

Introduction by ‘Ali Akbar Mazaheri

Look at the youth standing upon the origin of a new way with their hopes, abundant aspirations and hearts full of love and commotion, with the idea to move towards and independent and responsible life. They confront two important decisions, two vital obstacles, two lofty peaks and two big selections.

So they must necessarily cross through these two obstacles and reach for these peaks and take decisions regarding these two essentially important problems and make the selection.

It cannot be that they leave these two, or either one of them aside. And neither are they energetic enough to cross through them all alone, without any kind of guide or assistance, to reach their aim safely.

The good luck and prosperity or misfortune and misery of their lives is, to a great extent, connected and linked to these two decisions and selections.

If they are able to safely cross these two obstacles and peaks, then they have, to a great extent, neared themselves to prosperity and fortune. And if, God forbid, they do not succeed in making these decisions and selections (properly), then many difficulties and agonies will come into existence for them.

One of the two is choosing a job and the other is selecting a spouse.

Each of these two decisions and selections is big and sensitive; but one of them is even bigger and more sensitive than the other, and that is the selection of spouse.

One of the great Gnostics said: “If a man spends half of his life in the search of a suitable teacher, it is worthwhile, since he will become prosperous in the other half of it.”

I too say, “If a man spends half of his life searching for a proper and suitable spouse, it is worthwhile, because he will be prosperous, for the rest of his life.”^{[1](#)}

Have you ever seen a successful man who does not have a capable woman beside him? And have you ever seen a prosperous woman who does not have a talented man beside her?

Usually every successful man has a capable woman beside him and every prosperous woman has a capable man beside her. If we observe, we will discover that it is so in every society. Even if we probe into history, we see the same. For example, Ibrahim (a.s) has Hajar beside him, whilst Musa (a.s) has Safoora at his back. Isa (Jesus) (a.s) has his mother Maryam at his side and Mohammad (S) has Khadija (s.a) beside him. We find Zahra (s.a) beside Ali (a.s), whilst Imam Hassan (a.s),

Imam Hussain (a.s), and Imam Sajjad (a.s) have Zainab (s.a) beside them. And similarly, beside all the scholars, thinkers, inventors, and reformers we usually observe capable gifted women as their wives, mothers or sisters.

Of course, because of the fact that women usually remained inside the house, they made less public appearance and so remained to a lesser degree, the focus of attention of historians, speakers, and writers. As a result, they glittered less. But since capable and talented men and women had their roles to play in each other's success and prosperity, there is no difference between them and they are equal and alike.

We can even go to the extent to say that the role of women in the success of men has been more than the role of men in the prosperity of women. Because woman is the axis and basis of life and the family and if this axis becomes anguished, disturbed and unbalanced, the foundation of life will become turbulent and weak. It is very difficult for men to succeed in a shaky and turbulent life, but if the woman is talented and capable, the man will ascend to heaven from her lap.[2](#)

And likewise, the capability and talent of each sex has an effect on the prosperity of the other, whereas the incapability, inefficiency and inferiority of each one have their effect upon the fate of the other.

An inferior, abject, ill-mannered and faithless woman destroys the life of a man and makes him sit upon the dust of abjectness and shame. And a base, mean, characterless, and faithless man will push the woman towards misfortune, a bleak life and psychological and spiritual diseases.

The Prophet (S) prays to Allah about a bad spouse, saying:

أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ زَوْجَةٍ تَشْيِينِي قَبْلَ أَوَانِ مَشْيِي.

“Oh Allah! I take refuge in you from a wife who makes me old before my old age reaches me.”[3](#)

Only God knows what an abundance of huge amounts of energies are destroyed in this marsh. And what number of fresh souls become withered and emaciated in this field. And how many tragedies occur in this area. Woe to the man who has an evil and bad woman! And woe to the woman who becomes entangled with a vile and impure man!

What plentiful numbers of nice capable, religious and talented boys have been seen dragged and

pushed into marshes and slimes as a result of marrying an incapable and base girl! And how many good, nice, capable, modest, beautiful and spirited girls with good tastes and talents have been pushed into a cesspool, as an effect of marrying an incapable, faithless, illogical and selfish boy and been totally destroyed.

Or, if both of them are good and capable, but are not an equal match and counterpart, proportional to each other, then even this situation creates difficulty. And this is a very important and minute problem.

At a later stage, we will discuss spouses being equal counterparts, proportional to each other.

But right now, it is necessary to explain that goodness and fairness of both spouses alone is insufficient, but than them being a good match, proportionate to each other conventionally speaking, is also essential so they can move forwards together in harmony.

We have seen a great number of couples, which individually, are both good, but together they have a disorganised life, because they are not proportionate to each other. Each one lives a separate life to the other.

These couples too end up with conflict, disagreement, and some with divorce, whereas if each of them had married a proportionate spouse, they would have succeeded. I will explain this further, describing a few live examples.

A boy and a girl need assistance and guidance in this risky and sensitive field. Is it possible to leave the youth all alone in this much sensitive phase? They must have access to the people, means, books and centers to assist and help them out. It is not really advisable to leave them alone.

How is it that a teacher and guide is needed for driving a car, constructing a building, travelling along an avenue and performing simple and ordinary things, but a teacher, a guide, and a guardian is not essential for choosing a mate, organising and establishing a long life, and laying the foundation of a human assembly?

The marriage of a girl and a boy is the starting point of a big human race. The marriage of the chief of believers, Ali (a.s), with Fatima Zahra (s.a) laid the foundation of a great race, which continues yet and will remain continuous and persistent up to the end of human history. And hereby, we are benefiting from the benevolence and beneficence of this sacred relation and this blessed tree.

Imam Khomeini (r.a) and Ayatollah Khamene'i, the grand leaders, are the fruits of this blessed marriage. The marriage of Abu Sufian and Hind (the liver eater)⁴ also brought into being the foundation of an immoral race and so the Umayyad caliphs came into existence from this dirty relation. Humanity has suffered great losses and continues facing difficulties at the hand of this corrupt tree.

Islam has set so many laws and topics, and stresses so much upon the subject of marriage and selection of spouses that makes one surprised and astonished.

(Professor) Mohammad Taqi Ja'fari used to say: *"Bertrand Russell (the renowned European philosopher) wrote to me and asked, "Why has Islam given such value to, and formed laws for marriage?" In response to him, I wrote, "The problem is man. Marriage brings 'man' into existence."*⁵

The actual aim of the discussion in this book is making boys and girls familiar with the method and manner of choosing a spouse, so that they can succeed in this critical, serious and fate-making matter. But the other decision and selection, i.e., selecting a job, will Insha'Allah; be brought into consideration in another book.

Reminding of A Few Points

1- The stories and examples quoted this book are real and authentic, but the names of the people have been changed to protect their identity. Only in a few cases have the real names been used.

2- We hereby thank our dear honourable brothers, Mr. Jawad Chenari and Mr. Masood Azarbaijani who helped and co-operated realizing this book, Mr. Hussain fidaee of the Imam As-Sadiq (a.s) institute, Qom, who was responsible for composing and paging and to the publication centre of the Office of Islamic Propagation, at the seminary of Qom, which shouldered the responsibility of its publication. We pray to Allah to grant them abundant rewards.

3- This book is a preliminary in connection with the problems of the youth and Insha'Allah, we will take the relevant steps after it. Therefore, we would like thinkers, clear sighted and lucid personalities, the youth and respectable reader to send their views, suggestions, criticisms and observations to the writer, at the publisher's address, including real examples of their own experiences and anything which may relate to the topic of this book, as well as those things which may concern the younger generation and could be effective and a way-opener, so that they could be used in the following editions and books. Quite evidently, if such steps are taken with sincerity, they shall bring valuable and worthy rewards from Allah.

We also expect from young couples and all those who are inclined to take steps on the way to help and guide the younger generation to describe their sweet or bitter experiences, whether experienced directly or indirectly:

Experiences such as success or failure in the selection of a spouse, the ways of spending the periods of engagement and 'Aqad (the period after Nikah and before real marriage life), the do's and don'ts of these periods, the successes and failures of the phases of spouse-selection, engagement period, marriage, after marriage and the initiating of a new joint life, its continuation, along with the causes and factors of success and failure and their biographies, so that these milestones can be living guides for young people at the starting point of their lives toward the achievement of prosperous lives.

Meanwhile, if you are inclined, we will use your real names, but if you refer us not to do so, you can write

to us and we will use fictitious names, just as we have done in most of the examples quoted in this book.

We pray to Almighty Allah for His pleasure and guidance.

Ali Akbar Mazaheri

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1. Of course, it doesn't mean delaying the marriage; rather it means subtlety and carefulness in choosing the spouse. We shall explain it in the future discussions.
2. Here Imam Khomeini's famous saying has been hinted at: "Man ascends to heaven from the lap of woman".
3. Wasail al-Shia, vol. 14,p22.
4. Hind, the wife of Abu Sufian, chewed the liver of Hazrat Hamza (a.s) after his being martyred in the Uhud battle.
5. His lessons about Nahjul Balagha in television.

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