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Islamic Perspective on Sex

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Terminology used in this book

(Taken from Sheik Mahmoud Murad's book 'Common mistakes in Translation')

1. ***Rubb***: Some prefer to translate the term '*Rubb*' into 'Lord.' Beside the fact that the latter is a Biblical term referring to the alleged lordship of the slave of Allah, Prophet Jesus, the word 'lord' which is limited to 'master', 'chief', 'proprietor', or 'ruler', can never convey the conclusive signification of the term '*Rubb*'. The term '*Rubb*' means the Creator, the Fashioner, the Provider, the One upon Whom all creatures depend for their means of subsistence, and the One Who gives life and causes death.

2. ***Deen***: The word translated as religion is *'Deen*', which in Arabic commonly refers to a way of life, which is both private and public. It is an inclusive term meaning: acts of worship, political practice, and a detailed code of conduct, including hygiene or etiquette matters.

3. **[ﷺ] *Sallallaaho 'alaihi wa sallam*:** Some translate it as 'peace be upon him'. This translation is incorrect; the correct translation is, may Allah exalt his mention, and render him and his household safe and secure from every derogatory thing.

4. **[ﷺ] *Radya-Allahu anhu*:** May Allah be pleased with him.



Introduction

All praise is due to Allah, the *Rubb* of the worlds, and may Allah exalt the mention of His Prophet, and render him, his household and companions safe and secure from every derogatory thing.

Islam acknowledges the fact that one's sexual desire has to be satisfied. It considers fulfilling this desire a praiseworthy matter, as long as it is done within *Shari'ah* limits. It is not disdainful to satisfy this desire, nor should it be neglected. Allah (ﷻ) says:

> ﴿**Beautified for men is the love of desired things – women and children, and heaped-up treasures of gold and silver, and pastured horses and cattle and crops. That is the provision of the present life; but Allah has with Him the best return** [i.e. *Jannah*]**.**﴾ (3:14)

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "**Women, and perfume have been made dear to me, and I find comfort in performing *Salah*** (prayer)**."** (Nasa'ee)

Islam prohibits suppressing this desire completely, for Islam is the *Deen* which is in accord with the natural disposition of man. It fulfills his natural needs in an appropriate way, in accordance with *Shari'ah* law. Abu Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) said:

> **The Messenger of Allah** (ﷺ) **was asked about what admits people into *Jannah*** [Heavenly Abode] **most. He said: 'Fear of Allah and good manners.' He was then asked about what admits people into Fire most.' He said: 'One's tongue and private parts.'** (Tirmidthi)

In this booklet we will discuss the Islamic method of satisfying sexual desire, and how it can be transformed from a base desire into an act of worship through which a Muslim receives reward. Abu Dharr (ﷺ) said that some of the companions said to the Prophet (ﷺ): 'O Messenger of Allah! The rich companions have attained the greatest rewards…they pray as we pray, fast as we fast, and give out in charity from their wealth!' The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> '**Has not Allah given you that with which you can give charity from? Indeed every *Tasbeehah*[1] is a charity, every *Takbeerah*[2] is a charity, every *Tahmeedah*[3] is a charity and every *Tahleelah*[4] is a charity. Ordering with the good is a charity, and forbidding evil is a charity, and when one of you approaches his family, it too is a charity.' The companions (ﷺ) said: 'O Messenger of Allah, one of us approaches his wife desiring her, and receives reward on account of that?' The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: 'Won't a person receive sin for approaching an unlawful woman? Similarly, when he approaches his wife, he will be rewarded.**' (Muslim)

In Islam, marriage is encouraged. It is the only way a person may relieve his sexual tension. The Messenger (ﷺ) said:

> '**I marry women, so whoever disregards my *Sunnah*, is not from me.**' (Irwaa' al-Ghaleel)

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[1] i.e. to say *'Subhanallah'* meaning: Far removed is Allah from every imperfection. **(AM)**

[2] i.e. to say *'Allahu Akbar'* meaning: Allah is the greatest. **(AM)**

[3] i.e. to say: '*Alhamdulillah'* meaning: 'All praise is due to Allah.' **(AM)**

[4] i.e. to say *'Laa ilaaha illaa Allah'* meaning: 'There is no god worthy of being worshipped except Allah alone. **(AM)**

Islam considers marriage an innate need in the life of the individual. Love, mercy, and altruism spread in society, and it preserves the human race by means of procreation. One's chastity, honor and dignity are preserved through it; therefore, abstaining from marriage prevents one from these benefits and excellences and causes him to oppose his natural disposition.

A life of tranquility, peace and affection is what Islam seeks to establish between husband and wife. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿**And of His signs is that He created for you from yourselves mates that you may find tranquility in them; and He placed between you affection and mercy. Indeed in that are signs for a people who give thought.**﴾ (30:21)

Through marriage each spouse safeguards the other from the unlawful; this is the goal of marriage in Islam. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿**They are *lebaas*** (i.e. body cover, screen or *sakan* [i.e. you enjoy the pleasure of living with them]) **for you and you are the same for them.**﴾ (2:187)

There are some who oppose Islam in this regard, and support sexual relationships that are not bound by *Shari'ah* laws. Islam admonishes Muslims who behave like animals and fulfill their sexual desires however they please. What a grave sin it is indeed, when a man engages in sexual intercourse with a woman who is unlawful to him!

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

'**There is no sin more serious after *Shirk*** [associating partners with Him in worship] **than fornication.**' (Ahmed)

Islam nurtures and teaches its followers to be chaste, pure, and dignified. It seeks to refine and perfect the manners and etiquette of the Muslim. Abu Umaamah (ﷺ) said:

> **'A young man came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said: 'O Messenger of Allah, allow me to fornicate!' People gathered around him and said: '*Mah…Mah!*'[5] The Prophet (ﷺ) said: 'Bring him.' He then came close to the Prophet (ﷺ) and sat. He (ﷺ) then said to him: 'Do you like this for your mother?' He said: 'No, by Allah! May I be your ransom!' The Prophet (ﷺ) said to him: 'Similarly, people abhor this for their mothers.' The Prophet (ﷺ) then asked him: 'Do you like it for your daughter?' He said: 'No, By Allah! May I be your ransom!' He (ﷺ) said to him: 'Similarly, people abhor this for their daughters.' He (ﷺ) then said to him: 'Do you like it for your sister?' He said: 'No, by Allah! May I be your ransom!' He (ﷺ) said to him: 'Similarly, people abhor this for their sisters.' He (ﷺ) then said: 'Do you like it for your paternal aunts?' He said: 'No, by Allah! May I be your ransom!' He (ﷺ) said: 'Similarly, people abhor it for their paternal aunts.' He (ﷺ) then asked him: 'Do you like it for your maternal aunts?' He said: 'No, by Allah! May I be your ransom!' He (ﷺ) said: 'Similarly, people abhor it for their maternal aunts.'** (The narrator of the Hadeeth said that) the Prophet (ﷺ) placed his hand on the young man's chest and said: **'O Allah forgive him, purify his heart, and safeguard him from fornication.' After that the most hated thing to that youth was fornication.'** (Ahmed)

Islam does not approve of monasticism or abstinence from lawful worldly pleasures. Anas b. Malik (ﷺ) said:

[5] An expression, used to express scorn and displeasure. **(AM)**

> **'Three people came to the houses of the Prophet (ﷺ) asking about the worship of the Prophet (ﷺ). When they were informed of his worship, they saw it as little, and said: 'we are unlike the Prophet (ﷺ); Allah has forgiven him his past and future sins!' One of them said: 'As for me, I will continuously pray throughout the nights.' The other said: 'I will continuously fast and not break it.' The last one said: 'I will not approach women.' The Messenger (ﷺ) came and asked: 'Are you the ones who said this? Indeed, by Allah, I am the most god-fearing of you and pious, but I fast and break it, pray and take rest, and marry women, so whoever does not adhere to my Sunnah is not from me.'** (Bukhari)

Islam does not allow fulfilling one's sexual desire in an uncontrolled animalistic manner. Muhammad Qutb said:

> **'There is no problem with the issue of sex in Islam. Islam sets regulations through which one can satisfy his natural needs** [among which is his sexual desire] **and does not prevent him from doing so. The regulations set in Islam** [regarding this topic] **are similar to bridges set over a stream; it does not block the stream, rather organizes commuting back and forth. In this manner other goals can be achieved as well, which could not have been achieved** [before the erection of the bridge]. **This is exactly what Islam aims with man's sexual urge. It sets up regulations, not to prevent and suppress it; but organizes and regulates it, for these are the boundaries and limits of Allah. Allah says: ﴿Do not transgress the boundaries of Allah﴾. These are the boundaries that Allah sets as safe limits within which man can disburse that energy, and with which goodness encompasses both individual and society.**

The norms of the *Jaahiliyah* [Ignorance] **society realized the importance of regulating and organizing all natural human desires except sexual desire! It is the only natural desire of man which they did not bind by regulations! Yet** [the norms of that society] **did not allow one to own and possess things the way he liked from wherever he wanted, for this was considered theft, which that law punished. Similarly, there are regulations concerning dwellings and clothing, these are not left to ones' desires!'**[6]

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[6] *Manhaj at-Tarbiyah al-Islaamiyyah* vol. 2, pg. 218-9

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Islam acknowledges the fact that one's sexual desire has to be satisfied in a manner pertinent to *Shari'ah* law, (i.e. through marriage). One may not satisfy his desire in any other way. Allah praises those who abide by these laws saying:

> ﴿**Successful indeed are the believers, who are humble in their prayers, and who shun all that which is vain. And who are active in paying the Zakah, and who guard their chastity, except from their wives or what their right hands possess, for then they are not to be blamed.**﴾ (23:1-6)

Allah, the Exalted, encourages Muslims to get married, as this was a *Sunnah* (practice) of all Prophets and Messengers, may Allah render them safe from every derogatory thing. Allah (ﷻ) says:

> ﴿**And indeed We have sent before you Messengers, and bestowed them with wives and children.**﴾ (13:38)

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) also encouraged Muslims to get married and have offspring. Ma'qel b. Yasaar (ﷺ) said:

> "A man came to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and said: 'O Messenger of Allah, I am going to get married to a woman who is of noble descent, status and is rich but she is barren. Shall I marry her? The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:
>
> '**Marry the amicable and fertile woman, for I will boast** (the large number of) **my nation before all nations** (on the Day of Resurrection)**.'"** (Abu Dawood)

Islam has ordered Muslims to assist the one who wants to get married immediately. Abu Hurairah (ﷺ) reported that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

'**If you are approached by a man** (whose manners and *Deen* you are satisfied with) **then get him married; for if you do not, *Fitnah*** [trials and strife] **and evil will prevail.**' (Haakim)

Islam encourages guardians to make matters that relate to marriage uncomplicated. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

'A sign of woman's *Barakah* [i.e. goodness] **is ease in her engagement, dowry and labor** [i.e. child birth]**.** (Haakim)

Islam commands Muslims to get married and not fear poverty. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿**And marry those among you who are single** [i.e. a man who has no wife and the woman who has no husband] **and** [also marry] **the *salihun*** [pious, fit and capable ones] **of your** [male] **slaves and maid-servants. If they are poor, Allah will enrich them out of His bounty. And Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knowing** [about the state of the people]**.**﴾ (24:32)

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

'Allah will surely help three people; the *mujaahid* [Muslim fighter] **in the path of Allah, the one who marries in order to safeguard himself and to seek chastity, and the slave who seeks to buy his freedom.'** (Haakim)

Islam orders those who cannot afford to marry because of financial reasons, to keep chaste.

Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿**And those who find no means of marriage should keep themselves chaste, until Allah grants them means out of His bounty.**﴾ (24:33)

In Islam, youth are ordered to get married as soon as possible. The Prophet (ﷺ) has informed us what one must do to curb his desires if he cannot find the means to get married. He (ﷺ) said:

> **'O youth, whoever of you can afford marriage** [financially and physically] **let him get married; for indeed it lowers the gaze, and keeps one chaste; whoever cannot get married, he should fast, for it safeguards him.'** (Bukhari)

The Qur'an has given an exemplary paradigm to Muslim youth on how to deal with sexual desire, and how to suppress it in the story of Yousef (عليه السلام). Allah (ﷻ) says:

> ﴿**And she, in whose house he was, sought to seduce him** [to do an evil act]**, and she closed the doors and said: 'Come on, O you.' He said: 'I seek refuge in Allah! Truly, he** [your husband] **is my master! He made my living in a great comfort!** [So I will never betray him]**. Verily, the wrongdoers will never be successful. And indeed she did desire him, and he would have inclined to her desire, had he not seen the evidence of his *Rubb*. Thus it was, that We might turn away from him evil and illegal sexual intercourse. Surely, he was one of Our chosen slaves.**﴾
>
> (12:23-4)

Even if one is imprisoned and harmed, he should not give in to illegal relations. Allah (ﷻ) says:

> ﴿**She said: 'This is he** [the young man] **about whom you did blame me, and I did seek to seduce him, but he refused. And now if he refuses to obey my order, he shall certainly be cast into prison, and will be one of those who are disgraced. He said: 'O My *Rubb*! Prison is dearer to me than that to which they invite me. Unless You turn away their**

plot from me, I will feel inclined towards them and be one of the ignorant.﴾ (12:32-33)

Islam prohibits releasing sexual desire by any means other than that which is lawful. If one fears that he would fornicate, then in that case only, he may masturbate to relieve his sexual tension, which is the lesser of the two evils.



Steps Islam has taken to regulate Sexual Desire

Islam prohibits everything which arouses one sexually -except what occurs between spouses- for fear that a person would do what is unlawful. The following steps are carried out in Islam to prevent one from becoming sexually aroused.

1. Separating children in their sleeping places. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> '**Command your children to perform prayers when they are seven, and beat them** [if they do not perform prayer] **when they are ten, and separate them in their sleeping places.**'
>
> (Abu Dawood)

This is to prevent anything that would arouse them sexually while they are asleep.

Islam orders Muslim women to wear Hijab and not to socialize with non-*Mahram*[7] men, so that they can preserve their chastity and avoid arousing their sexual desires. Allah (ﷻ) says:

> ﴿**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 respectable women] **so as not to be annoyed. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.**﴾ (33:59)

Islam has made it lawful for elderly women, who neither desire marriage, nor are desired by others, to take off their outer garment. Allah (ﷻ) says:

[7] i.e. men she is allowed to marry. **(AM)**

﴿**And as for women past childbearing who do not expect wedlock, 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.**﴾ (24:60)

2. Lowering the gaze. The Muslim is ordered to lower his gaze[8] and not look at prohibited things; for fear that a person would stare passionately after the initial look, and then imagine, and finally do the unlawful. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿**Tell the believing men to lower their gaze** [from looking at forbidden things]**, and protect their private parts** [from illegal sexual acts]**. 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] **and not to show off their adornment except only that which is apparent and to draw their veils all over their bodies, faces, necks and bosoms, and not to reveal their adornment except to their husbands or their fathers, or their husband's fathers, or their sons, or their husband's sons, or their brothers or their brother's sons, or their sister's son, or their** [Muslim] **women, or the** [female] **slaves whom their right hands possess, or old male servants who lack vigor, or small children who have no sense of feminine sex. And let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment. And all of you beg Allah to forgive you, O believers, that you may be successful.**﴾ (24:30-1)

[8] This applies to men and women. **(AM)**

Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him, said[9]:

'**Since** [fornication] **stems from what one sees, the command to lower the gaze is given precedence over safeguarding one's private parts** [i.e. to be chaste]**. All incidents stem from what one sees; similarly, a fire starts with small sparks. An unlawful look, evolves into a thought** [in the heart] **which leads one to action and finally to the sin itself. That is why it is said:**

'**Whoever safeguards these four things preserves his *Deen*; his eyesight, thoughts, utterances, and actions.**'

One may happen to glance at something unlawful, but it is prohibited for him to look at it intently or the second time.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said to Ali (رضي الله عنه):

'**O Ali, do not look over and over. You would not be chastised on account of the first glance, but would be chastised on account of the second.**'

In order to encourage Muslims to lower their gaze, the Prophet (ﷺ) stated the reward a Muslim receives when he lowers his gaze out of fear of Allah and in hope of His reward. He (ﷺ) said:

'**A glance is similar to a poisoned arrow of *Iblees*; whoever leaves it due to fear of Allah and to seek His pleasure receives reward; his Iman** [increases]**, the pleasure of which he feels in his heart.**' (Haakim)

[9] *Al-Jawab al-Kafi leman sa'ala an ad-dawaa' ash-shafee* (The Adequate Answer for him who asks for the Curative Remedy) pg. 232

3. Seeking permission before entering upon someone, so that he would not see something which is unlawful. Allah (ﷻ) says:

> ﴿**O you who believe! Let your slaves and slave girls, and those among you who have not reached puberty ask your permission** [before they come to your presence] **on three occasions: before Fajr** [Morning Prayer]**, and while you put off your clothes for the noonday** [rest]**, and after the Isha** [late night prayer]**. These three times are of privacy for you; other than these times there is no sin on you or on them to move about, attending to each other. Thus Allah makes clear the verses of this Qur'an** [showing proofs for the legal aspect of permission for visits to you]**. And Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.**﴾ (24:58)

Allah (ﷻ) says:

> ﴿**And when the children among you reach the age of puberty, then let them** [also] **seek permission, as those senior to them** [in age]**. Thus Allah makes clear His *Ayaat* for you. And Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.**﴾ (24:59)

4. Islam prohibits men to imitate women and women to imitate men. Ibn Abbas (ﷺ) said:

> '**The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) cursed men who imitate women and women who imitate men.**' (Bukhari)

5. Islam prohibits looking at things which arouse one sexually, such as evil pictures. Abdurrahmaan b. Abi Sa'eed al-Khudri (ﷺ) said that his father said that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> '**A man should not look at another man's private parts, nor should a woman look at another's private parts. Two men**

> **should not lay naked under one garment, and two women should not lay naked under one garment.'** (Muslim)

6. Listening to things which arouse one sexually, such as music. Music usually provokes one to do evil and arouses the individual sexually. The scholars were truthful in their statement about music, when they said: **'Music leads to fornication.'**[10]

7. The Prophet (ﷺ) forbade sitting with youth [who have no hair growing on their faces] **and looking at them intensely, especially if they are attractive**. Abu Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) said that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> **'The son of Adam will commit his due share of fornication. The eyes fornicate and their fornication is looking at prohibited things. The ears fornicate and their fornication is listening to prohibited things. The tongue fornicates and its fornication is speaking to women strangers. The hand fornicates and its fornication is to touch unlawful things. The feet fornicate and their fornication is walking to the prohibited. The heart wishes and desires; thereafter, one may actually fornicate or come close to doing it.'** (Muslim)

8. The Prophet (ﷺ) forbade secluding oneself with a woman [stranger]**.** For a person may fall prey to satanic desires and fornicate with her. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> **'Let not one of you seclude himself with a woman** [stranger]**, for Satan would be their third.'** (Ibn Hibban)

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[10] This is the statement of Fudail b. 'Iyaad, may Allah have mercy on him, and is narrated by Ibn Abid-Dunya and al-Baihaqi. **(AM)**

Free intermingling between both sexes is prohibited in Islam, for prohibited relationships may result; all that leads to the prohibited is prohibited as well.

Muhammad Qutb said in his book *'Man between Materialism and Islam'*:

> '**Innocent coeducation was a great myth that originated from the West. When the West headed to secularism** [and lost its ideals] **and aimed to treat sexual tension, the sociologists and psychologists presented the pros and benefits of coeducation. Thereafter the West realized the fallacies of these values and benefits. Psychiatrists and psychologists withdrew their opinions regarding coeducation, and stated that slow dances, innocent parties, mixed tea parties and picnics even under the supervision of parents arouse one's desire. If these desires are suppressed due to social circumstances or shyness, this creates mental and nervous anxiety after the calmness one feels during these occasions. In this case, the youth resorts to one of two things; either to go to a place where he can do these things without the barriers present, or reside in this state of anxiety which leads to certain disorders. Therefore, what kind of innocence and nurturing is this?'**

9. Islam prohibits a woman to describe another woman to her husband for fear that he may dislike his wife on account of that. Some qualities which his wife tells to him about her may be preferable to him and are not present in his wife. Satan may even provoke him to seek this woman. Abdullah b. Masood (ﷺ) said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> **'A woman should not sit with another woman in order to describe her to her husband as though he is looking at her.'**
> (Abu Dawood)

10. Women are forbidden to leave their homes while they are perfumed and beautified, for this would cause people to look at them, and lead to the unlawful. Allah (ﷻ) says:

> ﴿**And stay in your houses, and do not display yourselves like that of the times of ignorance.**﴾ (33:33)

She is also prohibited to speak softly in a submissive tone; this safeguards her from weak men who desire fornication. A woman should talk to men (strangers) when needed only, and when she does, she should not talk in a flirtatious manner.[11]

Allah (ﷻ) says:

> ﴿**Be not soft in speech, lest he in whose heart is a disease** [of hypocrisy, or evil desire for adultery] **should be moved with desire, but speak in an honorable manner.**﴾ (33:32)

Allah (ﷻ) says:

> ﴿**And when you ask** [the Prophet's wives] **for anything you want, ask them from behind a screen: that is purer for your hearts and for their hearts.**﴾ (33:53)

Islam forbids nudity and the displaying of woman's adornments. Allah (ﷻ) says:

> ﴿**O Children of Adam! We have indeed bestowed upon you clothing to cover your shame** [i.e. private parts] **and as** [a thing of] **beauty and the clothing of piety is the best of**

[11] This applies to men as well. **(AM)**

all. That is one of the signs of Allah that they may remember.﴾ (7:26)

Abu Hurairah (ﷺ) said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

'There are two types of people who belong to Hell-Fire, whom I have not yet seen; people, who have whips similar to cattle's ears, with which they hit people. And women who are clothed yet unclothed; and walk in a seductive way, and do not obey Allah. Their heads are similar to a limp Bactrian camel's hump. They will not enter *Jannah*, and its scent can be smelt from a distance.' (Muslim)

Islam clarifies with whom the woman is allowed to uncover her apparent adornment. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿**And tell the believing women to lower their gaze** [from looking at forbidden things] **and protect their private parts** [from illegal sexual acts] **and not to show off their adornment except only that which is apparent and to draw their veils all over their bodies, faces, necks and bosoms, and not to reveal their adornment except to their husbands, or their fathers or their husband's fathers or their sons, or their husband's sons, or their brothers or their brothers sons, or their sister's sons, or their Muslim women or the female slaves whom their right hands possess, or old male servants who lack vigor, or small children who have no sense of feminine sex. And let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment. And all of you beg Allah to forgive you, O believers, that you may be successful.﴾** (24:31)

11. It is prohibited for the woman to travel alone, without *Mahram* (male guardian) such as the husband, father, brother,

or relative who is prohibited for her to marry. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> '**A man should not sit in seclusion with a woman** [stranger]**, nor should she travel without *Mahram*.' A man then asked the Prophet** (ﷺ): '**O Messenger of Allah** (ﷺ) **I have enlisted to go in such and such battle, and my wife has left to make Hajj!' The Prophet** (ﷺ) **said: 'Go make Hajj with your wife.'**
> (Bukhari)

The wisdom behind this is to preserve and safeguard the woman's chastity, for usually traveling is not easy, and requires many things, and the woman is weak in this regard due to the fact that she menstruates, becomes pregnant, and breast-feeds her child. Furthermore, a woman may be deceived easier than a man, for she may be affected by her surroundings. Therefore, during travel, she is in need of a person who safeguards and protects her from those who wish to harm her in any way, or take her money. She is also in need of someone who provides her with her needs, and ensures her total comfort. The *Mahram* is obliged to do all this, so she would not require the assistance of a stranger.

12. The Prophet (ﷺ) commanded Muslims to approach their wives if they see a woman who stimulates their sexual desire, in order to relieve themselves from this desire in a lawful manner. By doing this, he safeguards himself from falling into evil, and rids himself of the whispering of Satan. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> '**The woman comes in a shape similar to Satan, and goes in a shape similar to Satan**[12]**.'** (Muslim)

[12] Looking at women intently would certainly lead one to evil. **(AM)**

13. Islam commands both spouses to satisfy each other's sexual desire when either spouse desires. It is prohibited for a woman to refuse her husband's request when he wants to satisfy his sexual desire; since this would lead him to evil. He may search for other methods to satisfy his desire, or develop mental pressure, and both are detrimental to health. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> '**If the husband calls his wife to sleep with him, and she refuses; and he sleeps that night angry with her, the Angels curse her until the morning.**' (Abu Dawood)

The husband must also satisfy his wife's desires in order to protect and safeguard her from evils. Imam Ibn Hazm, may Allah have mercy on him, said:

> '**It is a duty of the husband to have intercourse with his wife, when she becomes purified if he is capable of doing so; otherwise, he is a sinner. The proof of this is in the words of Allah** (ﷻ):
>
> ﴿**And when they have purified themselves, then go in unto them as Allah has ordained for you.**﴾ (2:222)

Due to the severity of this matter, if the husband does not fulfill the wife's desire, she can raise her matter to the *Shari'ah* courts - if needed - so that she can take her due rights. This maintains the safeness of society from all evils.

Those who love to see evil become widespread in community have indeed been threatened by Allah with a most severe punishment. He (ﷻ) says:

> ﴿**Verily, those who like that** [the crime of] **illegal sexual intercourse should be propagated among those who**

believe, they will have a painful torment in this world and in the Hereafter. And Allah knows and you know not.﴾

(24:19)

If this is the punishment of those who like illicit relations to become apparent (in society), what is the punishment of those who engage in it and help spread it in society?



Marriage in Islam

Sayyid Saabiq, may Allah have mercy on him, said in his book '*Fiqh as-Sunnah*'[13]:

Islam has not legalized discharging sexual desire except through marriage, for Allah, the Exalted, did not want to equate man with other creatures, such that he fulfills his desire without understanding, or that his relationship with the female be a chaotic one without regulation.

Islam has instituted a system which safeguards man's honor and dignity. The relationship between man and woman only occurs after mutual consent of both parties is sought, and marriage is attested and witnessed by others and that both spouses belong to each other. In this right, a proper and safe way for this relationship is established, progeny would be safeguarded from going astray and preserved, and the woman is also safeguarded from all evil. Islam has preserved the core of the family which is nourished by motherly care, and taken care of by fatherly affection…thereafter children would grow up in a suitable environment. This is the system that Islam has accepted and it has effaced all others besides it.

It is appropriate to mention in brief the steps taken in Islam in order to marry a woman.



[13] Vol. 2, pg. 7.

1st Step: Choosing the Wife

In Islam there is a specific way to choose a wife, for the purpose of marriage in Islam is not only to satisfy one's sexual desire; rather, marriage is the first step in forming a family. For this reason, a Muslim should choose a wife with whom family relations can be maintained. This cannot happen unless a man marries a pious wife, who fears Allah, and fulfills her rightful duties, without ignoring other aspects, such as beautifying herself for her husband. Allah (ﷻ) says:

> ﴿**And marry those among you who are single** [i.e. a man who has no wife and the woman who has no husband] **and** [also marry] **the *Salihun*** [pious, fit and capable ones] **of your** [male] **slaves and maid-servants. If they be poor, Allah will enrich them out of His bounty. And Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knowing** [about the state of the people]**.**﴾ (24:32)

The Prophet (ﷺ) clarified the things that attract one to get married; and as we previously stated the most important factor among them is piety and *Deen*. He (ﷺ) said:

> '**A woman is married for one of four reasons; for her wealth, lineage, beauty and *Deen*. Marry on account of *Deen*, may your hands be full of dust!**' (Bukhari)

Islam seeks to prepare men to be husbands, who fit the description of the Prophet. The Prophet (ﷺ):

> '**The believers with the most complete and strong Iman are those who possess good character and manners, and the best of you is the best to his family.**' (Tirmidthi)

Islam also seeks to prepare women to be wives, who fit the description of the Prophet (ﷺ). He was asked: 'Which women are the best?

> **He said:** '[She is] **the one who pleases** [her husband] **when he looks at her, obeys him when he commands her**[14]**, and does not disobey him when he calls her** [to satisfy his sexual desire] **and helps him** [as long as that matter is not unlawful]**.'** (Nasa'ee)

Islam seeks to prepare the family to be a helpful element in the society. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> '**May Allah have mercy on a man who performed night prayers and awoke his wife, and if she refused to do so sprinkled some water on her face. May Allah have mercy on a woman who performed night prayers, awoke her husband, and if he refused sprinkled some water on his face.**' (Ibn Khuzaimah)



[14] She should obey her husband as long as he does not order her to do something unlawful. **(AM)**

2nd Step: Looking at the woman[15]

Islam seeks to establish lasting marital relations; a person should seek an attractive spouse who has good character and manners, so that both would be committed in this relation. Therefore, Islam has allowed both spouses to look at each other.

> A man came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and informed him that he was engaged to a woman from the Ansaar. He (ﷺ) said to him: '**Have you looked at her?**' He said: 'No!' Thereupon the Prophet (ﷺ) said to him:
>
> '**Go and look at her, for indeed there is something** (i.e. a defect) **in the eyes of the *Ansar*** [women]**.**' (Muslim)

The Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned the wisdom for seeing a woman in this regard. Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that Al-Mughira b. Shu'bah (رضي الله عنه) engaged himself to a woman and the Prophet (ﷺ) said to him:

> '**Go and look at her, for this will bring you closer together.**'
> (Ibn Majah)

The Islamic society is one that is safe and secure from social problems. Love and affection, between husband and wife, are

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[15] One should bear in mind the following:

a. It is unlawful for a man to be secluded with a woman in uninterrupted privacy. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> **'He who believes in Allah and the Last Day let him not seclude himself with a woman** [stranger] **unless she is accompanied by a *Mahram*** [male guardian] **otherwise, Satan will be their third.'**
> (Ahmed)

b. He looks at what usually appears of the woman; face, hands, feet, etc.

c. He should have genuine interest in getting engaged to the woman.

d. He should not speak to anyone about the shortcomings of that woman. (**AM**)

normal feelings [in Islam]. As long as this love is pure, innocent, and lawful, Islam acknowledges it. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> **'O Messenger of Allah! I have an orphan girl in my custody and two men have sought her for marriage. One is rich and the other is poor. We like the rich and she likes the poor…** [To whom should we offer her in marriage?]**'** The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: **'nothing is better for people who love one another than marriage.'** (Haakim)

Islam encourages that one intercede for a pious man to marry a pious woman who love each other.

Ibn Abbas (رضي الله عنه) said that the husband of Bareerah, may Allah be pleased with her, -a slave named Mugheeth- used to walk behind her weeping, while his tears would be falling off his beard. The Prophet (ﷺ) said to Abbas:

> **'O Abbas are you not amazed at how Mugheeth loves Bareerah and how she dislikes him!'**
>
> **He then said to her: 'Why don't you go back to him?' She asked him: 'Are you ordering me to do so?' He (ﷺ) said: 'I am only interceding on his behalf.' She said: 'I have no need for him.'** (Bukhari)

Islam also encourages male guardians to propose for women under their guardianship to suitable, pious men, after taking their consent; for, the guardian is keen on acquiring what is best for those under him. Allah (ﷻ) says:

> ﴿**And when he arrived at the water** [a well] **of *Madyan* he found there a group of men watering** [their flocks]**, and besides them he found two women who were keeping back** [their flocks]**. He said: 'What is the matter with you?'**

They said: 'We cannot water [our flocks] **until the shepherds take** [their flocks]**. And our father is a very old man. So he watered** [their flocks] **for them, then he returned back to the shade, and said: 'My *Rubb*! Truly I am in need of whatever good that you bestow on me!' Then there came to him one of the two women, walking shyly. She said: 'Verily, my father calls you that he may reward you for having watered** [our flocks] **for us.' So when he came to him and narrated the story, he said: 'Fear not. You have escaped from the people who are *dhalimun*** [wrongdoers]**. One of the two women said: 'O my father! Hire him! Verily, the best of men for you to hire is the strong, and the trustworthy. He said: 'I intend to marry one of these two daughters of mine to you, on condition that you serve me for eight years; but if you complete ten years, it will be** [a favor] **from you. But I intend not to place you under difficulty. You will find me, if Allah wills, of the righteous.' He** [Musa] **said: 'That is settled between me and you! Whichever of the two terms I fulfill, there will be no injustice to me, and Allah is a witness to all that we say!'**﴾

(28:23-28)

Salim b. Abdullah (ﷺ) said that he heard Abdullah b. Umar (ﷺ) say that Umar b. al-Khattab (ﷺ) said:

'**When** [my daughter] **Hafsa b. Umar lost her husband Khunais b. Hudhaafah as-Sahmi**[16]**, I met Uthman b. Affan (ﷺ) and suggested that he marry Hafsa, saying: 'If you wish, I will marry Hafsa b. Umar to you.' On that, he said,' I will think about it.' I waited for a few days and then he said to**

[16] He was one of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and had fought in the Battle of Badr and died in Madinah. (AM)

me, 'I am of the opinion that I shall not marry at present.' Then I met Abu Bakr (ﷺ) and said, 'If you wish, I will marry Hafsa b. Umar to you.' He kept quiet and did not give me any reply and I became angrier with him than I was with Uthman (ﷺ). Some days later, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) demanded her hand in marriage and I married her to him. Later on, Abu Bakr (ﷺ) met me and said: 'Perhaps you were angry with me when you offered me Hafsa for marriage and I gave no reply to you?' I said, 'Yes.' Abu Bakr (ﷺ) said, 'Nothing prevented me from accepting your offer except that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had referred to the issue of Hafsa; and I did not want to disclose the secret of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) but had he [i.e. the Prophet ﷺ] **given her up, I would surely have accepted her.'** (Bukhari)



3rd Step: Marriage Contract, Dowry and Wedding Feast

The Pillars and Preconditions of Marriage:

1. Both parties accept and approve of the marriage. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> **'The widowed woman or divorcee is not to be married unless she approves, and the virgin is not to be married until her permission is sought.' The Companions (ﷺ) said: 'O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) how is her permission sought?' He said: 'If she remains silent.'** (Bukhari)

If a woman is forced into marrying someone, she has the right to seek annulment of that marriage. Khansaa b. Khidam al-Ansaariyah told the Prophet (ﷺ) that her father forced her to marry someone, while she disliked him, so the Prophet (ﷺ) annulled the marriage.' (Bukhari)

These precautionary measures are taken so that the family would not fall apart and to prevent evil from spreading in society [i.e. cheating on the other spouse] which results when one of the spouses dislikes the other.

2. The guardian is a prerequisite for the validity of marriage. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> **'No marriage is valid unless one has a guardian and two trustworthy witnesses** [to attest the marriage]**. If marriage is completed without these** [i.e. guardian or witnesses] **it is a false marriage, and if they dispute with one another, then the ruler is the guardian for the** [woman] **who has no guardian.'** (Ibn Hibban)

This measure is taken so that the relationship of the kith and kin would not be severed. Usually, the guardian is more knowledgeable and keen to benefit those under his care. He would choose a suitable person who would keep her happy.

In the case the woman has no male guardian or her family prevented her from marrying a suitable person, the ruler becomes her guardian. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: '**The ruler is the guardian for the** [woman] **who has no guardian.**'

Ibn Abbas (رضي الله عنهما) said on the exegesis of the ayah:

> ﴿**O you who believe! You are forbidden to inherit women against their will; and you should not treat them with harshness, that you may take away part of the dowry you have given them, unless they commit open illegal sexual intercourse; and live with them honorably. If you dislike them, it may be that you dislike a thing and Allah brings through it a great deal of good.**﴾ (4:19)

In the Ignorance Era, when a man died, his guardians were the rightful heirs of his wife; whoever of them wanted to marry her would marry her, or they would not allow her to get married, so Allah revealed this ayah.

3. When both parties agree, it becomes a duty upon the husband to give his spouse her due dowry. Allah (ﷻ) says:

> ﴿**And give to the women** [whom you marry] **their dowry with a good heart; but if they of their own good pleasure, remit any part of it to you, take it, and enjoy it without fear of any harm** [as Allah has made it lawful]**.**﴾ (4:4)

The *Mahr* (dowry) should be reasonable. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> **'A sign of woman's *barakah*** [i.e. goodness]**, is ease in her engagement, dowry and labor** [i.e. child birth]**.** (Haakim)

Umar b. al-Khattab (ﷺ), the second Caliph, said:

> '**Do not make the dowry** [of a woman] **expensive. Were it praiseworthy** [in this life] **or a means of piety, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) would have done so. He did not give any of his wives or take for his daughters more than twelve *Oqiyah*[17].'**
>
> (Tirmidthi, Abu Dawood & Ibn Majah)

If any conditions were placed in the marriage contract, they must be fulfilled and the husband or wife must abide by them. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> '**The most rightful conditions one must fulfill are those that relate to marriage.**' (Bukhari)

In order for happiness to spread, one must invite family and friends to a wedding banquet. Its purpose is to publicize the marriage.

Anas b. Malik (ﷺ) said that Abdurrahman b. Auf (ﷺ) came from Makkah to Madinah and the Prophet (ﷺ) made a bond of brotherhood between him and Sa'd b. ar-Rabi al-Ansari. Al-Ansari had two wives, so he suggested that Abdurrahman take half, from his wives and property. Abdurrahman replied: 'May Allah bless you with your wives and property. Kindly show me the market.' So Abdurrahman went to the market and gained (in bargains) some dried yoghurt and some butter. After a few days the Prophet (ﷺ) saw Abdurrahman with some yellow stains on his clothes and asked him, 'What is that O Abdurrahman?' He replied: 'I have married a woman from the

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[17] One '*Oqiyah*' is equivalent to 40 silver Dirham; therefore, 12 *Oqiyah* are equal to 480 (silver) Dirham. (AM)

Ansar.' The Prophet (ﷺ) asked, 'How much *Mahr* (i.e. dowry) did you give her?' He replied: 'The weight of one date stone of gold.' The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

'**Offer a *walimah*** [wedding banquet] **even with one sheep.**' (Bukhari)

One should not be wasteful and extravagant in this banquet. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿**Verily the wasteful are brothers of the devils, and the devil is ever ungrateful to his *Rubb.***﴾ (17:27)

It is a must upon the person who is invited to attend the banquet, unless he has a valid reason. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

'**Whoever is invited to a wedding banquet, should attend.**'

(Bukhari)

The guests who attend the wedding banquet should supplicate for their hosts, as in the Hadeeth of the Prophet (ﷺ):

اللهم اغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وارْحَمْهُم وبارِكْ لَهُمْ فيما رَزَقْتَهُم

Allaahummaghfir lahum warhamhom wa baarik lahom feemaa razaqtahom

'O Allah, forgive them, and have mercy on them, and bless them in that which You have provided them.' (Ibn Hibban)

The guests should also supplicate Allah for both the spouses saying:

بارَكَ اللهُ لَكَ وبارَك عَلَيْك وجَمَع بَيْنَكُما في خَيْر

Baarakal-laahu laka wa baaraka alaika wa jama'a bainakoma fee khair

'May Allah bless you both and gather you in goodness.'

(Haakim)

Using the tambourine (*duff*) and singing innocent songs which do not excite a person sexually during this occasion are lawful **for women** in order to publicize the marriage.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said to A'ishah (رضي الله عنها) who had prepared a lady for a man from the *Ansaar* as his bride:

> **'O A'ishah! Weren't you amused** [during the marriage ceremony] **as the *Ansaar* like amusement.'** (Bukhari)



Etiquettes of the Wedding Night

When the groom and bride meet for the first time, the bridegroom is advised to present himself in a pleasant manner, and talk sweetly to the bride in order to start a good relationship and to stop uneasiness and nervousness.

> **Asmaa bint Yazeed b. as-Sakan, may Allah be pleased with her, said: 'I prepared A'ishah for the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and then called him; he (ﷺ) came and sat beside her. A jug of milk was brought to him, which he drank from, and gave A'ishah. She lowered her head, and was embarrassed. Asmaa' said: 'I reproached her and said to her: "Take it from the hand of the Prophet (ﷺ)!" She then took it and drank from it. The Prophet (ﷺ) then said to her, give it to your companion.'** Asmaa said, **I said: 'O Messenger of Allah, take it yourself, drink from it, and then give it to me with your hand.' He took it and drank from it, and then gave it to me.' I sat, and moved the utensil around so that I would drink from the same spot the Prophet (ﷺ) drank from. He then said: 'Give it to them.'** [i.e. the other women that were with me] **They said: 'We do not fancy it!' The Prophet (ﷺ) said: 'Do not gather between hunger and lies!'** (Ibn Majah)

It is also an act of Sunnah for the groom to place his hand on the forelocks of the bride and supplicate Allah, as in the Hadith:

اللهُمّ إِنِّيْ أَسْأَلُكَ خَيْرها وخَيْر ما جُبِلَتْ عليه وأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّها وشَرّ ما جُبِلت عليه

Allahumma innee as'aluka khairaha wa khair ma jobelat alaihi wa a'oothu beka min sharrehaa wa sharree ma jobelat alaihi

'***O Allah! I seek of you*** *[to grant me]* ***the best of this woman and the best of her characteristics. O Allah! I seek refuge with you to protect me against all the evils of this woman and her evil characteristics.***' (Bukhari)



Foreplay between spouses

Islam regards the satisfaction of sexual desire a natural instinct which should be fulfilled in an appropriate manner following certain regulations. The aim of marriage is that both spouses find comfort and spiritual stability in each other.

Allah (ﷻ) says:

> ﴿**And of His signs is that He created for you wives from among yourselves, so that you may find tranquility in them, and He engenders love and mercy between you. Indeed in that are signs for a people who reflect.**﴾ (30:21)

Marriage is encouraged in Islam, Jabir b. Abdullah (ﷺ) said: 'My father died and left seven or nine girls and I married a matron. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> '**O Jabir! Have you just got married?' I said: 'Yes.' He said: 'A virgin or a matron?' I replied: 'A matron.' He said: 'Why not a virgin, so that you might play with her and she with you, and you might amuse her and she amuses you.' I said: 'Abdullah** [my father] **died and left girls, and I dislike marrying a girl like them, so I married a lady** (matron) **so that she may look after them.' On that he said: 'May Allah bless you.'** (Bukhari)

Foreplay with the spouse is an important matter, for this increases the love, care and concern each has for the other. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> '**Everything besides the remembrance of Allah is an amusement and play** [i.e. futile] **except for four things: A man's sporting with his wife, training his horse, target practicing, and learning swimming.'** (Saheeh al-Jami as-Saghir)

Each spouse should groom himself/herself for the other. They should also clean themselves hygienically, wear pleasant scents, and appear in good attire. This increases one's love for the other. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

'**Allah is beautiful and loves beauty.**' (Muslim)

Nafi', may Allah have mercy on him, said that Abdullah b. Umar (رضي الله عنه) used to perfume himself with pure *Ood* and *Ood* mixed with camphor, and say: 'This is how the Prophet (ﷺ) perfumed himself.' (Muslim)

A'ishah (رضي الله عنها) said: 'I used to perfume the Prophet (ﷺ) with the best perfumes he brought, and see its shine on his head and beard.' (Bukhari)

Ibn Abbas (رضي الله عنه) said: 'I beautify myself for my wife, as she beautifies herself for me. I do not demand from her all my rights, for I would have to give her all her rights, for Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) says:

﴿**And they** (women) **have rights** [over their husbands (as regards living expenses)] **similar** [to those of their husbands (as regards obedience and respect)] **over them.**﴾ (2:228)



Types of Foreplay between spouses

a. On the Bed

Each spouse is allowed to undress completely in front of the other, and they are allowed to enjoy looking at each other. Bahz b. Hakeem reported that his father said that his grandfather (ﷺ) said:

> '**O Messenger of Allah! To what extent should we cover our private parts?**' The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: '**Completely cover your private parts**[18] **except from your spouse or your slave girl.**' He then asked the Prophet (ﷺ): '**What if people are gathered in one place?'** He said: '**If you can prevent anyone from looking at her, then do so.**' I then asked: **O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) if one of us is alone?**' He said**: 'One should be ashamed of Allah more than he is of people.**' (Abu Dawood)

Both spouses can enjoy each other the way they like, as long as the husband approaches the wife in the appropriate place (i.e. the vagina).

Ibn Abbas (ﷺ) said that Umar b. al-Khattab (ﷺ) came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said: 'O Messenger of Allah! I am destroyed!' The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: '**What has destroyed you?**' He said: 'I approached my wife in a different manner last night.'[19] The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) did not say anything to him, and Allah revealed:

> ﴿**Your wives are a tilth for you, so go to your tilth, when or how you will.**﴾ (2:223)

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[18] At all times. **(AM)**

[19] i.e. he approached his wife from behind, but in the vagina. **(AM)**

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> '**Approach your wives in any manner as long as it is in the vagina, and she is not in her menses.**' (Tirmidthi)

This Hadeeth does not mean that the husband should stay away from his wife, and abstain eating or drinking with her if she is menstruating. A'ishah (رضي الله عنها) said:

> '**While I was in my menstrual period, I drank from a cup, and the Prophet (ﷺ) drank from the same spot I drunk from and I ate meat from a bone, and the Prophet ate from the same place** (I ate from)**.'**

One may enjoy his wife while she is in her menstrual period, but should avoid having intercourse with her. Anas b. Malik (رضي الله عنه) said: 'When a Jewess was in her menstrual period; (the Jews) would not eat or drink with her, and they would not approach her while they were in their houses.' The Companions (رضي الله عنهم) asked the Prophet (ﷺ) about this, and Allah revealed:

> ﴿**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)] **for your own selves beforehand. And fear Allah, and know that you are to meet Him** [in the Hereafter], **and give good tidings to the believers.**﴾ (2:223)

The Prophet ﷺ said:

> '**Enjoy your wives, but do not have intercourse.**' (Muslim)

When the Jews heard this, they said: 'This man wants to differ with us in every matter!'

Usaid b. Hudair and Abbaad b. Bishr informed the Prophet (ﷺ) of what the Jews had said, and said: '**Shall we not have intercourse with our wives while they are menstruating?**' (Upon hearing that) the Prophet (ﷺ) was angry, and the two Companions left. Someone brought some milk as a gift for the Prophet (ﷺ) and he called them back, so that the Companions (ﷺ) would not think that he was angry with them.'

(Muslim & Abu Dawood)

Jabir (ﷺ) said, the Jews said: '**If a man approaches his wife from behind (but in the vagina) the child would be born cross-eyed.**' So Allah (ﷻ) revealed the following verse:

﴿**Your wives are a tilth for you, so go to your tilth, when or how you will.**﴾ (2:223)

Jabir (ﷺ) then said: '**If the man wishes he may approach his wife, from any way, as long as he approaches her in the vagina.**' (Muslim)

It is a Sunnah practice to mention the name of Allah, when a man approaches his wife, and to say the supplication which has been reported in the Hadeeth:

'**If someone wants to approach his wife, and says:**

بِسْمِ اللهِ اللّٰهُمَ جَنِّبْنَا الشَّيْطَانَ وجَنِّبْ الشَّيْطانَ ما رَزَقْتَنَا

'Bismillah, Allaahumma jannibnash-shaitan wa jannib ash-Shaitan ma razaqtana.'

'**I begin with the name of Allah…O Allah ward away Satan from us, and from that which You provide us with.**'

> **If Allah wills that a child be born, Shaitan would never harm him.'** (Bukhari)

He should also engage in foreplay with her, by kissing and touching her, to make her sexually aroused. A husband must wait for his wife to satisfy her sexual desire. Anas (ﷺ) said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> '**If a husband has an intercourse with his wife he must be truthful with her. If he got sexually satisfied before her, then he should wait for her to get her satisfaction.**'
>
> (Abu Ya'la)

Umar b. Abdul-Aziz reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> '**Do not have intercourse with your wife right away. Wait until she is as sexually aroused as you are.**' The man asked: O Messenger of Allah! What should I do [in order to achieve that?] He (ﷺ) replied: **'Kiss her, touch her, and try to arouse her. If you notice that is she is as ready** [sexually] **as you are, then engage in the intercourse.**' (Al-Mughni)

In addition, it is also an act of Sunnah to perform a complete ablution by taking a full bath, or a partial ablution, as one does to offer a prayer, if the husband desires to have another intercourse with her. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> '**If a man has an intercourse with his wife, and thereafter wants to approach her again, let him perform ablution.**'
>
> (Muslim)

This practice is purer, more hygienic and enables the person to have stronger sexual strength and desire.

b. When bathing

Foreplay with one's wife is not confined to the bed. A husband may sport with his wife at any time, if privacy for both is secured and maintained.

A'ishah (ﷺ) said:

> **'The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and I bathed from the same pot of water. He (ﷺ) rushed to take the water and I said to him, "Leave some for me! Leave some for me!"** (Muslim)

c. In the house

A'ishah (ﷺ) was asked:

> **'What did the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) do upon entering his home?' She said: 'He used the *Siwak*, possibly to purify his mouth to kiss and hug his family.'**

A'ishah (ﷺ) said:

> **'The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) kissed one of his wives and went to the Masjid to perform his prayers, and he did not make ablution.'** (Ahmed)

d. Outside the house

As we pointed out earlier, fun with the wife is permitted at all times and places if full privacy is ensured. Nobody must see a husband and wife having fun with each other in public.

A'ishah (ﷺ) said:

> **'While I was young, before I put much weight on, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and I were on a trip. He asked his Companions (ﷺ) to go ahead of him and asked me to race**

with him. I beat him in that race. Thereafter the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) did not ask me to race with him. Later on, after I had put on weight and forgotten that I had beaten him in a race, he asked his Companions, while I was traveling with him to go ahead of him. He then asked me to race with him, I said: **"O Messenger of Allah! How can I race with you and I have put on weight?"** He (ﷺ) said: **"You will do it." We raced and he beat me.** He (ﷺ) said: **"O A'ishah this win** [of mine] **by that win** [of yours] **in the race!".**'

(As-Silsilah as-Saheehah)

It is absolutely unlawful to reveal marital secrets or to talk about what takes place between a husband and his wife in private. The Prophet **(ﷺ)** said:

'**The greatest betrayal on the Day of Resurrection is that of a man who approaches his wife and she approaches him…and he fulfills his desire, and then tells people what he did with her.**' (Muslim)

In order for matrimonial life to be maintained, and the family to be protected, Islam has designated certain rights each spouse owes to the other.



The Rights of the wife over the husband

It is sufficient here to list some verses from the Qur'an and Prophetic traditions that clarify the rights of the wife in Islam.

1. Allah (ﷻ) says:

> ﴿**And live with them honorably. If you dislike them, it may be that you dislike a thing and Allah brings through it a great deal of good.**﴾ (4:19)

2. Allah (ﷻ) says:

> ﴿**And they** (women) **have rights** [over their husbands (as regards living expenses)] **similar to those** [of their husbands (as regards obedience and respect)] **over them to what is reasonable, but men have a degree** [of responsibility] **over them. And Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.**﴾ (2:228)

3. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> '**The best of you are the best to his family.**' (Ibn Majah)

4. Hakeem b. Mu'awiyah al-Qushairi said that his father said:

> '**O Messenger of Allah, what is the right of one of our wives over us?' He said: 'To feed and clothe her as one feeds and clothes himself. Do not slap her on the face, or say evil and nasty things to her. He should only forsake her in the bed** [and not send her away to a separate house]**.**'
> (Abu Dawood)

5. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> '**The most complete believers are the best mannered, and the best of you are the best to his family.**' (Ibn Hibban)

6. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

'**Fear Allah, and be mindful of Him concerning women. You have taken them with the right** [bestowed upon you] **from Allah, and approached them with the *Words of Allah*.**[20] **She should not allow anyone you dislike to enter your house whether male or female, and if they do this, then strike them** [lightly, without harming them]**. And they** (women) **have rights** [over their husbands (as regards living expenses)] **similar to those** [of their husbands (as regards obedience and respect)] **over them to what is reasonable.**'

(Muslim)

7. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

'**Let a believer not completely hate a believing woman, for if he hates a trait of her he might like another one** [in her].'

(Muslim)

Indeed perfection belongs to Allah alone.



[20] The *Words of Allah* refers to the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:
﴿**…then marry of women as may be agreeable to you, two, or three, or four.**﴾ (4:3) (**AM**)

The Rights of the husband over the wife

1. Allah says about the pious wives:

﴿**And the righteous women are the truly devout ones** [to Allah and to their husbands]**, who guard in the husband's absence what Allah orders them to guard** (e.g. their chastity, their husband's property)**.**﴾ (4:34)

2. A'ishah, may Allah be pleased with her, said: I asked the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ):

'**Whose right is greatest upon the woman?**' He said: '**Her husband's right.**' I then asked: '**Whose right is greatest upon the man?**' He said: '**His mother's.**' (Haakim)

3. Husain b. Mehsen said my paternal aunt told me:

I went to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) asking him about a certain matter. Thereafter he (ﷺ) asked me: '**Do you have a husband?**' I replied affirmatively. He (ﷺ) asked: '**How do you treat him?**' I replied: '**I do my best serving him, until I cannot.**' He (ﷺ) said: '**Take care of him, for he is either your** [means to] ***Jannah*** (Heavenly Abode) **or the Fire'.** (Haakim)

4. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

'**If a woman** [wife] **performs her five daily prayers, observes the fast of the month of Ramadan, is chaste and safeguards herself, and obeys her husband, she would be given the choice to enter *Jannah* through any of its gates.**'

(Ibn Hibban)

5. Mu'aadh b. Jabal (رضي الله عنه) said that he went to *Shaam* and saw the Christians prostrating to their priests and ministers. He saw the Jews prostrating to their rabbis and scholars. He asked them, 'why do you do this?' they said: 'this is the greeting due to the

Prophets.' He said: 'our prophet is more righteous of this honor!' The Prophet (ﷺ) then said:

> '**They have forged lies against their prophets as they distorted their books; if I were to order anyone to prostrate to anyone, I would have asked the woman to prostrate to her husband, due to the great right she owes him. A woman would not taste the sweetness of Iman unless she fulfills the right of her husband.**' (Haakim)



Divorce in Islam

Islam considers marriage a blessed ritual, and for this reason it is keen to strengthen the relationship between husband and wife. Allah describes the marriage contract as 'a strong and firm covenant'. He (ﷻ) says:

> ﴿**And how could you take it away after you have given yourselves to one another, and she has received a strong and firm covenant from you?**﴾ (4:21)

The words of the Prophet (ﷺ) also prove this point. He said:

> '**He is not considered among us, he who turns a woman or a slave girl against her husband or master.**' (Saheeh al-Jami as-Saghir)

Although marriage is blessed and sacred in Islam, divorce has been deemed lawful, yet it is as the Prophet (ﷺ) described:

> '**The most hated lawful thing to Allah is divorce.**' (Haakim)[21]

When marital relations cannot continue, divorce is an alternative, for it prevents evils from spreading in the community, such as a husband's cheating on his wife and vice versa. It prevents alteration of lineage, disruption of the inheritance, and spread of evil in society. Divorce is confined within its limits, so that it cannot be abused by those who have little intellect. The scholars have clarified that divorce is subject to the following rulings:

---

[21] This Hadeeth is weak. Allah says: ﴿**And if they decide upon divorce, then Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.**﴾ (2:227). It is understood from this verse that one should resort to divorce only when needed. (**AM**)

1. ***Waajib*** (i.e. compulsory): It is compulsory in the following cases:

a. When the two judges (one from the wife's family and one from the husband's family) decide that they should separate. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿**And if you fear that a breach might occur between a** [married] **couple, appoint an arbiter from among his people and an arbiter from among her people; if they both want to set things aright, Allah will bring about their reconciliation. Behold, Allah is indeed All-Knowing, Well-Acquainted with all things.**﴾ (4:35)

b. When the wife does not adhere to the Islamic teachings, or is not chaste. This also applies to the husband, for the wife should seek separation from her husband if he does not adhere to the Islamic teachings or is not chaste.

c. If the husband takes an oath not to have sexual relation with his wife, and he did not approach her for more than four months. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿**Those who take an oath that they will not approach their wives shall have four months of grace; and if they go back** [on their oath] **– verily Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.**﴾ (2:226)

Ibn Umar (ﷺ) said: 'If the period expires, then the husband has either to retain his wife in a good manner or to divorce her as Allah has ordered.' (Bukhari)

2. ***Makrooh*** (i.e. blameworthy/dispraised): This is the case when the person divorces his wife without any reason. This is what Iblees tries to do, may Allah curse him. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> *'Iblis* (Satan) **places his throne on water and sends his troops. The closest** [of his troops to him] **is the one who causes trial and tempts man. As such, Satan brings that one closer to him** [in honor and respect for what he did]**. One of the members of Satan's troops would come forward and report what** [evil] **he did. Satan would comment: 'You did not do anything!' Then another one of his troops would come forward and report: "I did not leave that man** [a husband] **until I separated him from his wife." Satan would bring him closer to him** [in honor and respect] **saying: "Yes indeed. It is you** (who deserves the honor)**.'** (Muslim)

3. ***Mubaah*** (i.e. lawful): It is lawful when the wife is of bad character, although one should be patient with her if he has a child from her.

4. ***Haram*** (i.e. prohibited): If the husband divorces his wife during her menses or when she is pure, after having intercourse with her[22]. Allah (ﷻ) says:

> ﴿**O Prophet (ﷺ)! When you divorce women, divorce them with a view to the waiting-period appointed for them, and reckon the period [carefully], and fear Allah your *Rubb*.**﴾
>
> (65:1)

Ibn Umar (رضي الله عنه) divorced his wife while she was in her menses, so Umar (رضي الله عنه) asked the Messenger (ﷺ) about it, and he (ﷺ) said:

> **'Order him** (your son) **to take her back and keep her till she is pure** [from her menses] **and then to wait till she gets her next period and becomes pure once again, whereupon, if he wishes to keep her, he can do so, and if he wishes to**

[22] It is also prohibited for a man to divorce his wife by uttering three divorces in one sitting. **(AM)**

divorce her he can divorce her before having sexual intercourse with her; and that is the *iddah* (prescribed period) **which Allah has fixed for the women meant to be divorced.**' (Bukhari)



Khul'[23] in Islam

If marital life is not built on love, harmony and good companionship between husband and wife, it would become a misery and ruin. In this case, Islam has instructed that the spouses bear patiently. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿**And live with them honorably. If you dislike them, it may be that you dislike a thing and Allah brings through it a great deal of good.**﴾ (4:19)

If the condition becomes unbearable, and the husband cannot stand his wife, he may divorce her; but, if the wife cannot bear her husband, it is lawful for her to ask for *Khul'* (instant divorce). In this case, she must return to him the *Mahr* (dowry) she took, at which, the marital relation ends. This is a sign of complete justice in Islam; the husband gave the *Mahr* (dowry) to his wife, and took care of all marital costs. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿**And it is not lawful for you** [men] **to take back** [from your wives] **any of your *Mahr*** (dowry) **which you have given them, except when both parties fear that they would be unable to keep the limits ordained by Allah. Then if you fear that they would not be able to keep the limits ordained by Allah, then there shall be no sin upon either of them if she gives back** [the *Mahr* or a part of it] **to her husband in order to free herself** [i.e. through *al-Khul'* (instant divorce)]**.**﴾

(2:229)

Ibn Abbas (ﷺ) narrated that the wife of Thabit b. Qais came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said: 'O Messenger of Allah! I do not blame

[23] *Khul'* is the dissolution of the marriage at the wife's instance; it is also referred to as 'instant' divorce. **(AM)**

Thabit for defects in his character or his *Deen*, but I, being a Muslim, dislike behaving in an un-Islamic manner (if I remain with him)." On that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said to her: '**Will you give back the garden which your husband has given you** [as *Mahr*]?' She said: 'Yes.' Then the Prophet (ﷺ) said to Thabit, '**O Thabit! Accept your garden, and divorce her at once.**'

(Bukhari)

The goal of Islam in this is to safeguard the honor of people, and society from all evils. If a woman stays with a man she does not want (or cannot bear) or if a man stays with a woman he does not want, this may lead one of them to the unlawful, especially if they do not have a strong Islamic sense to prevent them from doing the unlawful. Allah (ﷻ) says:

> ﴿**But if they separate, Allah will provide for each of them out of His abundance. And Allah is ever All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Wise.**﴾ (4:130)



Outcome of Sexual Freedom

Islam has prohibited fornication, and it is considered among the gravest sins. Islam has also forbidden all things that lead to it. Sayyid Qutb, may Allah have mercy on him, said[24]:

'**Islam seeks to eliminate pure animalistic sexual behavior where one is unable to differentiate between one individual and another. It seeks to establish a lasting family, not a relationship which ends after the initial sexual encounter. It also seeks to establish relationships between both sexes on account of human feelings and emotions; a relationship in which the spouses' hearts, feelings and bodies come together. They live their lives together and hold similar hopes, and bear similar pains, and seek out a future together. In this atmosphere, the new generation is raised, under the guardianship of both parents, and in an appropriate manner.**

In relation to this, there is a grave punishment for fornication in Islam, and it is described as an animalistic relapse, which effaces all these meanings, and goals [mentioned above] **and transforms a human into an animal… he would not differentiate between one woman and another, nor would a woman differentiate between one man and another. All a person hopes for is to fulfill his sexual desire. Even if he does differentiate between one and another, no goodness would result from this relation, and he may not be trusted or charged with the betterment of his (nation); no offspring or true emotions would result. True emotions have a lasting effect; this is the difference**

[24] *Fee Dhilaal al-Qur'an* (In the Shade of the Qur'an)

between lusts, passions and true emotions. Many do not differentiate between these two things, and are confused in this regard. What many consider emotion is actually an animalistic passion! Islam does not bar one from expressing his natural emotions nor regard them as lowly behavior. Islam only regulates, purifies and elevates it from animalistic lusts. Fornication, and in particular, harlotry holds no such values, and is very distant from all feelings, emotions and ethical manners and sense of belonging and relationship. Islam regards harlotry as the filthiest act in a human society. This practice would degrade man and equate him with an animal. In fact, there are many animals that live a decent and organized social life, far from the problems that arise from harlotry in some societies.'

We will list some of the problems and evils that result from the spread of fornication within a society; and of these evils are the following:

1. **Spread of fatal disease** that not only harms the individual, rather, the entire society. Allah (ﷻ) says:

> ﴿**And come not near to unlawful sex[25]. Verily it is a great sin, and an evil way** [that leads one to Hell, unless Allah forgives him]**.**﴾ (17:32)

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> '**O *Muhajireen* I seek refuge with Allah that you witness or are tried with five things.**

[25] The Arabic word for 'unlawful sex' is '*zina*'. It signifies all sexual intercourse between a man and a woman who are not husband and wife; therefore, it denotes both 'adultery' and 'fornication'. (AM)

Unlawful sex does not become apparent among a people, except sicknesses and diseases which were not known previously spread [among them]**.**

A people would not cheat in selling weighed goods, except that they would be punished with famine and drought, tightness in provisions, and a ruler who oppresses them.

A people would not prevent giving out *Zakah*, except they would be prevented rain; and had it not been for the animals they would not have received rain.

A people would not break the pledge of Allah and his Messenger (ﷺ) except that their outside enemies would gain the upper hand over them, and take from them some of what they previously had controlled.
If the rulers do not rule by the Book of Allah their efforts would be spent fighting and quarrelling with each other.

(Haakim)

Doing evil takes away one's honor and pride, and transforms him into an animal whose goal is to fulfill his desires. He inherits poverty, for he spends his money to fulfill his illegal lusts and desires. It causes one to feel great remorse in this life, and makes him liable for punishment in Hell-Fire. It also shortens one's life, for doing these evils are unhealthy and would cause sicknesses in one's body, which would (possibly) lead to his death.

2. **Illegitimate children** proliferate in society. Such children are deprived of the normal care and custody of real loving parents. As a result, these children lack the proper guidance and direction in their lives. No one, other than the real parents, can offer an honest, truthful, and meaningful guidance to a child; consequently, these children would grow up holding the rest of society in contempt. Anna Freud, in her book *Children without*

Families, comments on the psychological disorders that cannot be corrected by a psychiatric specialist except with great difficulties.

3. **Psychological disorders:** Unlawful sexual relationships lead to many psychological diseases and disorders. People who practice and maintain such unlawful relationships develop unease, lack of personal happiness and satisfaction, inferiority complex, and guilt. Allah (ﷻ) says:

> ﴿**And among His signs is this, that He created for you wives from among yourselves, that you may find repose in them, and He has put between you affection and mercy. Verily, in that are indeed signs for a people who reflect.**﴾
>
> (30:21)

4. **Sexual confusion** leads to moral confusion in society. It is a well-established fact that money easily lures people to do evil. Money also enables a person to get all that he likes in terms of pleasures and satisfaction. Thus, if those who are practicing unlawful pleasures lack the needed funds, they may commit any type of crime to satisfy their needs. Such individuals may steal, cheat, molest, rape, lie, deceive, or bribe to get what they want. They do not care where or how they get the needed funds, even if this is on the account of others.

5. **The punishment of Allah** descends upon communities wherein adultery and fornication are prevalent. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> '**My Ummah will be in a** [continuous] **state of good affairs as long as illegitimate children do not become apparent within society. If this happens, the punishment of Allah would be imminent.**' (Ahmed & Saheeh at-Targhib wat-Tarhib)



Conclusion

We have presented in this book some points regarding the Islamic perspective on sex. We hope this booklet will aid you in understanding this important aspect of human life, and the Islamic method in regulating and elevating it, such that it is regarded as an act of worship, by which a Muslim receives reward. Furthermore, we hope that this book will lead one to learning more about Islam which has a reference to everything a Muslim does in his private and public life. If a Muslim seriously seeks the reward of Allah, his rewards would not end with his death; he receives reward even after his death. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> '**When the son of Adam dies, his deeds cease except from three sources; continuous charity, beneficial knowledge** [he left] **or a pious child who supplicates Allah for him.**'
>
> (Muslim)

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> '**Whoever calls people to guidance, he receives reward similar to the rewards of those who follow it, while their rewards would not diminish. Whoever calls people to an evil, he receives the sin of it and sin similar to those who follow him in that evil, while their sins would not diminish.**' (Muslim)

An evidence which proves that Islam has a reference to everything no matter how minute it may seem, as observed from the Hadeeth of Salman (رضي الله عنه), who said:

The polytheists said to us, '**I see that your companion** [i.e. the Messenger of Allah ﷺ] **has even taught you how to relieve yourselves!**' Salman said: '**Yes! Of course, he forbids that one**

of us use his right hand to purify himself, and that we face the Qiblah while doing so. He also forbids us to use bones or dung to purify ourselves. He also said: 'Let not one of you purify himself with less than three stones.' (Muslim)

Dr. Hopkins, the Professor of Philosophy in Harvard University, in his book "*The Spirit of International Policy*":

'The progress and development of the Islamic countries is not by following the Western styles, which claim that religion has no say over the daily life of the individual, the laws and the political system. Man must find in the religion a source for growth and progress. At times, some people wonder whether Islam is capable of generating new ideas and issue independent rulings that coincide with the requirements of the modern life. The response to this is: "Yes. Islam is internally ready to grow, or rather one may say, Islam is better than many other similar systems in its ability to develop. Nevertheless, the difficulty is not in the ability of the religion of Islam because of the lack of means, but rather because of the lack of inclination and desire to use them. I do feel that I can rightly decide that Islam possesses all the necessary requirements for success".'

What a great *Deen* Islam is! It gives guidance to man through every stage in his life, and organizes all his affairs! A *Deen* with such qualities should be upheld and strictly adhered to by all Muslims. They should call people to it, so that they can enjoy their lives.

Non-Muslims should study Islam while leaving aside all preconceived notions. They should be informed of its merits and virtues, and beautiful aspects. Islam is the key to goodness and rids society of all evils. It contains all the answers to

problems mankind faces today. The problem is that many Muslims do not apply or adhere to its teachings due to the fact that they follow their whims and desires, or due to personal advantages, wherein one tries to gain materialistically even if it means cheating others.

الحمد لله رب العالمين حمداً كثيراً طيباً

وصلى الله على نبينا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه وسلم

All Praise is due to Allah alone, the *Rubb* of the Worlds

And may Allah exalt the mention of His Prophet and his household and render him safe from every derogatory thing

If you would like to receive more information about Islam, do not hesitate to contact us:

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www.islam-guide.com
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Glossary

1. Aqeedah: Creed.

2. Deen: a way of life, which is both private and public. It is an inclusive term meaning: acts of worship, political practice, and a detailed code of conduct, including hygiene or etiquette matters.

٣. Fitnah: Trial, strife and tribulation.

٤. Hadeeth: Prophetic Tradition.

٥. Hukm: Ruling.

٦. Iman: Belief.

٧. Jannah: This is the Heavenly Abode or Heavenly Gardens which Allah grants the pious slaves in the Hereafter. It is mistranslated as 'Paradise'.

٨. Kufr: Disbelief.

٩. *Nafl*: Supererogatory acts of worship.

١٠. Rubb: means the Creator, the Fashioner, the Provider, the One upon Whom all creatures depend for their means of subsistence, and the One Who gives life and causes death.

11. Shaitan: Satan.

12. Shari'ah: Islamic Jurisprudential Law.

13. Shirk: Associating partners with Allah.

14. Sunnah: Has more than one meaning. It may refer to:

a. Prophetic Traditions.

b. Rulings; i.e. it would then mean that the act is endorsed by the *Sunnah*.

15. Taqwah: Piety.

16. Ummah: Nation.



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