

Paradigm Shift On Thought Muslim Women's Perspectives

Edited by:
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CHAPTER 7

OBEDIENCE OF THE WIFE: A THEOLOGICAL CONTEXTUAL APPROACH FADZILAH DIN

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Introduction

The obedience of the wife is discussed both in books of *akhlāq* or etiquette of right conduct and in the traditional *tafāsīr*. The significance of *akhlāq* literature is that it is written for a general audience for the practical purpose of educating them about their social and family obligations and responsibilities. The content is supposed to appeal to religious emotion. In this literature, a great number of *aḥādīth* are cited which ‘persuade’ by means of reciting the punishment of hell (*al-nār*) or the condemnation of sin and the reward of paradise (*al-jannah*), such as a *hadīth* that says any woman who dies while her husband is pleased with her enters paradise.¹ In

¹ These *aḥādīth* and those with similar import are quoted in Akhlaq Husain, *Ibubapa Muslim*, [translated into Malay by Mustafa Ramadhan from the English version ‘Muslim Parents: Their Rights and Duties’], (Kuala Lumpur: Syarikat Ali Imran, 1987), p. 17, 21; Muhammad Yusuf Islahi, *Etiquettes of Life in Islam*, (Lahore: