

Shaykh Sālih ibn Fawzān ibn Abdullah al-Fawzān ADVICE TO THE MUSLIM WOMAN¹²

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

All praise is for Allah, the Lord of the worlds. May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon our Prophet Muhammad and upon all of his household and Companions.

The brothers who are responsible for the Da'wah decided that there should be a lecture on the subject of 'advice to the Muslim women'. However, this does not mean that this lecture is exclusively for the Muslim woman. On the contrary, it is a lecture that concerns all but it concerns the Muslim woman more. Undoubtedly, the Muslim man will be questioned (i.e., responsible) about the woman. Allah the Mighty and Majestic states,

يٰۤاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ
مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ
عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا ۝

O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Adam), and from him (Adam) He created his wife [Hawwa], and from them both He created many men and women and fear Allah through Whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allah is Ever an All-Watcher

over you.

[An Nisā' 1]

¹ Translation: Abu Ameenah AbdurRahman Bennett

² From the Book *Naseehah wa Fatāwā lil Mar'ah al-Muslimah*.

Allah the Most High also states,

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا لِيَسْكُنَ إِلَيْهَا ۗ﴾^{١٨٩}

It is He Who has created you from a single person (Adam), and (then) He has created from him his wife, in order that he might enjoy the pleasure of living with her.

[Al A'raf 189]

So the wisdom behind this is that he could enjoy the pleasure of living with her and enjoy intimacy with her and find comfort in sharing his inner feelings and secrets with her so as to support him through the hardships of life and so that they can together produce righteous offspring. Allah, the Mighty and Majestic states,

﴿وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً ۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ۝﴾

And one of His signs is that He created mates for you from yourselves that you may find rest in them, and He put between you love and compassion; most surely there are signs in this for a people who reflect.

[Ar Room 21]

From His signs – that is, His signs which are indicative of His decree, mercy and that He alone deserve to be worshipped without any partner. So Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, brought mankind into existence from one man and one woman. Allah states,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۗ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ۝﴾^{١٣}

O mankind! We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Verily, the most honourable of you with Allah is that (believer) who has At-Taqwa. Verily, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.

[Al Hujurat 13]

The union of the man and the woman that is bonded upon the law of Allah is from His blessings because it results in tremendous benefits. From the most important of these benefits is that it establishes the building blocks for a good society through the formation of the family unit. This is from the blessings of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic. Hence, great importance must be given to the women in terms of marriage and providing correct direction and in terms of choosing a righteous woman who possesses religion. And also in terms of how a man should treat her lest he abuses his authority over her and starts to oppress her. Allah states,

وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ١٩

And live with them honourably.

[An Nisā 19]

And,

فَأَمْسَاكُ بِمَعْرُوفٍ ٢٢٩

Then (a woman) must be retained in honour...

[Al Baqarah 229]

The relationship between a man and a woman should be a sturdy relationship as long as it is predicated upon everything that the law of Allah has prescribed of good companionship, gracious care, good treatment and carnal pleasure that falls under the purview of what Allah has made legal. Allah states,

نِسَاؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَّكُمْ فَأَتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَنَّى شِئْتُمْ وَقَدِّمُوا لِأَنفُسِكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ

وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ مُلْقَوَةٌ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ٢٢٣

Your wives are a tilth for you, so go to your tilth when or how you will, and send (good deeds, or ask Allah to bestow upon you pious offspring) before you for your ownselves.

And fear Allah, and know that you are to meet Him, and give good tidings to the believers (O Muhammad).

[Al Baqarah 223]

At this point, the important role the women plays in the society should be clear. For indeed the woman is the spouse of the husband and his [lifelong] partner. Since the dawn of the first man, and he was Adam, Allah created for him his spouse. And the Way of Allah [i.e., the institution of wedlock between a man and woman] has endured and will endure until the establishment of the Hour. Allah states,

سُنَّةَ اللَّهِ فِي الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ اللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا ٢٢٣

That was the Way of Allah in the case of those who passed away of old, and you will not find any change in the Way of Allah.

[Al Ahzāb 62]

Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, has made it a duty upon man to obey Him and worship Him, and He made it a duty upon women to likewise obey Him and worship Him, alone, free of any partner. He also promised the doers of good amongst both sexes great rewards and He promised the doers of evil from both sexes punishment and chastisement. Thus, the man and the woman are generally equal in terms of upholding legal obligations. Even though women have been assigned certain legal duties, both men and women are generally equal in terms of worship, obedience, reward and punishment. Allah states,

فَأَسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّي لَا أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَمَلٍ مِّنْكُمْ مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ بَعْضُكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْضٍ ۚ فَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَأُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأُوذُوا فِي سَبِيلِي وَقَاتَلُوا وَقُتِلُوا لَأُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ثَوَابًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الثَّوَابِ ١٩٥

So their Lord accepted of them (their supplication and answered them), Never will I allow to be lost the work of any of you, be he male or female. You are (members) one of another, so those who emigrated and were driven out from their homes, and suffered harm in My Cause, and who fought, and were killed (in My Cause), verily, I will remit

from them their evil deeds and admit them into Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise); a reward from Allah, and with Allah is the best of rewards.

[Al 'Imrān 195]

So Allah has promised both the male and the female [that their reward will never be lost], and He promised both of them His forgiveness and reward for displaying the characteristics he mentioned in the above verse. Just as Allah commanded the men, He also commanded the women:

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ذَلِكَ أَزْكَى لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ ۝ وَقُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَىٰ جُيُوبِهِنَّ ۖ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَائِهِنَّ ۝

Tell the believing men to lower their gaze, and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts, etc.). That is purer for them. Verily, Allah is All-Aware of what they do. And tell the believing women to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts, etc.) and not to show off their adornment except only that which is apparent (like palms of hands or one eye or both eyes for necessity to see the way, or outer dress like veil, gloves, head-cover, apron, etc.), and to draw their veils all over Juyubihinna (i.e. their bodies, faces, necks and bosoms, etc.) and not to reveal their adornment except to their husbands, their fathers...

[An Noor, 30-31]

And so Allah ordered the men to lower the gaze from viewing forbidden things – such as, gazing at women or looking at things that lead to fitnah and pornographic images which are forbidden by Allah. Likewise, looking at people's *'anrah* in the privacy of their homes is also forbidden for both men and women because it leads to immoral acts. And when Allah forbids something, He also forbids all paths that lead to the forbidden thing. And so He forbids the gaze because it is a means [to an evil]:

فَالْعَيْنَانِ زَنَاهُمَا النَّظْرُ

The adultery of the eyes is looking.³

The gaze is a type of poison from the poisons of Iblis, and so when a person administers it then he becomes poisoned – that is, this small amount of poison he injects will kill him because through the sight it poisons the heart. And so through the sight this poison is administered straight to the heart and this has a detrimental effect upon his heart or even kills the heart. So the man or the woman should not gaze at anything that Allah has forbidden. Allah created this sight we have as a blessing and as an instrument to be used in things that Allah has made legal. Allah said that it is the duty of men to **lower their gaze** and the duty of women to **lower their gaze**. He also says that it is the duty of men to **protect their private parts** and the duty of women to **protect their private parts**. And so both the man and the woman are to protect their private parts from falling into the forbidden, and so a man prevents himself from falling into immoral acts by preventing himself from gazing at the *awrah* of the people. And it is also forbidden to reveal the *awrah* because revealing the *awrah* of the men and the women leads to *fitnah* (temptation and enticement) and even shirk. So Allah created clothing for men and for women as a blessing from Him. Allah states,

يَبْنِيْءَ آدَمَ قَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا يُورِي سَوْءَاتِكُمْ وَرِيشًا^ط

O children of Adam, We have bestowed upon you clothing to conceal your private parts and as adornment.

[Al A'rāf 26]

And so there are two wisdoms behind Allah creating clothing: **(1) concealing the private parts** and **(2) as an adornment and means of beautification**. And then Allah informed us about the ‘clothing’ that is greater than the clothing that conceals our bodies, and it is the clothing of righteousness:

وَلِبَاسُ التَّقْوَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ^ج

And the raiment of righteousness, that is better.

[Al A'rāf 26]

³ Saheeh Muslim (2658).

So both the man and the woman cover their ‘awrah with ample clothing because this preserves our moral characters. As for nakedness or wearing revealing clothing then it is a cause for moral decay, a loss of honour and widespread corruption. If, however, we cover ourselves according to the directions of Allah then this will protect our private parts from fornication and homosexuality.

And then Allah singled out the women with an instruction. He states,

وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَىٰ جُيُوبِهِنَّ^{٣١}

And not expose their adornment except that which [necessarily] appears thereof and to draw their veils all over Juyubihinna (i.e. their bodies, faces, necks and bosoms, etc.)

[An Noor 31]

He commanded the women to cover their bodies extensively, including the hands, the feet, the whole body and the hair too – concealing themselves from men who are not their *mahārim*.⁴ The words **“expose their adornment”** mean not to expose their natural beauty, (e.g., face, hands and hair) and their cosmetic beauty (e.g., hair products and makeup). So the woman has been commanded to cover her physical beauty and the cosmetics she applies to her face and body. As for the words **“except that which [necessarily] appears thereof”** then the correct meaning of these words are clothes which appear – that is, outer clothes that have no type of attractiveness or allurements. Then He said, **“and to draw their veils all over Juyubihinna”** The word خُمُرٌ (*khumur*) is the plural form for خِمَارٌ (*khimār*) and it denotes the concept of covering (الغِطَاء). Also from the usages of this word is الخُمُر which means alcohol because it covers the senses.

So Allah commanded the woman to draw her *Khimār* all over her head, and the *Khimār* is what a woman places over her head. He ordered her to cover her neck and to **draw their veils all over Juyubihinna**. And this refers to the neck opening of the garment and the woman should cover what appears through the neck opening because if she has been commanded to cover the neck

⁴ [TN]: A woman’s *mahram* includes everyone whom she is never permitted to marry because of their close blood relationship (such as her father, grandfather, great-grandfather, etc., and her son, grandson, great-grandson, her paternal and maternal uncles, her brother, brother’s son and sister’s son), or because of breastfeeding (e.g., the brother and husband of the woman who breastfed her), or because they are related by marriage (such as the mother’s husband, the husband’s father, grandfather, etc., and the husband’s son, grandson).

then it also stands to reason that this also applies to the face since drawing a veil over the neck opening that is let down from the head over the face will inevitably cover the face. This is illustrated by the statement of Aa'isha:

كَانَ الرُّكْبَانُ يَمُرُّونَ بِنَا وَنَحْنُ مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مُحْرِمَاتٌ فَإِذَا حَادُوا بِنَا سَدَلَتْ إِحْدَانَا جِلْبَابَهَا مِنْ رَأْسِهَا إِلَى وَجْهِهَا فَإِذَا جَاوَزُونَا كَشَفْنَاهُ

Riders would pass us when we accompanied the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) while we were in the sacred state (wearing ihram). When they came by us, one of us would let down her outer garment from her head over her face, and when they had passed on, we would uncover our faces.⁵

And likewise we have the Most High's statement:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لَأَزْوَاجِكَ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَاءِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلْبَابِهِنَّ
ذَلِكَ أَدْنَىٰ أَنْ يُعْرَفْنَ فَلَا يُؤْذَيْنَ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ۝٩

O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks (veils) all over their bodies. That will be better, that they should be known (as free respectable women) so as not to be annoyed. And Allah is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

[Al Ahzāb 59]

The word الجلباب (*Jibāb*) is the big outer garment that a woman wraps herself in, and this big outer garment that she wears on top of her clothes, Allah commanded her to wrap her face with this garment too so that nothing appears of her that can be a cause of temptation for the man:

يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلْبَابِهِنَّ ذَلِكَ أَدْنَىٰ أَنْ يُعْرَفْنَ فَلَا يُؤْذَيْنَ ۗ

... to draw their cloaks (veils) all over their bodies. That will be better, that they should be known (as free respectable women) so as not to be annoyed.

[Al Ahzāb 59]

⁵ Sunan Abi Dāwood (1833). Shaykh al-Albāni has graded this hadith as weak.

So this command for a woman to cover her body applies to all risky scenarios where it is feared it could lead to temptation and enticement. The Most High states,

وَإِذَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُنَّ مَتَاعًا فَسَلُوهُنَّ مِنْ وَرَاءِ حِجَابٍ ۝۲

And when you ask (his wives) for anything you want, ask them from behind a screen.

[Al Ahzāb 53]

The verse refers to the women of the Prophet (ﷺ), but the verse is to be applied generally. The words of the verse speak specifically about the wives of the Prophet (ﷺ) but the meaning of the words are to be applied to all woman because the wives of the Prophet (ﷺ) are an exemplary model for believing women to follow. Allah also provides a general justification for this, and it is His statement:

ذَٰلِكُمْ أَطْهَرُ لِقُلُوبِكُمْ وَقُلُوبِهِنَّ ۝۲

That is purer for your hearts and for their hearts.

[Al Ahzāb 53]

So Allah commanded that they be asked from behind a screen, and the meaning of the word حِجَاب (*hijab*) here is anything that screens a woman, such as material, a wall, a door or anything else that screens a woman from a man when he wishes to engage her in conversation or ask her a question. All of this should take place from behind a screen. She should not hand over anything unless she is covered correctly. Rather, she should hand over this thing when she is behind a screen, a door, a wall or when she is covered in her attire because

ذَٰلِكُمْ أَطْهَرُ لِقُلُوبِكُمْ وَقُلُوبِهِنَّ ۝۲

That is purer for your hearts and for their hearts

[Al Ahzāb 53]

from falling into any temptation. So if a woman covers herself and men are unable to view her, then the hearts of men and women will be safe from any temptation and enticement. This is something that can be clearly observed in Muslim societies where women observe the *hijab*. In a

society where the *hijab* is observed correctly, you find it free from immoral behaviour. You only find immoral behaviour and men sexually objectify women in *hijab*-free zones.

So Allah's statement, **“That is purer for your hearts and for their hearts”** applies to the whole of the Ummah because the *hijab* keeps both the hearts of men and women pure. The *hijab* is also a type of impediment that blocks the path to immoral behaviour in the sense that it keeps the honour intact and the hearts safe from temptation and enticement. Also from the impediments that block the path to any temptation is the law that prevents women from travelling without a *mahram* because if a woman were accompanied with a *mahram* then he will protect her [from harassment] and have her best interests at heart. The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

لَا يَحِلُّ لِمَرْأَةٍ تُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ تَسَافِرُ مَسِيرَةَ يَوْمٍ وَلَيْلَةٍ إِلَّا مَعَ ذِي مَحْرَمٍ عَلَيْهَا

It is not lawful for a woman believing in Allah and the Hereafter to undertake a journey extending over a day and a night except when there is a *mahram* with her.⁶

In one narration he said, **“two days”** and in another narration he said, **“to undertake a journey”** without specifying any time. And so the intended meaning is that a woman doesn't travel alone without a *mahram*, and if she does travel without one then she has disobeyed Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ). As for the opinion of some of the people of knowledge that states, **“if a woman travels with a group of women then this is enough to fulfil the condition of a *mahram*”** then this opinion opposes the Prophet's statement (ﷺ) **“It is not lawful for a woman believing in Allah and the Hereafter to undertake journey extending over a day and a night except when there is a *mahram* with her”**. A group of women does not serve as a *mahram* for a woman. The understanding of 'a *mahram* for a woman' is something well known and it includes any man who is permanently unlawful for her to marry due to ties of blood, such as her father, her son, her brother, her paternal uncle, maternal uncle. Or because of ties through marriage, such as her husband's father or her husband's children [not from her]. Or because of breastfeeding, due to the Prophet's (ﷺ) statement,

يَحْرُمُ مِنَ الرَّضَاعِ مَا يَحْرُمُ مِنَ النَّسَبِ

⁶ Saheeh Muslim (1339).

What becomes unlawful (for marriage) through breast-feeding is that which becomes unlawful through blood ties.⁷

So the *mabram* of a woman is the man who is permanently unlawful for her to marry due to blood ties, ties through marriage or breastfeeding. It has to be the type of *mabram* that a woman is permanently forbidden from marrying and not the temporary *mabram*, like the sister of the wife or the wife's paternal or maternal aunty. This is a temporary injunction and, as a result, the husband is not a *mabram* for his wife's sister even though he cannot lawfully marry her, since this type of injunction is temporary. And this also applies to his wife's paternal and maternal aunts. As for a group of women then this group is not a *mabram* for her. The Prophet (ﷺ) stipulated a *mabram* for a travelling woman in all scenarios – no matter if she travels by foot, by animal, by car or by plane. We say this because there are some people nowadays who say that when a woman travels by plane that there is no harm if one *mabram* takes her to the airport and another should meet her at the other end. We say that this is not permissible because she has travelled without a *mabram* and the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

لَا يَجُزُّ لِمَرْأَةٍ تُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ تَسَافِرُ مَسِيرَةَ يَوْمٍ وَلَيْلَةٍ إِلَّا مَعَ ذِي مَحْرَمٍ عَلَيْهَا

It is not lawful for a woman believing in Allah and the Hereafter to undertake journey extending over a day and a night except when there is a *mabram* with her.⁸

It makes no difference if she travels by car, animal or plane because the Prophet (ﷺ) did not differentiate between different methods of travel and thus the reason remains. It is feared that she could be put to trial even if she is on a plane. There is no guarantee of safe passage even if she were on a plane. Moreover, let us suppose that the plane has some technical faults and is required to be rerouted to another country or city. Who then will meet her at this other rerouted destination? A *mabram* must always accompany the woman when travelling, to the extent that once a man came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said, “O Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ), I have enlisted in the army to partake in a particular campaign but my wife is on her way to perform Hajj?” The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

ارْجِعْ فَحُجِّ مَعَ امْرَأَتِكَ

⁷ Saheeh al-Bukhāri (2645).

⁸ Saheeh Muslim (1339).

Return and perform Hajj with your wife.⁹

So the Prophet (ﷺ) instructed this man, who had enlisted for a particular campaign, to return so that he could accompany his wife on Hajj and be a *mabram* for her. And this hadith proves that a *mabram* is a requisite for Hajj and outside of Hajj, irrespective of whether she is by herself or with a group of women. And for this reason, the Muslim jurists state that a requisite for a woman's Hajj is that she has a mahram, and if she has no *mabram* then she is not legally obliged to perform Hajj until she can fulfil the condition of having a *mabram*.

Islam also prohibits that a man be in seclusion with a woman, in the sense that he and this woman are in a place and no one else is with them because this sets the scene for temptation and enticement. The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

إِيَّاكُمْ وَالِدُخُولَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ". فَقَالَ رَجُلٌ مِنَ الْأَنْصَارِ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَفَرَأَيْتَ الْحَمَوَ. قَالَ الْحَمَوُ الْمَوْتُ

Beware of entering upon the women. A man from the Ansār said, ‘O Allah's Messenger (ﷺ), what about the in-laws of the wife (the brothers of her husband or his nephews etc.)?’

The Prophet (ﷺ) replied, The in-laws of the wife are death.¹⁰

And he (ﷺ) means that this is even more dangerous. And why? Because there is less restraint and less difficulty for things to happen than there is with strangers. It is not hard to restrain yourself with strangers but the in-laws of the husband/wife requires caution.

The stories we hear nowadays from the ignorant about how the brother/uncle of the husband or some other relative shaking hands with his wife and being alone with her or just barging in on her – then all of this is absurd! It is not permissible for a non-*mabram* to enter upon a woman who is home alone. This is the type of seclusion that is forbidden and hazardous. It is equally not permissible for him to enter a room that only she is in because it is an avenue to temptation and enticement. So much so that even if this man in this place were a doctor because the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

⁹ Saheeh al-Bukhāri (5233).

¹⁰ Saheeh al-Bukhāri (5232).

لَا يَخْلُونَ رَجُلًا بِامْرَأَةٍ إِلَّا كَانَ ثَالِثَهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ

Never is a man alone with a woman except that the third of them is the shaytān.¹¹

And this means that the shaytān enters upon both of them and entices and lures them into committing shameful acts because the job of the shaytān is to call to *fitnah* and never does he miss the opportunity to sow the seeds of corruption. And so, to hinder the shaytān and his helpers from thriving, Islam made it unlawful for a man to be alone with a woman.

A new type of unlawful seclusion with a woman that has cropped up lately is a woman being chauffeured in a car by a non-*mabram* driver. So he takes her to school or the marketplace or even to the masjid! This is not permissible. It is not permissible for a woman to ride alone in a car with a man who is non-*mabram* because it falls under the unlawful types of seclusion with a woman. And so the Muslim woman must be careful not to enter into unlawful seclusion with a man - irrespective of whether it takes place at home, in a car or any other place - especially during these times of ours when women spend a lot of time out and about at work, at the marketplaces or visiting relatives.

A woman should not spend a lot of time outside of the house except for when she has a need to go out. And when she goes out, she should be properly covered and she should not be perfumed¹² because if she goes out perfumed then that will garner men's attraction and be a reason for them to pursue her. So whenever possible a woman should stay at home because it is safer for her.

Allah says when addressing the wives of the Prophet (ﷺ), who are an exemplary model,

وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ ۚ

And stay in your houses. [Al Ahzāb 33]

And this means that women should stay in their houses and not go out because that is safer for her, but if she has some need to go out then when she goes out she should be properly covered.

¹¹ Jāmi' at-Tirmidhi (2165).

¹² [TN]: The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Any woman who perfumes herself and passes by people so that they can smell her fragrance is an adulteress." (Sunan an-Nasā'i 5126)

Allah loves that a woman pray in her home and not to go out and pray in the masjid, in spite of the masjid being a place of worship and purification. However, her going out is a subject to evil and for this reason, her praying at home is better than praying in the masjid. The Prophet (ﷺ) said

لَا تَمْنَعُوا إِمَاءَ اللَّهِ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ وَيُؤْتِهِنَّ خَيْرَ لِهِنَّ

Do not forbid the female slaves of Allah from (going into) the mosques of Allah. However, praying in their homes is better for them.¹³

And this means that praying at home is better for them than praying in the masjid. The Prophet (ﷺ) also said in another variation of the narration,

لِيَخْرُجْنَ وَهُنَّ تَفِلَّاتٌ

But let them go out as long as they have not adorned or perfumed themselves.¹⁴

Many woman nowadays are being put to trial by going out for no reason except for wandering around the shopping centres, all dressed up and perfumed and showing their faces. And when one of them enters into a bookstore or a galleria, she exposes her face to the employees as if they are *mahram* for her and starts to talk freely and joking around with them. Where is the modesty, O Muslim women?! Where is the Allah-consciousness, O Muslim women?

And so when a woman goes out, she must cover herself with garments that cover her correctly and are free of any embellishment. These garments that cover the body must be loose-fitting which do not cling to the body and characterise the body parts. The attire of the woman must fulfil the following specifications:

1. **They be loose-fitting and not tightfitting.**
2. **They cover the whole of the body, leaving nothing from her body uncovered – neither her hands, her feet and nor her face. Her attire should cover the whole of her body.**
3. **They are not decorated or adorned so that it attracts the attention of men.**

¹³ Graded as authentic by Shaykh al-Albāni in *Irwa' al-Ghaleel* (515).

¹⁴ Sunan Abi Dāwood (565).

The Muslim woman should be careful to protect herself against the words of the Prophet (ﷺ):

صِنْفَانِ مِنَ أَهْلِ النَّارِ لَمْ أَرَهُمَا قَوْمٌ مَعَهُمْ سِيَاطٌ كَأَذْنَابِ الْبَقَرِ يَضْرِبُونَ بِهَا النَّاسَ وَنِسَاءٌ كَاسِيَاتٌ عَارِيَاتٌ مُمِيلَاتٌ مَائِلَاتٌ رُءُوسُهُنَّ كَأَسْنِمَةِ الْبُخْتِ الْمَائِلَةِ لَا يَدْخُلْنَ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَا يَجِدْنَ رِيحَهَا وَإِنَّ رِيحَهَا لِيُوجَدُ مِنْ مَسِيرَةٍ كَذَا وَكَذَا

There are two types of people in the Fire whom I have not seen: men having whips like the tails of cows and they will be beating people with them. And women who will be dressed and yet appear to be naked, inviting to evil; and they themselves will be inclined to it. Their heads will appear like the humps of camels, leaning to one side. They will not enter Jannah and they will not smell its fragrance although its fragrance is perceptible from such and such a distance.¹⁵

He said, “**And women who will be dressed and yet appear to be naked**” - and that is, she will be wearing clothes but these clothes will not cover her, either because they are skimpy and do not cover her body or they do cover her body but they are see-through and revealing. And this is just like what we see in those countries that do not observe Islamic etiquettes, and surely you will see this amongst some of our women here (Saudi Arabia) except for those whom Allah showers His mercy upon. These are from the customs of the days of ignorance. Allah says about this:

وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَى^{٣٣}

And do not display yourselves like that of the former times of ignorance

[Al Ahzāb 33]

The word *tabarruj* means to put yourself on display in front of men. This is *tabarruj*. So when a woman goes out, she is required not to display herself, and even the elderly women who are past child-bearing have been forbidden from displaying themselves:

¹⁵ Saheeh Muslim (123).

وَالْقَوَاعِدُ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ الَّتِي لَا يَرْجُونَ نِكَاحًا فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْهِنَّ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ يَضَعْنَ ثِيَابَهُنَّ
غَيْرَ مُتَبَرِّجَاتٍ بِزِينَةٍ ۗ

And as for women past child-bearing who do not expect wed-lock, it is no sin on them if they discard their (outer) clothing in such a way as not to show their adornment. But to refrain (i.e. not to discard their outer clothing) is better for them. And Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.

[An Noor 60]

And so if the elderly women, who are past child-bearing and no longer have any desire for marriage, are forbidden from showing their adornments then what are we to say about young women?! What about beautiful women?! What are we to say about women who have a desire to marry?! How can she put herself on display?! This is among the practices from the days of ignorance! The woman who fears Allah and the abode of the Hereafter (the Fire) should stay far away from the negligent attitude we find in many of the women today with regard to covering, putting themselves on public display, making themselves sweet smelling and fraternizing with men. Allah says to the wives of the Prophet (ﷺ),

يٰۤاَيُّهَا النِّسَاءُ النَّبِيِّ لَسْتِنَّ كَأَحَدٍ مِّنَ النِّسَاءِ إِنِ اتَّقَيْتُنَّ فَلَا تَخْضَعْنَ بِالْقَوْلِ فَيَطْمَعَ الَّذِي
فِي قَلْبِهِ مَرَضٌ وَقُلْنَ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا ۗ

O wives of the Prophet, you are not like anyone among women. If you fear Allah, then do not be soft in speech [to men], lest he in whose heart is disease should covet, but speak with appropriate speech.

[Al Ahzāb 32]

And so if a woman is required to speak with a man who is non-*mahram* then she should do so by making sure her voice remains her normal tone, taking care not to speak in a soft and compliant manner or joke and jest. She should speak in a normal tone and only say what she needs to say without seeming completely at ease or without beautifying her voice; otherwise he who has a disease in his heart could be moved with desire. Thus, she should act on the injunction of Allah:

وَقُلْنَ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا ٣٢

...but speak with appropriate speech.

[Al Ahzāb 32]

It is a duty upon the Muslim women to fear Allah when they are by themselves and when they are in public. Just as it was a duty upon the women of the past, it is also a duty of the women of today that they take care to raise their children correctly because they will be questioned about the children they have custody over. So they should raise their daughters to have admirable characters, good moral conduct, to cover correctly and to be shy and modest. The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

كُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ... وَالْمَرْأَةُ رَاعِيَةٌ عَلَى أَهْلِ بَيْتِ زَوْجِهَا وَوَلَدِهِ وَهِيَ مَسْئُولَةٌ عَنْهُمْ

All of you are shepherds and each of you is responsible for his flock... A woman is the guardian of her husband's home and of his children and is responsible for them¹⁶

So the woman should provide for her a child a good upbringing because she is responsible for all of the children in her custody.

Also from the things that Allah has made unlawful is changing or modifying the creation of Allah which the Shaytān vowed to enjoin upon mankind:

وَلَا مُرْتَنَّهُمْ فَلْيَغْيِرَنَّ خَلْقَ اللَّهِ ١١٩

And certainly I will order them to change the nature created by Allah

[An Nisā' 119]

In the explanation of this verse, it refers to such things as *namas* (removing hair from the eyebrows), tattoos, *washr* (filing the teeth to make them look smaller) and hair extensions. The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

¹⁶ Saheeh al-Bukhāri (853).

لَعَنَ اللَّهُ الْوَاشِمَاتِ وَالْمُسْتَوْشِمَاتِ وَالنَّامِصَاتِ وَالْمُتَمَكِّصَاتِ وَالْمُتَقَلِّبَاتِ لِلْحُسْنِ الْمُغَيَّرَاتِ خَلَقَ اللَّهُ

Allah curses the woman who does tattooing and the one who has tattooing done, the woman who plucks eyebrows and the one who has it done and the one who files her teeth for beautification - changing what Allah has created.¹⁷

The word *an-nāmisah* means someone who removes hair from the eyebrows, no matter if it is done by plucking, shaving or any other method to remove hair from the eyebrows. So the Prophet (ﷺ) cursed this practice and the one who gets it done. There are women who are tested with this type of crime, and it is the removal of hair from the eyebrows, imitating the disbelieving, sinful and ignorant women who pay not mind to disobeying Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ). And when they remove this eyebrow hair they replace it by drawing eyebrows in their place – *subhānallah!* Are these drawn-on eyebrows better than real eyebrows?! This is a type of change in the nature of Allah’s creation, and it is impermissible for a Muslim woman to embrace these evil and corrupted practices that change the nature of Allah’s creation.

As for *al-wāshima* (tattoos) then this refers to the one who does the tattooing, and it is done by inserting a needle into the dermis layer of the skin until blood comes out and then injecting kohl or ink into the skin to form green patterns in the hands or face. This is tattooing [as it was understood in the past]. The *mustawshima* is the one who seeks to be tattooed and this person also falls under the ruling of changing the nature created by Allah. By Allah, you have to ask: which of the two is better? The colour of the skin that Allah created you with or this colour you have deformed yourself with? This is nothing more than blind obedience to the command of the shaytān:

وَأْمُرَنَّهُمْ فَلْيَغَيِّرَنَّ خَلْقَ اللَّهِ ۝۱۱۹

And I will command them so they will change the creation of Allah.

[An Nisā 119]

The word *al-wāsila* refers to the one who attaches hair extensions to her own hair, which is a type of deception and deceit because it gives the impression that these extensions are her real hair when

¹⁷ Saheeh Muslim (261).

in reality it is not part of her nature – it is just false hair. The person who does these hair extensions is cursed because the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

لَعَنَ اللَّهُ الْوَاصِلَةَ وَالْمُسْتَوْصِلَةَ

May Allah curse the one who does hair extensions and the one who has them done.¹⁸

And likewise *al-Washr* and it is filing the front teeth.¹⁹ The Prophet (ﷺ) cursed the women who file their teeth for purposes of beautification. And this refers to women who file down their teeth to place gaps between them, thinking that this is something beautiful when in fact it is a satanic practice. Thus, filing down the teeth is forbidden. As for surgery for correcting the teeth due to a fault with the teeth that requires correction then there is nothing wrong with this because this is a type of treatment for removing a deformity. However, if a woman who has no defect or disorder does this then such procedures of filing down the teeth or placing gaps between them are impermissible.

Likewise,

لَعَنَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ التَّايِبَةَ وَالْمُسْتَمِعَةَ

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) cursed the wailing women and those who listen to them.²⁰

And it was also narrated that

رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بَرِيءٌ مِنَ الصَّالِقَةِ وَالْحَالِقَةِ وَالشَّاقَّةِ

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) declared himself free of a woman who wails, shaves her head and tears up her clothes.²¹

¹⁸ Saheeh al-Bukhāri (5937).

¹⁹ [TN]: Imam an-Nawawi said, “What is meant by “those who file teeth” is those who file the four front teeth; that is done for old women and those who are approaching old age, to make them appear younger and to make the teeth look more beautiful, because this small gap between the teeth is for younger girls; when a woman gets old her teeth become bigger, so they file the teeth to make them appear more beautiful and to make people think that they are young.”

²⁰ Abu Dāwood (3128). There is weakness in its chain of narration, but there are other narrations that collaborate its meaning.

²¹ Saheeh Muslim (104).

The word *saliqa* refers to the woman who raises her voice when she has suffered some loss, and this type of wailing is a major type of sin because the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

فَإِنَّ النَّابِحَةَ إِنْ لَمْ تَتُوبْ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَمُوتَ فَإِنَّهَا تُبْعَثُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَلَيْهَا سَرَابِيلٌ مِنْ قَطْرَانٍ ثُمَّ يُعَلَى عَلَيْهَا بِدُرُوعٍ
مِنْ لَهَبِ النَّارِ

And if the woman who wails does not repent before she dies, she will be resurrected on the Day of Resurrection wearing a shirt of pitch (tar), over which she will wear a shirt of flaming fire.²²

During the times of pre-Islamic ignorance, they used to hire out wailers when someone had died [to wail at the funeral]. This is forbidden, but as for crying for the deceased then there is nothing wrong with this as long as the person does not raise their voices. Once the Prophet (ﷺ) cried and said [when he was questioned],

هَذِهِ رَحْمَةٌ جَعَلَهَا اللَّهُ فِي قُلُوبِ عِبَادِهِ

This is mercy which Allah has put in the heart of His slaves.²³

As for *al-bāliqa* then this is the person who pulls out her hair at the time of loss. And *ash-shāqab* is the one who tears and rips her clothes. [All of these people are cursed] because this is a manifestation of being bitter and angry and a lack of patience with the decree of Allah. What is required during times of adversity is patience and contemplation because Allah says,

وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ ۝ الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ ۝ أُولَٰئِكَ
عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ ۝

But give good tidings to the patient, who when disaster strikes them say, "Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return." Those are the ones upon whom are blessings from their Lord and mercy. And it is those who are the [rightly] guided.

²² Sunan Ibn Mājah (1582).

²³ Saheeh al-Bukhāri (7377).