9380 - How to Deal With Sinful Families in Islam

the question

What can a woman do, if her family is obstructing her path to Islam. They are non-Practicing Muslims. How does she fulfill Silat ir rahim and follow Islam if there is a great deal of difficulty in doing so. Can a sister just break ties, live on her own and try to get closer to Allah. It is becoming difficult to maintain ties of kinship when there is continuous evil, backbiting, fitnah, inciting me to disobey Allah, etc.,

Is there a dua to make when one faces such great difficulty?

And what do I do if I make mistakes and fall in sin – despite not desiring to do so?

Summary of answer

Islam teaches patience, wisdom, and gentle counsel when dealing with sinful family members. Believers are encouraged not to sever family ties, but instead to make sincere du‘ā’ for their guidance and strive to be a source of positive influence through good character and steadfast faith.
The Prophet’s example shows that kindness and consistent effort can lead to profound transformations—even among one's closest relatives.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

We say to this Muslim sister: may Allah reward you with good for adhering to Islam, and we ask Allah to make you steadfast in Islam and to send you people who will help you to do so.

Be Patient and Steadfast in The Face of Hardship

With regard to your question on how to deal with sinful families wisely, firstly, you have to bear their annoyance with patience, because the path of adherence (to Islam) is not easy, but it is the path of the Prophets. The Muslim is bound to face difficulties in the way of his adhering to Islam, as Imam Muslim narrated in his *Sahih* (2823) from Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Paradise is surrounded with difficulties and Hell is surrounded with desires.” The Prophets (peace be upon them) were faced with difficulties from their people and from the closest of people to them, but the reward for their patience was that Allah caused them ultimately to prevail.

Advise Them With Wisdom and Good Character

The Muslim sister should strive to advise her family with kindness, wisdom and beautiful preaching, and she should not despair or give up. She should show a good attitude towards them, say and do good things to them, and extend a helping hand to them, even to those who cause her the most hardship. This will have an effect on them, in sha Allah, and this is one of the most effective ways of calling people to Allah.

Seek Support From Within The Family

She should try to find people to help and support her, by trying to persuade those among her family members who like her, because they will be more likely to respond than others.

Pray Sincerely for Their Guidance

You have to equip yourself with the most effective “weapon”, which is praying for them to be guided and that Allah will fill their hearts with the light of adherence to Islam. You should say such Du`as a lot when prostrating and during the last part of the night, and at other times when du’aa’ is especially recommended, and you should not try to hasten the response.

Weighing the Consequences of Cutting Ties with Relatives

You should note that it is not always good to break off ties. In some cases, when those whom Allah has guided break off ties with their families, this makes them go further in their sin and farther removed from religious commitment. Breaking off ties may cause a person distress and make him unable to bear it. Hence we think that the sister should be patient and mix with her family in ways that will not affect her religious commitment and level of faith. The more she withdraws into herself –i.e., at home – the better, because if a woman leaves the family home, that may make people talk badly about her a lot, and evil-minded people may try to approach because she has gone away from those who could take care of her and protect her.

Your staying may be more beneficial to your family, because there are many sins that the family may not dare to commit out of respect for their children whom Allah has guided. If the children leave, this will give the family more freedom to commit whatever sins they want.

Hence the Da`iyah (caller to Islam) should act wisely and weigh the consequences of leaving [a situation]. They must not prioritize a minor benefit over preventing a greater harm—for repelling harm takes precedence over acquiring benefits.

The Best Du`a for Dealing with Sinful Families

There is no better Du`a for such situations than the Du`a of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) when he prayed for his people to be forgiven and guided.

- It was narrated that `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud (may Allah be pleased with him) said: It is as if I can see the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) telling us the story of one of the Prophets whose people beat him and made him bleed, and he was wiping the blood from his face and saying, “O Allah, forgive my people for they do not know.” (Narrated by Al-Bukhari, 3290 and Muslim, 1792).

An-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The Prophet referred to is one of the earlier Prophets. Something similar happened to our Prophet

(peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) on the day of Uhud. (End quote from *Sharh Muslim*, 12/150)

It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: Tufayl ibn `Amr Al-Dawsi and his companions came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and said: “O Messenger of Allah, (the tribe of) Daws have rebelled, so pray to Allah against them.” The people said, “Daws are doomed.” But the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “O Allah, guide Daws and bring them to me.” (Narrated by Al-Bukhari, 2779 and Muslim, 2524)

It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: “I used to call my mother to Islam when she was still a polytheist. I called her one day and she said something about the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that I did not like to hear. I came to the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) weeping, and said, ‘O Messenger of Allah, I have been calling my mother to Islam and she refuses. I called her today and she said something about you that I did not like to hear. Pray to Allah to guide the mother of Abu Hurayrah.’ The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, ‘O Allah, guide the mother of Abu Hurayrah.’ I went back, feeling optimistic because of the Du`a of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). When I came back, I went to the door and found it locked. My mother heard my footsteps and said, ‘Stay where you are, O Abu Hurayrah.’ I could hear the sound of water. She washed herself (did Ghusl), put on her chemise and quickly covered her head with her head cover, then she opened the door and said, ‘O Abu Hurayrah, I bear witness that there is no god except Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger.’ I went back to the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), weeping with joy, and said, ‘O Messenger of Allah (S), good news! Allah has answered your prayer and guided the mother of Abu Hurayrah.’ He praised and thanked Allah.” (Narrated by Muslim, 2491)

For more details, please refer to the following answers: 9047, 114437, 96371, 46876, 247586, 9668, 221778, 406458.

And Allah knows best.