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# Can these difficulties be resolved?

The aforementioned few points were those which impact the marital life of this generation. Bearing in mind that every pain has a cure and water quenches thirst, a question is raised as to what is the solution to such marital problems? These problems can be resolved in two ways:

- 1. Non-Islamic way
- 2. Islamic way

Both ways have been briefly explained further.

# 1. Non-Islamic Way

## a. Magic

Some people bank on magic or filthy practices, approach various Babas and waste not just their time and money but their faith and beliefs as well.

Hazrat Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) has narrated on the authority of his grandfather Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.):

"Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said in reply to a question by a lady who asked him (s.a.w.a.) that my husband is cruel towards me. I have resorted to magic to woo him and win him over. Is this right?

Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) replied: Woe be unto you! You have disturbed the seas and earth. The greatest angels of Allah and the angels of the heavens and the earth are cursing you.

On hearing this, the lady started fasting, praying, chopped off her hair and wore coarse clothes (so that Allah would forgive her).

When the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was informed of this he said: Allah will not forgive her by all this." 1

Such things are quite common these days. People believe in black magic, get influenced by the various

advertisements which are displayed, believe in such things instead of Allah and His Messenger, keep running after it forever and make matters worse. Islam has strictly forbidden such magic. If magic could resolve problems, then there wouldn't exit so many differences and households wouldn't have been destroyed. Hence, such things should be strictly refrained from.

### **b.** Restrictions

Some people are under a common misconception that being strict in the house would resolve issues. This is just a presumption and is far away from reality. Apart from this Islam has not permitted use of force and being oppressive.

When Allah sent Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) to a tyrant, oppressive person like Firaun, who claimed Godhood, He ordered,

Then (you and Haroon) speak to him a gentle word.

One of the characteristics of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) has been described as

and had you been rough, hard hearted, they would certainly have dispersed from around you.

When Islam emphasis on a soft behavior with disbelievers, polytheists, claimants of Godhood, then how can it permit strictness in domestic matters. Based on this –

- i. Islam has not permitted injustice and oppression
- ii. We will be answerable for our injustice and oppression on the Day of Qiyamat
- iii. Relationships will get ruined further
- iv. Fear halts the road to progress
- v. Spoils the atmosphere at home
- vi. It will result in the upbringing of children
- vii. Allah and the Prophet will be displeased
- viii. Blessings and bounties will reduce

### c. Complaints and Legal Action

Some people start complaining, sometimes to relatives or sometimes they even reach the police. Matters reach the court. Things are not resolved by this. On the contrary they get worse. Those who benefit are police and lawyers and we are left with loss of time, money and self-esteem.

Apart from this, it also leads to a lot of forbidden acts such as lying, taking false oath, giving false testimony, slandering, accusations and other prohibited acts. Because as per the Indian Judicial System, a case is not considered to be strong until one truth is accompanied by a number of lies, accusations, false allegations and all these forbidden acts are to be repeatedly performed.

Islam has given an oppressed person the right to complain but has not permitted lies, accusations and false charges. Rarely and seldom are such incidents heard that the situation improves after taking the matter to the court. Rather, even a faint ray of hope dwindles away. Nevertheless, even if the court rules in favor of a divorce, then too the divorce cannot be considered valid because it does not fulfill the conditions for divorce. Marital relations are not cut-off due on account of such divorces.

# 2. Islamic Way

## a. Dua and Tawassul

No one is more merciful upon the creatures than Allah. Allah and His Messenger never wish to see a family being destroyed. A lady came into the presence of Hazrat Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) and said: O son of the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.)! My husband does not like me. What should I do?

Imam (a.s.) replied:

Go and recite Salat al-Layl (night prayers)

After a few days later that lady came to Imam (a.s.) and said: O son of the Messenger of Allah! I'm extremely grateful to you. Now my husband holds me dear. He does not love anyone other than me.

Imam (a.s.) said:

"May Allah have mercy on a woman who gets up in the morning and wakes her husband up as well and may Allah have mercy on a man who gets up in the morning and wakes his wife up as well (for Salat al-Layl)." 2

Allah converts the hearts. Indeed, Allah has more authority over us than what we have upon ourselves.

Praying to Allah results in changing of the hearts, hatred gets converted to love and enmity transforms into friendship.

### b. Imagine ourselves in that position

Ameerul Momineen Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) willed to his son:

My dear son, listen to my will carefully. Make yourself as a criterion between you and others. Wish for others what you would want for yourself. Dislike those things for others what you would dislike for yourself. Do not oppress anyone just as you do not like being oppressed. Behave with others in a manner that you would want others to behave with you.3

Hazrat Imam Ja'far Sadig (a.s.) said:

It is written in the Torah 'O son of Adam! Be the way you want to. You will be treated in the same way as you treat (others)'.4

I'm unable to get a good sleep since the past few days. I feel uncomfortable, don't' feel hungry. I'm taking local medicines but it doesn't seem to have any effect. All of it is due to my mother-in-law. She is very ill-behaved. Her expectations are too high. Can't figure out what she wants from me. Even after doing everything she is always upset with me and keeps taunting me. When I'm not at home she opens my cupboard and starts searching for something. She scatters everything that I would have arranged. Something or the other goes on all the time. Life is a living hell.

I can't tolerate it any more. There is a limit to patience. I've already told my husband to choose either of us. I can't stay with his mother. He should look for a separate house or send his mother to his brother's place. After all even his brother has some rights. Please, have mercy on me. I just can't bear this anymore.

One day, when my 12 year old son came back from school, he puts his arms around me and said, 'Dear mother. When I grow up I will not marry.' I asked why. He said, 'because one day even I'll have to ask you to leave this house. If my wife does not agree to stay with you then what will I do? It is quite possible that she might say either me or your mother. What will I do that day?'

I was taken aback and went breathless for a moment. I was lost in my thoughts for some time. I decided to be brave and portray the qualities of a good daughter-in-law. I changed myself.

Now I don't allow my mother-in-law to work in the kitchen. In fact, I eat with her, bear with her, serve her, I also advise my husband to look after her and tell him that whenever he's back home, he should

first go to his mother's room, meet her and sit beside her.

Within a few weeks of this, the atmosphere at my place changed and I became tension-free. I got rid of the medicines, life was enjoyable and at peace. All the past issues were resolved. One day my mother-in-law told me in a loving tone, 'My dear. I used to previously consider you as my enemy but now I realize that I was mistaken.'

If we wish to see how our children will treat us in our old age, we need to see how we behave with our in-laws today. Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said: *Be good to your parents so that your children are good to you.* 

#### c. Mutual Discussion

It is a fact that if the husband and wife do not wish to mend relations and stay together, the admonishments of the greatest of saints will have no effect. If the following points can be of some help:

- i. None of them are infallible. Both of them can make the biggest of mistakes and that too repeatedly
- ii. Whatever mistakes are made by both, they should seek forgiveness from each other and try to compensate for it later. Hazrat Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) said:

Seeking forgiveness is a proof of the intellect5 and

One who seeks forgiveness in the best way deserves to be forgiven 6

iii. Accepting Apology. Allah revealed to Hazrat Moosa (a.s.): *O Moosa! I have done three things for you.*Now you do three things in return. Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) asked: What are those things O Lord? Allah revealed:

First – I have bestowed you with numerous bounties but never bragged about it. Therefore, whenever you give anything to my creatures don't boast about it.

Second –If you seek forgiveness from me for whatever you do, I accept your apology. When my creatures oppress you and later seek forgiveness, then accept their apology.

Third – I do not expect you to act now for the future. Even you should not seek your future sustenance now.7

Hazrat Ameerul Momineen Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) said:

He recognizes Allah the most, the one who forgives people the most even if there is no logical reason for it (forgiveness).8

He (a.s.) also said:

The worst person is the one who neither accepts the apology of others and nor does he forgive sins.9

Hence, accepting an apology is a sign of a good person and failing to accept it is a sign of an evil person. We all want to be enumerated among the good doers.

- iv. Reformation of defects
- a. When you wish to recount the defects and wrong-doings to a person then begin by praising the good qualities of that person and thank him for his good behavior.
- b. All the defects should not be spoken about together. Rather it should be done gradually and there should be attempts to reform them.
- c. You should not speak about the defects any time and at any place. Rather, selection of time and place becomes very important. It is important to understand the mood of the other person.
- d. Defects should not be made public. Talking about the defects in public and trying to advise would dent the personality of the opposite person.
- e. Before speaking about someone else's defects, we should ponder over our own short comings and try to reform ourselves first. It is inappropriate to try and reform someone else before improving our own selves. It won't have any effect either and may turn out to be contrary.

#### Salutations on that Lady

There was a person who never prayed and nothing affected him. Once he was seen in the mosque. He became a regular in congregational prayers and in the mosque as well. People who knew him were amazed at this change. Some thought that perhaps he might be in some difficulty that has made him pray and fast. People started talking various things about him because they were aware that he didn't even know how to recite prayers and he had never recited prayers. Some people welcomed him into the

mosque, honored and respected him. One day someone asked him about this sudden change. He replied:

I realized after marriage that my wife was extremely attached to prayers. She serves me a lot and treats me with honor and respect. She just had one complaint that her husband did not recite prayers and this pained her. She gradually started telling me about prayers. She began with the importance and virtues of prayers. Her words had an impact. I learnt how to pray in about a month's time. When I started reciting prayers, I enjoyed supplicating to Allah and got habituated to praying. The love for worship brought me into the mosque and I started praying in congregation. Now I don't enjoy anything as much as prayers. Indeed, such women have a high status near Allah.

## d. Consulting a Religious Scholar

Islam has a high regard for consultation. When mutual relations are affected, it is beneficial to consult an experienced religious scholar. We mention the following two incidents in this regard:

1) It is my habit that if there is an issue outside the house, I get angry and spoil my mood. My tone of voice changes. I can't seem to smile even after deliberately trying to do so and I carry this mood back home. At home, my wife and children are upset because of this. The same things continue at home, the level of anger increases, mood worsens and so does the environment at home.

Suggestion – Firstly, you should be congratulated that you are attentive towards your defects and are seeking a solution to resolve it. It should be borne in mind that being attentive towards one's defects is a step towards its resolution. A person who is negligent of his defects can't reform himself. Paying attention to a disease is a step towards its diagnosis and treatment and closer to its cure.

Secondly, man by nature prefers beauty over ugliness. Everyone likes a smiling face which is more beautiful and attractive than a fully blossomed rose. No one likes a sulking and frowning face. Allah loves those who are humble with others. Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) says: *Be humble in front of believers and other people (especially with family and friends).* Humility increases love. Our Prophet (s.a.w.a.) used to greet people with a smiling face. His face never sulked even in the most difficult circumstances.

Thirdly, you cannot live life in the same way. Life is accompanied by ups and downs, discomfort and ease, joy and sorrow, abundance and scarcity, health and illness, etc. One who lives in this world has to go through peaks and troughs, tough and easy phases. Being upset or spoiling one's mood is not the cure for this. Rather, its cure is to face it with a smile and consider this as a part of life. We should tackle it and move ahead. Surrendering to the circumstances is not a sign of brave people. Allah, the Almighty, has given man the capacity to easily bear thousands of difficulties daily. He has the ability to smile and be cheerful even if he is surrounded by calamities. He can be stronger than mountains in his resolutions.

If you are disturbed by anything and someone has spoilt your mood, you are capable enough of not letting its signs appear on your face when you enter your house. Your humility can ensure a peaceful

environment in your house.

Fourthly, when such a things occurs which spoils your mood and makes you frown, then don't enter your house immediately. Regain yourself and restore your breath before entering the house. Be mindful of the fact that your children are eagerly waiting for you to come home. Your cheerful face will make them fresh and increase their joy. Hazrat Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) says: *Goodness and good morals enlivens the house and increases the life-span.* 

2) One day when I returned home, I saw that my mother-in-law had some guests come over and she was complaining about me. In front of me she always praised me but was now slandering about me in my absence.

Since the time she has come home, she pays no attention to me. She doesn't take care of me at all. All that I had thought about her, she is just the opposite. I don't think this can go on for long. Let's wait and watch.

This hurt me immensely. I went straight to my room and started crying. I was deeply hurt by such hypocritical behavior of my mother–in–law. I feel infuriated whenever I think of that incident. I've started thinking about revenge. I'm mentally very disturbed and can't think of anything but revenge.

Suggestion – Go to your mother-in-law and give her a gift on Eid or any suitable occasion.

She behaved the way she did and I give her a gift?

Yes, if you wish to come out of this pain and sorrow and wish to achieve the satisfaction of Allah and His Prophet, then give her a gift.

Acting upon this suggestion was not easy for me. Nevertheless, I went to my mother-in-law with a gift on a suitable occasion. When I presented the gift it felt as if someone had poured cold water over fire. The feeling of revenge just vanished and was replaced with love. Now life is smooth, thanks to Allah.

#### e. Advice and Admonishment

Man, by nature, wants to scale the heights of perfection and lead a peaceful life. But evil desires and Satan do not allow him to achieve his aim. Apart from these two enemies, the environment today doesn't let man lead a peaceful life.

When marital life starts getting bitter, doubts regarding one another settle in each other's mind, relationships get rusted due to ill-thinking and undue expectations, then in such situations advice and admonishments to each other are extremely beneficial. Similarly, undue encouragement adds fuel to the fire. In such situations the role of the parents and since children normally follow what their mothers say, hence the advices of the mother can make or break marital relations.

A lady once said: Whenever I'm tired of my husband's objections and undue expectations, it is difficult to remain patient. At that time, my mother advises me thus,

There are some rights of a husband. If your house is not in order then it is his right to scold you and be upset. No one likes food which is not cooked properly every day. Be careful of these things. Don't be upset this way, be patient and organized. When I got married, there were lots of quarrels with your father in the initial stages. If I hadn't remained patient and apply my mind, then all of you would be in a mess with no education and no training. Since I acted wisely and was patient and looked after the house, life today is at peace and it feels great to see children like you.

A mother's advice always has an effect. Anger subsides, we feel recharged and life goes on in a peaceful manner. My mother comes home sometimes and helps me in the household chores and teaches me the art and method of leading a life. May Allah grant her a long life!

#### **Even such things happen**

A mother advised her daughter thus:

You have just one mother but there is no dearth of husbands. You should have your own house and your husband should take care of you. He will not find a wife better than you. Till your husband does not buy an independent house, you stay here with me. Go back only if he comes here to plead.

I had not experienced anything in life. In spite of loving my husband I used to quarrel with him and complain to him. I used to go to my mother's place by giving any excuse, sometimes even without informing him.

As a result, differences between me and my husband increased. My mother supported my actions and encouraged me further. Ultimately, we reached a point where we lived separately and finally got divorced. My small child stays with my husband. My mother is so strict that she doesn't allow me to meet my son as well.

Now I'm leading the life of a divorcee, a sorrowful life by forsaking a peaceful life. I just wish for death. I took admission in a college just to pacify my heart, tried some other things as well, but my heart is restless. Life remained full of grief and sorrow. Finally one day my mother told me that I was a burden on the society and should do some work. Now what do I do? Where do I go?

I have a younger sister. Proposals for her get rejected when people hear about me. I don't even have the courage to answer my mother now. Life is destroyed. Who should narrate my grief to?

Can anyone bring back my husband into my life again? Can I embrace my only child? Can my life be restored?

## f. Family Court

The Holy Quran states:

وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ شِقَاقَ بَيْنِهِمَا فَابْعَثُنْ حَكَمًا مِّنْ اَهْلِم وَحَكَمًا مِّنْ اَهْلِهَا اللهَ كَانَ يُرِيْدَا اِصْلَاحًا يُّوَفِّقِ اللهُ بَيْنَهُمَا اِنَّ اللهَ كَانَ عَلِيْمًا خَبِيْرًا

"And if you fear a breach between the two, then appoint judge from his people and a judge from her people; if they both desire agreement, Allah will effect harmony between them, surely Allah is Knowing, Aware." (Surah Nisa, 4:35).

Following important points can be observed from this verse:

- 1. Steps should not be taken after differences crop up. Rather, when there is a feeling that there might be differences, there should be attempts to bring them closer.
- 2. If there is no indication of differences or division between them then there should not be any interference in their lives. Unwanted interference can make matters worse.
- 3. The word شِقَاقَ (breach) is used at a place where a thing is being divided into two. By using this word for a couple, the Holy Quran has emphasized that both are a single soul in two bodies. They are extremely close to each other. This proximity should be maintained.
- 4. There shouldn't be any time lapse in the attempt at reconciliation. The فَ in الْبُعَثُونُ indicates swift action.
- 5. إِنْ خِفْتُمْ (then appoint) makes it evident that it is not an individual's responsibility but the society at large.
- 6. أَهْلِهَا and أَهْلِهَا indicate that relatives from both sides are responsible for the reconciliation.
- 7. حَكُمًا indicates towards a judge, a decision maker. Accepting the decision of the elders is the responsibility of the couple. They have to give preference of the other person's choice over their own choice.
- 8. حَكُمًا also indicates that the matter should not be made public. Only two representatives should decide together. There is no need to call for a Panchayat or a Meeting.
- 9. Instead of taking these matters to court, they should be resolved within the house quietly and should not be publicized.
- 10. Both sides should be present while resolving such issues.

- 11. إِنْ يُرِيْدَا إِصْلَاحًا (if they both desire agreement) if their intention is good, the result will also be good. If both parties want resolution and want to live together then it will be resolved. God forbid, if both parties just wish to voice their concerns and be adamant on their stand, then it is difficult.
- 12. If intentions are pure and there is a will to reunite then Allah shall bring their hearts together. It also indicates that despite repeated meetings, if a solution is not arrived at then one of the reasons is that both parties do not want reunion and have not come with clean intentions.
- 13. اَيُوَفِّقِ اللهُ بَيْنَهُما (Allah will effect harmony between them). Allah controls the hearts but our intentions matter.
- 14. The statement also indicates towards the fact that if things improve after these attempts then one should not feel proud but on the contrary thank Allah for He has changed the situation.

It is evident from the above that Allah wants both of them to live together under all circumstances. He never wants to see them separated. If we are servants of Allah, are living on His land and eating what He has granted us as sustenance. Hence, giving preference to His wishes over our own desires is a proof of our humanity.

It should also be borne in mind that if the relatives of both parties do not have the ability to resolve the matter, then they can also appoint someone else. As per the Islamic Jurists, accepting the decision of the arbitrator is the responsibility of both parties.

It has already been mentioned earlier that problems of the couple can be resolved only if both parties want a solution. If the couple themselves or due to someone else, do not wish to improve their situation, then all efforts will be futile. It should also be clear that the couple is matured and intelligent. Both of them are completely free to decide for themselves. No one can force them into any decision. Parents, relatives and friends can only suggest and obedience to anyone of them in such matters is not obligatory.

Parents are requested to not take undue emotional advantage of their rights upon their children related to their marital life. We request them to control their love and let their children decide freely for themselves. Experience says that a mutual decision by the couple will solve most of the problems.

Now let us discuss a few rights of the husband and wife.

- 1. Wasaael al-Shia, vol. 20, p. 247
- 2. Ahkaam-e-Khaanvaade, vol. 2, p. 209
- 3. Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 77, p. 205, H. 1
- 4. Al-Kaafi, vol. 2, p. 138, H. 4
- 5. Tasneefo Ghurar al-Hikam, p. 447, H. 10234
- 6. Tasneefo Ghurar al-Hikam, p. 195, H. 3818
- 7. Al-Mawaaiz al-Adadiyyah
- 8. Tasneefo Ghurar al-Hikam, p. 245, H. 5011

9. Tasneefo Ghurar al-Hikam, p. 447, H. 10246

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