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# The Seventh Talk

## 1. Mutual Understanding At Home

In the previous talk it was discussed that Islam strongly disapproves of dissensions and disagreements. Opposed to these, friendliness, affection, unity and brotherhood are given prime importance. These traits are considered sacred by Islam. The Holy Quran says that one very significant characteristic of the inhabitants of Hell is that when they meet on the Day of Judgment, they will all be cursing each other. Each one will blame the other for making him hell-bound! The other will counter him with a similar argument. The Herald will announce that Allah's retribution for both of them will be doubled! Firstly because they spoke ill of the believers in the world and then because they forced others to speak ill about themselves.

The Holy Quran says:

كلُّمَا دَخَلَتْ أُمَّةٌ لَّعَنَتْ أُخْتهَا حَتىَّ إِذَا ادَّارَكُواْ فِيهَا جَمِيعًا قَالَتْ أُخْرَئهُمْ لِأُولَئهُمْ رَبَّنَا هَؤُلَاءِ أَضَلُّونَا فَاتهِمْ عَذَابًا ضِعْفًا مِّنَ النَّارِ قَالَ لِكلٍّ ضِعْفٌ وَ لَكِن لَّا تَعْلَمُون

***....Every time a nation entereth, it curseth its sister (nation) till, when they have all been made to follow one another thither, the last of them saith unto the first of them : Our Lord! These led us astray, so give them double torment of the Fire. He saith:For each one there is double (torment) but ye know not. (Sura al-'Araf, 7: 38)***

Alas! You are unaware. The sign of the inhabitants of the Hell, therefore, is that they will talk ill of each other and none of them is ready to accept his own fault.

## 2. Blaming Each Other

Whenever a husband and wife are in disagreement, none of them wants to take the blame for any mistake. The husband says that the wife has been the cause of his troubles and the wife counters with a

similar claim. The husband says that the children have gone astray because of the wife's shortcomings in their upbringing. A house where such criticizing and exchange of foul language, takes place is like hell. These people will come to know only when the curtains are raised!

I would like to inform the ladies and the gentlemen that the world and the hereafter are the two sides of the same coin! The apparent side of the coin is the world and the hidden side is the hereafter. Whatever happens in this world, its reality will become evident and clear in the hereafter! If the fire of Hell comes upon us, it is the result of our own acts!

ذَلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيكُم

***This is on account of that which your own hands have sent before....*** (***Sura Ali Imran, 3: 182***)

If we get the bounties of the Heaven like the *houris,* it is on account of our own good deeds.

كلُواْ وَ اشْرَبُواْ هَنِيَا بِمَا أَسْلَفْتُمْ فِى الْأَيَّامِ الخَالِيَة

(***And it will be said unto those therein***)***: Eat and drink at ease for that which ye sent on before you in past days.*** (***Sura al-Haaqqah, 69: 24***)

On the Day of Reckoning the people will be addressed, "O those who have fasted during the auspicious days! These are the bounties that you have sent while you fasted. Eat, drink and enjoy yourself!" If there is strife and difference of opinion in your house; when a man and wife quarrel; when a brother and sister argue and exchange harsh and foul language, when (God forbid) a wife misbehaves with her husband, when a husband uses foul language with his wife, what is obvious is that the husband and wife are bad-mouthing each other, but in reality this house is Hell. One day when he opens his eyes he realizes that his house is actually Hell. The bad deeds of the spouses have been converted into physical forms.

The Holy Quran, in the verse quoted earlier (***al-'Ara, 7f:38***) describes the importance of actions of people living in a place. If they have differences in their lives, they will exhibit differences in the hereafter too and blame each other. If there is usage of bad language and physical violence here, then in the hereafter too they will use of bad language and violence. What you sow here, is what you will reap there. If there is foul language in your house and the atmosphere of your house is cold, then it will result in Hell-fire there. Contrary to this the Holy Quran says about the inhabitants of the heaven thus:

عَلىَ سُررٍ مَّوْضُونَةٍ

مُّتَّكِينَ عَلَيهَا مُتَقَبِلِينُ

***On lined couches,***
***Reclining therein - face to face.*** (***Sura al-Waaqi'ah, 56: 15, 16***)

Those who have lived in their families amicably, doing good and pious deeds, will enjoy all the comforts in Heaven.

لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا وَ لَا تَأْثِيمًا

إِلَّا قِيلًا سَلَمًا سَلَمًا

***There hear they no vain speaking nor recrimination***
(***Naught***) ***but the saying: Peace*** (***and again***) ***Peace!*** (***Sura al-Waaqi'ah, 56: 25, 26***)

The inhabitants of Heaven will neither talk evil, nor hear evil. They will only greet each other pleasantly. They will be grateful to each other, and each one will thank the other for getting them admitted to Heaven. This is the quality of the inhabitants of Heaven. If you want love and understanding to remain, then the husband must thank the wife, for example, for preparing tasty food, and then the wife smiles back saying that it was he who had brought such good grocery so that she could do justice to her culinary skills using them! If such an the environment prevails in the house, where the spouses are thankful to each other, where love and understanding prevails, where each one is ready to admit his fault, where each one is willing to excuse the other, such people will ultimately find themselves in Heaven.

## 3. Spirit Of Understanding At Home

Brothers and sisters! Your actions should be such that you earn the bounties of Heaven in the hereafter! Appreciate and praise each other at home. Own up to your faults. It is generally experienced that men tend not to accept their failings. I ardently appeal to them that if ever they are angry, although getting angry is forbidden, they should apologise to the subject of the anger once the anger subsides! Accepting ones fault is a sign of maturity. The home should be a place of learning for us. The home is like a wonderful book that gives instruction, particularly to women, in the art of living and ethics. If, unfortunately, a man commits a mistake, and stubbornly refuses to own up to it, the wife should discreetly try to mend the fences. She should not adopt an attitude of confrontation nor be proud (the attitude of 'why should I mend fences'). Anger and pride both belong in Hell!

If you wish to make your home heavenly, try to create an amicable and happy atmosphere there. If one of the couple, man or wife, is ready to strike a compromise over any dispute, the atmosphere returns to normalcy. At times like these, instead of saying, 'it's your fault' say 'it's my fault'. If one person bears with a little patience the fight will dissolve. If you want the blessings of Heaven you have to have patience.

Conflicts should not persist in homes, they should be gotten rid of immediately and should not last for even an hour. Man should uphold his dignity and the wife should be patient even if the husband, sometimes, is at fault! The Holy Quran says that such is a good wife!

الصَّلِحَتُ قَنِتَتٌ حَفِظَتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللهَ

***So good women are the obedient, guarding in secret that which Allah hath guarded. ...*** ( ***Sura an-Nisa', 4: 34***

There are two qualities of a good wife. One is that she is forbearing with her husband, even if he is wrong at times. The other quality is that she is chaste, whether she is alone or in company, whether her husband is present or is away. She is never without *hijab* even if she is in the presence of her husbands close relatives. She is never without hijab in front of *namahram*, even if he is only her husband's brother. She is very careful about her hijab and gait when she goes out in public places. Whether at home or outside, she covers herself properly. In the eyes of the Holy Quran such is an ideal wife.

Here I would like to draw the attention of women to the first part of the verse that stresses the point that good wives are obedient. Whenever there is a difference of opinion with the husband, the wife should discreetly avoid confrontation. Differences are bound to take place. Neither the husband nor the wife wants strife in the house. But if some differences crop up, the Quran wants one of the spouses, especially the wife, to step down and be patient with her husband, keeping quite so that the fire of dissension can die out. Pouring fuel on this fire in reality only increases the fire of the hereafter

Allah exhorts in the Holy Quran that the believing people should fear the fire of Hell and save themselves and their families from the Hellfire. This fire will burn you and reduce you to ashes. The fuel of this fire will be humans and the stones! The people of faith should be scared of the inferno of Hell. The Holy Book warns that there should not be conflicts in the home. Such conflicts and differences will destroy your dignity and personality. God forbid that either the husband or wife should ever resort to physical violence. If they do, then their dignity and respect cannot remain intact. We pity the women who don't have love for their husbands. We pity the homes where there is no happiness. A woman with a dead heart cannot give a cheerful daughter or a prosperous son to the society! Similarly a morose man cannot be a useful member of the society nor can he earn a better hereafter for himself! As the saying goes, a severed hand might be of some use, but a broken heart is absolutely useless!

Imam Musa ibn Jafar (a.s.) says in one of the traditions:

*Beware of restlessness and laziness as both these traits are impediments for your life in this world and in the Hereafter!*

The Imam (a.s.) has asked people to be active and abstain from laziness. The women should actively perform the chores at home. The men should avoid laziness and keep themselves busy in performing

their duties. One should not be unhappy, because an unhappy person will not find benefit either in this world or in the Hereafter. It is very well known that a woman with a dead heart can neither run her home nor can she take care of her husband and the children. Similarly a dead-hearted man will be nothing more than a drone for the society at large.

وَ لَا تَنَزَعُواْ فَتَفْشَلُواْ وَ تَذْهَبَ رِيحُكُمْ

***....and dispute no one with another lest ye falter and your strength departs from you....*** (***Sura al-Anfal, 8: 46***)

We should not fight amongst ourselves, or else we will have to face defeat and disappointment. Differences lead to the ebbing of your ability to face difficulties. A Muslim commands respect and has a personality. If one lakh Muslims were to be united, they could force not only America and Russia, but the whole world to spend sleepless nights. Then they would not be drawing up plans to make Muslims their servants. A person who has a foul tongue should not think that he is harming his wife in any manner by abusing her. In fact, he is harming himself; it is his tongue that is dirty. The first harm is that when he uses foul language, it destroys his own character. His dirty tongue stains his own character. Similarly, a wife who verbally abuses her spouse is harming herself rather than causing any insult to him. The biggest harm is that the husband stops loving her. The woman who doesn't have her husband's love and affection, and a man who has lost his character should seriously ponder over the verse of the Holy Quran quoted here. Dissensions and differences in a family are as bad for the inhabitants as being placed in the deepest pit of the Hell. Here there is no pit of Hell, so imagine yourself perched on a stone atop a tall mountain, with the valley below full of raging fire. Dissension is like the stone you are sitting on falling into the valley below. The Holy Quran says that one of the most valuable bounties of Allah is the instinct of love and affection. The Holy Book is doing a favor to us when it says:

وَ اعْتَصِمُواْ بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَ لَا تَفَرَّقُواْ وَ اذْكُرُواْ نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَينَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُم
بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَنًا وَ كُنتُمْ عَلىَ شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِّنَ النَّارِ فَأَنقَذَكُم مِّنهَا كَذَلِكَ يُبَينُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ءَايَتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تهْتَدُون

***And hold fast, all of you together, to the cable of Allah, and do not separate. And remember Allah's favor unto you: how ye were enemies and He made friendship between your hearts so that ye became as brothers by His grace; and*** (***how***) ***ye were upon the brink of an abyss of fire, and he did save you from it. Thus Allah maketh clear His revelations unto you, that haply ye may be guided.*** (***Sura Ali Imran, 3: 103***)

At the outset, the Holy Quran says that Muslims should, together, firmly hold Allah's Rope and remain united. Be brothers to one other. Then it reminds us of the times when they had not embraced Islam and were inimical towards each other. What a great blessing Allah has bestowed on them that they are now united under one banner. The Muslims are also reminded of the time when they were at the brink of the

fiery valley of Hell. Allah has saved them from that eventuality. Although this verse is addressing the early Muslims, it is relevant for all times. It is also relevant to our present discussion. The husband and wife who have love and affection for each other should be thankful to Allah. They must pray to Allah that the atmosphere of love remains forever in their homes. The husband should always be thankful to his wife and pray that the spring of love always flows in their house. The wife should appreciate his love and affection. Even if both of them thank Allah day and night, it will not be enough thanks for this blessing. Our discussion now proves that a woman who is shrewish by nature and an ill-tempered husband who persist with differences in their lives literally bring themselves to the brink of the fiery valley of the Hell. Now all that is required to land them in Hell is for them to topple over.

A person fell down from a height and died from the fall. An acquaintance of his saw him in a dream. The dead person told his friend, “Neither is there a *Munkar* nor any *Nakeer* nor any pressure (*Fishaar*) of the grave! I fell straight from the world into the center of the Hellfire!

Dear audience! Everything in this world is transient! Only two things will remain for ever. They are the spirit of service and forbearance! These are the traits that make a person radiant! Such persons will have radiant faces (like the full moon) when they are resurrected on the Day of Reckoning. Their faces will be so radiant that they will attract the attention of the others present in the Grounds of Reckoning!! The second thing that is permanent is the bounties of Heaven and the retributions of Hell! The world will cease to be.

Differences amongst us have got so deep rooted that the youth are worse than the aged, the educated are worse than the uneducated, the trader is worse than the laborer. We notice in our society that there are physicians who are highly respected for their practice, and who exhibit good ethics (*akhlaq*) in the society, but when we open the hearts of their wives we find a flowing river of blood on account of the doctor, inspite of his education. We find women who are forward thinking, highly respectable in the society, mix well with other women, but at home we examine the hearts of their husbands we find the poor man imprisoned by the witch that is his wife. It is true that the society is the mirror of the thoughts of its people. To illustrate my point, I shall mention here a very good example:

It is said that during a sermon the speaker asked, "Those men who are not happy with their wives may please stand up!" Except one person, the entire audience stood up. The speaker said, “I thank Allah that at least one person in this audience is happy with his wife!" That person, who was sitting, called out, “You are not correct! I am unable to stand up because my wife has broken one of my legs! I am unable to stand up!" Our societies are definitely such that it is difficult to find a man who is pleased with his wife and vice versa.

It is mentioned in the traditions that if differences spring up between two Muslims, or between husband and wife, it is imperative they should try to patch up the matters the very same day! The general practice is, that the younger of the two should apologise to the other. This may also mean that the wife should apologise, even if the husband was at fault. The traditions further say that if the matters are not sorted

out the same day, then definitely a truce must be struck the very next day. If the younger party is still adamant, then the elder should go and apologise!

Then no rancor should persist between the two, although both have done wrong by lashing each other verbally. Still they should let go of what happened and not harbor ill feeling towards each other. If the parties are unable to patch up on the second day, it is obligatory that they come to terms on the third day. The late Kulaini has recorded more than ten traditions on the subject. Allama Majlisi has narrated more than thirty traditions pertaining to this subject. The Imams (a.s.) have said that if the parties don't make a truce even after three days, they will not remain Muslims! Even if we don't have any care for our children and the world, we must, at least care for the commandments of the Imams (a.s.) in the matter i.e. we must care for Islam. Differences should be nipped in the bud. Why are there so many differences between us? If a husband is faced with economic difficulties in his work what fault is it of his wife that he should take it out on his hapless wife. Similarly, if the husband is not measuring up to the expectations of the wife, despite his best of efforts, she should not nag him for his failings. Place yourself in his shoes and judge whether you can afford that expensive necklace or dress. If you cannot afford it, why do you fight with him, abuse him and wail about it. In the name of Allah, when you decide on the dowry for the daughter, consult each other and come to an understanding. Think how you can lighten the burden instead of abusing each other. If you claim the dowry forcefully, the marriage can never prosper.

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