

HOW DOES ISLAM DEFINE WOMEN'S ROLES AGAINST OUR CULTURAL BACKDROP?

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THE PERFECT WOMAN

My perfect woman was

-intelligent

-funny

-modern

-powerful

-strong

-achieve great professional
accomplishments

I DIDN'T WANT TO GROW UP TO BE JUNE CLEAVER.



June Cleaver represented to me a woman who was

-old-fashioned

-fussy

-"domesticated"

A PERFECT WOMAN IS WHO...

"Whoso acts righteously, whether male or female, and is a believer, We will surely grant him a pure life; and We will surely bestow on such their reward according to the best of their works" (Ch. 16, Verse 98)

WE CAN ATTAIN RIGHTEOUSNESS:

This does not mean that women should not strive in pursuit of their professional or scholarly goals, nor does it mean that they should not work outside the home.

HADITH:

Umm Salamah relates that the Holy Prophet (SAW) said,

"If a woman dies and her husband is pleased with her, she will enter Paradise"
(Tirmidhi)

HADITH:

Hazrat Abdullah bin Abi Sufa narrated that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said, *"I swear by the Being who holds the life of Muhammad in his hands, that no woman shall be deemed to have done her duty by her God unless she has done her duty to her husband"* (Ibn Majah).

THE GREAT IMPORTANCE OF MARRIAGE:

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II writes, *"The Islamic law has only distinguished between two sets of rules. One pertains to God Himself, and the other to our fellow beings. Marriage therefore falls into the second category and may be considered to be its chief proponent. The Islamic law has made the most of it, but there are many people that do not seem to understand [the law] fully. Neither do they try to benefit themselves by it. Their case is like that of a baby who would be quite willing to barter a precious diamond for a base coin. I wish people could only realize the importance of marriage."*

THE HOLY QURAN:

The Holy Quran clears up this question,

"Of His signs is that He created mates for you of your own kind that you may find peace of mind through them, and He has put love and tenderness between you, in that surely are signs for a people that reflect." (30:22)

**YOU CAN BRING YOUR
HUSBAND A CUP OF TEA.**



A DIVISION OF LABOR:

The woman's primary sphere of activity is within the home.

The man's primary sphere of activity is outside the home.

OUR FIRST RESPONSIBILITY:

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V says,

"I give the examples of these old saints and holy people to give a lesson to new couples, for such families for such husbands and wives where problems arise, that they should ponder. In particular girls and ladies should reflect upon this. They should take great heed that first of all their responsibility is to take care of their homes." (Khutba, Nov. 8, 2011)

OUR CULTURAL STIGMA:



In a 2010 New York Times article, "The Stigma of being a housewife," journalist Katrina Bennhold states that for a woman,

"Their daily chores of cleaning, cooking or raising their children have always been ignored by national accounts. (If a man marries his housekeeper and stops paying her for her work, G.D.P. goes down. If a woman stops nursing and buys formula for her baby, G.D.P. goes up.)"

HOW DO WE RESPECT THIS SPHERE OF OURS?

With these cultural stigmas and a shifting perception of women's roles, how do we respect this sphere of activity and fulfill our role, whether we stay inside the home or work outside the home.

WAY OF SEEKERS:

"A child should be kept neat and tidy and, should be properly cleaned after stools...Let the child have a clean body. Its impact on his mind will be great. As a consequence, the child will become immune to sins which are caused by uncleanness"

-Safeguarding them from falling into sexual awareness.

WAY OF SEEKERS:

"A child should be fed at fixed hours. This will breed the habit of self-control and save it from a number of evils."

This one habit leads to:

"Punctuality

Self-control

Good health

Cooperation

Frugality

It will develop the inner strength to resist temptation."

WAY OF SEEKERS:

"A child should be given a variety of foods. It should have meat, vegetables and fruit, for dietary habits affect morals and a variety of food is necessary for a variety of morals. It should have more vegetables than meat as meat excites and in childhood there should be as little excitement as possible."