

CHAPTER SIX

Why can't we just have relationships or friendships with boys/girls?

The youth of today think that if you don't have a girl/boyfriend there's something wrong with you. However, Islam prohibits this type of relationships and here I will explain why.

Someone once said, 'The devil says to woman: You are half my army! You are my arrow with which I do not miss! You are my confidante! You are my messenger with whom I achieve my wants!'ⁱ

Umme Salma (may Allah be pleased with her) has related that 'I was with the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) along with Maimuna (may Allah be pleased with her) when Ibn Makhtum (may Allah be pleased with him) approached and came in to visit him, so he told us to veil ourselves.' I said, 'O Messenger of Allah, (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) is he not blind and unable to see us?' He replied "Are you blind and unable to see him?"ⁱⁱ

The Zina (fornication) of the eye is to look, the Zina of the tongue is the word, and the Zina of the foot is walking towards the desires.ⁱⁱⁱ

The Messenger of Allah said, "How who touches the palm of a woman will have burning coals placed on the palm of his hands on the day of judgement."^{iv}

The Messenger of Allah said, "For an iron rod to be driven into your head is better than touching a woman who is unlawful for you."^v

We find that Islam protects the dignity of the woman and intermingling with the opposite sex is prohibited.

Sense of boredom

A man's sense of boredom and discontent might arise even when his partner is still in the prime of her youth. It is here that the conflicts begin, with the woman attempting to the best of her ability to hold onto her husband while at the same time saving her dignity, at which point the man may resort to threats and even physical abuse, thereby leaving the woman with no alternative but to flee whenever she can.

Germaine Greer's book, 'The Whole Woman', released in 1999, states; One of the most persistent legends of the sexual revolution, that 'testing the waters' before marriage helps to determine compatibility, seems to have been definitively refuted. 'Some of the briefest marriages are those that follow a long period of cohabitation' (p.255).

So the Western culture of 'testing the waters' before marriage is only so that there is no commitment by both partners and when one of them feels like walking away for what ever reason there is nothing to stop them. Hence, leaving the other partner 'dumped' as they call it and heart broken with unwanted memories. Now because in a marriage there are commitments and both partners would have to think before making a decision of divorce, remarrying and children etc. it will take sometime in making a decision whatever it may be leaving enough time for both partners to decide and talk about the future of the family, hence, giving a warning which will not make either partner feel used or abused.

In a relationship that has no commitments (i.e. boy/girlfriend) there is little trust and more chance of domestic violence whilst in marriages there is more trust and little chance of domestic violence.

Domestic violence

In an article dealing with frightening epidemic, Richard F. Jones, a professor at the American College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, states, "*There is a plague sweeping across our nation... It is a heinous (shocking) phenomenon (fact) which cannot be overlooked or passed over lightly. On the contrary, it must be brought to an end. It is a revolting disease which be brought to an end. It is a revolting disease which no civilised nation can tolerate.*"^{vi} Jones then goes on to note, "*Every 12 seconds in the United States, a woman is subjected to this scourge (affliction). Every 12 seconds a woman is beaten, in some cases to the point of death, by a husband or lover! Every day we see the results of this abuse in our offices, our emergency rooms, and our clinics.*"^{vii}

People are not aware of what the Western women complains about today and the negative impact that the 'open' mixing of sexes has brought upon her, upon men, the family and the whole society. They shut their ears to the screams of dissatisfaction that fills the horizons of the Western world, as well as the screams of the scientists and literary men, and the fears of intellectuals and the reformists of the whole civilisation that has affected as a result of cancelling all restrictions on the mixing of sexes. Those people also forget that every nation has its personality that is formed by its beliefs and visualised it to the universe, life, existence and the existence of God, as well as its values, heritage and customs. It is not right for a society to copy another one.

An article I came across in the Asian Image, June 2004 titled 'Man bailed,' in this article it said, "M K1, 27, of Edith Street, was remanded on bail until May 27 by Blackburn magistrates charged with harassing his former girlfriend, F A.

Conditions of bail include no contact with the aggrieved, not to enter an area around her home address and not to go within the precincts of Blackburn Royal Infirmary, where she works as a staff nurse, except for medical treatment."

If a person did not get involved in this in the first place, the former boy friend would not have harassed her, nor will she have unwanted memories for the rest of her life. Because of intermixing of the sexes, feelings are hurt and hearts are broken, this is exactly what Islam is protecting each person from. But who wants to follow Islam, we would rather follow our own desires!

Lone parent

Another thing is that in a relationship outside wedlock there are no commitments the partner can be burdened with bringing up the children on her own which is very difficult for a single mother. Most cases it is the mother who keeps the children and the child never gets to see their father. Let us take a look at some government statistics:

Lone Parent Households with Dependent Children^{viii}

	All lone parent households with dependent children (1)	Male lone parent (3)			Female lone parent (3)		
		Total	Percentage in part-time employment	Percentage in full-time (2) employment	Total	Percentage in part-time (2) employment	Percentage in full-time (2) employment
ENGLAND	1,311,974	125,099	6.99	56.26	1,186,8	26.41	21.61

Notes:

(1) A dependent child is a person in a household aged 0-15 (whether or not in a family) or a person aged 16 - 18 who is a full time student in a family with parent(s)

(2) For the census, part time is defined as working 30 hours or less a week. Full time is defined as working 31 or more hours a week

(3) For the purposes of this table, a lone parent is defined as a parent with a dependent child living in a household with no other persons (whether related to that dependent child or not). This definition is to be distinguished from the standard definition of lone parent used in other tables.

Twenty-two per cent of UK families are headed by a single parent and 90 per cent of lone parents are women. Lone parenthood no longer carries a heavy social stigma, but single parents face special problems such as access to affordable child-care facilities and flexible working hours. (p. 3p. 3)²

Reports from the US show the effect that absence of a father has on nearly 22% of American children in a fatherless home is:

¹ I have used initials on purpose and have not disclosed the names.

² <http://www.independence.co.uk/publicationslist/75lone-parentfam.html>

- 63% of youth suicides are from fatherless homes^{ix}
- 90% of all homeless and runaway children are from fatherless homes^x
- 85% of all children that exhibit behavioural disorders come from fatherless homes^{xi}
- 80% of rapists motivated with displaced anger come from fatherless homes
- 71% of all high school dropouts come from fatherless homes^{xii}
- 70% of juveniles in state-operated institutions come from fatherless homes^{xiii}
- 85% of all youths sitting in prisons grew up in a fatherless home^{xiv}

These statistics translate to mean that children from a fatherless home are:

- 5 times more likely to commit suicide
- 32 times more likely to run away
- 20 times more likely to have behavioural disorders
- 14 times more likely to commit rape (boys)
- 9 times more likely to drop out of high school
- 10 times more likely to abuse chemical substances
- 9 times more likely to end up in a state-operated institution
- 20 times more likely to end up in prison

This is exactly what Islam wants to prevent in a Muslim society. Islam takes into consideration the whole picture i.e. not only just the individuals but the community at large. Would we see any of these problems in a society that follows the rules and regulations of Islam? Allah (The Exalted) knows what is good for His creation and who are we to question why we can't do this and why we can't do that?

Abortion

Let us also take a look at the figures for abortion, although there are many reasons for abortion this is one of the many reasons that many boy/girlfriends just wanted pleasure, a one night stand, no commitment, both partners are not ready to settle down etc. whatever the reason when Islam forbids something it is for the betterment of the individuals and society as a whole.

SPUC calls new abortion figures a tragedy

The Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC) says last year's England and Wales abortion statistics, just published, are evidence of a national tragedy.^{xv}

Paul Tully, SPUC's general secretary, said: *"The 2002 abortion figures for England and Wales show no significant shift in the number of recorded abortions or in the rate of abortions per 1,000 women in their main child-bearing years. These figures confirm the prediction that, by the end of this year, 6,000,000 unborn children will have been aborted in Britain since the passing of the 1967 Abortion Act. Furthermore, the government's strategy of reducing recorded abortion by promoting the morning-after pill is not working. On the contrary, unrecorded early abortions caused by the morning-after pill would undoubtedly add many thousands to these figures. 'It is a tragedy.'*"³

- The UK has the highest rate of teenage pregnancies in Western Europe. (p. 01)
- 'Teenage mothers are amongst the poorest and most vulnerable people in the UK'. (p. 10)
- The UK has one of the highest teenage pregnancy rates in the developed world, with 31 births per 1,000 girls aged between 15 and 19 in 1998. (p. 14)
- Britain is the teenage pregnancy capital of Europe; abortion is at an all-time high and we are in the grip of a huge epidemic of sexually transmitted infections which is threatening the fertility of the next generation. (p. 17)⁴

³ The figures can be reached on the Department of Health website from www.doh.gov.uk/public/sb0323.htm.

⁴ <http://www.independence.co.uk/publicationslist/75lone-parentfam.html>

We find from these facts and figures that many lives are taken, many hearts are broken, many burdened with responsibility, many children brought up without a father, and without a proper upbringing. Many children become corrupt and end up in jail.

Germaine Greer's writes; *'another consequence of the sexual revolution has been an increase in infidelity, and a consequent rise in divorce and single parenthood. Again, it is women who have shouldered most of the burden. 'In 1971, one in twelve British families was headed by a single parent, in 1986 one in seven, and by 1992 one in five' (p.202). Another consequence has been the pain of solitude. 'By the year 2020 a third of all British households will be occupied by a single individual, and the majority of those individuals will be female' (p.250).*

Personal Experience

Besides the above statistics as a teacher I personally have found that those children who are being brought up with a single parent are more aggressive than other children. The child's concentration and learning abilities are affected compared to those with both parents. The child is not given the due care and attention in their upbringing as they deserve. We find that Islam is not being a burden on people but it is to protect people whether we understand it or not.

Commitment

Prior to marriage the couple have not yet made a public, permanent commitment to one another. If, for example, a boyfriend or girlfriend should have a tragic accident and become disfigured or handicapped, the partner might choose to spend the rest of his or her life caring for the one injured. But there is no social obligation to do so. The injured party is still the responsibility of his or her family. Once a couple marries, however, they become immediate family to each other, next of kin to one another. It is in marriage that two become one--begin to share their lives, their hopes and fears, their dreams and disappointments, their finances. They make a home for themselves, and hopefully, for their children, as the fruit of their love.

Marriage means much more than sex, but the delight and joy of lovemaking is integral to marriage. The marital embrace is the result of the total self-giving of husbands and wives. Those who seek to justify premarital sex find it difficult to explain what marriage means, and what difference it makes to marry. People in love have a strong erotic attraction to each other. These God-given feelings are good and natural. But such desires are not meant to be acted upon until we are prepared to assume the responsibilities of marriage.

Premarital chastity is the best guarantee of marriage faithfulness. When premarital sex seems to be so common, it should come as no surprise that half of our marriages end in divorce. People, who do not respect the sacredness of marriage beforehand, are not likely to respect marriage afterwards. Follow the crowd into premarital sex, and don't be surprised if one day you follow the crowd into the divorce court. There is a big difference between being appropriately affectionate, and sexually arousing one another. If a couple is honest and willing, they will be able to learn how to demonstrate their affection for each other, without crossing the line into sexual stimulation.

Some may feel that the intense pleasure and release offered by petting is OK, as long as it stops short of intercourse. But sexual passion is powerful, and the more one feeds the flames of passion, the more it demands. Those who play with fire will eventually get burned. Petting is foreplay, designed by God to prepare the body for intercourse. Those who tease their bodies in this way, without intending to go "all the way," are on borrowed time. Sooner or later the deep-seated urges of the body will win out, and afterwards one is left surprised, confused, and feeling guilty.

Most people involved in a serious relationship don't start out planning, or expecting, to engage in sexual intercourse. But if they give themselves to passionate kissing or fondling, their petting becomes heavier and heavier, powerful passions cloud their reason, and they end up going all the way. As they say "it just happens."

Oppression

From the 20th century onwards, the soul of the Western women was no longer an issue; her body became the object of men's questioning. Women were told how ugly they were and the need for them to spend countless time and money in improving their facial appearances through extensive cosmetics, removing

their body odours through perfumery, reshaping their body to wafer like skeletons if they could pinch more than an inch, and finally to change their God given physique through plastic surgery, and all this to become accepted by men and worthy of their companionship!

Each couple is unique and must learn what places and situations are morally dangerous for them. If they sincerely desire to develop a chaste relationship, they will avoid situations where they know, from experience, they are likely to be weak. It is not enough to put oneself into, what is for you, an "occasion of sin," and pray to be stronger this time. Instead one must master all one's God-given strength to resist placing oneself into a situation where one knows he or she is likely to fall. That is where the battle must be fought. As they say "it is better to be safe rather than sorry".

We find that Islam is not a backward religion but a forward religion and looks at the future of the individual, family and community.

ⁱ On Disciplining the Soul. P. XLII

ⁱⁱ Ahmed & Tirmidhi

ⁱⁱⁱ Abu Dawood

^{iv} Bukhari

^v Tabarani and Baihaqi.

^{vi} "Domestic Violence: Let Our Voices Be Heard," The Journal of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, January 1993.

^{vii} ibid

^{viii} Source: 2001 Census, Crown copyright.

http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/your_council/about_leicestershire/statistics/research_info_population/research_info_census_2001/census_2001_key_statistics/census2001_key22_lone_parents.htm

^{ix} US DHHS Bureau of the census

^x Centre for Disease Control

^{xi} Criminal Justice & Behaviour, Vol 14, p. 403-26, 1978

^{xii} National Principles Association Report on the State of High Schools.

^{xiii} US Dept of Justice Special Report, Sept 1988

^{xiv} Fulton Co. Georgia jail populations, Texas Dept. of Corrections 1992

^{xv} London, 30 October 2003