

دور المرأة في إصلاح المجتمع

The Woman's Role in Society

Reform and Fatwas of

Importance to the Muslim

Woman

The Woman's Role in Society Reform and Fatwas of Importance to the Muslim Woman

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In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.

Introduction

Praise be to Allah, we praise Him and seek His help and forgiveness.

We seek refuge with Allah from the evil of our selves and from our bad deeds. Whoever Allah guides, none can lead astray, and whoever He leads astray none can guide. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah alone, Who has no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and messenger. Allah sent him with guidance and the religion of truth. He delivered the message, fulfilled the trust, advised the Ummah, and duly strove for the sake of Allah. May Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, his family, his Companions, and those who follow them with good righteousness until the Day of Judgment. To proceed:

I am pleased to be here today, Tuesday 23 Rabī' al-Thāni 1412 AH, at the Intermediate College for Girls in Jeddah, to express my thought on this serious topic, the role of the woman in society reform.

I say, by the help of Allah Almighty, seeking His guidance to what is right and sound,

that the woman plays a vital role in the reform of the society, because the reform of the society is of two kinds:

First: Visible Reform:

It is the kind of reform practiced in the markets, mosques, and other public places. Here men take the lead because they are the visible group that goes out more.

Second: Hidden Reform:

It is the kind of reform practiced in homes. It is mainly the woman's responsibility on account of her being the homemaker, as Allah Almighty addressed the Prophet's wives saying:

{وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَى وَأَقِمْنَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتِينَ الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِعْنَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا} [الأحزاب: 33].

{And settle in your homes, and do not display yourselves as women did in the days of pre-Islamic ignorance. Establish prayer, give Zakah, and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah only intends to keep the causes of evil away from you and purify you completely, O members of the Prophet's family.} [Al-Ahzāb: 33]

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Importance of the Woman's Role in Society Reform

That said, we believe that we could safely say that reforming half of the society or more is the woman's responsibility, for two reasons:

The first reason is that women are equal to men in number, that is if they do not outnumber them. Women constitute the majority of Adam's offspring as indicated by the Sunnah. However, this varies from one country to another and from one time to another. Women may outnumber men in a certain country and may be outnumbered by men in another,

and the same applies to time. Anyway, women play a significant role in reforming society; and there is a second reason that clearly indicates the importance of their role.

The second reason is that the new generations spend their early life in the care of women, and this makes the importance of women's role in reforming society quite obvious.

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Prerequisites of Women's Reformation of Society

In order to carry out their mission in reforming society, women must have certain qualifications or prerequisites. Some of these prerequisites are:

First: The woman's righteousness:

The woman must be righteous herself to be a good role model for other women. The question is: how does a woman attain righteousness?

Let it be known to every woman that knowledge is the only way to achieve righteousness. By "knowledge" I mean the Shariah-based knowledge that could either be obtained from books, if possible, or directly from scholars, be they men or women.

In this age of ours, it is very easy for women to obtain knowledge directly from the scholars via recorded tapes, which play a major role in guiding the society towards goodness and righteousness - praise be to Allah - if they are used for that purpose.

Hence, knowledge is a necessary precondition of a woman's righteousness because there is no righteousness but through knowledge, so it should be received either from the scholars or from the books.

Second: Articulation and Eloquence:

That Allah graces her with the gift of articulation and eloquence such that she could fluently and eloquently express herself in a sincere manner that reveals the meanings she carries in her heart. Many people may share those same meanings with her but they are unable to express themselves or may use unclear and ineloquent words to do so; hence, they fail to fulfill the hoped-for reform.

The question now is how to attain articulation, eloquence, and the ability to express oneself truly, fully, and clearly?

We say: In order to attain that, the woman must possess some knowledge of the Arabic Language branches, including grammar and rhetoric, through attending lessons, even if only a few. That way she would be able to express herself correctly and thus convey the meanings she intends to convey to the women she is addressing.

Third: Wisdom:

The woman must have wisdom in calling others to Allah and in conveying knowledge to her addressees. "Wisdom" means putting everything in its right place as defined by scholars.

It is a blessing from Allah Almighty to be endowed with wisdom.

قال الله عز وجل: {يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَن يَشَاءُ وَمَن يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا} [البقرة: 269].

Allah Almighty said: {He gives wisdom to whom He wills, and whoever has been given wisdom has certainly been given much good.} [Al-Baqarah: 269]

Absence of wisdom often leads to missing goals and causing confusion.

Wisdom in calling people to Allah Almighty requires dealing with each in the way that befits him, whether that person is ignorant, or he knows

but is heedless and negligent, or he knows but is too arrogant to accept the truth.

People, thus, fall into three categories: an ignorant person, someone who knows but is indolent, or someone who knows but is obstinate.

All cannot be dealt with equally; rather, each category must be addressed befittingly. This is why when the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) intended to send Mu'ādh to Yemen, he said to him:

«إِنَّكَ تَأْتِي قَوْمًا أَهْلَ كِتَابٍ».

“Indeed, you are going to people who are from the People of the Scripture.”

The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said that to inform Mu'ādh who they were so he could prepare himself accordingly and address them according to what befitted them.

Examples on how the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) adopted wisdom in calling to Allah:

Using wisdom in calling to Allah is indicated by incidents reported from the wisest of all people in calling to Allah; Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him). Following are examples of those incidents:

First example: The Bedouin who urinated in the mosque:

Anas ibn Mālik (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that a Bedouin man once entered the mosque and started passing urine in one of its corners. The Companions got angry, shouted at him, and tried to stop him. However, the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him), whom Allah has endowed with wisdom, rebuked them saying: "Do not interrupt him."

When the Bedouin finished urinating, the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) ordered that a bucket of water be poured over the urine. Then, he called the Bedouin and said to him:

«إِنَّ هَذِهِ الْمَسَاجِدَ لَا يَصْلَحُ فِيهَا شَيْءٌ مِنَ الْأَذَى أَوْ مِنَ الْقَذَرِ، وَإِنَّمَا هِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ، وَقِرَاءَةِ الْقُرْآنِ، وَذَكَرِ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ».

"These mosques are not the places meant for such urine and filth; rather, they are only for prayer, recitation of the Qur'an, and the remembrance of Allah Almighty." or he (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said something like that. [Al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others]

Imam Ahmad (may Allah have mercy upon him) narrated that this Bedouin then said: "O Allah, have mercy upon me and Muhammad alone with no one else with us."

Lessons to be learned from this story:

First lesson: The Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) got angry and yelled at the

Bedouin, which indicates the impermissibility of approving what is wrong. Rather, it is an obligation to hasten to forbid the wrongdoer from doing what is wrong. But if such an initiative would to a greater harm,

then deliberation becomes a must to eliminate this major evil. Hence, the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) forbade his Companions from, and even rebuked them for, interrupting the Bedouin and yelling at him.

Second lesson: The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) let something wrong happen in order to eliminate something that is worse. He approved of the Bedouin urinating thus eliminating a graver harm, namely one of two things which would have happened in case of interrupting that Bedouin:

1. He would either have had his 'Awrah (private parts) exposed to keep his clothes clean and untouched by urine. In that case, a larger spot of the mosque would have become stained and the man would have had his 'Awrah exposed before people, and both matters are evil.

2. Or he would have covered his 'Awrah and had his clothes stained with urine.

To avoid those two evil consequences, the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) approved of the Bedouin finishing what he had already started, since stopping him also would

not have eliminated the evil that had already taken place.

So, we learn the following lesson: if a certain evil only leads to what is worse, then abstaining from forbidding such evil becomes an obligation to ward off the graver one. There are grounds for this in the Qur'an,

فَقَدْ قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: {وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ} [الأنعام:108].

as Allah Almighty said: {And do not insult those they invoke other than Allah lest they insult Allah in enmity without knowledge.} [Al-An'ām: 108]

We all know that insulting the polytheists' gods is something that Allah Almighty loves. However, since that leads to insulting Allah Almighty, Who is far Exalted above that, therefore, He forbade us from insulting their idols;

وَقَالَ: {وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ} [الأنعام:108].

saying: {And do not insult those they invoke other than Allah lest they insult Allah in enmity without knowledge.} [Al-An'ām: 108]

Third lesson: The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) ordered that a bucket of water be poured over the Bedouin's urine immediately; which teaches us that hastening to eliminate the harm is a priority.

Delay has its shortcomings. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) could have delayed cleaning that spot of the mosque until the time of prayer; however, it is a priority to hasten to remove the harm before being unable to do so or forgetting about it. This is a crucial point; one must hasten to remove the harm for fear of future inability to remove it or forgetfulness.

For instance, if one's clothes are soiled with some impurity, it is preferable for him to immediately wash away that impurity. Delay may cause one to forget or become unable to remove the impurity due to lack of water or any other reason.

When a little boy was brought to the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and he made him sit on his lap, the boy urinated. So, he (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) immediately asked for water and poured it over the boy's urine. He did not delay washing his garment until prayer time is due for the previously mentioned reasons.

Fourth lesson: The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) informed the Bedouin that mosques are places built for prayer, recitation of the Qur'an, and remembrance of Allah. His words were:

«لا يصلح فيها شيء من الأذى والفنر».

“These mosques are not the places meant for urine and filth.”

Mosques should, thus, be honored, cleansed, and purified. Nothing should be done therein except what they were built for of what pleases Allah Almighty such as prayer, recitation of the Qur'an, His remembrance, and similar acts of worship.

Fifth lesson: When one preaches others with wisdom, kindness, and leniency, this will help him achieve more than what he would achieve if he chose to use violence.

The Bedouin was completely convinced of what the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) had taught him to the extent that made him make that famous statement: “O Allah, have mercy upon me and Muhammad alone with no one else with us.”

So we see that the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) used gentleness and leniency with that man,

because he was undoubtedly ignorant. It is inconceivable that someone who knows about the sanctity of the mosque and the necessity of honoring it would urinate in one of its corners before all people.

Second example: The Companion who had intercourse with his wife during daytime in Ramadan:

In a Hadith narrated by Al-Bukhāri and Muslim, Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that a man came to the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and said: "O Messenger of Allah, I am ruined." He said: "Why are you ruined?" The man said: "I had intercourse with my wife in Ramadan while fasting."

It is a major violation to have intercourse intentionally with one's wife while fasting in Ramadan. How did the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) handle that situation? Did he rebuke the man? Did he criticize him? Did he blame him? No, because the man came to him while being repentant and regretful, rather than being negligent and indifferent. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) asked him if he could free a slave as an expiation of what he committed, but the man replied in the negative.

He asked him if he could fast two months consecutively, but again he replied in the negative. He asked him if he could feed sixty of the needy, but he said he could not, then he sat down. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) brought him some dried dates and said to him: "Take this and give it out in charity (as an expiation)." The man said: "O Messenger of Allah, should I give it to someone poorer than me? By Allah, there is no household between its (Madinah's) two mountains poorer than mine."

The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) laughed until his premolars were visible then said: "Feed your family therewith."

Among the lessons to be learned from this story is that the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) did not reproach, scold, or rebuke the man, because he came repentant and regretful. There is a difference between one who is obstinate and one who admits his mistake and comes seeking our help and asking us to save him from what he had gotten himself into.

That is why the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) treated him that way. He sent him back to his family with a prize, namely the dried dates, which he should have used to feed sixty of the needy had he not been poor himself.

Third example: The man who sneezed during the prayer:

In the Hadith of Mu'āwiyah ibn al-Hakam (may Allah be pleased with him) when he entered to pray with the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him), then a man sneezed and said: "Praise be to Allah." Thereupon, Mu'āwiyah said: "May Allah have mercy upon you." The people gave him disapproving looks, on account of which he said: "Woe to me, why are you looking at me?"

They began to strike their thighs with their hands, so I realized they were urging me to be silent. When the Messenger of Allah (may Allah's

peace and blessings be upon him) finished - my father and mother be ransom for him - never have I seen a better teacher than him. By Allah, he neither scolded me nor hit me nor insulted me.

قال: «إِنَّ هَذِهِ الصَّلَاةَ لَا يَصْلَحُ فِيهَا شَيْءٌ مِنْ كَلَامِ النَّاسِ، إِنَّمَا هُوَ التَّسْبِيحُ، وَالتَّكْبِيرُ، وَقِرَاءَةُ الْقُرْآنِ».

He just said: ‘Prayer is not the time for anything of people’s talk; rather, it is the time for making Tasbīh (Glorifying Allah), making Takbīr (Exalting Allah’s name), and reciting the Qur’an.’ or as he (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) said.”

Fourth example: The man who wore a golden ring:

A man wore a golden ring despite the fact that the Prophet (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) had already clarified the ruling that it is impermissible for Muslim men to wear gold. Hence, he (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) said:

«يَعْمَدُ أَحَدُكُمْ إِلَى جَمْرَةٍ مِنْ نَارٍ فَيَضَعُهَا فِي يَدِهِ».

“One of you takes a live coal and puts it on his hand.” Then the Prophet (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) removed the ring himself and threw it away. After the Prophet had left, the man was told to take his ring and benefit of it but he said: “By Allah, I will not take a ring that was thrown

away by the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him)."

This firm way in dealing with the man in that incident was most likely because he already knew that gold was impermissible for Muslim men.

Hence, the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) treated him that way, which was stricter than in the previous examples.

So, the preacher must know how to deal with each person according to his status; whether the one he is addressing is ignorant, knows but is lazy and indifferent, or knows but is obstinate and arrogant. Each should be dealt with appropriately.

4. Good parenting skills:

The woman must possess good parenting skills to know how to raise her children, who will grow up to be the future men and women. The mother is the first influencer the children come in contact with. So, if the mother is of good morals, duly observes acts of worship, treats her children kindly, and raises them well, they will play a major role in reforming society.

Therefore, a woman who has children has to look after her children and give due care to raising them. She must seek their father's help if she is incapable of disciplining them. If they are fatherless, then she must seek the help of their guardian, be it a brother, an uncle, a cousin, etc.

A woman must not give in to the status quo and follow people blindly with the belief that she is incapable of making change. There would be no reform if we insisted on giving in to the status quo, because reform necessitates fixing what is corrupt and changing what is good to what is better until all affairs are set aright.

Surrendering to the status quo has no place in Shariah;

For this reason, when the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) was sent among people worshipping idols, severing kinship ties, oppressing and wronging others, he did not surrender to that status quo, or, rather, Allah Almighty did not give him permission to surrender to it, saying to him:

{فَاصْدَعْ بِمَا تُؤْمَرُ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْمُشْرِكِينَ} [الحجر: 94].

{Then declare what you are commanded and turn away from the polytheists.} [Al-Hijr: 94] So, Allah Almighty commanded him to declare the truth and turn away from the ignorant and forget about their ignorance and their aggression in order to complete his mission, and that is exactly what happened.

Someone might say that wisdom entails change; that is true, but not at the speed we want, because society is far from the reformation we hope for.

In such a case, one should start by fixing what is more important and urgent then move with people one step at a time until he could fulfill the hoped-for results.

5. Being active in calling to Allah:

The woman must perform a role in educating other women through society, whether at school, college, during post-graduate studies, or at any other educational level.

This could also be attained through the visits that women exchange where useful words could be spoken among them.

We were informed - praise be to Allah - that there are some women who play a significant role in this regard. They arrange sessions on Shariah knowledge or Arabic Language for other women.

This is, undoubtedly, a good thing worthy of praise and an ongoing charity for such women after their death

لَقَوْلِ النَّبِيِّ عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ: «إِذَا مَاتَ الْإِنْسَانُ انْقَطَعَ عَمَلُهُ إِلَّا مِنْ ثَلَاثَةٍ: إِلَّا مِنْ صَدَقَةٍ جَارِيَةٍ، أَوْ عِلْمٍ يُنْتَفَعُ بِهِ، أَوْ وَلَدٍ صَالِحٍ يَدْعُو لَهُ».

as the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "When a person dies, his deeds come to an end except for three things: ongoing charity, beneficial knowledge, or a pious child who prays for him."

So, if the woman is active in preaching in her community through visits or through gatherings at

schools or otherwise, then she can have a great influence and play a major role in society reform.

That is all I can say now with regards to the woman's role in society reform and the prerequisites of such reform.

I ask Allah to make us guided and guiding others, righteous and reformers, and to grant us of His mercy for He is the Supreme Bestower. All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the Worlds, and may His peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, his Companions and those who follow them with good conduct until the Day of Judgment.

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Fatwas of Importance to the Woman

Question (1):

A woman at college gives the students a Fatwa that riding with a driver is not considered Khalwah (a man and a woman meeting in seclusion) and that scholars hold different opinions on this issue. She says that even if this is considered Khalwah, it will belong to the category of 'elimination of means leading to unfavorable results', and what is in this category is permissible in case of need as mentioned by Ibn al-Qayyim. Your Eminence, what is your opinion on that?

Answer:

In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, Most Merciful. All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the

worlds. May Allah's peace and blessings be upon His servant and messenger our Prophet Muhammad, his family, his Companions, and those who follow them with good conduct until the Day of Judgment.

It was authentically reported that the Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Beware of entering upon women." They [the Companions] said: "O Messenger of Allah, what about the (woman's male) in-laws?" He said: "The in-laws are death," meaning that one should be wary of the in-laws just as he is wary of death.

This statement is one of the most eloquent expressions of deterrence and prohibition, because escape from death is an intrinsic attitude not only for humans but for animals as well. So, if Khalwah (meeting in private) between the wife and any of her male in-laws is death, then this means that such a situation should be absolutely avoided.

It was also authentically reported that the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "A man must never be alone with a woman except in the presence of her Mahram (spouse or unmarriageable kin)."

The woman in the car is alone with the driver, who is not a Mahram for her. Although some scholars said that this is not considered Khalwah, yet it is graver than Khalwah because the driver has

full control of the car. We received questions in this regard that indicate the gravity of that issue.

No matter how chaste one is, the devil, in this situation, can easily manipulate him and one could fail to resist the temptation, if not in the first time, then possibly in the second or third time.

As to the Fatwa that some women were given in this regard based on the scholars' difference in opinion, then taking such a difference as a means to giving Fatwas permitting what the Shariah texts apparently declare unlawful would cause massive confusion, and those who do so would be condemned as being in pursuit of concessions.

Scholars (may Allah have mercy upon them) mentioned that the pursuit of concessions is unlawful, and that one is not permitted to go after the scholars' concessions. Rather, one should follow the ruling that is supported by evidence as to whether a matter is obligatory, prohibited, or permissible.

As for the one who says that forbidding Khalwah belongs to the category of 'elimination of means leading to unfavorable results', we say to him: what is your evidence on that?

The prohibition here could be of an end rather than of a means. In other words, the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) prohibited the Khalwah in itself, not for its being a possible means leading to sin. Consequently, the

words of Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy upon him) that the questioner mentioned - that what has been prohibited as a means could become permissible in case of need - cannot serve as supporting evidence. For instance, selling ripe dates for dried dates is impermissible; however, it becomes permissible when necessary like in case of the 'Arāyā transaction. Another example, it is permissible to use a silver-welded container, where silver is necessarily used for fixing a crack, although it is impermissible to drink in gold or silver cups or cups that have any trace of either metal.

Anyway, our answer to that question is:

First: Who said that this issue falls under elimination of means leading to unfavorable results and that it is a prohibition of means?

Second: The strong inherent inclination to be tempted by a woman could be a reason for prohibiting Khalwah as an end in itself, especially if both the driver and the female rider are young.

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Question (2)

Is it permissible for a woman, whose husband refuses to allow her to be veiled from his brothers, to uncover her face while covering all of her body?

Answer:

No, she should cover her face, with or without her husband's consent. However, she should try to convince him that uncovering the face before non-

Mahrims is impermissible. If she fails to convince him, it is obligatory on her to seek the pleasure of Allah Almighty even if that causes people to be angry with her. In fact, whoever seeks the pleasure of Allah through people's displeasure, Allah will protect him from people's wrath, and whoever seeks people's pleasure through the displeasure of Allah, Allah shall inflict His wrath on him and will make people displeased with him.

It is impermissible for the wife or anyone to go against the command of Allah Almighty in order to please her husband or anyone else.

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Question (3)

A man divorced his wife while she was pregnant following a quarrel between them. After a period of time, he divorced her again triply with a single utterance after a quarrel between them. He, then, called her and said to her: "I have previously divorced you triply while I was in a state of anger; now you are a million-times divorced." Is that woman divorced a million times or what?

Answer: That woman is not a million-times divorced because the divorce prescribed by Shariah is only three times. Nonetheless, if it is proved that the middle incident of divorce was uttered in a state of anger where he could not control himself, then that incident does not count. What counts is the first incident of divorce that took place during her

pregnancy and the last one which he uttered with deliberation; however, he chose to say "million" instead of one.

In this case, if they have a problem regarding that issue, let them contact us to arrange what is necessary for issuing them a Fatwa.

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Question (4):

Her husband does not perform the prayers in congregation; rather, he prays at home. Should she stay married to him or should she ask for annulment of the marriage contract?

Answer:

She is not obliged to ask for the annulment of marriage and she is free to choose to stay married to him; however, she should always give him advice and urge him to fear Allah.

She should inform him of the punishment prescribed for the one who does not join the congregational prayer and the reward prepared for the one who does, and that praying in congregation is twenty-seven times better than praying alone. May Allah make her a cause for guiding him.

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Question (5):

Is wearing an embroidered Abāya (long loose dress for women) considered an impermissible exposure of adornment?

Answer:

There is no doubt that wearing an embroidered Abāya or embroidered head veil is considered an impermissible exposure of adornment. Allah Almighty addressed the Prophet's wives saying:

{وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَى} [الأحزاب: 33]، وقال عز وجل: {وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ بِأَرْجُلِهِنَّ لِيُعْلَمَ مَا يُخْفِينَ مِنْ زِينَتِهِنَّ} [النور: 31].

{And abide in your houses and do not display yourselves as the display of the former times of ignorance.} [Al-Ahzāb: 33]

Allah Almighty also said: {And let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment} [Al-Nūr: 31]

Since Allah Almighty forbade the Prophet's wives from exposing their adornment like the pre-Islamic era of ignorance, and forbade the believing women from stamping their feet to make known what they conceal of their adornment, this indicates that it is impermissible to reveal anything that is considered an adornment.

Let it be known that the more the woman's clothes are far from being tempting, the better it is for her and the more fearful of Allah Almighty and attached to Him she becomes.

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Question (6):

What is the ruling on a woman using birth control pills in order to finish her studies or to delay

pregnancy, since she has a little boy, despite her husband's disapproval; i.e. he wants to have a child?

Answer: It is impermissible for the wife to use birth control methods, regardless of the reason, except with her husband's consent. Likewise, it is impermissible for the husband to prevent what could lead to pregnancy except with his wife's consent.

This is why scholars stated that it is impermissible for the man to resort to coitus interruptus except with his wife's consent.

But what if the husband permits his wife to use contraceptives; what would be the ruling on using such pills?

In my opinion, and based on what I heard from doctors, the impermissibility of using such pills outweighs its permissibility because it is extremely harmful for the uterus, the blood, and future conception.

As we have been informed, fetus deformation is frequently caused by the use of such contraceptive pills.

If we assume that no harm is caused by contraceptives, which is only an assumption not a fact, then the woman should still not use what reduces the probabilities of her having children because the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) encouraged marrying the woman who is extremely loving and prolific.

The more individuals there are in the nation, the more superior and self-sufficient it becomes. Hence, Prophet Shu'ayb (Jethro) (peace be upon him) reminded his people of this blessing, as mentioned in the Qur'an, saying:

{وَاذْكُرُوا إِذْ كُنْتُمْ قَلِيلًا فَكَثَّرَكُمْ} [الأعراف: 86].

{...And remember when you were few and He increased you...} [Al-A'rāf: 86] Allah Almighty reminded the children of Israel of this blessing, saying:

{وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ أَكْثَرَ نَفِيرًا} [الإسراء: 6].

{...And We made you more numerous in manpower} [Al-Isrā': 6]

Nations, nowadays, boast of their large population because, as I said before, such multitude gives the nation dignity and self-sufficiency.

*

Question (7):

What is the ruling on the husband who refuses to buy medication for his wife arguing that she gets a salary?

Answer: The husband should not be stingy with his wife in this regard if he is rich; however, if he is a man of moderate means and she has enough money because she is employed,

then he has the right to refuse to pay for her medication, especially if it requires a lot of money. This is a debatable issue among the Muslim jurists.

Some of them are of the opinion that medical treatment and medication are by no means the husband's responsibility; whereas others say that it depends on the amount of money required. A third group holds that it depends on customs and traditions; i.e. if it is common that the husband provides for his wife in this regard, then it is obligatory on him to do so and vice versa.

In any case, if there is a dispute, it should be referred to court, and if there is no dispute, then reconciliation between the two spouses is possible and efforts should be made to reconcile between them.

*

Question (8):

Two sisters, each of them breastfed the other's son; what is the ruling on the rest of the siblings?

Answer: If a woman breastfeeds an infant, he becomes her son through breastfeeding and all her children, boys and girls, become his milk-siblings. However, this is of no effect on his biological siblings or his fathers of all degrees and mothers of all degrees.

Suppose that one of those two sisters has a son called Khālīd and the second sister's son is called Muhammad. If Muhammad is breastfed by Khālīd's mother, then Muhammad becomes a brother to all her children, boys and girls.

Similarly, if Khālid is breastfed by Muhammad's mother, then Muhammad becomes a brother to all her children, boys and girls. However, there is no breastfeeding-based relation between Khālid's siblings and those of Muhammad. This is based on the previously mentioned rule; namely that the ruling of breastfeeding applies to the breastfed one and his offspring, but not to his parents nor his siblings and uncles.

*

Question (9):

A woman was divorced twice, then her husband took her back. After a while, they realized that the last incident of divorce was actually the third, but she had children with him after that third divorce. What is the ruling on those children?

Answer: Those children are the legitimate children of that man, who, it turned out, had divorced his wife three times, because he was either unaware or he forgot that divorce had occurred three times. Hence, the children are rightfully attributed to their father because they came as a result of an intercourse that was mistakenly believed to be lawful.

Islamic law has made intercourse that is mistakenly believed to be lawful just as the certainly lawful intercourse for the sake of guarding parentage.

*

Question (10):

A woman was divorced twice, then she asked her husband to divorce her the third time. He refused but she insisted, so he said to her: “You will be divorced on Wednesday”. That occurred on Saturday. Before Wednesday, he took back his words. Is taking back his words, in this case, sound according to Shariah and she is not, thus, divorced?

Answer: If a man made his wife’s divorce conditional on a certain time, for instance, by saying on Wednesday or when such and such month starts, you will be divorced or the like of that,

then he would not be entitled to take back his words and divorce would occur by the time he determined. Hence, we say:

if the husband meant by his words to actually issue the divorce, then his wife would be divorced on Wednesday even if he took back his words.

But if he meant that he would divorce her on Wednesday and she would become divorced by that divorce that he would issue on Wednesday, but then he did not divorce her when it was Wednesday, then divorce did not occur because that last intention takes the form of a promise of divorce rather than a conditional divorce.

So, if he said: “On Wednesday, I shall divorce you”, then Wednesday came and he did not divorce her, then no divorce occurred.

*

Question (11):

What is the ruling on the father or the paternal or maternal uncle kissing the woman on the face? In other words, can a man kiss his daughter, sister, or niece on the face?

Answer:

This is permissible in principle. However, if there is any fear of temptation, then it becomes impermissible, because Shariah has eliminated the means that may lead to unfavorable results. So, we say

that there is nothing wrong with a man kissing his daughter on the cheek or forehead since no temptation is likely to arise here.

However, temptation could arise in case of the nephew or the uncle. Hence, scholars stated that it is disliked for a man to kiss his niece or aunt on the face unlike the father or the son.

*

Question (12):

Is it permissible for one to pray behind the Imam on the television; i.e. by watching him on the television?

Answer: This is impermissible because the Imam and those praying behind him must be present in the same place, and if not in the same place, then they should be joined by connected lines in between them. This way, the congregational prayer would be real in terms of place and actions.

It goes without saying that such a condition is not fulfilled in joining the prayer via the television. Therefore, it is impermissible to pray behind the Imam on the television.

*

Question (13):

How is it possible to avoid the sorcerer's evil, knowing that the spell will be put into effect soon?

Answer: If it is confirmed by strong and clear evidence that a person is practicing sorcery, then his evil could be avoided by substantiating the claim against him so that he would be forbidden from practicing sorcery. However, I would like to warn against illusions spreading among people nowadays.

One may even catch a cold and falsely believe that magic or the evil eye or the like are behind that.

For this reason, people's complaints of the evil eye and sorcery have increased, although this could be nothing but illusions. So, one should truly rely on Allah and never give in to such illusions and fantasies.

*

Question (14):

Does the wedding ring involve imitation of the Christians?

Answer: It was said that the wedding ring is copied from the Christians' traditions. If that is the case, then whoever imitates a people will be

counted among them. However, if what is intended is a man giving his wife a gold ring as a gift, then this does not indicate a corrupt belief.

Also, we hear about a husband who gives his wife a gold ring with his name written on it and takes from her a gold or silver ring with her name written on it; this is impermissible because it is based on a corrupt belief; which is that such a ring with the spouse's name on it will cause their marital bond to last forever, and this is a baseless falsehood. Moreover, it is unlawful for men to wear a gold ring in any shape or form as the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) prohibited gold for men and made it permissible for women.

*

Question (15):

What is the ruling on a man who beats his wife without a reason calling for that?

Answer: It is unlawful to beat one's wife without a reason and it is considered an assault against her. Allah Almighty has permitted beating the wife only for a valid reason;

فَقَالَ: {وَاللَّاتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ} [النساء: 34].

He said: {But those [wives] from whom you fear arrogance, advise them; then forsake them in bed; then hit them...} [Al-Nisā': 34]

In the case in question, the woman has the right to ask for divorce because of her husband's assault against her.

However, I believe that if it is not possible for the spouses to settle that issue between them, then she should ask her guardians; like her father, brother, etc., to interfere and reconcile between them.

*

Question (16):

What is the ruling on a woman who slackens in performing Ghusl (ritual bath) so she delays prayer and performs it beyond its due time?

Answer: She commits a great sin and must repent to Allah Almighty and be keen, in the future, on performing the prayer on its due time and in the manner prescribed by Allah and His Messenger.

We ask Allah to grant us and her sincere repentance and to make us from the righteous who seek His pleasure, and Allah is the Grantor of success.

*

Question (17):

A woman came to Jeddah to visit her daughter and did not have the intention to perform 'Umrah. Then she decided to perform 'Umrah, where should she assume Ihrām from?

Answer:

She should assume Ihrām from Jeddah because when the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings

be upon him) determined the Miqāts (places beyond which no Muslim intending to perform Hajj or 'Umrah can cross towards Makkah without being in a state of Ihrām), he said:

«هَئِذَا لَمْ يَكُنْ مِنْ غَيْرِ أَهْلِهِمْ مَنْ يَرِيدُ الْحَجَّ أَوْ الْعُمْرَةَ، وَمَنْ كَانَ دُونَ ذَلِكَ فَمِنْ حَيْثُ أَنْشَأَ، حَتَّى أَهْلُ مَكَّةَ مِنْ مَكَّةَ».

“These places (Miqāts) are for their people as well as those who pass by them on their way to perform Hajj or 'Umrah. Those living within those boundaries can assume Ihrām from where they set out (for the journey), and even the residents of Makkah, their Miqāt would be the place where they are staying in Makkah.”

So, people living within the boundaries of the Miqāts assume Ihrām from where they intend to set out, and this applies to Makkah residents as well.

*

Question (18):

Is it obligatory on a woman to call others to Allah, and where should she practice that?

Answer:

We should know that the rule states that any confirmed Shariah command for men is also a confirmed command for women unless there is evidence on its being restricted to men only.

An example of evidence indicating a Shariah command that is restricted to men: 'Ā'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: “O Messenger of

Allah, is Jihad obligatory on women?" He replied: "The kind of Jihad obligatory on them is one that involves no fight; it is Hajj and 'Umrah."

This proves that Jihad, which involves fighting the enemy, is an obligation on men only.

Likewise, the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "The best of men's rows (in prayer) are the first ones and the worst are the last ones; whereas the best of women's rows are the last ones and the worst are the first ones."

So, commands and prohibitions affirmed regarding men are, in principle, affirmed regarding women and vice versa.

That is the reason why the person who makes a false accusation of adultery against a man should receive eighty lashes as a corporal punishment prescribed by Shariah, although the [Qur'anic] verse originally mentions those who accuse the unaware chaste "women".

قال الله تعالى: {وَالَّذِينَ يَرْمُونَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَأْتُوا بِأَرْبَعَةِ شُهَدَاءَ فَاجْلِدُوهُمْ ثَمَانِينَ جَلْدَةً} [النور: 4].

Allah Almighty says: {And those who accuse chaste women and then do not produce four witnesses - lash them with eighty lashes...} [Al-Nūr: 4]

So, let's see if calling to Allah Almighty is only required of men or a common assignment for both men and women.

According to the Qur'an and Sunnah, it is clear that calling to Allah Almighty is a common assignment. However, the woman is required to call other women, not men, to Allah.

She is required to call other women to Allah where she can do that, whether it is in schools or mosques.

*

Question (19):

My husband commands me to finish my studies to become a preacher among women. However, I want to quit my studies and look after my home and children. Is it wise to obey my husband or should I quit my studies?

Answer:

I believe that you should consider which of the two options is of more benefit. Is it necessary that you stay at home because, for instance, you have many young children who need you to look after them? If this is the case, then it is better for you to stay at home than to go out and study, because the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said:

«ابدأ بنفسك».

“Start with yourself.”

You are required to look after your children and take care of your house, and this is an obligation.

On the other hand, preaching is a communal obligation that could be carried out by a sufficient number of women. If it is possible, however, to combine both and be a preacher, even if not at school, then this would be something good.

On this occasion, I would like to warn my brothers against bringing female servants from abroad, whether they are Muslims or non-Muslims, because this matter incurs many evils:

One of these evils is that many of them come without a Mahram (spouse or male unmarriageable kin). Traveling without a Mahram is impermissible for women as authentically narrated by Al-Bukhāri and Muslim from the Hadith of Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allah be pleased with him) who reported that the Prophet (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) said:

«لا تسافر امرأة إلا ومعها محرم».

“No woman is to travel except in the company of a Mahram.”

Another evil is that this servant becomes acquainted with the secrets of the household she is working for. She could even be hired for the sake of spying on Muslims’ affairs to find out their secrets.

A third evil is making women accustomed to laziness, idleness, and inactivity, even mentally, which is very harmful. When a woman stays at her

home doing nothing, she loses her wit and her memory becomes weak.

One more evil is that some of those servants are young and pretty, thus causing temptation. They either seduce the man himself, whom they are working for, or his sons if he has any, as we have heard many such stories.

Another evil is that many of those servants reveal their faces, hands, arms, legs, and feet in the presence of men at homes, and this is all impermissible.

Therefore, we have to be quite cautious of bringing female servants from abroad. If there is a necessity for that, then three conditions must be fulfilled:

1. The woman must have her Mahram with her.
2. That there is no fear of temptation.
3. Presence of true necessity for bringing such a servant.

*

Question (20):

How does a woman call other women to adhere to religion? Is it better for them to hold gatherings at their homes or in the mosque?

Answer:

I believe that women can call others to Allah Almighty just like men. But since it is not that easy for the woman to go out, unlike the man, therefore, she is not totally equal to him in this regard. But the

colleges that have a large number of women could be a good field for calling to Allah among women.

As for holding home gatherings for women for that purpose, I do have a problem with that because on comparing its benefits with its possible harms, I see that

it is preferable for the woman to stay at her home, seek knowledge, and read books. However, if those women live in houses close to each other, like adjacent neighbors, for instance, then this will be easy for them.

But having to ride a car or go to a far place to attend a gathering held in another woman's house, this is something that I pause at and seek guidance from Allah before saying that it is permissible.

Now, we have to stop here because it is time for prayer. We ask Allah to make these answers of benefit to Muslims and a means of bringing us closer to Allah Almighty.

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