



Sayyiduna Abu Hurairah (radhiyallahu ‘anhu) reports the following incident from Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam):

From the people of the past, there was a husband and wife who were extremely poor. On one occasion, the husband arrived from a journey and entered his home, suffering from the pangs of hunger. He asked his wife, “Do you have any food?” (Seeing him in this pitiable state, she did not have the heart to tell him that there was no food, so) she said, “Yes, glad tidings, for the sustenance of Allah Ta‘ala will soon come to you!”

(The husband’s hunger was so severe that he could not wait, and) he thus asked her for the food immediately. He said to her, “What is the matter with you? Go and see if you have any food or not!” His wife (calmly) responded, “In a few moments! We have hope in the mercy of Allah Ta‘ala!”

Eventually, when the husband could wait no longer, he said to his wife, “What is wrong with you? Go look for some bread! If you have some, bring it for me to eat, for I cannot tolerate the hunger anymore and I am suffering!” His wife responded, “Yes, the food in the oven will soon be ready! Don’t be hasty!”

After some time passed, in which the husband remained silent, and she anticipated that her husband would again ask her to see if there was any food in the house, she thought to herself, “Why don’t I go and look in the oven?” With this thought in mind, she went to the oven, and (to her absolute astonishment,) she found it to be filled with meat, and she found that her mill was grinding grain into flour! She thus took the flour from the mill, lifting the mill and emptying it, and removed the meat from the oven (and prepared the bread, thereafter serving the food to her husband).

After narrating this incident, Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) mentioned, “I take an oath by that Being in whose control lies the life of Abul Qasim (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam)! If she had taken the flour from the mill, without lifting and emptying the mill, it would have continued grinding and producing flour until the Day of Qiyaamah.”

(Musnad Ahmad #9464)

Lessons:

1. The wife understood that her husband was starving and exhausted, as he had just arrived from a journey. Hence, she tried within the best of her understanding and ability to lessen his burden and did not tell him that there was no food in the house. She displayed a remarkable sense of consideration and compassion for her husband.

It is thus imperative for one spouse to consider the feelings and mood of the other.

If we need to discuss a sensitive issue with our partners, then we should ensure that the time, place and manner are all suitable.

2. Allah Ta‘ala is the Sole Provider for the entire creation. Just as Allah Ta‘ala provides with means (e.g. through a person working and earning), Allah Ta‘ala also provides without means. In essence, we must have the complete conviction that it is Allah Ta‘ala alone who provides, and our sustenance has been preordained. If we have this mindset, we will never be tempted to stretch our hand to impermissible wealth or impermissible food.

Likewise, we will be content with what we have, as we understand that it was preordained for us, and no effort of our own could have changed what we received.

3. If we have any problem, we should turn to Allah Ta‘ala and place our trust in Him. Allah Ta‘ala is All-Powerful and has complete control over everything. He can easily assist us from the unseen and bless us with ease after our difficulty. All that is required is that we lead lives pleasing to Him and place our trust in Him.