

The Duties of a Daughter-in-Law

English translation:

A: So Ropa, can you explain to us what a daughter-in-law is, like what Rutendo said? Also Rutendo mentioned about sweeping the yard. I am sure the people here (USA) do not understand what that means. Can you explain what it means, what kind of custom it is and what the daughter-in-law will be wearing and doing?

Ropa: Thank you. Uhh, the difference between the ways a daughter-in-law is viewed in Zimbabwe and here (USA) is that, when the daughter-in-law becomes part of the family, she is viewed as someone who should be respected. She is supposed to take a position of a mother and also a daughter-in-law should have the character and morals that are expected in our Shona culture. I would say in Zimbabwe, a daughter-in-law should be someone who has respect and a person who shows morals that she came from a good family. She has been counseled before. Thank you.

A: So a daughter-in-law is a person who gets married to go and live with the husband's family?

Ropa: Yes.

A: Alright. That's okay. So Rutendo said a daughter-in-law wakes up in the morning and wraps a cloth around herself, *otsvaira chivanze*. Can you explain to me what *kutsvaira chivanze* is and what is a *chivanze*?

Ropa: These are duties that expected of a daughter-in-law. Eh usually, a daughter-in-law is expected to wake up every morning.

A: Like what time?

Ropa: Before the cock crows. Ha ha ha.

A: Before the cock crows? Alright.

Ropa: Before the cock crows, I mean, the cock usually crows a little before it gets clear outside. This means, we usually say in *mambakwedza*, meaning very early in the morning.

A: Around 5:00 am.

Ropa: Around 5:00. So the daughter-in-law is expected to wake up, most of the people will still be sleeping, and takes her wrapping cloth and head scarf, and wears them. She takes a broom. *Ruvanze* is that place on a home which is supposed to be swept. It is

outside of the house where there can be trash or leaves or anything. This is a place which is expected to always be clean because *chivanze* gives people an impression of what the people who live in that home are like. Therefore *ruvhanze* should always be clean. So it is the daughter-in-law's responsibility to make sure that *ruvanze* is clean.

A: What does she use to clean?

Ropa: She uses a broom.

A: Can you explain what the broom looks like

Ropa: A broom. I would say, for instance, a tree. A tree has branches. So, now as we go to the smaller branches of the tree, those that are not hard [to break], as we head towards the leaves, those branches can be used as a broom. Sometimes people use hard grass to make a broom. A broom can be made in different ways. But a broom is a thing that makes one to be able to move the trash as you sweep.

A: Alright. So those are the responsibilities of a daughter-in-law.

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