175113 - How should he deal with his father, who he has found out has haraam relationships with women?

the question

My father betrays my mother; what should I do? He offers all the prayers, and he always offers Islamic advice, so doesn't that make him a hypocrite, because of the things that he does? I ask Allah for forgiveness. This has been going on for a long time, but it was intermittent, but when we came to live in Africa, my father married another wife, and he left us and ran away with her. After I moved to the UK – I was born in the UK, then moved to Africa when I was small – the same thing happened again, and nothing changed. My mother and I moved to live far away from him, because she found out what was going on when I was about fourteen years old, but three years ago we moved back. Now I am watching him closely and the matter has gotten even worse. I have seen his personal page on a dating website, and I have seen text between him and other women, including his other wife, in which there are shameful words. He also receives pictures from his other wife, and I believe that he is also dating other women. Recently he has begun to visit other women, and I know that because I have seen one of the messages. I know that what I am doing is wrong, and that is because I have been devious. But I am worried that if I confront him, my mother will be devastated, because she will know what he is doing. What should I do? Please note that there are other family members who tried to guide him, but they failed.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

What your father is doing is a betrayal of his religion, before it is a betrayal of your mother. For the father – the head of the family – to fall into blatant sin, or sin that is known to some of his children, will be destructive to the family which will lose out on having a good example and will lose out on rightly guided leadership for the household and the family, and this will make one family

disintegrate and cause the bonds between them to be lost, and everyone will have the audacity to commit whatever sins he wants. Therefore fathers should beware of being bad examples to their families, and they should realise that Allah, may He be exalted, will question them about those under their care, and whether they advised them sincerely or were negligent towards them and towards the trust that was given to them.

We were upset to read what you said about your father, especially as he is one of those who pray and who offer good advice. Therefore we will advise you to do several things, which we hope will be beneficial to you.

1.

You should stop reading his messages and spying on his messages and correspondence, because that comes under the heading of spying which is blameworthy; it involves looking at that which it is haraam to look at, namely the images of a man and that which it is not appropriate to look at (‘awrahs), and looking at those haraam images may be a cause of temptation. There is no guarantee that if a person in a situation like yours sees images of men or ‘awrahs, that will not lead to him falling into temptation and moral corruption. It is sufficient for you to know that he has fallen into sin by having haraam relationships with women, whether by correspondence or face-to-face. There is no need to try to find out more, because of what that involves of haraam things and bad effects, without the hope of any interest being served by that.

2.

You should look for the reasons why your father has fallen into the sin of having haraam relationships with women. Your mother may be the cause, so she should be the remedy. In cases such as your father’s, it often happens that a man does not find in his wife that which would satisfy his sexual desire, and he does not find any kind words or nice behaviour that would make him happy and feel no need for haraam relationships with other women. Of course that does not give him an excuse for forming those haraam relationships, especially if the man has been doing that for a long time, and has done so repeatedly. Rather we are trying to look for a remedy for this

problem by all possible means. If the matter is like that, then advise your mother to treat him in a proper manner, and to make sure that he will be content with her and have no need for any other women.

3.

You can also try advising him indirectly, such as one of you asking him for advice, in writing or verbally, concerning a specific matter in school or on the Internet, or in the community in which you live and the people with whom you mix, about a problem similar to the problem that you have with him: how should children deal with a father in a situation like your father's? What are the sins incurred by such a father? What are the negative effects of his actions on his family?

We hope that this trick will be beneficial in setting his affairs straight; it may be the blow that will hit its target and make him wake up from his heedlessness and refrain from his misguidance and sin.

4.

If that method is not effective in making him wake up from his heedlessness, then we think that you should confront him directly, and you should speak to him frankly, not by way of hints. The approach should not be too gentle; rather it should be confrontational. But it should be done with love and sincerity, expressing the fear that he may be subject to the punishment of Allah and be exposed to the wrath of his Lord, may He be exalted, and the fear that he may meet a bad end which would result in punishment for him and disgrace and shame for his family.

We hope that this will be effective in making him refrain from haraam relationships with women, and will play a role in making him mend his ways and be sincere towards his family.

5.

If none of the things that we have mentioned is successful, then you should try hard to find a man who is close to him in the way he thinks, whom he likes and has a similar attitude, who can offer him sincere advice and remind him of the consequences of his actions in this world and in the

Hereafter, and do not give up hope.

6.

We will not tell you that the last thing you should do is offer supplication for him and pray that he be guided aright. Rather this is the first thing that you should do. But we will tell you that if none of the things that we have mentioned is successful with your father, then you should still carry on offering supplication for him, praying that Allah will rectify his condition, change his behaviour and guide him to the straight path. You should also seek out the good times for offering supplication, such as the last third of the night, and you should seek out the actions where it is most likely that supplication will be answered, such as when prostrating in prayer.

7.

If none of the things mentioned above is successful with your father, and you think that he is going to persist in those immoral deeds, then your mother should not carry on living with such a person; rather she should hasten to separate from him, either by means of talaaq or khula‘. Perhaps if he sees that, he may pay attention to his family life, which is going to be ruined, and give up what he is doing. If he does not give it up and does not change, then this makes it more imperative for your mother to leave him. As for you (his children), you should continue to uphold ties with him and treat them kindly as much if you can.

We ask Allah to guide your father to the best words, actions and conduct, and to bring that about sooner rather than later.

And Allah knows best.