

# **Prophetic Guidance in Dealing with Muslim and Non-Muslim Women**

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**٢٢ October ٢٠٠٨**

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## Abstract

Islam is the only religion which gives women a high status in society. Critics claim Islam hinders women by not giving them their due rights and throws doubts on matters related to women, such as polygamy, divorce and inheritance.

The research investigates the teachings of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) and his dealings with women. These guidelines illustrate how his followers should deal with women, whether mothers, wives, daughters, sisters, maternal aunts, paternal aunts, Muslim or non-Muslim. It discusses how the Prophet treats women in various situations and circumstances and demonstrates the importance of women as she compliments a man and is half of the community.

The research concludes with some important findings in dealing with women.

## المخلص

يهدف هذا البحث إلى إبراز عناية الإسلام بالمرأة، وكيفية التعامل معها، من خلال الهدى النبوي في التعامل مع المرأة المسلمة وغير المسلمة ، وقد تعرض الباحثان لبيان واقع المرأة مع المرأة أمماً، وبناتاً، وزوجة، وخلصت الدراسة إلى أن ﷺ قبل الإسلام وبعده، وكيف تعامل النبي الهدى النبوي في التعامل مع النساء نموذجاً فريداً لم يسبق إليه، ، وأن الإسلام هو الدين الوحيد الذي أعطى المرأة كامل حقوقها، وساوى بينها وبين الرجل، ووضع القواعد الأساسية لبناء الأسرة المسلمة التي تشكل اللبنة الأولى في بناء المجتمع.

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## Introduction

Allah sent His Messenger (peace be upon him) with a final religion for all mankind which is the religion of Truth, to proclaim it over all religion, as He says in the Quran: 'It is He Who has sent His Messenger with guidance and the Religion of Truth, to proclaim it over all religion, even though the Pagans may detest (it).' [Surah 9, Verse 33].

Among the advantages of this religion is that it is a religion of nature, as Allah says: 'So set your face steadily and truly to the Faith: (establish) Allah's handiwork according to the pattern on which He has made mankind: no change (let there be) in the work (wrought) by Allah. That is the standard Religion: but most among mankind understand not.' [Surah 30, Verse 30], and differentiates between human beings on the basis of piety, as He said Blessed and exalted is He: 'O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise (each other)). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things).' [Surah 49, Verse 13].

Islam gives women a high status which did not exist in previous legislatures, but critics unjustly accuse Islam of oppressing and degrading women, claiming that Islam may be biased in favour of men. For instance, they claim a man's testimony is equal to the testimony of two women<sup>1</sup>; if a woman is murdered her compensation is half that of a man<sup>2</sup>; they attain half the share of the inheritance of men<sup>3</sup>; it allows the man to marry a

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<sup>1</sup>. This disparity has nothing to do with humanity and dignity of women, or her eligibility, but bearing in mind her conditions and that they do not come out of her house only if she need something, and if she passed by a financial or criminal matters that occur outside the home they pass unnoticed because of their Hyaiha (Modesty), so her testimony as evidence not like the man who witness the event closely, and checking it, while the testimony of women are accepted in Sharia law in matters of women; as proof of birth, and whether she is virgin or not, and sexual defects of women, the issue related to validation provisions, taking into account, and this are keen and consider, for any equitable justice.: (Women between the doctrine and law, p.31-32).

<sup>2</sup>. The penalties for murder in Islam: the punishment of the murder should be murder, but if pardoned by the victim family, it was regarded as parental diyah as an estimate of the loss of material damage suffered by the family of the deceased, and this will be seen as that the loss of man is more than the loss of woman. the man who supports the family, and not women, and this does not decrease the women, because Islam made men and women are equal in the punishment. (Women between the doctrine and law, p.37-39).

<sup>3</sup> Islam is the first religion who gave women the right to inheritance after it was denied, the share of women of inheritance is not always less than the share of men, but their share in some cases are more than men, or equal, in some cases which women inherit are (more than thirty causes, according to the status of their kinship of the Dead, she

second, third and fourth wife; it permits the beating of the wife; and the abandoning and locking up of women at home and prevents them from working, etc.

Nowadays there are many people who complain about the state of Women in Islam and hold conferences and discussions calling for fairness and granting women more rights.

The purpose of this paper is to highlight the real state of women in Islam and how Islam honours women, through examples of the Prophet's dealings with women. This research is titled: 'Prophetic Guidance in Dealing with Muslim and Non-Muslim Women'. We have translated our research in English for the benefit of non-Arabic speakers to acquaint them with the greatness of Islam and illustrate that the Prophet was a leading figure in honouring the status women.

This research has been divided into an introduction, four chapters and a conclusion in which we note some of our major findings.

## 1 The Honouring of Women in Islam

### 1.1 The Status of Women Prior to Islam

If we would like to know how much honor Islam holds for women we must know their status before the coming of Islam.

Before Islam, women were deprived of basic rights. They were denied rights, had no right to inheritance and were instead part of the inheritance.

When a father dies, his eldest son inherits his wives with the exception of his mother. In the event of the father's wife being beautiful, the eldest son puts a gown over her and subsequently becomes her husband. If the wife was ugly, she was locked within the house until she died<sup>4</sup>.

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got half the share of men in four cases only, and its share in the remaining cases equal to or more than men.

the duties of men are more than the duties of women;; the male is in charge of spending on his wife, mother, daughter, sister, and so on. and this was more than its share of the inheritance, it's the man responsibilities towards them.

<sup>4</sup> Al Khouli, Islam and Modern Women, (p. 13).

When a woman gave birth to female offspring, people were pessimistic of her birth so they buried her alive for fear of poverty and shame. They did this out of fear their dignity would be tainted<sup>°</sup>.

Allah highlights this issue in the Holy Quran: 'When news is brought to one of them, of (the birth of) a female (child), his face darkens, and he is filled with inward grief!' [Surah ١٦, Verse ٥٨]. In the same Surah He says: 'With shame does he hide himself from his people, because of the bad news he has had! Shall he retain it on (sufferance and) contempt, or bury it in the dust? Ah! What an evil (choice) they decide on?' [Surah ١٦, Verse ٥٩].

In another Surah He says: 'When the female (infant), buried alive, is questioned.' [Surah ٨١, Verse ٨]. He continues: 'For what crime she was killed.' [Surah ٨١, Verse ٩].

women in most societies before Islam including Arabs have a very bad status; Hinduism women do not have the right to life after the death of her husband, and she should be burned together with her husband, and she is worse than evil, death, hell, snakes, and fire<sup>١</sup>

The Romanians women were the most denied of their rights, women and sold like any other items, and if her father died, the mandate passed to the guardian of the girl, can not get rid of this guardian, unless she sell her self to another man, and if the woman married, she married by contract so-called the "sovereignty" of the husband, or the husband has to buy his wife<sup>٢</sup>

the state of women Greek is worse than in the other societies, as Demosthenes said: "We take the pleasure of the prostitutes, mistress Alkhalilat to take care of our health, and take wives to give birth to legitimate children"<sup>٣</sup>

Even the law of Hammurabi did not do justice to women, but they are like cattle, if a man killed a girl, it was recognized that his daughter had to be killed, or possessed<sup>٤</sup>

The People of the Book did not apply the law of Allah regarding the right of women, Jews look to women as a mere servant, and not have the right to inheritance, and the father have the right to sell her, it does not inherit anything as long as the father have some boys, they look

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<sup>°</sup> Al Qurtubi, Al Jami' Li Ahkaam Al Quran, Beirut, Lebanon, ٢<sup>th</sup> Edition, Volume/Page (١٩ / ٢٠٢).

<sup>١</sup> Mustafa al-sebai, Women between the doctrine and law, alMktib alIslami, Biruet, Ed, ٥, p. ١٨).

<sup>٢</sup> Al-Bahe al-Khule, Islam and modern Women Issue, Dar al-Qlam, alkuwit, 1<sup>st</sup> ed, p ١٢.

<sup>٣</sup> Ibid, p ١٨

<sup>٤</sup> Women between the doctrine and law, p ١٨

at women as the curse; she caused Adam to be removed from Paradise.<sup>10</sup>

Christians consider women the reason of the moral decay because of their contact with the men as they want, they consider marriage impurity and must stay away from it, and the single is better than the married in the sight of Allah, at the peak of their civilization and because of the free mixing men and women everywhere, adultery have become non-denier, religion and accepted the wrong relationship between men and women, and has become an example of the holy gods to commit sin, , all of which led to the fall of their civilization, and it is interesting to note that the English law until 1800 had allowed the man to sell his wife, and set the price of six pence; or 1% of the Pound<sup>11</sup> The above analysis clearly demonstrates that before the coming of the Prophet, women did not have rights or dignity but were in fact traded as a commodity.

## 1.2 The Status of Women During the Lifetime of the Prophet

Islam honours women because they are seen as the foundation of society. They are mothers, wives, sisters and daughters and they raise heroes in societies. In Islam, a woman is the core of a society and brings either righteousness or corruption.

Therefore, Islam elevates women to the highest levels of pride and human dignity after being depressed by men in the time before the Prophet Mohammed. The Prophet describes a woman as being ‘the other half that completes a man’<sup>12</sup>.

Islam gives both men and women rights and duties assigned to each party equal to the duties of the other party with some differences due to physiological and psychological variations, in order that they may complement each other. As Allah says in the Quran: ‘The Believers, men and women, are protectors one of another: they enjoin what is just, and forbid what is evil: they observe regular prayers, practice regular charity, and obey Allah and His Messenger. On them will Allah pour His mercy: for Allah is Exalted in power, Wise.’ [Surah 9, Verse 71].

In another verse, Allah equalises the reward for men and women, as He says: ‘For Muslim men and women,- for believing men and women, for devout men and women, for true men and women, for men and women who are patient and constant, for men and women who humble themselves, for men and women who give in Charity, for men and women who fast (and deny themselves), for men and women who guard their chastity,

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<sup>10</sup> .Ibid,p 19.

<sup>11</sup> .Ibid,p 19-20.

<sup>12</sup> Al Tirmidhi, Sunan, a book of purity, in the section on if a man has a wet dream, Volume (1 / 189), Hadith (113); Abu Dawood, Sunan, Volume (1 / 111), Hadith (236); Ahmad, Musnad, Volume (1 / 206); Abu Ya'la, Musnad, Volume (1 / 149); Al Bayhaqi, Sunan, Volume (1 / 168), Hadith (567); Al Darimi, Sunan, Volume (1 / 210), Hadith 564.

and for men and women who engage much in Allah's praise, - for them has Allah prepared forgiveness and great reward.' [Surah ٣٣, Verse ٣٥].

Similarly, they are equal in punishment, as He said: 'As to the thief, Male or female, cut off his or her hands: a punishment by way of example, from Allah, for their crime: and Allah is Exalted in power.' [Surah ٥, Verse ٣٨].

He goes on further to say: 'The woman and the man guilty of adultery or fornication, flog each of them with a hundred stripes: Let not compassion move you in their case, in a matter prescribed by Allah, if ye believe in Allah and the Last Day: and let a party of the Believers witness their punishment.' [Surah ٢٤, Verse ٢].

In other verses, there are no disparities between the commands for men and women except in certain circumstances such as: leadership at home; testimony; and inheritance. In the case of leadership Allah says: 'Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has given the one more (strength) than the other, and because they support them from their means. Therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient, and guard in (the husband's) absence what Allah would have them guard. As to those women on whose part ye fear disloyalty and ill-conduct, admonish them (first), (Next), refuse to share their beds, (And last) beat them (lightly); but if they return to obedience, seek not against them Means (of annoyance): For Allah is Most High, great (above you all).' [Surah ٤, Verse ٣٤].

The reason leadership is allocated to men is because a man is best suited to resolving problems; he pays to establish the family including the dowry and maintenance of the family, amongst other things; and because women are blessed with sensitive emotions and these may overcome the ability to reason logically as they may be overwhelmed by emotion.

As for the issue of testimony, Allah requires two women instead of one man in financial circumstances. He said: '...and get two witnesses, out of your own men, and if there are not two men, then a man and two women, such as ye choose, for witnesses, so that if one of them errs, the other can remind her.' [Surah ٢, Verse ٢٨٢].

Al Baydhawi said: 'This is only to do with financial matters (two woman instead of one man)', as confirmed by Shaafa'i and Abu Hanifa. The reason why there must be two women instead of one man is that she might forget and the other will remind her, financial matters always used to happen in the market and the woman is not always present there as she was bringing up the family. That is why Allah requires two women instead of one man<sup>١٣</sup>.

Regarding inheritance, Allah has ordained for women half the share of men, as He outlines in the Holy Quran: 'Allah (thus) directs you as regards your Children's

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<sup>١٣</sup> Abi Al Saud, Tafsir of Abi Al Saud, Volume (١ / ٢٧٠); Al Baythawi, Tafsir of Al Baydhawi, Volume (١ / ٥٧٨).



(Inheritance): to the male, a portion equal to that of two females'. [Surah ٤, Verse ١١]. This is because men have the responsibility of paying the dowry and maintenance for women, while women do not have any financial responsibilities to the family.

However, the share of inheritance will in certain situations be equal to that of men, for instance, brothers from the mother's side. Allah says in the Quran: 'If the man or woman whose inheritance is in question, has left neither ascendants nor descendants, but has left a brother or a sister, each one of the two gets a sixth; but if more than two, they share in a third.' [Surah ٤, Verse ١٢]. It is clear that each one of them inherits a sixth irrespective of whether male or female, demonstrating that women are equal with men in the amount of inheritance received.

In some cases, the share of women can be more than that of men. For example, if a man dies and leaves a wife and one daughter, the daughter inherits half of the estate; the wife inherits one eighth; and the rest is distributed between the relatives even if there are one hundred men. As Allah says in the Quran: 'They ask you for a legal decision. Say: Allah directs (thus) about those who leave no descendants or 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 (between them): if there are brothers and sisters, (they share), the male having twice the share of the female. Thus dose Allah make clear to you (His law), lest you err. And Allah has knowledge of all things.' [Surah ٤, Verse ١٢٦].<sup>١٤</sup>

Islam did not stop granting women their rights, but recommended their good treatment and did not force her to do anything she did not want to do. As Allah says in the Quran: 'O you who believe! You are forbidden to inherit women against their will. Nor should ye treat them with harshness, that you may take away part of the dower ye have given them, except where they have been guilty of open lewdness; on the contrary live with them on a footing of kindness and equity. If ye take a dislike to them it may be that you dislike a thing, and Allah brings about through it a great deal of good.' [Surah ٤, Verse ١٩]. Here, kindness means every word and act a man could use with a woman which has a pleasant implication and meaning. It must be mentioned here that this was not recommended pre-Islam.

The Prophet recommended dealing with women in a righteous manner, as he said: 'Be kind to women as they were created from a rib which is crooked, and if you try and put it straight you will break it. So leave it crooked and do treat women with kindness'<sup>١٥</sup>. The Prophet always used to deal kindly with his wives, was permanently smiling and was always joking with good humour. He is a supreme example for his followers in dealing

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<sup>١٤</sup>. Where the share of women half the share of men, are cases in which women are equal with men in the degree of kinship with the Dead, but the duties of men are more of the duties the women; the male is in charge of spending on his sister and, and when she got married, the husband will pay a dowry to her, and so on, so that his share will be more than her because of his responsibilities towards them.

<sup>١٥</sup> Al Bukhari, a book about the prophets, Hadith (٣٣٣١).

with women. Regarding this, Allah says in the Holy Quran: ‘You have indeed in the Messenger of Allah a beautiful pattern (of conduct) for any one whose hope is in Allah and the Final Day, and who engages much in the Praise of Allah.’ [Surah ٣٣, Verse ٢١].

## ٢ Prophetic Guidance in Dealing with Mothers

### ٢.١ Mothers

Mothers in Islam have an unparalleled superior status. There are many verses in the Quran highlighting respect to parents, including looking after them, being kind to them and praying for them. Allah says in the Quran: ‘Your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him, and that you be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honour. And, out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility, and say: "My Lord! Bestow on them your Mercy even as they cherished me in childhood."' [Surah ١٧, Verses ٢٣-٢٤].

Allah focuses on the mother and reminds offspring about their mothers’ suffering and orders them to be kind in return. He says in the Quran: ‘And We have enjoined on man (to be good) to his parents: in travail upon travail did his mother bear him, and in years twain was his weaning: (hear the command), "Show gratitude to Me and to your parents: to Me is (the final) Goal.’ [Surah ٣١, Verse ١٤].

In another place in the Quran, Allah commands children to be kind to their parents and reminds them about a mother’s hardship, including her periods of pregnancy, labour delivery and breast-feeding. He says in the Quran: ‘We have enjoined on man kindness to his parents: In pain did his mother bear him, and in pain did she give him birth. The carrying of the (child) to his weaning is (a period of) thirty months. At length, when he reaches the age of full strength and attains forty years, he says, "O my Lord! Grant me that I may be grateful for your favor which you has bestowed upon me, and upon both my parents, and that I may work righteousness of which you will approve; and be gracious to me in my issue. Truly have I turned to you and truly do I bow (to you ) in Islam."' [Surah ٤٦, Verse ١٥].

The Prophet also instructs Muslims to be kind to parents even if they are non-Muslims, especially the mother. We are advised to be kind to her, take care of her and not cause any physical or mental harm to them.

Abdullah bin Masood said: I asked the Prophet of the good deeds most beloved to Allah. The Prophet replied, "Observing prayers on time." I then asked, what next O Messenger of Allah? He said, "Respecting parents." What next I asked? He responded, "Jihad in the name of Allah."<sup>١٦</sup>

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<sup>١٦</sup> Al Bukhari, in the book of prayer, in the section of prayer times, Hadith (٥٢٧); Muslim in the book of faith, Hadith (٨٥).

The Prophet said a mother has higher priority to be looked after than the father. Al-Bukhari and Muslim said on the authority of Abu Hurayrah: A man came to Allah's Messenger and said, 'O Allah's Messenger! Who is more entitled to be treated with the best companionship by me?' The Prophet said, "Your mother." The man said, 'Who is next?' The Prophet said, "Your mother." The man further said, 'Who is next?' The Prophet said, "Your mother." The man asked for the fourth time, 'Who is next?' The Prophet said, "Your father."<sup>10</sup>

Being kind to and treating parents with kindness has a higher priority in Islam than Jihad for the sake of Allah as mentioned in the above Hadith<sup>10</sup>.

In another saying, Abdullah ibn Amr ibn Al-Aas narrated: A man said to the Prophet, 'Shall I participate in Hijrah and Jihad, seeking the reward of Allah?' The Prophet said, "Are your parents living?" The man said, 'Yes, both of them are.' The Prophet replied, "Do you want to seek the reward from Allah?" The man answered, 'Yes'. Then the Prophet advised, "Go back and be kind to your parents."<sup>11</sup>

Al Hakim narrated, on the authority of Aisha, that she asked the Prophet, 'Which people have more rights than a woman?' He said, "Her husband."<sup>12</sup>

A mother's rights do not terminate at the time of death but in fact continues after it. Al Hakim reported, on the authority of Abu Usaid Malik ibn Rabia Sa'idi: We were sitting with the Prophet and a man came from the tribe of Salama and he said, 'O Messenger of Allah is there any kind deed I can do for my parents after their death?' The Prophet replied, "Yes, to pray for them and ask Allah for forgiveness for them; to fulfill their oath; to keep their kinship ties; and to honour their friends."<sup>13</sup>

Thus, we see that Islam has elevated parents and increased the honour of a mother over a father due to the hardships she faces, including pregnancy, birth, breast-feeding and raising the children in collaboration with the father, ultimately giving women a high and respectable status in Islam.

Nowadays, in our globalisation age we see some children neglecting their parents, not respecting them, not honouring their rights, placing them in a nursing home when they become old, and do not see them except on special occasions such as mother's and father's day.

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<sup>10</sup> Al Bukhari, a book of good manners and form, Hadith (٧٦٧٠); Muslim, a book of being kind to parents, Hadith (٧٠٤٨).

<sup>11</sup> See footnote ٧. ). The meaning of Jihad in the way of Allah, is straggle against the enemy( holy war), also were used in self-defense, or straggle against the devil, or self desire. (definitions(Altareefaaf) of Jarjani V. ١, P ٧٦٠).

<sup>12</sup> Muslim, a book of kinship and kindness, in the section on respect and kindness to parents, Hadith (٧٠٤٩).

<sup>13</sup> Al Hakim, Mustadrak, a book of respect and kindness to parents, edited by Mustafa Abdel-Qader Atta, Scientific Library, Beirut, Lebanon, 1<sup>st</sup> edition, ١٩٩٠, Volume (٤ / ١٩٣), Hadith (٧٣٣٨).

<sup>14</sup> Mustadrak, Volume (٤ / ١٧١), Hadith (٧٣٦٠).

## ٢.٢ Grandmothers and the Elderly

Grandmother also have a high status in Islam due to her relation between the father and mother as Islam considers her as a mother too. Consequently, the Prophet dedicates a portion from the inheritance to her. If either the mother or father has passed away, the grandmother is allocated their portion.

A grandmother came to Abu Bakr to ask for her share of inheritance. He told her he could not find any evidence of a grandmother's rights to inheritance from either the Holy Quran or the Sunnah but he would make enquiries. He then asked Al Muqheera ibn Shu'uba who said, 'The prophet has allocated for her one sixth'.

Another grandmother came to Umar ibn Al Khattab asking for her inheritance. He told her he could not find inheritance laws for a grandmother in the Holy Quran but he would implement the one sixth as advised by the Prophet<sup>٢٢</sup>.

When the Prophet entered the city of Al Medina the inhabitants came to meet him. The first thing he asked them was, 'Which is the nearest home of our relatives?' Abu Ayyub said, 'Me, O Messenger of Allah. This is my home and this is my door'. The Prophet then said, 'Let us go and rest at your home'<sup>٢٣</sup>.

In enquiring about the nearest home of his relatives, the Prophet was referring to his maternal family of Bani Najjar. Al Hafiz<sup>٢٤</sup> ibn Hajar commented on this Hadith and explains that the Prophet referred to them as relatives because the mother of the Prophet's grandfather, Abdel Mutelab, was called Salma bint Auf, and was from the tribe of Bani Najjar<sup>٢٥</sup>. In another version, when the inhabitants of Al Medina came forward to host him he said, 'I will be the guest of my (maternal) uncles from Bani Najjar'<sup>٢٦</sup>.

The Prophet used to respect and honour elderly females. On the authority of Aisha: An old lady came to the Prophet whilst the Prophet was sitting with her. The Prophet asked her, 'Who are you?' She replied, 'I am Juthama Al Mazniya'. He replied, 'Indeed you are Hussanah. [The Prophet used to change names which had a bad meaning. In this case, Juthama meant 'corpse' and so the Prophet changed it to Hussanah meaning 'nice'.] How are you? How have you been since we left you?' She answered, 'Very well'. She then left. Aisha asked the Prophet why he received her in such a way, i.e. in happiness even though she was an old woman. The Prophet replied, 'As she used to visit us whilst I was

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<sup>٢٢</sup> Al Tirmidhi, a book of obligations, in the section on the inheritance of the grandmother, Volume (٤ / ٤٢٠), Hadith (٢١٠١); Abu Dawood, a book of obligations, in the section on the inheritance of the grandmother, Hadith (٢٨٩٤); Ibn Majah, a book of obligations, in the section on the inheritance of the grandmother, Hadith (٢٢٢٤).

<sup>٢٣</sup> Al Bukhari, a book qualities, in the section of the migration of the Prophet and his companions to Al Medina, Hadith (٣٩١١).

<sup>٢٤</sup> Hafiz: keeper, guardian, caretaker, This is the title of some one who memorized the Holy Quran, or who narrate the saying of the prophet. (the method of naqd (to find fault the Hadith) Aatar, p. ٧٦)

<sup>٢٥</sup> Ibn Hajar, Fatih Al-Bari, Volume (٧ / ٢٥٢).

<sup>٢٦</sup> Ibn Hajar, Faith Al-Bari, Volume (٧ / ٢٤٦).

with Khadijah, and part of faith is to keep relationship ties<sup>٢٧</sup>.

The Prophet used to joke with elderly women in order to amuse them. Al Tirmidhi reported on the authority of Al Hassan that he said: An old lady came to the Prophet and said, 'O Messenger of Allah, pray to Allah to make me amongst your companions in Paradise'. The Prophet replied, 'No old lady will enter paradise'. She went whilst weeping. Then the Prophet told his companions to tell her that she will enter paradise as a young woman as there are no elderly people there. In this sense, the Prophet was joking with her.

Thereafter, the Prophet quoted the Holy Quran: 'We have created (their Companions) of special creation. And made them virgin - pure (and undefiled). Beloved (by nature), equal in age.' [Surah ٥٦, Verses ٣٥-٣٧]<sup>٢٨</sup>.

### ٢.٣ Paternal and Maternal Aunts

Islam dictates the status of paternal aunts as equivalent to fathers and maternal aunts as equivalent to mothers. Imam Ahmad, Al Hakim ibn Habaan narrated on the authority of ibn Umar, who said: A man came to the Prophet and said, 'O Messenger of Allah, I have committed a great sin. Is repentance accepted for this?' The Prophet replied, 'Do you have parents (alive)?' The man said, 'No.' Then the Prophet asked, 'Do you have a maternal aunt?' He answered, 'Yes.' The Prophet then said, 'Then take care of her.'<sup>٢٩</sup> In other words, looking after maternal aunts is a form of repentance for his sins.

Abu Dawood reported in the authentic Hadith on the authority of Ali, who said: Zaid ibn Haritha<sup>٣٠</sup> came to Mekkah with the daughter of Hamza<sup>٣١</sup>. Jaafar<sup>٣٢</sup> said, 'I will take custody of her as she is my (paternal) uncle's daughter, and my wife is her aunt.' I (Ali) then said, 'I have rights on her, so I will take custody of her as she is the daughter of my

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<sup>٢٧</sup> Al Hakim, Mustadrak, The Two Shahihs, Volume (١ / ٦٢), Hadith (٤٠).

<sup>٢٨</sup> Al Tirmidhi, The Merits of Mohammed and Al-Khasael Al Mustafawiya, edited by Sayed Abbas Al Jalaymi, Muassasat Al Kutub Al Thaqaafiya, Lebanon, Beirut, ١<sup>st</sup> edition, ١٤١٢ Hijrah, Volume (١ / ١٩٩).

<sup>٢٩</sup> Ahmad, Musnad, Volume (٢ / ١٩٧); Al Hakim, Mustadrak, Volume (٤ / ١٧١); Ibn Habban, Volume (٢ / ١٧٧).

<sup>٣٠</sup> Zaid bin Haritha Hraahil, Abu Osama, , and Zaid was sold in the Jaahiliyyah, Hakim Bin hizam in Habasha market district of Mecca for Khadija Bint Khuwaylid , and she gifted to the Messenger of Allah, and zaid was adopted by Messenger of Allah : "This is my son, he will inherited me and I will inherit him ." Abdullah ibn Umar: we used to call Zaid bin Haritha ,Zaid bin Mohamed, however, until Allah the Almighty reveled : " call them to their parents" (al isteab fi marefat al ashab ,Ibn Abd al-Barr, ١ / ١١١).

<sup>٣١</sup> . Hamza Bin Abdul Muttalib bin Hashim bin Abd Manaf Abu-Qurashi al-Hashemi , he is the uncle of the prophet blessings and peace be upon him and his brother through breastfeeding (alisaba fi tamyez al-Sahaabah ١ / ٤٩).

<sup>٣٢</sup> . Jaafar bin Abi Taleb al-Hashemi is Al-Sahabi wihe the two-wing uncle of the Messenger of Allah may Allah bless him and was martyred in the battle of Mu'tah eight years of immigration (tagreeb Tahzib ١ / ١٤٠ .٩).

uncle and my wife is the daughter of the Prophet.’ Zaid replied, ‘I have rights on her and will take custody of her as I brought her all the way from Medina looking after her.’ Then the Prophet came out and we informed him of what had been discussed, who said, ‘The girl should be with Jaafar. His wife is her maternal aunt and the maternal aunt is parallel to a mother.’<sup>۲۲</sup>

Al Bukhari reported on the authority of Mujahid and Urwa, who said: We heard Aisha in her home. Urwa said, ‘O Mother, O Mother of the believers, did you hear what Mujahid said?’ She answered, ‘What did he say?’ He replied, ‘The Prophet made Umrah four times, one of which was in Rajab.’<sup>۲۳</sup> In the above Hadith, despite Aisha being the maternal aunt of Urwa he referred to her as mother, which shows that a maternal aunt is equivalent to a mother especially when the mother is not alive.

Thus, Islam gives maternal and paternal aunts a lot of esteem and respect as they are the closest to the mother and father respectively. As a result, the Prophet forbids a man to simultaneously marry his wife and her paternal or maternal aunts. Al Bukhari reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah: The Prophet said, ‘Do not marry the maternal or paternal aunts of your wife (i.e. simultaneously be married to your wife and her aunts).’<sup>۲۴</sup>

Furthermore, the Quran forbids a man to marry two sisters simultaneously. Allah says in the Holy Quran: ‘Prohibited to you (For marriage) are:- Your mothers, daughters, sisters; father's sisters, Mother's sisters; brother's daughters, sister's daughters; foster-mothers (Who gave you suck), foster-sisters; your wives' mothers; your step-daughters under your guardianship, born of your wives to whom ye have gone in,- no prohibition if you have not gone in;- (Those who have been) wives of your sons proceeding from your loins; and two sisters in wedlock at one and the same time, except for what is past; for Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful. Also (prohibited are) women already married, except those whom your right hands possess: Thus has Allah ordained (Prohibitions) against you: Except for these, all others are lawful, provided you seek (them in marriage) with gifts from your property,- desiring chastity, not lust, seeing that you derive benefit from them, give them their dowers (at least) as prescribed; but if, after a dower is prescribed, agree Mutually (to vary it), there is no blame on you, and Allah is All-knowing, All-wise.’ [Surah ۴, Verses ۲۳-۲۴].

Although this verse does not mention the maternal and paternal aunts, the Prophet does mention them in the aforementioned Hadith<sup>۲۵</sup>.

<sup>۲۲</sup> Abu Dawood, Sunan, a book of divorce, in the section on who has a right over a child, Volume (۱ / ۶۹۴), Hadith (۲۲۸۰); Al Nisa'i, Sunan Al Kubrah, a book of features, Volume (۶ / ۸), Hadith (۸۰۷۹); Al Hakim, Mustadrak, Volume (۳ / ۲۳۲); Al Bazaar, Volume (۳ / ۱۰۰).

<sup>۲۳</sup> Al Bukhari, Sahih, a book of pilgrimage, in the section on how many Umrahs the Prophet performed, Hadith (۱۷۷۶).

<sup>۲۴</sup> Al Bukhari, Sahih, a book of marriage, in the section on a woman should not be combined with her aunt in marriage, Hadiths (۰۱۰۸ and ۰۱۱۱); Muslim, Sahih, a book of marriage, in the section on forbidding to combine a wife with her aunts, Volume (۲ / ۱۰۲۸), Hadith (۱۴۰۸).

<sup>۲۵</sup> See footnote ۲۱.

## ۳ Prophetic Guidance in Dealing with Other Relatives

Allah commands Muslims to be kind to their relatives. He says in the Holy Quran, '...reverence Allah, through whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (reverence) the wombs (That bore you): for Allah ever watches over you.' [Surah ۴, Verse ۱]. He condemns those who cut ties with their relatives. He says, 'Then, is it to be expected of you, if you were put in authority, that you will do mischief in the land, and break your ties of kith and kin?' [Surah ۴۷, Verse ۲۲].

In the Hadith Qudsi<sup>۳۷</sup> Allah says, 'I am Allah and I am the Merciful. I have created relatives and gave her a name out of My Names (Al Rahman). Whosoever keeps ties with relatives, I will keep ties with him. And whosoever cuts off ties with relatives, I will cut off ties with him.'<sup>۳۸</sup>

Imam Al Bukhari and Muslim said on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, that the Prophet said: Allah created creation. Upon completion, a relative held up the Throne of Allah and she said, 'I seek refuge in you from the one who cuts off relationships.' Allah replied, "Would you be pleased if I join relationships with the one who joins relationships with you; and cut relationships with the one who cuts relationships with you?" She said, 'Yes, O my Lord.' He said, "This is for you (will be granted to you)."<sup>۳۹</sup>

There are two types of relatives: blood relatives and faith relatives. According to Islam, each group has been given the right of kindness to them, including visiting relatives, speaking to them, being polite to them, giving gifts, enquiring about their well-being, and so on. Ultimately, these lead to a strengthening of relationship ties<sup>۴۰</sup>. Female relatives include mothers, grandmothers, maternal aunts, paternal aunts, sisters, and their daughters.

Previously, we mentioned mothers, grandmothers, maternal aunts and paternal aunts and so there is no need to reiterate these. This chapter will focus on sisters and their daughters.

### ۳.۱ Girls

During the time of ignorance, Arabs used to bury their daughters alive for fear of destitution, shame, captivity or slavery. Ibn Abbas said, 'At the time of ignorance if a woman was pregnant she would dig a small hole in the ground. If it was a girl, she would

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<sup>۳۷</sup>. Qudsi hadith :a saying by the prophet on the authority of Allah. (the method of *naqd*(to find fault the Hadith), Aatar,, p. ۳۲۳).

<sup>۳۸</sup> Al Tirmidhi, Jami', a book of kindness, in the section on cutting off ties with relatives, Volume (۴ / ۳۱۰), Hadith (۱۹۰۷); Abu Dawood, Sunan, a book of Zakat, in the section on keeping ties with relatives, Volume (۱ / ۳۰۰), Hadith (۱۶۹۴). Both Hadiths reported by Sufian bin Uyayna, on the authority of Abu Salama. Imam Al Bani confirmed this is an authentic Hadith, Volume (۲ / ۴۹).

<sup>۳۹</sup> Al Bukhari, Sahih, a book of Tafseer, in the section on cutting ties with relatives, Hadith (۴۸۳۲); Muslim, Sahih, a book of kindness, in the section on keeping ties with relatives and forbidding to cut them off, Volume (۴ / ۱۹۸۱), Hadith (۲۰۰۴).

<sup>۴۰</sup> Shokani, Fayth Al Qadeer, Volume (۲ / ۲۴۹).

leave it in the hole and bury it. If it was a boy, she would take it home. Equally, women in other societies were no better off than this.<sup>٤١</sup>

However, upon the commencement of Islam he condemned these actions and their methods of treatment with daughters. Allah says in the Holy Quran, ‘When the female (infant), buried alive, is questioned - For what crime she was killed.’ [Surah <sup>ا</sup>, Verses <sup>ا-٩</sup>]. Thus, Islam forbids killing daughters by burying them alive and commands Muslims to be kind to their daughters.

The Prophet said in the Hadith, ‘Allah forbids on you to disobey your mothers and to bury your daughters (alive).’<sup>٤٢</sup>

In addition, Al Bukhari and Muslim reported on the authority of Aisha, that she said: A woman came to me with two daughters asking for help. I only had one date and I gave it to her. The mother cut it into two halves and gave each half to each of her daughters. The woman then left. Then the Prophet came in and I told him about it. He said, ‘Whosoever takes care of their daughters and is kind to them, they will be a protection for them from the Hell Fire.’<sup>٤٣</sup>

On the authority of Anas ibn Malik, the Prophet said, ‘Whosoever looks after two girls until they reach the age of maturity, on the Day on Judgement that person and I will be like this (he raised his index and second fingers and joined them in parallel unison, i.e. they will be on the same level in Paradise).’<sup>٤٤</sup>

Imam Muslim reported on the authority of Aisha, that she said: A poor woman and asked for food. I gave her three dates. She gave one date to each daughter and wanted to eat the third one herself. But her daughters were asking for more so the woman split it in half and gave a half to each of her daughters. I liked her attitude and informed the Prophet about her. He said, ‘Allah has freed her from the Hell Fire and granted her Paradise.’<sup>٤٥</sup>

The Prophet commands equality in the treatment of boys and girls and urges us not to differentiate between them. On the authority of Ibn Abbas, the Prophet said, ‘Whosoever has a daughter and does not bury her alive, abuse her and does not prefer a son over her, Allah will cause him to enter Paradise.’<sup>٤٦</sup>

The Prophet gave us the most wonderful example in how to deal with daughters. Al Nisa’i and others reported on the authority of Aisha, the mother of the believers, that she

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<sup>٤١</sup> Al Qurtubi, Al Jami’ Li Ahkaam Al Quran, Volume (١٩/٢٠٢). Also see Section [١.١] in this paper.

<sup>٤٢</sup> Al Bukhari, Sahih, a book on borrowing, in the section about forbidding to waste money, Hadith (٢٤٠٨); Muslim, Sahih, a book of judgement, in the section on the prohibition of asking too many questions, Hadith (٥٩٣).

<sup>٤٣</sup> Al Bukhari, a book of manners, in the section on the mercy of a father, Hadith (٥٩٩٥); Muslim, Sahih, a book of kindness, in the section on being kind to daughters, Hadith (٢٦٢٩).

<sup>٤٤</sup> Muslim, Sahih, a book of kindness, in the section on being kind to daughters, Hadith (٢٦٣٠).

<sup>٤٥</sup> Muslim, Sahih, a book of kindness, in the section on being kind to daughters, Hadith (٢٦٣١).

<sup>٤٦</sup> Abu Dawood, Sunan, a book of manners, in the section on the virtues of bringing up orphans, Volume (٢/٧٥٩), Hadith (٥١٤٦); Al Misnad, Volume (١ / ٢٢٣).



said: I have never seen anyone as similar to the Prophet in his mannerisms, including sitting, talking and his attitude, than Fatima the daughter of the Prophet. When she used to come in, he used to stand up to greet and kiss her and used to make her sit in his sitting place. As well as this, when the Prophet used to visit her she used to stand up to greet and kiss him and used to ask him to sit in her sitting place.<sup>٤٧</sup>

### ٣.٢ Sisters

Imam Al Bukhari and Muslim reported on the authority of Jabir bin Abdullah, who said, ‘My father passed away and he left seven or nine daughters. I got married to a woman and the Prophet asked me if she has been married before. I told him she had been married previously. The Prophet asked me why I did not choose a woman who had not been married before so I could have more fun with her. I told him my dad passed away and left seven or nine daughters and I wanted someone to look after them. Upon this, the Prophet said, "May Allah bless you."<sup>٤٨</sup>

Here, the Prophet’s response of ‘May Allah bless you’ indicates his pleasure at the action of Jabir, i.e. being kind to his sisters by marrying someone who could look after them.

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of Anas ibn Malik, who said the Prophet said, ‘Whosoever sponsors or takes care of two daughters, three daughters, two sisters or three sisters until they die or he dies, him and I will be like this (the Prophet joined his index and middle fingers together in parallel to indicate his and the person’s closeness in Paradise).’<sup>٤٩</sup>

Imam Al Bukhari mentioned in his book Al Adab Al Mufrad on the authority of Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri, that the Prophet said, ‘If anyone has three daughters or three sisters and is kind to them, surely he will enter Paradise.’<sup>٥٠</sup>

### ٣.٣ Keeping Kinship Bonds

The Prophet commands us to keep kinship ties with all relatives and warns against cutting them. He informs us that cutting these ties is a reason for not entering Paradise and for their supplication not to be answered by Allah.

Imam Muslim reported on the authority of Muhammad ibn Jubayr, that his father told

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<sup>٤٧</sup> Al Nisa’i, Sunan, a book of manners, in the section on virtues of Fatima, Volume (٥ / ٩٦), Hadith (٨٣٩٦); Al Tirmidhi, Sunan, a book of virtues, Volume (٥ / ٧٠٠) Hadith, (٣٨٧٢); Abu Dawood, Sunan, a book of manners, in the section on standing up and greeting the visitor, Volume (٧ / ٧٧٦), Hadith (٥٢١٧); Ibn Hibaan, Sahih, Volume (١٥ / ٤٠٣); Al Hakim, Al Mustadrak, Volume (٤ / ٣٠٣). Also, see Al Tirmidhi, Volume (٣ / ٢٤١).

<sup>٤٨</sup> Al Bukhari, Sahih, a book of expenditure, in the section on the wife helping her husband with his children, Hadith (٥٣٦٧); Muslim, Sahih, a book of breast-feeding, in the section on the recommendation to marry a woman who has faith, Volume (٧ / ١٠٨٦), Hadith (٧١٥).

<sup>٤٩</sup> Ahmad, Musnad, Volume (٣ / ١٤٧). Imam Al Bani confirmed this as an authentic Hadith, Volume (١ / ٥٩١).

<sup>٥٠</sup> Al Bukhari, Al Adab Al Mufrad, Volume (١ / ٤٧).

him that the Prophet said, ‘The one who cuts off relationships will not enter Paradise.’<sup>o1</sup> In addition, Imam Muslim reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, that the Prophet said, ‘The supplication of a servant will be responded to as long as they do not supplicate to do wrong-doing, to cut off ties with relatives, or to complain that the response of their supplications are delayed.’<sup>o2</sup>

The Prophet orders us to keep ties with relatives even from one side, i.e. if one keeps ties regardless of the other cutting it off. Imam Muslim reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, that a man came to the Prophet and said, ‘O Messenger of Allah, I have relatives and keep relationship ties with them but they cut them off. I do kind to them but they harm me in return. I am forbearing with them but they insult me in return.’ The Prophet replied, "If what you are saying is correct, it is as though you are throwing sand in their faces. There will be a supporter from Allah (i.e. an Angel) as long as you keep ties with them."<sup>o3</sup>

Imam Al Bukhari reported on the authority of Abdullah ibn Amr, that the Prophet said, ‘The one who keeps relationship ties is not considered as one who joins ties. But in fact it is the one who keeps relationship ties despite the other side constantly cutting them that is considered as the joiner.’<sup>o4</sup>

Thus, it is clear from the above instructions that the Prophet urges us to keep relationship ties and forbids us to cut them off. He advises us to be kind to relatives in all circumstances, as Allah commands in the Holy Quran: ‘Nor can goodness and Evil be equal. Repel (Evil) with what is better: Then will he between whom and you was hatred become as it were thy friend and intimate!’ [Surah 41, Verse 34].

## 4 Prophetic Guidance in Dealing with Couples

### 4.1 Treating Wives with Kindness

Allah commands believers to treat their wives with kindness whether he loves her or not. He says in the Quran: ‘O you who believe! You are forbidden to inherit women against their will. Nor should you treat them with harshness, that you may take away part of the dower you have given them, except where they have been guilty of open lewdness; on the contrary live with them on a footing of kindness and equity. If you take a dislike to them it may be that you dislike a thing, and Allah brings about through it a great deal of good.’ [Surah 4, Verse 19].

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<sup>o1</sup> Muslim, Shahih, a book of kindness, in the section on keeping ties with relatives and forbidding to cut them off, Volume (4 / 1981), Hadith (2006).

<sup>o2</sup> Muslim, Sahih, a book of remembrance and supplication, in the section on there being a response to supplication as long as the servant does not complain of delay [in response to the supplication], Volume (4 / 2090), Hadith (2730).

<sup>o3</sup> Muslim, Sahih, a book of kindness, in the section on keeping ties with relatives and forbidding to cut them off, Volume (4 / 1982), Hadith (2008).

<sup>o4</sup> Al Bukhari, Sahih, a book of manners, in the section on the joiner of relationships, Hadith (0991).

This commandment is for husbands to treat their wives nicely and in a kind manner. Here, kind manner can be defined as: giving her the entitled dowry; paying for her living expenses; and not being angry with her for any mistakes. Allah says in the Quran: ‘...the parties should either hold together on equitable terms, or separate with kindness.’ [Surah ٢, Verse ٢٢٩].

Furthermore, Allah says: ‘If you take a dislike to them it may be that you dislike a thing, and Allah brings about through it a great deal of good.’ [Surah ٤, Verse ١٩]. This verse indicates that it is recommended for a husband to keep his wife even though he may dislike her<sup>٥٥</sup>. The Prophet has also confirmed this meaning by proclaiming, ‘A believing man should not hate a believing woman. If he dislikes one characteristics of her, he will like another one.’<sup>٥٦</sup>

The Prophet commands believers to deal softly and be polite to their wives. Imam Al Bukhari and Muslim reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, that the Prophet advised, ‘Be kind to women for they were created from a rib. The rib is crooked. If you attempt to straighten the rib, you will break it. If you leave it, it will remain crooked. So be kind to women.’<sup>٥٧</sup>

The Prophet gave a supreme example on dealing with wives for every married man. He considers kindness to one’s wife is part of faith. Al Tirmidhi and Ibn Maja reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, that the Prophet said, ‘A believer who has perfect faith is the one who has perfect characteristics, and the best amongst you are those who do best to their wives.’<sup>٥٨</sup>

Part of being kind to one’s wife is to clothe her, feed her, and so on. Ibn Maja reported on the authority of Mu’awiya, on the authority of Abu Mu’awiya: A man came and asked the Prophet, ‘What rights does a wife have over her husband?’ He said, "To feed her from what he eats, to clothe her from what he wears, do not strike her face, do not use harsh words and do not forsake her except in her bed.”<sup>٥٩</sup>

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<sup>٥٥</sup> Al Jasaas, Ahkaam Al Quran, Volume (٣ / ٤٧).

<sup>٥٦</sup> Muslim, Sahih, a book of breast-feeding, in the section on being kind to women, Volume (٢ / ١٠٩١), Hadith (١٤٦٩).

<sup>٥٧</sup> Al Bukhari, a book about the prophets, in the section of the character of Prophet Adam and his offspring, Hadith (٣٣٣١). Also, a book of marriage, in the section on being kind to women, Hadith (٥١٨٦); Muslim, Sahih, a book of breast-feeding, in the section on the best of worldly materials is a righteous wife, Volume (٢ / ١٠٩٠), Hadith (١٤٦٨).

<sup>٥٨</sup> Al Tirmidhi, Jami’, a book of breast-feeding, in the section on the rights of a wife over her husband, Volume (٣ / ٤٦٦), Hadith (١١٦٢); Ibn Majah, Sunan, a book of marriage, in the section on being kind to women, Volume (١ / ٦٣٦), Hadith (١٩٧٨); Ibn Hibaan, Sahih, Volume (٩ / ٤٣٣); Abu Ya’la, Musnad, Volume (١٠ / ٣٣٣); Muslim, Sahih, Volume (٢ / ١٠٩٠). Imam Al Bani confirmed this as an authentic Hadith, Volume (١ / ٥٧٣).

<sup>٥٩</sup> Abu Dawood, Sunan, a book of marriage, in the section on rights of women over her husband, Volume (١ / ٦٥١), Hadith (٢١٤٢); Ibn Majah, Sunan, a book of marriage, in the section on the rights of a wife over her husband, Volume (١ / ٥٩٣), Hadith (١٨٥٠). Imam Al Bani confirmed this is an authentic Hadith, Volume (١ / ٣١١).

The Prophet used to help his wives. Imam Al Bukhari and Muslim reported on the authority of Aswad Ibn Yazeed, who said: I asked Aisha what the Prophet used to do at his home. She replied, ‘He used to do the wife’s job. When the time came for prayer he used to go and lead people in the prayer.’<sup>٧١</sup>

The Prophet deems playing games (i.e. leisure activities) with the wife is permissible and the husband will be rewarded for that. He said, ‘Everything game a man plays is worthless except archery, training a horse, horse-riding and when a husband has fun with his wife. These will be worthwhile for him.’<sup>٧١</sup>

From the above Hadiths it is clear that Islam grants a high status to women both honouring and respecting them.

#### ٤.٢ Justice between Wives

Allah commands Muslims to be just and kind in all matters. He says in the Holy Quran: ‘Allah commands justice, the doing of good, and liberality to kith and kin...’ [Surah ١٦, Verse ٩٠]. He orders us to do justice especially between wives. In addition, He made dealing justly between wives a condition on every Muslim man if they want to marry more than one. He says in the Quran: ‘If ye fear that you shall not be able to deal justly with the orphans, Marry women of your choice, Two or three or four; but if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly (with them), then only one...’ [Surah ٤, Verse ٣].

Al Zamakhshari said, ‘Allah permits a Muslim man to marry more than one, but he connects this permissibility with being just to them’<sup>٧٢</sup>.

The Prophet warns those who marry more than one and is not just between them. He said, ‘Whosoever has two wives and is biased towards one, on the Day of Judgement he will come and part of his body will be leaning over to one side.’<sup>٧٣</sup>

The Prophet used to treat his wives with justice. He used to try his utmost to be just with them and used to ask Allah for His forgiveness in the uncontrollable event that his heart leaned towards one wife rather than another. Aisha reported: The Prophet used to treat us justly and used to say, ‘O Allah, this is my justice for the things I have control over (i.e. materialistic things), and do not blame me for things which I do not have control over (i.e. his heart).’<sup>٧٤</sup>

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<sup>٧١</sup> Al Bukhari, Sahih, a book of Athaan, in the section on helping a wife until the call for prayer has been said, Hadith (٦٧٦); also in a book of expenditure, in the section on helping a wife, Hadith (٥٣٦٣); also in a book of manners, in the section on how a husband should deal with his wife, Hadith (٦٠٣٩).

<sup>٧١</sup> Al Tirmidhi, a book on virtues of jihad, in the section on the excellence of shooting for Allah’s sake, Hadith (١٦٣٧). Al Tirmidhi confirmed this as an authentic Hadith.

<sup>٧٢</sup> Al Zamakhshari, Al Kashaaf, Volume (١ / ٢٣٣).

<sup>٧٣</sup> Al Nisa’i, Sunan, a book of dealing with women, in the section on a man favouring [is biased towards] one wife over another, Volume (٥ / ٢٨٠), Hadith (٨٨٩٠). Imam Al Bani confirmed this as an authentic Hadith, Volume (١ / ٦٠٩), Hadith (٣٩٤٢).

<sup>٧٤</sup> Al Tirmidhi, Sunan, a book of marriage, in the section on treating wives equally, Volume (٣ / ٤٤٦), Hadith (١١٤٠); Abu Dawood, Sunan, a book of marriage, in the section on justice between women, Volume

The Prophet used to be just between his wives in spending overnight time with them. He used to rotate between them giving them an equal share. Upon travelling, he used to use a random selection method. Imam Bukhari reported on the authority of Aisha, who said: When the Prophet intended to travel he used to use a random selection method. The one whose name was picked used to travel with him. He used to rotate the nights between his wives except Sawda bint Zama', who gave her nights to me in order to seek the pleasure of the Prophet<sup>10</sup>.

When the Prophet fell ill, he used to ask the permission of his wives to remain in Aisha's house. Abu Dawood narrated on the authority of Aisha, who said: Upon falling ill, the Prophet sent someone to call his wives. So they came, and he said to them, 'I am ill and cannot rotate the nights between you. So can you give me permission to remain at Aisha's house?' They then gave permission to him<sup>11</sup>.

Imam Al Bukhari reported on the authority of Aisha, who said: During his illness, the Prophet used to ask, 'Where will I be tomorrow? Where will I be tomorrow?' He meant which day was the day he would spend with me. All his wives gave him permission to stay wherever he wished. He remained at my house until he died. Just before he passed away, whilst I was holding his head against my chest, Abdul Rahman ibn Abu Bakr came in with a *Miswaak* (tooth-stick) in his hand and the Prophet said to him, 'Can I have that (*Miswaak*)?' He handed it to me; I chewed it (to make it soft) and then passed it to the Prophet. He used it to brush his teeth whilst leaning against my chest<sup>12</sup>.

From the above narrations, it is clear the Prophet used to respect his wives, dealt justly with them and never used to stay with one wife more than a night unless the other wife gave her permission to him.<sup>13</sup>

(1 / 648), Hadith (2134); Al Nisa'i, Sunan, a book of dealing with women, in the section on a man favouring [is biased towards] one wife over another, Volume (0 / 281), Hadith (8891); Ibn Majah, Sahih, a book of marriage, in the section on dealing justly with women, Volume (1 / 433), Hadith (1971); Al Hakim, Al Mustadrak, Volume (2 / 204).

<sup>10</sup> Al Bukhari, Sahih, a book of gifts, in the section on gifts of a wife to a person who is not her husband, Hadith (2094); and in a book of witnesses, in the section on using a random selection method to solve problems, Hadith (2688).

<sup>11</sup> Abu Dawood, Sunan, a book of marriage, in the section on dealing with women, Volume (1 / 649), Hadith (2134). Imam Al Bani confirmed this as an authentic Hadith, Volume (2 / 401), Hadith (1870).

<sup>12</sup> Al Bukhari, Sahih, a book of Maghazi, in the section on the illness and death of the Prophet, Hadith (4400).

<sup>13</sup> . We should mention that polygamy is permitted for necessity; to address the imbalance between the number of males and females in particular times of war as the least number of men on the number of women, as well as in the case of wife's illness and inability to have intercourse, or inability to bear children, if polygamy is prevented, men and women will solve their own problems, by adultery,

### ٤.٣ Addressing Family Problems Caused by Marital Jealousy

There is no doubt that every household has family problems in some form or other including the Prophet's household. Despite this, the Prophet used his kindness and wisdom to solve his household predicaments. Using the Prophet's wise methods yields an excellent example for Muslims to address family problems. In fact, many sociologists have proposed theories to address these problems based upon the Prophet's approaches.

A fundamental problem which developed in the Prophet's household is marital jealousy. This type of jealousy is a common occurrence between husband and wife, and especially between women if they are married to the same man. It is extremely difficult to eradicate of marital jealousy but it is important to address and tackle the issue with wisdom. Al Manaawi describes marital jealousy as, 'hatred of women to share one man.'<sup>١٩</sup>

If marital jealousy is not dealt with properly it will lead to the destruction of the family. Consequently, the Prophet tackles this issue by his sayings and actions in order for the husband to address this problem and keep the family together.

The Prophet deals with this problem using different approaches:

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and other ways, also polygamy if man can treat his wife's with Justice and the ability to spend on his wife's.

In the West may not have a problem for not allowing polygamy because the society permit adultery, and easy for a man to find another woman if his wife sick, and this the cause for spreading the daises, statistics show that were published in Europe and America from the rise of the proportion of illegitimate children increased the worry of social workers, and all this because of not allowing polygamy and the men use to the practice of adultery (Islam and the contemporary women's issues p. ٩٠-٩٥), and (women between the doctrine and law, p. ٨٠-٨٥).

Some scientists have called for the West to allow polygamy to solve such problems, including what was published in the newspaper, " Lagos Weekly record " in the issue dated ٢٠/٤/١٩٠١ C.A, and also English philosopher, "Spencer" in his book: "The fundamental of the social " to allow polygamy in the time of war (encyclopedia of knowledge, fareed wajdi: ٤ / ١٩٢ in the article: the husband), In Al-Ahram news paper, on ١٢/١٢/١٩٦٠ A.C discovery of a document written by: "Martin Borman," Hitler's deputy wrote in ١٩٤٤. That Hitler was seriously thinking that allows a man to marry a German two , to ensure a strong future of the German people .( Islam and women's issues, p. ٩٣). Finally, it must be pointed out that the sexual disease caused by committing adultery, not polygamy.

<sup>١٩</sup> Al Manaawi, Al Tawqeef Alay Muhimaat Al Ta'areef, edited by Mohammad Radwan al Daya, Dar al Fiqr, Beirut, Lebanon, ١<sup>st</sup> edition, ١٤١٠ Hijrah, (p. ٥٤٤).

- (i) Tackling the problem with soft words, calmness and wisdom.

Imam Al Bukhari reported on the authority of Anas ibn Malik, that he said: The Prophet was staying with one of his wives. Another of his wives sent a plate of food to the house he was staying in via a servant. The wife who he was staying with hit the servant's hand on purpose until the plate fell down and the food dropped onto the floor. The Prophet got up, cleaned the food and said to the few Muslims who were watching, 'Your mother (i.e. the Prophet's wife) has become jealous.' The Prophet re-entered his house and gave a plate to the servant in replacement of the broken plate.<sup>v</sup>

Hence, despite his wife's action the Prophet was not angry with her but instead absorbed her jealousy by addressing a few companions who were present and saying 'your mother has become jealous'. At the same time, he replaced the plate with an unbroken one so as to indicate to the wife who sent the food that he had ate and enjoyed the food and here was her plate.

Imam Muslim reported on the authority of Urwa, that Aisha said: One night the Prophet was staying with me and he went out. I followed him. He saw me and said, 'Aisha what is the matter, are you jealous?' I answered, 'Yes O Messenger of Allah. Someone like me would be jealous over someone like you.' The Prophet replied, 'That means Satan has come to you.' I then said, 'O Messenger of Allah does that mean Satan has accompanied me?' He said, 'Yes.' I asked, 'With every human?' He replied, 'Yes.' I then asked, 'Even with you O Messenger of Allah?' He said, 'Yes, but my Lord has helped me against Satan until he embraces Islam.'<sup>v</sup>

From the above, it is clear that the Prophet dealt with this problem using a kind, soft and wise approach.

- (ii) Showing his displeasure about the situation with anger.

With regards to marital jealousy, sometimes the Prophet would express his emotions with anger. Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of Aisha, that she said: One day the Prophet mentioned his first wife Khadijah. He praised her a lot until I became jealous. I said to him, 'O Messenger of Allah, you keep mentioning an old lady with saggy red cheeks when Allah has replaced her with a younger one better than her (i.e. Aisha was referring to herself).' Then the Prophet's facial expression changed and he became red expressing his anger towards my comment. Prior to this, I had never seen the Prophet becoming this angry except on two occasions: when the Angel Gibrail brought revelations; and when he saw

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<sup>v</sup> Al Bukhari, Sahih, a book of marriage, in the section on marital jealousy, Hadith (٥٢٢٥).

<sup>v</sup> Muslim, Sahih, a book of the description of the Day of Judgement, in the section on Satan sending his followers to mislead people, Hadith (٢٨١٥).

huge clouds in the sky as it meant the coming of either mercy (i.e. rain) or punishment (i.e. a flood).<sup>vʔ</sup>

Imam Al Nisa'i reported on the authority of Anas ibn Malik, who said: Sophiya went on a journey with the Prophet and his companions and her camel became weak and she fell behind the caravan. When they arrived at their destination the travelers stopped and she came late. She was crying. She said the Prophet, 'You have provided a weak camel for me to travel on.' The Prophet used to comfort her and wipe the tears from her eyes but she continued to cry. Then he became angry and left her. Then she went to Aisha and said, 'This is my day and I will give it to you.' Aisha went to the Prophet and said to him, 'Sophiya has given me her day in order that I can stay with you.' The Prophet asked, 'What is the matter with you Aisha?' She replied, 'It is a blessing from Allah; He gives it to whom He wishes.' Upon Sophiya's actions the Prophet was pleased with her. The Prophet then went to his wife Zaynab and said, 'Sophiya has become ill due to her weak camel. Can you lend her your camel in order to continue our journey?' Zaynab said, 'You want me to lend my camel to a Jewish woman?' Upon hearing this, the Prophet became angry with Zaynab and left her and never returned to her home for three months (i.e. refrained from her). She thought the Prophet was going to leave her for good (i.e. divorce her) so she folded his bed and put it away. After three months he went to her home in order to show reconciliation.<sup>vʔ</sup>

Thus, the Prophet addressed the incidents with Aisha and Sophiya by expressing his anger with them in response to their actions, via facial expressions. The third incident was with Zaynab. He dealt with this problem by showing his anger and refraining from her for a three month period in order to show her that what she said was very hurtful, dangerous and is not permitted in Islam.

The Prophet said in the Hadith, 'If a wife sleeps a night whilst her husband is angry and refrains from her, all the Angels curse her until morning.'<sup>vʔ</sup>

- (iii) Giving an opportunity to the wife to explain her feelings about marital jealousy.

Sometimes the Prophet addressed marital jealousy by giving his wives a chance to express their feelings about jealousy without exceeding limits and using excessive emotion and ill feelings.

Al Nisa'i reported on the authority of Aisha, that she said: Sawda, the wife of the Prophet, visited us one day. The Prophet sat between us. He rested one of his legs on my leg and the other on Sawda's leg. I made *Harira* (food made from flour). I told Sawda to eat but she refused. I told her to eat otherwise I will throw some of

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<sup>vʔ</sup> Ahmad, Musnad, Volume (٦ / ١٥٠).

<sup>vʔ</sup> Al Nisa'i, Sunan, a book of living with women, in the section on a man leaving his wife for a period and the length of this period, Volume (٥ / ٢٦٩), Hadith (٩١٦٢); Abu Dawood, Sunan, a book of manners, in the section on the length of time a Muslim can leave his fellow Muslim, Volume (٢ / ٦٩٦), Hadith (٤٩١٣).

<sup>vʔ</sup> Ahmad, Musnad, Volume (٢ / ٢٥٥).



the food on your face! She did not eat so I took the plate and put some on her face. The Prophet took his leg off Sawda and told her to do the same to me. After doing this, the Prophet laughed at us both. Then we heard Umar shouting his son Abdullah, in order to inform us that he was coming to the house. Upon this, the Prophet told us to get up and wash our faces as Umar was coming.<sup>v°</sup>

## ٤.٤ Addressing Family Crises

There is no doubt that every home will have a crisis in one way or another. The Prophet's household was no different and came across some of these crises. However, the Prophet tackled these crises in a way that has now become an example and method for us to solve such problems.

- (i) Not to hasten judgement in the case of accusations but to address the problem carefully.

One of the most hurtful crises that the Prophet came across was when someone gave a false accusation against his wife.

Aisha reported about her story of false accusation and said: Whenever Allah's Apostle intended to go on a journey, he used to draw lots amongst his wives, and Allah's Apostle used to take with him the one on who the lot fell. He drew lots amongst us during one of the Ghazwat which he fought. The lot fell on me and so I proceeded with Allah's Apostle after Allah's order of veiling (the women) had been revealed. I was carried (on the back of a camel) in my howdah and carried down while still in it (when we came to a halt). So we went on till Allah's Apostle had finished from that Ghazwa of his and returned. When we approached the city of Medina he announced at night that it was time for departure. So when they announced the news of departure, I got up and went away from the army camps, and after finishing from the call of nature, I came back to my riding animal. I touched my chest to find that my necklace which was made of *Zifar* beads (i.e. Yemenite beads partly black and partly white) was missing. So I returned to look for my necklace and my search for it detained me. (In the meanwhile) the people who used to carry me on my camel, came and took my howdah and put it on the back of my camel on which I used to ride, as they considered that I was in it. In those days women were light in weight for they did not get fat, and flesh did not cover their bodies in abundance as they used to eat only a little food. Those people therefore, disregarded the lightness of the howdah while lifting and carrying it; and at that time I was still a young girl. They made the camel rise and all of them left (along with it). I found my necklace after the army had gone. Then I came to their camping place to find no call maker of them, nor one who would respond to the call. So I intended to go to the place where I used to stay, thinking that they would miss me and come back to me (in my search). While I was sitting in my resting place, I was overwhelmed by sleep and slept. Safwan bin Al Mu'attal As

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<sup>v°</sup> Al Nisa'i, Sunan, a book on dealing with women, in the section on revenge, Volume (٢ / ٢٩١), Hadith (٨٩١٧).

Sulami Adh Dhikwani was behind the army. When he reached my place in the morning, he saw the figure of a sleeping person and he recognized me on seeing me as he had seen me before the order of compulsory veiling (was prescribed). So I woke up when he recited *Istirja* (i.e. *'Inna lillahi ia inna ilaihi raji'oon'*) as soon as he recognized me. I veiled my face with my head cover at once, and by Allah, we did not speak a single word, and I did not hear him saying any word besides his *Istirja*. He dismounted from his camel and made it kneel down, putting his leg on its front legs and then I got up and rode on it. Then he set out leading the camel that was carrying me till we overtook the army in the extreme heat of midday while they were at a halt (taking a rest). (Because of the event) some people brought destruction upon themselves and the one who spread the *Ifk* (i.e. slander) more, was Abdullah bin Ubai ibn Salul. (Urwa said, 'The people propagated the slander and talked about it in his (i.e. Abdullah's) presence and he confirmed it and listened to it and asked about it to let it prevail.' Urwa also added, 'None was mentioned as members of the slanderous group besides (Abdullah) except Hassan bin Thabit and Mistah bin Uthatha and Hamna bint Jahsh along with others about whom I have no knowledge, but they were a group as Allah said. It is said that the one who carried most of the slander was Abdullah bin Ubai bin Salul.' Urwa added, 'Aisha disliked to have Hassan abused in her presence and she used to say, "It was he who said: My father and his (i.e. my father's) father and my honor are all for the protection of Mohammed's honour from you."'). Aisha added, 'After we returned to Medina, I became ill for a month. The people were propagating the forged statements of the slanderers while I was unaware of anything of all that, but I felt that in my present ailment, I was not receiving the same kindness from Allah's Apostle as I used to receive when I got sick. (But now) Allah's Apostle would only come, greet me and say, "How is that (lady)?" and leave. That roused my doubts, but I did not discover the evil (i.e. slander) till I went out after my convalescence, I went out with Um Mistah to Al-Manasi' where we used to answer the call of nature and we used not to go out (to answer the call of nature) except at night, and that was before we had latrines near our houses. And this habit of our concerning evacuating the bowels, was similar to the habits of the old Arabs living in the deserts, for it would be troublesome for us to take latrines near our houses. So I and Um Mistah who was the daughter of Abu Ruhm bin Al Muttalib bin Abd Manaf, whose mother was the daughter of Sakhr bin Amir and the aunt of Abu Bakr As Siddiq and whose son was Mistah bin Uthatha bin Abbas bin Al Muttalib, went out. I and Um Mistah returned to my house after we finished answering the call of nature. Um Mistah stumbled by getting her foot entangled in her covering sheet and on that she said, 'Let Mistah be ruined!' I said, 'What a hard word you have said. Do you abuse a man who took part in the battle of Badr?' On that she said, 'O you Hantah! Didn't you hear what he (i.e. Mistah) said?' I said, 'What did he say?' Then she told me the slander of the people of Ifk. So my ailment was aggravated, and when I reached my home, Allah's Apostle came to me, and after greeting me, said, 'How is that (lady)?' I said, 'Will you allow me to go to my parents?' as I wanted to be sure about the news through them. Allah's Apostle allowed me (and I went to my parents) and asked my mother, 'O mother! What are the people talking about?'

She said, ‘O my daughter! Don’t worry, for scarcely is there a charming woman who is loved by her husband and whose husband has other wives besides herself that they (i.e. women) would find faults with her.’ I said, ‘Subhan-Allah! (I testify the uniqueness of Allah). Are the people really talking in this way?’ I kept on weeping that night till dawn. I could neither stop weeping nor sleep then in the morning again, I kept on weeping. When the Divine Inspiration was delayed. Allah’s Apostle called Ali bin Abi Talib and Usama bin Zaid to ask and consult them about divorcing me. Usama bin Zaid said what he knew of my innocence, and the respect he preserved in himself for me. Usama said, ‘O Allah’s Apostle! She is your wife and we do not know anything except good about her.’ Ali bin Abi Talib said, ‘O Allah’s Apostle! Allah does not put you in difficulty and there are plenty of women other than she, yet, ask the maid-servant who will tell you the truth.’ On that Allah’s Apostle called Barira (i.e. the maid-servant) and said, ‘O Barira! Did you ever see anything which aroused your suspicion?’ Barira said to him, ‘By Him Who has sent you with the Truth. I have never seen anything in her (i.e. Aisha) which I would conceal, except that she is a young girl who sleeps leaving the dough of her family exposed so that the domestic goats come and eat it.’ So, on that day, Allah’s Apostle got up on the pulpit and complained about Abdullah bin Ubai (bin Salul) before his companions, saying, ‘O you Muslims! Who will relieve me from that man who has hurt me with his evil statement about my family? By Allah, I know nothing except good about my family and they have blamed a man about whom I know nothing except good and he used never to enter my home except with me.’ Sad bin Mu’adh the brother of Banu Abd Al Ashhal got up and said, ‘O Allah's Apostle! I will relieve you from him; if he is from the tribe of Al Aus, then I will chop his head off, and if he is from our brothers, i.e. Al Khazraj, then order us, and we will fulfill your order.’ On that, a man from Al Khazraj got up. Um Hassan, his cousin, was from his branch tribe, and he was Sad bin Ubada, chief of Al Khazraj. Before this incident, he was a pious man, but his love for his tribe goaded him into saying to Sad (bin Mu’adh). ‘By Allah, you have told a lie; you shall not and cannot kill him. If he belonged to your people, you would not wish him to be killed.’ On that, Usaid bin Hudair who was the cousin of Sad (bin Mu’adh) got up and said to Sad bin Ubada, ‘By Allah! You are a liar! We will surely kill him, and you are a hypocrite arguing on the behalf of hypocrites.’ On this, the two tribes of Al Aus and Al Khazraj got so much excited that they were about to fight while Allah’s Apostle was standing on the pulpit. Allah’s Apostle kept on quietening them till they became silent and so did he. All that day I kept on weeping with my tears never ceasing, and I could never sleep. In the morning my parents were with me and I wept for two nights and a day with my tears never ceasing and I could never sleep till I thought that my liver would burst from weeping. So, while my parents were sitting with me and I was weeping, an Ansari woman asked me to grant her admittance. I allowed her to come in, and when she came in, she sat down and started weeping with me. While we were in this state, Allah’s Apostle came, greeted us and sat down. He had never sat with me since that day of the slander. A month had elapsed and no Divine Inspiration came to him about my case. Allah’s Apostle then recited Tashah-hud and then said, ‘Amma Badu, O Aisha! I have been informed so and

so about you; if you are innocent, then soon Allah will reveal your innocence, and if you have committed a sin, then repent to Allah and ask Him for forgiveness for when a slave confesses his sins and asks Allah for forgiveness, Allah accepts his repentance.’ When Allah’s Apostle finished his speech, my tears ceased flowing completely that I no longer felt a single drop of tear flowing. I said to my father, ‘Reply to Allah’s Apostle on my behalf concerning what he has said.’ My father said, ‘By Allah, I do not know what to say to Allah’s Apostle.’ Then I said to my mother, ‘Reply to Allah’s Apostle on my behalf concerning what he has said.’ She said, ‘By Allah, I do not know what to say to Allah’s Apostle.’ In spite of the fact that I was a young girl and had a little knowledge of Quran, I said, ‘By Allah, no doubt I know that you heard this (slandering) speech so that it has been planted in your hearts (i.e. minds) and you have taken it as a truth. Now if I tell you that I am innocent, you will not believe me, and if confess to you about it, and Allah knows that I am innocent, you will surely believe me. By Allah, I find no similitude for me and you except that of Joseph’s father when he said, ‘(For me) patience in the most fitting against that which you assert; it is Allah (Alone) Whose Help can be sought.’ Then I turned to the other side and lay on my bed; and Allah knew then that I was innocent and hoped that Allah would reveal my innocence. But, by Allah, I never thought that Allah would reveal about my case, Divine Inspiration, that would be recited (forever) as I considered myself too unworthy to be talked of by Allah with something of my concern, but I hoped that Allah’s Apostle might have a dream in which Allah would prove my innocence. But, by Allah, before Allah’s Apostle left his seat and before any of the household left, the Divine inspiration came to Allah’s Apostle. So there overtook him the same hard condition which used to overtake him, (when he used to be inspired Divinely). The sweat was dropping from his body like pearls though it was a wintry day and that was because of the weighty statement which was being revealed to him. When that state of Allah’s Apostle was over, he got up smiling, and the first word he said was, ‘O Aisha! Allah has declared your innocence!’ Then my Mother said to me, ‘Get up and go to him (i.e. Allah’s Apostle). I replied, ‘By Allah, I will not go to him, and I praise none but Allah. So Allah revealed the ten Verses, ‘Verily! They who spread the slander are a gang, among you...’ [Surah ٢٤, Verses ١١-٢٠]. Allah revealed those Quranic Verses to declare my innocence. Abu Bakr As Siddiq who used to disburse money for Mistah bin Uthatha because of his relationship to him and his poverty, said, ‘By Allah, I will never give to Mistah bin Uthatha anything after what he has said about Aisha.’ Then Allah revealed, ‘And let not those among you who are good and wealthy swear not to give (any sort of help) to their kinsmen, those in need, and those who have left their homes for Allah’s cause, let them pardon and forgive. Do you not love that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is oft-Forgiving Most Merciful.’ [Surah ٢٤, Verse ٢٢]. Abu Bakr As Siddiq said, ‘Yes, by Allah, I would like that Allah forgive me.’ and went on giving Mistah the money he used to give him before. He also added, ‘By Allah, I will never deprive him of it at all.’ Aisha further said, ‘Allah’s Apostle also asked Zaynab bint Jahsh (i.e. his wife) about my case. He said to Zaynab, ‘What do you know and what did you see?’ She replied, ‘O Allah’s Apostle! I refrain from claiming falsely that I have heard or seen anything. By Allah, I know

nothing except good (about Aisha).’ From amongst the wives of the Prophet Zaynab was my peer (in beauty and in the love she received from the Prophet) but Allah saved her from that evil because of her piety. Her sister Hamna, started struggling on her behalf and she was destroyed along with those who were destroyed. The man who was blamed said, ‘Subhan-Allah! By Him in Whose Hand my soul is, I have never uncovered the cover (i.e. veil) of any female.’ Later on the man was martyred in Allah’s Cause.’<sup>vi</sup>

From the above Hadith narration, we can see how the Prophet dealt with a very sensitive family crisis.

It is important to pointed out some important aspects learned from this Hadith, including:

١. Verification and not to rush to the conclusion the prophet, have waited for forty days, until Allah reveled verses in the Holy Quran to innocence of Aisha's and a reduction of those involved in the *afak* incident.

٢- severe punishment on those who accuse innocent women in their dignity and honor (٨٠) lashes while Fornicator (١٠٠ lashes) and this indicates shows the seriousness of the symptoms of people engage in this act is no less dangerous than adultery.

٣- This incident prove that the Holy Quran is not from the prophet Mohammed, as he waited forty days to aunocius the innocence of his wife. If the Quran were from the Prophet Mohammed, he will respond to the hypocrites strait away.

- (ii) Punishment according to the magnitude of the action without exceeding limits. A second crisis to happen in the Prophet’s household was when the Prophet told two of his wives (Aisha and Hafsa) a secret, but they revealed this secret to other women. When he found out he swore by Allah to refrain from all his wives for one month.

Imam Al Bukhari reported on the authority of Abdullah ibn Abbas, who said: I was keen to ask Umar about the two wives of the Prophet who revealed his secret. Umar replied, ‘I am surprised you do not know. They are Aisha and Hafsa.’<sup>vii</sup>

In this case, the Prophet refrained from his wives for one month in order to teach them a lesson not to reveal the secrets between a husband and his wives as these secrets should remain within the home.

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<sup>vi</sup> Al Bukhari, Sahih, a book of witnesses, in the section on preferring a woman over another, Hadith (٢٦٦١); also in a book of Al Maghaazi [military expeditions led by the Prophet], in the section on false allegations, Hadith (٤١٤١); Muslim, a book repentance, in the section on false allegations, Hadith (٢٧٧٠).

<sup>vii</sup> Al Bukhari, Sahih, a book of marriage, in the section on a man advising his daughter, Hadith (٥١٩١); also in Muslim, Sahih, a book of divorce, in the section on refraining from wives, Hadith (١٩٧١).

- (iii) To give the wife freedom of choice between remaining with her husband and divorcing him in the case of the husband not being financially able to support his wife.

Allah commands the husband to maintain his wife financially according to his ability. He says in the Holy Quran: ‘Let the man of means spend according to his means: and the man whose resources are restricted, let him spend according to what Allah has given him. Allah puts no burden on any person beyond what He has given him. After a difficulty, Allah will soon grant relief.’ [Surah ٦٥, Verse ٧].

When the Prophet was asked about the rights of a wife, he confirmed one of the rights regarding maintenance by saying, ‘To feed her from what he eats, and to clothe her from what he wears.’<sup>٧٨</sup>

If the husband is unable to fully or partly financially maintain his wife, she has the choice to ask for a divorce or to continue with the marriage<sup>٧٩</sup>.

Imam Muslim reported on the authority of Jabir ibn Abdullah, who said: Abu Bakr came and asked permission to enter the house of the Prophet. He was granted permission to enter. Then Umar came and he asked permission. He was also granted entry. The Prophet was quiet and was sitting down with his wives sitting around him. Umar said, ‘I will say something to make the Prophet laugh.’ He said, ‘O Messenger of Allah, what would happen if my wife came and asked me for maintenance and I broke her neck. What will happen?’ Then the Prophet started laughing and said, ‘As you can see, they are all around me asking for maintenance.’ Abu Bakr went to his daughter Aisha and grabbed her from her neck and blamed her for asking the Prophet for maintenance. Umar went to his daughter Hafsa and did the same. Both of them said to their daughters, ‘You have asked the Prophet for something which he has not got!’ They both replied, ‘By Allah, we would not ask him for something he has not got.’ Then the Prophet refrained from them for a month (or ٣٩ days) until Allah revealed the following: ‘O Prophet! Say to thy Consorts: "If it be that ye desire the life of this World, and its glitter, then come! I will provide for your enjoyment and set you free in a handsome manner.’ [Surah ٣٣, Verse ٧٨]. Then the Prophet turned to Aisha and said, ‘I want to give you a choice, but before you make up your mind discuss it with your parents. The choice is: either you desire Allah and His Messenger; or divorce.’ Aisha replied, ‘I do not want the choice to discuss it with my parents. I decide Allah and His Messenger. This is my choice and please do not tell others what I have decided.’ Then the Prophet told his wives, ‘Allah did not send me to

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<sup>٧٨</sup> Abu Dawood, Sunan, a book of marriage, in the section on the rights of a woman over her husband, Volume (١ / ٦٥١), Hadith ٣١٤٣.

<sup>٧٩</sup> Al Qurtubi, Al Jami’ Bi Ahkaam Al Quran, Volume (٥ / ١٦٩); Rowthat Al Talibeen, Volume (٩ / ٧٦); Ibn Al Salah, Fatawa, Volume/Pages (١ / ٦٤٥, ٦٦١ and ٦٩٤).

make life hard for people and to tell them off, but has sent me as an educator to make things easy for people.’<sup>^</sup>

If the Prophet was materialistic and wanted all that was in the world, Allah would have granted it to him. However, he wanted to show his nation that happiness would not come through being materialistic and wealthy but via piety and being close to Allah.

Al Tirmidhi reported on the authority of Abu Umamah, that the Prophet said: My Lord gave me the choice of making the desert surrounding Mekkah turn into gold. I said, ‘No my Lord. One day I will eat; the next I will become hungry. This is better for me because when I feel hungry I remember You and pray for You. When I eat and feel full, I praise and thank You for giving me sustenance.’<sup>^</sup>

In addition, Allah allocated the Prophet a fifth of the war booty which would have made him very rich, but instead he chose to spend it on the poor and needy.

Therefore, the Prophet has given us wonderful examples of leadership in addressing family problems for the benefit of the family in this life and in the hereafter.

## ◦ **Prophetic Guidance in Dealing with Non-Muslim Women**

The Prophet did not ignore non-Muslim women in a Muslim community but considered them as part of the community. In everyday life, Muslims have to deal with non-Muslims of the community.

### ◦.1 **The Act of Doing Goodness and Being Kind**

Allah commands believers to be kind to their parents and to look after and treat them nicely even if they are non-Muslims. He says in the Holy Quran: ‘We have enjoined on man kindness to parents: but if they (either of them) strive (to force) you to join with Me (in worship) anything of which you have no knowledge, obey them not. You have (all) to return to me, and I will tell you (the truth) of all that you did.’ [Surah ٢٩, Verse ٨].

In another verse He says in the Quran: ‘"But if they strive to make thee join in worship with Me things of which thou hast no knowledge, obey them not; yet bear them company in this life with justice (and consideration), and follow the way of those who turn to me (in love): in the end the return of you all is to Me, and I will tell you the truth (and meaning) of all that you did."’ [Surah ٣١, Verse ١٥].

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<sup>^</sup> Muslim, Sahih, a book of divorce, in the section on giving a wife the choice of divorce, Volume (٢ / ١١٠٤), Hadith (١٤٧٨).

<sup>^</sup> Al Tirmidhi, Jami’, a book of Al Zuhuh, in the section on being patient in times of poverty, Volume (٤ / ٥٧٥), Hadith (٣٩٨٠); Ahmad, Musnad, Volume (٥ / ٢٤٥); Al Tabaraani, Al Mu’jam Al Kabir, Volume (٨ / ٢٠٧).

In the above verses, Allah clearly informs children to treat their parents with kindness and obey them in all circumstances except if they tell the parents to disobey Allah or leave Islam. In this, and only this case, children should not listen to their parents.

Imam Al Bukhari reported on the authority of Asma bint Abu Bakr, who said: My mother came to visit me whilst she was non-Muslim. I asked the Prophet, ‘Shall I keep kinship ties with her or not?’ He replied, ‘Yes, keep kinship ties with her.’<sup>^t</sup> In this Hadith, the Prophet advises Asma to receive her mother and treat her nicely even if she was not a Muslim.

Imam Ahmed reported on the authority of Abdullah ibn Zubair, that he said: Qateela bint Abdul Uza, the mother of Asma bint Abu Bakr, came to visit Asma whilst she was non-Muslim. She brought some gifts and food with her. Asma refused to let her in to her house or except her gifts. Aisha asked the Prophet about this. Then Allah revealed the Verse: ‘Allah forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you not for (your) Faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them: for Allah loves those who are just.’ [Surah ٦٠, Verse ٨]. Then the Prophet told Asma to let her in and to except her gifts<sup>^t</sup>.

Furthermore, Imam Muslim reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, who said: I used to invite my mother to become a Muslim. One day she said something unpleasant about the Prophet. So I went to see the Prophet whilst I was weeping about what she said. I said, ‘O Messenger of Allah, I used to invite my Mother to Islam, but today she said something unpleasant about you. So O Prophet of Allah, can you pray to Allah to guide my mother to Islam?’ The Prophet responded by saying, ‘O Allah, guide the mother of Abu Hurayrah.’ I left him with happiness as he prayed for my mother. I went to my mother’s home and knocked on the door. She spoke from inside and said, ‘Wait.’ I waited and heard some water running. I realised she was having a bath. She opened the door and immediately said, ‘O Abu Hurayrah, I bear witness there is no God but Allah, and I bear witness that Mohammed is His servant and Messenger.’ Upon this, I went running to the Prophet crying out of happiness and joy and I said, ‘O Messenger of Allah, glad tidings to you. Allah has answered your prayer and guided my mother to Islam.’ On hearing this, the Prophet praised Allah and thanked Him. Then I said, ‘O Messenger of Allah, pray to Allah that the believers will like my mother and me, and my mother and I will like the believers.’ Then the Prophet said, ‘O Allah, make this servant and his mother like the believers, and the believers like him and his mother.’ Abu Hurayrah responded by saying, ‘O Messenger of Allah, pray that every believer who hears about me but has not seen me (i.e. come after his death) like me.’<sup>^e</sup>

## ٥.٢ Marriage to Non-Muslim Women

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<sup>^t</sup> Al Bukhari, Sahih, a book of manners, in the section on which people have rights on me, Hadith (٥٩٧); Muslim, Sahih, a book of Zakah, in the section on virtues of charity to relatives, Hadith (١٠٠٢).

<sup>^r</sup> Ahmad, Musnad, Volume (٥ / ١٧٤).

<sup>^e</sup> Muslim, Sahih, a book of virtues of the companions, in the section on virtues of Abu Hurayrah, Hadith (٢٤٩١).



Allah forbids Muslim men to marry atheists as He says in the Holy Quran: ‘Do not marry unbelieving women (idolaters), until they believe: A slave woman who believes is better than an unbelieving woman, even though she allures you...’ [Surah ٢, Verse ٢٢١]. However, Allah does allow Muslim men to marry women from the people of the book, i.e. Christian and Jewish women. He says in the Quran: ‘This day are (all) things good and pure made lawful unto you. The food of the People of the Book is lawful unto you and yours is lawful unto them. (Lawful unto you in marriage) are (not only) chaste women who are believers, but chaste women among the People of the Book, revealed before your time, when you give them their due dowers, and desire chastity, not lewdness, nor secret intrigues if any one rejects faith, fruitless is his work, and in the Hereafter he will be in the ranks of those who have lost (all spiritual good).’ [Surah ٥, Verse ٦].

It is worth mentioning that Safyia was a Jew who became a Muslim before she married the Prophet. In addition, Maria the Coptic was a Christian who became a Muslim and then married the Prophet.

Therefore, a Muslim man can marry a Christian or Jewish woman who has a right to keep her faith and practice it freely. This is part of the rights a Muslim man must give to her and also part of religious freedom granted to her under Islamic Law. This is because a Muslim man believes in their Prophets, Isa (Jesus) and Musa (Moses), and their books, the *Injil* (New Testament) and *Tawrah* (Old Testament).

Moreover, a Muslim man must fulfill his duty as a husband towards his non-Muslim wife in the same way he would treat a Muslim wife. This includes treating her with kindness and supporting her financially, etc.

## **Conclusion**

After reviewing Verses from the Holy Quran and the Hadiths of the Prophet on the subject of the treatment of women, we can deduce the following:

- (i) Islam is the only religion which has given women full rights.
- (ii) Islam has equated men and women in rights, responsibilities and duties, but these have been assigned according to their respective physical and psychological states.
- (iii) The Prophet has given us the finest examples of how to deal with women in different circumstances and in all areas.
- (iv) The Prophet has laid down basic rules for building a Muslim family which is the foundation for the construction of an Islamic society.
- (v) The Prophet has uniquely solved family problems by addressing numerous family crises.
- (vi) If a married couple knows each other's rights and responsibilities, this leads to the continuity and smooth running of a family.

Finally, we would like to ask Allah to make this work sincere in its purpose. If it is right we thank Allah for guiding us to the Right Path, and if there are errors, it is from our shortcomings as human-beings so we beseech Allah for forgiveness.