43123 - Does Obeying Husband Come Before Parents and Siblings?

the question

How important is a husband to his wife, are her sisters more important than husband, who should she listen to, how up on the importance ladder does husband comes. Is the husband more important than her own parents and sisters?

Summary of answer

In Islam, a wife's obedience to her husband takes precedence over her parents and siblings. The Quran and Hadith emphasize the husband's rights, stating that fulfilling them leads to Paradise while neglecting them may lead to Hell. Scholars agree that if there is a conflict between obeying one's husband and parents, the husband's rights take priority, except with his permission. However, a husband must exercise this authority with fairness and compassion.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Husband's Rights in Islam: A Clear Obligation

The Quran and Sunnah indicate that the husband has a confirmed right over his wife, and that she is commanded to obey him, treat him well and put obedience to him above obedience to her parents and brothers. Indeed, he is her paradise and her hell. For example, Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

- {Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has made one of them to excel the other, and because they spend (to support them) from their means.} [An-Nisa' 4:34]

- And the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “It is not permissible for a woman to fast when her husband is present except with his permission, or to allow anyone in his house without his permission.” (Narrated by Al-Bukhari, 4899)

Al-Albani (may Allah have mercy on him) said, commenting on this Hadith: Since it is obligatory for a woman to obey her husband with regard to his satisfying his desire, it is more appropriate that it be obligatory for her to obey him in that which is more important than that, namely raising their children , guiding the family, and other rights and duties. (End quote from Adab Az-Zifaf, p. 282)

- Ibn Hibban narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “If a woman prays her five (daily prayers), fasts her month (Ramadan), guards her chastity and obeys her husband, it will be said to her: ‘Enter Paradise from whichever of the gates of Paradise you wish.’” (Classed as authentic by Al-Albani in Sahih Al-Jami`, no. 660)

Ibn Majah (1853) narrated that `Abdullah ibn Abu `Awfa (may Allah be pleased with him) said: When Mu`adh came from Syria, he prostrated to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) who said, “What is this, O Mu`adh?” He said, I went to Syria and saw them prostrating to their archbishops and patriarchs, and I wanted to do that for you. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, “Do not do that. If I were to command anyone to prostrate to anyone other than Allah, I would have commanded women to prostrate to their husbands. By the One in Whose hand is the soul of Muhammad, no woman can fulfil her duty towards Allah until she fulfils her duty towards her husband. If he asks her (for intimacy) even if she is on her camel saddle, she should not refuse.” (Classed as authentic by Al-Albani in Sahih Ibn Majah)

- Ahmad (19025) and Al-Hakim narrated from Al-Husayn ibn Muhsin (may Allah be pleased with him) that his paternal aunt came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) for something and he dealt with her need, then the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Do you have a husband?” She said, “Yes.” He said: “How are you with him?” She said, “I do not neglect any of his rights except those I am unable to fulfil.” He

said: “Look at how you are with him, for he is your paradise and your hell” – i.e., he is the cause of you entering Paradise if you fulfil his rights and the cause of your entering Hell if you fall short in that.

Al-Mundhiri classed the chain of narration of this Hadith as good in At-Targhib wat-Tarhib; it was classed as authentic by Al-Albani in Sahih At-Targhib wat-Tarhib, no. 1933.

Scholarly Opinions on Conflicting Duties

If there is a conflict between obedience to one’s husband and obedience to one’s parents , then obedience to one’s husband takes priority.

Imam Ahmad (may Allah have mercy on him) said concerning a woman who has a husband and a sick mother:

Obeying her husband is more obligatory upon her than (taking care of) her mother , unless he gives her permission. (End quote from Sharh Muntaha Al-Iradat, 3/47)

In Al-Insaf, (8/362) it says: She does not have to obey her parents with regard to leaving her husband or visiting etc. , rather obedience to the husband takes priority.

There is a Hadith concerning this issue which was narrated by Al-Hakim from `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) who said: I asked the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), “Who has the most right over a woman?” He said: “Her husband.” I said, “Who has the most right over a man?” He said, “His mother.”

But this is an inauthentic Hadith, which was classed as such by Al-Albani in Da`if At-Targhib wat-Tarhib, 1212, and he criticized Al-Mundhiri for classing it as good.

And Allah knows best.