96665 - Reasons why the mother interferes in her married daughter’s life and how to deal with it

the question

I am a married woman. My mother interferes in my marital life and causes problems between me and my husband. She, for example, goes to the doctor and asks him about my health, she goes also to the lab and takes my examination results. Sometimes she keeps asking me about my husband and his matters. She knows that my husband does not like these questions, but she does not care. She says that she is doing these things to be assured about me and my health, but my husband and I see this as interfering in our life, and this is not her right. I have tried many times to talk to her but she does not listen, she even becomes angry. I do not know what to do. I do not want my mother to be displeased with me, nor do I want my husband to be displeased either.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The mother’s rights over her children are great, and Islam has enjoined the children to fulfil these rights, and it regards disobedience to parents as a major sin.

The details of the mother’s rights and her duties are explained in the answer to question no. 5053.

The mother whose daughter has got married should realize that it is not permissible for her daughter to give precedence to obeying her mother over obeying her husband, and she (the mother) should understand that it is not permissible for her to interfere in her daughter’s life after marriage, unless she is asked to intervene in order to bring about a reconciliation or to offer advice and guidance.

The mother’s interference in her married daughter’s life has both negative and positive effects. The positive effects include what the wise mother does of guiding her daughter to things that will

improve her life, whether that guidance comes before her daughter gets married or after.

Undoubtedly the mother's experience of life and her compassion towards her daughter will motivate her to offer advice to her daughter who does not have the same experience and wisdom in dealing with a husband.

But the mother's interference in her married daughter's life may also have negative effects, the most serious of which is a case in which her interference leads to her daughter being divorced, when the husband sees that his wife is not obeying him and he has no position of control over her, and that his wife's mother is the one who tells his wife what to do and what not to do, which leads to the destruction of her daughter's marriage.

It is not permissible for the daughter to go along with her mother when she asks her for private information, even if that will make her angry with her, for obedience to Allaah comes before obedience to anyone else, and it is not permissible to give precedence to the wrath of anyone else over the wrath of Allaah, may He be exalted.

Undoubtedly there are reasons for this interference on the part of the wife's mother. These reasons include the following:

1 – The mother's strong personality, and her husband's weak character, so that she is the one who makes decisions in the home, and she wants to transfer this to her daughter's home too.

2 –Weak character of both her daughter's husband and her daughter, which gives the mother the opportunity to play a major role in directing the affairs of her daughter's household. The mother thinks that running the household needs a strong hand and that the couple are unable to run their home, so she takes charge.

3 – Impassioned feelings towards her daughter, which makes her ask about her food, drink, medicine and sicknesses, and how her husband is treating her; it may even make her overstep the mark and ask about intimate details of married life, including love and sex!

4 – Husband's mistreatment of his wife, which leads the mother to intervene in matters great and

small, so as to make the husband behave himself and ensure that the wife is given her rights.

5 – Frequent visits on the daughter's part to her mother, and being in touch with her a great deal. In most of these visits etc the mother cannot find anything to talk about except finding out what is going on in her daughter's house.

In order to solve the problem of the mother interfering in her married daughter's life in ways that may spoil her life, she and her husband should pay attention to a number of things, including the following:

1 – Direct advice from the daughter or her husband to the mother not to interfere in their lives, telling her that this is not permissible for her, and that this interference may lead to the couple splitting up.

2 – Telling the father (the mother's husband) that he must stop his wife from interfering in the life of her daughter and her husband.

3 – Hinting to the mother, or even warning her, that if she continues to interfere in their lives, then the husband will stop her from visiting her daughter or getting in touch with her, and he will also stop his wife and children from visiting her mother. This will clearly demonstrate the strength of character of the husband and wife, and it will prevent the mother from interfering in a negative way in their lives.

4 – It is essential that the couple work out together how to deal with this problem and that neither of them tries to solve it on his or her own without the other. This problem concerns both parties, so it needs a common strategy to deal with it.

5 – They should consult the mother with regard to some matters, and ask for her advice, so that the relationship between them will remain within shar'i limits, and so that she will know that her involvement is not rejected completely, and that they may need her in some cases. This will give her confidence and maintain contact, whilst preventing negative interference.

6 – Reducing the number of visits and contact with the mother, and when the visit does take place,

there should be a focus on talking about useful things, advice and reminders to do acts of obedience, and avoid sins and bad deeds.

We ask Allaah to set your affairs straight and to guide you all to that which pleases Him.

And Allaah is the Source of strength.