

## **Chapter 10**

### **Analysis Hadiths regarding the Relations between Husband and Wife**

## Introduction

Islamic morality takes its basis from faith and essentials of belief. In order the ethical system be fruitful in people's life they should practice what they believe. Otherwise, it will remain as though in minds and does not influence people's life in their individual, family and social relationships. Morality takes its strength from practice and without faith, it cannot be effective. Indeed, belief in God, the Hereafter, the holy books, the resurrection, and Heaven and Hell are the important principles that elevate our lives to the level of the angels and that bring order to our lives.<sup>384</sup>

Families which are consists of husband and wife constitute society. Happy family yields happy society. With sound education, couples can establish good marital life. The family is not just satisfying natural desires it is also essential part of society. The institution of marriage is seed of nation.

Matrimony has been defined as the act of bringing couples together within certain principles and through a legitimate contract with an obvious purpose.<sup>385</sup> Hence marriage is very important Muslims must be very cautious in selecting partners. Moreover, the purpose for such holy union should be in line with the objectives and principles of Islam. If marriage is made merely on the basis of physical considerations it later will cause bitter disputes between spouses. Therefore, it should be established on rational basis as well as on emotional ones.

Having a purpose in everything is a method and a system and individuals must already have a purpose in all of their actions. They must work so that they are determined in their efforts, consequently enabling them to reach their goal.<sup>386</sup> Thus, if a person gets married without taking into consideration all the aspects of these issues, but rather just jumps into marriage merely in order to satisfy sexual desires, it is extremely doubtful that such a person will establish a healthy family or bring up children that will be a useful and well-adjusted member of society.<sup>387</sup>

The Prophet (pbuh) stated that “marry and multiply so that I will be proud of your numerousness.”<sup>388</sup> Raising children that will please God and His Messenger will be the main purpose in Islamic marriage. This aim will enable couples to be pious, responsible citizens, fond of their families and interested in the education of their children. Until such holy union, the young should protect their chastity for the Prophet said; “O the community of youth! Those who have the means to marry should marry. Those who cannot marry should fast, as this is a shield against the forbidden acts.”<sup>389</sup>

Couples should come together in the name of God in order to receive His blessing to their marital life. God sanctifies matrimony made in His name and bring spouses closer to one another. In recent years, the divorce rate has been increased because many aimless marriages have been made and such behavior has substantially destroyed the foundations of the family institution.

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<sup>384</sup> Fethullah Gülen, *From Seed to Cedar*, p. 4.

<sup>385</sup> Gülen, *From Seed to Cedar*, p. 6.

<sup>386</sup> Gülen, *ibid.*

<sup>387</sup> Gülen, *ibid.*

<sup>388</sup> Abd al-Razzak, *Musannaf*, vol.6, 173.

<sup>389</sup> Bukhari, *Sahīh*, Nikāh, 2.

The first and most important step in marriage is selecting a partner who is compatible with one's feelings and lifestyle. Unfortunately, mostly people select their life partner based on emotions and physical attraction. Later, they suffer from never ending disputes within the family. They do not share the home in peace due to differences in mentality. The Prophet stated that "There are four reasons why a woman is chosen for marriage: for her wealth, for her good family name, for her beauty, or for her piety. You must choose the pious one in order to attain peace."<sup>390</sup>

Piety is the most important criteria in selecting a spouse. A person should choose the beauty of piety, morality, and religion in marriage. In Islamic thought, family life is not a life pertaining only to this world; it will exist over a prolonged period of time, stretching well into the next world and beyond, through our children and grandchildren.<sup>391</sup> A happy marriage and good home can be a heaven in the earth, yet it has many enemies to destroy it. In order to build a good home, one must know if a future spouse is compatible with him/her in belief, morality and lifestyle. The family, the foundation of nations and states, should not be something that is embarked upon without previous contemplation and the drawing up of a plan; any negligence in this regard entails negligence for the entire nation.<sup>392</sup>

Men and women are united under the family institution. They put their trust in God and submit to His will. The Qur'an focuses on both men and women when describing their attitudes in a healthy society;

"Surely all men and women who submit to God, and all truly believing men and truly believing women, and all devoutly obedient men and devoutly obedient women, and all men and women honest and truthful in their speech, and all men and women who persevere (in obedience to God through all adversity), and all men and women humble (in mind and heart before God), and all men and women who give in charity, and all men and women who fast, and all men and women who guard their chastity, and all men and women who remember and mention God much—for them God has prepared forgiveness (to bring unforeseen blessings) and a tremendous reward."<sup>393</sup>

If words and actions do not contradict to Islam, couples will be happy and their children will always behave properly, seeing their parents as examples. The family environment is mirror in which the children see themselves and act accordingly. If parents observe religious duties and do good deeds this will affect the children positively. Such women and men, who persistently guard themselves from transgressing and who perceive the doing of evil as being no less than passing through the gates of Hell, will have a great influence not only on their children, but also on their social environment.<sup>394</sup>

After a brief introduction to marriage in Islam, now, the relationship between the couples will be explained. The Qur'an commands men to treat their wives kindly and have good relationship with them.<sup>395</sup> Kind words and polite behaviors are very important in family relations. The best character is connected by the Prophet to one's best treatment to his wife.

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<sup>390</sup> Bukhari, *Sahīḥ*, Nikāḥ, 15; Abu Dāwud, *Sunan*, Nikāḥ, 2.

<sup>391</sup> Gülen, *Seed to Cedar*, p. 15.

<sup>392</sup> Gülen, *ibid*, p. 21.

<sup>393</sup> Qur'an 33: 35.

<sup>394</sup> Gülen, *ibid*, p. 23.

<sup>395</sup> Qur'an 4: 19.

He showed the best example in his life by treating his wives best.<sup>396</sup> He would smile, make jokes and have friendly conversations with them to make them feel happy and cared. He raced with Aisha twice to show her that she was special for him. Another time, he invited Aisha to watch folkloric dance of Abyssinian people together. Occasionally, he suffered from improper behaviors of his wives but he never broke their hearts.

Islam is often criticized in the West due to misconceptions about women. Opposing to this, the Prophet was very respectful towards women. He protected their rights and urged his Companions to do the same. Significantly, women started seeing a true respect, sincere love and real honor guided by Islamic teachings, as the Prophet was very cautious and adamant about these issues. The prophet was very polite and friendly in order that all the women could feel comfortable and act as they wished without being worried about consequences of their acts. ‘Umar reports;

“One day I went to the Prophet and saw him smiling. “May God make you smile forever, O Messenger of God,” I asked why he was smiling. “I smile at those women. They were chatting in front of me before you came. When they heard your voice, they all vanished.” On hearing this answer, I raised my voice and told them: “O enemies of your own selves, you are scared of me, but you are not scared of the Messenger of God, and you don’t show respect to him.” “You are hard-hearted and strict,” they (the women) replied.<sup>397</sup>

The Prophet was directed by God, but still consulted the matters with his wives to show them his love and respect. He also wanted to present the best model in terms of how to treat wives and taking their opinions in every matter. It was a unique act since people used to consider the women as valueless objects just two decades earlier. The treaty of Hudaibiya is an example for how the Prophet consulted with his wife Umm Salama and acted upon her advice. The Muslims found the conditions of the treaty of Hudaibiya very hard, and therefore were reluctant to go back to Medina without the making the pilgrimage. However, Prophet Muhammad ordered them to remove their pilgrim attire. They did not fulfill the order in spite he repeated it to them couple of times. Thereupon he consulted this matter with his wife Umm Salama. She replied; “O Messenger of God, don’t repeat your order lest they disobey you and perish. Sacrifice your own animals and take off your pilgrim dress (*ihram*). When they understand the order is decisive, they’ll obey you without hesitation.”<sup>398</sup> He did as she suggested and the Companions fulfilled the order this time.

In conclusion, the Prophet was very respectful to his wives and warned his followers one more time in this regard in his farewell sermon;

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<sup>396</sup> Tirmidhi, *Sunan*, Manāqib, 63.

<sup>397</sup> Bukhari, *Sahīh*, Adab, 68.

<sup>398</sup> Bukhari, *Sahīh*, Chapter Shurut: 15.

## Commentary on Unforgettable Hadiths of Prophet Muhammad

“O People, it is true that you have certain rights with regard to your women, but they also have rights over you. Remember that you have taken them as your wives only under Allah’s trust and with His permission. So, treat your women well and be kind to them for they are your partners and committed helpers.”<sup>399</sup>

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<sup>399</sup> Bukhari, *Saḥīḥ*, Hajj, 1623.

## Analyses of Hadith regarding the Relations between Couples

### First hadith

وعن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: استنصوا بالنساء خيراً، فإن المرأة خلقت من ضلع، وإن أعوج ما في الضلع أعلاه، فإن ذهبت تقيمه كسرته، وإن تركته، لم يزل أعوج، فاستنصوا بالنساء

Abu Hurayra reports that Messenger of God (pbuh) said: “take my advice with regard to women; act kindly towards women, for they were created from a rib, and the most crooked part of a rib is its uppermost. If you attempt to straighten it; you will break it, and if you leave it alone it will remain crooked; so, act kindly toward women.”<sup>400</sup>

In another narration; “a woman is like a rib, if you attempt to straighten it, you will break it; and if you benefit from her, you will do so while crookedness remains in her.”<sup>401</sup>

In another narration; “a woman has been created from a rib and will in no way be straightened for you; so, if you want to benefit from her, you will benefit from her while crookedness remains in her. If you attempt to straighten her, you will break her, and breaking her is divorcing her.”<sup>402</sup>

### Analysis of the hadith

The hadith is authentic according to Bukhari and Muslim; therefore, they recorded it in their *sahih* collections. Before starting to explain the hadith, it is good to know the general view of Islam on human creation. Islam rejects the theory of evolution. Human kind is not result of evolution. God created them as unique species. Adam and Eve were created miraculously and then other human beings were produced from them. Everything in the universe is created by God according to cause and effect (causality) relationship. When all the conditions are present, the result comes to existence. First creation of human beings (Adam and Eve) is a miracle and cannot be explained according to principles of causality. God declared in the Qur'an;

“And (remember) when your Lord said to the angels: I am creating a mortal from dried, sounding clay, from molded dark mud. When I have fashioned him in due proportions and breathed into him out of My Spirit, then fall down prostrating before him (as a token of respect for him and his superiority).”<sup>403</sup>

“O humankind! If you are in doubt about the Resurrection, (consider that) We created you from earth (in the beginning while there was nothing of your existence as humankind, and the material origin of every one of you is also earth). Then (We have created you) from a drop of seminal fluid, then from a clot clinging (to the womb

<sup>400</sup> Bukhari, *Sahih*, Anbiya, 1; Muslim, *Sahih*, Rada, 60.

<sup>401</sup> Bukhari, *Sahih*, Nikah, 79.

<sup>402</sup> Muslim, *Sahih*, Rada, 59.

<sup>403</sup> Qur'an 15: 28-29.

wall), then from a lump in part shaped and in part not shaped, and differentiated and undifferentiated, and so do We clarify for you (the reality of the Resurrection).<sup>404</sup>

“We created humankind (in the very beginning) from a specially sifted extract of clay. Then We have made it into a fertilized ovum in a safe lodging. Then We have created of the fertilized ovum a clot clinging (to the womb wall), and (afterwards in sequence) We have created of the clinging clot a (chew of) lump, and We have created of (a chew of) lump bones, and We have clothed the bones in flesh. Then We have caused it to grow into another creation. So Blessed and Supreme is God, the Creator Who creates everything in the best and most appropriate form and has the ultimate rank of creativity.”<sup>405</sup>

The beginning of human creation is a miracle. When humanity forgot how God created Adam and Eve miraculously He reminded them by creating Jesus without father; “The creation of) Jesus in reference to God resembles (the creation of) Adam. He created him from earth, then said He to him, "Be!" and he is.”<sup>406</sup>

The hadith, which states that women were created from a rib, explains their nature rather than their biological entity. In order to understand women’s creation, the following verse from the Qur’an must be understood well; “O humankind! In due reverence for your Lord, keep from disobedience to Him Who created you from a single human self, and from it created its mate, and from the pair of them scattered abroad a multitude of men and women.”<sup>407</sup> According to this verse, God did not create Eve from any physical part of Adam but from his essence or substance. In other words, God used some substance to create Adam and from the same substance, He created Eve. The essence and substance of Adam is different from his physical entity. Tallness, weight, hair, skin etc. are related to physical side of human beings while character, thoughts, DNA, feelings, intelligence etc. are related to their essence and identity. Therefore, God created Eve from the essence that He created Adam. The Qur’an states that God created Adam from single human self and from the same self He created Eve. This human self is different from Adam’s physical entity.

Since, the hadith is *khābar wāḥid* (single source report) it must be explained in line with the Qur’anic verses. According to *Uṣūl Tafsīr* that is methodology of Qur’anic exegesis, if there is a contradicting between a hadith and Qur’anic verse the hadith is interpreted according to the latter. So, it is necessary to refer to the verse to interpret the hadith. Firstly, it is essential to know the occasion and reason behind the statement of the Prophet. The expression ‘take my advice with regard to women’ is related to establishing healthy relationship between the couples at home. Treating women kindly and advising them goodness is very important. In order to be successful in education or having good relationship with someone it is essential to know their psychology and nature. The expression ‘a woman is like a rib, if you attempt to straighten it, you will break it’ alludes that they have very fragile nature and men should be careful in relationship with them. If one ignores women psychology and acts according to men nature, he will fail in his marriage.

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<sup>404</sup> Qur’an 22: 5.

<sup>405</sup> Qur’an 23: 12-14.

<sup>406</sup> Qur’an 3: 59.

<sup>407</sup> Qur’an 4: 1.

The Prophet used metaphoric language to express the fragileness and sensitivity of women. Therefore, the hadith does not aim to explain that woman was created from a rib. It draws our attention to women nature. So, a rib symbolizes a woman nature, but not her physical entity.

The expression ‘from a rib’ is used to explain that women are from the same species of men and have the same human selfhood. The essence and substance of human beings are the same regardless of their gender. If they were different a multitude of men and women could not be produced from them as it is indicated in the verse; “O humankind! In due reverence for your Lord, keep from disobedience to Him Who created you from a single human self, and from it created its mate, and from the pair of them scattered abroad a multitude of men and women.”<sup>408</sup>

The word rib alludes that women are inclined to be crooked as men’s nature is. Today, women are used in many areas of life to tempt men to immoral conducts. In newspaper or TV advertisements, women are used by promoting their feminine site. The Prophet warned the women that some wicked people would use them for their evil purposes. Indeed, using women to stir carnal desires of men is their debasement and it is a great insult to their identity.

The hadith advises men to be kind to their wives in order not to break their hearts and destroy marital relations for they have very sensitive and fragile nature. Instead of force, abuse and rudeness men should love their wives and handle the problems in family by mercy and care. This method is more effective on woman nature to reach happiness. The peace and tranquility at home can be attained by treating women kindly.

Some scholars interpreted the expression ‘the most crooked part of a rib is its uppermost’ as women’s tongue for they criticize their husbands very severely and ignore their favors. Once the Prophet explained why some women would enter Hell as ‘they curse a lot and are ungrateful to their husbands’.<sup>409</sup> As explained previously tongue may cause a person commit many sins such slandering, backbiting, gossiping, lying, testifying falsely and many more. By denying all the favors and goodness of husband women commit a great sin. They expose family secrets when chatting with friends and backbite about their husbands. All these evils are done by tongue therefore; metaphorically, it is the most crooked part of a rib.

## Second hadith

وعن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: لَا يَفْرَأُكَ مُؤْمِنٌ مُؤْمِنَةٌ إِنْ كَرِهَ مِنْهَا خُلُقًا رَضِيَ مِنْهَا آخَرَ

Abu Hurayrah reports that Messenger of God (pbuh) said; “a believer must not hate his wife; if he dislikes one of her characteristics he will be pleased with another.”<sup>410</sup>

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<sup>408</sup> Qur’an 4: 1.

<sup>409</sup> Bukhari, *Sahīh*, Hayd, 6.

<sup>410</sup> Muslim, *Sahīh*, Rada, 61.



### Analysis of the hadith

The hadith is authentic according to criteria of Muslim. He recorded it in his *sahīh* hadith collections. Human beings are inclined to make mistakes. If one blames another because of his/her mistakes there can be none remain not to be blamed. One who seeks a faultless friend will remain friendless. Everyone has some mistakes. Only the prophets are infallible for they are the best human beings. God sent them as best role model to guide humanity to straight path.

The hadith warns the couples concerning the characteristics of each other. If one may not like one, he/she may like others. A believer must not hate his wife because of one of her characteristics for he may be pleased with another. Similarly, a wife must not hate her husband because of some attitudes or habits. Every believer has many good characteristics and therefore deserves to be liked. Said Nursī explains this fact with analogy;

“Imagine yourself on a ship or in a house with one criminal and nine innocent persons. If someone tried to destroy the ship or the house (because of that one criminal), you would understand the magnitude of such an injustice and protest. Even if there were one innocent person and nine criminals on that ship, it would still be unjust to sink it. A believer may be compared to a house or a ship belonging to God. Such a person has not nine, but as many as 20 innocent attributes such as belief, Islam, and neighborliness. If you cherish rancor and enmity for a believer because of one criminal attribute you do not like, and you want to destroy that ship or house created by God, your crime would be most atrocious.”<sup>411</sup>

The default and proper feeling in believers’ heart is love. Their nature is nourished with mercy and affection. There is no room for hatred and enmity in their hearts. Islam and faith requires love and concord between believers. It is a great evil and injustice to nurture hostility for any believer, especially towards one’s wife or husband. Unity in belief requires unity of hearts between the couples. Intimate attachment to one’s wife or husband through mutual ties of unity is necessary for God established the marriage as legal union. God creates love in the hearts of couples through marriage contract. They must not destroy such love by evil acts, thoughts and feelings.

There are many reasons which require mutual love between the couples such as they both worship One God, follow the same prophet and face to the same direction in the prayers. Preferring hatred to love because of trivial reasons causes dispute, discord, rancor, enmity, and grudges between the couples and this is a great disrespect for all the ties that God established. Nurturing hatred for one’s wife or husband is like condemning all of his/her innocent attributes because of one little mistake or bad characteristics. Indeed, this is a great injustice.

### Third hadith

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<sup>411</sup> Said Nursī, *The Letters*, 22. Letter, 282.

وعن عمرو بن الأَخوصِ الجُشميِّ رضي اللهُ عنه أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي حَجَّةِ الْوَدَاعِ يَقُولُ بَعْدَ أَنْ حَمَدَ اللهُ تَعَالَى، وَأَتَى عَلَيْهِ وَذَكَرَ وَوَعظَهُ، ثُمَّ قَالَ: أَلَا وَاسْتَوْصُوا بِالنِّسَاءِ خَيْرًا، فَإِنَّمَا هُنَّ عَوَانٌ عِنْدَكُمْ لَيْسَ تَمْلِكُونَ مِنْهُنَّ شَيْئًا غَيْرَ ذَلِكَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُبِينَةٍ، فَإِنْ فَعَلْنَ فَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ، وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ ضَرْبًا غَيْرَ مُبْرِحٍ، فَإِنْ أَطَعَتْكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا، أَلَا إِنَّ لَكُمْ عَلَى نِسَائِكُمْ حَقًّا، وَلِنِسَائِكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ حَقًّا، فَحَقِّقُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ أَنْ لَا يُوطِئَنَّ فُرْشَكُمْ مِنْ تَكْرَهُونَ، وَلَا يَأْتِيَنَّ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ لِمَنْ تَكْرَهُونَ، أَلَا وَحَقُّهُنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْ تُحْسِنُوا إِلَيْهِنَّ فِي كِسْوَتِهِنَّ وَطَعَامِهِنَّ.

Amr bin al-Ahwas al-Jushami had heard the Prophet (pbuh) saying on his Farewell Pilgrimage, after praising and glorifying God and admonishing people; “treat women kindly, they are like captives in your hands; you do not own anything else from them. In case they are guilty of open indecency, then do not share their beds and beat them lightly but if they return to obedience, do not have recourse to anything else against them. You have rights over your wives and they have their rights over you. Your right is that they shall not permit anyone you dislike to enter your home, and their right is that you should treat them well in the matter of food and clothing.”<sup>412</sup>

### Analysis of the hadith

The narrator of this hadith is Amr b. al-Ahwas al-Jushami who were present at Farewell Pilgrimage and listened to the famous sermon there. He reported a few hadiths which took place in the most authentic hadith books. There is not much information about his life. May God be well pleased with him. Tirmidhi recorded this hadith in his Sunan book. The hadith is *hasan* (fair or good) which is a mid-category between authentic and weak.

The Prophet always advised his followers to treat their wives kindly and showed them the best example for every matter of life. He put great effort to eradicate all the customs, habits and notions that belonged to the time of ignorance. He established all praiseworthy attributes in the hearts of the Companions. Prior to Islam, women were considered as valueless objects of trade with no rights. The husbands were beating their wives so brutally. The Prophet wanted to remove this evil custom and warned the Muslims on many occasions in this regard. Once he stated that, “some of you beat their wives as if they were slaves, and then lie with them at the end of the day.”<sup>413</sup>

In order to understand the hadith better it should be interpreted in line with the following Qur’anic verse;

“Men (those who are able to carry out their responsibilities) are the protectors and maintainers of women inasmuch as God has endowed some of people (in some respects) with greater capacity than others and inasmuch as they (the men) spend of their wealth (for the family’s maintenance). Good, righteous women are the devoted ones (to God) and observant (of their husbands’ rights), who guard the secrets (family honor and property, their chastity, and their husband’s rights, especially where there is none to see them and in the absence of men) as God guards and keeps undisclosed (what should be guarded and private). As for those women from whose determined disobedience and breach of their marital obligations you have reason to fear,

<sup>412</sup> Tirmidhi, *Sunan*, Rada, 11; Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, Nikāh, 3.

<sup>413</sup> Bukhari, *Sahīh*, Tafsīr, 1; Muslim, *Sahīh*, Jannah, 49

admonish them (to do what is right); then, (if that proves to be of no avail), remain apart from them in beds; then (if that too proves to be of no avail) beat them (lightly without beating them in their faces). Then if they obey you (in your directing them to observe God's rights and their marital obligations) do not seek ways against them (to harm them). (Be ever mindful that) God is indeed All- Exalted, All-Great."<sup>414</sup>

This verse is very important concerning the relations between wife and husband. There are some important points that can be extracted from this verse to establish a healthy relationship at home.

First, God created everyone with different capacity and intellect. One person may be superior in some respect to others and this is a requirement of social life in order for all kind of jobs and duties to be fulfilled. Similarly, God created men, in some respects, superior to women, while He has also given women superiority over men in other respects.

Usually, men have greater physical strength than women do and are endowed with a greater capacity for management. Even in the modern world, administrators are usually men. God entrusted men with financial responsibility, therefore they are assigned as the head of family. However, this does not mean that men have absolute authority in the family; rather, they should consult with their wives before making any decision that concerns all.

As being the head of the family men are responsible for the welfare and prosperity of the home. Although men are commanded to treat their wives kindly, they are required to establish and maintain the peace among the family members. For this reason, God guided men concerning the treatment of rebellious women who ruin peace and tranquility at home. According to this guideline, men advise their wives to do what is right and prevent what is wrong. Then, if that proves to be of no avail, they remain apart from them in beds. If this does not solve the problem, they beat the wives lightly without slapping them in their faces. In the hadith above, the Prophet explained the same matter as 'in case they are guilty of open indecency, then do not share their beds and beat them lightly but if they return to obedience, do not have recourse to anything else against them.'

It must be noted that all these steps are for education and saving the marriage. It is strongly forbidden in Islam to beat wives. This method (beating them lightly) is only applicable to a truly rebellious wife. She is of evil conduct and displays obstinacy concerning the negligence of her duties in the home but also, she does not care about moral conducts. The Prophet explained the meaning of beating as it should be light and only employed as a last resort in extreme cases such as lewdness committed by the wife.<sup>415</sup> He warned men to refrain from beating as much as possible, and slapping in the faces.<sup>416</sup> He condemned men who beat their wives and even advised a Muslim woman, Fatimah bint Qays, not to marry a man known for beating women.<sup>417</sup>

Moreover, Islam never leaves women unprotected in the face of men's harsh treatment and negligence of their family duties. The Qur'an advises reconciliation first;

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<sup>414</sup> Qur'an 4: 34.

<sup>415</sup> Tirmidhi, *Sunan*, Tafsir (Tawba), 1.

<sup>416</sup> Abu Dawud, *Sunan*, Nikah, 42.

<sup>417</sup> Muslim, *Sahih*, Talaq, 36.

“If a woman fears from her husband ill-treatment or (such breach of marital obligations as) his turning away in aversion, then there will be no blame on them to set things right peacefully between them; peaceful settlement is better.”<sup>418</sup>

This verse does not advise women to leave husbands in bed and then beat them. However, women have right to resort to the court and even demand divorce. Even the court can apply the same three measures in question against the husband behalf on their wives.

#### Fourth hadith

وعن مُعَاوِيَةَ بْنِ حَيْدَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: قُلْتُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مَا حَقُّ زَوْجَةٍ أَحَدَنَا عَلَيْهِ؟ قَالَ: أَنْ تُطْعَمَهَا إِذَا طَعِمْتَ، وَتَكْسُوَهَا إِذَا اكْتَسَيْتَ وَلَا تُضْرَبَ الْوَجْهَ، وَلَا تُفَبَّحَ، وَلَا تَهْجُرَ إِلَّا فِي الْبَيْتِ

Mu’awiya bin Hayda reports that I asked Messenger of God (pbuh); “what right can a wife demand of her husband?” He replied, “You should provide her food from what you eat, clothe her how you clothe yourself, not strike her on the face, and do not tell her she is ugly or separate from her except in the house.”<sup>419</sup>

#### Analysis of the hadith

The narrator of hadith is Mu’awiya bin Hayda. He was from Basra and came to the Prophet to represent his tribe. He joined the military campaign towards Asia and became a martyr there. May God be well pleased with him. The hadith is *hasan* according to criteria of Abu Dāwud and he recorded it in his *Sunan*.

The hadith clarifies who will be responsible to meet the basic needs of a wife and what would be the criteria for that. A husband is supposed to provide his wife food and clothes as he provided himself. In other words, men are required to take care of their wives at the same level in which they take care of themselves. The hadith clearly express that wife has the same rights as husband does. However, women did not have any right prior to Islam. They could not find food and clothes. Therefore, the Prophet removed this immoral custom and recognized the rights of women. With Islam, they have gained an honorable status and financial freedom. They achieved equal rights concerning food and cloths.

The Prophet recognized not only physical needs of women but also their psychological and spiritual needs. Since, women are very sensitive and delicate beings, men are advised to be kind to their wives. He prohibited from rude words and disrespectful acts toward them. One of the most offensive words that are said to women is the negative expression about their beauty. Hence, the Prophet warned men not to tell their wives that they are ugly. In order not to offend them and break their hearts men must be polite and gentle.

The Prophet protected women’s honor and dignity by commanding Believers to be respectful to women. Prior to marriage, both sides may decline the marriage proposal on the basis of

<sup>418</sup> Qur’an 4: 128.

<sup>419</sup> Abu Dāwud, *Sunan*, Rada, 41.

physical beauty, but after marriage one cannot say to his wife she is ugly. Additionally, women may be seen less attractive in their special terms such pregnancy, menstruation or after giving birth. These are not in their hands therefore cannot be belittled because of them.

The other matter that the hadith deals with is not beating wife's face. This does not mean that it is permissible to beat other areas. The Prophet prohibited from the beating wives. As explained in the previous hadith, beating lightly is the last resort if it will save the marriage. Other than that, it is not permissible to beat or harm her in any way. The last point in the hadith is separating women in the beds. This act is done at home and only for educational purpose. Again, this is practiced to prevent divorce between the couples. In order to guide a disobedient wife to right conducts and moral values a husband can separate his bed, but it should be done within the house. Although one suspends the practice of sleeping with wife, he should not stop speaking to her because that will increase the hatred and enmity between the two. However, in case of special circumstances, one can separate from her by leaving his home, as once the Prophet (pbuh) left his wives and moved to upper room in the *masjid*.

### Fifth hadith

وعن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه، قال: قال رسول الله صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: أَكْمَلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِيمَانًا أَحْسَنُهُمْ خُلُقًا، وَخَيْرُكُمْ خَيْرُكُمْ لِنِسَائِهِمْ

Abu Hurayra reports that Messenger of God (pbuh) said; “the best of the believers is those who have the best characteristics, and the best of you are those who are the best to their wives.”<sup>420</sup>

### Analysis of the hadith

The hadith is ḥasan (fair) according to Tirmidhi. He recorded it in His Sunan. It is also reported by other Sunan authors in the same meaning but various verbatim. One's morality is understood in mutual relationships. Without testing a person, his/her characteristics is not known. Gold's actual substance is separated through fire. Righteous people is known via trials. A good believer is the one who has good characteristics while immoral Muslims are weak in faith. Morality will be covered in details in the last chapter.

The Prophet named the best Muslims as the ones who are the best to their wives. Treating a wife kindly is strongly related to one's morality. A person who has good manners and good characteristics is polite to his wife. He tolerates his wife when she makes mistakes and smiles her face to make her happy. If one annoys his wife with his attitudes that indicates that he is weak in faith. Being nice and polite outside but rude in the home is a sign of hypocrisy. Indeed, the family members deserve kind treatment most. Imam Malik suggests that a husband should make his wife accept him as the most beloved in the world.

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<sup>420</sup> Tirmidhi, *Sunan*, Rada, 11; Abu Dāwud, *Sunan*, Sunnah, 15.

In order to be a nice husband, he should often express his love to his wife and do her favors as much as he can. When going home in the evenings he should ask his wife if she is good or has any problem. Good quality of conversation increases love between them. Therefore, he should speak to his wife and share his knowledge, experiences or even hardships with her. He should make jokes and tease his wife in a nice way to build friendly atmosphere in the home. As mentioned earlier, the Prophet raced with Aisha twice and often had friendly conversations to make her happy.

### Sixth hadith

وعن عبد الله بن عمرو بن العاص رضي الله عنهما أن رسول الله صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قال: الدُّنْيَا مَتَاعٌ، وَخَيْرُ مَتَاعِهَا الْمَرْأَةُ الصَّالِحَةُ

‘Abdullah bin ‘Amr bin al-‘As reports Messenger of God (pbuh) said; “the world is but a (quick passing) enjoyment; and the best enjoyment of the world is a pious and virtuous woman.”<sup>421</sup>

### Analysis of the hadith

The hadith is authentic according to criteria of Muslim. It is recorded by Imam Muslim, Nasāī and Ibn Mājah. The world and what is in it is temporary. They are quick passing enjoyments. People are sent to this world to achieve the next one. However, the temporary beauty of this world may delude some and have them forgotten the eternal abode. The Prophet reminded Believers this fact and encouraged them to be prepared for the Afterlife.

The best enjoyment of the world is a righteous woman. Nothing deserves to be loved from the beauty of this world except a pious woman, because she protects her husband from seditions of the world. She satisfies her husband in terms of his physical and spiritual needs. She is content with lawful provision therefore does not urge her husband to earn more by violating halal means. Another time, the Prophet expressed this fact as follows; “three things make a person happy, a righteous woman, a nice home and a good beast (vehicle). On the other hand, he is upset with three things, an immoral woman, a bad home and a difficult beast (vehicle).”<sup>422</sup>

When the following verses were revealed, the Companions became so much worried;

“Those who hoard up gold and silver and do not spend it in God’s cause (to exalt His cause and help the poor and needy): give them (O Messenger) the glad tidings of a painful punishment. On that day, it (that hoarded wealth) will be heated in the fire of Hell and therewith their foreheads and their sides and their backs will be branded (and

<sup>421</sup> Muslim, *Sahīh*, Rada, 64; Nasāī, *Sunan*, Nikāh 15

<sup>422</sup> Ahmad b Hanbal, *Musnad*, vol.1, 168.

they will hear): “This is the treasure which you hoarded up for yourselves; taste now what you were busy hoarding!”<sup>423</sup>

In order to lessen their fear, the Prophet told them; “you better have a thankful heart to God, a tongue that praises Him and a believing woman. A righteous wife will help you be the prosperous in the Afterlife too.”<sup>424</sup> A pious woman helps her husband to fulfil his religious duties and prevent him from following the carnal desires.

### Seventh hadith

وعن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: إِذَا دَعَا الرَّجُلُ امْرَأَتَهُ إِلَى فِرَاشِهِ فَلَمْ تَأْتِهِ فَبَاتَ غَضْبَانَ عَلَيْهَا لَعْنَتُهَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ حَتَّى تُصْبِحَ.

وفي رواية لهما: إِذَا بَاتَتْ الْمَرْأَةُ هَاجِرَةً فِرَاشَ زَوْجِهَا لَعْنَتُهَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ حَتَّى تُصْبِحَ.

وفي رواية قال رسول الله صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ مَا مِنْ رَجُلٍ يَدْعُو امْرَأَتَهُ إِلَى فِرَاشِهِ فَتَأْتِيهِ إِلَّا كَانَ الَّذِي فِي السَّمَاءِ سَاحِطًا عَلَيْهَا حَتَّى يَرْضَى عَنْهَا.

Abu Hurayra reports that Messenger of God (pbuh) said; “when a man calls his wife to his bed, and she does not respond and he (the husband) spends the night angry with her, the angels curse her until morning.”<sup>425</sup>

In another narration: The Messenger of God (pbuh) said; “when a woman spends the night away from the bed of her husband, the angels curse her until morning.”<sup>426</sup>

In another narration: Messenger of God (pbuh) said; “by Him in Whose Hand is my life, when a man calls his wife to his bed, and she does not respond, the One Who is above the heaven becomes displeased with her until he (her husband) becomes pleased with her.”<sup>427</sup>

### Analysis of the hadith

Bukhari and Muslim agreed on the authenticity of the hadith and recorded it in their *sahīh* collections. Additionally, Abu Dāwud reported it in his Sunan. The hadith explains one of the rights of a husband on his wife. God created man and woman to be happy and set some guidelines to achieve it. The couples need one another and their happiness lies in a peaceful union and good relations.

Marriage is established to prevent people from illicit sexual relationships and protect the lineage. If a man cannot satisfy his sexual desire with his wife in lawful way, he will be open

<sup>423</sup> Qur’an 9: 34-35.

<sup>424</sup> Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, Nikāh, 5.

<sup>425</sup> Bukhari, *Sahīh*, Bad al-Khalq, 7; Muslim, *Sahīh*, Nikāh, 122.

<sup>426</sup> Bukhari, *Sahīh*, Nikāh, 85; Muslim, *Sahīh*, Nikāh, 120.

<sup>427</sup> Muslim, *Sahīh*, Nikāh, 121.

to illegal means. In order to close such evil door, the Prophet warned Muslim women to be more cautious in this regard. Even a wife is not permitted to observe optional fasting without the permission of her husband. The Prophet said; “It is not lawful for a woman to observe (voluntary) fasting without the permission of her husband when he is at home; and she should not allow anyone to enter his house without his permission.”<sup>428</sup>

The hadith uses respectful language to explain the intimate relations between the couples. When a man calls his wife to his bed, and she does not respond, God is displeased with her until her husband is pleased with her. Even, the angels curse her until morning. The style and expression of the hadith reveals the importance of its subject. Because any problem in the family may cause a divorce and then collapse of society. Moral society is consisting of moral families. In order a man to be moral, he must satisfy his natural desires with his wife. If he is not married, fasting is recommended to him.

Men is inclined to the beauty of women and they are weak against their carnal desires. Therefore, God created women to complete one another; “They are a garment for you (enfolding you to protect you against illicit relations and beautifying you) and you are (in the same way for the same reasons) a garment for them.”<sup>429</sup> In another verse, this fact is expressed more clearly; “And among His signs is that He has created for you, from your selves, mates, that you may incline towards them and find rest in them, and He has engendered love and tenderness between you. Surely in this are signs for people who reflect.”<sup>430</sup>

The Prophet emphasized on the importance of intimate relationships between wife and husband. He stated, “When a man calls his wife to satisfy his desire, she must go to him even if she is occupied with the oven.”<sup>431</sup> In order a wife understands her husband’s value the Prophet said; “If I were to order anyone to prostrate before another, I would have ordered a woman to prostrate before her husband.”<sup>432</sup> It is prohibited to prostrate before any creation other than God. Nevertheless, the hadith uses this method to express the importance of the husband. In another occasion the Prophet clearly stated; “any woman dies while her husband is pleased with her, she will enter Paradise.”<sup>433</sup>

In conclusion, most of the problems in family are caused by the negligence of sexual relations. When a wife ignores the need of her husband and declines his invitation to bed this causes hatred and enmity between them. One of the reasons for the marriage is satisfaction of natural desires through a lawful mean. Preventing a husband from this right is a great evil. Therefore, the Prophet warned the Muslim women on many occasions include;

“Whenever a woman harms her husband in this world (that is without any due right), his wife (Huri- angelic women) in Paradise says; ‘you must not harm him. May God destroy you! He is only a passing guest with you and is about to leave you to come to us.’”<sup>434</sup>

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<sup>428</sup> Bukhari, *Sahīh*, Nikāh, 84; Muslim, *Sahīh*, Zakat, 84.

<sup>429</sup> Qur’an 2: 187.

<sup>430</sup> Qur’an 30: 21.

<sup>431</sup> Tirmidhi, *Sunan*, Rada, 10.

<sup>432</sup> Abu Dāwud, *Sunan*, Nikāh, 40.

<sup>433</sup> Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, Nikāh, 4.

<sup>434</sup> Tirmidhi, *Sunan*, Rada, 19.