103845 - The meaning of “Bad statements are for bad people (or bad women for bad men) and bad people for bad statements (or bad men for bad women)”; and is it possible to find a wife who is righteous both outwardly and inwardly?

the question

I wrote this message after I read an essay. In its end a situation was mentioned: Al-laalkaa’e narrated that when a man mentioned A’yesha, may Allah be pleased with her, in a bad manner in Al-hasan ben zaid’s presence, he ordered to kill this man by sword. The Alwiyyoun said: he is one of our group. So Al-hasan said: “we seek refuge with Allah from this, this man slandered the prophet, peace be upon him. Allah Almighty says (interpretation of the meaning): “Bad statements are for bad people (or bad women for bad men) and bad people for bad statements (or bad men for bad women). Good statements are for good people (or good women for good men) and good people for good statements (or good men for good women) such are innocent of that which people say: For them is pardon and a bountiful provision”

So if A’yesha may Allah be pleased with her is a bad woman then the prophet, peace be upon him is also bad. Thus, this man is infidel; kill him by sword, so they killed him.

What is the explanation of this verse “Bad statements are for bad people (or bad women for bad men) and bad people for bad statements (or bad men for bad women). Good statements are for good people (or good women for good men) and good people for good statements (or good men for good women) such are innocent of that which people say: For them is pardon and a bountiful provision”

I had a personal experiment myself; I married a girl who I though is religious, my aim was to establish a righteous Muslim home in which I try my best to follow the approach of our honourable prophet, peace be upon him, and his companions. In brief, I did not ask about her very well before marriage, I found her to be very vile. May Allah forgive her and me. Most of her talk was lies and tricks. I did not feel she has any passion for Islam or for righteousness. I divorced her after I knew she is not going to change herself, we have one child.

I love Islam too much and I love anyone I feel he is religious, and I have strong hatred to those who are immoral especially if they insist on sinning or announce their sins.

My marriage and divorce experiment was the bitterest I had in my life. I now fear I repeat the bitter experience again. I wish to find who will help me be more religious. How can I be assured while people are content to show opposite of who they really are? Especially when it comes to such matters as marriage.

Before I married that woman I prayed istikhara many times and consulted Allah, I was sometimes crying and asking Allah to guide me, especially when I see bad signs from her side or from her family that indicates they are not religious people.

I am not trying to say it is not my fault, or to show myself as the better one in this relationship. By I love Islam, by Allah, and am very jealous for Islam, and I hate lying strongly. Briefly, I do not think it is in my hands to get the right one even if I ask very well and collect information about the girl or try to test her personality before marriage. Unless if Allah has mercy on me and blesses me with giving me a righteous wife.

Marriage nowadays became very difficult. I, by Allah, think it is of the most difficult matters, and the most difficult part of it is finding a moral and religious wife. I think it is impossible unless Allah permits. When I read or hear the mentioned verse, I feel very sad; does it mean that I chose my previous wife because I deserve this? I know it is a test from Allah, but I want to have a clear explanation of the verse and, if possible, the rest of my queries.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

The mufassireen differed concerning the meaning of the verse (interpretation of the meaning):

“Bad statements are for bad people (or bad women for bad men) and bad people for bad statements (or bad men for bad women)”

[al-Noor 24:26]

Some of them said that it refers to bad and good words, so the meaning of the verse is: Evil words are for evil men, and evil people are for evil words, and good words are for good people, and good people are for good words.

Others said that it refers to evil and good actions. So the meaning of the verse is: Evil actions are for evil men, and evil people are for evil actions, and good actions are for good people, and good people are for good actions.

The third opinion concerning this verse is that evil and good refer to people with regard to marriage. So the meaning of the verse is: evil women are for evil men, and evil men are for evil women, and good women are for good men, and good men are for good women.

There is no reason why the verse cannot be understood in all these senses, although the most obvious meaning is the first one mentioned, and this is the opinion of the majority of mufassireen. The second view comes next.

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

“Bad statements are for bad people (or bad women for bad men) and bad people for bad statements (or bad men for bad women)” means all evil men, women, words and actions that are fit for evil and in accordance with it or accompanied by it and in harmony with it, and all good men, women, words and actions that are fit for good and in accordance with it or accompanied by it and in harmony with it. This explanation is general in meaning and nothing is excluded from that. One of the greatest application of this is that with regard to the Prophets – especially the Messengers of strong will, and especially their leader, Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), who is the best among all the good of creation – only the best of women are suitable for them. So the one who slanders ‘Aa’ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) in this manner is slandering the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), which was the aim of the slander (al-ifk) fabricated by the hypocrites. The mere fact that she was the wife of the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) confirms that she was nothing but good and pure and

innocent of these reprehensible matters.

So how about when she is the siddeeqah of women, the best, most knowledgeable and purest of them, the beloved of the Messenger of the Lord of the Worlds? Revelation did not come down to him when he was under the same cover as any of his wives except her. Then the verse states clearly, so that there will be no opportunity for any propagator of falsehood to say anything and no room for any doubt whatsoever:

“such (good people) are innocent of (every) bad statement which they say”

[al-Noor 24:26]

The reference is primarily to ‘Aa’ishah, and then to the believing chaste women.

“for them is forgiveness” [al-Noor 24:26]

meaning, forgiveness for all of their sins.

“and Rizqun Kareem (generous provision, i.e. Paradise)” i.e., in Paradise, coming from the Generous Lord.

Tafseer al-Sa’di (p. 563).

Secondly:

What you have quoted about the killing of a man who slandered ‘Aa’ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) is true. This is what the Muslim rulers should do, which is to execute everyone who slanders ‘Aa’ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her), because impugning the honour of ‘Aa’ishah is disbelief in the Qur’aan, and impugning the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him). Either of these actions implies kufr which puts a person beyond the pale of Islam, and the one who does it deserves to be executed for apostasy.

In al-Mawsoo’ah al-Fiqhiyyah (22/185) it says:

The fuqaha’ are unanimously agreed that the one who slanders ‘Aa'ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) has disbelieved the clear, unambiguous statement of the Qur’aan that was revealed concerning her, and hence he is a kaafir. Allaah says – in the hadeeth of the slander (al-ifk), after Allaah declared that she was innocent – “Allaah forbids you from it and warns you not to repeat the like of it forever, if you are believers” [al-Noor 24:18]. So the one who goes back to that is not a believer.

Are all the other wives of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) regarded as being like her?

The Hanafis and the Hanbalis, according to the correct opinion, which was favoured by Ibn Taymiyah, say that they are all like her. They quoted as evidence the verse in which Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Bad statements are for bad people (or bad women for bad men) and bad people for bad statements (or bad men for bad women). Good statements are for good people (or good women for good men) and good people for good statements (or good men for good women): such (good people) are innocent of (every) bad statement which they say; for them is forgiveness, and Rizqun Kareem (generous provision, i.e. Paradise)”

[al-Noor 24:26]

Slandering them implies slander of the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and impugning his honour, which is forbidden.

The other view, which is that of the Shaafa’is and the other view of the Hanbalis, is that they – apart from ‘Aa’ishah – are like the rest of the Sahaabah; the one who reviles them is to be flogged, because he is a slanderer. End quote.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-‘Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

Slandering ‘Aa’ishah with regard to that of which Allaah has declared her innocent is kufr, because it is disbelieving the Qur’aan. With regard to slandering other wives of the Prophet (peace and

blessings of Allaah be upon him) there are two scholarly opinions, the sounder of which is that it is kufr, because it is a slander against the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), because “Bad statements are for bad people (or bad women for bad men).”

Majmoo’ Fataawa al-Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (5/p.86)

See also the answer to question no. 954.

Thirdly:

It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) 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 you prosper).” Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 5090; Muslim, 1466.

It is not impossible for a man to find a righteous wife who will help him to obey Allaah, serve him, raise his children, and look after his wealth and house. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) advised men to marry the woman who is religiously committed. If it were not possible or within a man’s capability to find that religiously committed woman, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) would not have advised him to marry her. He is the one who said in the same hadeeth that some men marry women for their beauty, and some marry them for their lineage or their wealth. Men choose women according to their own desires and traditions and customs, but his advice to all men is to look for the woman who is religiously committed and marry them, because in marrying such a woman there is a great deal of good which the man will see in himself, his house and his children.

You should not give up hope of finding a woman who is religiously committed and of good character. The Muslim ummah is still doing well and there are still Muslim families which are raising women who are of good character and committed to Islam, and are brought up in this manner.

The failure of one experience of marriage does not mean that the same will happen to all subsequent marriages. What happened to you may have been a punishment to you because of your shortcomings in asking and finding out about the woman whom you married.

People know one another and mix with one another, so the state of a family and its members will not be hidden from their relatives and neighbours. The members of the family mix with people in the mosque and school and when visiting people, so a righteous woman will be known and distinguished from the opposite, and the religiously committed man will be known and distinguished from his opposite, by their adhering to regular prayer, and adherence to outward shar'i laws, and their attitude in dealing with others. What one of them hides inwardly is something that no one can know, and the one who is deceived by outward righteousness when a person is inwardly corrupt is not to be blamed, because our Lord does not require us to look at what is hidden inside people.

Moreover, what is applicable to the women among whom you are looking for a life partner is also applicable to you. How do people know who you really are, or what you are like inwardly? Guardians have been advised to give their female relatives in marriage to men who are religiously committed and of good character, based on what they can see, as well as asking and finding out from the relatives of the suitor. Whatever wrong impressions and deceit may happen on the part of the woman may also happen – and more so – on the part of the man. So you should not be anxious or worry because of your first marriage. All you have to do now is look carefully, and ask good people about good families who raise their daughters to obey Allaah and with good morals and attitudes. Then you can focus your questions about the one whom you want to marry from those families, by asking her friends and classmates about her commitment and righteousness, and about her attitude and interactions with others. Thus you will have followed the advice of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), and we hope that you will not be disappointed by her and that they will not be disappointed by you.

We ask Allaah to help you to make a good choice and to bless you with a righteous wife who will keep you chaste and you will keep her chaste, and you will treat her well and she will treat you

well, and to bless you with good and righteous children.

For more information on the qualities to be sought in the wife, please see the answers to questions no. 26744 and 10376.

And Allaah is the Source of strength.