

## **No Sex Outside Marriage**

Everything is composed of small units, just like a house is built with bricks. Likewise, society consists of multiples of a small unit, which is the family: a man and a woman are joined by a bond to form a complete unit.

Despite its dislike of divorce, Islam permits it as a necessary remedy when things go wrong. It encourages the preservation of the family because it is the most important institution in human society.

Sex outside the marriage bond reduces the family into an institution that imposes unnecessary burdens. Why should a man fork out money and take on responsibilities when he can have his pleasure in casual relations that are easily terminated, just like one uses discards a used disposable napkin?

Nothing is more detrimental to proper relations and the family institution than the radical and polarized movements that marginalise the other sex. Feminist movements start with a premise that is contrary to the nature of women. They imagine that they help women when they advocate free and unrestricted sex. They call on women to behave exactly like men, regardless of the physiological and psychological differences between the two sexes.

This has led to the emergence of a generation that considers the marital relation too restrictive, when it is the fundamental bond that promotes social security. This generation asks: 'why should one burden oneself with children and commitments?' The question is: where does this lead us?

The result is that 16% of world children grow up with only one parent. The figure is even higher in Western countries which do not encourage the continuity of the family. In the United States, the figure goes as high as 35% which means that over one-third of the children of the most powerful state in the world grow up in an unhealthy family environment. 80% of such children live in families where the mother is the only parent, while their fathers leave to find other women. In Canada, the figure is 22% while it is 21.5% in Britain. It is the children that suffer most as a result. Studies show that divorce and the breakup of the family leave adverse effects on children, as they

feel unsettled, excitable and unsociable, in addition to having problems with their studies.

Islam describes marriage in fine terms, as in the Qur'anic verse that says: 'Among God's signs is that He creates for you spouses out of your own kind, so that you might incline towards them, and He engenders love and tenderness between you. In this there are clear signs indeed for people who think.' (30: 21)

Islam rejects the culture of free and unrestricted sex which reduces the fine relationship between husband and wife to something akin to a takeaway meal. It then aims to satisfy a transitory desire, instead of being the result of a rational decision to form a life-partnership. It becomes subject to a whim of a person who has taken too much drink.

Court cases of rape show hard debate between those who consider sex under the influence of alcohol by one party as rape of the other and those who consider it a consentious action, saying that everyone is responsible for their deeds, whether they are drunk or sober.

The debate continues even when neither party is drunk because fierce contention continues in rape cases. The evidence that courts have to consider in these cases is not different from a situation in which the two parties are in consent. In today's fast-food culture, it is extremely difficult for a woman to prove that she had not consented. Hence, the overwhelming majority of rapists escape punishment. According to statistics, the figure is 80-90%.

To protect society from all these problems, Islam establishes clear boundaries, forbidding all sex outside the marriage bond. The Qur'an accurately describes the consequences of free sex: 'Do not come near adultery. It is indeed an abomination and an evil way.' (17: 32)

Marriage is the only sound relationship between man and woman. In all situations where men and women are together, as in the workplace or other social contacts, Islam requires women to wear the hijab. It thus elevates the woman from being a sex object and enables her to assume her rightful status as a participant in society without any sexual overtones.

