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Marital Life: Importance and Issues

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ وَ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَیْكَ يَا وَلِيَّ الْعَصْرِ (عج) اَدْرِكُنَا

Marital life is an innate need of every human being. Allah, the Almighty, has created a suitor for everyone. The Divine system allows human beings to find their partners themselves and spend their lives fulfilling the necessities of life. Allah, the Most High, has granted man superiority over all other creatures. Accordingly, the laws and issues of the married life of man are different from all other creatures.

Allah has greatly emphasized on marriage in the life of an individual. Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) has considered marriage among those traditions (sunnah) that *“one who turns away from it is not a part of his nation”*. Marriage has been regarded as *“protection of half of faith”* and *“the prayers of a married person carry seventy times more reward”*.

Nevertheless, marriage is an essential and necessary aspect of a person’s life without which, life is not just incomplete but also disturbed and stressed. Marriage has been regarded as a cause of peace, tranquility, love, affection, proximity to Allah and forgiveness of sins. Living together despite different natures and customs has been considered as striving (Jehaad). Glad tidings of Paradise have been given for living a successful life. Caring for the husband has been regarded as Jehaad, nurturing children as an excellent worship, being obedient as a great fortune and leading a married life while bearing hardships and calamities has been considered as a medium of raise in grades.

Islam dislikes disputes, differences, quarrels and skirmishes. Among all things which are permissible (Mubah), divorce is the most detestable.

Despite all these admonishments, emphases and encouragements, conjugal life is a big issue these days. Previously, marriage was seen as bliss. Nowadays, it is completely converse. Reports of disputes are being heard from everywhere be it cities or villages, the issues are common everywhere. These issues are prevalent, in no less numbers, even in educated and financially sound households.

These marriage issues are more dangerous than a cancerous virus. A cancer virus affects only an individual but these issues impact two families and even the children and future generations. These issues affect even religion and faith because when these differences take the shape of complaints then things are not just restricted to narrating of facts but they result into an endless series of allegations and accusations and families are involved in sins. When sins gain a stronghold, divine blessings and bounties decrease. As a result, the differences continue to increase.

Nowadays, married life has become a victim of differences. These differences start cropping up only a few days after marriage. Another peculiarity about couples these days is that instead of resolving matters, both parties want a quick divorce. Something which Allah despises has become the first choice of people. What is the reason for this destruction? Simply sighing over issues or discussing them with someone else is not the solution. People tend to only discuss these issues in public but seldom think about resolving these disputes.

Let us try to find its causes and influencing factors by pleading in the sacred presence of Hazrat Vali-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) for his special attention and then try to look for its cure and solution. Every problem has a solution and every illness has a cure.

1. Investigation and Analysis

One of the reasons for differences is that the two parties do not investigate or inquire enough about each other before marriage. Discussions are limited to education, post, occupation, income, house and good looks. How well educated are the boy or the girl? How do they look? What is the occupation of the parents? How big is their house? At the most, the family history and lineage are enquired about. None of these are a guarantee for a successful life. The fundamental aspects which will ensure peace and tranquility in life are the morals and nature of the boy and girl and their families, and the manner in which they talk.

These days, marriages are being called off more on account of morals and behavior than money. The fact that true morals and conduct can be known only by staying together is undeniable but we can definitely get a good indication of the true character through the neighborhood and surroundings. The conduct and character of the family can definitely be known by interacting with people who know them. The environment at home does leave an impact on the children. Hence, it is important to investigate thoroughly before agreeing to the marriage.

The Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) said:

إِذَا هَمَمْتَ بِأَمْرٍ فَتَدَبَّرْ عَاقِبَتَهُ فَإِنْ كَانَ خَيْرًا فَاسْرِعْ إِلَيْهِ وَإِنْ كَانَ شَرًّا فَانْتَهِ عَنْهُ

“When you intend to do anything, then ponder over its end result. If it (the end) is good then hasten

towards it and if it is evil then stay away from it.” [1](#)

Marriage means laying the foundation of a blessed family and hence the foundation needs to be strong. Especially those marriages which are being fixed via the internet require more investigation.

Youth, when they are impressed with someone, they accept each other so unconditionally that they are unwilling to accept any suggestions in this regard. It is a request to those youth to never underestimate the suggestions of their parents. Their experienced vision is capable of looking at things which young eyes cannot comprehend.

Marriage is a lifelong commitment. Hence, it needs to be carefully thought out.

2. Lack of Training

If a youth wants to drive a car then it is important for him to be completely trained on it. He can drive a car only after he has learnt it completely.

In older days, people coexisted in joint families. Grandparents, uncles and aunts all lived together. People with different natures lived in the same house. The elders would keep an eye on the children and used to train them. They would instruct them of the ups and downs, the culture of the house itself and would train them how to co-exist with people of different natures. Apart from this, girls did not receive higher education. They were seldom married immediately after their primary education or during its course. So, there was a gap of few years between completion of their education and marriage. During this period girls got an opportunity stay in joint families and practically learn the house-keeping. They learnt to cook and stitch clothes and all such things were greatly emphasized upon. The effect of this was that a girl would step into her in-laws house with experience by her side. She knew how to look after her husband as well as co-exist with people of different natures. She knew how to maintain relations. Consequentially, most marriages used to be successful.

Joint families have disappeared today. Large houses have transformed into 2-bedroom flats. There are no elders in the house. Grandparents, uncles and aunts live separate while children live separately with their parents. Hence, the training which was imparted to live with people of different natures no longer exists. The practical lessons of patience and forbearance have vanished. On the other hand, these days, girls are either married during the course of their education or are engaged. The modern education system neither has any discussion on house-keeping nor on morals and etiquette. There is no chance of learning house-keeping and looking after the husband after completing education. The result is that the vehicle of life is driven without appropriate training. It is similar to a youth driving a brand new car from the showroom without knowing how to drive. It is obvious that the consequence of this would be an accident. This accident could be major or minor. Hence, if a youth wants to drive a car on the road then along with the car being good, knowledge of driving is also a must.

Therefore, today, there is a strong need for a training course before marriage which educates on the various aspects of married life so that the vehicle of life does not meet with any accident.

3. Expectations

Before marriage, the boy and girl as well as their parents have such high expectations and pin such high hopes on each other that it hurts when expectations are not met. Questions begin to arise in each other's minds. The hearts start speaking out. Complaints start flooding in and both sides consider their grievances to be valid, which worsens the situation and spoils relations as well. In such a situation, relatives of both sides especially parents aggravate it even further; the boy's mother just can't stop lauding her son. A complaint which could have been resolved merely by a clarification, now gains strength and then one complaint gives rise to another leading to ruining of relations.

Each one feels that the other person didn't fulfill my rights and didn't submit to my wishes. Only if we thought how well have we fulfilled the rights of others and what are the rights of other people over us. On the Day of Judgment, we shall not be questioned as to how well others have fulfilled our rights. Rather we shall be asked how well have we fulfilled the rights of others upon us and what rights do others have over us. We shall not be questioned as to why did others not accept our apology and didn't forgive us? Rather we shall be asked why did we not accept apology from others and why did we not forgive them even after they sought forgiveness from us? If you are so hard-hearted that you are not ready to forgive each other despite being asked for pardon, then how can you seek forgiveness in front of Allah for your major sins?

Allah, the Almighty, says in the Holy Quran that:

***'if you are grateful then I shall certainly increase for you.'* (Surah Ibrahim, 14:7).**

Being grateful to someone encourages that person, increases affection, values good actions and a person wants to continue performing good actions in future; rather it inspires to do better. If a couple thank each other for their good actions, it will increase the love in their hearts. A wife once said: when anything good happens in the house e.g. good food is cooked or his clothes are ironed, then he is thankful. Similarly, if he brings anything for the house, we thank him. Upon hearing this, another lady who was sitting there remarked: My husband has never thanked me irrespective of whatever I do.

No such vaccination has been invented to increase love in the hearts. There has not been any medicine called "Love of the Hearts" has been devised that eating it would result in development of love in the hearts. Love is developed through goodness and serving each other, by thanking and being grateful to the good deeds and service done to each other.

4. Marriage between equals

When we talk about service, often such things are heard: our relationship is that of equals, we are partners of each other i.e. we are both equal to each other. Then why should we serve one another? If it is a marriage between equals then why should we serve our husbands? Why should we be grateful?

These are effects of western culture. Marriage is a sacred and a lifelong relationship. Peace and tranquility in life are dependent on it. Survival of this relationship is a great fortune. The issue is not with serving each other. It is about keeping the relationship alive. A person said that if my life is affected so is hers. The question is what will we gain if someone else's life is impacted? Will we be better off if the other person is worse off? If relations sour, will it impact both or only one? If people ponder over the fact that matters can be resolved merely by expressing gratefulness and some regret, then there is no point losing sleep over something which can be dealt with kind words. It is nothing but foolishness, to worsen matters due to our 'ego' which can be resolved easily otherwise.

5. Television and Internet

It is fact that the west is far advanced in science and technology than us. But it does not mean that it is also better than us in morals and etiquette, religion and faith. Various things which are portrayed through the medium of television, internet, Facebook, etc. and the kinds of films which are shown have impacted our marital life immensely. The existence of traditional weddings is far less in the west. There are more of friendly relations. They are more like two partners of a firm. The partnership continues till the time both are deriving benefit from it, otherwise they call it quits. Marital life for them means staying together either until they like each other, or else they part ways and look for someone else.

The situation in India is unlike this. Here, religion and faith exist and so do morals and etiquette. Marriage is a sacrosanct relationship, worship, proximity to God, protection of religion and faith. Therefore, imitating the West in these matters is nothing but self-destruction. Apart from this, the mutual discord and differences shown through television programs, and the people responsible for them who get heavily paid for doing so have no connection with real life. The dialogues used are completely scripted and are alien to reality. All those stories are false and there is no truth in them. But unfortunately man is deceived by the apparent. He considers it to be true and tries to implement the same in his life.

Nevertheless, programs on television and internet which destroy morals and serials ruining religion and faith have negatively affected the lives of youth. Intellect and wisdom demand that we should refrain from such programs. We should not let our lives be impacted by false stories.

6. Worldly Attractions

One of the peculiarities of this world is that all that glitters seems gold. Advertisements which appear in

television and newspapers glorify things to such an extent that it seems life is incomplete without them. We feel our problems would be solved if we have a particular thing but procuring it is never easy. The more attractive it seems in the advertisement, the tougher it is to obtain it.

Further, if that thing is not obtained, people begin to speak ill. A polite conversation gets converted to taunting and the situation starts getting worse. Interestingly, if that thing is obtained, after a few days a new demand crops up whether it is clothes, jewelry or anything else. Its importance is also lost after some days. Greed is a calamity which has no end. If the couple takes steps according to their income and necessities, the money saved shall benefit both. Bitterness of relationships can also be reduced through contentment.

7. Ignorance from the Disadvantages of Divorce

Anger is considered to be a kind of insanity. A person loses the ability to think and reflect while he is in a state of anger. He does not pay heed to the other person and by the time he is able to comprehend, it's too late. If he carefully thinks through its disadvantages and considers all perspectives, then he can remain safe from destruction, devastation, humiliation and regret. Some of the disadvantages are as follows:

a. Effect on Families

Just as marriage brings together not just two individuals but two families, similarly divorce also impacts not just the couple but also their families. Family relations are spoilt and friendship turns into enmity.

b. Effect on Children

Children are the most invaluable gifts from Allah. Their upbringing is the parents' responsibility. Both parents are important for a child. When parents part ways after a divorce, the children are either deprived of a father's compassion or a mother's love and affection. Their education, health, morals and etiquette, everything is affected. It affects their future as well. If children remain with their father, then although their expenses are taken care of but when the father is out for his work or business then who will look after them especially girls. A father's innate nature allows him to be patient only up to a certain extent. If they stay with their mother, then along with expenses they will be devoid of a guide. A mother can only look after them in the house, not beyond that. Children, who are the greatest bounty in this world, will be affected due to mutual differences. Sacrificing for something which is valuable is a sign of humanity.

c. Effect on Spirituality

The lives of both husband and wife are affected due to divorce. Sometimes the effect results in demoralization. Not a single person seems reliable and trustworthy. Everyone appears doubtful. A

person becomes irritable.

d. Second marriage becomes difficult

Sometimes such people become so pessimistic that they are never prepared to remarry whereas marriage is a necessity of life. The need for a house does not cease to exist if the existing house collapses. Second marriage becomes difficult. Families are extremely cautious. Everything is questioned.

e. Dissatisfaction of Allah and the Messenger (s.a.w.a.)

Although Allah and His Messenger (s.a.w.a.) have permitted divorce under some conditions but in their view, it is the most hated and annoying among all those things which are permissible. Hazrat Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ يُحِبُّ الْبَيْتَ الَّذِي فِيهِ الْعُرْسُ وَ يُبْغِضُ الْبَيْتَ الَّذِي فِيهِ الطَّلَاقُ وَ مَا مِنْ شَيْءٍ أَبْغَضَ إِلَى اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَ
جَلَّ مِنَ الطَّلَاقِ.

“Allah, Mighty and Majestic be He, loves the house in which there is marriage and hates the house in which there is divorce. There is nothing more disliked near Allah, Mighty and Majestic be He, than divorce.” [2](#)

Hazrat Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) has narrated from Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.):

تَزَوَّجُوا وَلَا تَطْلُقُوا فَإِنَّا بِالطَّلَاقِ يَهْتَرُ مِنْهُ الْعَرْشُ

“Marry but do not divorce for surely divorce makes the Arsh (Divine throne) tremble.” [3](#)

Islam has permitted divorce but only on the condition that it becomes absolutely impossible to stay together. Simply divorcing because of personal ego or that of the parents or due to social status or due to love for someone else, makes the Arsh tremble and its result shall not be favorable in Qiyamat.

8. Interference of Parents

One of the major reasons for issues which are observed in daily life and the relationship between the boy and the girl being spoilt is interference of parents, especially mother or some other elder member of the family.

It should be firmly borne in mind that obedience to parents is obligatory. It is necessary to treat them kindly. However, this obedience is not limitless but confined. After marriage, obedience of the husband is

obligatory for a girl and not of her parents. It is very well known to all that a girl can neither step out of her house nor invite anyone as a guest without the permission of her husband. The husband, though, does not require the permission of his wife to go out of the house. But obedience of parents just to offend the wife or to torture her is not necessary. If the parents force their son to divorce his wife and threaten to disown him in case he fails to do so, even then their obedience is not obligatory and not obeying them in such a situation shall not be considered as their disobedience.

After marriage, without the permission of the husband, if a girl is forced by her parents to stay with them instead of her husband, then this is incorrect as per Islamic Shariah.

There are many incidents where girls want to stay with their husbands but their parents do not permit. In such a situation, obeying parents is not necessary rather it is obligatory to stay with the husband. According to traditions, till the time a woman is outside her house without the permission of her husband, she will be cursed by angels. Blessings and peace cannot descend at a place which is cursed.

Post marriage, it is the responsibility of the parents especially mother, to not encourage her daughter's complaints. Rather she should advise her daughter to be patient and forbearing and teaching her ways to try and win her husband's love by serving him. She should not advocate on her behalf by exaggerating her daughter's complaints in front of others.

Nowadays parents, especially mother, become advocates of their children, blow things out of proportion, consider their children as perfect and try to prove the other person as mistaken and oppressive. The situation worsens, misconceptions are converted to allegations and accusations and matters get out of control. Such things which don't even exist are spoken about each other. In such a situation, how can someone express regret for something he/she has not done at all. If parents refrain from interfering in the married life of their children, let them live with each other, understand and adjust with each other and allow them to settle things between themselves then things will be under control.

Here, it is the responsibility of the couple to respect and honor each other, trust each other, not let things go outside the privacy of the house and not encourage those who are inquisitive about it by not divulging anything to them. It is a humble request to parents that if they wish to see a blissful life of their children then refrain from undue interference in their marital issues, encourage them to face the difficulties and calamities, don't discourage them.

9. Short temperedness

The world today is such that people are extremely short tempered, get angry very quickly and are uncontrollable. This short temper plays a vital role in today's marital life. A spark will result in a fire and there is no smoke without fire. The current system of education and training is such that levels of patience and forbearance are reducing by the day. Anger seems to increase every moment. The effect of this anger upon others is of secondary importance while man himself is deeply impacted by it. His

status and position is tainted and domestic life is devastated.

Anger is a part of human nature and a portion of his innate nature as well. Without anger there wouldn't be any self-esteem and courage. But making best use of one's anger is the knack of a person. Experts say that when we are angry, we should not let out our anger immediately but delay it by 5 minutes. After 5 minutes, we are free to decide whether we need to express our anger or be patient. We will see the fruits of this approach over time. Now read this incident carefully. This is an incident of a short tempered wife and her husband.

“Since the past 3–4 years, there has been a steady increase in my anger daily. My mental condition is going from bad to worse. I'm beset by illness and disease. I've consulted many doctors including psychologists but to no avail. Getting angry with children on petty issues and quarreling with my husband has become routine. When the anger subsides, I pity myself, there is a feeling of remorse and then I turn affectionate towards my dear children.

My mother keeps telling me to not be so short tempered, I should be respectful to my husband and honor him, treat my children with mercy because such anger will not benefit anyone. There will be chaos in the house and it will spoil the children. But I would not be affected by anything. I always wanted to control my anger but was never successful. This is what happened one day:

There was a quarrel between me and my husband over a petty issue. He was just telling me that we should visit his grandmother but I refused to go. Things got so bad that I flung a slipper at my child. Although, it missed him but it broke the window and hit a person walking on the street. I can't explain the embarrassment thereafter.

Even my husband is by no means any better. When he sits with the children for their homework, he gets extremely violent and beats them up. If I try to interrupt, then he scolds me off.

Such was our routine. Every day in the house was a hazard and finally, we were left with nothing else but embarrassment. But it was all of no use. Even the children were fed up of this daily humdrum.

Coincidentally, one day there was a program on 'How to control one's anger?' They said:

“A person should try and control his anger. The bravest person is he who can control his anger. One who protects others from his anger, Allah shall protect him from His wrath and anger on the Day of Qiyamat. The woman of the house should never get angry. She should safeguard her children and her husband from her anger. I request you that next time when you get angry, just try and control your anger for 5 minutes. Believe me! You will learn to control your anger by practicing only a few times. Just start right away.”

This had such a deep impact over me that it is inexpressible. I could recollect each and every thing of the past and wept continuously for a long time by remembering how I had wronged my children and my

husband. I acted upon that advice with all seriousness. My tension has reduced and the atmosphere at home has improved. Now there is no headache or illness nor any need for a doctor, treatment or medicines. Now there is love, affection, honor and respect among everyone in the house. The anger which made my house a living hell, control over it has now transformed that same house into paradise. Now I'm in no need to visit any doctor or medicines, the atmosphere in the house is peaceful and everyone is happy.

[1.](#) Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 71, p. 342, H. 15

[2.](#) Al-Kaafi, vol. 6, p. 54, H. 3

[3.](#) Awaali al-La'ali, vol. 2, p. 139, H. 387

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