ONE BEDROOM FLAT

As the dream of most parents I had acquired a MBBS degree and passed PLAB to enter UK, the land of braves and opportunity. When I arrived in the UK, it was as if a dream had come true. Here at last I was in the place where I wanted to be. I decided I would be staying in this country for about Five years (maximum Permit Free Period) in which time I would have earned enough money to settle down in India. My father was a government employee and after his retirement, the only asset he could acquire was a decent one bedroom flat. I wanted to do some thing more than him. I started feeling homesick and lonely as the time passed. I used to call home and speak to my parents every week using cheap international phone cards. Two years passed, two years of Burgers at McDonald’s and chicken legs in KFC and discos and 2 years watching the foreign exchange rate getting happy whenever the Rupee value went down. Finally I decided to get married. Told my parents that I have only 10 days of holidays and everything must be done within these 10 days. I got my ticket booked in the cheapest flight. Was jubilant as I was actually enjoying shopping for gifts for all my relatives and friends back home. If I miss anyone then there will be talks. After reaching home I spent home one week going through all the photographs of girls and as the time was getting shorter I was forced to select one candidate. In-laws told me, to my surprise, that I would have to get married in 2-3 days, as I will not get anymore holidays soon and they cannot wait for long. After the marriage, it was time to return to UK, after giving some money to my parents and telling the neighbors to look after them, we (I was lucky and managed to get the visa of my wife early) returned to UK. My wife enjoyed this country for about two months and then she started feeling lonely. The frequency of calling India increased to twice in a week sometimes 3 times a week as she also has to call her parents. Our savings started diminishing. After two more years we started to have kids. Two lovely kids, a boy and a girl, were gifted to us by the almighty. Every time I spoke to my parents, they asked me to come to India so that they can see their grand-children. Every year I decide to go to India. But part work, part monetary conditions prevented it. Years went by and visiting India was a distant dream. Then suddenly one day I got a message that my parents were seriously sick. I tried but I couldn’t get any holidays and was stuck up in the procedures and thus could not go to India. The next message I got was my parents were passed away and as there was no one to do the last rites the society members had done whatever they could. I was depressed. My parents passed away without seeing their grand children. After couple more years passed away, much to my children’s dislike (by now nearly cocos) and my wife’s joy we returned to India to settle down. I started to look for a suitable property, but to my dismay my savings were short and the property prices had gone up during all these years. I had to return to the UK. My wife refused to come back with me and my children refused to stay in India. My 2 children and I returned to UK after promising my wife I would be back for good after two years. ONE BEDROOM FLAT 100 Moral Stories 70 www.islamicoccasions.com Time passed by, my daughter decided to get married to a Scottish and my son was happy living in Ireland. I decided that enough is enough and wound-up every thing and returned to India. I had just enough money to buy a decent Two-bed room flat in a well-developed locality. Now I am 60 years old and the only time I go out of the flat is for the routine visit to the nearby place of worship. My faithful wife has also left me and gone to the holy abode. Sometimes I wondered was it worth all this? My father, even after staying in India, had a house to his name and I too have the same, nothing more. I lost my parents and children for just ONE EXTRA BEDROOM. Looking out from the window I see a lot of children dancing. This damned cable TV has spoiled our new generation and these children are losing their values and culture because of it. I get occasional cards from my children asking I am alright. Well at least they remember me. Now perhaps after I die it will be the neighbors again who will be performing my last rites, God Bless them. But the question still remains ‘was all this worth it?’ I am still searching for an answer....There are no unanswered prayers.... At times the answer is NO.