī due to witnessing narrations, see *Ādāb Az-Zifāf* (no. 287).

ثَلَاثٌ مِنَ السَّعَادَةِ وَثَلَاثٌ مِنَ الشَّقَاوَةِ فَمِنْ السَّعَادَةِ الْمَرْأَةُ تَرَاهَا تُعْجِبُكَ
وَتَغِيْبُ فِتَامُئْتَهَا عَلَى نَفْسِهَا وَمَالِكَ وَالِدَابَّةُ تَكُونُ وَطِيَّةً فِتُلْجِحُكَ بِأَصْحَابِكَ
وَالدَّارُ تَكُونُ وَاسِعَةً كَثِيْرَةَ الْمَرَافِقِ
وَمِنْ الشَّقَاوَةِ الْمَرْأَةُ تَرَاهَا فَتَسُوْءُكَ وَتَحْمِلُ لِسَانَهَا عَلَيْكَ وَإِنْ غِيْبَتْ عَنْهَا لَمْ
تَأْمَنْهَا عَلَى نَفْسِهَا وَمَالِكَ وَالِدَابَّةُ تَكُونُ قَطُوْفًا فَإِنْ صَرَبْتَهَا أَتْعَبْتِكَ وَإِنْ
تَرَكَتَهَا لَمْ تُلْجِحُكَ بِأَصْحَابِكَ وَالِدَّارُ تَكُونُ ضَيِّقَةً قَلِيْلَةَ الْمَرَافِقِ

“There are three things that bring about happiness and three that bring about misery. Happiness is to have a wife who, when you look at her, pleases you much, and when you are absent, you can trust her with herself and your property; and to have a good, easy-going riding beast that enables you to reach your companions; and a spacious home that has much by way of facilities.

And from misery is to have a wife who, when you look at her, displeases you—she uses her tongue to speak against you, and when you are absent, you cannot trust her with herself or your property; and to have a difficult and disinclined riding beast—if you whip it, you only tire yourself out and if you leave it alone it will not carry you to your companions; and a narrow constricted home with very little by way of facilities.”²⁰

Therefore, a woman should try her utmost to be a comfort to her husband, seeking to please him. Allāh’s Messenger ﷺ said:

²⁰ It was reported by Al-Hākim (2/162). Shaikh Al-Albānī رَحِمَهُ اللهُ graded this narration *hasan* in *Silsilatul-Ahādith as-Sahīhah* (no. 1047).

أَلَا أُخْبِرُكُمْ بِرِجَالِكُمْ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ التِّي فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَالصَّيِّقُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ
وَالشَّهِيدُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَالْمَوْلُودُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَالرَّجُلُ يَزُورُ أَخَاهُ فِي نَاحِيَةِ الْمِصْرِ لَا
يَزُورُهُ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ
وَيَسْأَلُكُمْ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ الْوَدُودُ الْوَلُودُ الْعَوُودُ عَلَى زَوْجِهَا الَّتِي إِذَا غَضِبَ
جَاءَتْ حَتَّى تَضَعَ يَدَهَا فِي يَدِ زَوْجِهَا وَتَقُولُ لَا أَذُوقُ عَمُصًا حَتَّى تَرْضَى

“Shall I inform you which of your men are from the people of Jannah? The Prophet is in Jannah, the one who believes firmly in the Truth is in Jannah, the martyr is in Jannah, the newborn [who dies] is in Jannah—and the man who visits his brother who lives on the other side of the city; he does not visit him except for Allah’s sake, the Mighty and majestic.

Your women from the inhabitants of Paradise are loving, fertile²¹ and an asset to their husbands. And if her husband becomes angry, she places her hand in his hand and says: *‘I will not taste sleep until you are pleased.’*”²²

²¹ She is happy to have many children—her mother, grandmother and aunts are known to have had many children.

²² Ar-Rāzī in *Al-Fawā'id* (1/202/Q) and from him, Ibn ‘Asākir (2/87/2), Abu Nu‘aym in *Al-Hilyah* (4/303) and others—declared *sahih* by Shaikh Al-Albānī in *As-Sahihah* (no. 287).

THE RIGHTS OF THE HUSBAND

‘Abdullāh ibn Abī ‘Awfā رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrated that Allāh’s Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

لَوْ كُنْتُ أَمِيرًا أَحَدًا أَنْ يَسْجُدَ لِأَحَدٍ لَأَمَرْتُ الْمَرْأَةَ أَنْ تَسْجُدَ لِزَوْجِهَا وَالَّذِي
نَفْسُ مُحَمَّدٍ بِيَدِهِ لَا تُؤَدِّي الْمَرْأَةَ حَقَّ رَبِّهَا حَتَّى تُؤَدِّي حَقَّ زَوْجِهَا وَلَوْ سَأَلَهَا
نَفْسَهَا وَهِيَ عَلَى قَتَبٍ لَمْ تَمْنَعُهُ

“If I were to command anyone to prostrate to someone else, I would have commanded the woman to prostrate to her husband. By the One in whose Hand is the soul of Muhammad, a woman has not fulfilled the rights of her Lord until she has fulfilled the rights of her husband. And were he to call her for marital relations while she was sitting on the saddle of a camel, she should not refuse him.”²³

It is said that the reference to the saddle of a camel is to the place where the Arab women used to sit and give birth. The *hadith* states that even if a woman is in the late stages of pregnancy, she should respond to her husband’s request. So, if the woman is obligated to answer her husband at this difficult time, then how much more so at other times?

Al-‘Allāmah Al-Albānī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ stated:

“If it is obligatory upon the woman to obey her husband when it comes to his desire for her, then it is even more obligatory upon her to obey him in that which is more important than that, such as the cultivation and education of their children,

²³ Ibn Mājah (no. 1853), Ibn Hibbān (6/186—*Ihsān*), Ahmad (4/381). Declared *sahih* by Al-Albānī in *As-Sahihah* (3/202).

rectification of their family and other than that from the rights and obligations.”²⁴

Allāh’s Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said,

لَا يَحِلُّ أَنْ يَسْجُدَ أَحَدٌ لِأَحَدٍ وَلَكِنْ لَوْ حَلَّ لِأَحَدٍ أَنْ يَسْجُدَ لِأَحَدٍ لَأَمَرْتُ
الْمَرْأَةَ أَنْ تَسْجُدَ لِزَوْجِهَا لِعَظَمِ حَقِّهِ عَلَيْهَا وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَوْ وَجَدْتُ عَلَيْهِ
جُرْحًا يَفِيضُ صَفَاغًا مِنْ قَدَمَيْهِ إِلَى صُدُغِ رَأْسِهِ فَجَاءَتْ وَلِحَسْتِهِ مَا أَفْسَحْتُ
كُلَّ حَقِّهِ

“It is not right that any person should prostrate to another but if it was allowed for any one person to prostrate to another, then I would have commanded the wife to prostrate to her husband due to his great right over her. By the One in whose Hand is my soul, if there was a wound pouring forth pus from his feet to the crown of his head and his wife came [to his aid] and licked that, she would still not have fulfilled all of his rights.”²⁵

So, regardless of whether an illness strikes him, or he is afflicted by a calamity or injured in battle, the wife stands by her husband and aids him and supports him without abandoning him—and because of this, her reward is immense. And when it comes to her welfare, safety, security, shelter, food, and clothing, he does not shirk his responsibility. They remain united and caring for one another in times of ease and hardship until one of them or both leaves this world.

So, the rights between spouses extend far beyond the marital bed. The bond of marriage is an immense blessing, and it is hated by Iblīs and his followers, who make every effort to destroy marriages and come

²⁴ See *Ādāb Az-Zifāf*, (p. 282).

²⁵ Ahmad (3/159), Al-Mundhirī graded the narration as *jayyid* (good) in *Al-Tarḥīb wat-Tarḥīb* (3/55), see *Sahīh Al-Jāmi‘ As-Sagḥīr* (no. 7602).

between a man and his wife. Sometimes he will use the enticement of sins which one of them falls into, or by sending an evil adviser to cause discord between them, or through close relatives who are afflicted with whisperings from Shaytān to create animosity between a man and his wife—it can be the mother who feels that her son made the wrong choice or the parents of the bride who think their daughter could have done better, or that she is being over-burdened with housework and so on. So, the wife should remind herself of her duties before Allāh بِتَارِكِهِ وَتَعَالَى, since every man desires a wife who, when he looks at her, pleases him much, and when he is absent, he can trust her with herself and with his wealth, just as Allāh’s Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ stated.

Abu Hurairah, رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrated that the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

لَا يَجِلُّ لِلْمَرْأَةِ أَنْ تَصُومَ وَرَوْحُهَا حَاضِرٌ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ وَمَا أَنْفَقَتْ مِنْ مَالِهَا فِي الصَّدَقَةِ بِغَيْرِ إِذْنِهِ فَنِصْفُ أَجْرِهَا لَهُ

“It is not right for a woman to fast while her husband is present except with his permission, and whatever she spends of her wealth in charity without his permission, then half of the reward is for him.”²⁶

Al-Hāfidh Ibn Hajr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ stated,

“This *hadīth* shows that the right of the husband upon the wife is given priority over performing optional good deeds because fulfilling his rights is an obligation—and fulfilling the obligations takes precedence over the optional deeds.”²⁷

Shaikh Al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah²⁸ رَحِمَهُ اللهُ was asked about a man whose wife fasts during the day and stands in prayer at night, and when he

²⁶ Al-Bukhārī, *Al-Fath* (9/15), Muslim (no. 1026).

²⁷ *Al-Fath* (9/296).

²⁸ *Majmū‘ Al-Fatawā* (32/274-275).

calls her to bed, she refuses. She gives precedence to optional fasting in the days and prayer during the nights over obedience to her husband—is this permissible? He responded:

لَا يَحِلُّ لَهَا ذَلِكَ بِاتِّفَاقِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ بَلْ يَجِبُ عَلَيْهَا أَنْ تُطِيعَهُ إِذَا طَلَبَهَا إِلَى
الْفِرَاشِ وَذَلِكَ فَرَضٌ وَاجِبٌ عَلَيْهَا وَأَمَّا قِيَامُ اللَّيْلِ وَصِيَامُ النَّهَارِ فَتَطَوُّعٌ
فَكَيْفَ تُقَدِّمُ مُؤَمِّنَةً النَّافِلَةَ عَلَى الْفَرِيضَةِ

“This is not permitted for her by the agreement of the Muslims. Rather, she is obligated to obey him if he calls her to bed—that is obligatory upon her. As for praying in the night and fasting in the day, they are optional—so how can a believing woman give precedence to something optional over an obligation?”

He also said,

“There is nothing more obligatory upon a woman after obedience to Allāh and His Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ than her obligations to her husband.”

The Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ made this obligation clear in his saying:

لَوْ تَعَلَّمَ الْمَرْأَةُ حَقَّ الزَّوْجِ لَمْ تَتَّعِدْ مَا حَضَرَ غَدَاؤُهُ وَعَشَاؤُهُ حَتَّى يَفْرَغَ مِنْهُ

“If the woman knew the true right of the husband, she would not sit down when her husband is served his morning and evening meals until he has finished.”²⁹

²⁹ Al-Bazzār (2/180—Kashf) and see *Sahih Al-Jāmi‘ As-Saghīr* (no. 5135).