

Research on the Factors of Family Breakdown in Islam

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Abstract

The strength of a society depends on the strength of a family, and strong relationships among its members. If the breakdown of the family dominates, the society will lose its most basic support, power and peace. In addition, the family will suffer from weakness, incapacity and confusion since disintegration of the family prevents the human resource from being productive, leads them toward destruction, committing crimes, spreading fear and terror among the people, and makes the social relations of the people weak and vulnerable. All these issues will hinder the movement towards development in the society, cause backwardness, and loss of moving towards harmony and advancement. Therefore, protecting the family from breakdown is the same as protecting the society from various problems that diminish the merit of the society, prevent productivity and development, and turn into destructive and deadly aspect.

One of the undeniable facts among sociologists, training specialists and Muslim scholars is that the family is considered the backbone of the society and foundation of the human life. If the family is based on sturdy religious and moral foundations and deep connections, it will be a strong brick in building a capable nation, or a living cell in the body of the society. In fact, throughout the Islamic history, the Muslim family has been equipped with Islamic values, such as mutual relations, compassion, kindness, love, cooperation, beneficence and collaboration based on piety and goodness, respect for elders, mercy on children, sacrifice, love, good speech and kinship ties. Thus, the role of the family has been very effective in the life of strong and dynamic society. However, the western conspiracies against Islam and Islamic society resulted in the backwardness of the Islamic world, and more importantly the submission of Islamic countries to the western

invaders helped the process to get worse. Some of the factors and causes of family breakdown, such as lack of commitment to the religious rules regarding marriage, wrong traditions, and religious ignorance have appeared and increased among Islamic societies, which caused so many difficulties in different aspects of Muslims' lives.

Keywords: Family, Training, Marriage, Breakdown, Responsibility.

Introduction

All praises be to Almighty Allah, the creator of the universe, and peace and blessings be upon our beloved prophet Mohammad, and upon all his family, companions and followers.

The family in a society is considered as an institution that establishes the first pillar and base of the society. The religion of Islam has always given respect and value to the family, and has insisted on the preservation of its position. Allah Almighty has sent down many decrees and rulings to amend and consolidate it, so the Muslim family should be inspired by these commandments and act upon them to achieve success both in this world and the hereafter. Although the way of life is changing today, and the family institution is getting weaker, the family has a clear presence as an indisputable institution in the most developed countries of the world. However, the changes that have occurred in the structure of the family lately, and the new definitions given about family which differ from the traditional definition, have created a clear crack in the structure of this long-standing institution. Unfortunately, due to the increasing growth of electronic devices and mediums, and the widespread invasion of the corrupt culture against the morals of foreigners, the family system in Islam has faced weakness and crisis, and the basic elements of the family, such as husband, wife and their spiritual values are less valued today. Although the western world had been affected by this disaster before, its dire effects gradually spread to the eastern world as well. According to the mentioned facts, if we want to have a healthy society and family, and to protect the existing deviations, perversions and misguidances of the society, we must equip all family members with the ornament of faith in Allah, respect, trust, and love for each other, and nurture

moral students so that through sound awareness they will realize their responsibility, and help each other in avoiding differences and problems.

Problem Statement

The basic and fundamental thing that the society requires and forms the foundation of the society is the family, but its breakdown will lead the society towards destruction and fall. Unfortunately, due to various factors, this institution has been overlooked, and hence misfortunes and losses affect everyone.

Importance of Research

The necessity of this research becomes obvious from the fact that the family in current era is neglected due to ignorance and distance from the true vision of Islam, and following foreign cultures. In fact, none of the spouses realizes their real obligation and responsibility regarding the healthy training of their children, so it is necessary to increase the value and status of this institution through recognizing factors of the breakdown and then taking serious measures to treat this terrible phenomenon in the light of the teachings of Islam.

Research Questions

- **The main question:** What is the position of the family in Islam?

Sub questions:

1. What are the factors and causes of the family breakdown?
2. What are the ways to create a healthy family?

Research Objectives

- **General objective:** The primary purpose of this research is that establishing a healthy and constructive society is an urgent and

fundamental need, and Islamic teachings have given it so much attention.

- **Sub-objectives:** Studying the factors and causes of the family breakdown and its dire consequences. Also discussing the ways to overcome this problem in the light of Islamic teachings and the opinions of religious scholars.

Introduction to the Family

Literally family means household, lineage, family members, wife and children, and idiomatically the family means a social unit that includes parents and their children, and in a broader sense, distant and close relatives are also considered as family sometimes. ⁽¹⁾

1. Parents' Responsibility towards the Family

The religion of Islam has beautiful rules and commands for all dimensions and aspects of life. In fact, Islam has drawn a specific path for every aspect of life, including family and relatives. Allah Almighty expresses the responsibility of the family in the Holy Quran in this way: (O believers! Protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones). (Al-Tahrim/6)

The mentioned verse clearly stated the responsibility and obligation of the head of the family. It evidently says that the obligation of the head of the family is not only to provide food, clothing, housing and other material needs, but also, he/she is responsible to pay attention to their healthy training, spiritual aspects, equip them with Islamic teachings and present committed and faithful individuals to the society. Scholars of Quranic sciences say under the interpretation of the above-mentioned verse that Hazrat Umar

¹ -Amid, Hassan. (1381) Farhang Omid. Publisher: Amirkabir Publications. Vol.2 p.985

(May Allah be pleased with him) told the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH): O Messenger of Allah, we know how to save ourselves from the hell fire, but how can we save our families from hell fire? The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said to him: Instruct your family and friends to follow the commands and instructions that Allah Almighty has given you, and forbid your family from what Allah Almighty has prohibited you from, is considered saving your families from the hell fire.² Namely, self-preservation is to abandon sin and not surrender to rebellious lusts, and the preservation of family is to educate them properly, command them to do good deeds, forbid them from the bad deeds, and provide them with a healthy environment which is free of any contamination in the home and family. In fact, these are the steps which should be taken at the time of getting married and having children, and be planned properly and with utmost care.³ Although Islam has insisted on the preservation of the family and paying serious attention to it, we see that due to different factors and reasons, and the entry of foreign cultures into our country, the family center is exposed to harm and distance from the authentic Islamic teachings, and is moving towards evil. In the coming paragraphs of this article, I will study some of the factors of the family breakdown, and recommend solutions to it in the light of Islamic teachings, and the experience of great scholars and intellectuals.

2. Factors and Causes of Family Breakdown

– Negligence and lack of attention to Islamic laws

² - Qurtubi, Abi Abdullah Muhammad bin Ahmad. (bt) Tafsir al-Qurtubi. Publisher: Pakistan, School: Rashidiya. Volume 18, page 173

³ - A group of nobles and scientists, (1387 Hajj) sample interpretation. Place of publication: Dar al-Katb al-Islamiya. Vol.28S/299

The traditions of some Islamic societies have imposed various patterns regarding marriage. These patterns are completely contrary to the Islamic teachings regarding marriage which aims to establish love, and peace between the spouses, and both sides take pleasure from a prosperous and beautiful life. In fact, making a young boy or girl marry someone who he/she doesn't love and doesn't want to live with is one of these bad traditions. Our beloved Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) has prevented forced marriage. If a girl's father or guardian marries her against her will, the Prophet (PBUH) has given the woman the right to criticize and reject the marriage contract. Once a girl has come to the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) and said: my father married me to his nephew so that he could save him from his humiliation, (but I do not love him), the Prophet (PBUH) has given the choice to the girl to either accept the marriage contract or reject it, so the girl said: I accept the decision my father had made, but I meant that women should know that fathers have no rights to marry girls against their will.⁴ In our society, we observe many events which damaged the family's dignity and honor, the main cause of which is the negligence and not following the Islamic teachings.

The Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) has ordered that a girl and a boy should see each other before getting married. When Mughira bin Sha'bah (R.A.) proposed a girl for marriage, the Prophet (PBUH) said to him: see her since it will create more love and blessings between you.⁵ In Fact, as mutual comfort in marital life is one the major objectives, looking at each other at the time of proposal is also allowed and preferred according to the Islamic Sharia. Although some of the families use some other ways in order to make

⁴ - Ibn Majah, Hafez Abi Abdullah. (1999 AD) Sunan Ibn Majah, researcher: Saleh bin Abdul Aziz al-Sheikh, place of publication: Riyadh Dar es Salaam, p. 269

⁵ - The same source. P. /267

sure of the qualities of proposed girls, such as sending close relatives to the house of proposed girl, or a reliable woman by the marriage broker, but the way that our beloved Prophet (PBUH) has shown to Mughira bin Sha'bah (R.A.), i.e. seeing directly is far from any kind of doubt and definitely results in mutual consent between both sides.⁶

3. Not Observing the Islamic Hijab

Since the human society has been created for constructing and developing the earth, and the responsibility of the caliphate on earth lies with them to implement social justice on the earth. In Fact, justice and progress are associated with the society in which men and women play a vital role. However, not observing *hijab*, intermingling, and distancing Islamic teachings, lead to sedition and degradation instead of establishing justice and equality. In the history and past centuries before Islam, there were countless excess and paucity, transgressions against women in different cultures and nations, but it is the only Islam that has given special value and rights to both man and woman.

in the present era, the issue of protecting human rights is one of the priorities of the developed countries, and under the slogan that women were deprived of their rights in the past, the women should be granted more freedom, which has brought women from the high position of chastity to the market of indecency, and stripped her of her dignity and honor. So that the love between couple remains durable, and differences and hatred do not damage it, Allah Almighty has prescribed some limitations for each of the couple so that they can live a comfortable and happy life by observing them. The philosophy of *hijab* is not a mystery, but it is quite clear as the Holy

⁶ - Zohbi, Mohammad Hossein. (2010) Personal conditions between the Sunni and Jaafari schools of thought, with a little capture. Place of publication: Cairo, Dar al-Hadith. p. 37

Qur'an says: (This (Hijab) is purer for your hearts and theirs.) (Al-Ahzab/53). The venerated interpreters of the Holy Quran also say: by observing *hijab* their chastity is protected, and are not harmed by evil people.⁷

Because of not observing hijab by women, dressing beautifully, using make-up and other cosmetics, and then going to cities or other public places puts men, especially young people in a constant state of irritation, and provoke their hidden desire which usually leads to committing adultery. Accurate statistics show that with the increase of nakedness and not observing *hijab*, the divorce rate and the breakdown of marital life continuously increased in the world because whatever one's eyes see, the heart remembers, and whatever the heart desires the rebellious desire will make him/her fulfill his/her sexual desire by any cost. In this way, the couple hate each other which finally results in divorce and separation. Expanding the scope of prostitution and increasing illegitimate children is one of the most painful consequences of not wearing hijab, which does not need statistics since the reasons of these dire consequences are countless in the western society. When the society wants a woman with her provocative body, it is natural to demand more make-up day by day, and in this way, it becomes a means to satisfy the rebellious desires of a group of evil and immoral people. Thus, in such a society, how can a woman gain her real value and position? ⁸

4. No Harmony between Husband and Wife

From the perspective of Islam, harmony between spouses is an undeniable and necessary matter since any kind of dispute and conflict that

⁷ - Sabouni, Mohammad Ali, (1391 Hijri) Safwa al-Tafaseer, translator: Seyyed Mohammad Taher Hosseini, publisher: Kabul Al Tariq Bookstore, vol.3 p.493

⁸ - Ghiyashi, Abdul Samad (1388 Hijab) Muslim woman's hijab with little possession Publisher: Iran Shaykh al-Islam Ahmad Jam Publications. p. 22

occurs between a husband and his wife, affects not only the husband and wife badly, but also affects a group of people, which is the family. In fact, Islam orders the people in authorities, judges and religious scholars to settle the argument and tension between the spouses and don't be impartial in such occasions. They should appoint a mediator from the male family and an arbitrator from the female relatives who are fair, pious and capable of making fair decision to settle the argument between the spouses in order to create an atmosphere of peace and harmony between them, Allah Almighty says: "If you anticipate a split between them, appoint a mediator from his family and another from hers. If they desire reconciliation, Allah will restore harmony between them. Surely Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware". (Surah An-Nisa 35).

The above verse makes it very clear that when a conflict takes place between the spouses and gets worse by husband against wife, then it is necessary to establish peace between them right away. But if the problem is not resolved, it is natural that the flame will surround the family of both parties and the conflict will become more widespread.⁹

Lack of harmony between the husband and wife creates an atmosphere that has bad effects on the family and relatives, and thus the family's foundation moves towards anxiety and destruction, and the husband or wife looks for a friend, and hence the love among the family member is disintegrating.¹⁰

5. The Mother's Failure to Fulfill her Mission

⁹ - Osmani, Muhammad Shafi. Translator: Mohammad Yusuf Hosseinpour, Publisher: Iran Shaykh-ul-Islam Ahmad Jam Publications, Third edition. Volume 3, page 499

¹⁰ - Al-Qasim, Mayada Mustafa. (2018) Al-Tafkuk al-Asri and the work of Ali al-Muhammad. Publisher: Grammar School. P./23

The wisdom of Allah Almighty behind creation has required that the human society is based on reciprocity between men and women. In fact, each of men and women has special and exclusive characteristics besides common features. By these special traits the couple complement each other and bring mental, physical and social evolution to him/her. Actually, without this evolution, one cannot survive, and with the self-centeredness of each of the men and women, corruption and chaos arise and the wheel of life stops moving.¹¹

According to the natural characteristics of a woman, the most basic mission for which she has been created is that she is a mother and the organizer of the house, and as long as a woman is not free for this mission, she will not be able to carry out the mission effectively. It is a severe mistake for a woman to leave her home, violate her noble mission, turn to work outside the home, and think that working outside is necessary for contribution to the development of a society. Acutely, the rule is that women work inside the house, and this issue is of high importance. Working from home is an exception to the rule. Despite this, as long as the work outside does not weaken her work at home, Islam does not prevent it.¹²

Lack of Awareness of Islamic Teachings, made women not pay thorough attention to chores, children and spouse. The entry of women into the field of public works causes many problems from the moral and social point of view. In fact, it leads to undermining the household affairs and children, and neglecting household affairs also leads to chaos in family life, breaking its basic foundations and weakening the spirit of family unity.

¹¹ - Zadani, Abdul Majeed (bt) Women and political rights in Islam. Publisher: Kuwait: Al Manar Islamic School. P/2

¹² - Saba'i, Mustafa, (1404 AH) Women between Jurisprudence and Law. Publisher: Al-Maktaba al-Islamiyyah. p. 175

It is worth mentioning that there is a global plan for women to abandon their main mission by citing their right to work shoulder to shoulder with men, step out of the house and do something that is incompatible with their institution and nature. The current phenomenon of confusion and disunity, which the Muslim woman is facing, is the result of this issue. Due to lack of awareness about Islam and lack of understanding of her importance at home, she adopts the concepts getting women to work out of the house, without realizing its dimensions or the dire consequences that leaving home for work will lead to. In fact, the great danger that threatens the peace of the family is this phenomenon. These destructive thoughts have had a deep impact on many women, especially many educated women who have lived in the atmosphere of women's freedom and emphasis on her independence and her right to work - even if her husband and guardian do not want to.¹³

6. Negligence and Failure of Man in Performing his Duties

Man's responsibility for the family is not confined to providing material expenses. Men's guardianship has broader and comprehensive sense. In order to fulfill this responsibility properly, his presence among the family members must be tangible and noticeable, and everyone should sense his presence. He should participate in the issues that are important to the family members, find out about their favorite things, accompany them in entertainment and visits outside the home, and daily activities should not avoid him from taking part in the above-mentioned affairs. In fact, Islam does not allow anyone to allocate his/her entire time to worship and neglect the right of the family. In this regard, Imam Bukhari (R.A), (R.A), in his *Sahih*, in the chapter on fasting, tells the story of formation of a brotherhood

¹³ - Turki, Masoud bin Abdul Aziz. (1412 Hijri AH) Al-Tawsr al-Islami to face the problems of the family, Magazine: Al-Aman, No. 5, Publisher: Riyadh: Al-Adara Al

between Salman Farsi and Abu Darda. The Prophet (PBUH) had established the bond of brotherhood between Salman and Abu Darda' (R.A). Salman went to see Abu Darda' and found his wife looking disheveled (her appearance was not that of a married woman). He asked her: 'What's wrong?' She replied: 'your brother, Abu Darda' has no worldly desires.' Then Abu Darda' arrived and prepared some food for Salman and said: 'Go ahead and eat, I am fasting.' Salman said: 'I shall not eat unless you eat with me.' So, Abu Darda' ate with him. At night Abu Darda' arose for the voluntary prayer. Salman told him to go to sleep, so he slept. This happened again. Towards the latter part of the night Salman said to him: 'Wake up' and both offered the prayer together. Then Salman said: 'It is true that you owe your duty to your Lord, but you also owe a duty to yourself and to your wife. So, you should carry out your duty to everyone.' Then they went to the Prophet (PBUH) and related all that transpired to him. He said: 'Salman was right.'"

The above Hadith makes it clear that the responsibilities of husbands are not only to take care of the material affairs and expenses of the family, but also to pay attention to family values, such as healthy upbringing, compassion and kindness. When a father is fully committed to his duties, he will protect his family from the factors of disunity and multiplicity, and the children will grow up in a balanced and harmonious manner under the shadow of the father who is full of kindness and affection besides kind strictness and seriousness. However, if the father neglects to fulfill his material and spiritual duties or thinks that his duty is to provide the family with the essential needs, such as providing food and clothing and the responsibility does not go beyond it, and then because of enjoying the company of his friends, going on vacations and continuous trips with them,

or going on his business trip and being away from his family for one or more months, with such behavior, his family is exposed to destruction since the family has lost its guardian and the guardian has provided the ground for evil friends to convert the children from the straight path and make them the tools of corruption. In fact, the absence of the father from home multiplies the importance of servants because Family members have lost a guard who would hold their hand and punish them if they deviated. A man's lack of understanding of the extent of his guardianship causes him to neglect his duties towards his wife and children, and he may come to believe that he has absolute freedom in his work and that no family member has the right to ask him. Actually, this kind of behavior from a man causes the marriage bond to weaken and the family to be confused, and sometimes the issue leads to doubts and pessimism, which destroys the marriage bond. Sometimes, a man's failure to fulfill his duties and his frequent absence from home gives the woman an excuse to confront her husband's actions in such a way that he constantly goes out of the house and spends most of the times with the wives of his neighbors and relatives. Thus, this act will contribute to breaking the marriage bond and intensifying family problems.

The responsibility of the husband in the family is the same as the responsibility of the sailor. The sailor must protect the ship from the damage and lead it to the shore of safety. If he fails in his responsibility, sinking into the dark depths of the sea will be the irreversible fate of the ship. The family is also like this. If a man is not awake and alert and does not understand the duty he has towards the family, the family will face chaos and will eventually breakdown and disintegrate. ¹⁴

¹⁴ - Jaber, Amine (1384 AH) The Collapse of the Family, Origins and Consequences, Translator: Daoud Naroi, Publisher: Nesrahahsan, p. 72

7. Increase in Divorce Rates

Divorce is a harmful phenomenon that has devastating consequences for children, family, morals and stability of life in general. Divorce is the result of lack of awareness about the reasons which allow a husband and wife to separate from each other, after all the other corrective measures have failed. People divorce their wives for illogical reasons, and do not allow themselves to live peacefully together according to the commandments of Allah Almighty, and don't respond to hatred and malice and consider the right time for separation and divorce if the life becomes very tough. In addition, lack of knowledge about divorce rulings is one of the primary reasons for the increase in divorce rates and is considered the main cause of family breakdown and disintegration. Moreover, the increase in the divorce rate is a natural consequence of a marriage in which religious conditions are not observed. It is also the result of religious ignorance in understanding the marriage bond and non-presence of those who voluntarily strive to create compatibility between husband and wife when they are in conflict. The presented statistics indicate the increase in the rate of divorce in the world, most of which is related to developed countries. In England, at least one out of every five young people has experienced separation from their parents before the age of sixteen, while in America, this statistic is 1/3. Divorce is one of the major losses in the lives of affected families. In fact, this loss is not only a crisis for divorced people, it also causes damage to children similar to the damage caused by the death of parents.

In general, divorce can be divided into two categories: 1. Explicit divorces: Divorces that are performed by the couple referring to special family courts and finally to the marriage and divorce registry offices, and in a religious manner, the husband and wife officially invalidate the marriage

certificate. When they do so, it is called an explicit divorce. 2. Hidden divorces: There are divorces that have the features of the first type of divorces in all respects, but due to cultural, spiritual, situational and special legal barriers, they are not revealed. Such divorces happen without cancelation of marriage. Affected husband and wife may waste the best days of their lives under one roof with minimal communication (even just verbal communication), and without the exchange of mutual marital love and respect.¹⁵

8. Huge Age Difference between the Spouses

Certainly, even if the age gap between a husband and wife is big, when the conditions for the validity of the marriage are complete and there are no obstacles, the marriage is considered permissible and valid in the light of Islam. However, when there is a huge age gap, some Sharia rules are limited and regulated, such as the rule that harming others is not allowed in Islam, and that the prevention of corruption comes before the acquisition of benefits as Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, “Doing harm and reciprocating harm is not allowed.” This rule means that if the huge age gap leads to harm, the marriage will be considered impermissible.¹⁶

In fact, medical, sociological and psychological studies have proven that the huge age difference between husband and wife leads to a big gap in sexual power. Undoubtedly, if the husband is very aged, he can't nurture children perfectly. Moreover, it is said that the reflection of the huge age difference between husband and wife will be negative in dealing with children. The huge age gap causes a deep gap between husband and wife

¹⁵ -Bairami, Mansour. (1378 AH) Family and its Pathology, Publisher: Aydin Publications, pp.6-62

¹⁶ - Al-Bayhaqi, Abu Bakr Ahmad bin Al-Hussein bin Ali. (b) Al-Sunan al-Kabari, publisher: Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, vol. 6 p. 70

psychologically, socially and intellectually, which causes a lack of understanding and compatibility between husband and wife in their private life, especially in the upbringing of children, and affects their marital relationships badly which will ultimately result in chaos and collapse of life, and the family will become unnatural.¹⁷

9. Social Media Bad Publicity

This phenomenon includes all means of mass communication, such as television, radio, show, satellite, internet, etc. The most sensitive and dangerous phenomenon of this part is the invasion of satellites, which is manifested in the mass of satellite and internet channels. In fact, this phenomenon of breaking our borders, identity and conscience is a modern and fast device, and tries to uproot the original Islamic values and replace them with Western values. Western satellite channels which access enough facilities and attractive tools can penetrate their values into the soul and psyche of a large number of viewers who are affected easily by the propaganda of values and ideas that threaten Islamic identity and culture.

Children and young people of any age are exposed to stimulating and influencing factors through western satellite advertisements, and feel a deep and violent shock in Islamic values and concepts. The Internet is the most harmful device that Western thought conceived to expand its culture and traditions and provide data and information that is contrary to honesty, impartiality and scientific credibility. This network also promotes values and concepts that have a negative impact on Muslims due to the existence of unbridled and burdensome organizations that promote prostitution and vulgarity. Since the satellite channels of Islamic countries see themselves in

¹⁷ - The Islamic perception of confronting family problems. p. 110

unequal competition with foreign channels, and are not able to close the windows of immoral channels, they cannot provide a preventive alternative to resist against alien channels that spread their poisons. If we realize that Western media propaganda, especially satellite and internet channels, have a special sensitivity towards a Muslim family, especially the mother, we will also realize that these channels are considered a devastating danger for the Muslim family because the Muslim family is the last fortress that has not yet fallen at the cultural, social and legal level. Therefore, what the media propaganda of the West gives us, is nothing else but what immerses the Muslim family in the philosophies and activities that the family has fallen into in the civilization and culture of the West because in this way they can completely dominate the fortress. ¹⁸Western media propaganda is a modern and influential weapon that steps into the depths of homes in order to destroy Islamic values, break family ties, and force the new generation to lead a life of destruction and aimless.

10.Poor Economic Conditions

Economic condition means that the material level of one of the spouses is better than another's, and the low income of the family. According to sociologists, the economic distance between husband and wife creates conflicts within the family and makes the stronger party impose his/her control over other who is inferior in terms of finances. In fact, the terrible economic situation of a husband will lower his position in terms of social and marital aspects. Regarding financial sufficiency, it was narrated from Imam Abu Hanifah (R.A) that any woman who is mega-rich, a man should marry her, who is able to pay her dowry and alimony because people are

¹⁸ - Hassana, Omar Ubaid. (bt) Article: The Book of the Nation, Shamara (53), Publisher: Qatar. pp. 13-14

proud of each other for having wealth and they consider poverty as a shame and dishonor¹⁹ as Imam Muslim (R.A) narrates in Sahih Muslim in chapter of the waiting period of divorce: When Muawiyah bin Abi Sufyan (R.A.) proposed to Fatimah, the daughter of Qais, he consulted with the Prophet (PBUH) about it, the Prophet (PBUH) said: Muawiyah (R.A.) is poor and has no wealth, so marry Asama bin Zayd.²⁰

If a wife has more wealth than a husband, she will sometimes interfere with the husband's responsibility of guardianship, and this factor will badly affect the establishment of the family and the attitude of the children toward their father. As the economic factor is the most important factor affecting the structure of the family, its ability to perform its duties and face problems, the poverty of the family or the low income of the family apart from being able to meet the basic needs of the family, leads to lowering educational level of the children, and thus lowering the status of the family.

Maybe the danger of poverty is not confined only in its unpleasant consequences on the family and its ability to meet basic and necessary needs but also its negative consequences expand and include children's feelings of deprivation, inferiority and loss of self-confidence. This is how poverty leads to countless social, psychological and moral problems of families, which will face breakdown and disintegration.²¹

11. Forced Marriages

One of the inhumane traditions which is unfortunately seen in some Islamic societies is the tradition of forced marriage. Forced marriage means

¹⁹ - The Islamic Perception of Facing Family Problems, p. 103

²⁰ -Al-Nishapuri, Muslim bin Al-Hajjaj. (1375 AH) Sahih Muslim, Publisher: Pakistan: Old Library in front of Aram Bagh, Karachi, vol.1 p.485.

²¹ - Collapse of the family of origins and consequences, p. 78

that sometimes for personal desires, money or ignorant zeal, the guardian forces his sister or daughter to marry a relative or stranger, while Islam and its beautiful laws strongly deny such inhuman actions. Abu Hurayrah (R.A.) reported that the Prophet (PBUH) said: "A previously married woman should not be married until her verbal consent has been sought, and a virgin should not be married until her permission has been sought." They said: "O Messenger of Allah, what is her permission?" He said: "When she remains silent." (Narrated By Imam Muslim in His Sahih).

The above Hadith is a warning for those who force their daughters or sisters to marry someone without consultation with them and against their consent. In fact, the experiences have proven that most of the quarrels and conflicts in the family are caused by forced marriages, and finally lead to the loss of life and disintegration of the family. Even some of the girls who do the heinous act of running away from home, is the result of this inhumane tradition of forced marriage. That is why the Islamic jurists and scholars say with emphasis that marriage should not take place without consent of the both sides, and forced marriage is an obstacle to the validity of marriage as they say: If one of the spouses or both of them are not satisfied with the marriage contract, the marriage will not be valid.²² Moreover, some other Islamic scholars have said: Since marriage is a bond and a permanent love between two families and a great body of society, it is not only limited to the husband and wife, so reasonable and all-round efforts should be made to achieve the satisfaction of the spouses and their families, and the future consequences be bright and prosperous.²³ From the above research, it

²² - Tahhamaz, Abdul Hamid Mahmoud. (B) Al-Fiqh Al-Hanafi Fi Thawba Al-Jadid, Publisher: Pakistan: Haqqani School, vol.2 p.62

²³ - Personal status between the Sunni doctrine and the Jaafari doctrine, p. 104

became clear that forced marriage is one of the factors and causes of family breakdown, and it always exposes the family to destruction.

12.Preventive Ways and Solutions to Family problems

In order to eradicate family problems and avoid from breakdown, it is appropriate that two types of measures should be taken: preventive measures and solution aspects.

A. Preventive Ways

It is obvious that prevention is better than cure. This proverb has been widely used in many contemporary social, health, economic and educational programs, and also in settling the problem of family breakdown. Undoubtedly, issues that prevent falling into the problem of family breakdown should be paid much attention by everyone. Some of the preventive ways are as below:

– Enhancing one's Faith

The most important factor that prevents a person from falling into various problems is building a firm faith in the youth during their childhood. This saying means that children should get training of faith. One of the researchers has defined the education of faith as it is connecting the child with the principles of faith from the time he acquires wisdom, making him accustomed to the pillars of Islam from the time he acquires understanding, and teaching him/her the basics of Sharia from the time he tells good and bad apart well. When a young person is nurtured based on a strong, true and correct faith, a good and healthy personality will be formed, who will be able to face all problems with the spirit of faith and trust in Allah Almighty, and the weapon of correct knowledge of Sharia, and benefit from all new and beneficial phenomena that are not contrary to religious teachings. Problems

will definitely not weaken the strength and arm of such educated persons, and he will find his direction clear in the very beginning as well.

– Establishing a Family on the Right Foundations

It means that from the very initial stage of choosing a spouse, the family should be formed based on the teachings of Islam. In Bukhari and Muslim, it is narrated from Abu Hurairah (R.A) that the Prophet (PBUH) said, "A woman is married for four things, i.e., her wealth, her family status, her beauty and her religion. So you should marry the religious woman (otherwise) you will be a losers." ²⁴

What are mentioned in the above hadith are the criteria that people generally consider when choosing a spouse, but the Prophet (PBUH) mentioned the most important criterion (faith) among them that if one of the husband and wife lacks this criterion, the other criteria will have no value? If the wife is pious and faithful, she will bring success to that new family, and she will be eager to form it based on what is desirable to her, and she will stay away from any factor that disrupts the peace of the family or creates problems in its relationships. Being the same in terms of age, education, social and economic status is one of the other factors preventing family disputes. Understanding and observing the mutual rights and duties that Islam has legitimized for husband and wife are also included in the above mentioned way.

– Not Interfering in the Life of Couples

This factor primarily affects a husband and wife's family. When the two families refrain from interfering in the problems that arise between the

²⁴ - Bukhari, Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Ismail. (1999 AD) Sahih Al-Bukhari, chapter: Dom. Publisher: Riyadh: Dar Al Salam Library. p. 910

spouses, and ask them to solve the problems by themselves without involving the rest of the family in them, this method will be a better preventive way to protect the family from the interference of other irresponsible parties. Sometimes some mothers interfere in the lives of their daughters out of kindness, which makes a small problem - the husband does not buy gold for his wife- turn into a big problem. Thus, it makes the father, mother, relatives of both sides, and sometimes the official authorities intervene in the problem between the spouses, and the case may result in breaking up the family.

– **Healthy Upbringing**

One of the main principles of building a healthy family, and protecting its identity and special features is paying full attention to the children's education, and it is necessary to keep in mind that the meaning of education is much broader than just getting information and learning something. In fact, both education and nurture are necessary for the growth of children because they are trusts submitted to their parents. The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: The best gift that parents can give to their children is their healthy upbringing.²⁵

B. Solution

There are countless and various ways to overcome family disharmony. some of the solutions are as below:

– **Religious Institutions**

Religious institutions include all the existing religious bodies in the society, such as mosques, scholars and religious schools. A mosque is a place where a Muslim goes for performing prayers five times a day and night. In

²⁵ - Nomani, Manzoor Ahmad (1389 AH), Ma'arif al-Hadith, translated by: Abu al-Hussein Abd al-Majid Maradzahi, publisher: Iran, publications: Farouk Azam. Vol. 3, p. 343

the mosque, the subject of the rights of husband and wife in Islam, and how to amend the family problems that are elaborated in the Holy Quran, Sunnah of our beloved Prophet (PBUH), and sayings of his companions and other righteous people of the Ummah can be delivered to people so they get aware of the rights between the spouses and settle their problems peacefully. In addition, conveying Islamic teachings and etiquettes of life to people through radio, television and the press, especially delivering instructions on how to solve the newly emerged problems, the scholars provide a great service to the people that they are in much need of it. Moreover, the scholars' direct meetings with people or over the phone allow them to overcome many family problems before they become complicated, and lead to the collapse of the family.

– Educational Institutions

One of the best solutions to the family problems is existence of healthy educational and training institutions in the society. The responsibility of providing the programs needed by the people is laid on the shoulders of these institutions. The scope of work of these educational institutions is to find out the problems of the students, and try to solve them by communicating with their parents, and examine the problem in their presence. The differences and conflicts that occur at the student's home have dire impacts on him/her and his/her academic progress. Due to the high scientific capabilities, they have, universities and higher educational institutions are expected to hold constructive and useful programs for the students' families. Through these programs, the ways of a successful marital life, and the way of dealing with family problems would become clear for the families.

– Family Counseling Institutions

These institutions deal with all family issues in all stages of family life. They provide services in family formation for those who decide to get married. These services are provided by defining marital life, rights and duties of husband and wife. The objectives of family counseling institution are the followings: 1. Reducing confusion, tension and resentment existing between husband and wife. 2. Preventing aggressive reactions in marital interaction. 3. Finding out the causes of conflict and making husband and wife aware of them. 4. Boosting motivations of husband and wife to resolve conflicts and disputes that occur. 5. Helping husband and wife to reconcile their different points of view and reach balanced solutions to overcome existing differences.²⁶

Conclusion and Outcomes

After having done research on the factors and causes of family breakdown, I have reached to the following results:

- The strength of a society depends on the strength of a family, and strong relationships among its members. If the breakdown of the family dominates, the society will lose its most basic support, power and peace. In addition, the family will suffer from weakness, incapacity and confusion.
- The religion of Islam has beautiful rules and commands for all dimensions and aspects of life. Islam has drawn a specific path for every aspect of life, including family and relatives.
- Justice and progress are associated with the society in which men and women play a vital role. However, not observing *hijab*,

²⁶ - Morsi, Kamal Ibrahim, (1411 AH), marital relations and mental health, p. 45

intermingling, and distancing Islamic teachings, lead to sedition and degradation instead of establishing justice and equality.

- The lack of harmony between the husband and wife creates an atmosphere that has bad effects on the family and relatives, and thus the family's foundation moves towards anxiety and destruction, and the husband or wife looks for a friend, and hence the love among the family member is disintegrating.
- The huge age gap causes a deep gap between husband and wife psychologically, socially and intellectually, which causes a lack of understanding and compatibility between a husband and wife in their private life, especially in the upbringing of children.
- Western media propaganda is a modern and influential weapon that steps into the depths of homes in order to destroy Islamic values, break family ties, and force the new generation to lead a life of destruction and aimless.
- If a wife has more wealth than a husband, she will sometimes interfere with the husband's responsibility of guardianship, and this factor will badly affect the establishment of the family and the attitude of the children toward their father.
- Linking the child to the principles of faith from the time he acquires wisdom, making him accustomed to the pillars of Islam from the time he acquires understanding, and teaching him/her the basics of Sharia from the time he/ she can tell good and bad apart well. When a young person is nurtured based on a strong, true and correct faith, a good and healthy personality will be formed, who will be able to face all problems with the spirit of faith and trust in Allah Almighty, and the weapon of correct knowledge of Sharia, and benefit from all new and

beneficial phenomena that are not contrary to religious teachings. Problems will definitely not weaken the strength and arm of such educated persons, and he will find his direction clear in the very beginning as well.

- Being on the same level as husband and wife in terms of age, education, social and economic status is another factor preventing family disputes.
- One of the basic axes of building a healthy home and protecting its identity and special features is the complete dedication to the education and upbringing of children.
- Universities and higher educational institutions are expected to hold constructive and useful programs for the students' families. Through these programs, the ways of a successful marital life, and the way of dealing with family problems would become clear for the families.

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