175863 - His parents want to separate, and each of them wants him to be on their side

the question

My parents are in the moment of getting divorced through court. My mothers statement in the court contains lies according to my father. As well as my father's statement in the court contains nothing but lies according to my mother. Now my mother wants my help to tell my father to stop spreading fitnah, and my father wants my help too to say the same thing to my mother. As a son, I can't pick a team. I know that my mother is not 100% to be blamed for her statement and neither my father. but Allah knows best. I don't like the way they both getting divorced by neglecting the way that Allah and His Messenger SAW already prescribed in the Quran and Sunnah. I have tired many times to give them advice, showing them the truth but nothing as the result. Can you please give this son some advice on what he can do as a muslim son in this situation and to help him get rid of the feeling of being helpless.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Honouring one’s parents is a duty that is enjoined on children, and disobeying them is something that is definitively forbidden. Allah, may He be blessed and exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him. And that you be dutiful to your parents. If one of them or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of disrespect, nor shout at them but address them in terms of honour.

And lower unto them the wing of submission and humility through mercy, and say: ‘My Lord! Bestow on them Your Mercy as they did bring me up when I was small.’

Your Lord knows best what is in your inner-selves. If you are righteous, then, verily, He is Ever

Most Forgiving to those who turn unto Him again and again in obedience, and in repentance”

[al-Isra’ 17:23-25].

Shaykh Muhammad al-Ameen ash-Shanqeeti (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

In this verse, Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, enjoined sincerity of worship to Him alone, and He mentioned alongside that the command to treat parents kindly. This pairing of obedience to parents with worshipping Him alone that is mentioned here is also mentioned in other verses, such as the following:

“Worship Allah and join none with Him in worship, and do good to parents…”

[an-Nisa’ 4:36]

“And (remember) when We took a covenant from the Children of Israel, (saying): Worship none but Allah (Alone) and be dutiful and good to parents…”

[al-Baqarah 2:83]

“Give thanks to Me and to your parents, unto Me is the final destination”

[Luqmaan 31:14]

Elsewhere, He explains that honouring them is obligatory, even if they are mushrikeen and call one to join them in their shirk (association of others with Allah), as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“But if they (both) strive with you to make you join in worship with Me others that of which you have no knowledge, then obey them not, but behave with them in the world kindly”

[Luqmaan 31:15]

“And We have enjoined on man to be good and dutiful to his parents, but if they strive to make you join with Me (in worship) anything (as a partner) of which you have no knowledge, then obey

them not. Unto Me is your return”

[al-‘Ankaboot 29:8].

In these verses Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, mentions kindness to parents in conjunction with Tawheed (affirmation of His Oneness) and worshipping Him alone. This is indicative of the emphasis placed on the obligation to treat parents with kindness.

End quote from Adwa’ al-Bayaan, 3/85

Hence it is obligatory for you to honour your parents, treat them kindly, offer them sincere advice, and try to reconcile between them. If they insist on divorce, the right of either of them to kind treatment is not waived, no matter how wrong they have been.

You should explain clearly to them that you will continue to honour them and will try hard to be kind to them, but you will avoid inclining to either party at the expense of the other or listening to claims and accusations that may turn you against one or the other, as there will be no benefit in listening to these claims if they have chosen to separate.

You should remember that the mother’s right to good companionship is three times that of the father, without detracting from the father’s rights.

It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: A man came to the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and said: O Messenger of Allaah, which of the people is most deserving of my good companionship? He said: “Your mother, then your mother, then your mother, then your father.”

Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 5626; Muslim, 2548.

An-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said: In this hadeeth we see the recommendation to treat relatives kindly, and that the mother is the most entitled of them to that. Then after her comes the father, then the next closest, then the next closest. The scholars said: The reason for precedence being given to the mother is the great deal of effort that she puts into raising him, her

compassion, her service, the difficulties she suffers in pregnancy, childbirth, and breastfeeding, then in raising him, serving him and taking care of him when he is sick, and so on. Al-Haarith al-Muhaasibi narrated that the scholars were unanimously agreed that precedence is given to the mother over the father in terms of kind treatment. Al-Qaadi ‘Iyaad narrated that there was a difference of opinion concerning that: the majority said that she is given precedence but some said that the parents are to be given equal good treatment. And some of them attributed that to Maalik. However the correct view is the first opinion, because of the clear meaning of these hadeeths. And Allah knows best.

End quote from Sharh Muslim, 16/102

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-‘Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked: I am a young man, twenty-five years of age. My father and mother are constantly arguing all day long. If I show kindness to one of them, the other one gets angry, and if I show kindness to the other one, the first one gets angry and accuses me of being disobedient. What should I do, O shaykh, in order to honour both of them? Am I regarded as being disobedient towards my mother just because I show kindness to my father, or vice versa?

He replied:

The answer in this case is that honouring parents is one of the most important duties that one human being owes to another, because Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Worship Allah and join none with Him in worship, and do good to parents…”

[an-Nisa’ 4:36].

“And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him. And that you be dutiful to your parents”

[al-Isra’ 17:23].

“Give thanks to Me and to your parents, unto Me is the final destination”

[Luqmaan 31:14].

And there are many hadeeths that speak of this matter. What the individual is required to do is to honour both of his parents, both his mother and his father, and to treat them kindly financially, by means of physical actions, by means of his high status, and in every way he can. Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And We have enjoined on man (to be dutiful and good) to his parents. His mother bore him in weakness and hardship upon weakness and hardship, and his weaning is in two years give thanks to Me and to your parents, unto Me is the final destination.

But if they (both) strive with you to make you join in worship with Me others that of which you have no knowledge, then obey them not, but behave with them in the world kindly”

[Luqmaan 31:14-15].

So He enjoined kind treatment of these mushrik parents who strive to make their child follow them in their shirk; despite those efforts on their part, Allah commands the child to behave with them in this world kindly. As that is the case, what you have to do with regard to your parents who you say are always arguing, and that each of them gets angry with you if you show respect to the other, is two things:

Firstly, with regard to the disputes that are occurring between them, you should try to reconcile between them if you can, so as to put an end to the disputes, enmity and resentment that existed between them. That is because each spouse has duties towards the other that must be fulfilled, and part of your honouring your parents is to try to put an end to these disputes so as to clear the air between them and make life happier.

Secondly, your duty towards them is to honour and show kindness to each one of them, and you can deflect the anger of the other when you show kindness to one of them by concealing it. So you can show kindness to your mother in some way that your father will not find out about, and you

can show kindness to your father in some way that your mother will not find out about. In this way you will have done what is required of you. You should not be content to let your parents remain in a state of conflict and dispute and you should not leave them in such a frame of mind that they will get angry if you show kindness to one of them. What you have to do is explain to each of them that showing kindness to one does not mean that you are severing ties with the other; rather each of them has a share of kind treatment as enjoined by Allah.

End quote from Fataawa Islamiyyah, 4/196

If your parents persist in this dispute, what we think you should do is avoid getting involved in their arguments altogether, especially since you have been offering your advice to them from the beginning.

May Allah help you to honour your parents and guide you; may He guide your parents and set their affairs straight.

And Allah knows best.