212986 - Advice to someone who had a bad experience of marriage which has put them off the idea of ever getting married again

the question

i am a muslim man .i was married first in 2005 and divorced after 6 months. and again in 2008.i had sexual relations with both. my first wife had a boy friend who was her classmate which i did not know did not like my telling her not to talk to an indecent man and also my trying to be more islamic and she left me and asked for a divorce after a fight and i was forced to pronounce talaq 3 times at once with the demand being made by her to do so. subsequently i married for the second time and my father was seriously ill and i had to quit my job so as to look after him.he died 1.5 yrs later.my mother was in iddath and my second wife took all her jewellery and was not traceable for 10 days.after 10 days her father calls up and abuses me and my mother and says that if i wanted her i should leave my old mother and live with my wife separately. or else i should divorce her and that she was not willing to stay together. she and her father threatened to jail me and my mother and beat us up if we went to her house. i had no choice but to give talaq again.what troubles me is that i was forced on both occasions to give three talaaq at one go by both women.was i right? now i am single and hate the thought of marriage ever.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

We ask Allah, may He be glorified, to help you cope with what has been decreed for you, and to help you to think straight and mend your ways, and to relieve you of your distress and sorrow, and to bestow upon you a great reward for having honoured your parents, for He, may He be glorified, is Most Generous. We advise you to not to be hasty with regard to the matter of divorce, as it should be the last resort, not the first option, because divorce is something that is disliked in and of itself, and nothing changes that fact except in cases where it is justified to resort to it.

You should understand that it is essential for the Muslim, from the outset, to choose a wife who

meets the requirements that prescribed in Islam, and not hasten to get married without thorough checking and consideration. Rather he should think long and hard, research the matter and ask questions, so that he can find one who is religiously committed and of good character. Failing to look for one who is religiously committed and of good character, in pursuit of transient worldly standards that will fade and diminish, such as lineage, wealth and beauty, is what usually leads to separation and dissent first of all, then ultimately to divorce.

The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) encouraged us to look for a righteous wife. Al-Bukhaari (5090), Muslim (1466) and others narrated from Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "Women may be married for four things: their wealth, their lineage, their beauty and their religious commitment. Choose the one who is religiously-committed, may your hands be rubbed with dust (i.e., may you prosper)."

It was narrated by Ibn Abi Shaybah in his Musannaf (17149) and Abu Ya'la al-Mawsili in his Musnad (1012) that Abu Sa'eed said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "A woman may be married for one of three characteristics: a woman may be married for her wealth, or for her beauty, or she may be married for her religious commitment. You should look for the one who is religiously committed and of good character, may your right hand be rubbed with dust (i.e., may you prosper)."

Classed as hasan by al-Albaani in Saheeh at-Targheeb wa't-Tarheeb, no. 1919

With regard to divorcing your wife who used to talk to her male friend, you had the right to divorce her, especially after it became clear that she was persisting in doing that and she refused to accept advice, and she asked for divorce.

With regard to your wife who left the house because she objected to your honouring your parents and looking after them, although she was wrong to do that, you could have been patient with her and with her father's offensive attitude, and you could have advised her and informed her of parents' rights, and exhorted her in general with regard to this and other matters of religion,

especially since you had neglected her rights. You should have examined the matter further, and tried to give each person his or her due rights.

But whatever the case, this is something that has passed, and perhaps it will be a lesson to you for the future. Whatever Allah wills happens and whatever He does not will does not happen. What matters is that you learn from this experience for the future.

Finally, we advise you not to let this previous experience influence your attitude towards marriage and make you prefer to remain single, because that is a mistake. Marriage is part of the way of the Prophets and Messengers. Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): “And indeed We sent Messengers before you (O Muhammad SAW), and made for them wives and offspring” [ar-Ra‘d 13:38].

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-‘Uthaymeen said, discussing what we learn from the verse (interpretation of the meaning): “And We said: ‘O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in Paradise” [al-Baqarah 2:35]:

… Marriage is an ancient practice, since the time Allah created Adam, and it continued among his descendants, the Messengers and Prophets, and others, as Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): “And indeed We sent Messengers before you (O Muhammad SAW), and made for them wives and offspring” [ar-Ra‘d 13:38].

End quote from Tafseer Soorat al-Baqarah, 1/130

Because of that, the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said to a group of the Sahaabah who wanted to go to extremes in worship and strive hard in it:

“By Allah, I am the most pious among you and I fear Allah the most, but I fast and do not fast, I pray and I sleep, and I marry women. Whoever turns away from my Sunnah is not of me.”

Narrated by al-Bukhaari (5063) and Muslim (1401).

However we should point out that the divorces did count as such at all times, if you agreed to it

and meant it. If what you mean when you say that you were forced to do it is that you were compelled to do that in order to rid yourself of these wives and their defiant attitudes, then this is correct. But if what you mean by being forced to do it is that you were compelled in the shar'i sense, i.e., that you are forced to do it in such a way that the divorce does not count as such, then this is not correct. Rather the divorce counts such because you decided and chose to do it, therefore it counts as such.

For more information on the rulings on the threefold talaaq, please see fatwa no. 36580

And Allah knows best.