96584 - Who is the woman who is religiously committed?

the question

I am a young man who has started to think of getting married, but I have a few questions that I want to find out about before I look for a wife.

With regard to the wife, who is the woman who is religiously committed, whom the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) urged us to seek? I know that the more knowledgeable, devoted to worship, pious and involved in da'wah she is, the better, but what about the one who is less than that, such as if she only does the obligatory duties – is she considered to be religiously committed in the sense meant by the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)? What about the one who wears hijab that does not cover the face, or niqaab that does not cover the eyes – is she regarded as religiously committed?

In other words: if the man's family chooses a girl who does the obligatory duties and wears hijab that shows the face, does he have the right to refuse to propose to her because she is not religiously committed?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Advice to marry the woman who is religiously committed – who is the one who is religiously committed?

(a)

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) encouraged marrying women who are religiously committed, as he said: "Women may be married for four things: their wealth, their lineage, their beauty and their religious commitment. Choose the one who is religiously-

committed, may your hands be rubbed with dust (i.e., may your prosper).” Narrated by al-Bukhari, 5090; Muslim, 1466.

‘Abd al-‘Azeem Abaadi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

What this means is that a man who is religiously committed and of noble character should make religion his focus in all things, especially with regard to long-term matters. So the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) enjoined finding a wife who is religiously committed, which is the ultimate goal.

“may your hands be rubbed with dust” is urging him to strive hard and roll up his sleeves and seek that which is enjoined.

‘Awn al-Ma’bood (6/31).

(b)

With regard to the attributes of religiously committed women, we may list many attributes which apply to women who are described as religiously committed. These include:

1. Sound belief

This is the most important attribute. The woman who is from ahl al-sunnah wa’l-jamaa’ah will have achieved the highest and most precious characteristic of religiously-committed women, and the one who is a follower of bid’ah (innovation) and misguidance will not be one of the religiously committed women whom the Muslim is encouraged to marry, because of the bad effect that she will have on the husband or children, or on both.

2. Obedience to her husband, and not going against him if he enjoins something that is right

It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah said: It was said to the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): Which of women is best? He said: “The one who makes (her husband) happy when he looks at her, obeys him when he tells her to do something, and does not disobey him with regard to herself or her wealth in a way that he dislikes.”

Narrated by al-Nasaa’i (3131); classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Nasaa’i.

So the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) mentioned together three important characteristics to be found in the good, righteous wife. They are:

(i) When he looks at her, he is happy with her religious commitment, attitude, behaviour and appearance.

(ii) When he is away from her, she protects his honour and his wealth.

(iii) If he tells her to do something, she obeys him, so long as he does not tell her to commit sin.

3. Helping her husband in his faith and religious commitment, telling him to do acts of obedience and stopping him from doing haraam things.

It was narrated that Thawbaan said: When there was revealed about silver and gold what was revealed, they said: So what kind of wealth should we acquire? ‘Umar said: I will find out about that for you. So he mounted his camel and caught up with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and I was right behind him. He said: O Messenger of Allah, what kind of wealth should we acquire? He said: “Let one of you acquire a thankful heart, a tongue that remembers Allah and a believing wife who will help him with regard to the Hereafter.”

Narrated and classed as hasan by al-Tirmidhi (3094). In another version it says: “who will help him with his faith.” Ibn Maajah (1856). Classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Tirmidhi.

Al-Mubaarakfoori (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“A believing wife who will help him with his faith” means, with his religious commitment, by reminding him to pray, fast and do other acts of worship, and will keep him from committing zina and all other haraam deeds.

Tuhfat al-Ahwadhi (8/390).

4. She should be a righteous woman, and among the attributes of the righteous woman is that she is obedient to her Lord and fulfils her husband’s rights with regard to his wealth and herself, even when her husband is absent.

Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient (to Allah and to their husbands), and guard in the husband’s absence what Allah orders them to guard (e.g. their chastity and their husband’s property)” [al-Nisa’ 4:34].

Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahmaan al-Sa’di (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“Therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient” means: obedient to Allah, may He be exalted.

“guard in the husband’s absence” means: they are obedient to their husbands and even in their absence they guard themselves and their husband’s wealth, seeking the help of Allah in that, because no one can do that by himself or herself, for the self is inclined towards evil, but the one who puts his trust in Allah, He will suffice him and help him in his religious and worldly affairs."(Tafseer al-Sa’di p. 177)

It was narrated that Sa’d ibn Abi Waqqaas said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “There are four things that are essential for happiness: a righteous wife, a spacious home, a good neighbour and a sound means of transportation. And there are four things that make one miserable: a bad neighbour, a bad wife, a small house and a bad means of transportation.”

Narrated by Ibn Hibbaan in al-Saheehah (1232); classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in al-Silsilah al-Saheehah (282) and Saheeh al-Targheeb (1914).

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

A righteous wife will be with her righteous husband for many years, and she is the one who is

meant in the hadeeth in which the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “This world is temporary conveniences and the best of its comforts is a believing wife, who when you look at her she pleases you and if you tell her to do something she obeys you, and if you are away from her she protects you with regard to herself and your wealth.”

This is what the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) enjoined when the Muhaajiroon asked him which kind of wealth they should acquire, and he said: “Let one of you acquire a tongue that remembers Allah, a thankful heart, and a believing wife who will help him with regard to the Hereafter.” Narrated by al-Tirmidhi from Saalim ibn Abi’l-Ja’d, from Thawbaan.

She may offer the love and compassion that Allah speaks of in His Book, and the pain of separation may be harder for her than death in some cases, and harder than losing wealth or leaving one’s homeland, especially if one of them is fond of the other or they have children together who will be harmed by separation.

Majmoo’ al-Fatawa (35/299).

5. Good etiquette and knowledge

It was narrated that Abu Moosa al-Ash’ari said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “There are three who will be given a double reward: a man from among the people of the Book who believed in his Prophet, then lived to see the Prophet (S) and followed him and believed in him– he will have a double reward; and a slave who fulfils his duty towards Allah and towards his master – he will have a double reward; and a man who had a slave woman whom he fed and fed her well, and taught her and taught her well, then he set her free and married her – he will have a double reward.”

Narrated by al-Bukhari (97) and Muslim (154).

Al-Mubaarakfoori (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“and taught her” means he taught her good manners.

“and taught her well” means teaching in a kind manner.

Tuhfat al-Ahwadhi (4/218).

6. Doing acts of worship and obedience, and refraining from haraam things.

This is part of what being religiously committed means, that is mentioned in the saheeh hadeeth that we quoted at the beginning of our answer.

Al-Khateeb al-Sharbeeni al-Shaafa’i (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

What is meant by religious commitment is acts of obedience and worship, and righteous deeds, and refraining from haraam things.

Mughni al-Muhtaaj (3/127).

The one who combines obedience to her Lord, doing the obligatory duties that are enjoined upon her, and avoiding the haraam things that she is forbidden to do, with obedience to her husband, has glad tidings from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that she will be highly honoured when she enters Paradise.

According to the hadeeth: “If a woman prays her five (daily prayers), fasts her month (Ramadaan), guards her chastity and obeys her husband, it will be said to her: Enter Paradise by whichever of the gates of Paradise you wish.” Narrated by Ahmad (1664) and others; classed as hasan by al-Albaani because of another report in Saheeh al-Targheeb, as stated by al-Arna’oot in Takhreej al-Musnad.

7. She is a devout worshipper and one who fasts

Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“It may be if he divorced you (all) that his Lord will give him instead of you, wives better than you __ Muslims (who submit to Allah), believers, obedient (to Allah), turning to Allah in repentance, worshipping Allah sincerely, given to fasting or emigrants (for Allah’s sake), previously married

and virgins” [al-Tahreem 66:5]

al-Baghawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said: “will give him instead of you, wives better than you Muslims” means who submit to Allah and obey Him.

“believers” who believe in the Oneness of Allah (Tawheed).

“obedient (to Allah)” means obedient, or it was said: who offer supplication (du’aa’), or who pray.

“given to fasting or emigrants” those who fast often, or Zayd ibn Aslam said: women who migrated (for the sake of Allah), or it was said, who go with him wherever he goes.

Tafseer al-Baghawi (8/168).

Thus it is known that “religious commitment” (deen) is a comprehensive word that includes different kinds of worship, obedience, characteristics and attitudes. It is essential to note that that which we have said of these qualities and deeds is not the same with all women, rather there are different degrees thereof, and that is well known. The more modest, knowledgeable and devoted to worship a woman is, the more desirable she is as a wife.

Whatever the case, the woman who is religiously committed is the one who will help a man to protect his own religious commitment, and help him with regard to his Hereafter; she will make him happy when he looks at her and she will protect him when he is absent, and she will raise his children well.

See the answer to question no. 83777 for information on proposing to a girl who is religiously committed but not beautiful; you will find useful information there that is complementary to this answer.

And Allah knows best.