

Chapter 4: Abstain from Domestic Differences

For a child the home is like a nest. He feels very much attached to it. His heart is always tied to it. If the parents are on friendly terms his nest remains durable like a warm lap. The child in such a home feels contented and secure. Getting an upbringing in such congenial atmosphere the latent qualities and capabilities in the child will truly find expression and will bring out salutary results.

But if the parents are excitable and fighting type then the child will lose its calm and contentment and he will be uneasy and restless. The parents who argue and fight do not realize that the feelings of the poor child. In such a situation the children get frightened and with hurt hearts they seek some corner to hide themselves wondering as to why their parents are behaving in that manner.

Otherwise they seek the avenues of fleeing from the nest that has been so dear to them and seek refuge in some lane or bazaar. The bitterest memories of a child are the times when the parents have heated, loud arguments and fights. The children are unable to forget such scenes till late in their own lives. These events remain etched on their psyche and have deleterious effect on their natures.

Such children have weak hearts and stunted physique. They will be heart broken and spend their lives miserably. It is quite possible that daughters of such parents carry an impression that all men are as harsh and rude as their own father is. This may lead to abhorrence of the very thought of marriage for such girls.

It is also possible that the sons of such homes think that all women are as ill mannered as their own mother is and decide to remain celibate all their lives. In such an environment the children become rebellious and start hating the parents and the things come to such a pass that some children become revengeful. The statistics indicate that lot of gallivanting, alcoholic and anti social children is the consequence of the disturbed atmosphere at home

If one thinks of the bitter events of his childhood when the parents had bitter differences then he will feel that despite the passage of long years the unpleasant memories are remaining etched on his mind.

One intellectual writes:

“The parents should know the fact that when there is an argument or fight between the elders of the house there will be deleterious effect on the thinking of the children. The type of relations the elders keep will have definite effect on development of the children....if the atmosphere of unity and peace is absent from the house then it is not possible to give proper upbringing to the children.

When the elders become argumentative and excitable they forget that the impressionable children are with them whose upbringing is their responsibility. In such an atmosphere the children do not learn any good lesson. The children then become secluded and ill tempered. Particularly children of slightly higher age find the situation very difficult. Their hearts cry over the attitude of the father. They are unable to decide whose side they should take. In some cases they become antagonistic to both the parents."

Another person writes in a letter:

"...from the most unpleasant incidents of my childhood the vividly etched on my mind are those when my parents used to fight exchanging abusive language. During these events my sister my brother and myself used to stand shivering in a corner. As long as the fight continued we used to watch helplessly. I remember my sister used to cry at such events and these fits lasted for long. She is now a victim of nervous breakdown. It seems that the wrangles of our parents had a very bad effect on the spirit of my sister...."

Another person writes:

".... the thought of an unpleasant event of my childhood doesn't leave my memory. My father was ill mannered, excitable and selfish. He used to invent excuses to fight at home and shout at everyone. Our parents used to fight throughout the day. I wonder they never tired of doing this. The fights generally used to be on trivialities. There was no night when I went to bed without shedding tears. This was the reason that my nerves were weak. I am a scared person and I get bad dreams.

I have consulted doctors who say that the reason for my condition is the effects of the atmosphere at my home. He says that there is no cure for this other than rest and peace at home. My happy days started when I got married and I escaped from that house. Now, although my life is peaceful, I have a feeling that I am a defeated person and I cannot make much progress in life. I appeal to parents, In the name of God If you have any differences, do not fight in the presence of your children!"

He further writes in his long letter:

“The worst event of my life happened when I was eight years old. That day my parents had a very bad fight. All the children went scurrying to corners. The event had such a sad effect on my spirit that for a long time I couldn't erase the thought from my memory. I was fed up with my family and myself. I used to think that I should not return home from school. I used to offer a silent prayer to God that I die of some serious sickness.

Many a time I thought of committing suicide. Several times I dreamt that I was married and fighting with my spouse. During such dreams I used to plan a strategy for preserving my rights. After my marriage I tried several times to pick up a quarrel with my wife to demonstrate to her that I am an angry person. Luckily my wife is of a cool nature. She treats me with love and affection and convinces me with good arguments and advice. It is my good luck that the ill temper did not last long with me. When I recall the mistakes of my parents I did introspection over my own failings and I tried hard to mend my nature. Now I am leading a peaceful life."

Another gentleman writes:

"... When I was nine years old my parents separated because of acute differences. They left me, my sister and my brother in the care of our paternal grand father. We used to cry there very often. While visiting my mother I used to dream while sleeping that I wouldn't go to my father's house. After some time some well-meaning relatives intervened and made my parents to reunite.

My mother returned back to our home. But during that short break my spirit got so much affected that even now I feel sad about it. Now I make a serious effort that whenever I have any differences with my wife, we don't give vent to our feelings in the presence of our children."

Another letter reads thus:

"... there are many bitter memories of my childhood and pleasant memories are but few. When I remember those days I become sad and I am unable to control the tears welling my eyes. The reason for this sadness is that I always found my parents arguing and fighting. Thus they made life difficult for us brothers and sisters. We are a family of eight children. I never argue with my husband that I do not become the cause of the bitterness of my husband and children."

In one letter someone writes:

"... Age five is the best part of one's childhood. When I was of this age there came about bitter differences between my parents. My father brought a second wife. Because of these differences my mother secured a divorce from my father. We were six brothers and sisters. One day turned very bitter for us. I was playing with one of my brothers when our mother came to say her adieus to us. God knows how sad we children were.

Our mother went away and we remained with our father and the new mother. We remained away from our own mother for two years bearing the pangs of negligence that our father showed to us. Then one day our mother came and took me and one of my brother's home. She had received some legacy from her mother's property.

With that inheritance she carried on our upkeep. Later on the other brothers and sisters too joined us. Our mother gave us the treatment of both a mother and a father. We cannot forget her courage and

sacrifices."

Another lady writes in her letter:

".... my parents always used to quarrel and there was turmoil in our home. My mother always used to be angry. I was eight years of age when she used to leave my other siblings in my care and go out. My sister and brothers were of age two, four and six. I used to care for them to the best of my capability. Sometimes I used to get beatings from our father.

Despite all the difficulty I was trying to continue my studies but I failed in my second standard. My tutors were aware of my difficulties. They took pity on me and gave me grace marks. In such circumstances I reached high school. Now I am also a mother. I make a sincere effort that differences do not plague me and my family."

The parents who feel their responsibility and they have interest in good upbringing of their children refrain from giving rise to any differences and fights in the family and they definitely avoid airing any differences in front of the children. There is no worse act than the parents disturbing the children by squabbling in their presence and leaving them behind. If they realize the feelings of the children during such absences, however brief they are, then they would try never to fight again.

Such events are remembered till the end of one's life. However there are hardly any families where there is no meaningful difference of opinion. But in marital life there is always the need for rapprochement. Wise and informed couples resolve their differences with cool and calm discussions.

If the children learn of the differences of their parents, they should handle the matter tactfully and convince them that the matter is being sorted out and they need not worry on that count. The parents should take care that they do not talk of divorce in the hearing distance of their children. This not only affects their married life but can cause damage to the delicate minds of the children.

Separation between husband and wife is a grave injustice to the children. They feel that their nest has fallen down. And their lives are shattered. This is naturally because the children have love for both the parents and cannot imagine any one of them abandoning them. If the children remain in the custody of the father after the divorce and he gets a second wife they will be required to unwillingly live under the care of a step mother.

However good and gentle the stepmother is, she cannot take the place of the real mother. General observation is that most stepmothers do not take good care for stepchildren. The newspapers carry many stories of bad treatment of children at the hands of stepmothers. If the children revert to the care of the separated mother, they still feel the void created by the absence of the father. And if the parents are so thoughtless that they leave the children to the care of foster parents, it will be very sad for the young kids.

Anyway, the husband and wife are free till they have children. But they have added responsibility after they have children and this will be the time when they have to make sincere efforts to avoid any serious differences cropping up. They must protect the good atmosphere at home and do not become the cause of worry to the children. Otherwise they will be answerable and subject to retribution in the Court of Allah.

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