

Description: The complimentary roles of husbands and wives in Islam.

By Mary Ali and Anjum Ali (edited by IslamReligion.com)

Published on 23 Oct 2006 - Last modified on 02 Dec 2007

Category: [Articles](#) > [Current Issues](#) > [Women](#)

Rights of a Wife

The Quran states:

"And among His signs is that He created for you mates from among yourselves that you may live in tranquility with them, and He has put love and mercy between you; Verily, in that are signs for people who reflect." (Quran 30:21)

Marriage is therefore not just a physical or emotional necessity but, in fact, a sign from God! It is a relationship of mutual rights and obligations based on divine guidance. God created men and women with complimentary natures and, in the Quran, He laid out a system of laws to support harmonious interaction between the sexes.

"...They are your garments and you are their garments...." (Quran 2:187)

Clothing provides physical protection and covers the beauty and faults of the body. Likewise, a spouse is viewed this way. Each protects the other and hides the faults and compliments the characteristics of the spouse. To foster the love and security that comes with marriage, Muslim wives have various rights. The first of the wife's rights is to receive *mahr*, a gift from the husband, which is part of the marriage contract and required for the legality of the marriage.

The second right of a wife is maintenance. Despite any wealth she may have, her husband is obligated to provide her with food, shelter and clothing. He is not forced, however, to spend beyond his capability and his wife is not entitled to make unreasonable demands. The Quran states:

"Let the man of means spend according to his means, and the man whose resources are restricted, let him spend according to what God has given him. God puts no burden on any person beyond what He has given him." (Quran 65:7)

God tells us men are guardians over women and are afforded the leadership in the family. His responsibility for obeying God extends to guiding his family to obey God at all times.

A wife's rights also extend beyond material needs. She has the right to kind

treatment. The Prophet said:

"The most perfect believers are the best in conduct. And the best of you are those who are the best to their wives."

God tells us He created mates and put love, mercy and tranquility between them.

Both men and women have a need for companionship and sexual needs, and marriage is designed to fulfill those needs. For one spouse to deny this satisfaction to the other, the temptation exists to seek it elsewhere.

Duties of a Wife

With rights come responsibilities. Therefore, wives have certain obligations to their husbands. The Quran states:

"...The good women in the absence of their husbands guard their rights as God has enjoined upon them to be guarded...."(Quran 4:34)

A wife is to keep her husband's secrets and protect their marital privacy. Issues of intimacy or faults of his that would dishonor him, are not to be shared by the wife, just as he is expected to guard her honor.

A wife must also guard her husband's property. She must safeguard his home and possessions, to the best of her ability, from theft or damage. She should manage the household affairs wisely so as to prevent loss or waste. She should not allow anyone to enter the house whom her husband dislikes nor incur any expenses of which her husband disapproves.

A Muslim woman must cooperate and coordinate with her husband. There cannot, however, be cooperation with a man who is disobedient to God. She should not fulfill his requests if he wants her to do something unlawful. A husband also should not take advantage of his wife, but be considerate of her needs and happiness.

Conclusion

The Quran states:

"And it befits not a believing man or a believing woman, when God and His Messenger have decided on an affair (for them), that they should (after that) claim any say in their affair; and whoso is rebellious to God and His Messenger, he verily goes astray in error manifest." (Quran 33:36)

The Muslim woman was given a role, duties and rights 1400 years ago that most women do not enjoy today in the West. These are from God and are designed to keep balance in society; what may seem unjust or missing in one place is compensated for or explained in another place. Islam is a complete way of life.

The web address of this article:

<http://www.islamreligion.com/articles/428>

Copyright © 2006-2011 [IslamReligion.com](http://www.IslamReligion.com). All rights reserved.