



THE PERFECT WEDDING GIFT

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What guidelines does the Shar'iah give the wife to help cement the relationship between herself and her husband?

The Qur'an in Surah Shu'ra (v74), describes the prayer of the pious in the following manner: 'Oh our lord! Grant us wives and offspring who will be the joy and comfort of our eyes.' The explanation of the above verse is clearly illustrated in the beautiful words of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) (as narrated by ibn Abbās) 'The best woman (wife) is the one whom, when you look at her she pleases you, when you command her she obeys you, when you are not in her presence she safeguards herself and your belongings.' (Bukhāri).

Today, the wife adorns herself for weddings and other social events, beautifying herself to attract the attention of everyone else besides the one who is most important in her life. The husband comes home tired from work, only to find his wife shabbily dressed, too glued to the drama on TV to even reply to the Salām of her husband. Meal times and other household duties are dictated by the box. The children are sent away to their rooms with the words 'Go to your room and read your Qur'an - or finish up your homework.' These words, mind you, are not uttered because of some great concern for the child's education; in fact it is only mentioned to get them out of the way. Remember! Your children may not do what you ask them to do, but they very often do what they see you do. What kind of example are we setting for these impressionable young minds? Unrealistic demands made by the wife do not help much to strengthen the marital bond. Being dictated by fashion and the way the people next door are living, the wife forces the husband to beg and borrow just to keep up with the Jones's.

Publication No. 45

'If your brother's wife can have it, then why can't I?' 'Well your sister has it in her house.' Comparing ourselves with those who have more than us does not help to relieve tension between husband and wife. The words of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) beautifully explain: 'Look at those who have less than you, do not look at those who have more than you, (if you do so) then you are more likely to appreciate Allah's favours upon you.'

If a man had to choose a wife according to the guidelines given by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), what kind of a person was he to look for? The Hadith states: 'A woman is married for four (things); her wealth, her family status, her beauty and her religion. So choose (marry) the religious woman, otherwise you will be a loser.'

The Qur'an in Surah Rum (v21) explains the purpose of marriage as a source of comfort for both partners. No one has married 'Mr Perfect' and no one is perfect! Are you making the environment in the home conducive to living in peace and harmony or does your husband feel that he rather be at work than at home with you?

What degree of obedience does the Shar'iah command the wife to have for her husband? A Hadith of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) explains, 'If I had to command anyone to prostrate to somebody, I would have commanded the wife to prostrate before her husband.'

However, if your husband commands you to do something against the Shar'iah you do not have to obey him.

If the objectives of both husband and wife are to please Allah, the couple will find more common ground on which to build the relationship.

Marriage in Islām is a legally-binding agreement between a man and a woman establishing their intention and mutual commitment to live together according to the teaching of the faith. They must remember their duty to Allah and to each other at all times, and that they have mutual rights.

HUSBAND'S OBLIGATION:

Have you ever pondered over the Khutbah which the Imām recited to you before you enthusiastically uttered 'Nakahtuhā Wa Qabiltuhā Wa Tazawwajtuhā'?

Let me help you and shed some light over this contract which you have made yourself party to, that is 'The Nikāh Contract'. The Imām recited to you three verses from the Noble Qurān:

Surah Nisā (4) verse 1:

"O Mankind Fear your guardian Lord who created you from a single soul, and He created from it its mate and from them He scattered many men and women."

Surah Āle Imrān (3) verse 102:

"O You who believe! Fear Allah as He should be feared and die not except in a state of Islām."

Surah Ahzāb (33) verse 70:

"O You who believe. Fear Allah and make your utterances straight."

TAQWA

The common element in each of these verses is the Arabic word 'Taqwa' (God Consciousness). In these verses you are reminded to fear Allah Ta'āla in the manner you treat the lady you are taking as your wife. There is no one to see the way you conduct yourself within your home. Let the fact and belief that Allah is watching

guide you in your treatment of the woman you have made your wife by granting her the respect and dignity she deserves.

You have brought somebody's daughter into your own home. She left her family, her friends, close associates and in many cases even the town that she grew up in and she came to a strange environment just to share the rest of her life with you. Was she handed over to you to be a target of your physical and verbal abuse?

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is reported to have said in connection with the treatment of animals: "Fear Allah in your treatment of these animals who cannot speak." If this was his concern for the animals, how tremendously greater would his concern have been for humans; therefore, can you imagine what his reaction would have been to the wife battering that takes place nowadays?

What then are the most important ingredients of a happy marriage? Allah Ta'āla says in Surah Room (30) verse 21.

"And from amongst His signs is that He created for you from amongst yourselves partners, that you may live in tranquillity with them, and He has created love and mercy between you. Verily in that are signs for those who reflect."

It is this love and mercy that strengthens the bond of marriage. The ability to overlook each other's faults goes a long way in cementing the relationship. Once a man came to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and said, 'O Allah's messenger, how many times should I forgive the wrongs of my slaves.' The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) replied, 'Forgive them seventy times a day.' If a worker is entitled to so much of compassion what about your lifelong companion?

BEST OF YOU

Today, we are very courteous to our clients, appreciative to our colleagues and cheerful to our friends. Unfortunately this warmth is not extended to the poor wife who is most deserving of this courtesy and charm. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is reported to have said, "The most complete of believers in faith are those who are best in character. The best of you are those who are best to their wives." (Mishkāt)

Every person has shortcomings. It is therefore quite natural to find this in your partner. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has advised us to take pleasure in the good and overlook the bad. Have you ever spared the thought that there may be so many habits which you possess that may be bringing grief to your wife? She may have been patiently bearing it not wanting to hurt your feelings.

Let us go back and fulfil the demands of this contract.

TREAT YOUR WIFE AS YOU WOULD LIKE YOUR SON-IN-LAW TO TREAT YOUR DAUGHTER.

WIFE'S OBLIGATION:

Many prospective wives seem to have their hopes dashed after they enter into the contract of marriage. Once the honeymoon is over, suddenly things are not so rosy any more, and the reality of married life seems to be a far cry from the Harām movies which many have been watching or the novels which end up with 'and they lived happily ever after'. In a world where it has become fashionable to engage in immoral activities and illicit relationships, it is becoming increasingly difficult to convince people that marriage is an important component of a pure society.