

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

Today also *incha Allah* I will continue speaking about marriage. There is an interesting hadith in which the Holy Prophet Mohammad (saw) is reported to have said: “The most perfect believer in faith is the one whose character is finest and who is kindest to his wife.” (Nasai & Tirmidhi). From this we can learn and conclude that if we want to be the best amongst the Muslims we should do our best to improve our selves. We should understand that it is important for us to manifest good character throughout our life. Very often we meet with people who unfortunately brag about their misbehavior. This is not at all the way of the Muslim as taught by the Holy Prophet Mohammad (saw). The Holy Prophet (saw) has taught us that we should exhibit the excellent behaviour in all circumstances of life. We should do our best not to offend anyone. If we are conscious that we have offended someone we should try to make amends as soon as we can. I also recall from memory another hadith where the Holy Prophet (saw) is reported to have said that with his good behaviour a Muslim can attain the rank of someone who fasts during the day and prays at night. Such is the regard of someone who displays the best of behaviour in all circumstances of life. The next part of the hadith speaks about being kindest to one’s wife. One should make an effort to act kindly towards one’s wife or wives. Since he was wise the Holy Prophet (saw) knew quite well the relationship between a husband and his wife. So he advised that a husband should deal kindly with his wife. In another hadith he said that he dealt most kindly with his wives.

In another hadith from Nasai we read “A Muslim man can acquire no benefit after Islam greater than a Muslim wife who makes him happy when he looks at her, obeys him when he commands her, and protects him when he is away from her in herself and in his property.’ From this hadith we understand that being guided to Islam or being born a Muslim is by itself a great favour of Allah upon one. This is most probably why we have been taught to say after each meal “*Alhamdo lillahillazi at’amana wa saqana wa ja’alana minal mouslemeen*” meaning “All praise is due to Allah who has provided us with food and drinks and has made us Muslims.” Being a Muslim is such a great favour of Allah upon one that one has to be grateful for it. Some people like to think that there is no difference at all we are all the same. It is not the same at all in the eyes of Allah. In the Holy Quran Allah forbids us from marrying idolatrous women but we can marry chaste believing women from those who have been given the book. So we

should be careful with whom we try to develop relationships. To believe in Allah and his Prophets is an important element of being a Muslim. After getting faith, what is most important as a gift is to have a wife who displays four characteristics. She keeps herself in such a way that the husband is always pleased when he looks at her. Secondly she obeys her husband whenever he tells her to do something that is good according to Islam and thirdly she protects her husband by well behaving in his absence and by protecting his property as well. If couples bear in mind these words full of wisdom they will go far in creating for themselves marital bliss on earth.

In another hadith we read that the Holy Prophet (saw) said “*Addunya mata’oune wa khayro mata’id dunyal mar’atous salehato*” which is translated as “the whole world is a provision and the best of these provisions is a pious woman”. From this hadith one may conclude that should women try to be pious they would become the best provision of this world.

Speaking about what may bring one joy the Holy Prophet (saw) is reported to have said: "Four things bring one joy: a righteous wife, a spacious house, a pious neighbor and a comfortable riding animal." Today most probably the comfortable riding animal has been replaced by other comfortable means of transport.

He further said stressing the need to marry "When a man marries, he has fulfilled half of his religion, so let him fear Allah regarding the remaining half." This helps us to understand that marriage is an important step in one’s life and one should do one’s best to make it work. In trying to do so one should familiarize oneself with the teachings of the Holy Quran and the sayings of the Holy prophet (saw) as well and practice them and one will enjoy a happy life. If you think you will do better than what these teachings say, you will harm no one but yourself and those who are close to you. Islam and its teachings are a blessing to all of us. We should learn to see it so.

In yet another hadith we read “When someone proposes marriage to one of you whose religion and character pleases you, then you should marry him. If you do not do so, there will be tribulations in the earth and the proliferation of corruption.” I remember reading this hadith when I was quite young and it did make a good impression on me. These days’ women are becoming very choosy. Some sacrifice marriage for their careers thinking that this should be the course for them. We hear a lot about feminist ideas. But if you read intelligently about these matters you will know that many of those feminist ideas which were quite current in the 1960s and 1970s are no longer as attractive today as they were then and many women are abandoning them because they have not found happiness

through them. So the Holy Prophet advised men to cultivate their character and advised women to accept them for marriage. There are some other quotes that I have read that may complement what is said in this hadith. They are as follows: “When talking about marriage, Allah says your spouses are garments for you. A garment may or may not fit perfectly-but either way, it covers imperfections, protects and beautifies.” The second one is “All too often people concentrate on finding the right spouse, little realizing that half of any marriage is being the right spouse.” And another one is “The man dreams of a perfect woman and the woman dreams of a perfect man and they don’t know that Allah created them to perfect one another.” For this perfection of each other to take place one has to learn to open and sustain a dialogue with one’s partner with a view to understand issues and to solve them rather than casting blames. Very often instead of exchanging views we start exchanging insults and it leaves a bitter taste. Most misunderstanding crop up between couples, between friends, between neighbors, between parents and children, between government and the people because there is a failure in communication. People talk but they fail to hear because they are too busy trying to speak what is on their mind and they fail to understand what the other person is saying. We should learn to show patience and hear what our partner or friend or colleague is saying before we respond. There are plenty of studies that have been made in the west to help us understand why people fail to communicate with one another. Those interested may read much about such studies on the internet and it is freely available.

Now I will tell you about some revelations and writings of the Promised Messiah, Hazrat Ahmad (as) which directly concern women. As you might all be aware Hazrat Masih Maood (as) had many sincere followers around him. The most distinguished ones were Molvi Nuruddin and Molvi Abdul Karim(ra). Yet it happened that once Molvi Abdul Karim spoke harshly with his wife. Hazrat Masih Maood (as) received a revelation as follows: *Ye Tarik accha nahin ous seh rok diya jaye mousalman ke leader abdul karim ko . Khozoul rifqa al rifqa fa innal rifqa raasul khayraat –narmi karo narmi karo ke tamaam nekiyon ka sar narmi hay”*

Eventually Hazrat Masih Maood (as) commented on this revelation in one of his books and he wrote:

“Molvi ‘Abdul-Karim had spoken somewhat harshly to his wife. This caused the commandment that such harsh language should not be used. Normally a believer should be gentle and courteous towards everyone though on occasion a harsh

expression might be employed like a bitter medicine, but only in case of need and to the degree needed. Harshness should not become a habit.

[Arba'in, no. 3, p. 38, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 17, p. 429 and Appendix Tohfah Golarhviyyah, p. 25]

This revelation contains guidance for the whole Jama'at, that they should treat their wives with kindness and courtesy. Your wives are not your slaves. In point of fact, marriage is a covenant between man and woman. Therefore, strive not to be false to your covenant. God Almighty says in the Holy Qur'an: "*Wa aasherouhounna bil ma'roof* " 'Lead a life of kindness and equity with your wives.' And it is mentioned in a hadith: "*Khayrokoum khayrokoum le ahlehi* " "The best among you is he who is best towards his wife.'

Therefore, be good to your wives both spiritually and physically. Keep praying for them and avoid divorce. A person who is hasty in divorce is sinful in the eyes of God. Do not hasten to break like a dirty vessel that which God has brought together. [Arba'in, no. 3, p. 38 footnote, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 17, pp. 428–429]

In another revelation Hazrat Masih Maood (as) was told

بہت لوگ خیال کرتے ہیں کہ عورتیں ان کی کنیزکیں ہیں۔ کنیزکیں نہیں بلکہ ان کی ساتھی ہیں۔

**[Urdu] Many people think that their wives are their servants. They are not servants but they are their companions.**

*Tazkira P 1058*

In the light of such teachings we (all men) should be very careful in the way we treat our wives and they (our wives) also should be very careful in the way they deal with us. We all should learn to live together with love and peace. This should be our aim. We should try to fall in love with our partners several times during the course of our life as one wise man rightly said.

Maulana Rumi said: "Your task is not to seek for love, but merely to seek and find all the barriers within yourself that you have built against it." So when we feel we are not being loved we should see in ourselves and try to break all the barriers that we have built within us which prevents our love for our wife for others and for Allah from manifesting itself. This is our task of a life time and in this we can get a great help from our partner in life. We should all in earnestness seek to love rather than just paying lip service to an empty slogan devoid of any practical application which is circulated around the "world saying "love for all

and hatred for none.” Hazrat Masih Maood (as) has taught us this about love. He says:

Of the natural conditions of man is his search after an Exalted Being towards Whom he has an inherent attraction. This is manifested by an infant from the moment of its birth. As soon as it is born, it displays a spiritual characteristic that it inclines towards its mother and is inspired by love of her. As its faculties are developed and its nature begins to display itself openly, this inherent quality is displayed more and more strongly. It finds no comfort anywhere except in the lap of its mother. If it is separated from her and finds itself at a distance from her, its life becomes bitter. Heaps of bounties fail to beguile it away from its mother in whom all its joy is concentrated. It feels no joy apart from her. What, then, is the nature of the attraction which an infant feel so strongly towards its mother? It is the attraction which the True Creator has implanted in the nature of man. The same attraction comes into play whenever a person feels love for another. It is a reflection of the attraction that is inherent in man’s nature towards God, as if he is in search of something that he misses, the name of which he has forgotten and which he seeks to find in one thing or another which he takes up from time to time. A person’s love of wealth or offspring or wife or his soul being attracted towards a musical voice are all indications of his search for the True Beloved. As man cannot behold with his physical eyes the Imperceptible Being, Who is latent like the quality of fire in flint, but is hidden, nor can he discover Him through the mere exercise of imperfect reason, he has been misled grievously in his search and has mistakenly assigned His position to others.....”(Philosophy of the teachings of Islam.)

The love for the opposite sex that is manifested through marriage is but a means that will take us to the true purpose of our life which is to manifest a deep love for Allah by shunning all evil and doing what is good. May Allah help each one amongst us to realize this love for Allah. Ameen.