11440 - Arguments with her husband – she is asking how to become a righteous wife

the question

I am a new muslimah and am fromthe U.S. I have been raised not to let a man controll me. Now the problem is that my husband is not from here and we tend to argue alot.I know more of the laws and common everyday things more than he does.His english is not that great, so, I have to explain to him sometimes and he is used to how his country and culture are, so, in public I tend to do the talking alot.This makes him mad sometimes but I feel it is the only way to get things done right most of the time. Now we argue alot and I don't know how to be the "wife" that I am supposed to be Islamically. I am still in the learning process, but that is were I have my biggest problem.How can I change that or try to make the problem better.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

We praise Allaah for guiding you to Islam, which is the greatest blessing that Allaah can bestow upon His slaves.

We would like to tell you that Allaah has given you rights over your husband, and has enjoined upon you duties towards him. You can read question no. 10680 to find out more about this.

You have to do the duties towards your husband which Allaah has enjoined upon you. Islam regards the husband’s rights as great because of the husband’s great importance in building the Muslim household, and because Allaah has enjoined him (the husband) to look after his family’s interests and take care of them.

The Muslim woman should be wise in her dealings with her husband, because man – usually – is pleased with kind words and appreciates kind treatment. So if that comes from his life-partner, that will have a greater effect. The wise woman must also keep away from all kinds of behaviour that will offend her husband, and rid herself of every kind of action that annoys him, and try not to control him. The man has the role of qawwaam (protector and maintainer), and the responsibility is his. Making him feel that he is falling short in certain situations may make him angry and not treat his wife well. One of them said: “The best wife is the one who knows how to create harmony in her marriage and strikes a balance between obeying and respecting her husband and expressing her own strong personality.”

Your speaking to people on his behalf – because he does not speak your people’s language well – is permissible according to sharee’ah, but as stated above, you have to be wise in doing this. When doing these things you should not make him feel that he is lacking or that he is not important. Rather you should refer to him when speaking to the people, and consult with him, and do not make decisions in his presence without asking his permission. You should do that in front of the people to whom you are speaking so that he will feel that he is important. Try to make him feel that he speaks his own language better than you do, and that you complement one another; and you can help him to learn your language, and he can help you to learn his language.

This is what we advise you to do, and this is what may reduce his anger and stop him from behaving in this manner. It seems that it is only a matter of time, and you have to be careful in handling this situation until he becomes more fluent in your language and is able to do things himself, on his own.

Secondly:

In order to become a good wife, you have to learn what Allaah has enjoined upon you, so that you can do it. You have to know how righteous women behave, their attitude and the way they interact with their husbands. You will need to strive hard until you get used to it, but it is not impossible. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Knowledge comes by learning, and patience comes by trying to be patient. Whoever seeks goodness will be given it, and whoever

fears evil will be protected from it.” Narrated by al-Daaraqutni in al-Afraad; this is a hasan hadeet, as was stated by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Jaami’, 2328.

Some of these characteristics and attitudes are those of which a wise mother advised her daughter before marriage, which is comprehensive advice. We ask Allaah to help you to achieve this. That mother said to her daughter:

“O my daughter, you are leaving your house in which you grew up, and going to live with a man whom you do not know, a companion whom you are unfamiliar with. Be like a slave woman to him and he will be like a slave to you. Remember ten characteristics which will be a stored treasure for you:

The first and second are to be devoted to him and be content, listen to him and obey.

The third and the fourth are to consider his nose and eyes; do not let him see anything ugly of you, or let him smell anything but a good fragrance.

The fifth and the sixth are consider the time of his sleeping and eating, for hunger burns and disturbance of sleep causes anger.

The seventh and the eighth are to look after his wealth and to take care of his family and his dependents.

The ninth and the tenth are to look after his wealth and take care of his dependents.”

Thirdly:

The husband has to fear Allaah his Lord, and not transgress the rights of his wife. He should give her her rights as Allaah has enjoined upon him. He should realize that people vary, and that what he knows, many people are ignorant of, and what he is ignorant of, many people know. For him to have a wife who will translate for him and show him what will benefit him and how things are done is better for him than having someone with him whom he cannot trust. Knowledge can only be acquired by learning, and the way to learn is by striving and working hard.

Advise him to try to control himself at times of anger, and not to get angry unless you have transgressed one of the sacred limits of Allaah. This is the kind of anger that is regarded as praiseworthy.

And Allaah knows best.