

Let's Learn from the Holy Qur'an

Fatemeh Khazaii

Islam urges both men and women to base their relations and contact upon Divine teachings and values and on this sound basis to cooperate with each other for the fulfillment of beneficial goals. *“God commands justice, kindness and giving (their due) to near relatives, while He forbids the sexual misconduct, debauchery and insolence. He so instructs you (all) so that you may draw attention to it.”*

The Holy Qur'an, al-Nahl, 90

And regarding the unavoidable contact between men and women in the society, the believers are advised thus: *“Tell believers to avert their glances and to guard their private parts; that are chaster for them. God is informed about anything they may produce.”* The Holy Qur'an, al-Nur, 30

As we see chastity has been highly valued and strongly commanded by Allah. The advantages of following this Divine teaching as well as following all other Divine teachings are no doubt innumerable. Here, we content ourselves with just pointing out the fact that being chaste and behaving in a chaste manner protect the society's security and raises the spiritual level of both men and women. And in fact, Islam raised the status of women to a very high level, so much so that according to the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his Infallible successors, a man's behaviour towards women became the criterion for judging his nobility and virtuousness.

In a well-known Hadith, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) of Islam has been quoted as saying, “The noble hold women in reverence, and the mean in contempt.” As inferred from this Hadith, just mean and impious men degrade and look down upon

women and behave towards them in disrespectful ways, including through unchaste gazes and lustful conduct. In fact, while allowing and even encouraging proper, fruitful cooperation between men and women in the society, Islam has prohibited any unhealthy behaviour such as talking to the non-Mahram unnecessarily and/or with the aim of getting pleasure. In the Holy Qur'an, Chapter 28 we are informed about the proper and indeed praiseworthy conduct of Prophet Musa(AS) towards the daughters of Prophet Shoaib (AS): *“When he approached the water of Midian, he found a company of people watering (their flocks) there and found a company of people watering (their flocks) there and found two women besides them, holding theirs off at a distance. He said, “What’s the matter with you?” They both said, “We may not draw any water until the herdsman move on. Our father is an elderly gentleman.” So he did the watering for them. Then he went off to [rest in] the shade, and said: “My Lord, I am poor enough to accept anything You may grant me.” One of the girls came up to him, walking bashfully. She said; “My father invites you, in order to reward you with some [sort of] payment since you have done the watering for us.” When he came up to him, he told him the stories. He said, “Do not fear, you have escaped from wrongdoing folk.”* The Holy Qur'an; Al-Qisas, 23-25

Certain very illuminating lessons can indeed be learnt from those Qur'anic verses regarding the proper manners of behaviour in the society by both men and women. The daughters of Prophet Shoaib (AS) had to water their flocks, yet they refused to go near the non-Mahram males and instead, waited for them to leave. We can infer from this verse, among other things that as per Divine commands, while women are permitted to go into the society for necessary tasks and works, they should as far as possible, keep a distance between themselves and the men.

As a God-conscious, committed man, Prophet Musa (AS), though himself tired, hungry and thirsty at the time, did not hesitate to approach the two girls to ask them about their problem and to help them like a man, without any indecent intention. He did not act indifferently towards the women and thereby set another lesson for the pious men to follow.

After finishing with watering the flocks for the two girls, Prophet Musa (AS) went to a shady place to rest and did not continue his contact with the two girls. This also teaches us that unnecessary talking to the non-Mahram is to be avoided, and that one (whether a man or a woman) should help God's servants just for God and not for any selfish motives such as showing off or sexual instincts.

Being exhausted after having travelled a long distance, Prophet Musa (AS) prayed to Allah for His help and Allah soon sent His help, as He Himself promised His believing servants in the Holy Qur'an : *"You who believe, if you support God (God's cause), He will support you and steady your footsteps."* The Holy Qur'an; Muhammad, 7.

As we read in the same chapter of the Holy Qur'an, Allah's help reached Prophet Musa(AS) through those two daughters who narrated the account of the watering and noble behaviour of Musa (AS) to their father - another Divine Messenger - Prophet Shoaib (AS), and through that Prophet who received Prophet Musa(AS) most respectfully and also married one of his two noble daughters to him. Sure, Prophet Musa (AS), was totally reliant on God and on none else, and thus was blessed with ceaseless help from God throughout his blessed life.

There are certainly many more lessons in these Divine words and no doubt, through using one's mind and reason, one can learn much more from them. However here, we would like to draw the attention of our readers to a comparison:

Just compare such manly, humane behaviour with the way irreligious, secular and Westernized men behave towards women; regarding just a number of stories and novels published in the West suffices to give one a clear view in this regard, for example the story of a young girl who following graduation from university, starts working hard in a company and yet is fired just a day after she tells her boss that she has decided to stop being his mistress! Really which one is humane and praiseworthy and which one is inhumane and detestable? Of course, to those selfish, immoral men who desire all, including women to be slaves to them and who are devoid of true human characteristics, the irreligious, carefree and wayward conducts are desirable and certainly that is why they promote secularism and anti-God trends. Yet, to any person of sound mind, and pure heart, the manners and ways of true men of God, including Prophet Musa (AS) are the best, the most proper ones and necessary to be followed and propagated.

Indeed, it seems that the slavery and slave-holding systems of the past have given their place to new, much more complicated and much more oppressive forms and systems at the hands of the Western powers and the Westernized. This of course does not mean that all people in the West are living immoral lives. Rather it means that what the Western and secular media present and propagate as values and ideals are no more than tools for enslaving all, in particular the women who suffer the disgrace of free-sex in the name of freedom; in fact the disgraceful effects of that immoral system are numerous, the feeling of being cheapened by the women included.