

# *Islamic Solution For Happy Marriage Life:*

The marital relationship between man and woman is the corner stone of human culture and marriage is the oldest and the most consequential social institution giving rise to human civilization. The preservation and strengthening of this institution is vital for healthy progression of a civic society. For its magnitude, Islam has formulated the marital laws on extremely sound principles and clearly specified the rights and obligations of spouses with provisions to protect them:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا

*“O People keep your duty to your Lord, Who created you from a single being and of the same created its mates, and spread from these too many men and women. And keep your duty to Allah, by Whom you demand one of another your rights and to the ties of relationship...” [Q, 4:1]*

The major objective of marriage in Islam is the protection of moral sanctity. Islam denounces illicit relationship as the most heinous and severely punishable social crime:

وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الزَّوْجَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا

*“And come not near zina (fornication and adultery). Indeed, it is an abomination and an evil way.” [Q, 17: 32]*

It urges both men and women to subject their relationship to a code of law, which protects the morality against indecency and guard’s civilization against chaos. Marriage, as advised by the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), is a shield against any assault on chastity and human dignity. [Muslim]

Another objective of marriage is to foster a bond of love and compassion between spouses:

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

“...He created mates for you from yourself that you might find peace of mind in them and He put between you love and compassion...” [Q, 30: 21]

This is crucial because they together have the responsibility of advancing the purposes that the human society aspires to accomplish through marriage. Love and compassion not only enable the spouses to lead a happy life, but also give them the strength to raise a family for the promotion of higher cultural and moral values.

Islam provides clear guidelines to follow to achieve these objectives and seeks a stable family environment. Both parties are obligated to comply with the principles of marriage. Briefly and first of all, husband must give a *Mahr* (wedding gift) to his wife:

وَأْتُوا النِّسَاءَ صَدُقَاتِهِنَّ نِحْلَةً فَإِنْ طِبْنَ لَكُمْ عَنْ شَيْءٍ مِّنْهُ نَفْسًا فَكُلُوهُ هَنِيئًا مَّرِيئًا

“Give women their bridal-due in good cheer (considering a duty)...” [Q, 4: 4]

Following this requirement, husband is responsible for providing physical, economic and emotional security to his wife; whereas, she is required to protect her chastity and honor of her husband and his property, including his children.

Other chores of life are left up to the individuals to sort out, according to their strengths, preferences, and circumstances. Islam does not indulge in micromanaging. It allows people to mature and be able to take charge of their lives within the defined parameters. Spouses are provided flexibility to optimize their potentials and use their particular talents to contribute in their own ways to the wellbeing of the family and its advancement. Compatibility, adjustability and cooperation are essentials of group dynamics in response to a constantly shifting balance under evolving circumstances. The stability of a vibrant family is culmination of these attributes.

The collective impact of family units on the surroundings cannot be overstated. A strong family structure is the first step in building a socially healthy and morally prospering society. Only such a society is capable of coping with behavioral problems that take many forms. Islam views such problems very seriously and prevents them at the family level by disciplining the spouses and holding them responsible for any undesirable social behavior caused by their lack of attention. Thus, marriage in Islam is not just for emotional gratification. Its purpose is much nobler and higher, which is to build and protect a morally thriving society. For this reason, the marital practice is considered as a form of worship in Islam and it is an established tradition of prophets.

In fact, a Muslim's Islamic status is tied to the practice of marriage as pronounced by the Prophet (saw):

*“When a person marries, he completes half of his religion; let him fear Allah concerning the other half.”* [Al’Tirmidhi]

That is, making the marriage work and fulfilling its obligations is, in essence, to complete Islam. Those who refrain from it without any valid reason are not only vulnerable to slipups without the shield of marriage, they are even disowned by the Prophet (SAW), who says:

*“Marriage is a tradition of mine; whosoever turns his face away from my tradition does not belong to me.”* [Ibn Majah]

He has also described the status of good men and women. Regarding women he says:

*“The world and all things in it are valuable; but the most precious thing in the world is a virtuous woman.”* [Muslim]

As regards to men, he says: *“The best among you is that who is best to his family, and I am the best of you to my family...”* [Al’Tirmidhi]

The richness and solidity of spousal union depends on vibrant relationship between the principals built on mutual respect and fairness. The dictionary meaning of ‘fair’ is just, honest, impartial, and unprejudiced. Obviously, no human being, however intelligent, can meet these criteria nor can anyone comprehend all human characteristics of

men and women to be able to prescribe rules to govern them with equity and fairness. This domain entirely belongs to Allah (SAW). Taking into account their physiological and psychological variants, personality traits, and consistent with their needs and roles, Allah (SAW) has specified rights and duties of husband and wife that would leave them together functionally and emotionally to secure an orderly and sparkling spousal cohabitation.

It is also important to note that fairness demands equality between physical units that are identical. Men and women, however, are neither mere physical entities nor are they identical. They have their own personalities and are made different to perform diverse, yet complementary, roles that converge to the same goal – a well-placed family in the society. Thus the emphasis of Islam is not on quantitative equality in every aspect of life. Instead, it seeks a qualitative balance in functional areas critical to the stability of family establishment for advancing the society's mammoth cause.

There are areas, of course, where equity simply means equality and Islam requires that kind of fairness too. There is absolutely no demarcation between genders in terms of, for instance, social justice, human rights, intellectual development, moral values, reward and punishment. Islam's system of recognition of individuals' accomplishments and their conduct is governed by the principle of '*equal virtue – equal reward.*' The believing men and women are assured:

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

*“Whoever works righteousness, man or woman, and has faith in Allah, verily to them We will give a life of purity (in this world) and We will grant to such their reward (in the eternal life) based on their best actions” [Q, 16: 97].*

The same doctrine applies to whoever is guilty of wrong-doing.

In addition to financially supporting the family as head, husband is also responsible for fostering a moral climate and social accord at home. He

must present himself as a role model of Islamic behavior to the members of his household. The Islamic attitude in this regard is very unyielding:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فُؤَا أُنْفُسِكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلَائِكَةٌ  
غِلَاطٌ شِدَادٌ لَا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ

*“O Believers! Save yourselves and your households from a Fire whose fuel shall be the men and stones...”* [Q, 66: 6]

That is, man’s responsibility is not just to be righteous in his own life. It also includes that he educate and discipline his household members, who have been entrusted to his care in the natural process of life, and create a moral climate at home to the best of his ability.

This theme is further reinforced by the Prophet (saw): *“Each one of you is a herdsman and is accountable with regard to his herd: the ruler is a herdsman and is accountable with regard to his subject; the man is a herdsman of his family and is accountable with regard to them; and a woman is a herdsman of her husband’s house and his children and is accountable with regard to them.”* [Bukhari]

The metaphor of herdsman is worth pondering for his protective instincts. The Islamic code enunciates these duties and defines the limits within which they can be exercised.

If Muslim spouses adhere to these guidelines in conducting their household affairs, their marital relation will grow on healthy grounds, home will become a center of joy, and most importantly, their children will become a treasure full of pride. These golden rules are workable in any culture, society, or setting. If they are committed, there is a sufficiently built-in adaptability in the code to amply respond to any contingencies and meet any challenges mounted against them.

While it is husband’s express responsibility to provide financial support to the family, Islam is not opposed to seeking economic prosperity if a wife chooses to engage in a gainful employment by providing valuable services to the society (Provided her employment does not violate Islamic environment and values envisioned in Quran and Sunnah). However, it cannot allow family’s peace and prospects to be jeopardized for additional material gains. Priorities must be set sensibly without

letting other things undermine them. The best choice for Muslim spouses is to subject their decisions to a code of discipline that protects the stability of bond in which they find serenity and realization of the purpose of their existence:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا

O people! Fear your Lord, who created you from a single soul, and created from it its mate, and propagated from them many men and women. And revere God whom you ask about, and the parents. *Surely, Allah is ever watchful over you.*” [Q, 4:1]

The preceding discourse makes it clear that Islam’s goal of shielding the society against all detrimental influences begins by protecting the family integrity and raising disciplined and contributing citizens of the society. The Qur’an refers to the family matters as often as the five daily salat (prayers), namely, 82 times. This speaks volumes about family’s sacrosanctity and its solemnity to dignify and advance human race. Generally, these references gravitate toward three critical areas that hold the key to a sound and vibrant married life:

1. Social environment created by mutual respect and healthy communication.
2. Operating system identifying role assignments based on interests and strengths of the participants.
3. Hierarchical order for organizational discipline.

Obviously, this calculated and solicitous conduct cannot sprout in a vacuum. It requires nurturing through discipline and sense of duty. Awareness of some realities, hinted below, and following the guidelines of the Qur’an for re-directing behavior will bring a person up to the task:

We must believe, and the empirical evidence is there as far as eye and mind can reach, that the legislative authority rests with Allah(SWT). He alone makes the laws as He wills: “...*Indeed Allah decrees as He wills.*” [Q, 5: 1] And also, He does as He wills: “...*Allah does whatever He wills.*” [Q, 2: 253] Though these decisions or actions may not always

seem to be of our liking, nothing can stop or change them. In principle, it is what it is, because that is the golden rule:

بِاللَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ يَهَبُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ إِنْ شَاءَ إِنَّهَا وَيَهَبُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ  
الذُّكُورَ

*“To Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth...” [Q, 42: 49]*

While we may not comprehend them, they are based on His infinite knowledge, wisdom and mercy for the global administration:

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهُ لَكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ  
تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

*“...it may well be that you dislike a thing even though it is good for you, and it may well be that you like a thing even though it is bad for you...” [Q, 2: 216]*

The best approach is to reconcile with the reality rather than defy or hopelessly confront. Husband and wife have been paired wisely; now it is for them to exemplify their union and live a model life of dignity and honor.

This world is rich in diversity that cuts across everything that surrounds us in every category- seen or unseen. Nowhere is it more visible than in humans and their thought processes, strengths, functionalities, possessions, or deficiencies. They are strong when cooperating and self-destruct when envying and competing:

وَلَا تَتَمَنَّوْا مَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بِهِ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ لِلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا وَلِلنِّسَاءِ  
نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَسَبْنَ وَاسْأَلُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا

*“Do not covet what Allah has conferred more abundantly on some of you than others. Men shall have a share according to what they have earned, and women shall have a share according to what they have earned. Do ask of Allah His bounty. Surely Allah has perfect Knowledge of everything.” [Q, 4: 32]*

Partners in marriage must pool their strengths together and make up for each other's deficiencies. In Allah's sight, the relationship between the two is of such an inalienable intimacy and confidentiality like a person's body and his clothes:

أَجَلَ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفْتُ إِلَى نِسَائِكُمْ هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَهُنَّ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَخْتَانُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا عَنْكُمْ فَالآنَ بَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَابْتَغُوا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّى يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ ثُمَّ أَتَمُوا الصِّيَامَ إِلَى اللَّيْلِ وَلَا تُبَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَأَنْتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرَبُوهَا كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ

“...they are your garment, and you are theirs...” [Q, 2: 187]

Islam enjoins consultation in conducting common affairs. The Qur'an introduces this concept:

وَالَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَى بَيْنَهُمْ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ

“... Those who... conduct their affairs by mutual consultation...” [Q, 42: 38].

Consultation is an important characteristic vital to a deliberated collective life. The smallest social congregation of humans comprises of two individuals, husband and wife, for example. They must conduct major family matters through mutual consultation so that both feel committed to and vested in them.

Similarly, every socio-economic unit is headed by someone entrusted with the overall responsibility of safely navigating the unit. In Islam that responsibility is assigned to husband, and wife supports husband in carrying out his duties:

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَانِتَاتٌ حَافِظَاتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ وَاللَّاتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ فَإِنْ أَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا كَبِيرًا

“Men are the protectors and maintainers of women...” [Q, 4: 34]



In this capacity as custodian, he is tasked to be a role model for the family.

Justice is a universally celebrated human right of every soul; but Islam requires an extra mile to go to top it off with generosity:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ

“Surely Allah enjoins justice and generosity...” [Q, 16: 90]

Extra layer of generosity creates goodwill and fosters high regards for the compassionate. Beading makes the joint seamless. There is no higher place for generosity than a person’s own household.

Wrapping it up, Allah (SWT), metaphorically, defines Himself as Light of the heavens and the earth:

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ مِثْلُ نُورِهِ كَمِشْكَاةٍ فِيهَا مِصْبَاحٌ الْمِصْبَاحُ فِي زُجَاجَةٍ الزُّجَاجَةُ كَأَنَّهَا كَوْكَبٌ دُرِّيٌّ يُوقَدُ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ مُبَارَكَةٍ زَيْتُونَةٍ لَا شَرْقِيَّةٍ وَلَا غَرْبِيَّةٍ يَكَادُ زَيْتُهَا يُضِيءُ وَلَوْ لَمْ تَمْسَسْهُ نَارٌ نُورٌ عَلَىٰ نُورٍ يَهْدِي اللَّهُ لِنُورِهِ مَن يَشَاءُ وَيَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْأَمْثَالَ لِلنَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

“Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth...” [Q, 24: 35]

Since the Islamic *Sharia’h* is full of directives aimed at elevating one’s family and social life, a glowing house that echoes Islamic discipline is, in fact, a reverberator of that Light, analogous to a Masjid with same goal:

فِي بُيُوتٍ أُذِنَ اللَّهُ أَنْ تَرْفَعَ وَيُذْكَرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ فِيهَا بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ

“(Those who are directed to this Light) are found in the houses which Allah has enjoined to be raised and wherein His names are remembered; in them people glorify Him (by obeying Him)...” [Q, 24: 36]

A household fortified by such virtues is a fortress of Islam and its residents are promised the ownership of the Paradise:

اَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ أَنْتُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ تُحْبَرُونَ  
وَتِلْكَ الْجَنَّةُ الَّتِي أُورِثْتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

*“Enter the Paradise, you and your wives, to enjoy...and live therein forever ... This is the Paradise you inherit because of what you used to do.” [Q, 43: 70, 72]*