7669 - How should she deal with a husband who watches pornographic movies and does not give her her rights?

the question

My husband has not been intimate with me for many years. I feel like he doesn't love me anymore. He has had sexual problems even when I first married him and I noticed he watches alot of movies which contain sex and nudity but will never aproach me or even kiss me. I have children and I believe divorce is not the right option. What is the solution? I feel shy to say anything to him about this matter.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly: do not feel too shy to speak to your husband and advise him about these matters, because speaking to him may be more beneficial and make it easier to find a solution. Exhort him and speak to him in an effective manner such as will reach his heart; remind him of the punishment and wrath of Allaah; scare him with the torment of Hell; remind him of the trust and the responsibility he has towards his wife and children, (as in the hadeeth): Each of you is a shepherd and each of you is responsible for his flock; the man is the shepherd of his household and is responsible for those under his care.

One of his rights over you is that you should tell him that what he is doing to you is a sin, and that watching these filthy movies is keeping him away from Allaah and from remembering Him. Perhaps he will relent and pay heed to your words. Keep repeating that to him, with wisdom and paying attention to what is in your best interests. If he does not respond, then seek the help of someone who you think he will listen to, such as knowledgeable and righteous people, relatives, friends or anyone who may have some influence over him.

Secondly:

Try to get him to listen to some effective tapes of khutbahs, speeches and lessons, directly or indirectly, and give him some Islamic books, so that maybe his heart will be opened to the truth.

Thirdly:

If none of this has any effect, then appoint an arbitrator from his family and an arbitrator from your family, who you think will be able, by their involvement, to improve the relationship between you and make him give up the evil things he is involved in. These arbitrators should be righteous people, in accordance with the words of Allaah (interpretation of the meaning):

If you fear a breach between them twain (the man and his wife), appoint (two) arbitrators, one from his family and the other from hers; if they both wish for peace, Allaah will cause their reconciliation. Indeed Allaah is Ever All-Knower, Well-Acquainted with all things [al-Nisaa 4:35]

If these two arbitrators wish for peace, then we ask Allaah to bring you back together in a good and proper manner and to reconcile you with the best relationship there can be between a husband and wife.

Fourthly:

If the arbitrators cannot achieve a complete reconciliation, then make the following offer to him, if you can be patient and put up with it:

Suggest that he marry another wife, and let you stay with him without any rights as far as the intimate relationship is concerned, on the condition that he gives up his sin and you stay with your children and he spends on you. There is nothing wrong with that, because Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

And if a woman fears cruelty or desertion on her husbands part, there is no sin on them both if they make terms of peace between themselves; and making peace is better [al-Nisaa 4:128]

One of the meanings of making peace here is that she agrees to forego her right of having him stay with her overnight, in return for her staying married to him.

Aaishah said: When Sawdah bint Zamah grew old, she gave her day to Aaishah, so the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) spent Sawdahs day with her.

(Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 4914; Muslim, 1463).

Sawdah, may Allaah be pleased with her, was one of the wives of the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him).

If you do not reach an agreement with him, even something of this nature, and you cannot be patient and put up with it, then you should not think about or suggest divorce except after being sure that that the disadvantages of staying with this man outweigh the disadvantages of separating from him. In this case, you should bear in mind the words of Allaah (interpretation of the meaning):

But if they separate (by divorce), Allaah will provide abundance for everyone of them from His Bounty. And Allaah is Ever All-Sufficient for His creatures needs, All-Wise [al-Nisaa 4:130]

In this difficult situation, you must turn to Allaah and seek His Help and ask for guidance to make the right decision. We remind you again that it is your duty to remind and advise this man in all situations. May Allaah protect you and take care of you.