



The Woman's Role in Building the Successful Household

By Shaikh Saleem al Hilalee

Transcribed for www.salafipublications.com by Abu and Umm Mariam

The Shaykh began by praising Allah (subhana wa ta'ala) and sending peace and by blessings upon His Messenger Muhammad (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) and by reciting to us a part of the Khutba tul-Hajaa that I am sure we are all well acquainted of.

He began by stating:

“Allah (subhana wa ta'ala) created everything in pairs. All existence has this principle instituted in it. Plants, animals, everything that has been created by Allah (subhana wa ta'ala) has been created in pairs. Allah (subhana wa ta'ala) establishes this in the Qur'aan by saying:

'Glory be to the one Allah who created everything in pairs.'

Also we realise that Allah (subhana wa ta'ala) in creating everything in pairs, has established this as a way of completing one half with another. And therefore Allah describes the muslim union, the muslim marriage, of a man and of a woman, as a completion and as a source of love and security by saying:

'It is He, Allah, Glory be to Him, who has created from a single soul a partner for it, so that it may find love and security in it.'

This is something that is undeniable, something that is known and established and it is something that the foundation of the healthy muslim family must support and must understand in order to further the establishment of the laws of Allah and of His Messenger Muhammad (sallallahu alaihi wassallam). And this is one of the first realisations that must be made in order to begin building a successful muslim family and raising it on the account of the actions that one half of the partners, in this case, it will be the discussion with the muslim sisters, inshaAllah, what are the things that she must undertake to ensure a successful family and a healthy situation.”

The Shaykh continued by saying that:

“The Messenger of Allah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) in many different ahadeeth and in many different places has shown the importance of the muslim woman. Especially her importance and her role in building a successful and healthy relationship in her home. And this is why Allah (subhana wa ta'ala) from the orders, from the general order that he has given to the muslim woman, in Surah tul-Ahzaab, we see He says:

'And stay in your homes.'

This verse implies that the best place and the place that the muslim woman can reach the pinnacle of her relationship with Allah (subhana wa ta'ala), is by being a good muslimah in her home. By protecting it, guarding it, teaching the inhabitants of the home the laws of Allah and His Messenger Muhammad (sallallahu alaihi wassallam). And this is why we see that the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) explaining this ayaat and other ayaat – he mentioned a hadeeth that is very important by saying: **'All of you have been given responsibilities and each of you shall be held to account in how well he upheld his responsibility.'**

In mentioning in the hadeeth he says: **"..the muslim woman is responsible for her home and she will be asked and questioned about what she has done in fulfilling her responsibility and duty in the home."**

Therefore we understand that the muslim woman must be responsible for protecting her home, cleansing it, purifying it from the evils of the shaytaan. Making sure that there is a healthy situation in it for her children, for her husband, for herself. All of these are responsibilities that she as a muslim woman must strive to maintain and uphold.

If the muslim woman becomes corrupt by the influences and ideas of the disbelievers, the home will become corrupt. And if the home becomes corrupt, the children and the lineage will become corrupt. And what is society if it is not a collection of homes that contain individuals coming together. So therefore if the muslim woman becomes corrupt she will be the weak link in the home. The rest of society will suffer on account of her weakness, in not establishing the laws of Allah in her home and with her family.

Further, we understand, after having understood the importance of the role of the woman and that she is an integral part of the relationship inside the home. We ask ourselves, what is asked of the muslim woman? What are her responsibilities? They are broken down into two broad general terms:

- 1.** First she has a responsibility for cultivating a healthy situation in the home for the husband and for the children.
- 2.** Second her responsibility is in raising the children and educating them.

As for the first one, making a healthy situation and cultivating it, it comes from the verse where Allah (subhana wa ta'ala) says to us in the Qur'aan that ***'the spouse finds solace in her.'***

Therefore your muslim husband, he should find solace in being with you. Therefore it becomes her responsibility according to the words of Allah to cultivate this solace. To cultivate this sense of security, tranquillity and peace in the home. She is the one to dictate the mood of how the house and the home will be running.

Also we see another ayah in the Qur'aan where Allah (subhana wa ta'ala) mentioned that:

'The woman is like the garment of the man and the man is like the garment of the woman.'

The garment or the clothing it implies protection, therefore the muslim woman is a protection for her muslim husband, her man. And he is also a source of protection and security for her. Therefore she has a responsibility of protecting his secrets, protecting his wealth, protecting his children, protecting his home from intruders and from people that he does not wish to enter it.

As for the second point, which is her duty in raising children, it comes from the verse, where Allah (subhana wa ta'ala) says in the Qur'aan:

'Oh you who believe! Protect yourself and then your family (meaning children, spouse and so forth) from a Fire.'

So therefore it is a responsibility of the muslim woman as being a person from those who believe in Allah, that she must strive to protect herself and her family. Also we see in the general hadeeth that we mentioned earlier, the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) said: **'The muslim woman is responsible for her home.'**

Her responsibilities range to dealing with her children, educating them, teaching them the manners, protecting them, and showing them what is right and what is wrong. Cultivating all of these important aspects in their daily life and in their daily routine. So that they will be raised in a clean and secure manner.

Now we come to the point where we ask ourselves again, how do we make our homes have a healthy situation in it? What are some of the things we can implement to build the secure home on the establishment of the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wassallam)?

1. From the most important things first of all is to learn the habits of your husband. And also it is incumbent upon the husband to learn the habits of his wife.

This is something that is important as has been shown in many ahadeeth in the sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alaihi wasallam). That the muslim woman is to strive to learn about her husband as much as she can. And this can only come about by learning what our deen, our religion has dictated, in terms of how to deal with one's husband. So therefore the important point is that she learns his habits, learns his manners and shows him how she can accommodate them with the words of Allah and the sunnah of His Messenger Muhammad (sallallahu alaihi wassallam).

2. Second, the muslim woman must realise that her responsibility in the home is a way of worshipping Allah (subhana wa ta'ala). It is part of keeping her duty to Allah. A woman

once came and asked the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) while she was holding a child in her hand, she asked him: **'Will I be rewarded for this, O messenger of Allah?'** Implying taking care of the child and raising him according to the tenants of al-Islaam. And the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) answered her in the affirmative by saying: **'Yes you will be rewarded.'**

3. Third, from the things that a muslim woman can do to build a healthy relationship in her home and cultivate it, is to know that building a peaceful home is a way of pleasing Allah (subhana wa ta'ala). It is something that Allah (subhana wa ta'ala) and his Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) advised the muslim men to seek, when they are asking for a muslim woman's hand in marriage.

To seek out the woman who is loving, caring, tender. The muslim woman who is also 'walood' a source of a long lineage. So this is something that the muslim man is advised with, to look for the woman who is caring, who is kind, who is tender. For a peaceful home must be built on tenderness and kindness and respect. So therefore these are from the things that we were advised as muslim men to seek when we are seeking a muslim wife."

The Shaykh continued by advising us with some more hints to how to build a loving relationship in the home, by saying:

4. Number four is to try to work out the family issues and the problems that may arise inside the home, not to involve other people. Not to run to the Imaam as soon as something wrong happens, but to try to work it out inside of the home and not to let it get out of hand and also not to divulge any of the family problems in front of young children or children in the household

5. Number five, from the most important points is that he muslim woman must be patient. She must have patience. And this is vividly shown in the example as is narrated in the Saheeh of al-Bukhaari, in the story of Isma'eel and his father Ibraheem:

'Isma'eel was married to a woman and Ibraheem came to visit his son and upon arriving to his home he found that Isma'eel was away from the house. So he asked Isma'eel's wife, 'how is the situation, how is your life with Isma'eel?', without telling her that he is his father. She said 'we have little food' and she began to complain. He told her, 'when your husband returns inform him that he is to change his doorstep (then entrance of his door).' So when Isma'eel returned from his trip she informed him of what the man had told her who was in fact his father Ibraheem and Isma'eel told her: 'Return to your family' or 'you are divorced, my father has just ordered me to divorce you.'

And the reason for this was that she was not patient. She showed Ibraheem that she was a woman who was not patient, was not willing to put up with some of the hardships in life.

‘Then Ibraheem came a year later and found a new wife that Isma’eel had married. And once again Isma’eel was out of the home when he arrived. Ibraheem (alaihissalaam) asked the wife of Isma’eel, his son, ‘how is your situation, how is your life?’ She said, ‘Alhumdulillah, everything is fine.’ And she did not complain. He told her, ‘when your husband returns, tell him to hold onto his doorstep and not to change it.’

Meaning that to inform Isma’eel that his wife was pious and was patient and that he should not divorce her. Therefore we see that the woman as is shown in this example, is like the doorstep of the home, everything must pass through her. She is the one in control of what enters and what leaves. She is the one who is in control of setting the mood of the home. If she is impatient and if she is hurried in her words, therefore there will be ill treatment and hardship that will follow. But if she is patient and obedient to Allah and guarding of her home and guarding of her children, therefore it will be a situation that will have in it a healthy attitude for the husband, wife and the children.”

The Shaykh now begins another segment with us by saying:

“We have understood what are some of the things that will make the house peaceful and secure.” He now discusses what will ruin some of the peace and security in the home. He gives us two examples by saying:

“The muslim home and the muslim sister, if she does one of these two things, she is putting her home in liability and will be held responsible for it.

1. First is leaving the home and not keeping a good home. As the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) has said: **‘The woman is awrah. When she leaves the home the Shaytaan makes her high** (something that is a possession, something that is important) **in the sight of other men.’**

So therefore she is used by the shaytaan to influence people outside her home, we see this as being an important point. Because once the muslim woman leaves her home constantly, for no valid reason or without a reason. It shows that she is being used by the shaytaan. That she has now become a pawn that he uses in attacking some of the worshippers of Allah (azzawajal) and also in attacking her own self, she becomes a pawn. And this is something that the disbelievers, past and present, will constantly strive for. They wish for the muslim woman to exit her home, to put herself in a situation where she is uncovered, in a state where she can be manipulated by people right, left and centre.

So this is an important issue, the muslim woman should strive to remain in her home, in the company of her children, in the company of her security. Building an established relationship with her husband.

2. Second, of the things that may ruin the muslim home is the muslim woman/sister not fulfilling her duties. Constantly neglecting the duties that have been allotted to her, that

we have discussed with you previously. The five duties that we have mentioned are important for the muslim sister to establish in building a successful home.

If she intentionally and willingly leaves these things or causes someone else to take responsibility for them, she becomes out of touch with the necessities that her home needs. Becomes out of sync with what the home requires. And therefore she loses touch with her children and with her husband.

This will lead to a destruction of the home, sooner, than later.

InshaAllah now we will turn to some of the questions that you had put forth, from the first lecture.

QUESTION: “Is the woman’s money her husband’s money? Does the husband have rights over his wife’s money? Or does she have a say in her own wealth, especially if she had it before marrying him?”

ANSWER: “The muslim woman can have her own money. It is shown in the salaf al-awwal, meaning the sahaba, that many/some of the women had their own wealth. And it came to the point where they would give their zakah, the zakah which incurred on the money that they had, to their husbands. And this is shown in the famous story of Zainab. Where she asked the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) if it was permitted for her to give her zakah, to her husband, Ibn Mas’ood (radiallahu anhu). So therefore if it was Abdullah Ibnu Mas’ood’s money upon marrying her, she would not be permitted to give him zakah, because you cannot give yourself.

Therefore it was her money and therefore the muslim sister can contain and have her own money that she enters into marriage with or that she earns while married. As for her spending of the money, it is important for her to inform her husband, before spending the money out of her own discretion. Even if it is for herself, she should inform her husband before spending the money so that the relationship will not have holes/faults being punched in it, because of inconveniences and things of this sort.

QUESTION: “With regard to the woman remaining in the home and her duties being in the home, how does she balance this, if she is forced out of necessity to work and this work takes her away, ten hours per day, five days per week. Is she relieved of some of the household duties due to this hardship?”

ANSWER: “It is waajib upon the man to be responsible for working outside the home or from in the home to earn enough money to support his family. Meaning his wife and children and any of those whom he is responsible for supporting. This is something that he must fulfil. It is his obligation as part of his marriage to the sister and to his children that he is to support them as best he has the ability.

Equally it is the responsibility of the muslim sister to work, which is an equal share, in her home, helping with raising the children and taking care and making sure that the household is in order and has a sense of security and solace. This does not mean that the muslim husband is not supposed to work in the home, or should not work in the home. It means that if he has the ability to help out with some of the chores and duties, as the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) did, he is permitted to do so. Yet he cannot be forced in doing so, as the muslim woman cannot be forced to exit her home to work.

So therefore the muslim man is responsible for earning the muslim woman is responsible for maintaining. The muslim man is not responsible for maintaining and the muslim woman is not responsible for going out to earn some of the wealth to support the household.

QUESTION: “If a brother buys his wife something which was for both of them to share, then when he divorces her, or divorces his wife, how do they handle the situation? Does she take the things, does she take the object or does he keep it?”

ANSWER: “If the muslim man, the husband, purchased this object with his own money and did not transfer to her, by giving it to her, it would remain his property and it would be under his discretion. Yet, if he purchased the product or whatever it was, informing her that it was for her use, then it would be her property, even if he was the one who had originally bought it and therefore he would have no say in it or no claims to it.”

QUESTION: “If a man and woman have children out of wedlock, then they both accept Islaam and they both get married, are the children now halaal children and the father has to uphold his rights to them?”

ANSWER: “If the man and woman had these children in wedlock, wedlock that was known according to the religion that they were in before, the children would be established as theirs after they accept Islaam. But since in the question it says they had the children out of wedlock, the children would not be established under the man, not be known as his children. Yet it is incumbent upon him to support them as he would support his own children.”

QUESTION: “If a husband is not practising his religion, he only occasionally prays and oppresses his wife, what should she do?”

ANSWER: “The muslim man and muslim woman and believing man and believing woman are helpers of one another to piety. Therefore if the muslim husband sees his wife straying, it becomes his responsibility to guide her back to the words of Allah and the sunnah. To bring her back to what is best. Equally if the husband is straying it becomes her responsibility to guide him back to the words of Allah and the sunnah. This is something that is clear and must be done. And she must try to make it ‘love’ to him, show him the importance of prayer and importance of things that he is neglecting.” And the

Shaykh asks Allah (subhana wa ta'ala) to bring the brother a source of guidance through his muslim sister who is concerned about his situation.

QUESTION: “Exactly what can a woman do to help the masjid and community. If a sister possesses skills and quality that the men do not, can she become involved in planning and betterment in the community?”

ANSWER: “We have mentioned to you and we will mention to you again that the best place for the muslim sister is in the sanctuary of her home. **This is where she can reach perfection in her relationship with Allah.** She is permitted to exit her home without any question in regards to establishment of the salah and in regards to attending Islaamic classes, to increase her knowledge. As for the muslim sister having certain skills and certain abilities, it is not compulsory for her to use them. Yet if she has these abilities she should try to use them to her best ability by being flexible. If she has the ability to work out of her home (i.e. from the home), so be it. If she can invite other sisters to her home, teach them and things like this. This would be best for her, inshaAllah (ta 'ala).

QUESTION: “What is the ruling of the sister who is not married but she has a six year old son and a seven year old younger sister and she wants to take them away from this land, to study Islaam and raise them in a muslim country. Can her young child, who is six years old, be her wali on that trip?”

ANSWER: The Shaykh answered the question and this is our final question...the Shaykh answers the question by saying:

“The wali or the mahram, should be of the age of majority, so that he has the ability to be the protector and capable of defending the people he is travelling with and making right decisions. But if this sister, as she has claimed has no wali, she can still make hijrah irrelevant of the age of the child, as a way of making hijrah to Allah, for Allah and for His Messenger Muhammad (sallallahu alaihi wassallam), if she has intended to make the hijrah as a way of self-preservation and protection of her family. Therefore she may still travel to the lands of the muslims, protecting herself and her lineage, her son and her sister inshaAllah (ta 'ala).”

(Translator): So this is where we will conclude:

Subhana kallahumma wa bi hamdik ashadu an laa ilaha illa ant wa astagfirooka wan utooboo ilayk.