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The Seventeenth Talk

1. Need of A Family

Our discussion now is on the needs that a husband and a wife have to fulfil for each other. Today's discussion is about the finances of the family and is an important one.

2. Condemning Stinginess In Material Needs

The first need which both the husband and wife have to take care of is the material needs of each other. The husband must make all possible efforts to provide material comforts to his family, but if he is miserly not only does he fail to fulfil that which is obligatory on him but also becomes the target of those verses of the Holy Quran which condemn miserliness. The Holy Book says that the miserly person should not think that stinginess is a virtue, it is an undesirable trait. On the Day of Judgement, the money that he refused to spend due to his stinginess will be hung from his neck in the form of a heavy chain, and he will be brought to the Grounds of Reckoning in this shameful state!

وَ لَا يحْسَبنَّ الَّذِينَ يَبْخَلُونَ بِمَا ءَاتَئهُمُ اللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِ هُوَ خَيرًا لَّهُم بَلْ هُوَ شرٌّ لَّهُمْ سَيُطَوَّقُونَ مَا بخِلُواْ بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ

And let not those who hoard up that which Allah hath bestowed upon them of his bounty think that it is better for them. Nay, it is worse for them. That which they hoard will be their collar on the Day of Resurrection. ..... (Sura Ali Imran, 3: 180)

The people who, in their stinginess, don't spend on their families, on the society, on the poor and the needy and don't spend in the way of Allah, will find their stinginess hung in the form of a collar around their necks. A stingy man is detested. Miserliness is one of the negative traits in men. In fact, the miserly man himself condemns it. The proof of this fact is that when someone reminds such a person that he is stingy, he doesn't like the remark! Stinginess is one of the things that extinguish love, whether it is in the society or in the house. If a man can afford to keep his family in comfort but refuses to do so his family will never respect him or love him. A man should, to the best of his capabilities, fulfil the needs of his

family. He should, at least fulfil their basic needs of food, clothing and shelter, and if possible get them married etc. It is the man's duty to arrange for his daughters marriage and give her some dowry. It is his duty to educate his children, and choose a good wife for his son. Being miserly and not fulfilling these needs leads to many difficulties if their material needs are not met, some children resort to theft and robbery, the woman starts robbing from her own house. Initially she picks her husbands pocket, then she begins to shoplift.! All these calamities are the result of miserliness; hence one should not be miserly.

Similarly the wife too should attend to the material needs of the husband. She must ensure that the husband gets good food at home. She must prefer him over herself and the children. If there is food, fruit, etc in the house, but the wife denies these to her husband, she is not only stingy, but also '*laeem*'. *Laeem* persons are worse than misers. A miser is one who does not spend his own money on others, but a *laeem* is one who cannot bear another eating even what does not belong to the *laeem*. They stop you from spending your own money (not theirs) on the deserving and the poor, too. They justify their act by saying that when you do not spend on your own family and self, why should you spend on others! By saying such things they weaken your resolve to help the poor. The extreme case of a *laeem* person is one who envies others using their own money. Some people neither spend themselves, nor do they allow others to spend, neither do they allow others to help the needy and the poor. These persons are degraded and low. *Laeem* is that lady whose husband gets good food and fruits for the house, but she deprives him of these. One cannot expect love from such women.

In one of my previous talks I have mentioned some men who expect too much from their wives. To use a proverb, they don't get meat, but want to eat *kebab!* But there are other families where the poor husband does bring the meat, but the wife serves the *kebab* to the children and the guests, but not to the husband! Such thoughtless women will be brought to the Grounds of Judgement in the form of the most degraded of the wild beasts. She will be asked why she denied the husband what belonged to him. The wife who metes out such treatment to her husband should not expect any love from him. And if the husband decides to marry again, the wife should not cry and grumble. Similarly, if a husband does not fulfil; the needs of the family, inspite of having the means to, should not expect any love from them. It is very important that the husband and wife take good care of each other. If the husband has meagre means, the wife should not embarrass him by making demands on him. She should be patient and encourage him. The husband, too, should give preference to fulfilling the needs of the family to other things. "First, one should light the lamp in his home, then in the mosque!" If a person's wife and children are not properly provided for, how can he help others? His first duty is towards his home – to fulfil the needs of his family. It is narrated that a person died and left everything he had in the way of Allah. The Prophet of Allah (s) attended his burial. The companions met the Prophet (s) in the evening and said, "The dead man's children are hungry! He was well-off, but at the time of his death he gave away everything he had in charity." The Prophet (s) said, "If I was told about this earlier, I would not have offered the dead person's funeral prayer! The husband should have first taken care of his wife and children before giving any charity."

3. Need of Satisfying The Sexual Instinct

The sex instinct in the humans has to be satisfied. Just as other desires are satisfied, this desire, too, must be fulfilled. It is necessary and obligatory on both the husband and the wife to satisfy each others sexual instinct. If any couple neglect this important aspect of their lives, they are committing a grave sin.

The Prophet of Islam (s) has said, “If a husband goes to bed and calls his wife, and she evades till the husband falls asleep, then the angels curse her till the morning! This is the natural right of the husband and the wife over each other!”

Similarly, the Prophet (s) has also said, “If a man neglects to satisfy his wife’s sexual needs, and the wife indulges in adultery, then the retribution will be as much for the husband as it is for the wife!”

If a wife is tardy about giving attention to the needs of the husband, and he falls into sin, that is he views *namahram* women with passion, then she is as much liable for Allah’s punishment as him. This sin will be entered in the account of the husband as well as the wife! On the day of Judgement, when her account of deeds will be given to her, it will be shown that she had gazed at *namahram* seductively. The wife will plead with Allah that she never looked at a *namahram!* She will be told that, “Your husband had done that, but it was because of you. You should have prevented it. You should have satisfied him sexually, whether it was before the act by adorning yourself etc. or the actual act itself. If a man keeps more than one wife and doesn’t satisfy them or give them equitable treatment, and if one of them gets fed-up and sighs, this sigh is sometimes back breaking, and is enough to uproot a person.

4. Need of Sympathy

The third need is that of sympathy and consideration. This distinguishes a human being from a brute. The human beings are not inanimate objects or trees. Even the domesticated animals expect some sympathy from their masters. When you see a kitten or a lamb or a puppy going near its mother to feed, the mother views it with warmth. In addition to satisfying the physical needs of the little one, the mother satisfies its emotional needs too. She does this by licking the little one, and rubbing her head on his body. If beasts require warmth and affection, humans require it more. Even a dog knows that in addition to nutrition, its puppy needs love and sympathy. Man should know that expressing love and affection for each other is food for the soul. Food for the soul is more important than food for the body. God forbid that husband or wife should have less love for the spouse.

Islam exhorts people to take special care of the orphans and the Holy Quran says that a society that doesn’t care for the orphans is not a Muslim society.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

أَ رَءَيْتَ الَّذِى يُكَذِّبُ بِالدِّينِ

فَذَلِكَ الَّذِى يَدُعُّ الْيَتِيمَ

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the MERCIFUL
Hast thou observed him who belieth religion?
That is he who repelleth the orphan. (***Sura Maauun, 107: 1-3***)

'O my Prophet! Should I show you the person who is not a Muslim, who has no faith in religion? He is the person who has abandoned the orphans.' Those who do not care about the orphans are not true Muslims. Why does Islam stress so much on helping and showing affection to the orphans? We read in the traditions that when an orphan came to the Prophet (s), he used to make the orphan sit on his lap and stroked the head of the child with affection. He always gave special care to the orphans. Even Amir al Mu'minin cared for orphans a lot.

The families of the martyrs are blessed to have the opportunity to raise orphans. There are ladies whose husbands have died or have been martyred, and they are raising their orphaned children. These ladies are earning a great reward. It is narrated in traditions that if someone caresses the head of an orphan with affection, good deeds equal to the number of the hair his hand has touched, will be entered in his account of deeds. He gets a great reward. Dealing with orphans with love and affection fetches so much reward because they have lost their father. But the orphan still needs sympathy. Allah wants to fill this void from other sources. If their emotional needs are not fulfilled, they will become rebellious. A youth, boy or girl, who has been deprived of love and affection, might prove to be very dangerous for the society. A society where there is dearth of affection turns into a society of criminals. A society lacking in affection will comprise of gloomy individuals.

If a woman is depressed at heart, she cannot be expected to care for her husband. She will not be able to care for the house or be a good mother to her children. Similarly a man who is depressed at heart cannot be a part of the society; he remains cut off from the society. When does a person become depressed? When he is deprived of love and affection at home. Right from the beginning of life, the child has a lot of needs. Some are dormant. For example his Need of sex is there, but it is dormant. His love for money is dormant. However there are some needs he can understand. For example, he knows when he is hungry or thirsty and when he is satiated. He knows that when he is hungry, he should suck at his mother's breast. One instinct is that of love. When the mother nurses her child, she fondly caresses him. The mother caressing her child with love is more important than the nursing itself. Similarly, when the father smiles at the child, it is more important than the mother's milk. A father who fulfils the physical needs of his children but ignores their emotional needs, is a father only in name. He is an ignorant, uneducated father. Some fathers are so busy with their work that they have no time for their children. When the father leaves home for work in the morning, the child is sleeping. When the father arrives

home late after the days work, the child is sleeping. The father should play with the children, seat them on his lap, and caress their head lovingly. A father's smile for his child is very important and valuable. Similarly his smile for his wife and his love towards his wife is very important, because human beings crave love.

We read in the traditions that when Pharaoh was killing the male children, Hadhrat Musa (a.s.) received his upbringing under the roof of that very tyrant, in the lap of Asiya, the wife of the Pharoah! Allah put love for Musa (a.s.) in the heart of Pharoah. And he looked after Prophet Musa like a father. Allah says in the Holy Quran that Musa (a.s.) was raised in His own care! In addition to this, Musa (a.s.) was kept under the care of Hadhrat Shoaib (a.s.) for ten years. Under the care of the Prophet of Allah, he reached perfection and achieved that stage where he had the privilege of conversing with Allah. When he was ordained a Prophet Musa (a.s.) was commanded by Allah to make Haroon (a.s) his vicegerent, so that they could together frighten the Pharoah! Still Allah instructed them to treat the Pharoah with consideration.

اذْهَبَا إِلىَ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّهُ طَغَى

فَقُولَا لَهُ قَوْلًا لَّيِّنًا لَّعَلَّهُ يَتَذَكَّرُ أَوْ يخْشى

Go, both of you, unto Pharoah. Lo he hath transgressed (***the bounds***)***.***
And speak unto him a gentle word, that peradventure he may heed or fear. (***Sura Taha, 20: 43-44***)

These verses indicate to us that a human being, whoever he might be, is thirsty for love and affection. Therefore Islam directs us to kill tyrants, but does not give us the right to abuse or insult him. It gives us permission to put the noose around his neck, but stops us from insulting him. The Judge can punish the person who insults others.

Therefore, the wife expects love from the husband more than anything else. Similarly the husband too wants love from his wife before anything else. Your son, your daughter and your wife all expect love from you. When a man enters his house, he should at least say "*salaamun 'alaykum*". If he does not do this, he should at least meet his family with a smile. He should not come home with a long face, because it is a big calamity for the house. Sometimes husbands and wives hurt each other a lot. If the husband is ill-tempered, he goes to the extent of beating his wife. This sin will attract grave retribution. There are some husbands who neither verbally abuse nor beat their wives, but are always angry and sullen at home. The wife might have preferred to bear a hundred lashes from the husband than his glum demeanour. Similarly there are many wives who neither nag the husbands nor fight with them but they always wear belligerent expressions and look angry. They even refuse to speak to her husband and are always sullen.

This attitude is worst than lashing the husband a hundred times. This attitude may lead the husband to get fed-up with his wife. A husband should not assume that if he has a good tempered wife, she will remain so forever. If there is a decrease in love from your side, she can become bad. Similarly if there is a decrease in love for your son or daughter, it will inevitably lead to disaster. One has always to bear in mind that for a human being love is a prime need. If the ladies at home become paragons of love, they will be the most successful homemakers. If a woman is devoid of feelings of love and compassion for others, if she doesn't love her husband or children, then she is a demon! Women, by nature, are more loving than men. It is the duty of both husbands and wives to maintain an atmosphere of love and affection in their homes. May Allah help us succeed in these endeavours! *Aameen!*

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