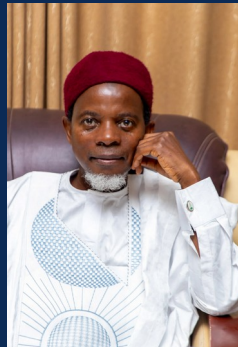




A REFLECTIVE HANDBOOK ON MARRIAGE & FAMILY

Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus

An Islamic Worldview of Marriage, Gender Differences and Family Harmony



Imam Onike Morufu Abdul-Azeez

Chief Missioner, NASFAT · Registered Shariah Adviser, Securities Commission Malaysia

A Note from the Author

Dr. John Gray's *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus* remains one of the most widely read books on relationships, offering practical insight into how men and women communicate, express emotion, and resolve conflict differently. Its popularity reflects a genuine human need: to be understood by the one we love.

This handbook takes that same conversation and grounds it in the worldview of Islam. Rather than beginning from difference — as though men and women are visitors from separate worlds — the Qur'an begins from unity: a single soul, from which both were created. What the modern text frames as psychology, Islam frames as amanah (trust), taqwa (God-consciousness) and rahmah (mercy).

Each chapter that follows takes a theme from the popular discourse on gender differences and re-reads it through the Qur'an, the Sunnah of the Prophet ṣallā Allāhu 'alayhi wa sallam, and the wisdom of the Companions and the broader Islamic and cultural tradition. My hope is that every husband, wife, counsellor and student of the family finds here not just a comparison of ideas, but a practical companion toward a home built on sakīnah (tranquility), mawaddah (love) and rahmah (mercy).

And Allah knows best.

Imam Onike Morufu Abdul-Azeez

Table of Contents

- 1** From “Different Planets” to “One Origin”
- 2** Emotional Needs vs Spiritual Needs
- 3** Masculinity in Islam vs Modern Misinterpretation
- 4** Femininity: Not Weakness, But Influence
- 5** Silence vs Expression: The Islamic Balance
- 6** Conflict Resolution: Mercy Over Ego
- 7** Love Languages vs Acts of ‘Ibādah
- 8** Leadership (Qiwāmah) Misunderstood
- 9** The Digital Age: A Critical Modern Insight
- 10** Metaphor: Two Rivers Meeting
- 11** Arabic Wisdom
- 12** The Real Islamic Equation
- 13** Deep Reflection Questions
- 14** Closing Reflection

From “Different Planets” to “One Origin”

Dr. Gray’s book begins by emphasising difference — men and women as visitors from separate worlds, needing a phrasebook to understand one another. Islam begins somewhere else entirely: with unity of origin.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ

Sūrah an-Nisā’, 4:1

“He created you from a single soul.”

Islam reframes the discussion

- Not “strangers trying to understand each other”,
- but two halves from one essence trying to return to harmony.

Emotional Needs vs Spiritual Needs

The book focuses on emotional validation and communication styles. Islam adds a deeper layer beneath both.

- *Spiritual alignment determines emotional stability. When hearts are connected to Allah, misunderstandings reduce naturally.*

“The heart that is filled with love of Allah finds ease with people.”

— Saying of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib

The deeper diagnosis

- *Many marital conflicts today are not communication problems — but spiritual emptiness problems.*

Masculinity in Islam vs Modern Misinterpretation

The book often portrays men as withdrawn, solution-driven and emotionally distant. Islam refines this picture of masculinity.

The Prophet ṣallā Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam cried, listened, and served his family — tenderness was never a contradiction of his strength.

“I am certainly amazed that a man can be with his family like a child, but if he is called forth, he is found to be a true man.”

— Saying of ‘Umar ibn al-Khattāb (Abu Amina Elias, 2026)

The Islamic balance

- *Softness at home. Strength outside.*

Femininity: Not Weakness, But Influence

The book presents women as emotional and expressive. Islam elevates this quality rather than diminishing it.

- *Emotional intelligence is power, not weakness.*

Historical Insight

The Prophet ṣallā Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam listened to women in family matters and in political matters, including treaty contexts.

- *Islam recognises: women shape decisions, not just express feelings.*

Silence vs Expression: The Islamic Balance

The popular narrative says: men go silent, women talk more. Islam teaches a more deliberate balance.

مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلْيُكَلِّمْ خَيْرًا أَوْ لِيَصْمُتْ

“Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should speak good or remain silent.”

— Agreed upon (al-Bukhārī and Muslim)

Not one extreme or the other

- *Not silence always. Not expression always. But purposeful communication.*

Conflict Resolution: Mercy Over Ego

Modern advice stops at “understand your differences.” Islam adds a further, harder discipline: control of the ego (nafs).

لَيْسَ الشَّدِيدُ بِالصُّرَعَةِ، إِنَّمَا الشَّدِيدُ الَّذِي يَمْلِكُ نَفْسَهُ عِنْدَ الْغَيْظِ

“The strongest among you is the one who controls himself in anger.”

— Abū Hurayrah, agreed upon

وَالْكَاظِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ

Sūrah Āl ‘Imrān, 3:134

“Those who restrain anger and pardon people.”

➤ Marriage survives not by understanding alone — but by forgiveness.

Love Languages vs Acts of ‘Ibādah

The book speaks of emotional needs and appreciation. Islam transforms these same everyday acts into worship.

► *Providing, caring and listening are all forms of ṣadaqah (charity).*

“Even the morsel you place in your wife’s mouth is charity.”

— Agreed upon

إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى يَقُولُ: أَيُّنَ الْمُتَحَابِّينَ بِجَلَالِي؟ الْيَوْمَ أُظِلُّهُمْ فِي ظِلِّ عَرْشِي، يَوْمَ لَا ظِلَّ إِلَّا ظِلِّي

“Where are those who loved one another for My sake? Today I will shade them in the shade of My throne, on a day when there is no shade but Mine.”

— Ḥadīth Qudsī, Muslim

إِذَا تَزَوَّجَ الْعَبْدُ فَقَدْ اسْتَكْمَلَ نِصْفَ الدِّينِ، فَلْيَتَّقِ اللَّهَ فِي النِّصْفِ الْبَاقِي

“When a man marries he has fulfilled half of the religion; so let him fear God regarding the remaining half.”

— Anas ibn Mālik

► *Islam spiritualises affection, service and intimacy.*

Leadership (Qiwāmah) Misunderstood

The book avoids the language of hierarchy altogether. Islam introduces qiwāmah — but not as the book’s absence of the idea might suggest.

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ

Sūrah an-Nisā', 4:34

“Men are the maintainers/protectors of women”

What it does not mean

- *Not domination. Not superiority.*

What it means

- *Responsibility and accountability.*

“The best among you is the one who is most just.”

— **Saying of ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān**

- *Leadership is justice, not control.*

The Digital Age: A Critical Modern Insight

If the book were written today, it would likely note a new pattern: men escaping into screens, women seeking attention online. Islam warned of the deeper root of this centuries in advance.

يَعْلَمُ خَائِنَةَ الْأَعْيُنِ وَمَا تُخْفِي الصُّدُورُ

Sūrah Ghāfir, 40:19

“Allah knows the betrayal of the eyes and what hearts conceal.”

► *Digital behaviour affects trust, intimacy and spirituality alike.*

Metaphor: Two Rivers Meeting

Man as one river. Woman as another. What happens when two rivers meet depends entirely on how they meet.

IF THEY CLASH

There is flood.

IF THEY ALIGN

There is fertility and life.

Bí a bá fẹ́ kí ilé pé, a kùí fi ọkàn méjì gbé e. “If you want a home to last, you cannot build it with two opposing hearts.”

— Yoruba Proverb

لَيْسَ خَيْرُكُمْ مَنْ عَلَبَ أَهْلَهُ، بَلْ مَنْ رَفَقَ بِهِمْ

“The best of you is not the one who overpowers his family, but the one who is gentle with them.”

The Real Islamic Equation

THE BOOK SAYS

Difference + Understanding = Harmony

ISLAM SAYS

Difference + Taqwā + Mercy + Patience = Barakah

Deep Reflection Questions

Take a moment, before continuing, to ask yourself honestly:

- Do I react based on ego, or based on taqwā?
- Do I listen to respond — or do I listen to understand?
- Is my home a place of sakīnah (tranquility), or a place of tension?

POWERFUL CLOSING

*Men are not from Mars.
Women are not from Venus.*

They are both from Allah...
returning to Allah...
and tested through each other.

FINAL STRIKING LINE

*The success of marriage is not in discovering differences — but in managing them
with faith, discipline, and mercy.*



Imam Onike Morufu Abdul-Azeez
The Onike Framework