

The Duties and Trusts of Marriage

The husband is charged with maintenance, protection, dealings with matters outside the home, and leadership within the family. The woman is entrusted with caring for and rearing the children, organising the home, and creating the loving atmosphere within the home.

A new husband needs to remember that his wife is not his mother – she may not ever cook like his mother, or do for him the things his mother did, or think like his mother, or make allowances for him like his mother.

A new wife needs to remember that her husband is not her father – he may never think like her father, make allowances for her like her father, do the things her father did, or have any of the same skills that her father had.

Fathers and mothers (God willing) love their children without reservations, and forgive them all sorts of awful conduct, and plead for them, and make allowances for them. Even if their children are awful, they (God willing) never cease to love them. They will not 'divorce' them. On the contrary, husband and wives are 'new' to each other; nobody has the *right* to be loved if they are not making themselves lovable. **You cannot force someone to love you. You cannot force someone to respect you.** Love and respect have to be earned – both by your chosen life-partner, and also by your in-laws (who will not see you in the same light as your own parents).

Islam does offer a few rights, however:

- A Muslim woman has the right not to be pushed to work in order to gain money, although work and trade are not prohibited to her, provided such work is within the framework of modesty and does not jeopardise the happiness and contentment of husband or family.
- A Muslim man has the right to expect his wife to be faithful and loyal to him, and vice versa.
- A Muslim man has the right to be head of his household
- A Muslim woman has the right to expect the head of her household to treat her with respect and love, and not become tyrannical or a foolish spendthrift, etc.
- A Muslim woman has the right to expect her man to provide adequate funds for her housekeeping.
- Muslim men and women have the right to have their sexual desires satisfied within the marriage, since they have promised never to seek this outside the marriage. However, neither has the right to cause pain, or be abusive or inconsiderate when a spouse is tired or ill.
- A Muslim man has the right to expect his wife to care and cherish for him and their children, to protect his good name, and provide him with support and comfort.