



AHMADIYYA  
MUSLIM JAMA'AT  

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Canada

2019

# Happy and Prosperous Marriage

A GUIDE FOR NEWLY WED COUPLES  
TO ASSIST THEM IN STARTING THEIR  
NEW LIFE AS PER THE TEACHINGS OF  
ISLAM

NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF RISHTA NATA



# **A Guide to Happy and Prosperous Marriage**

*A guide for newly wed couples to assist them in starting their new life as per the teachings of Islam*

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Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at Canada

**Published in Canada in April 2019**

I<sup>st</sup> Edition

Published by:

National Department of Rishta Nata  
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Printed in Canada

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this document is to assist the newly wed couples by providing them necessary guidance to start their new lives as a family unit.

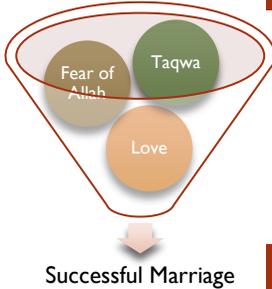
This booklet is also intended to be read especially by the parents of the bride and the bridegroom and by other members of the family in general.

This document relies heavily on the Urdu book titled,

ہدایات برائے کونسلنگ کمیٹی رشتہ ناٹھ برائے نظارت اصلاح و ارشاد مرکزیہ

It has additional content making it Canadian centric, based on things that have been observed in previous sessions.

## GUIDE'S INTENT



This guide book is intended to be read by the couple and their families before they come for the pre-marriage counselling sessions. The chair of the counselling session will also be discussing points from this booklet during the session. Hence the session will be very productive if all parties come prepared, having read this booklet.

## FOUNDATION OF MARRIAGE

*Taqwa* (love of Allah and the fear of losing His love) is the foundation of Islamic marriage and is mentioned five times in the Khutba Nikah. A marriage cannot be successful without prayers. All parties should fervently pray before and during each step of the marriage process and thereafter on a continued basis for its success.

## BEFORE NIKAH

### DEFINITION OF MARRIAGE

Marriage is a union between two persons and two families. It may be easier to resolve issues between two individuals rather than between two families. This is because a family is made up of more than two individuals who have traditions, habits and practices that have been ingrained for years. Hence, the couple is advised not to confront either family head on. Soon enough the couple will be making their own family, and their own traditions.

It is, however, equally important to accept or tolerate the traditions, habits and practices of both families, unless they are clearly un-Islamic.

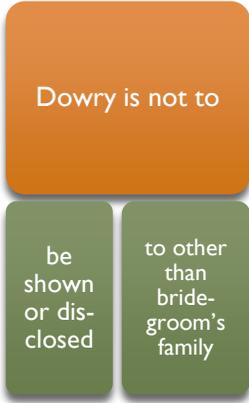
### GIVING CONSENT

It is important to confirm that both the bride and bridegroom are proceeding with this relationship of their own free will.

The bride must give her consent with full freedom and without any pressure from anyone. If either party wishes to marry someone else or is in love with someone else, this should be shared without prejudice or fear. Being forthcoming now will ensure a happy relationship for both the bride and the bridegroom.

### DEFINITION OF NIKAH

Nikah is a contract between two individuals and constitutes a Pre-Nuptial agreement. The couple can also choose to enter into another Pre-Nuptial agreement that can record all their agreed terms and conditions for the proposed marriage.



It is important that the content of the Nikah form be fully understood along with the logic behind the various questions, especially the part relating to bride's consent and witnesses.

The Nikah form must be reviewed and filled out carefully and thoroughly. Scratching the text or over writings are not acceptable in the form.

Signature date of witnesses must be the same as of the person whose statement they are witnessing, otherwise, it renders the Nikah forms invalid.

#### DEFINITION OF HAQ MEHR

Haq Mehr (Dowry) is a gift the husband must give to the wife. It should be preferably paid at the time of marriage. If it is not paid at that time, it becomes a goodly loan payable on demand. Haq Mehr is the right of the bride and must be honoured under all circumstances. As per instructions of Syedna Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih II<sup>ra</sup> it is an amount based on the six months to one-year income of the bridegroom.

Haq Mehr must be determined, within the above guidelines, with mutual agreement of the two families. It should be in the currency where the newlywed couple is to settle after marriage.

Regarding the Haq Mehr payment, the Hazrat Musleh Mau'ud<sup>ra</sup>, quoting the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup>, has said that it must be paid by the husband and then, if the wife so decides, she may return it to her husband<sup>1</sup>. Such return should be documented and witnessed.

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<sup>1</sup> Fiqah al-Masīh, translated from Urdu, page 263

Haq Mehr must never be inflated for the purposes of a false prestige, even if it is done with an assurance from the bride's side that it will never be claimed. Nikah, under such pretense, must never be announced.

## GIFTS & OTHER ITEMS

### DOWRY & OTHER GIFTS

Whatever items are given by the bride's family to her, of their own volition, is referred to as Dowry. It is what the bride brings with her to her new home.

Any desire or demand for Dowry - ornaments, apparel, furniture or Dowry in any other kind from bride's family by bridegroom's family is un-Islamic and strictly forbidden<sup>2</sup>.

To help establish parameters of what comprises a Dowry, when the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> married his daughter, Hazrat Fatima<sup>ra</sup>, the Dowry comprised of some kitchen utensils and bed furnishings.

Is the Dowry extravagant because there is a need to set up the couple? Are both parties happy and comfortable with this? Some marriages break down later, because the son-in-law feels that he was treated like a pauper, incapable of providing for his family.

It is important to discuss if the Dowry being provided is to impress others or to fulfil a requirement. Dowry is not to be shown or displayed to anyone other than bridegroom's family. Allah's blessings are only earned when righteousness is the goal.

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<sup>2</sup> Misbah, May 15, 1930

If the bride's family is unable to provide a Dowry because of financial difficulties or for any other reason, is this point understood and accepted by the bridegroom's side? If this matter is not clear, it will be unwise to proceed with the marriage as it may become a point of rancor later.

## JEWELRY GIVEN AT THE TIME OF MARRIAGE

Any jewelry given to the bride at the time of marriage becomes her exclusive asset. She may do with it as she pleases. If any borrowed jewelry is given at the time of the wedding, it must be clearly stated in advance that these items will have to be returned after the ceremonies.

Jewelry can also be considered as part of the Haq Mehr, if recorded as such on the Nikah form. If not counted as a part of Haq Mehr in the Nikah form, all such jewelry is a gift to the bride and becomes her exclusive asset like that of Haq Mehr even if she is divorced by husband later.



## OTHER MARRIAGE GIFTS

Apart from jewelry, clothes and other gifts, in cash and kind, also form part of the property and assets of the one who receives them. Hence, they can be disposed of in any way by the recipient, i.e. given away or kept. The Holy Prophet<sup>ᵃ</sup> has likened taking back of a given gift to eating one's own vomit<sup>3</sup>.

It is highly advisable that gifts provided by the in-laws be kept and used to demonstrate their value. If a dress or item of clothing

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<sup>3</sup> Al-Bukhari, 2623; Muslim 1620

provided by the mother-in-law is not to one's taste, it still pays dividends to be seen wearing it.

## BEFORE MARRIAGE

Free unrestrained communication or meetings between would-be couple before Nikah may cause problems and misunderstandings instead of developing an understanding. It is, therefore, recommended that there should not be any undue delay in Nikah / marriage after a proposal has been decided.

Problems  
before  
marriage

*Beware of problems that begin before marriage and then simmer and then present after marriage as huge boils that can disrupt or destroy a marriage.*

## EXPECTATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES FROM THE SPOUSE

Has a discussion between the two parties taken place about expectations from each other? It would be beneficial to share this understanding during a session with all parties present.

Things to clarify/share would be:

- What is expected of the bride?
- If the bride is a student, what are the expectations in that case?
- What is to be expected if the bride is employed?
- Is the bride expected to be helping with household chores, cooking, keeping the house clean etc.?

Similar questions should be asked about the bridegroom as well.

- What is expected of the bridegroom?
- Is the bridegroom settling, having arrived from another country?
- Is the bridegroom working?
- What is expected of him in helping with household chores, etc.?

Are the bridegroom and the bride happy and comfortable with their expected roles? Are there any grey areas or areas of potential conflict? e.g. expecting the bride to do all the cooking, washing and cleaning the entire house, while there are able bodied brothers or sister-in-law in the house.

Is the bridegroom expected to take the bride on international holidays etc.?

### HOUSEHOLD CHORES

Household duties should be allocated such that all able-members of the household participate in the upkeep of the house. The bride is not expected to come to her new home as a maid.

Household duties to be carried out by the wife should be told to her by the husband, not the mother-in-law, not the sisters-in-law(s) nor anyone else. This conversation should be held as a discussion in a light-hearted manner. It must not come across as an authoritative decree.

### ADJUSTING TO THE NEW LIFE

It is important to remember that adjusting to married life is a process of gradual assimilation in the family and not a forced induction. This is true for both the bride and the bridegroom as each will be adjusting to their new shared life together.

### TAKING CARE OF FAMILY

Is there is an elderly or sick member in the family? This information should be disclosed ahead of time and what the expectation are to be in this case.

Does the bride know if she will be expected to look after a sick member in the family? Does the bridegroom know that he will be expected to provide support for the bride's family if they are in distress or unexpected tragedy befalls upon them?

### SPOUSE FROM OVERSEAS

If the bride arrives from another country, more care should be taken to have her adjust to the new environment by learning the language, if needed. It should be mutually agreed to enable her to complete basic secondary school education, if not educated enough earlier.

If the bridegroom arrives from another country, he should be guided on the possible career options, degree equivalencies. He should be helped to adjust in the new environment while adjusting to his role as the bread earner.

### FULL DISCLOSURE ABOUT PERSONAL ISSUES

Both parties should be aware of each other's health and personal issues, their likes and dislikes in advance. Such issues, if not pointed out in advance can lead to a breakdown of marriage with great acrimony. For discussion purposes, some are presented below.

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#### I. HEALTH

Have both sides made each other aware of any previous or ongoing health issues? Has either party had surgery or any health issues such as a history of fits/epilepsy, even though it may be fully controlled now? Are there any chronic diseases such as diabetes, thyroid problems, depression, mental illnesses, any hidden scars, etc.?

## Education & Work

- Be truthful about the level of education completed or in process and where one works, and what is the job and position in that job.



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## 2. PREVIOUS MARRIAGES / CHILDREN

Have there been any previous marriage(s)? Is there an existing wife, in case of men? Are there children from previous marriage(s)? Have there been any previous engagements? etc.

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## 3. PERSONAL HABITS

Does the bridegroom or the bride have a history of smoking or drinking or taking any intoxicants? Is either actively engaged in them presently?

If one has had a history but is now clear of such addictions, however several people are aware of this history, then it is always advisable to be clear about this with the future partner before marriage. It will only end painfully if found later, as it will be a sign of lack of honesty.

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## 4. PURDAH

Modest clothing and observance of purdah or wearing hijab is a norm of an Ahmadi female adult. Both families should understand that. If a bride does not wear hijab before marriage, she must dress up modestly and try to adopt wearing hijab sooner than later. Any situation contrary to these norms before and/or after marriage must be shared with the other party and accepted by both parties in advance of a marriage decision.

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## 5. EMPLOYMENT

Be truthful about the level of education completed or in process and where one works, and what is his/her job and position in that job.

If the bride has a desire to work, it should be made clear ahead of time.

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## 6. JAMA'AT WORK

Does the spouse volunteer time for the Jama'at? Is the other party aware of this? Do they actively participate in Jama'at activities and regular in paying their chanda?

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## 7. EDUCATIONAL LOANS

Is there any educational loan that the bride has from before marriage? Will it be paid off by the parents of the bride? Will it be paid off by the bride herself (if working)? Will it be paid off by the bridegroom and/or his family? This must be decided in advance of marriage decision.

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## 8. A STUDENT SPOUSE

If the bride is studying, then both sides need to understand how this will affect the responsibilities of the home and what compromises will have to be made in advance. In such cases, the bridegroom should be willing to share responsibilities of the home when the bride is away. Having said this, the wife should also understand that pursuing her education does not shift her prime responsibility of the home.

If the bridegroom is studying, then both sides should discuss the parameters and time commitments as well and what compromises will need to be made.

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## 9. ANY OTHER MATTERS

If there are other matters not mentioned here, they must be brought up openly and discussed. Pre-marital counselling session is a great opportunity to raise them.

## THE MARRIAGE

### SIMPLICITY IN FUNCTION

Hazrat Masīḥ Mau'ud<sup>as</sup> has said that it is obligatory on Ahmadi families to eradicate evil customs and throw them out, root and branch.

Condition No. 6 of Bai'at states:

He/she shall refrain from following un-Islamic customs and lustful inclinations...<sup>4</sup>.

In the Holy Qur'an, Allah says,

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ

Believers shun all that is vain<sup>5</sup>

And,

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا أَنْفَقُوا لَمْ يُسْرِفُوا وَلَمْ يَقْتُرُوا وَكَانَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ قَوَامًا

And those who, when they spend, are neither extravagant nor niggardly but moderate between the two;<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Conditions of Bai'at, Alislam.org

<sup>5</sup> The Holy Qur'an, 23:4

<sup>6</sup> The Holy Qur'an, 25:68

Hence, over indulgence in makeup and other unnecessary expenses should be avoided.

Some marriage rites and rituals are common to some families and frowned upon by others, such as, giving of gifts to the entire household by one side or the other.

Gift giving is not discouraged but should be done with simplicity in mind and not done with any pretenses.

### MEHNDI AND OTHER CUSTOMS

Hazrat Musleh Mau'ud<sup>ra</sup> has said that Mehndi and other related ceremonies as practiced today are un-Islamic<sup>7</sup>. Therefore, booking of banquet halls for large scale functions and use of speakers for such ceremonies must be strongly discouraged.

### MAKING OF GUESTS LISTS

Inviting guests for marriage functions such as the Rukhsati and Walima may be shared with the parties in advance to avoid any pitfall in that regard later. Rukhsati is paid for by the bride's family, therefore, the bridegroom should keep their guests to a minimum to avoid unnecessary burden on the bride's family.

Similarly, the Walima function is arranged by the bridegroom's family and the bride's family should invite a limited number of guests to the Walima function.



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<sup>7</sup> Daily Al-Fazl, April 15, 2015 page 3-4, Approved Recommendation of Majlis Shura 2015

## ARRANGEMENTS FOR PURDAH

Purdah is an Islamic injunction. It must be observed in all functions. Waiters serving the food and photo/videographers on ladies' side should be ladies.

## ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRAYERS

If Rukhsati / Walima ceremony falls at salat time, proper salat arrangements must be made at the ceremony venue.

## PUNCTUALITY

Punctuality in all functions must be observed. Sometimes, guests are given one time on the card and the guests of honour are provided a different time. This exhibits a lack of respect for the time of the guests and can also be construed as arrogance of the hosts by the guests.

## HONEYMOON ARRANGEMENTS

Honeymoon avails the newlywed couple an opportunity to focus on each other and bond together.

Therefore, the plans should be discussed in advance. Has it been determined or is it a surprise? Not going away on honeymoon should not come as a surprise. If the bridegroom cannot afford to go away, it should be made clear at the outset. Lack of clarity on such issues only helps to fuel disputes in future.

If going abroad, are the passports and vaccinations current? The bridegroom should not expect the bride to have anticipated that the honeymoon was going to be abroad.

## LIVING WITH THE NEW FAMILY

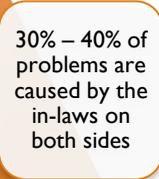
### FIRST FEW DAYS

Everyone should be very welcoming to the bride. She is a guest of the house and should be very well looked after. During this period, she should not be expected to be involved in any household chores. It is important to keep in mind that the bride has just left the cozy sanctity of her own house, and will have feelings of sadness, and may pine for her parents etc. This should be fully understood and sympathized with. Lack of understanding at this stage could mark out the in-laws as being harsh, hard and without sympathy. Such actions must be avoided at all costs.

It is traditional in South-Asian culture for the bride to behave like a bride and the bridegroom like a bridegroom for the first few days. The bride should take care of her appearance and join others dressed up properly. The bridegroom should behave as a son-in-law. Respect of the gifts that have been given to either side is to be shown. Wearing the dress provided by the in-laws, or the necklace from the in-laws not only is good manners, but also earns a lot of respect and appreciation.

Clothes and jewelry, especially those given as gifts by the in-laws take on a significance. If a dress or item of clothing provided by the mother-in-law is not to the bride's taste, she should still show her gratitude by being seen wearing it, at least once.

It is not always possible for the other side to have anticipated one's tastes and preferences. They have tried their best and provided gifts out of love. Not being appreciative may be construed as ingratitude and disregard for the in-laws and may start the marriage with a bad impression.



30% – 40% of problems are caused by the in-laws on both sides

## NEW PRACTICES AND HABITS

Both families are used to their own way of living and dealing with things. Be mindful of this and be respectful to each family's way of doing things, if they are different from yours. Do not impose your ideas upon the other and do not joke about the practices and habits of the others. Show understanding and respect.

## NEW FAMILY DYNAMICS

Each family operates differently; in some households, the mother may make all the decisions, or the eldest son does, or the father does, etc.

In some households, certain types of decisions may be taken by certain members of the family. Both the bridegroom and the bride are advised to learn about this in the early days, and then try to respect the family dynamics. Neither should try to impose their own values; there will be enough time for that when the couple gets established.

## FAMILY STRESSES

Both sets of in-laws will feel a sense of loss at some stage, for having to share their child with another. This is an understandable emotion and natural. Do not feel angry and disappointed when you see signs of this. Tolerate it. Best way to eventually make it go is to become part of the family – merge with the family.

Tensions usually mount with the sisters of the husband, as it is difficult to share a brother. Best way for the bride to deal with this is to ignore it, as much as possible, and try to befriend them. Find things that are common between them and yourself and use them to befriend them.



Rights of Wives

- When wives are given their due rights they usually take very good care of their husband's parents.

## RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONDUCT OF THE PARENTS

It is the responsibility of the parents-in-law to provide love and comfort to the bride who has left her home to join a new family and a new environment. Do not try to impose authority by trying to control everything. Instead, try to gain her confidence, trust and respect. Once this is achieved, common grounds can then be achieved, effortlessly, in a very relaxed environment. The mother-in-law should treat her daughter-in-law as she would want her own daughter to be treated.

In the same vein, the daughter-in-law should treat her mother-in-law as she would treat her own mother, with love, trust and respect.

## WIVES ARE ENTITLED TO THEIR RIGHTS

Huzoor Anwar<sup>aa</sup> has mentioned in his Friday Sermon that, approximately 30% – 40% of problems are caused by the in-laws on both sides. It is usually the husband's parents who try to establish control and say inappropriate remarks about the daughter-in-law or her family which upsets the wife, ultimately making her return to her parent's home.

This verbal aggression of the in-laws, sometimes, drives the wife to go back to her parents in estrangement. Even though it is wrong of her to do so, it is the husband's responsibility that, while he respects and serves his parents, he should also look after his wife and provide her with her due rights. When these rights are fulfilled, wives usually take very good care of their husband's parents. By the Grace of Allah, there are many examples in the Jama'at of in-laws

having more trust in their daughter in-laws than even their own children<sup>8</sup>.

## BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE IN-LAWS

The bride is expected to show respect and deference to her parents-in-law. The bridegroom is also expected to treat his parents-in-law with respect, just as he does his own parents. Both are also expected to show tolerance and respect to the siblings of their spouse. The new couple must make every effort to remember that their spouse's family is now their own. They should not consider their in-laws as strangers, outsiders, or as people to be opposed. They should welcome their in-laws into their own lives and treat them as they would treat their own family, with love and respect. They should endeavour to become friends with their spouse's siblings and develop a parent-child relationship with their spouse's parents. They should treat their in-laws as they would want their spouse to treat their own parents. Only then can a respectful and peaceful situation be established with one's in-laws.

### Couples living on their own

- If conflicts are arising because the couple is living with the joint family ...
- Parents should be supportive of the couple separating and living on their own



## COOKING SKILLS

In order to avoid unnecessary embarrassment after marriage, it should be made clear to the bridegroom and his parents, in advance, if the bride has not yet learned how to cook. Obviously, if she cannot, she should not be expected to prepare full meals on her own after the marriage. She may need gentle guidance from her mother-in-law. It should be ascertained beforehand how much skill she possesses; how much she will learn before the wedding and how much she will need help with this after marriage through support from

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<sup>8</sup> Friday Sermon - November 10, 2006

her in-laws. Ideally, she should have basic skills to provide meals for herself and her husband.

## DISCUSSING MARITAL DISCORD

Huzoor Anwar<sup>aa</sup> has stated that both men and women should self-reflect. In addition, in-laws on both sides should self-reflect, for it could be the fault of either side, although usually it is the male side that commits the excesses. Huzoor Anwar<sup>aa</sup> said that on his instructions, Amir Sahib UK carried out a survey, which informed us that the rate of incidents of culpability amongst men is three times that of women, whereas in 30-40% of cases, it is the in-laws who create the friction<sup>9</sup>.

## MARITAL HOME

A separate home for the newly weds is to be considered a prerequisite as it is important to take steps to make the new family independent. This will enable them to make their decisions and establish themselves as a family unit.

If a joint family arrangement is to be done, this should be on the request of the couple, particularly the bride, and that too after having lived separately for some time.

Exception is to be considered for the sake of parents who need care.

If it is planned that the bride will live with the bridegroom's parents in a joint family setting, for a limited or longer period and that joint family home would be the marital home for the newly-weds, it must

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<sup>9</sup> Friday Sermon - November 10, 2006

be accepted by both parties before the marriage and there must not be any ambiguity about this.

In one of his sermons, Huzoor Anwar<sup>aa</sup> quoted Surah Al Nur verse 62 and with reference to the writings of Hazrat Khalifātul Masīh I<sup>ra</sup> explained that a joint family system is only beneficial if it promotes love and affection, otherwise there is no commandment for it. This is obvious as the verse clearly mentions separate abodes for parents and siblings etc. If this system were followed, then the traditional hostility between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law would cease. The Qur’anic verse is indicative that living in a joint family system is not obligatory.<sup>10</sup>.

Hazrat Khalifātul-Masīh I<sup>ra</sup> has said that, in India people usually complain about fights between the bride and the mother-in-law. However, if they follow the Holy Qur’an this would not happen. The Qur’an says that the parents’ house should be separate from that of the married children<sup>11</sup>.

Hazrat Khalifātul-Masīh II<sup>ra</sup> said that, Shari’a allows for the newlywed couple to live on their own as they are young, and they need to have a frank and private environment. If they are always imprisoned how will they be happy?<sup>12</sup>.

Huzoor Anwar<sup>aa</sup> has provided clear guidelines regarding this in his Sermons. He says:

At times, the cause of discord in marriage is because the husband does not have his own house and is living with his parents. Sometimes this is because the husband may be

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<sup>10</sup> Friday Sermon - November 10, 2006

<sup>11</sup> Haqa’iqul Qur’an vol 3 page 233

<sup>12</sup> Khutbaat Mahmood vol 3 page 64

experiencing financial difficulties or is still studying and therefore it is not possible for him to buy his own house. In such an instance, the wife should support him and live with her in-laws until he acquires the means to purchase his own house. In certain cases, the women and her parents end the marriage and so such practices are completely wrong. If the girl cannot live with the in-laws, then she should have voiced her reservation from the outset. However, there are certain men who are living at home with their parents because of their irresponsible actions and simply cite the excuse that they want to support their elderly parents.<sup>13</sup>

Typically, the bride moves into the bridegroom's home, and not the other way around.

In exceptional cases, the bridegroom may move to the bride's home, but only by prior mutual agreement.

## LIVING ON THEIR OWN

When a couple is living on their own, different dynamics come into play. They are now responsible for running their entire household and managing all the chores and responsibilities. Both should collectively make decisions and whatever is agreed upon, both should be content and comfortable with the arrangement.

## ASSIGNMENT OF HOUSEHOLD DUTIES

Agree on how the household should be run. Who is responsible for grocery shopping and day-to-day running of the household?

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<sup>13</sup> Friday Sermon, March 3, 2017

If the wife is going to manage household finances, it is important for both parties to agree on what is a fair sum of money to be provided every week or month to ensure that this task is carried out. There should always be provision for this to be reviewed at intervals to ensure the figure is reasonable.

Islam guides us that, to provide for all the needs of the family, is the responsibility of the husband. If the wife is also working, with the express consent of the husband, and willingly wishes to contribute towards the household expenses, then this is acceptable.

#### SUGGESTED DAILY HOUSEHOLD ROUTINE

Household chores can be divided with mutual agreement. It will be helpful for the couple if they:

- Establish a daily household routine and follow it.
- Get up and have breakfast together. The wife should not let her husband prepare / have breakfast alone while she lies in bed asleep.
- Ensure clothes are ready in the morning, before it is time to go to work; this may even be done the night before, if needed.
- If the spouse takes a packed lunch, make sure it's ready the night before, or well before its time to leave.
- Make sure that the evening meal (or lunch if the spouse comes home for it) is ready on time. Try to cook food that both like.
- Establish a routine for the day, vacuuming, laundry, cleaning, cooking etc.,
- If the wife is back earlier than the husband or if she does not work, she should make sure that she is properly dressed when husband comes home. Many husbands are put off when they come home to see their wife shabbily dressed or still in her night gown!

Same applies to the husband as well. He should also ensure that he is properly dressed when he is at home.

- Unless essential, each one should avoid being on the telephone/texting with friends and their family at the time when the spouse is coming in from work. This shows you are not focused on the spouse.
- The husband needs to be mindful of his wife's needs and try his best to participate in household chores and show appreciation for activities she has performed.
- Upon returning from work the husband should actively engage and meet and greet his wife with love. Listen to what she has to say about her day.
- Unless essential, the husband should avoid going to the computer/phone as soon as he comes home. Both parties should give due attention to making time for one another first.

## SPOUSE HOME ALONE

If the bride is not working outside the home, she may be alone at home for long periods of time. Hence, she should be prepared for a life, which will be markedly different from what she may have been used to.

When the husband has gone away to work, it can suddenly become very lonely, and depression can set in. It is advisable for the bride to avoid brooding on her own, spending too much time on the internet or on the phone, sleeping excessively and neglecting herself and her home.

When alone, she needs to occupy her time by:

- Making a daily schedule of work around the house.
- Keeping busy doing things which are / or will be useful in future, like taking courses.

- Making friends with people she knows her husband will approve of – never with those she is sure he will object to. This applies both ways; both sides owe it to each other to find friends of their own gender and ones that the spouse approves of.
- Calling her family from time to time to inform them of her well-being and seeking their best wishes. Be in frequent contact with both sets of parents. Encourage each other to do so. It reassures everyone.
- Improving her religious knowledge by reading the books of the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup>. This is in anticipation of her setting a good example for their children in the future.

#### IN-LAWS VISITING

It is important that the in-laws also visit the couple's home. Liking or disliking the in-laws should not preclude them from visiting as they are the spouse's parents.

#### POCKET MONEY

The wife must be provided with a reasonable amount of pocket money for personal use over and above household expenses. However, this may not be necessary if she has her own job.

It is a good idea to keep a written account of all expenses, large or small, especially for the first year after marriage. This will provide an idea of the family's spending habits and shall help to keep finances balanced.

In Islam, what a man earns is common to both husband and wife, but what a wife earns belongs exclusively to her to spend as she

may choose<sup>14</sup>. Therefore, wife's income should not be eyed upon by the husband. Nor should she be coerced or cajoled into giving the husband her income. Husbands who try to hold back household expenses with the understanding that the wife should also contribute are in the wrong. Any household contribution from the wife's income must be completely voluntary.

If both husband and wife are working, the wife may choose to contribute toward the household expenses. This must be agreed upon in advance of the marriage decision.

## FINANCIAL MATTERS

Conflicts about financial issues are common in marriage troubles. It is wise to ensure that this aspect is handled with sensitivity and fairness. Both sides should agree on how money is to be spent over and above the usual household expenses. Sometimes the husband may have committed to financially supporting his relatives; this should be agreed and shared in advance. If the husband is the sole breadwinner, he will have greater say and control over his income.

If a substantial portion of the husband's income will be going outside the use of the married couple and the household budget, then it is important to disclose this before marriage.

Although the husband may have financial responsibilities in relation to his parents or siblings, he must understand that his primary obligation is spending on his family, his wife and children.

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<sup>14</sup> Syedna Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V<sup>aa</sup> concluding address at Jalsa Salana Spain 2010

## HOLIDAYS/RECREATION VS. FINANCES

Look at the finances of the family before demanding or expecting a holiday. Also, look at what is affordable and reasonable. A good holiday brings the couple together and rejuvenates them. A holiday taken under pressure has the opposite effect.

## VISITING RELATIVES

If the couple's families live at some distance, frequency of trips to visit them need to be discussed with sensitivity and balance vis-à-vis the financial aspect and the amount of time spent with each family.

It is good practice to visit both sets of parents regularly. Both have rights and it is important to build mutual confidence if these rights are maintained and upheld.

## BALANCING WORK AND HOUSEHOLD DUTIES

The prime responsibility for managing the household lies with the wife. If she is working outside the home, then the workload must be shared between the husband and wife with mutual respect and understanding and not by enforcement. Tasks should be decided upon mutually and a conscious plan be made ahead of time to clarify both the husband and wife's duties and responsibilities.

Prepare a weekly calendar each weekend for the upcoming week and identify who is doing what. Even menus can be planned in order to facilitate grocery shopping and in turn, to be cost-conscious.

This schedule will also help to maintain balance, as it will be clear to see whether both are spending enough time as a couple alone, with each of the in-laws, or if there is too much time being spent at work, or with friends without the spouse, etc. It will also help to ensure that both parties are executing their respective roles and

will help to avoid the conflict between them. Planning and patience are crucial!

## INVITING PEOPLE OVER

Neither spouse should invite people to the house without letting the other know in advance (exceptions accepted). Neither spouse should invite people the other is uncomfortable with, unless it is those for whom Allah has enshrined a right in Islam, parents and blood relations.

## CHILDREN

The decision about when to have children must be mutual. But it must be borne in mind that an important objective of marriage is to have children<sup>15</sup>, the sooner the better. If the couple does not want to have children in the first year or two of marriage, it must be decided in advance of marriage, so it does not become a bone of contention between the couple leading them to tension in their marriage.

At the birth of the child, will the wife spend some time at her mother's home, or, more commonly, will her mother come to help her in her own home? Or will she remain with her husband and/or in-laws?

If there is difficulty in conceiving, it could be due to medical problems with either spouse. Medically speaking, causes of infertility are equally distributed between genders, so it is not fair to blame one partner or the other.

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<sup>15</sup> Pathway to Paradise, first edition, page 40

Medical help should be sought if there has been no pregnancy after one year of decision to have a child.

Both partners should seek medical advice together. Be understanding and supportive of each other if there is a medical cause identified. This should not be a cause for separation. Support your spouse, as you would want to be supported.

## BUILDING A LASTING RELATIONSHIP

The very purpose of marriage in Islam is ‘peace of mind’<sup>16</sup>. A happy marriage can make a couple’s life paradise on earth. It can be a huge blessing and bring immense bliss, peace, and harmony in their lives. However, this is only possible with a lot of dedication and hard work on both sides. One can only get as much out as one puts in this relationship.

### VALUE OF PRAYER

A marriage cannot be successful without prayers. Newlyweds should begin and end each day with prayer. They should try to wake up for Tahajjud prayer, offer prayers together when offering at home and try to make it a habit to offer two Nawafil each day for the success of their marriage. This is the most powerful tool and will go a long way to help them protect their marriage. This prayer should be recited regularly by the couple:

... رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّتِنَا فُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ  
إِمَامًا

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<sup>16</sup> Pathway to Paradise, first edition, page 39

... Our Lord, grant us of our wives and children the delight of *our* eyes, and make us a model for the righteous.<sup>17</sup>

## LETTERS TO HAZRAT KHALĪFATUL-MASĪH<sup>AA</sup>

The couple should make it a habit to write letters requesting prayers for their marriage to.

Write a letter to Huzoor Anwar<sup>aa</sup> regularly requesting prayers for the couple's happy marriage. The couple should take time out every week to sit down and write the letter together. When they develop this connection with Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh<sup>aa</sup>, a positive difference in their relationship will be evident and they will earn the blessing of his prayers as another layer of protection over them.

## SPENDING TIME TOGETHER

In the early days of marriage, it is expected that the newlyweds will, and should, spend most of their time together. If feasible, going away on a honeymoon helps the couple develop a mutual understanding.

On the other hand, going about their normal business, as if nothing has happened, is building a poor foundation for the future.

It is important for each family to allow the couple to have enough time together to solidify their relationship.

## DEVELOPING COMMUNICATION SKILLS

The couple should be able to talk to each other openly and sincerely. Men and women have vastly different ways of communicating with one another. This difference should be realized early, and an

Pray

رَبَّنَا بَبِّ لَنَا  
مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَ  
ذُرِّيَّتِنَا قُرَّةَ  
أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا  
لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا

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<sup>17</sup> The Holy Qur'an, 25:75

effort made to improve one's communication skills accordingly, as needed.

## RESPECT

The couple must treat each other with respect in whatever they do, like, dislike, enjoyment or exhibiting a preference. Their tastes may differ in many ways. As they are two different individuals coming together, they should be understanding and give each other time and leeway to adjust to change. As time passes, their tastes and preferences will automatically merge together, Insha'Allah!

The couple should respect one another's feelings and avoid anything that causes concern to the other, if it is a reasonable request. (e.g., having a small light on, during the night, in the bedroom).

## TOLERANCE AND UNDERSTANDING

While trying to adjust to each other, the newlywed couple should be tolerant of the mistakes or difficulties they each experience. Some issues may just be very difficult to overcome. As an example, it may be impossible for one to suddenly stop snoring, or perspiring excessively, or laughing a certain way, etc. Therefore, restraint and tolerance need to be exercised.

Similarly, there may be difficulties in adjusting to dietary preferences; not liking something cooked a certain way, etc. Patience and understanding are needed, rather than feeling slighted and blaming the other for not respecting the culinary skills of the in-laws.

## DEVELOPING TRUST

A spouse is a person with whom everything is going to be shared at some time or other. Without question, each other's secrets and personal details must be kept confidential.

This means that parents and siblings will need to be placed in a lower hierarchy and the spouse is now the first and foremost point of reference. One must remember this fact and not breach the confidence and trust the other partner has placed on them.

According to a hadith, a couple is not allowed to reveal their issues even to their parents and in-laws<sup>18</sup>.

All the couple's issues are to be resolved between themselves within the four walls of their bedroom. The husband and wife relationship should remain private, and issues are best discussed only between the couple themselves. The couple should try to work things out between themselves and give each other due consideration for their inexperience.

## HONESTY IN THE RELATIONSHIP

There are no secrets or lies between husband and wife. They must be open and truthful with one another so there is no cause for future misunderstandings or suspicions. The Holy Qur'an teaches that, they are as if garments for each other<sup>19</sup>, meaning they cover and keep to themselves, each other's weaknesses.

The wife of the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup>, Hazrat Amman Jan<sup>ra</sup>, advised women never to keep secrets from their husbands. She said if one

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<sup>18</sup> Bukhari, Book of Hadithul Ambia, Chapter Alnaslanfi almashi

<sup>19</sup> The Holy Qur'an 2:188

makes a mistake, one should openly admit it rather than attempting to conceal it. She explained: “The husband may not see what goes on, but Almighty Allah does. Ultimately, when the matter is exposed, it diminishes the dignity of the woman”<sup>20</sup>.

#### PRIVACY OF THE IN-LAWS

Both partners are entrusted with whatever happens within their new family. This trust must not be breached. Outsiders should not be told about what happens in one another’s families, especially if a weakness or fault is noticed in the new home. Everyone has faults, even in one’s own family.

The in-law’s family culture may be new to the spouse, but they owe it to their in-laws to be respectful and open-minded.

The new couple should keep matters they witness in the homes of their in-laws private and not divulge details to their own parents. Parents will naturally be very sensitive to their children's well-being, and may overreact to small issues, even if the couple is happy together. Some judgement and tact should be exercised when speaking about in-laws to anyone else. The in-laws will certainly reciprocate the good will.

#### RELATIONSHIP WITH THE REST OF THE FAMILY

While being together as a couple for the most part, obligations to the rest of the family must not be forgotten. It is important for one spouse to give the other enough time to fulfill their obligations to their parents or siblings – such as seeing and greeting them in the mornings and or having a meal with them, if that is the norm.

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<sup>20</sup> Hadrat Amman Jan<sup>ra</sup> – An Inspiration for us all, page 187

The couple should try to remember to inquire about other members of the family, so that they do not feel ignored. Calling one's parents periodically and letting them know how things are proceeding is an important duty to remember.

#### RELATIONSHIP WITH FRIENDS

The couple should now be mindful of the fact that relationship priorities, after their marriage, have changed and their spouse is now the priority.

Friends will have to take a back seat and time allocation to them will have to be reduced. A complete cut-off is not recommended either and one should be allowed to remain in contact with friends and update them from time to time.

#### RELATIONSHIP BOUNDARIES PRESCRIBED BY ISLAM

Marriage is a sacred gift from Allah and should be treated as a precious treasure. It is a lifelong commitment and a delicate matter; not a temporary arrangement that can be dealt with immaturely or foolishly. Both husband and wife should be clearly aware about the instructions of marriage and each other's roles, as outlined in the Holy Qur'an, Aḥādīth, the Ten Conditions of Bai'at, and by the Khulafa Ahmadiyyat.

Both parties are responsible for helping to maintain the sanctity of marriage by covering one another's faults, keeping personal issues private and honouring their spouse the same way that they would like to be honoured.

#### MARRIAGE IS A PARTNERSHIP AND A JOURNEY

The couple should try to focus on each other's strengths, not weaknesses. Marriage is a journey. It has its ups and downs. It will

require personal sacrifice from both at some point. Everyone wants peace of mind and contentment when things are going well but should also be prepared to be strong and steadfast when they are not.

## POTENTIAL CONFLICTS AND THEIR RESOLUTION

After a while, when the euphoria of marriage settles down, the newlywed couple begins to see their partner and new family in a different light. Things which had been ignored earlier, may become significant now.

It is important to try one's best not to focus on miss-steps in the early phase of marriage. One party gives up something, the other gives up something else and together, they reach a middle ground. They must realize that this is their new life and they must adjust to the new reality together.

For the marriage to succeed, both parties must have a commitment to make it work. It can only work when both parties are prepared to make compromises to find common ground.

Conflicts or other issues with the partner or their family are best discussed directly with the partner alone, in a spirit of forbearance, tolerance and mutual understanding. It is best not to involve other members of either families as they may provide solutions best suited to their own point of view. Interference from families is a frequent cause of marriage breakdowns.

If any difficulties arise, they must be tackled with mutual respect and with the view that a solution will be found. Above all, Taqwa must be kept foremost in mind – that is, will Allah be happy or unhappy if this issue is brought to the fore? Every potential conflict should be addressed with prayers.

## DISPUTES AND ARGUMENTS

Disagreements will occur in normal human discourse, sometimes frequently. The couple is well advised to remember these important tips:

- ✓ Avoid answering back. Observe patience.
- ✓ Avoid arguing when the spouse is angry.
- ✓ Never bring the other's family into the argument (e.g., "Your parents or other family members are like this also", etc.)
- ✓ Never raise your voice. All issues, big or small, should be discussed calmly, maturely, and in a normal tone.
- ✓ Never using bad language.
- ✓ Never become violent (i.e. throw things, punch or slap). The surest way of losing respect is to display violence of any kind.
- ✓ Try to end an argument as soon as you can. This can be done by either apologizing; even if you are not wrong and the other is too proud to accept it – you can correct them later when they are in a better mood.
- ✓ If arguments become persistent, more experienced and sensible senior family members can help, if they do not take sides.
- ✓ Sometimes a junior family member close to one partner may be able to provide help and quick resolution.

## AVOID THESE PITFALLS

It is also important for the couple to be aware of outside factors that may affect their relationship. As such, following matters should be paid heed to:

- ❖ Beware of any third party who seeks to gain influence in marital matters, which should remain only between husband and wife. (e.g., wife's best friend always telling her to argue with

her husband for various reasons, or husband's mother always telling him to be firmer with his wife).

- ❖ Beware of other people who enquire about your in-laws from you, hoping to find areas of criticism.
- ❖ Beware of friends and relatives who seek to know about how things are going but are more interested in getting juicy gossip rather than offering genuine help.

If, despite all this, things do not seem to be working, then it is better to involve appropriate elders of the Jama'at confidentially. If one partner or their family is acting in a way that endangers the other or their health, or is a gross violation of Islamic teachings, help should be sought in a mature manner, i.e. the local Jama'at President should be involved; he may assign member(s) of the local Islahi Committee to help confidentially.

Of course, one should discuss with one's parents for help and advice if the conflicts continue and cannot be resolved by the couple themselves.

## RELATIONSHIP OF A MOTHER AND DAUGHTER-IN-LAW

Huzoor Anwar<sup>aa</sup> has shed light on this important aspect:

Another pertinent issue these days brought by some girls is the cruelty and injustice they endure from their in-laws or husbands. At times, girl's side are not informed of boy's behavioral issues or are told in such a manner that the girl and her parents are led to believe that the issues are not a big deal. However, when looked closely, a very frightening situation appears. Sometimes, it has been observed that the husband wants to live in peace and harmony with his wife, but the mother-in-law or sister-in-law behave harshly

towards the wife or incite the son or brother to be cruel to his wife. In such cases, the poor girl is left with only two choices, either to opt for separation, or to live in such cruelty for the rest of her life.

Furthermore, it has also been seen, that in certain cases, when such wrongs are committed against the girl, she in turn wrongs the mother-in-law when she is given authority as a daughter in-law. And thus, begins a satanic cycle that goes on and on in families lacking righteousness. This all occurs despite both parties having received the teaching of righteousness and truthfulness in the verses of Nikah. These verses promote the establishment of a paradise on earth and an atmosphere to which even strangers are attracted.

Such harsh cases are few – yet they are very distressing and painful ... May Allah enable every Ahmadi home, every husband and wife, mother and daughter in-law, sister-in-law and brother to tread along the path of righteousness and establish a beautiful society<sup>21</sup>.

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<sup>21</sup> Friday Sermon, May 30, 2003

## APPENDIX A – ISLAMIC TEACHINGS ON MATRIMONIAL RELATIONSHIP

While as human beings, men and women have equal rights but in view of their distinct God given faculties, their areas of activity are different and explaining the verse *و للرجال عليهن درجة* Hazrat Musleh Mau'ud<sup>ra</sup> has said that, on matters of management, men as 'qawwam' have priority over women<sup>22</sup>.

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masīh IV<sup>rh</sup> has said that if a husband does not fulfill his responsibility of providing the finances for the household, he loses his role as 'Qawwam'<sup>23</sup>

The Promised Masih<sup>as</sup> has said that except for immorality, all other incidents of bitterness by wives must be borne with patience by their husbands. He said that to him, it is shamelessness on the part of husbands to have arguments with their wives. Allah has made us males to complete his blessings on us. To thank Him for that, we must be kind to females.<sup>24</sup>

Hazrat Abu Huraira<sup>ra</sup> narrates that the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> said that if a husband calls his wife to his bed and she declines that request and the husband spends his night not satisfied with that situation, angels curse the wife that whole night<sup>25</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> Tafsir Kabeer vol 2 page 513

<sup>23</sup> Islam's Response to Contemporary Issues, 2007 Hardback edition, pages 106-107

<sup>24</sup> Malfuzat Vol 2 page I

<sup>25</sup> Mishkat Bab Ishratul Nisa

Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh I<sup>ra</sup> said that since women have a tender heart, Allah wants the men to always treat them with kindness.<sup>26</sup>

Hazrat Musleh Mau'ud<sup>ra</sup> explaining the hadith that women are created out of the ribs of men, said that women, to express their ego, instinctively oppose their husbands. Men should therefore, on an issue, convince their wives by reason and not by use of coercion otherwise they will lose their loving relationship.<sup>27</sup>

The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> said that the conduct between a husband and his wife should be like those of two best friends. The first witness of a person's good conduct and his relationship with Allah is his wife. If his relationship with his wife no good, it is simply not possible that he is at peace with his Lord. The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> had said that best amongst you is one who is the best for his wife.<sup>28</sup>

The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> has said that, the best woman is one who brings delight to her husband and when her husband asks her to do something, she obeys him, and she avoids doing that what he dislikes<sup>29</sup>. Hazrat Masīh Mau'ud<sup>as</sup> has said that a wife should always obey her husband and should not ask for justification of those instructions<sup>30</sup>.

The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> said that if a man is not righteous, his children will not be righteous. A woman is a spy on her husband. He cannot hide his weaknesses from her. He should conduct himself in such righteous a way that his wife should believe that there is no one better in righteousness than him on the face of the earth. A

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<sup>26</sup> Khutbat Nur Vol 2 page 217

<sup>27</sup> Tafsir Kabir vol 1 page 303

<sup>28</sup> Malfuzat Vol 5 page 418

<sup>29</sup> Baihaqi fi sha'b al-iman

<sup>30</sup> Malfuzat Vol 1 page 404

woman is always impressed by the conduct of her husband. If he is righteous, she does get some share of his righteousness and if he is sinful, she does get some share in that of his conduct.<sup>31</sup>

The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> said that a woman will never be seen fulfilling the rights of Allah until she fulfills the rights of her husband first<sup>32</sup>.

The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> said that one part of worship for a woman is to fulfill the rights of her husband<sup>33</sup>.

The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> has said that women have been promised by Allah the Almighty that if they obey their husbands, Allah will save them from every type of tribulations; their children will be given long and blessed lives<sup>34</sup>. He further said that Messenger of Allah<sup>sa</sup> had said that it is mandatory for a woman to remain obedient to her husband otherwise none of her deeds are acceptable to Allah<sup>35</sup>.

The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> has said that, I wonder on the wisdom of those persons who impressed by present day thinking say that husband and wife have equal rights<sup>36</sup>.

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masīh I<sup>ra</sup> said that, I always wonder as to who the fool was who floated the idea of equality of men and women<sup>37</sup>.

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<sup>31</sup> Malfuzat Vol 5 page 217 – 218

<sup>32</sup> Sunan Ibne Majah – 40 Gems of Beauty, page 75

<sup>33</sup> Malfoozat Vol 3, page 369

<sup>34</sup> Tafseer Surah Al Nisa Vol 2 Page 237

<sup>35</sup> Malfoozat Vol 5 page 47-48

<sup>36</sup> Malfoozat vol 4 page 104

<sup>37</sup> Haqa'iqul Qur'an Vol 4 page 295-96

Hazrat Musleh Mau'ud<sup>ra</sup> has mentioned that, per Islamic Sharia, a wife cannot go out of her home without permission of her husband. While he cannot restrain her from meeting her parents, the choice of timing of such a meeting will be his prerogative<sup>38</sup>.

The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> has said that, a man is Imam of his household<sup>39</sup>.

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<sup>38</sup> Khutbaat Mahmood vol 3 page 205-206

<sup>39</sup> Malfoozat Vol 5 page 208

## APPENDIX B – SERMON OF HAZRAT KHALĪFATUL-MASĪHV<sup>AA</sup>

Huzoor Anwar<sup>aa</sup> said that problems relating to matrimony and conjugal relationships are causing a lot of anxiety in households. They do not only affect the husband and wife but also their parents and even the children.

Such problems cause the children to suffer both in material and spiritual terms. Almost every day I receive letters or meet people who relate such problems.

Regarding some problems arising from marriages contracted outside Pakistan, Huzoor Anwar<sup>aa</sup> said that the major cause of this is the fact that both sides do not reveal everything about themselves truthfully. The verses that are recited at the occasion of Nikah stress the need for telling the truth, whereas people often do not speak the truth about themselves. Sometimes parents force their daughters to marry men who are not compatible with them in terms of education and lifestyle. Likewise, some men marry according to their parents' desire and then start tormenting their wives afterwards. No one party can be blamed one hundred per cent, because in some instances the men are at fault while in others the women are at fault. Conjugal problems affect the children as well. Sometimes after spending many years together and having several children, a man starts complaining that he cannot live with his wife anymore and wants to divorce her, or that he wants to take another wife; or the wife says that she has spent her life in torment and now wants Khula'. Huzoor Anwar<sup>aa</sup> said that the ratio of Khula' in our Jama'at is greater than that of divorce. In any case, it is the children who suffer. Statistics collected by international institutions also prove that separation between husband and wife adversely affects the children, no matter who they live with.

Huzoor Anwar<sup>aa</sup> said that another fact that causes problems among couples is the interference of the wife or the husband's parents. Some wives complain that their husbands do not fulfill their responsibilities. In short, there is no end to complaints from both sides which sometimes go on for many years even after the children have grown up. It is mostly childish things, impatience and wrong friendships that are at the root of such problems. If all the marital problems of different age groups are summed up in one sentence, it would be that they are caused by ignorance and lack of interest in religious teaching and an inclination towards materialism.

The solution to these problems can only be found in the light of the Holy Qur'an, Hadith, and the teachings of the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup>. Huzoor Anwar<sup>aa</sup> said that we are fortunate to have accepted the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> who took from us the pledge that we shall give priority to our faith over everything worldly.

And in matters of matrimony, we have the Holy Prophet's<sup>sa</sup> specific instruction that faith must be given priority. The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> said: "A man marries a woman for four things: her wealth, her lineage, her beauty, or her piety. I advise you to marry a pious woman, and may God bless you."

If both sides make faith and piety their priority, then most of these problems will automatically disappear. Huzoor Anwar<sup>aa</sup> said that since we do not know how a person really is, it is important to perform the Istikhara, or ask God to guide us, and to stop us if the matter is not good for us. Prayers that are offered before marriage help to lead a happy life after marriage. But Satan keeps attacking in various ways, therefore it is important to always keep praying for a happy and loving relationship.

Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh I<sup>ra</sup> says I advise you to care for your relatives in keeping with Taqwa and be truthful. If you want to see success in your life, then Taqwa is essential.

The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> says: In matters of matrimony, one should only see if the person has a good character and is pious. Islam does not differentiate between race and caste. The basic principle is to decide on the basis of Taqwa, all else are false innovations. And it is also important to consider compatibility.

Huzoor Anwar<sup>aa</sup> said that once the boy's side has seen the girl's photograph and has received all the relevant information, they should not unnecessarily delay the decision and cause emotional distress for the other side.

The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> says that it is evident from the Holy Qur'an that marriage has three benefits: piety and virtue, preserving one's health, and progeny. If these three things are kept in mind, then there will be no problems in matrimony.

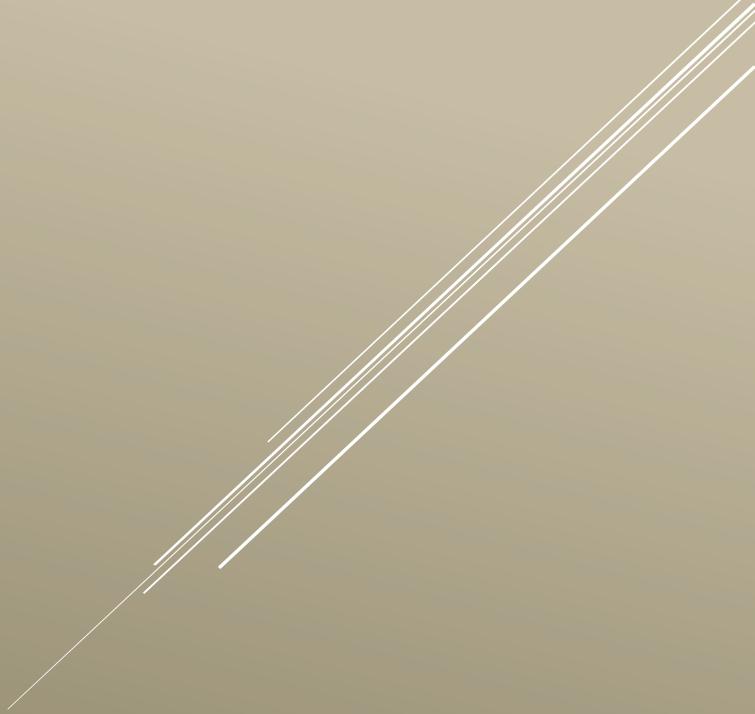
Huzoor Anwar<sup>aa</sup> said that I receive complaints from some countries that people do not wish to marry missionaries. Such thinking is wrong, and one should always give priority to faith.

Regarding taking more than one wife, the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> says, "You should not be overwhelmed by lust and desire, but if there is a genuine need, you can take a second wife."<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Friday Sermon, March 03, 2017





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