

WOMEN

AND THE FEAR OF MARRIAGE

Dr. Layla Hamdan | March 11, 2023 | Article | Women



Muslim women in our time find themselves amidst a clash of ideas and projects that occupy their attention, centered around the concept of 'dismantling womanhood.' These notions are disseminated through widespread media outlets and extended international institutions. A poisonous injection has persisted for decades under the shadow of Western dominance, affecting generations of Muslim women since the Western occupation set foot in the lands of the Islamic world.

The West recognized that one of the crucial factors in achieving dominance in the Islamic world is the alignment of Muslim women with Western plans. Unfortunately, they succeeded in this endeavor, causing Muslim women in our time to lose their position and primary role. This loss has spanned generations, and this dominance has only been withstood by those sheltered under the mercy of the Almighty!

The diversion of women from their pivotal role in producing capable generations carrying the trust of Islam is not the sole reason for the continuation of this dominance. Undoubtedly, there are other factors contributing to this outcome, as men are not exempt from being within the scope of their goals and all the factors of empowerment for individuals and the nation.

The purpose of this article is not to discuss Western deceit, dominance, the consequences of occupation, and other strategies and plans of subjugation that remain effective to this day. Instead, I aim to shed light on an important issue related to all of this, one

that is spreading in our societies, prompting queries and justifications. It is the issue of women abstaining from marriage and their apprehension about the roles of wife and mother.

So, where does this fear come from, and how does it manifest, and what are its motivations?

Just as we have women who dream of marriage and stability but cannot achieve it due to laws imposed by families – assuming authority not divinely sanctioned – such as completing education, working, contributing to family expenses, and more, we also have women who fear marriage and shy away from stability. They are not encouraged towards it due to misconceptions they carry. Based on what I observe in consultations and real-life situations, I summarize these misconceptions as follows:

Exaggerating the Responsibilities of a Wife

A certain type of discourse aims to portray the role of a wife as a nearly impossible task, demanding her to perform duties akin to a robot. She is not allowed to make mistakes or show weakness; otherwise, she bears the responsibility for the destruction of the household. The girl who reads many comments of this nature envisions marriage as a significant trial that she will be unable to handle. She fears the attempt to please her husband all the time,

even when her psyche is not supportive and is weak. She fears bearing the burden of raising children alone, where no mistakes are accepted, and she does not deserve help. The relationship is built solely on obedience without mercy or affection. This portrayal creates significant fear and apprehension among a segment of women towards marriage because its repercussions involve accountability and rights that they may not fulfill. However, this understanding is entirely incorrect. Life in marriage is fundamentally based on affection, mercy, kindness, and mutual consideration. There won't be a wise husband who finds his wife in need of him and abandons her with the excuse of 'this is your duty' and 'this is your responsibility alone.'

Portraying marital life as mere cold, dry mathematical equations is neither logical nor realistic. The relationship is about harmony, cooperation, righteousness, and accountability. When the wife weakens and needs support, her husband will be the first to support her. This is how the Salaf (righteous predecessors) were, and their judgment was not harsh; either you fulfill all your duties, or you are a failure. Life goes through times of strength and weakness, acceptance, and avoidance. Every step in our lives relies on seeking help from Allah, and I remember at this moment how the women of the early generations did everything by themselves and found blessings and assistance from Allah through remembrance and supplication. Muslim woman, dismiss the slanderers and the whispers of demons. Performing the roles of a wife and a mother is an honor before being an obligation.

Do not think that Allah will abandon you without assistance and blessing if you seek His help, being a devoted servant to Him.

Discard these narratives that reality contradicts, and experience disproves. Do not deprive yourself of the blessings and the favor of a righteous spouse. Be assured that the generous man, if you honor him, will provide. Allah does not decree marriage unless there is goodness for His servants. So, Muslim woman, have good expectations of Allah, contemplate the verses about marriage in the Quran, and reflect on the Prophet's ﷺ conduct with his wives – may Allah be pleased with them. This will calm your fears.

The magnitude of failed experiences and the rise in divorce rates

Many young women fear failure in a marital relationship and do not want to endure the feelings of sadness, pain, and separation, especially since they observe such scenarios extensively around them. The number of divorced women is increasing, and the reasons for divorce are multiple. Immorality in disputes is a cause for shame, and a lack of piety dominates the scene. Consequently, whenever she is approached about marriage, she might, due to the intensity of what she observes, automatically assume the role of a divorcée. When she hears stories from divorced individuals and experiences that ended in failure, her confidence in the possibility of success in a marital relationship diminishes. She might even witness this failure firsthand under the same roof with her parents.

Therefore, I say that the prevalence of failure is not necessarily a reason for it to be repeated in your case. You are required to rebel against all the causes that contribute to this failure, and there are many. It starts with the goals of marriage; the more purely worldly these goals are, the more they lose their blessings. Therefore, correct your compass and change the way people live. Do not make yourself a mere copy of them; instead, play the role of presenting a successful example and a model by gathering the reasons for success with sincerity, seeking the help of Allah, and then witnessing the support of your Lord, the Exalted.

So, my sister, do not be deceived by the failures of those who have failed. The favor of Allah is vast, and undoubtedly, there are wonderful success stories hidden in some corners of the scene, worthy of appreciation. Be guided by them.

The Provocative Feminist Discourse

This sick discourse, which has spread among us in all its media and cultural forms, has caused significant losses in women's thinking. Unfortunately, it constantly finds nourishment from the societal errors and the diminishing role of men, regardless of the reasons. We are facing a disease and a malicious ideology that must be treated early. Women need to understand that feminism is a pathological condition and a disease that should not infiltrate their minds. We should create immunity against it.

One of the most prominent aspects of this destructive ideology is the insistence on independence and "self-fulfillment" away from her husband and family. It instills fear of childbirth and marriage because they supposedly restrict her "freedom." Instead, they promote the idea of individualism, satisfaction through exploiting bosses and employers, and discourage her from the image of being a mother and a homemaker, portraying it as unappealing. Counteract all of this with the Quran, the Sunnah, righteous deeds, companionship that reminds of Allah, beneficial reading, awareness, and necessary knowledge. I haven't seen a treatment like this that rebuilds hearts, demolishes doubts, and guides women back to the righteous path, united as a nation devoted to Allah. Because the battle between feminism and women is fundamentally a battle between disbelief and Islam. A steadfast believer does not submit to the call of disbelief but rises with her faith, as Allah is her protector and supporter.

Fear of Marital Relationships

Some girls develop an intense fear of having a husband in their lives who commands and prohibits, with lingering memories of the negative relationship between their parents. They hear stories from neighbors about domestic violence or cases of women discussing marital relationships with negativity and exaggeration, leading to misconceptions and misunderstandings. Consequently,

the girl becomes repelled by the idea, viewing every man approaching her as merely driven by lust, indifferent to her essence and soul. Unfortunately, all of this stems from the accumulation of errors in our society, often fueled by dramatic portrayals.

Even if these women get married, they struggle significantly to harmonize with their husbands due to these fears and the negative perspective they hold toward marital relationships. The remedy lies in addressing these thoughts with the guidance of the Sunnah and the practices of righteous women. It involves recognizing the beauty of affection, mercy, the fruits of motherhood, and also paying attention to femininity, safeguarding it from intellectual distortions.

Caution is necessary to avoid indulging in prohibited scenes, as one of its consequences is the fear of marital relationships and forming a misguided understanding of the nature of these relationships in the lawful context. Unfortunately, some women secretly fall into these scenes due to various reasons such as delaying marriage, exposure to temptations, corrupt companionship, and others. The result is the dominance of malicious perceptions.

Outdated Customs and Traditions

Many girls abstain from marriage due to shouldering responsibilities that are not obligatory upon them in Islam. The girl demands to work, earn money, achieve her family's dreams, and be prominent in society, prioritizing how society perceives her. Faced with these responsibilities, she finds herself unable to think about her own self and building her family. Allah Has not created each individual with two hearts within, and the train of life moves forward while she is unprepared to be a wife. Her thoughts are confined to accumulating wealth and achieving social and professional success.

On the contrary, she encounters those who numb her conscience every time she wakes up. Between those who trivialize the matter and those who consider a certificate as the greatest support and accomplishment for her. Between those who criticize the role of housewives and various details in the scene that make her more inclined towards choosing a career over the household! This situation requires a serious self-reflection, a cessation of heedless obedience to what displeases Allah, and a rebellion against this ignorance. Step away from the path of incessantly chasing the world and take a moment to contemplate her nature and ultimate destiny.

Fear of Betrayal

Due to the prevalence of stories of betrayal and treachery in our societies, whether spread by people or through dramas and media, some girls develop a horror of the idea of marrying a man who might betray them. The problem is that just the thought that a man might consider polygamy makes them completely dismiss the idea of marriage. Therefore, many women reject a man who entertains the idea of polygamy because, for them, it constitutes betrayal. All of this stems from the accumulation of Western thinking, which has spread despite Western women strangely tolerating marital infidelity!

These women are preoccupied with a prominent appearance in society, diverting attention from the actual breakdown of marital relationships in their homes. Hence, there is an increasing reliance on alcohol, painkillers, and psychiatric medications to cope with the pain. A Muslim woman knows that a pious Muslim man does not betray or exceed the limits set by Allah. Polygamy is a legitimate right for him. Therefore, let the selection be improved from the beginning and submit to the judgments of Allah, who has ordained them for great wisdom and greater benefit. Do not burden yourself with thoughts about a future that death may hasten before reaching it!

Disappointments in Love and Failed Experiences

Unfortunately, girls today live in an environment that neither protects nor preserves them. Societies demand and enforce mixing, while parents neglect safeguarding their daughters from the thieves of reputation. Emotional drought prevails in households. Growing up in such an environment, a girl dreams of her knight in shining armor, her hero!

Even if the girl is committed and devoted to her religion and worship, she remains a woman with the need for shelter and marriage. Delaying this matter and opening the doors to temptations, she finds herself dreaming of the ideal husband who will rescue her from all this. She then dedicates herself to her home, realizing her dream of being a wife and mother!

She becomes prey to the audacity of a man who appears to embody all the qualities of her dreams, including commitment, love for Islam, righteous deeds, and the dream of a promising Muslim family. His boldness and psychological needs match her weakness and passion, creating an attachment that makes her sacrifice everything for him. She even holds herself to oaths and covenants, pledging loyalty to him, treating him as if he were already her husband. Whenever doubts arise and her conscience awakens, he reassures her, confirming that he is the man who will protect her, preserve her, and fulfill their promising aspirations together. She believes it all and considers herself well-guided and secure.

However, this man reveals only what he chooses to show her – a handsome face, love, and care. With time, she is surprised by his transformation, evasion of commitments, denial of promises, and his escape from proposing and marrying her. He leaves her shattered halfway through the journey for the most trivial reasons. How easy it is to evade responsibilities in a relationship that is not permissible according to Sharia, and to justify such evasion with religious reasoning! This is in contrast to marriage, which requires a man to face his responsibilities.

Girls in such situations carry the dream of marrying a righteous man, a rarity in their midst, to rescue them from a merciless, crumbling society. They become victims of every detail of the scene, and their spirits crumble. They regard all men with suspicion, withdrawing into seclusion and rejecting marriage proposals due to a fear of betrayal, exploitation, and lies!

Therefore, many girls who have refused marriage have experienced a failed emotional relationship. They bore the costs of giving a good opinion to a stranger who they thought was their savior. They sincerely attached themselves to him, numbing their conscience to marriage promises and loyalty agreements. Women, by nature, carry a large load of emotions. If they once exposed them to a man who neither values nor preserves them, they suffered significant losses in themselves and their lives.

Islam came to protect women from draining their emotions in the wrong place, prohibiting relationships without marriage and

leaving halal marriage open for anyone interested. Otherwise, the honor of Muslims should not be underestimated. As you sow, so shall you reap.

Therefore, we strongly advise girls, especially with the prevalence of social media, to protect themselves and not believe every man who approaches them in these ways, even if he claims to want her for the sake of Allah, whether he is a sheikh, a preacher, or someone famous on the pulpit. A sincere man will not leave her halfway but will marry her with a strong commitment, and that is the reality of piety. Yes, a man may weaken, but manhood reminds him of the consequences of destroying a Muslim girl, regardless of his justifications. He protects her as he wants his sisters and daughters to be protected; otherwise, how can he expect Allah to provide him with a woman who preserves him when he has secretly violated the sanctity of Muslim homes? A man bears the responsibility of his promises and covenants because Allah is a witness to them, and escaping is often the way of such people. The woman is the victim with no one to console her. Therefore, a woman must protect herself because we are in an era where only distancing yourself from any relationship with men can shield you from suspicions. If you get involved and something happens, consider it a lesson learned. Make it a reason for your improvement, not your decline. This is the ambition of the Muslim woman – self-correction, repentance, and improvement – because an entire nation awaits your

righteousness. Allah is All-Knowing, nothing is hidden from Him!

The Ideal Image

Many girls refrain from marriage because the ideal model they have envisioned is highly perfect for marriage. The girl often seeks qualities that are difficult to find in her surroundings, and thus she prefers to remain single rather than get involved in a marriage that does not meet her aspirations. This category is genuinely excused, especially considering the prevalence of negative examples of spouses in our lives. However, this is not a permanent excuse. The fundamental aspect is to search for religiosity and good character in a man. If it is available, seek Allah's help, make Istikhara, and accept it as divine guidance.

If you seek the truth, marriage is destined, and if Allah has written it, attempting to escape it will not change the fact that you will marry the person Allah has decreed for you. Being cautious is not a substitute for fate. Seek help from Allah, you do not know where the good lies. Ultimately, marriage is not only for the sake of a spouse with an ideal image but also for the sake of children who will be a source of joy for you and for Muslims in general. Consider this more deeply.

Monasticism

Here, we do not mean the commendable form of seclusion for the sake of Allah, as mentioned in the verse: "And remember the name of your Lord and devote yourself to Him with [complete] devotion." (Quran, Al-Muzzammil: 8).

Rather, we mean the blameworthy form of monasticism, as practiced by some Christians by abstaining from marriage and imposing strict worship on oneself. Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him) have prohibited this form of monasticism. Allah says: "Monasticism, which they innovated, We did not prescribe it for them [monasticism] except [that they did so] seeking the approval of Allah. But they did not observe it with due observance." (Quran, Al-Hadid: 27).

In Sahih Muslim, it is narrated from Anas that some companions of the Prophet ﷺ asked the Prophet's wives about his actions in private. Some of them said, "I will not marry women," and some said, "I will not eat meat," and some said, "I will not sleep on a bed." When the Prophet (peace be upon him) heard this, he praised Allah and glorified Him and said: "What is the matter with people who say such and such? But I pray and sleep, fast and break my fast, and marry women. Whoever turns away from my Sunnah is not of me."

Therefore, it is not permissible to go against prophetic guidance. If a righteous husband is available for a woman, she should trust

in Allah and take the step, maintaining a positive view of her Lord, worshipping Him with humility.

Fate, Provision, and Trials

These are some of the prominent reasons why women refrain from marriage. To every Muslim woman, I say, marriage is fate, provision, and a test. Do not perceive it as the grand dream that must be realized according to certain standards, nor reject it as an outcome of a failed and destructive result. Rather, it is destinies that we move towards. Many women have been married several times and yet their nature remains intact, and their thoughts about marriage remain the same. They neither harbor resentment nor deny this blessing. It is destined for a woman to be with one man rather than another. Blessed is she who excels, leaves a good impact, fears Allah, fulfills her obligations without injustice, and proceeds to her Lord succeeding in the test of piety. Even if marriage does not last and divorce occurs, the lesson lies in how you handle this divorce. All of these are exams in which we either rise or fall. Choose for yourself whatever draws you closer to Allah by following the Book of your Lord and the Sunnah of His Prophet, and accepting fate, whether good or bad. That is the path to success.

A Muslim woman should never regret what is halal. Divorce after a lawful marriage is not a failure. This does not mean accepting

any man who approaches you; it is not wrong for a woman to choose the best for her religion and circumstances. Not all women are in the same situation, and not all women are spoiled in a comfortable life. Therefore, seek Allah's guidance and occupy yourself with acts of worship until Allah decrees a matter that is already determined.

To those who have not been blessed with a righteous husband in their lives, remember, there is no celibacy in paradise. Strive for a high rank so that Allah may choose for you some of His beloved servants!

Know that the real abode is in paradise, so we work, and thus we strive, as we were created to worship Allah. If a righteous husband is not granted to protect and support you in piety, then be patient and work for the highest ranks of paradise. Reckon it as a test from Allah to see your actions.

A successful marriage remains a favor from Allah, and if deprived of it, consider it part of the trials of the journey and the deficiencies within us. Do not belittle it as a deprivation of Allah's blessing from the beginning. Allah says: "And of His signs is that He created for you from yourselves mates that you may find tranquility in them, and He placed between you affection and mercy. Indeed in that are signs for a people who give thought." (Quran, Ar-Rum: 21).

May Allah protect the Muslim women, guide them to what He loves and is pleased with, shield them from trials, both apparent and hidden, and unite them with righteous men capable of upholding responsibility and preserving trust.

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