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COMPLETE REFERENCE BOOK

The Righteous Man

الرَّجُلُ الصَّالِحُ

A complete reference for the Muslim man — as a servant of Allah, a son, a husband and a father: rights, responsibilities, etiquette, what to do and what to avoid, and guidance on caring for himself

ٱلرِّجَالُ قَوَّٰمُونَ عَلَى ٱلنِّسَآءِ ...

English edition · 2026 · v1

An-Nisa' 4:34

How to use this book

This book is written for Muslim men and boys, and for those who raise and guide them: parents, wives, teachers and friends. It takes up the man's role as a servant of Allah, a son, a husband and a father, alongside the care of his body, his soul, his wealth and his responsibilities in law.

You may read it from cover to cover, or keep it as a reference: open the relevant chapter when a question arises. Every chapter begins with a verse of the Qur'an, followed by a brief explanation, practical steps and checklists.

Every chapter has a **Do & Avoid** page as a quick guide, and closes with **Common questions** that answer the questions people usually ask. The appendix at the end of the book holds a summary, daily and weekly checklists, a glossary of terms and helplines.

Leadership (qiwamah, the husband's responsibility) in this book is understood as a trust and a service, not as power to dominate. The fiqh follows the Shafiʿi school (madhhab) as it is practised in Malaysia, and important differences of opinion are noted briefly. References to the law are general summaries.

This book is not a fatwa, and it is not legal or medical advice. For specific situations, consult the state Islamic religious office, the Syariah Court, a syarie lawyer or a doctor. May every page make your steps towards the pleasure of Allah easier.

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Every chapter opens with a verse of the Qur'an and closes with a **Do & Avoid** page and common questions. Further reference at **mypolygyny.com**.

01

CHAPTER 1

Who Is the Righteous Man?

A heart humbled before Allah, a character that puts people at ease, strength under control.

لَّقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِى رَسُولِ ٱللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱلْيَوْمَ ٱلْءَاخِرَ وَذَكَرَ ٱللَّهَ كَثِيرًا ﴿٢١﴾

"Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example to follow, for whoever hopes for (the mercy of) Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah often."

Surah al-Ahzab 33:21

What soleh means

The word **soleh** (righteous) comes from a root meaning good, sound and fit for its purpose. A righteous man is a man whose relationship with Allah is sound, and that soundness then shows in his character, his work and his treatment of people.

The Qur'an often pairs faith with **righteous deeds** (amal soleh). Allah promises a good life to whoever does righteous deeds, man or woman, while believing (Surah an-Nahl 16:97).

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Allah does not look at your appearance or your wealth; He looks at your hearts and your deeds.” (reported by Muslim, Kitab al-Birr wa as-Silah wa al-Adab)

Righteousness is not a title for the man who never slips. It is a direction of travel: he strives, he errs, he repents and he rises again.

- Righteousness begins in the heart, then shows in worship, character and responsibility.
- It is open to every man: the teenager, the single man, the husband, the father, the widower, the elder.

Marks of a righteous man

🤲

Obedient to Allah

Keeps the prayer, keeps away from major sins, and worships sincerely rather than for praise.

🛡️

Trustworthy & responsible

Keeps his promises, and guards the property and the honour entrusted to him.

🌿

Gentle & affectionate

Good to his parents, his wife, his children and the weak. Firm without being harsh.

🧭

In command of himself

Masters his anger, his eyes, his tongue and his desire. This is real strength.

📖

A lover of learning

Studies religion and the world so that he can lead himself and his family wisely.

🤝

A benefit to others

Works hard, helps readily, and is present for family, neighbours and the mosque.

The first example: the Messenger of Allah ﷺ

Allah praised him: “And indeed, you are of a magnificent character.” (Surah al-Qalam 68:4). He ﷺ is the measure of the righteous man in every role.

At home he helped with the household, and when the time for prayer came he went out to pray (reported by al-Bukhari, no. 676). He never struck a woman or a servant with his hand (reported by Muslim, Kitab al-Fadha'il).

He also showed that a man may feel. His eyes filled with tears when his son Ibrahim died, while he remained content with the decree of Allah (reported by al-Bukhari, no. 1303).

- A leader who serves, not one who waits to be served.
- Gentle with his family, brave in defence of the truth.
- Constant in remembering Allah, in ease and in hardship.

Examples: the Companions & Luqman

Abu Bakar as-Siddiq

Affirmed the Messenger of Allah ﷺ without hesitation; soft-hearted, quick to tears when reciting the Qur'an.

Umar al-Khattab

Firm for the truth and just as a leader, yet in awe of Allah over every trust he carried.

Uthman bin Affan

Known for his modesty and his generosity; he spent his wealth for the good of the community.

Ali bin Abi Talib

Brave, learned and unattached to luxury. His strength was guided by knowledge and wisdom.

Luqman al-Hakim

Taught his son tawhid, prayer, patience and humility (Surah Luqman 31:13–19).

Myth vs fact

Myth

- A righteous man must be hard and fierce to be respected.
- A real man does not cry and does not speak of his feelings.
- Leadership means everyone must do as he wishes.
- Housework and caring for children are not a man's business.
- Diligent worship is enough; character towards the family does not matter.

Fact

- ✓ The strong man is the one who masters himself when angry (al-Bukhari 6114).
- ✓ The Prophet ﷺ wept at the death of his child (al-Bukhari 1303).
- ✓ Leadership is a trust and a service that will be asked about in the hereafter.
- ✓ The Prophet ﷺ himself helped with his own household (al-Bukhari 676).
- ✓ True worship gives rise to good character towards people.

Do & Avoid: building a righteous self

Do

- ✓ Begin by putting your prayer and your intention right.
- ✓ Choose one example to follow and study his life.
- ✓ Keep company with good men who remind you of Allah.
- ✓ Take account of yourself each night, even for a minute.
- ✓ Repent at once, every time you slip.

Avoid

- ✗ Showing off your worship, or feeling better than other people.
- ✗ Treating harshness as a sign of manhood.
- ✗ Despairing because of past sins.
- ✗ Waiting to be “perfect” before you change.
- ✗ Judging other people while forgetting your own faults.

Common questions

I have many past sins. Can I still become a righteous man?

You can. The door of repentance stays open as long as the soul has not reached the throat and the sun has not risen from the west. Many of the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ had a dark past before Islam. Begin with sincere repentance, leave the sin, put your prayer right, and find good companions.

Must a righteous man keep a beard and wear a robe?

Following the Prophet's appearance has its value, but righteousness is measured in the heart and in deeds. Allah looks at hearts and deeds (reported by Muslim, Kitab al-Birr wa as-Silah wa al-Adab). Do not judge a man by his clothes, and do not make light of the sunnah either. The ruling on the beard is discussed in Chapter 3.

What if I lose my temper easily?

Anger is part of our nature, but it can be trained. When anger comes, fall silent, seek forgiveness, change your position or leave the place for a while, then perform wuduk. The Prophet ﷺ repeated the counsel: “Do not become angry.” (reported by al-Bukhari, no. 6116). If anger is hard to control, get help from a counsellor.

02

CHAPTER 2

A Servant of Allah First

Before he is a son, a husband or a father, he is a servant of Allah.

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ ٱلْجِنَّ وَٱلْإِنسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٦﴾

"And I did not create the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me."

Surah adh-Dhariyat 51:56

Creed: the foundation of everything

Every role a man holds stands on one foundation: he is a **servant of Allah**. When that foundation is firm, his leadership in the family becomes a trust rather than a power.

Sound creed begins with tawhid: Allah alone is worshipped, with no partner beside Him. Luqman's first counsel to his son was not to associate anything with Allah, for association is a great wrong (Surah Luqman 31:13).

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said that Islam is built upon five things: the testimony of faith, establishing the prayer, paying zakat, the hajj and fasting Ramadan (reported by al-Bukhari, no. 8).

- Learn the six articles of faith and what they mean.
- Keep away from charms, witch doctors and fortune-telling, which contradict tawhid.
- Learn from certified teachers, not from sources of unclear standing.

Prayer: the pillar of a man's life

The five daily prayers are the first mark of a servant. Allah says that prayer restrains a person from indecency and wrongdoing (Surah al-Ankabut 29:45).

For men, **congregational prayer** is strongly called for, especially at the mosque or the surau. Prayer in congregation is twenty-seven degrees better than praying alone (reported by al-Bukhari, no. 645). In the Shafiʿi school (madhhab), congregational prayer for the five obligatory prayers is a communal obligation (fardu kifayah) in a locality, while some other scholars hold it obligatory upon every man.

Friday prayer is a personal religious obligation (fardu ain) for every man who meets the conditions. When the call to Friday prayer is made, leave off trade and hasten to the remembrance of Allah (Surah al-Jumu'ah 62:9).

- Make prayer the fixed point of your day, not the time that is left over.
- Bring your sons to the mosque with good manners and affection.
- Do not deliberately miss Friday prayer for worldly business.

Fasting, zakat, hajj & umrah

🌙

Fasting Ramadan

Made obligatory so that you may attain taqwa (al-Baqarah 2:183). Teach the family to fast gladly.

🌾

Zakat fitrah

The head of the household pays it for himself and his dependants before the Eid prayer.

💰

Zakat on wealth

Due once the nisab and the year (haul) are met. Check with the state zakat centre on income and savings.

🕋

Hajj

Obligatory once in a lifetime for those who are able (Ali 'Imran 3:97). Register early and save from a young age.

🧳

Umrah

In the Shafiʿi school (madhhab), umrah too is obligatory once in a lifetime for those who are able.

🍽️

Voluntary fasts

Mondays and Thursdays, the day of Arafah and Asyura: self-training and a shield against desire.

Living with the Qur'an

1. **Correct your recitation**
   Learn tajwid with a certified teacher. It is never too late to begin.

2. **Read every day**
   Even one page. The deeds Allah loves most are the constant ones, however small.

3. **Understand the meaning**
   Read a translation and a short tafsir in English alongside the Arabic.

4. **Memorise little by little**
   Begin with the short surahs, for your prayers and your daily recitation.

5. **Put it into practice**
   Take one verse a week and try to live it in your character and your daily decisions.

6. **Teach your family**
   "The best of you are those who learn the Qur'an and teach it." (al-Bukhari 5027)

Remembrance & intention: worship all day

- ✓ Begin the day with an intention: to work and provide for your family for Allah's sake.
- ✓ Keep to the morning and evening remembrance, even if only a few minutes.
- ✓ Keep istighfar, tasbih, tahmid and salawat on your tongue while driving or waiting.
- ✓ Say the supplications before eating, leaving the house, driving and sleeping.
- ✓ Renew your intention before a large task: “O Allah, I do this for You.”
- ✓ Remember: hearts find rest in the remembrance of Allah (Surah ar-Ra'd 13:28).
- ✓ Every deed depends on its intention (reported by al-Bukhari, no. 1).
- ✓ Close the day with self-review: give thanks for the good, repent for the wrong.

Do & Avoid: a life of worship

Do

- ✓ Pray early in the time, and in congregation when you can.
- ✓ Come early to the mosque on Friday.
- ✓ Calculate and pay your zakat on time.
- ✓ Choose small voluntary acts that you can keep up.
- ✓ Invite the family to worship together, gently.

Avoid

- ✗ Delaying prayer for meetings, games or screens.
- ✗ Worshipping in order to be praised or thought pious.
- ✗ Loading yourself with heavy practices and then stopping altogether.
- ✗ Forcing the family with anger and threats.
- ✗ Taking religious knowledge from sources of unclear standing.

Common questions

I work shifts. What about Friday prayer?

Friday prayer is a personal religious obligation (fardu ain) for men who meet the conditions, so arrange your roster so that you can attend. An employer should make room for it. If there is a genuine excuse in the Syariah, such as emergency duty that cannot be left, pray Zuhur instead. Check with the state religious office or a certified ustaz about a particular work situation.

I rarely prayed before this. Must I make up all of them?

In the Shafiʿi school (madhhab), obligatory prayers that were missed must be made up. Repent first, guard your current prayers, then make up the missed ones little by little as you are able, for example one make-up prayer after each obligatory prayer. Do not let the total number drive you to despair.

Does working to provide for the family count as worship?

Yes, if the intention is for Allah, the means are lawful and it does not crowd out your obligations. The maintenance a man spends on his family is among the most richly rewarded of all spending (reported by Muslim, Kitab az-Zakah).

03

CHAPTER 3

Fiqh for Men

The basic knowledge that makes a man's worship valid, clean and untroubled.

... فِيهِ رِجَالٌ يُحِبُّونَ أَن يَتَطَهَّرُوا۟ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُطَّهِّرِينَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

"...In it are men who love to purify themselves, and Allah loves those who purify themselves."

Surah at-Taubah 9:108

Purity & the manners of istinja'

1. **Enter with the supplication**
   Left foot first. Do not carry exposed verses of the Qur'an into the lavatory.

2. **Mind the direction & your aurat**
   In open ground, do not face the qiblah or turn your back to it. Keep your aurat from view.

3. **Avoid splashing**
   Sit, or stay close to the bowl, so that urine does not splash onto your clothes and body.

4. **Istinja' with water**
   Wash with the left hand until the impurity is gone. Water cleans best of all.

5. **Or with stone or tissue**
   Valid with at least three clean wipes, if the impurity has not dried and has not spread.

6. **Do not follow misgivings**
   After istinja', do not keep checking. You remain pure until you are certain otherwise.

7. **Leave with the supplication**
   Right foot first, and say “Ghufranaka” (I seek Your forgiveness).

The obligatory bath: junub & wet dreams

Allah says: "...and if you are in a state of janabah, then purify yourselves." (Surah al-Ma'idah 5:6). For a man, the obligatory bath (ghusl) is required by two main things: **the emission of semen**, whether in sleep or otherwise, and **sexual intercourse**, even without emission. A deceased person must also be washed.

A wet dream is a sign of puberty and part of our nature, not a sin. Semen is pure in the Shafiʿi school (madhhab), yet it still makes the bath obligatory.

Mazi (the clear fluid of arousal) does not make the bath obligatory. It is impure: wash the private part and perform wuduk (reported by al-Bukhari, no. 269). **Wadi** (the thick white fluid after urinating) is treated as urine is.

- Essentials of the bath: the intention to lift major impurity, and water over all the skin and hair.
- Recommended: perform wuduk first, wash the private parts, begin with the right side.
- While in janabah it is forbidden to pray, to make tawaf, to touch the mushaf, to recite the Qur'an and to sit in the mosque.

Friday prayer: conditions & manners

Friday prayer is obligatory upon the Muslim man who has reached puberty, is of sound mind, free, healthy and resident. A traveller and a sick man are not obliged, though their prayer is valid if they attend.

Conditions of validity in the Shafiʿi school (madhhab): within the time of Zuhur, in a settled locality, preceded by two sermons, and attended by at least forty resident worshippers. Other schools accept a smaller number.

Be silent during the sermon. Even telling someone else to “be quiet!” while the imam preaches is counted as idle talk (reported by al-Bukhari, no. 934).

- The Friday bath, trimming the nails and wearing fragrance.
- Wearing your best clean clothes.
- Coming early, and not stepping over the shoulders of the congregation.
- Praying the two rak'ahs of greeting the mosque even while the sermon is under way, briefly.
- Increasing salutations on the Prophet and supplication on Friday.

A man's aurat & clothing

Aurat: navel to knee

Must be covered in prayer and before other people. Cover a little more to be sure of it.

Gold is forbidden to men

Rings, chains and white gold included. Platinum and silver (a ring) are permitted.

Pure silk is forbidden

Garments of pure silk are forbidden to men; synthetic silk and ordinary cloth are permitted.

Isbal (trailing garments)

Forbidden if out of pride. Without pride: disliked in the Shafiʿi school, forbidden according to some scholars.

Not imitating women

The Prophet ﷺ cursed men who imitate women (reported by al-Bukhari, no. 5885).

Neat & clean

Take your adornment (good clothing) whenever you go to the mosque (Surah al-A'raf 7:31).

The sunnah of fitrah for men

- ✓ Circumcision: obligatory in the Shafiʿi school; have it done by a trained practitioner.
- ✓ Trimming the moustache so that it does not cover the lip.
- ✓ Keep the beard (Bukhari 5892); shaving is disliked (Shafiʿi), forbidden (three schools).
- ✓ Trimming the nails of the hands and the feet regularly.
- ✓ Removing the underarm hair.
- ✓ Shaving the pubic hair.
- ✓ Do not leave nails, moustache and hair beyond forty days (reported by Muslim).
- ✓ Using the siwak and keeping the mouth clean, especially before prayer.
- ✓ Keeping the nose, the gaps between the fingers and the body clean.

Do & Avoid: cleanliness & worship

Do

- ✓ Take the obligatory bath promptly so that you do not miss a prayer.
- ✓ Learn wuduk, the bath and the prayer from a sound teacher.
- ✓ Wear clean, pleasant-smelling clothes to the mosque.
- ✓ Keep the sunnah of fitrah as a weekly routine.
- ✓ Teach your sons about puberty and the obligatory bath early.

Avoid

- ✗ Indulging misgivings until you repeat your wuduk again and again.
- ✗ Leaving splashes of urine on your clothes.
- ✗ Wearing a gold ring or a gold chain.
- ✗ Talking or using your phone during the Friday sermon.
- ✗ Looking down on those who hold another view on a disputed matter.

Common questions

I had a dream but there is no trace of wetness. Must I bathe?

No. The bath becomes obligatory when semen is actually emitted, not because of the dream alone. Conversely, if there is a trace of semen even though you do not recall a dream, the bath is obligatory. If you are unsure whether it is semen or mazi, ask an ustaz for further guidance.

May a man wear a white gold ring?

He may not. White gold is gold alloyed with other metals, so the ruling on gold still applies. A man may wear a silver ring, while platinum and other metals that are not gold are permitted.

What about the difference of opinion on the beard and isbal?

Both are matters on which scholars differ. Follow the view you are convinced of on the basis of knowledge, keep to the sunnah as best you can, and respect a brother who holds another view. What is not disputed: arrogance is forbidden.

04

CHAPTER 4

Guarding the gaze, honour & desire

Desire is part of our nature; mastering it is the mark of a man's strength.

قُل لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا۟ مِنْ أَبْصَـٰرِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا۟ فُرُوجَهُمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ أَزْكَىٰ لَهُمْ ۗ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ خَبِيرٌۢ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

"Tell the believing men to lower their gaze and to guard their chastity. That is purer for them. Indeed, Allah is fully aware of what they do."

Surah an-Nur 24:30

The gaze: the first door

In Surah an-Nur 24:30 the command to lower the gaze is addressed to men first, before women (24:31). It is not a command to shut your eyes, but not to let the gaze linger on what is unlawful. Allah names the result: it is **purer** for the soul.

Allah also says, “Do not come near adultery” (Surah al-Isra' 17:32). The prohibition is not the act alone, but every road that draws near to it.

The Prophet ﷺ said that the eye too commits adultery, and its adultery is the look (reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim). The unintended glance is forgiven; what is asked is that you turn away at once (reported by Muslim).

- The first glance, unintended: no sin in it.
- The second look, deliberate: that is the one to guard against (reported by Abu Dawud and at-Tirmidhi, hasan).
- The chain runs: a look → fantasy → messages → meeting alone → touch. Break it as early as you can.

Pornography: a hidden wound

Many men, teenagers among them, struggle with pornography in silence. It is easy to reach, it is free, and it often begins out of curiosity or boredom. In time it can become a habit that is hard to stop.

The effects are real: the heart hardens towards sin, time and attention are lost, shame and secrecy deepen, and a man's view of women and of intimacy between husband and wife can be damaged.

If you are struggling, know this: the door of repentance is always open. Healthy guilt drives change; crushing self-contempt often pushes a man back into the habit. Be honest with yourself and with Allah.

- Distributing, selling or displaying obscene material is an offence under the Penal Code (s.292).
- Sexual material involving children is a grave crime (Sexual Offences Against Children Act 2017).
- Addiction is a problem that can be treated, not a disgrace to be hidden for ever.

A way out of addiction

1. **Admit it and repent**
   Name the problem honestly. Repentance: regret, stopping, and resolving not to return to it.

2. **Close off access**
   Install content filters, remove the apps that trigger you, keep your phone out of the bedroom.

3. **Know your triggers**
   Boredom, loneliness, tiredness, stress or staying up late. Plan a response for each one.

4. **Replace, do not just empty**
   Fill the time with sport, work with your hands, learning, good friends and congregational prayer.

5. **Find an accountability partner**
   Someone you trust: a brother, an ustaz, a counsellor or your wife, whom you can report to honestly.

6. **Get professional help**
   See a doctor, a counsellor or a psychologist. Talian Kasih 15999 can help point the way.

7. **A fall is not the end**
   If you slip, repent again at once. Note down what happened and improve your plan.

A man's shields

🌙

Fasting

"Whoever is not yet able to marry, let him fast; it is a shield for him" (Bukhari 5066).

💍

Marry when you are able

Marriage lowers the gaze better and guards chastity better (Bukhari 5066; Sahih Muslim, Kitab an-Nikah).

🕌

Prayer & remembrance

Congregational prayer and remembrance strengthen the heart to refuse the whispers of desire.

🏃

An active body

Exercise and enough sleep reduce boredom, stress and reckless craving.

🤝

Righteous friends

A good friend draws you towards good and corrects you when you drift.

⏳

Fear of Allah

The man who refuses an invitation to adultery out of fear of Allah is given His shade (al-Bukhari & Muslim).

Mixing, social media & khalwat

Islam does not forbid a man to work, to study or to do business with women. What is guarded is the manner: business that is clear, courteous language, modest dress, and not lingering without need.

The Prophet ﷺ said that no man should be alone with a woman unless a mahram of hers is present (reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim). This is the basis of the prohibition of khalwat.

In Malaysia, khalwat is an offence under the state Syariah criminal enactments (and under the federal act for the Federal Territories). The penalty and the definition differ from state to state.

Social media is a new space for mixing. Private messages late at night, flirtatious banter and pictures that should never be sent are a “digital khalwat” that opens the same road.

- Deal with people in a group or in an open space.
- Avoid private messages that serve no purpose.
- Ask yourself: would I be at ease if my wife or my mother read this?

Do & Avoid: guarding the gaze and your honour

Do

- ✓ Turn your gaze away at once when the unlawful comes into view
- ✓ Install content filters on your phone and your computer
- ✓ Keep a voluntary fast when desire is strong
- ✓ Deal with women clearly, courteously and briefly
- ✓ Follow accounts that add to your knowledge and your faith
- ✓ Ask for help when a habit is hard to stop

Avoid

- ✗ Looking again and again on purpose
- ✗ Browsing alone late at night with no purpose
- ✗ Being alone with a woman who is not a mahram
- ✗ Private messages with a flirtatious edge, even as “banter”
- ✗ Keeping or sharing obscene pictures and videos
- ✗ Despising yourself until you despair of the mercy of Allah

Common questions

Does having a strong desire mean I am not a good man?

No. Desire is part of the nature Allah created, and it is lawfully channelled through marriage. Righteousness is not measured by the absence of desire, but by mastering it. A man who holds himself back for the sake of Allah is worshipping Him, even while his heart is in turmoil.

I have repented many times and still return to it. Is my repentance worthless?

No. As long as you regret it and resolve to stop, every repentance is accepted by the permission of Allah. But change your strategy too: close off access, know your triggers, and find an accountability partner or a counsellor's help. Addiction is rarely solved by resolve alone.

May I be friends with a female colleague on social media?

Connecting for work or for learning is not wrong. Keep the limits: courteous language, no private messages without need, no flirtatious banter, and nothing you would be embarrassed for your wife or your family to see.

05

CHAPTER 5

Character & conduct

The strong man is gentle in his speech and firm in what he holds to.

وَعِبَادُ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَمۡشُونَ عَلَى ٱلۡأَرۡضِ هَوۡنٗا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ ٱلۡجَٰهِلُونَ قَالُواْ سَلَٰمٗا ﴿٦٣﴾

"And the servants of the Most Merciful are those who walk upon the earth humbly, and when the ignorant address them (harshly), they say words of peace."

Surah al-Furqan 25:63

Trust, honesty & keeping your word

Character is the true measure of a man. Allah praised the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: “And indeed, you are of a magnificent character” (Surah al-Qalam 68:4).

Honesty leads to goodness, and goodness leads to Paradise (reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim). An honest man has no lies to keep track of.

Trust covers wealth, secrets, duties, office and family. Allah says, “Fulfil your promises, for promises will be asked about” (Surah al-Isra' 17:34).

The Prophet ﷺ named three marks of hypocrisy: when he speaks he lies, when he promises he breaks it, and when he is trusted he betrays (reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim).

- Do not promise what you are not sure you can fulfil.
- If you must break a promise, say so early and apologise.
- Let word and deed match (Surah as-Saff 61:2–3).

Controlling anger

1. **Know the early signs**
   A hot chest, a rising voice, clenched hands. Stop before the anger takes charge.

2. **Seek refuge with Allah**
   Say a'uzubillahi minasy-syaitanir-rajim; the Prophet ﷺ taught it for anger (al-Bukhari & Muslim).

3. **Be silent**
   Do not make a decision, give a promise or say anything at all while you are angry.

4. **Change your position**
   If you are standing, sit; if the anger remains, lie down (reported by Abu Dawud, sahih).

5. **Leave the place**
   Step out for a while, perform wuduk, walk. Say that you will come back to the conversation.

6. **Talk once you are calm**
   Use “I feel…” rather than “you always…”. Focus on the problem, not on the person.

7. **Apologise and repair**
   A man who apologises loses no honour by it; he raises it.

Guarding the tongue

"The strong man is not the one who wins at wrestling, but the one who masters himself when he is angry" (Bukhari 6114). A man asked for counsel, and the Prophet ﷺ answered again and again, "Do not become angry" (Bukhari 6116). Anger that is not controlled shows itself fastest through the tongue.

"Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him speak well or keep silent" (reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim). Allah also commands speech that is true and apt (Surah al-Ahzab 33:70).

Allah forbids suspicion, spying and backbiting, and likens backbiting to eating the flesh of a brother who has died (Surah al-Hujurat 49:12).

- The Prophet ﷺ guaranteed Paradise to the man who guards his tongue and his chastity (reported by al-Bukhari).
- No cursing, no foul oaths and no insults, social media included.
- Good humour tells no lies and belittles nobody.

The adornments of a righteous man

🌾

Humility

No one humbles himself for the sake of Allah without Allah raising him (reported by Muslim).

🚶

Free of arrogance

Do not turn your face away or walk with a swagger; be moderate in step and in voice (Luqman 31:18–19).

🌸

Modesty

Modesty is a part of faith (reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim).

🕊️

Forgiving

Allah tells us to pardon and overlook, so that He may forgive us too (an-Nur 24:22).

🤲

Gentleness

Had the Prophet ﷺ been harsh and hard of heart, people would have fled from him (Ali 'Imran 3:159).

💪

Restraining anger

Allah loves those who restrain their anger and pardon other people (Ali 'Imran 3:134).

A responsible man

- ✓ Does his work without being told again and again
- ✓ Arrives on time, or says in advance if he will be late
- ✓ Owns his mistake without blaming his wife, his children or anyone else
- ✓ Repays debts as he promised, or talks it over before the date falls due
- ✓ Keeps the secrets of those who trust him
- ✓ Finishes what he begins, or hands it over properly
- ✓ Carries the family's burden without holding it over them
- ✓ Asks for counsel (syura) before a large decision
- ✓ Shows an example rather than merely giving orders

Do & Avoid: everyday character

Do

- ✓ Speak the truth even when it is bitter, and speak it gently
- ✓ Keep your promises, large and small
- ✓ Fall silent and sit down when anger peaks
- ✓ Give the greeting of peace and a smile to other people
- ✓ Forgive, your own family most of all
- ✓ Admit your fault and apologise sincerely

Avoid

- ✗ “Small” lies told to dodge trouble
- ✗ Cursing, shouting or insulting, at home or on social media
- ✗ Backbiting and passing on stories without checking them
- ✗ Boasting, showing off and belittling other people
- ✗ Holding grudges and raking up old faults
- ✗ Making a large decision while you are angry

Common questions

Shouldn't a man be firm? If he is gentle, people will walk over him.

Firm and harsh are two different things. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was the firmest of men for the truth, yet the gentlest of them in speech. Firmness means holding to your principles; it needs no raised voice, no cursing and no threats. Gentleness is strength under control.

I have had a short temper for as long as I can remember. Can this change?

It can. The Prophet ﷺ counselled a Companion, “Do not become angry”, which means it can be trained. Know your triggers, work through the steps for controlling anger, and put mistakes right at once. If anger leads to violence or is damaging your family, get help from a counsellor or a doctor.

Is every joke that is untrue counted as a lie?

The Prophet ﷺ joked too, but he said nothing except the truth. A joke that is plainly understood as a joke and deceives nobody is not the same as an invented story meant to mislead or to embarrass someone. Avoid humour that strips another person of their dignity.

06

CHAPTER 6

As a son

After tawhid, kindness to one's parents is the greatest trust a child carries.

۞ وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ إِيَّاهُ وَبِٱلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ إِحْسَٰنًا ۚ إِمَّا يَبْلُغَنَّ عِندَكَ
ٱلْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَآ أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُل لَّهُمَآ أُفٍّ وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُل لَّهُمَا قَوْلًا
كَرِيمًا ﴿٢٣﴾

"Your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him, and that you be good to your parents. If one or both of them reach old age with you, do not say "uff" to them, do not rebuke them, and speak to them with noble words."

Surah al-Isra' 17:23

Birrul walidain: right after tawhid

In Surah al-Isra' 17:23, the command to be good to one's parents comes immediately after the command to worship Allah. The next verse tells the child to lower himself to them in tenderness and to pray, “My Lord, have mercy on them as they raised me when I was small” (17:24).

A man asked who had the greatest right to his good treatment. The Prophet ﷺ answered, “Your mother” three times, then “your father” (Bukhari 5971; Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Birr wa as-Silah wa al-Adab). A mother carries her child in weakness upon weakness (Surah Luqman 31:14).

The Prophet ﷺ said that the man who finds his parents old, one or both of them, and does not enter Paradise through them, is the loser (reported by Muslim).

- Obey them in what is right; there is no obedience in disobedience to Allah (Bukhari 7257; Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Imarah).
- Even where you differ with them, keep treating them well in this world (Luqman 31:15).

Maintaining parents: a child's duty

In the Shafiʿi school (madhhab), a child who is able must provide maintenance (nafkah) for parents who are poor and cannot support themselves. The duty falls on sons and daughters alike where they are able, but in most families the son is the main earner, so the burden more often lands on him.

Allah names parents as the first recipients in the list of good spending (Surah al-Baqarah 2:215). The Prophet ﷺ taught that a man begins with himself, then with his family (reported by Muslim).

So order it wisely: the basic needs of your wife and children cannot be neglected, and parents who are in need cannot be left either. Talk with your brothers and sisters so that the burden is shared fairly.

- What you give parents who already have enough is charity and devotion, not a debt.
- Never hold over them what you have given.
- Money is no substitute for time and attention.

Caring for parents who are old or ill

1. **Visit and call often**
   Set a pattern of visits and calls. To them, the voice of their child is medicine.

2. **Know their health**
   Keep a list of medicines, appointments and doctors. Go with them to the clinic when you can.

3. **Make their home safe**
   Grab rails in the bathroom, floors that are not slippery, a night light. Cut the risk of a fall.

4. **Share the load together**
   Divide the turns, the costs and the tasks among the siblings. Do not let one person carry it all.

5. **Guard their dignity**
   Involve them in decisions. Speak respectfully even when they are confused or quick to anger.

6. **Care for the carer too**
   An exhausted carer loses patience easily. Take rest and get help if you need it.

7. **After they are gone**
   Pray for them (reported by Muslim), settle their debts, and keep in touch with their friends.

Balancing mother and wife

A parent's rights

- To be respected, visited and prayed for
- To be helped and maintained if they are in need
- To be obeyed in what is right
- Not to be cut off once their son marries

A wife's rights

- Maintenance (nafkah), kind treatment and protection from her husband
- Housing that is fit for her, with privacy of her own (Shafiʿi)
- No duty to serve her parents-in-law; that is kindness, not compulsion
- The household's private matters kept within the household

The husband's part

- ✓ To be a bridge, not a battlefield
- ✓ Not to compare his mother and his wife
- ✓ To speak with each of them separately and fairly
- ✓ To fulfil both rights without wronging either

Wali & protector of your sisters

Protector, not controller

A brother, older or younger, protects his sister with affection, not by confining her.

Order of the wali (Shafiʿi)

Father, grandfather, full brother, then half-brother through the father, nephew, paternal uncle.

A trustworthy wali

Put your sister's good and her own choice first; ask for her consent.

Do not obstruct

A wali (guardian) who refuses without lawful cause may be replaced by a wali hakim through the Syariah Court.

A place to return to

If she is wronged, your home is a place of safety. Help her find advice, or the 999 line.

Maintenance if needed

Help a sister who has nobody to provide for her, especially after your father dies.

Do & Avoid: devotion to your parents

Do

- ✓ Speak to them gently and humbly
- ✓ Call them and visit them often
- ✓ Help them financially as far as you are able
- ✓ Ask for their blessing and their prayers before a large step
- ✓ Bring your wife and children to visit them
- ✓ Pray for them in every prayer

Avoid

- ✗ Saying “uff”, sighing at them or raising your voice
- ✗ Disappearing once you marry or move away
- ✗ Comparing your mother with your wife in front of them
- ✗ Holding over them the money or the effort you have given
- ✗ Forcing your wife to serve beyond what she can bear
- ✗ Obeying an instruction that breaks the Syariah

Common questions

My mother wants me to divorce my wife for no clear reason. Must I obey?

Obedience to parents is limited to what is right. Divorcing a wife who has done no wrong may wrong her and the children. Listen to your mother's worries patiently, look for the real cause, bring in a respected go-between, and keep treating your mother well without wronging your wife.

Must I live in the same house as my parents after I marry?

You need not. A wife has a right to housing that is fit for her, with privacy of her own. If every party is content to live together, it is permitted and can be a good thing. If not, living separately while visiting and helping your parents often is still dutifulness to parents (birrul walidain).

My father neglected the family. Must I still treat him well?

Yes, the duty to treat him well does not fall away, even though the wound is real. Treating him well does not mean denying what happened or letting yourself be hurt. Fulfil his rights as far as you are able, keep healthy limits, and if you need to, get a counsellor's help to heal that wound.

07

CHAPTER 7

Lawful earnings, career & money

A righteous man earns with clean hands, a calm heart and a wise plan.

فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةُ فَٱنتَشِرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱبْتَغُوا۟ مِن فَضْلِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱذْكُرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

"When the prayer is ended, disperse through the land and seek the bounty of Allah, and remember Allah often so that you may prosper."

Surah al-Jumu'ah 62:10

Earning a living is worship

Islam honours work. The Prophet ﷺ said that no one eats better food than what his own hands have earned, and that the Prophet Dawud (peace be upon him) ate from the work of his hands (reported by al-Bukhari). A man who leaves early in the morning to provide for his family is worshipping, so long as his intention is right and his means are lawful.

Allah made the earth easy to travel: “walk through its regions and eat of His provision” (Surah al-Mulk 67:15). Reliance on Allah is not sitting and waiting. It is striving as well as you can, then leaving the outcome to Allah.

Lawful earnings leave their mark on a man's supplication, on his heart and on the children who grow up on them. What counts is not the amount, but the **blessing** in it.

- Intend your work as providing for your family and keeping your dignity from having to beg.
- A small lawful job is nobler than a large income of doubtful origin.
- Provision includes health, time, knowledge and family, not money alone.

Riba: leave it, however small

Allah has permitted trade and forbidden riba (Surah al-Baqarah 2:275). He strips riba of its blessing and makes charity grow (2:276). Believers are told to give up what remains of riba; if they refuse, "then know that there is war from Allah and His Messenger", and if they repent, they are entitled to their principal alone (2:278–279).

The Prophet ﷺ cursed the one who consumes riba, the one who pays it, the one who records it and its two witnesses, and said that they are all alike (reported by Muslim).

In Malaysia, Syariah-compliant options are widely available: home and vehicle financing, Islamic credit cards, savings and takaful. If you are already in a conventional loan, repent, do not add to it, and work towards moving to an Islamic product or settling it early when you are able.

- Ask the bank which contract is used, for example murabahah, ijarah or musyarakah mutanaqisah.
- Loan sharks (along) and get-rich-quick schemes are not only forbidden; they can destroy a family.

The manners of borrowing and lending

1. **Borrow only when you must**
   The Prophet ﷺ often sought refuge from the burden of debt (reported by al-Bukhari). Tell a need from a want.

2. **Write it down and witness it**
   Record the amount, the term and the manner of payment (Surah al-Baqarah 2:282). It protects the relationship; it is no sign of distrust.

3. **Pay as you promised**
   A man who is able to pay and drags out his debt has done wrong (Bukhari & Muslim).

4. **Be open if you are struggling**
   Contact the creditor early and ask to reschedule. Do not disappear or make excuses.

5. **List them in your wasiat**
   Debts are still claimed after death. Record them all so that your heirs can settle them.

6. **Give time to the hard-pressed**
   If the debtor is in difficulty, give him time; forgiving the debt is better still (Surah al-Baqarah 2:280).

Trust at work

🕐

Time is a trust

Arrive on time and work the full hours. A wage for stolen time carries no blessing.

🤝

Honest dealing

“Whoever cheats is not one of us” (reported by Muslim).

🚫

Refuse bribes

The Prophet ﷺ cursed the giver and the taker of bribes (reported by Abu Dawud & at-Tirmidhi, sahih). Report to SPRM.

🎁

Gifts for your office

A gift that comes because of your office is a betrayal of trust (reported by al-Bukhari & Muslim).

🗂️

Guard your employer's property

Company equipment, data and money are not personal property. Use them as permitted.

👥

Be fair to your workers

Pay wages in full and on time. Do not load them beyond what they can bear.

Planning the family's finances

- ✓ Obligatory maintenance (nafkah) first: the family's food, housing, clothing and treatment.
- ✓ Build a monthly budget with your wife; record real income and real spending.
- ✓ Build an emergency fund little by little, aiming for a few months of expenses.
- ✓ Keep to the middle: neither wasteful nor miserly (Surah al-Furqan 25:67).
- ✓ Protect the family with takaful; keep nominees, hibah and your wasiat up to date.
- ✓ Cut card and personal debt; clear the costliest one first.
- ✓ Plan for the children's education, hajj savings and retirement early.
- ✓ Pay your zakat, then give regularly, even if only a little.
- ✓ Your wife's salary and property are hers; what she contributes is kindness, not a duty.
- ✓ Teach the children the value of money, gratitude and giving from an early age.

Do & Avoid: earnings and money

Do

- ✓ Begin the day with Subuh and a supplication before going out to earn
- ✓ Choose Syariah-compliant financial products and understand the contract
- ✓ Talk about money with your wife openly and honestly
- ✓ Build your skills so that lawful income grows
- ✓ Get AKPK advice early if debt begins to press

Avoid

- ✗ Loan sharks (along), get-rich-quick schemes and unlicensed investments
- ✗ Bribes, “coffee money” and gifts for your office
- ✗ Borrowing for your way of life and for show
- ✗ Hiding a large debt from your wife
- ✗ Gambling in any form, online betting included

Common questions

Is zakat due on a salary?

In Malaysia, the state fatwas make zakat on income obligatory once income reaches the nisab (based on the value of gold), at a rate of 2.5%. Scholars differ on the matter, but follow the ruling of your own state. The state zakat centres provide calculators and monthly salary deduction schemes, and the zakat paid qualifies for an income tax rebate.

I already have a conventional personal loan. What should I do?

Repent, and do not take on a new loan. Keep up the payments so that your family is not burdened with penalties, while working to move the balance to Islamic financing or to settle it early. If it has already become too heavy, get the free advice of the Credit Counselling and Debt Management Agency (AKPK) before matters grow worse.

May I give charity while I am still in debt?

A small act of charity is still encouraged; charity does not diminish wealth (reported by Muslim). But a debt that has fallen due, zakat and the family's maintenance must come first. The Prophet ﷺ said that the dinar spent on one's family carries the greatest reward (Muslim, Kitab az-Zakah).

08

CHAPTER 8

Ready to marry

Marriage begins long before the contract: with intention, knowledge, preparation and a wise choice.

وَمِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦٓ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُم مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَٰجًا لِّتَسْكُنُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ
بَيْنَكُم مَّوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

“And among His signs is that He created for you spouses from among yourselves so that you may find rest in them, and He placed between you affection and mercy. In that there are signs for people who reflect.”

Surah ar-Rum 30:21

Al-ba'ah: able outwardly and inwardly

The Prophet ﷺ said: “O young men, whoever among you is able (al-ba'ah), let him marry, for it lowers the gaze better and guards chastity better. Whoever is not able, let him fast, for fasting is a shield for him” (Bukhari 5066; Sahih Muslim, Kitab an-Nikah).

Al-ba'ah covers the ability to bear the mahr (dower) and maintenance (nafkah), together with readiness in body, in feeling and in knowledge. Able does not mean rich: Allah promises, “if they are poor, Allah will enrich them from His bounty” (Surah an-Nur 24:32). Those who are not yet able are told to keep themselves chaste until Allah gives them sufficiency (24:33).

The ruling on marriage differs with circumstances: recommended for the man who desires it and is able, obligatory for the man who is able and fears falling into adultery, and forbidden for the man who is certain he will wrong his wife.

- Intention: to protect your religion, to build a family, to continue your line and to seek the pleasure of Allah.
- Readiness in feeling: able to control anger, to listen, to give way and to apologise.
- Not to escape your problems, and not to prove your manhood.

Choosing a wife

Religion

A woman is married for wealth, lineage, beauty and religion; choose religion (Bukhari 5090; Sahih Muslim, Kitab ar-Radha').

Character

Honest, gentle in speech, respectful towards her parents and responsible.

Compatibility (kafa'ah)

Closeness in religion and background makes things easier; it is the right of the woman and her wali.

Look before you propose

The Prophet ﷺ told a man to look at her before proposing (reported by Muslim). Attraction matters.

Pointing the same way

Talk early about your views on children, careers, where to live and money.

Look in the mirror

A man who seeks a righteous wife works on himself first.

From istikharah to the contract

1. **Istikharah & counsel**
   Pray istikharah with its supplication (reported by al-Bukhari); ask your parents and people of knowledge.

2. **Enquire with good manners**
   Learn her character and background through family or people you trust, without prying.

3. **Khitbah (the proposal)**
   Propose through the wali. Do not propose to a woman who is already under another man's proposal (Bukhari & Muslim).

4. **Pre-marriage course**
   Required of Muslim couples in Malaysia, run by the state Islamic religious department or a certified provider.

5. **Health screening**
   Pre-marriage HIV screening is required by the states. See a doctor if anything is unclear.

6. **Marriage application**
   Complete the application at the religious office; obtain permission if your bride is from another state.

7. **Contract & registration**
   Offer and acceptance before the wali and two witnesses; make sure the marriage is registered.

Khitbah, limits and the mahr

An engagement is a time for getting to know one another, not half a marriage. A fiancée is still ajnabi: no khalwat, no touching, no going out alone without a mahram. Talk openly, with the knowledge of the family. If the engagement is broken off without valid reason, the party who broke it may be required to return the engagement gifts and the costs of preparation (Act 303 s.15; the state enactments are similar).

The mahr (dower) is wholly the wife's right, given willingly: “And give the women their dower as a gift given willingly” (Surah an-Nisa' 4:4). Islam encourages a mahr that is not a burden. The Prophet ﷺ once said to a Companion who was poor, “look for even a ring of iron” (reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim).

The mahr is not the same as the hantaran. The hantaran is custom and can be negotiated; the mahr is a matter of the Syariah. The value of the mahr and of the gifts is recorded at registration (Act 303 s.21).

- Do not take on a large debt for the hantaran and the celebration.
- The walimah is recommended, even a modest one (reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim).

The contract and the ta'liq: understand before you speak

The essentials of marriage in the Shafiʿi school (madhhab) are the groom, the bride, the wali (guardian), two upright male witnesses, and the offer and the acceptance. Without a wali the marriage is not valid in the Shafiʿi school (the Hanafi school differs for an adult woman). A marriage without permission or outside the proper procedure can be an offence under the state enactments, and it can make matters difficult for the children later.

After the contract, the husband pronounces the ta'liq. The wording differs a little from state to state, but it generally says: if the husband leaves his wife for four Hijri months in a row, does not maintain her during that time, or harms her body, she may complain to the Syariah Court. If her complaint is proven, the court may confirm the divorce (Act 303 s.50).

The ta'liq is no formality. It is a promise before Allah and the witnesses, and a protection for the wife.

- Read your own state's ta'liq text before the day of the contract.
- Pronounce the acceptance clearly and calmly; the registrar will guide you.

Do & Avoid: preparing for marriage

Do

- ✓ Learn the fiqh of marriage, a wife's rights and the basics of a household before the contract
- ✓ Discuss money, housing and plans for children honestly
- ✓ Involve both sets of parents respectfully
- ✓ Set aside the basics: the mahr, early maintenance and a modest home
- ✓ Be honest about health and about debts that will affect the marriage

Avoid

- ✗ Being alone together or touching during the engagement
- ✗ A hantaran and a celebration so heavy that you fall into debt
- ✗ Choosing on looks or wealth alone
- ✗ Marrying without permission or outside the registration procedure
- ✗ Hiding a marriage you are already in

Common questions

My finances are not yet stable. Should I wait?

The basic ability is to bear the mahr and modest maintenance, not to be rich. If desire presses on you and you are able in the basics, marriage guards you better, and Allah promises sufficiency (an-Nur 24:32). If you are not able at all, fast and build your income. Discuss a realistic way of living with your future wife and her family.

May I talk to my fiancée by telephone or message?

Communicating about the marriage and getting to know one another is permitted, within limits: courteous language, no flirtatious words, no pictures that expose the aurat, and it is best that the family knows. A fiancée is not yet lawful to you; avoid conversations late into the night, which open the door to temptation.

Who is the wali if my bride's father has died?

In the Shafiʿi school (madhhab), guardianship passes in order: the paternal grandfather, the full brother, the half-brother through the father, the nephew, the paternal uncle and so on. If there is no wali by lineage, or the wali refuses without lawful cause, the Syariah Court may appoint a wali hakim.

09

CHAPTER 9

As a husband (1): qiwamah as a trust

A husband's leadership is measured by service, maintenance and affection, not by power.

ٱلرِّجَالُ قَوَّٰمُونَ عَلَى ٱلنِّسَآءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ ٱللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ وَبِمَآ أَنفَقُوا۟ مِنْ أَمْوَٰلِهِمْ ... ﴿٣٤﴾

“Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has given some of them more than others, and because they spend of their wealth…”

Surah an-Nisa' 4:34

What qiwamah means

Qawwam means the one who stands over an affair, managing it, guarding it and bearing its cost. This verse ties a husband's leadership to two reasons: what Allah has given him, and the maintenance he spends. So qiwamah (the husband's responsibility) is a duty discharged through service and through wealth, not a right to rule as he pleases.

Allah says: “And for them (wives) there are rights equal to their duties, according to what is right; and husbands have one degree above” (Surah al-Baqarah 2:228). That degree is a degree of responsibility. The Prophet ﷺ said: “A man is the shepherd of his household and he will be asked about his flock” (Bukhari 893; Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Imarah).

A good leader leads by example, by consultation and by affection: the first to rise for prayer, the most patient of them, and the quickest to apologise.

- Qiwamah is no licence to confine, to insult or to injure.
- Obedience is only in what is right; there is no obedience in disobedience to Allah (Bukhari 7257; Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Imarah).

A wife's rights over her husband

💍

Mahr (dower)

Wholly the wife's right, given willingly (an-Nisa' 4:4). If the mahr is owed, pay it promptly.

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Maintenance (nafkah)

Food, clothing, treatment and reasonable needs, according to the husband's means (at-Talaq 65:7).

🏠

Housing

A home that is fit, safe and gives her privacy, according to the husband's means.

🤲

Kind treatment

Given food and clothing, not insulted and not shunned outside the home (Abu Dawud, hasan sahih).

📖

Knowledge & religion

Taught, or given the chance to learn, her personal religious obligations (fardu ain) and to perform her worship.

❤️

Affection & intimacy

Time, attention, warmth and the fulfilment of her intimate needs with kindness.

Living together in kindness

"And live with them in kindness. Then if you dislike them, it may be that you dislike something in which Allah has placed much good" (Surah an-Nisa' 4:19).

The Prophet ﷺ said: "The most complete of the believers in faith is the best of them in character, and the best of you are those who are best to their wives" (Tirmidhi 1162, hasan sahih). He also counselled a believer not to hate his wife; if he dislikes one of her traits, he will be pleased with another (reported by Muslim).

In the sermon of the Farewell Pilgrimage he said: "Be mindful of Allah in your treatment of women" (Muslim, Kitab al-Hajj).

- What is right (makruf) is measured by the Syariah and by the good custom of the community, not by the husband's taste alone.
- A word of thanks, a word of praise and a smile are part of the maintenance of the soul.
- See your wife's goodness as a whole; do not fix on one shortcoming.

Helping at home: a forgotten sunnah

- ✓ The Prophet ﷺ served his family and went out when the prayer time came (Bukhari 676).
- ✓ Lighten the housework: wash the dishes, sweep the floor, hang out and fold the clothes.
- ✓ Take the children so that your wife can rest, worship and look after herself.
- ✓ Repair what breaks in the house yourself; do not wait to be asked again and again.
- ✓ Ask “what can I help with?” before your wife has to ask you.
- ✓ When your wife is ill, pregnant or in confinement, take on more of the work.
- ✓ If you can afford it and the load is too heavy, arrange help or a service.
- ✓ Do not hold your help over her; it is worship, not a favour that demands a return.
- ✓ Do not criticise the food; the Prophet ﷺ never criticised food (Bukhari & Muslim).

Maintenance: the spending with the greatest reward

The Prophet ﷺ said that of the dinar spent in the way of Allah, the dinar spent to free a slave, the dinar given to the poor and the dinar spent on one's family, the greatest in reward is the one spent on the family (Muslim, Kitab az-Zakah). He also warned that it is sin enough for a man to withhold food from those in his charge (reported by Muslim).

Maintenance (nafkah) of a wife is obligatory even where the wife has means of her own, and its measure follows the husband's means (at-Talaq 65:7). The Syariah Court may order maintenance for a wife (Act 303 s.59), assess its amount by means and by need (s.61), and arrears of maintenance may be claimed as a debt (s.69). A wife in nushuz without lawful cause is not entitled to maintenance, subject to the court's confirmation (s.59(2)).

A wife's salary, her inheritance and her savings are her own.

- Give your wife money for herself, not only money for the kitchen.
- Never make maintenance a tool of pressure or of punishment.

Do & Avoid: leading a household

Do

- ✓ Consult your wife on the family's decisions
- ✓ Give maintenance on time and in full, without having to be asked
- ✓ Spend time alone together, joke with her and value her
- ✓ Lead the prayer in congregation and a circle of learning at home
- ✓ Apologise when you are wrong; that is the mark of a mature leader

Avoid

- ✗ Confining her, spying on her or cutting her off from her family
- ✗ Insulting, threatening or injuring her (an offence under Act 521)
- ✗ Holding maintenance over her, or withholding money as punishment
- ✗ Comparing your wife with other women
- ✗ Leaving the whole house and the children to her

Common questions

Must a wife cook and keep the house?

In the Shafiʿi school (madhhab), housework is not part of a wife's original obligations; some other scholars read it according to local custom. In practice most wives do it as a kindness, so value it. A husband should help alongside her, and provide conveniences or help in the house if he can afford it.

My wife works. Must I still provide maintenance?

Yes. Maintenance (nafkah) is the husband's duty even where his wife earns, and her salary remains hers. If she is willing to contribute, that is charity with a great reward. Discuss a fair financial arrangement, and record her contributions to large assets such as the house, so that each party's rights are clear.

What if I cannot afford full maintenance?

Allah does not burden a soul beyond its capacity (at-Talaq 65:7). Be open with your wife, economise together and keep striving. The duty does not fall away, but its measure follows your real means. If a husband is able and deliberately does not maintain his wife, she may claim at the Syariah Court, and it can even be grounds for judicial dissolution (fasakh) or ta'liq.

10

CHAPTER 10

As a husband (2): the art of the relationship

A home is built with gentle words, hands that never hurt, and justice actually delivered.

وَمِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦٓ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُم مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَٰجًا لِّتَسْكُنُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ
بَيْنَكُم مَّوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

"And among the signs of His power is that He created for you spouses of your own kind so that you may find rest in them, and He placed between you affection and mercy. Truly in that are signs for people who reflect."

Surah ar-Rum 30:21

Communication: listen before you answer

Ar-Rum 30:21 names three purposes of marriage: tranquillity (sakinah), affection (mawaddah) and mercy (rahmah). All three live or die by communication. Many husbands are quick with solutions, yet a wife most often wants to be heard first.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ talked, joked and raced with Aisyah (narrated by Abu Dawud, sahih). He also said: “Let no believing man hate a believing woman. If he dislikes one of her traits, he will be pleased with another” (Muslim, Kitab ar-Radha').

- Give her your full attention: put the phone down, look at her.
- Say back what you understood: “So what you mean is…?”
- Acknowledge her feelings even when you disagree.
- Say “I feel…”, not “you always…”.
- Set aside time to talk every day, even 15 minutes.
- Say thank you, give praise and apologise clearly.

Handling conflict and anger without harm

Disagreement is normal; causing hurt never is. The Prophet ﷺ said: “The strong man is not the one who wins at wrestling, but the one who controls himself when angry” (Bukhari 6114), and counselled: “Do not become angry” (Bukhari 6116).

Aisyah said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ **never struck** a woman or a servant with his hand (Muslim, Kitab al-Fadha'il). Domestic violence, whether physical or psychological, is an offence under the Domestic Violence Act 1994 (Act 521).

- When anger peaks, stop and take a break.
- Recite the ta‘awwuz; change posture: sit, or lie down (narrated by Abu Dawud, sahih).
- Return to the matter once calm, one issue at a time.
- Do not drag up the past, insult her family or threaten divorce.
- If self-control is hard, get counselling. Emergency: 999; support: Talian Kasih 15999.

Intimacy and keeping what is private, private

Intimacy is an act of worship and a shared right. The Qur'an calls husband and wife a garment for one another (al-Baqarah 2:187). The Prophet ﷺ taught that there is charity in the intimacy of husband and wife (narrated by Muslim).

Spreading the secrets of the bedroom is among the worst things in the sight of Allah on the Day of Judgement (Muslim, Kitab an-Nikah).

- Begin with cleanliness, fragrance, kind words and affection.
- Say the supplication before coming together: “Bismillah, Allahumma jannibnash-shaytan…” (al-Bukhari and Muslim).
- Take account of her needs, tiredness and health; never force her.
- Intimacy is forbidden during menstruation (haid) and post-natal bleeding (nifas) (al-Baqarah 2:222); anal intercourse is forbidden.
- Problems with performance or pain? See a doctor; it is medical, not shameful.
- Tell no one about your intimate life, least of all on social media.

Nushuz and syiqaq: a balanced response

1. **Examine yourself first**
   Nushuz can come from the husband too (an-Nisa' 4:128). Check whether your wife's rights have been met.

2. **Advise her gently**
   The first step in an-Nisa' 4:34: talk it through kindly, remind her with love, never shame her.

3. **Separate sleeping places**
   The second step, temporary and without cutting off speech. Not driving your wife out of the house.

4. **No violence**
   The third step is tightly conditioned: no injury. Imam ash-Shafi'i: leaving it is better.

5. **Appoint arbiters, hakam (4:35)**
   A representative from each family to reconcile them. The court may appoint hakam (s.48).

6. **Use the official services**
   Family counselling at the religious office or Syariah Court before any thought of separation.

Talaq and polygyny: a trust, not a weapon

Talaq is the last resort. The Qur'an commands “keep her in kindness or release her in kindness” (al-Baqarah 2:229) and forbids holding a wife back in order to hurt her (2:231). Talaq must never be used as a threat. Talaq pronounced while a wife is menstruating, or in a clean period in which intercourse has taken place, is talaq bid'ī: sinful, though still effective (Shafiʿi). In the Federal Territories, a divorce petition is filed in court (Act 303 s.47); pronouncing talaq outside the court without permission is an offence (s.124). State enactments contain similar provisions.

Polygyny is permitted on the condition of justice (an-Nisa' 4:3); if you fear you cannot be just, one wife is enough. Affection of the heart cannot be made perfectly equal, but do not incline so far that one wife is left hanging (4:129). Written permission of the court must be obtained first (s.23(1)); the court weighs the necessity, the capacity to provide maintenance (nafkah), justice, and any darar syarie to the existing wife (s.23(4)). Marrying without permission is an offence (s.123).

Do & avoid: the art of the relationship

Do

- ✓ Listen fully before offering an opinion
- ✓ Apologise first, even though you lead the family
- ✓ Settle conflict privately and calmly
- ✓ Guard the privacy of your home and your wife's dignity
- ✓ Seek counselling or hakam early
- ✓ Deliver justice in maintenance, time and attention

Avoid

- ✗ Hitting, shoving, threatening or verbal abuse
- ✗ Pronouncing talaq in anger or as a threat
- ✗ Days of silence used as punishment
- ✗ Airing household matters on social media
- ✗ Marrying again in secret, without the court's permission
- ✗ Comparing your wife with other women

Common questions

Does an-Nisa' 4:34 not permit a husband to hit his wife?

The verse sets out a step that comes after counsel and separation of sleeping places, and only for clear nushuz. The scholars condition it on causing no injury and never to the face; many hold that leaving it altogether is better, because the Prophet ﷺ never struck anyone (Muslim, Kitab al-Fadha'il). Injuring a wife is forbidden and is an offence under Act 521.

If I pronounced talaq in anger, what should I do?

Do not make your own assumptions. Go at once to the Syariah Court or the state religious office to determine whether the talaq took effect and how many were counted. In the Shafiʿi school a triple talaq in one pronouncement counts as three, so this is a very serious matter. A pronouncement outside the court may also be prosecuted (s.124).

Is the first wife's consent needed for polygyny?

The law does not make it an absolute condition, but an applicant must state whether the consent or the views of the existing wife have been obtained (s.23(3)), and she is summoned to the hearing (s.23(4)). Honesty and consultation are what good character demands.

11

CHAPTER 11

As a father (1): welcoming a child

A father begins as a husband who supports; then he is present, he provides, and he protects.

وَٱلَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَٰجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّـٰتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَٱجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا ﴿٧٤﴾

“And those who pray: “Our Lord, grant us from among our wives and our offspring a comfort to our eyes, and make us leaders of those who are mindful of You.””

Surah al-Furqan 25:74

Children: a gift, a trust and a prayer

A child does not belong to us; he is a trust from Allah. The Qur'an reminds us that a mother carries her child in weakness upon weakness (Luqman 31:14), and that pregnancy through to weaning takes thirty months (al-Ahqaf 46:15). A father who grasps this sees pregnancy as a shared project, not his wife's business alone.

The prophets prayed for righteous offspring. Make these prayers a daily habit from the first day of marriage:

- “My Lord, grant me from Yourself good offspring” (Ali ‘Imran 3:38).
- “My Lord, make me and some of my offspring people who establish prayer” (Ibrahim 14:40).
- “Grant us from among our wives and offspring a comfort to our eyes” (al-Furqan 25:74).
- Intend every effort for your child as worship and provision for the hereafter.

Supporting your wife: pregnancy, birth and recovery

- ✓ Go with her to antenatal check-ups; know the dates, the risks and the birth plan.
- ✓ Take over the heavy work at home: lifting, shopping and tidying.
- ✓ Provide nourishing food and make sure she gets enough rest and water.
- ✓ Pack the hospital bag and arrange transport, emergency numbers and papers.
- ✓ Be at her side during the birth if allowed, and pray a great deal.
- ✓ During her recovery: take the baby at night so she can sleep.
- ✓ Respect post-natal bleeding (nifas): no intimacy until it stops and she has had the ghusl.
- ✓ Watch for signs of post-natal depression; if it persists, see a doctor at once.
- ✓ Shield her from pressuring remarks, including from your own family.

The sunnah of welcoming a baby

1. **Gratitude & tahnik**
   The Prophet ﷺ softened a date, touched it to the baby's palate and prayed for him (narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim).

2. **Choose a good name**
   The names most beloved to Allah are Abdullah and Abdul Rahman (narrated by Muslim). Avoid names with poor meanings.

3. **Aqiqah on the seventh day**
   Strongly recommended of the father: two goats for a boy, one for a girl. It may be deferred if he cannot yet afford it.

4. **Shave the hair**
   On the seventh day; Shafiʿi scholars encourage giving the weight of the hair in gold or silver as charity.

5. **Circumcision**
   Obligatory for boys in the Shafiʿi school (strongly recommended in some others). Consult a doctor.

6. **Register the birth**
   Register with JPN within the stated period so the child's rights and documents are secure.

A child's maintenance: a right, not a favour

Maintenance (nafkah) of a child is the father's duty. The Qur'an places the food and clothing of a nursing mother upon the father in a fair and reasonable way, and no one is burdened beyond his capacity (al-Baqarah 2:233; at-Talaq 65:7). In the Federal Territories, Act 303 s.72 requires a man to maintain his child, whether the child is in his custody or another's, covering accommodation, clothing, food, medical care and reasonable education according to his means.

The Prophet ﷺ said the dinar with the greatest reward is the one spent on one's family (Muslim, Kitab az-Zakah).

- Build a new family budget: milk, nappies, medical care, education savings.
- Name your beneficiaries and arrange takaful cover within your means.
- A child's maintenance does not lapse on divorce or on marrying again.

A father who is present, not just a bill payer

⏰

Time set aside

A fixed slot each day to play, read and talk, with no phone in hand.

🤲

Touch & affection

The Prophet ﷺ kissed his grandson and said: whoever shows no mercy is shown none (al-Bukhari, Muslim).

🍼

Share the baby care

Bathe, change, soothe. The Prophet ﷺ helped with the housework (Bukhari 676).

🕌

An example in worship

A child sees his father pray, read the Qur'an and supplicate from his earliest years.

🛡️

Protector of the family

Keep the home, the car and your child's digital world safe; protect without smothering.

💬

Words that build

Praise effort, do not label. A father's words become the voice inside his child.

Do & avoid: a new father

Do

- ✓ Plan the money and the leave before the due date
- ✓ Take turns at night with the baby
- ✓ Perform the aqiqah and give a good name
- ✓ Ask your wife daily: “What can I take off your hands?”
- ✓ Pray for your child by name
- ✓ See a doctor if your wife or baby shows warning signs

Avoid

- ✗ Treating pregnancy and the baby as your wife's job alone
- ✗ Going into debt for a large aqiqah celebration
- ✗ Demanding intimacy during the nifas period
- ✗ Belittling your wife's sadness or exhaustion
- ✗ Treating the baby differently because of its sex
- ✗ Being late or slack in paying your child's maintenance

Common questions

Should the azan and iqamah be recited in a newborn's ear?

It is a widespread practice in our society, but the reports about it are weak in their chains of transmission. If you do it, do not treat it as an established sunnah or an obligation, and do not fault families who leave it. What is established is the tahnik, the prayer, a good name, the aqiqah and shaving the hair.

I cannot yet afford the aqiqah on the seventh day. What now?

The aqiqah is recommended, not obligatory. In the Shafiʿi school it may be done after the seventh day, and it remains the father's responsibility until the child reaches puberty. After that the child may do it for himself. Do not borrow for a grand feast; a modest slaughter, shared out, is enough.

When should a boy be circumcised?

In the Shafiʿi school it becomes obligatory at puberty, and it is recommended to do it early in childhood (as soon as the seventh day if it is safe). Choose a medically safe time on a doctor's advice, and explain it to your son so that he is not frightened.

12

CHAPTER 12

As a father (2): raising your children

Upbringing begins with example, moves forward with love, and is kept safe by fairness.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ قُوٓاْ أَنفُسَكُمۡ وَأَهۡلِيكُمۡ نَارٗا وَقُودُهَا ٱلنَّاسُ وَٱلۡحِجَارَةُ ...

﴿٦﴾

"O you who believe, guard yourselves and your families against a Fire whose fuel is people and stones..."

Surah at-Tahrim 66:6

The trust of upbringing: guard your family

At-Tahrim 66:6 calls on every believer to guard himself first, and then his family. A father is a shepherd and will be asked about those in his care (Bukhari 893; Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Imarah). Allah also commands: “Enjoin prayer upon your family and be steadfast in it” (Taha 20:132).

Every child is born upon the natural disposition, fitrah (narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim). A father's task is to preserve that fitrah, not to shape his child into a copy of himself. The reward runs on: when a person dies, among the deeds that do not cease is the prayer of a righteous child (narrated by Muslim).

- Educate yourself first; children imitate, they do not merely listen.
- Share the role with your wife; raising children is not the mother's job alone.
- Pray for your children every day, naming each of them.

Tarbiyah by stage of life

1. **0–6 years: love & foundations**
   Affection, play, stories of the prophets, daily supplications. Teach table manners as the Prophet ﷺ taught Umar bin Abi Salamah.

2. **Age 7: beginning prayer**
   “Teach your children to pray at the age of seven” (Abu Dawud 495, hasan). Teach wudu patiently.

3. **7–10 years: gentle discipline**
   A prayer routine, chores at home, reading the Qur'an. Separate the sleeping places of boys and girls.

4. **10 to puberty: preparation**
   Explain the signs of puberty, the obligatory bath, modesty and guarding the gaze before it happens.

5. **Teens: friend & guide**
   Listen more, discuss as Ibrahim did with Ismail: “Consider, what is your view?” (as-Saffat 37:102).

6. **Young adults: let go slowly**
   Hand over responsibility for money, career and decisions; remain the one they turn to.

Fairness, daughters, and the example of Luqman

When a companion wished to give a gift to only one of his children, the Prophet ﷺ said: “Fear Allah and be just between your children” (Bukhari 2587; Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Hibat). Justice covers gifts, attention, praise and time.

Daughters are a path to Paradise: whoever raises two daughters until they reach maturity will be with the Prophet ﷺ on the Day of Judgement like two fingers side by side (Muslim, Kitab al-Birr wa as-Silah wa al-Adab). Raise them with knowledge, dignity and self-confidence.

Luqman's counsel to his son (Luqman 31:13–19) is a father's syllabus in brief:

- Tawhid: associate nothing with Allah (31:13).
- Worship and enjoining good: establish prayer, be patient under trial (31:17).
- Character: no arrogance, walk modestly, lower your voice (31:18–19).
- Manner: the warm address “O my son”, not a rebuke.

Discipline without harshness

🌿

Gentleness is strength

Allah gives for gentleness what He does not give for harshness (narrated by Muslim).

📋

Clear rules

Few rules, their reasons explained, and kept by the father himself.

⚖️

Logical consequences

Fit the consequence to the fault, such as taking back the gadget, not shaming the child.

👏

Praise the effort

Catch your child doing good. Specific praise works better than anger.

🧘

Calm yourself first

Never discipline in anger. The Prophet ﷺ never said “uff” to Anas (al-Bukhari, Muslim).

🚫

The red lines

No blow that injures, no humiliation. Child abuse is a crime.

The digital world and talking about puberty

A gadget is not a childminder. Agree with your children when, where and for how long screens may be used, and set the example by putting your own phone down when you are with the family.

A boy should hear about puberty from his father, not from the internet. In the Shafiʿi school a boy reaches puberty with the emission of semen (including a wet dream) or on completing 15 lunar years. Start the conversation around the age of 9 or 10, calmly and without excessive embarrassment.

- Keep gadgets in open spaces; no gadgets in bedrooms at night.
- Turn on parental controls and review the apps together.
- Teach them never to share photos, their location or personal details.
- Explain that wet dreams are normal, how to take the obligatory bath and how to stay clean.
- Discuss guarding the gaze, the harms of pornography, and how to ask for help.
- Make sure your child knows he can ask you anything without being scolded.

Do & avoid: raising your children

Do

- ✓ Pray in congregation with your children at home or the mosque
- ✓ Spend one-to-one time with each child
- ✓ Be fair in gifts, praise and attention
- ✓ Explain the reason behind every rule
- ✓ Apologise to your child when you get it wrong
- ✓ Involve your children in decisions suited to their age

Avoid

- ✗ Hitting, shouting or insulting in anger
- ✗ Comparing a child with siblings or with others
- ✗ Favouring sons over daughters
- ✗ Leaving their upbringing to gadgets or the school alone
- ✗ Ordering prayer while the father himself does not pray
- ✗ Dodging conversations about puberty and sexuality

Common questions

Abu Dawud 495 mentions striking a child at ten. How should this be understood?

It concerns prayer, after three years of patient teaching, and not other faults. The scholars condition it on a light blow that causes no injury and never to the face, and only where it would actually help. If it does not help, it is not permitted. Love, example and encouragement come first; injuring a child is wrong both in the Syariah and in law.

My teenage son is becoming lax about prayer. What should I do?

Do not open with anger. Invite him to pray in congregation, talk privately about what he is feeling, and connect prayer to the life he wants. Keep the relationship strong; a child returns more easily to a father who never cut off his affection. Pray for him, and ask help from a teacher or mentor he respects.

When is the right age to give a child his own smartphone?

The Syariah sets no fixed age. Weigh your child's maturity, the real need, and your own ability to supervise. Start with a basic phone or a shared device, write down an agreement about the rules, and review it from time to time.

13

CHAPTER 13

The extended family and the community

A righteous man is not only good at home, but also to his relatives, his neighbours and the ummah.

... وَٱعۡبُدُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَلَا تُشۡرِكُواْ بِهِۦ شَيۡـٔٗاۖ وَبِٱلۡوَٰلِدَيۡنِ إِحۡسَٰنٗا وَبِذِي ٱلۡقُرۡبَىٰ
وَٱلۡيَتَٰمَىٰ وَٱلۡمَسَٰكِينِ وَٱلۡجَارِ ذِي ٱلۡقُرۡبَىٰ وَٱلۡجَارِ ٱلۡجُنُبِ وَٱلصَّاحِبِ
بِٱلۡجَنۢبِ وَٱبۡنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ... ﴿٣٦﴾

"Worship Allah and associate nothing with Him. Be good to your parents, to relatives, to orphans, to the poor, to the near neighbour and the distant neighbour, to the companion at your side and to the traveller..."

Surah an-Nisa' 4:36

The widening circle of a man's goodness

Surah an-Nisa' 4:36 arranges goodness as one widening circle: it begins with the right of Allah, then parents, relatives, orphans, the poor, the near and distant neighbour, the companion at your side, and on to the traveller. A righteous man does not stop at his own front door; his good flows outwards.

The Prophet ﷺ said: “Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him honour his guest… let him not harm his neighbour… and let him speak well or stay silent” (narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim).

Yet one's own family remains the priority. Service to the community can never excuse neglecting a wife and children. That balance is the mark of mature leadership.

- The right of Allah first, then the rights of people in order of nearness.
- Good done outside the home does not replace responsibility inside it.
- The verse closes with a warning: Allah does not love the arrogant and the boastful.

In-laws: respect and boundaries

Parents-in-law

- A mother-in-law is a permanent mahram after the marriage contract (an-Nisa' 4:23)
- Honour them as you would your own parents; visit and call regularly
- Hear their advice, but decisions about your marriage belong to the two of you
- Never compare your wife's family with your own in front of her

Siblings-in-law

- A wife's sisters are not mahram; observe modesty and the proper limits
- It is forbidden to have two sisters as wives at the same time (an-Nisa' 4:23)
- Never be alone with them: “the in-law is death” (narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim)
- Help and honour them as family, with courtesy and good manners

Keeping the ties of kinship

1. **Know who your relatives are**
   List your uncles and aunts, cousins and your wife's relatives; let no one be left out.

2. **Keep in touch regularly**
   A message, a call or a short visit. Consistency beats the occasional grand gesture.

3. **Be there at the big moments**
   Feasts, illness, bereavement and the festive days: your presence means a great deal.

4. **Help those in need**
   Relatives in hardship have the first claim (al-Isra' 17:26); begin with the nearest.

5. **Reconnect what was cut off**
   The one who truly keeps kinship restores the tie that was broken (narrated by al-Bukhari).

6. **Reconcile those at odds**
   The believers are brothers, so make peace between them (al-Hujurat 49:10).

7. **Bring your children along**
   A child learns kinship by watching his father visit the family.

Neighbours, the mosque and the congregation

A neighbour is a trust

Jibril urged the rights of neighbours until the Prophet ﷺ thought they would inherit (al-Bukhari, Muslim).

Share what you have

Send food round, give the greeting, ask after them and help when they are in need or ill.

Cause no harm

Mind the noise, the parking, the rubbish and your neighbours' privacy.

Bring the mosque to life

Congregational prayer is 27 degrees better than praying alone (narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim).

Join the congregation

Know your imam and the local community; attend classes, working parties and funerals.

A heart attached to the mosque

A man whose heart is attached to the mosque is shaded by Allah in the hereafter (al-Bukhari, Muslim).

Leadership and daʿwah in the community

"Each of you is a shepherd and will be asked about his flock" (Bukhari 893; Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Imarah). In the prayer hall, the residents' association or the workplace, a righteous man leads with trustworthiness, consults others (ash-Syura 42:38) and serves, rather than chasing position.

Daʿwah begins with character. Allah commands: "Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair counsel, and argue with them in the best manner" (an-Nahl 16:125). The Prophet ﷺ said: "Convey from me, even a single verse" (narrated by al-Bukhari).

- Begin with yourself and your family before correcting others.
- Correct privately and gently; never shame anyone in public.
- Refer major legal questions to the recognised religious authorities.
- Put service first: tending the deceased, helping the needy, mentoring the young.

Do & avoid: with family and community

Do

- ✓ Honour a guest with a cheerful face and whatever you can offer
- ✓ Visit relatives and neighbours, above all when ill or bereaved
- ✓ Defend your wife's dignity in front of your own family
- ✓ Consult others before taking decisions for the community
- ✓ Come to the mosque for the daily prayers, not only on Fridays

Avoid

- ✗ Exposing your wife's faults or your household's affairs to relatives
- ✗ Burdening a host by staying far too long without leave
- ✗ Harming neighbours with noise, rubbish or blocked access
- ✗ Cutting off relatives over a grudge or an inheritance
- ✗ Preaching harshly, sarcastically or publicly on social media

Common questions

My mother and my wife do not see eye to eye. What is my role?

Be the bridge, not a one-sided judge. Hear each of them separately, protect the dignity of both, and do not carry hurtful words between them. Honour your mother, and fulfil your wife's rights, including a comfortable home of her own. If need be, ask for a family counsellor at the religious office.

A relative has cut me off. Should I keep trying?

Yes, in a way that keeps your own dignity. The one who truly keeps the ties of kinship is the one who restores them when they are broken (narrated by al-Bukhari). Send greetings, festive wishes, or help when they are in difficulty. If they are hurting you, see less of them, but never stop praying for them or greeting them.

How long may a guest stay?

The Prophet ﷺ spoke of three days of hospitality; beyond that it is charity, and a guest should not stay so long as to burden his host (narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim). Announce your arrival, come at a suitable hour, ask permission, and guard your gaze in another's home.

14

CHAPTER 14

Caring for yourself: the body

The body is a trust; caring for it is worship, and the strength to serve your family.

يَٰبَنِيٓ ءَادَمَ خُذُواْ زِينَتَكُمۡ عِندَ كُلِّ مَسۡجِدٖ وَكُلُواْ وَٱشۡرَبُواْ وَلَا تُسۡرِفُوٓاْۚ
إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلۡمُسۡرِفِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

"O children of Adam, wear your fine clothing whenever you go to the mosque, and eat and drink, but do not be excessive. Truly Allah does not love those who are excessive."

Surah al-A'raf 7:31

The body as a trust

Many men look after the car and the phone more carefully than their own bodies. Yet the body is a trust from Allah, and we will be asked about it. The Prophet ﷺ said: “A strong believer is better and more beloved to Allah than a weak believer, and in both there is good” (narrated by Muslim).

He also warned: “Two blessings in which many people are deceived: health and free time” (narrated by al-Bukhari). Allah forbids us to throw ourselves into ruin (al-Baqarah 2:195).

A husband and father in good health can work, worship, play with his children and care for his wife for far longer. Looking after your health is not selfishness; it is part of the responsibility.

- Health is a blessing; show gratitude by looking after it.
- Intend your eating, exercise and sleep as strength for worship.
- The strength in the hadith takes in faith, resolve and the body too.

The pillars of a healthy body

🍽️

Eat enough, no more

A third for food, a third for drink, a third for breath (narrated by at-Tirmidhi, hasan sahih).

🥗

A balanced plate

Plenty of vegetables and fruit; cut back on sugar, salt, fried food and sweet drinks.

🚶

Move every day

Brisk walking, cycling or sport. Start slowly; see a doctor if you have a condition.

😴

Enough sleep

The Prophet ﷺ slept early after Isyak and disliked talk after it (narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim).

💧

Drink plain water

Make plain water your main drink; avoid leaning on sugary and caffeinated drinks.

🧘

Rest & allow slack

Your body has a right over you (narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim). Rest is not laziness.

Smoking and vaping: a plain harm

Islam permits what is wholesome and forbids what is harmful (al-A'raf 7:157), and forbids us to destroy ourselves (al-Baqarah 2:195). On the basis of harm to health, to wealth and to those around the smoker, the Muzakarah of the Fatwa Committee of the National Council for Islamic Religious Affairs Malaysia ruled that smoking is forbidden, and reached the same ruling on vaping.

Cigarette smoke also harms your wife and children at home, and a father's example carries great weight. Stopping is genuinely hard, because nicotine is addictive, but it is possible with help.

- Set a quit date and tell your family.
- Get help at a Klinik Kesihatan or a stop-smoking clinic.
- Know your triggers (coffee, stress, friends) and replace them with something else.
- If you slip, do not give up; try again.

Health screening for men (general)

- ✓ Have your blood pressure measured regularly, more often with a family history
- ✓ Check your blood sugar so that diabetes is caught early
- ✓ Check your cholesterol; ask your doctor how often is right for your age
- ✓ Keep an eye on your weight and measure your waist
- ✓ See a dentist at least once a year
- ✓ Tell your doctor about urinary problems, chest pain or breathlessness
- ✓ Take medicines as prescribed; never stop on your own
- ✓ Ask your doctor for a screening schedule suited to your age and risk

Cleanliness and the sunnah of fitrah

1. **The five acts of fitrah**
   Circumcision, shaving the pubic hair, trimming the moustache, cutting the nails, removing underarm hair (al-Bukhari, Muslim).

2. **Never leave it past 40 days**
   The Prophet ﷺ set a time limit for trimming the moustache, the nails and the hair (narrated by Muslim).

3. **Use the siwak, mind your mouth**
   The Prophet ﷺ strongly encouraged the siwak before every prayer (narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim).

4. **Bathe and wear fragrance**
   Bathe and put on fragrance, above all for the Friday prayer and when with your wife.

5. **Clean, tidy clothing**
   Wear your good clothes to the mosque (al-A'raf 7:31); look presentable at home for your wife too.

6. **Hair and beard kept neat**
   Comb and tidy them; a beard left to grow still needs to be clean and neat.

Do & avoid: caring for the body

Do

- ✓ Eat before you are famished, stop before you are stuffed
- ✓ Exercise at least a few times a week
- ✓ Sleep early and wake fresh for Subuh
- ✓ Go for health screening and follow your doctor's advice
- ✓ Play sport or walk together with your wife and children

Avoid

- ✗ Smoking, vaping and anything intoxicating
- ✗ Late-night eating and a sweet drink every day
- ✗ Staying up with a screen until Subuh is missed
- ✗ Ignoring symptoms out of ego or fear of being examined
- ✗ “Male vitality” pills or supplements without a doctor's advice

Common questions

I am busy with work. How am I meant to exercise?

Start small: a brisk 10–15 minute walk after Subuh or in your break, take the stairs, and walk to the mosque if it is near. Combine it with family time, such as cycling with the children at the weekend. Consistency matters more than duration. If you have heart disease or high blood pressure, see a doctor first.

Does the sunnah of eating little mean I should go hungry?

No. The sunnah is moderation, not punishing yourself. Eat enough to be strong for worship and work, choose good food, and do not be excessive (al-A'raf 7:31). If you want to lose a significant amount of weight or you have diabetes, get advice from a doctor or a dietitian.

I feel well. Do I still need screening?

Yes. High blood pressure, diabetes and high cholesterol often have no symptoms in the early stages. Screening helps catch them earlier, when treatment is easier. Ask your doctor or Klinik Kesihatan how often is right for your age and family history.

15

CHAPTER 15

Caring for yourself: soul and emotions

A strong man is not one who never grieves, but one who knows how to bring his heart to Allah and ask for help.

ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَتَطۡمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُم بِذِكۡرِ ٱللَّهِۗ أَلَا بِذِكۡرِ ٱللَّهِ تَطۡمَئِنُّ ٱلۡقُلُوبُ ﴿٢٨﴾

“Those who believe, and whose hearts find rest in the remembrance of Allah. Know that it is in the remembrance of Allah that hearts find rest.”

Surah ar-Ra'd 13:28

Men have hearts too

Many men were raised on the line “men don't cry”. That is not a teaching of Islam. When his son Ibrahim died, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ wept and said: “The eye weeps, the heart grieves, and we say nothing but what pleases our Lord. Truly we are grieved to part from you, Ibrahim” (Bukhari 1303).

The prophet Ya'qub said: “I only complain of my anguish and my sorrow to Allah” (Yusuf 12:86). To feel sad, afraid or worn out is part of being human. What is asked of us is to handle it in a way that pleases Allah.

Real strength is mastering yourself when angry (Bukhari 6114), not bottling everything up until it bursts.

- Tears are not weakness; the Prophet ﷺ wept too.
- Name the feeling: sadness, disappointment, fear, shame.
- Confiding in your wife or a trusted friend is a sign of maturity.

Pressure at work and with money

Within your capacity

Allah burdens no soul beyond its capacity (al-Baqarah 2:286).

Write it down, order it

List your debts and your tasks. A problem on paper is far easier to plan a way out of.

Talk it over with your wife

Do not carry it alone; your wife is a partner, not an outsider to family matters.

Get proper advice

For debt, go to an official financial counselling agency or to your bank early.

Boundaries on work hours

Set a time to switch off the work phone. Home needs a husband and father who is present.

Hardship has an end

“Truly with hardship there is ease” (al-Insyirah 94:5–6).

Depression and suicidal thoughts: get help

Depression is an illness, not a sign of weak faith or missed prayers. Its signs include prolonged sadness, loss of interest, trouble sleeping or sleeping far too much, feeling worthless, and withdrawing from people. It can be treated.

Allah says: “Do not despair of the mercy of Allah” (az-Zumar 39:53). Islam forbids taking one's own life (an-Nisa' 4:29), and Islam equally commands us to seek treatment and to help one another.

- If you have thoughts of harming yourself, tell someone **now**.
- Emergency: call 999 or go to a hospital Emergency Department.
- Talian Kasih 15999, or Befrienders for emotional support.
- See a doctor at a Klinik Kesihatan; treatment and counselling are available.
- If a friend seems low, ask him gently and go with him to get help.

Finding a way out of addiction

1. **Admit the problem**
   Cigarettes, gambling, pornography, online games or drugs: the first step is honesty with yourself.

2. **Repent and never despair**
   Allah forgives all sins for the one who repents (az-Zumar 39:53). Fall, then get up again.

3. **Cut off the triggers**
   Delete the apps, change your route, filter the internet and keep away from those who pull you back.

4. **Fill the empty space**
   Replace it with sport, a class, voluntary work and time with your family.

5. **Get expert help**
   See a doctor, a counsellor, or the National Anti-Drugs Agency (AADK) for drugs.

6. **Find someone to answer to**
   A righteous friend or an ustaz who can check in on how you are doing.

Tazkiyah an-nafs: prayers and remembrance that settle the heart

- ✓ Remember: successful is the one who purifies his soul (ash-Syams 91:9–10)
- ✓ A short self-review each night: what went well, what needs mending
- ✓ Make dhikr; Allah says: “Remember Me and I will remember you” (al-Baqarah 2:152)
- ✓ Yunus's prayer: Lā ilāha illā anta, subḥānaka innī kuntu minaẓ-ẓālimīn (al-Anbiya' 21:87)
- ✓ Ḥasbunallāhu wa niʿmal-wakīl: Allah is enough for us (Ali 'Imran 3:173)
- ✓ The prayer for refuge from anxiety, grief, weakness and the burden of debt (al-Bukhari)
- ✓ Read the Qur'an every day, even a little, and understand its meaning
- ✓ Pray two units at night and pour out your heart to Allah

Do & avoid: caring for the soul

Do

- ✓ Admit what you feel and tell someone you trust
- ✓ See a doctor or counsellor when the sadness does not lift
- ✓ Mind your sleep, food and exercise; body and soul are tied together
- ✓ Make time for dhikr, the Qur'an and prayer with presence of heart
- ✓ Patience and gratitude: all of a believer's affairs are good (Muslim)

Avoid

- ✗ Bottling it up until it bursts as anger at your wife and children
- ✗ Escaping into cigarettes, gambling, pornography or drugs
- ✗ Mocking those who seek mental health treatment
- ✗ Cutting yourself off from family and the congregation
- ✗ Assuming suicidal thoughts will simply pass without help

Common questions

If I am depressed, does that mean my faith is weak?

Not necessarily. Depression is a health condition that can strike the most devout. The Prophet ﷺ instructed us to seek treatment, and getting treatment does not contradict trust in Allah. Keep up your prayers and dhikr, and at the same time see a doctor. Every grief and hardship that befalls a believer wipes away his sins (narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim).

How do I talk about my feelings with my wife?

Choose a calm moment, begin with “I feel…” rather than blame. Say what you need: to be heard, a little space, or help. Listen to her feelings too. Sharing a weakness does not diminish your leadership; it builds trust.

A friend of mine is talking about wanting to die. What should I do?

Take it seriously. Listen without judging, ask him directly whether he is thinking of harming himself, and do not leave him alone if there is immediate danger. Call 999 in an emergency, or help him reach Talian Kasih 15999, Befrienders or a doctor.

16

CHAPTER 16

Rights, property and legal responsibility

Property is a trust: discharge other people's rights before you claim your own.

لِيُنفِقْ ذُو سَعَةٍ مِّن سَعَتِهِۦ ۖ وَمَن قُدِرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقُهُۥ فَلْيُنفِقْ مِمَّآ ءَاتَىٰهُ ٱللَّهُ ۚ
لَا يُكَلِّفُ ٱللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا مَآ ءَاتَىٰهَا ۚ سَيَجْعَلُ ٱللَّهُ بَعْدَ عُسْرٍ يُسْرًا ﴿٧﴾

“Let the man of means provide according to his means; and whoever's provision is straitened, let him provide from what Allah has given him. Allah burdens no soul beyond what He has given it. Allah will bring ease after hardship.”

Surah at-Talaq 65:7

Maintenance: an obligation, not a favour

Maintenance (nafkah) for a wife and children is the duty of a husband and father, given according to his means (at-Talaq 65:7). It is not a gift to be withdrawn in anger. The Prophet ﷺ said the dinar with the greatest reward is the one spent on one's family (narrated by Muslim, Kitab az-Zakah), and warned: "It is sin enough for a man that he neglects those in his charge" (narrated by Abu Dawud, hasan).

Islamic family law in Malaysia reinforces this trust. The examples below are from Act 303 (Federal Territories); state enactments have near-identical provisions.

- **s.59:** The court may order a man to pay maintenance to his wife or former wife.
- **s.61:** The rate of maintenance is assessed chiefly on the means and needs of the parties.
- **s.72:** A father must maintain his child, whether in his custody or another's: accommodation, clothing, food, medical care and education.
- **s.69:** Arrears of maintenance may be claimed as a debt, including from the estate after death.
- **s.79:** A child maintenance order normally ends at 18 (except an unmarried daughter or a child with a disability), and may be extended for higher education.

A wife's rights that must be protected

💍

Mahr

Wholly the wife's right. Deferred mahr (dower) remains a debt of the husband until it is paid.

🍲

Maintenance

Food, clothing, medical care and basic needs, according to his means and in a fair manner.

🏠

A home

Suitable, safe accommodation, in keeping with the husband's means.

👛

Her property is hers

A wife's salary, inheritance and gifts belong to her. Do not take them without her willing consent.

🤝

Kind treatment

Live with her in kindness (an-Nisa' 4:19): respect, gentleness, fairness and no violence.

📁

Documents & records

Keep the marriage certificate, the taʿliq document, maintenance receipts and property records somewhere safe.

If divorce happens: discharge the rights

1. **Pronounce it through the court**
   Apply at the Syariah Court (s.47). Talaq outside the court without permission is an offence (s.124).

2. **Maintenance during ʿiddah**
   Obligatory in the ʿiddah of a revocable talaq, or if the former wife is pregnant; the right lapses if she is in nushuz (s.65).

3. **Outstanding mahr & mutʿah**
   Settle deferred mahr (s.57). Mutʿah (consolatory gift) is for a wife divorced without reasonable cause (s.56).

4. **A place to live**
   A former wife may remain in the matrimonial home until suitable alternative accommodation is provided, within the limits of s.71.

5. **Jointly acquired property**
   The court divides property acquired during the marriage (harta sepencarian), counting the contribution of keeping the home (s.122).

6. **Custody (hadhanah)**
   The mother has the first right to custody of a young child (s.81); then by age and the choice of a discerning child (s.84).

7. **A child's maintenance & love**
   Child maintenance remains obligatory (s.72). Access is set by the court; never use a child as a weapon.

Faraid, wasiat, hibah and debt

The estate of the deceased is dealt with in order: funeral expenses, debts, the bequest (wasiat), and then faraid, the fixed shares of inheritance (an-Nisa' 4:11–12). The Prophet ﷺ told Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas that a bequest of a third is already a great deal, and that leaving heirs well provided for is better than leaving them to beg (narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim).

- **Husband:** 1/2 of his wife's estate if she left no children; 1/4 if she did.
- **Father:** 1/6 if the deceased left a son; 1/6 plus the residue if only daughters; if no children, asabah (the residue).
- **Son:** asabah; together with a daughter, the ratio is 2 : 1. This larger share matches the duty of maintenance.
- **Wasiat:** at most 1/3, and not to an heir: "There is no bequest to an heir" (narrated by Abu Dawud and at-Tirmidhi, hasan sahih), unless the other heirs agree.
- **Hibah:** a gift made during life; take advice so that it is valid and does no injustice to the heirs.
- **Debt:** write it down and have it witnessed (al-Baqarah 2:282). A believer's soul is held by his debt until it is paid (narrated by at-Tirmidhi, sahih).

Matrimonial offences and domestic violence

Leadership in a household has never been a licence to cause harm. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ never struck a woman or a servant with his hand (narrated by Muslim, Kitab al-Fadha'il). The law, too, draws clear boundaries:

- **Polygyny without the court's permission** is an offence (Act 303 s.123); written permission must be obtained first (s.23).
- **Talaq outside the court** without permission is an offence (s.124). The penalty for each: a fine not exceeding RM1,000, imprisonment not exceeding six months, or both. For polygyny without permission, the maximum in Terengganu is RM2,000 or one year (s.126), and in Sarawak RM3,000 or two years (s.127).
- **The Domestic Violence Act 1994 (Act 521)** protects wives, former wives, children and family members from physical abuse, threats, coercion, confinement and psychological abuse. The court may issue a protection order.
- If you feel you are about to lose control, step away, perform wudu, and get counselling.
- Men can be victims of abuse too; call Talian Kasih 15999, or 999 if there is immediate danger.

Do & avoid: rights, property and the law

Do

- ✓ Pay maintenance for wife and children on time, however modest
- ✓ Keep records of maintenance payments and important documents
- ✓ Write a bequest (≤ 1/3) and a list of your assets and debts
- ✓ Settle deferred mahr and your debts as soon as you can
- ✓ Handle divorce, polygyny and custody through the Syariah Court
- ✓ Get advice from a Syarie lawyer or the religious office

Avoid

- ✗ Withholding maintenance to punish a wife or former wife
- ✗ Taking your wife's property without her willing consent
- ✗ Pronouncing talaq in anger or outside the court
- ✗ Marrying again without the court's written permission
- ✗ Keeping a child from his mother, or using him as a weapon
- ✗ Any form of violence, threat or control

Common questions

My former wife is blocking me from seeing my child. May I stop paying maintenance?

No. A child's maintenance is the child's right and the father's duty (Act 303 s.72), separate from the question of access. If access is being denied, apply to the Syariah Court for an order or for enforcement. Withholding maintenance only wrongs the child, and the arrears can be claimed as a debt (s.69).

Can I gift all my property to one child so that it is not divided by faraid?

A gift made during life is in principle valid if its conditions are met, but the Prophet ﷺ commanded fairness between children (narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim). A gift deliberately designed to deny the other heirs their rights can provoke bitter dispute and sin. Discuss it with the family and take advice from the religious office or an Islamic estate planner.

My wife works. Am I still obliged to provide maintenance?

Yes. Maintenance of a wife remains the husband's duty even when she earns. If she willingly helps with household expenses, that is her charity and her kindness, not an obligation. Talk about it openly and thank her for what she contributes.

17

CHAPTER 17

Trials, resilience and daily practice

A strong man is not one who never falls, but one who rises again with Allah.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱصۡبِرُواْ وَصَابِرُواْ وَرَابِطُواْ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تُفۡلِحُونَ ﴿٢٠٠﴾

“O you who believe, be patient, be steadfast in patience, remain ever ready, and be mindful of Allah so that you may succeed.”

Surah Ali 'Imran 3:200

When tested: work, illness and divorce

Trial is the way Allah has ordered things, not a sign that He is displeased with you. The Prophet ﷺ said that the affair of a believer is always good: if he receives a blessing he gives thanks, if hardship strikes he is patient, and both are good for him (narrated by Muslim).

- **Losing a job:** be open with your wife, rebuild the budget, avoid a hasty interest-bearing loan, and keep trying. Pray as Musa prayed: "My Lord, truly I am in need of whatever good You send down to me" (al-Qasas 28:24).
- **Trust in Allah:** if you truly relied on Allah, He would provide for you as He does the bird that leaves hungry and returns full (narrated by at-Tirmidhi, sahih).
- **Illness:** seeking treatment is sunnah; see a doctor. Every weariness, pain and sorrow that befalls a Muslim wipes away his sins (narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim).
- **Divorce:** part in kindness (al-Baqarah 2:229), discharge the rights, never speak ill of your former wife in front of the children, and get counselling.

Losing a wife or a child

Grief is not a sign of weak faith. When his son Ibrahim died, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ wept and said: "The eye sheds tears, the heart grieves, and we say nothing but what pleases our Lord" (narrated by al-Bukhari, no. 1303). He also went on remembering Khadijah and honouring her companions long after her death (narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim).

When calamity strikes, say: "Truly we belong to Allah, and to Him we return" (al-Baqarah 2:156), and pray that Allah reward you in that calamity and replace it with something better (narrated by Muslim).

- Allow yourself to grieve; do not bear it alone and in silence.
- Pay attention to the children who are grieving too; they need a father who is present.
- Postpone big decisions such as selling the house or remarrying until your heart is settled.
- If the grief drags on, you cannot sleep, or you think of harming yourself, see a doctor or call Talian Kasih 15999.

Patience and acceptance: strength within

🌱

Patience

The patient are given their reward without reckoning (az-Zumar 39:10).

🤲

Pour it out to Allah

Ya'qub said: "I only complain of my anguish and my sorrow to Allah" (Yusuf 12:86).

🧭

Trust in Allah

Whoever relies on Allah, He is enough for him (at-Talaq 65:3). The effort still goes on.

🌅

Hope

Truly with hardship there is ease (ash-Syarh 94:5).

💚

Gratitude

Count the blessings still with you: faith, family, health, friends.

🗣️

Ask for help

Talking to your wife, a trusted friend, an imam or a counsellor is not weakness.

A righteous man's day (an example)

1. **Before Subuh**
   Rise early; if you can, pray tahajud and witir, a few units. Seek forgiveness.

2. **Subuh**
   Pray in congregation at the mosque or with the family. Morning dhikr and some verses of the Qur'an.

3. **Working hours**
   Work with integrity and skill. Zohor and Asar on time, in congregation if you can.

4. **Late afternoon**
   Evening dhikr. Come home on time, exercise or move, and help with the housework.

5. **Maghrib–Isyak**
   Lead the family in prayer. Recite together or give a short reminder; ask the children how they are.

6. **Evening**
   Quality time with your wife; call your parents. Keep screens down.

7. **Before sleep**
   Wudu, ayat al-Kursi, a short self-review, and forgive everyone. Sleep early.

Chosen prayers from the Qur'an

- ✓ Good in this world and the next; spare us the punishment of the Fire (al-Baqarah 2:201)
- ✓ My Lord, expand my breast and make my task easy for me (Taha 20:25–26)
- ✓ My Lord, increase me in knowledge (Taha 20:114)
- ✓ Make me and my offspring people who establish prayer (Ibrahim 14:40)
- ✓ Forgive me, my parents and the believers on the Day of Reckoning (Ibrahim 14:41)
- ✓ Have mercy on my parents as they raised me when I was small (al-Isra' 17:24)
- ✓ Wives and children as comfort to our eyes; make us lead the God-fearing (al-Furqan 25:74)
- ✓ There is no god but You; glory be to You; I was among the wrongdoers (al-Anbiya' 21:87)
- ✓ We have wronged ourselves; without Your pardon and mercy, we are lost (al-A'raf 7:23)
- ✓ Do not let our hearts deviate after You have guided us; grant us mercy (Ali 'Imran 3:8)

Do & avoid: when you are tested

Do

- ✓ Say the istirjaʿ and pray when calamity strikes
- ✓ Be open with your wife and talk it through together
- ✓ Keep up your prayers and dhikr even when the heart is heavy
- ✓ Mind your food, sleep and exercise while under strain
- ✓ Get help from a doctor or counsellor when you need it
- ✓ Keep up the small practices, day after day

Avoid

- ✗ Bottling it all up alone in the name of 'being a strong man'
- ✗ Taking the pressure out on your wife and children
- ✗ Fleeing to cigarettes, gambling, pornography or interest-bearing debt
- ✗ Wailing, blaming fate, or giving up hope
- ✗ Making big decisions while angry or grieving
- ✗ Abandoning prayer because you are busy or sad

Common questions

Does weeping and feeling sad mean I have not accepted Allah's decree?

No. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ wept when his son died and called it mercy. What is forbidden is wailing, uttering words that dispute the decree, or despairing. Acceptance means receiving what Allah has decreed with the heart while remaining obedient, even as the tears fall.

I am extremely busy. What is the minimum practice I should hold on to?

Start with the essentials: the five daily prayers on time, a short morning and evening dhikr, a few verses of the Qur'an, one act of kindness for the family, and seeking forgiveness before sleep. The deeds most beloved to Allah are those done consistently, even if small (narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim). Then add a little at a time.

I have lost my job and I am ashamed to tell my wife. What should I do?

Be honest, calmly and soon. Your wife is a partner, not a spectator; talking it through is lighter than hiding it. Rework the spending, list the steps for finding work, and avoid interest-bearing debt. If the strain is affecting your sleep or your mood, see a doctor or a counsellor.

Do & Avoid: a summary

Do

- ✓ Put prayer first, especially in congregation, along with learning and your bond with Allah
- ✓ Be dutiful to your parents and help them when they are in need
- ✓ Lead the family with trust, sufficient maintenance (nafkah) and kind treatment
- ✓ Raise your children with affection, example and discipline without violence
- ✓ Earn lawfully; write down debts, your wasiat and a record of your property
- ✓ Look after body and mind; ask for help when you need it

Avoid

- ✗ Violence, threats or control over your wife and children
- ✗ Withholding maintenance (nafkah) or taking your wife's property without her consent
- ✗ Pronouncing talaq in anger or outside the court
- ✗ Riba, bribery and debt with no plan to repay
- ✗ Unlawful glances, pornography and mixing that oversteps the limits
- ✗ Bottling up stress alone until it harms you and your family

Daily checklist

- ✓ The five prayers on time, in congregation where possible
- ✓ Morning and evening remembrance (zikir)
- ✓ Some Qur'an, even a few verses, together with the meaning
- ✓ One kindness for your parents: a prayer, a call or a hand
- ✓ Good words and real time with your wife and children
- ✓ Work honestly; lawful earnings only
- ✓ Guard your eyes and your tongue: no backbiting, no foul speech
- ✓ Move, eat well and drink enough water
- ✓ One act of charity, however small, even a smile
- ✓ Self-review, istighfar and enough sleep

Weekly & monthly checklist

- ✓ Weekly: Friday prayer early, the sunnah bath and reading al-Kahf
- ✓ Weekly: attend a class of learning or a lesson at the mosque
- ✓ Weekly: talk with your wife about family, money and plans
- ✓ Weekly: dedicated time with each child
- ✓ Weekly: visit or call your parents, parents-in-law and relatives
- ✓ Monthly: voluntary fasts, such as Mondays and Thursdays or the white days
- ✓ Monthly: review budget, maintenance (nafkah), savings, debts and zakat
- ✓ Monthly: update your wasiat, asset list and important documents
- ✓ Monthly: check your health; regular screening as your doctor advises
- ✓ Monthly: give to the mosque, a neighbour or a charitable cause

Glossary (1)

- ✓ Qiwamah — a husband's responsibility in the family: trust, maintenance and protection
- ✓ Nafkah — maintenance: the food, clothing and housing a man must provide
- ✓ Mu'asyarah bil-ma'ruf — living together with your wife in kindness (an-Nisa' 4:19)
- ✓ Birrul walidain — doing good to your parents and being dutiful to them
- ✓ Mahr (mas kahwin) — the dower a husband must give on marriage; entirely the wife's
- ✓ Ta'liq — the husband's undertaking after the contract; breaching it can end the marriage
- ✓ Nushuz — refusing marital duties without lawful cause in the Syariah
- ✓ Hakam — arbitrators for both sides who seek to reconcile a couple (an-Nisa' 4:35)
- ✓ Talaq — dissolution of marriage by the husband; in Malaysia it must go through the court
- ✓ Rujuk — taking your wife back in the 'iddah of a revocable talaq, with no new contract

Glossary (2)

- ✓ 'Iddah — a woman's waiting period after divorce or the death of her husband
- ✓ Mut'ah — a consolatory gift to a wife divorced without reasonable cause
- ✓ Harta sepencarian — jointly acquired matrimonial property gained during the marriage
- ✓ Hadhanah — the right of custody of a young child
- ✓ Faraid — the distribution of an estate under Islamic law
- ✓ Wasiat — a bequest taking effect after death; up to 1/3, and not to an heir
- ✓ Hibah — a voluntary gift of property made during one's lifetime
- ✓ Aurat — the parts of the body that must be covered; for a man, navel to knee
- ✓ Junub — the state of major impurity that makes the obligatory bath (ghusl) due
- ✓ Ghadd al-basar — lowering the gaze away from the unlawful (an-Nur 24:30)

Helplines

🚨

Police 999

Emergencies and immediate danger. Your safety and your family's comes first.

📞

Talian Kasih 15999

Support and referral for family crises, abuse and emotional distress.

🕌

Islamic Religious Office

Family advisory unit: marriage counselling and advice on the religious ruling.

⚖️

Syariah Court

Talaq, polygyny, maintenance, mut'ah, harta sepencarian, custody (hadhanah) and faraid certificates.

📜

Legal Aid Department

Advice and representation for those who qualify, family cases included.

🩺

Health clinic / doctor

Health screening, treatment, and referral for emotional problems, addiction and depression.

CLOSING

Closing

Becoming a righteous man is not about being perfect. It is a lifelong journey: falling and rising, learning and mending yourself, with a sincere intention for the sake of Allah.

Begin with one small step from this book and keep to it steadily. The deeds Allah loves most are those done consistently, even if they are few (reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim).

May Allah have mercy on every man who reads this book, make him a trustworthy leader, a gentle husband and a father who is present, and make his home a place of calm and affection.

وَٱلَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَٰجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّٰتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَٱجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا ﴿٧٤﴾

"Our Lord, grant us from among our wives and our offspring comfort to our eyes, and make us an example for those who are mindful of You."

Surah al-Furqan 25:74