

Surah 38. Sad

Asad: having beside them well-matched mates of modest gaze.⁴⁶

Malik: and beside them there shall be bashful virgin companions of equal age.

Mustafa Khattab:

And with them will be maidens of modest gaze and equal age.

Pickthall: And with them are those of modest gaze, companions.

Yusuf Ali: And beside them will be chaste women restraining their glances (companions) of equal age.⁴²⁰⁹

4210

Author Comments

46 - Lit., "such as restrain their gaze", i.e., are of modest bearing and have eyes only for their mates (Razi). This allegorical reference to the delights of paradise occurs in the Qur'an three times (apart from the above instance, which is chronologically the earliest, in [37:48](#) and [55:56](#) as well). As an allegory, this phrase evidently applies to the righteous of both sexes, who in the life to come will be rejoined with those whom they loved and by whom they were loved in this world: for, "God has promised the believers, both men and women, gardens through which running waters flow, therein to abide, and goodly dwellings in gardens of perpetual bliss" ([9:72](#)); and, "anyone - be it man or woman - who does [whatever he can] of good deeds and is a believer withal, shall enter paradise" ([4:124](#), with similar statements in [16:97](#) and [40:40](#)). Finally, we are told in [36:56](#) that in this paradise "will they and their spouses on couches recline" - i.e., will find peace and inner fulfilment with and in one another. (For an explanation of the term *atrab* rendered by me as "well-matched", see note [15] on [56:38](#).)

4209 - Cf. xxxvii. 48 and n. 4064, and xxxvi. 56, n. 4002. As we conceive happiness in this life, it is not complete if it is only solitary. How we hanker after some one who can share in our highest joy! That feeling is also figured here.

4210 - To make the social happiness complete, we want companionship of equal age. Age and youth cannot be happy together. It is not suggested that in the Timeless state figured here, there will be old age; but if it is possible to conceive of temperamental differences then, the company will be so arranged that it

will be congenial. Or we can accept the type of youth and freshness as common to all in that happy state.

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