



Before Death Do Us Apart

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It is nowadays a rather common tête-à-tête over the phone or in a larger group at parties that more people today are going through divorce or are separated or are living out. One reason obviously is that there are simply more people, and therefore more marriages, more interactions, more quarrels, more tensions, and therefore things taut are aught to split. On a more serious note, the numbers are actually alarming.

Today we all know more couples who are at loggerheads with each other than at any other. And on inquiry as an outsider you will find that their reason to part ways is so stupid, so immature, and so illogical that they are (in your view) making a grave mistake. You think so because you are an outsider. The two feuding parties on the other hand consider their option as the only one left.

The fact is, every relationship is unique. A spouse unable to continue in wedlock may be great in another. But then in some cases we have seen the pillar of success elusive after one failure, two, three separations. The highest I have heard is five. Pray no one beats me on that number.

Husbands and wives have left each other after a few days, after a month or two, after several years, and even after decades. So, divorce has no time pattern.

Arranged marriages, love marriages, Internet marriages, cousin marriages, visa and convenience marriages, hard and fast marriages, adult marriages,

child marriages, families-getting-married marriages ... they all have their percentages of failures. So, how the guy and the gal got together is not a factor.

Poor people's marriage or rich, slum weddings or palatial, spouse living in the country or outside, educated people or uneducated, one learned and the other not, dark or fair or pink, racial or interracial, employed or unemployed, living as a limited family or in a larger extended family, religious or atheistic, same belief or different, we find divorces in every sphere of the society. So, who the persons are is not the cause.

The primary reason why couples want out is intolerance.

Now before we get married we know that the person I am exchanging vows with is different from me, unless of course we are talking about same-sex avowals. On that point, it is unfortunate that a heterosexual couples can no longer say they are 'happy and gay' without raising eyebrows.

Couples lovey-dovey or thrust into a relationship know beforehand what they are getting into, well most of it. And there is the catch for those people who end marriages quickly. They find falsehood in their partner. He does not have the degree he said he had, his parents said it too. She does not look that great without the makeup. That is how she always presented herself before kobul. This usually happens when the 'love' is skin or foundation deep.

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In deeper relationships economy can be a factor among the rich. Either person fooling around seriously with a third person is a very strong case of shouting, sulking and separating.

What is most astounding in some break-ups is that the couple had been going around for five six years, and then after the wedding they find out a matter or two that is not to their liking. Or, they suddenly find someone else who is more to their liking. What a shame! If only the 'better-liked' person would have arrived on the scene before the nuptial tie. But then someone could find even a 'better' person than that.

In Islam, divorce is permitted as a last option if it becomes impossible to continue as a married couple due to disagreement, and all options have been

ship'.

The problem frequently is the friends of either part of a couple-in-trouble. Instead of encouraging a disturbed partner to patch up petty matters, we more often than not fan the fire and help either partner to step over the threshold in the opposite direction. Trifle issues, such as snoring, or passing excessive time with same-sex friends, or shopping, or the sister-in-law, or the mother-in-law, or not giving time to housekeeping, not attending when the other is dining, continuing to befriend someone disliked... the list could go on, can break, or if ingredients such as tolerance and patience are introduced, make a marriage.

In our entire discussion so far we have left out the most important component of a marriage – the



Manan Morshed, *Dark 3*, acrylic on paper, 2011.

exhausted and both parties are treated with respect and justice. However, couples should evaluate a given situation and try to their utmost to reconcile. The Prophet Muhammad pbuh once said, "Of all the lawful things, divorce is the most hated by Allah." It is reluctantly allowed because no one should continue in an unbearable living condition. Sustained ill manners of in-laws, drunkenness, foul mouth, violence, polygamy, fraudulent activities, and unexplained income should not be tolerated, and one will perhaps serve better the other if the delinquent partner can be persuaded to come to light.

Married life has been described as 'one filled with mercy, compassion, and tranquillity. Marriage is a great blessing. Each partner in the marriage has certain rights and responsibilities, which are to be fulfilled in a loving way in the best interests of the family. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. When a marriage is in danger, couples are advised to pursue all possible remedies to rebuild the relation-

child, if the Lord Almighty so blesses. The child is the one that fastens a growing family together, realising which many parents sacrifice their dislikes and differences for the love of their child. There is little doubt that parents suffer in any break-up, and they do love the child, but the child suffers the most and sometimes forever. Matters often turn nasty and inhuman when an egotist fight ensues over the child. Many children have sadly committed suicide after the divorce and/or new marriage of their parents. Little do we realise that the divorce is between the husband and wife, and that the mother and the father should be left out; together and singly they belong to the child.

The next time anyone amongst us will indulge in an out-of-marriage relationship beginning say with a frivolous romance, or consider a possible break-up with our wedded partner, let us give First Class seat to our children. They deserve no less, or we do not deserve them.

And, hey! Many congratulations to all of you out