

Safeguarding the Husband's Chastity: A Marital Right and a Shariah Obligation

(Translated)

Amidst the global dominance of Western civilization and the influence of its deviant ideas on the Islamic Ummah, various social ills have emerged among Muslims. Behavioral deviations have spread, alongside a reluctance to adhere to Shariah rulings and the adoption of Western perspectives regarding social life and the relationship between men and women. One such instance is the adoption of the view that polygyny (marriage to more than one wife) is objectionable—even if people only voice this disapproval without acting upon it, as the general Muslim public dares not explicitly reject a Shariah ruling established by clear, definitively transmitted (mutawatir) Shariah texts.

Among these imported Western concepts is the notion regarding a wife safeguarding her husband's chastity, and vice versa. The West often views this matter either as a personal interest for which the other party must pay a price—frequently a material one—or as a favor bestowed by one spouse upon the other. Regrettably, this concept has permeated Muslim society; it is often treated as a right to be claimed rather than an obligation to be fulfilled. It is therefore essential to highlight what the true Deen of Allah prescribes in this important regard, bearing in mind that there is no place for bashfulness when it comes to matters of Deen.

First: Islam establishes marital life upon the foundations of tranquility, affection, and mercy. It assigns Shariah rights and Shariah obligations to both spouses to preserve this sacred bond and ensure family stability. Among the rights affirmed by Shariah is the husband's right to have his wife safeguard his chastity, respond to his legitimate needs, strive to bring him happiness, and protect him from the causes of temptation and moral deviation. Thus, safeguarding the husband's chastity is neither a trivial matter in marital life nor merely a voluntary favor from the wife. Instead, it is a requirement of being a good wife and a manifestation of living together in kindness and honor. Shariah texts affirm that it is a wife's obligation not to reject her husband regarding marital intimacy and to strive earnestly to please him—within the bounds of marital rights established by Shariah—even if she finds it burdensome at times. Abu Hurairah (ra) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, «إِذَا دَعَا الرَّجُلُ امْرَأَتَهُ إِلَى فِرَاشِهِ فَأَبَتْ فَبَاتَ غَضَبًا عَلَيْهِا لَعَنَتُهَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ حَتَّى تُصْبِحَ» **"If a man calls his wife to his bed and she refuses, and he spends the night angry with her, the angels curse her until morning."** (Reported by Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

Secondly: the matter goes beyond the mere fulfillment of the Shariah obligation; a wife who treats her husband well and seeks to please him earns a great reward. This is evident in the hadith concerning the female Companion Asma bint Yazid al-Ansariyyah (ra), who came representing the women to ask the Prophet (saw) about their reward compared to the deeds performed by men—such as Salah of Jumu'ah, Salah in congregation, Jihad, Hajj, and the like. The Prophet (saw) said to her, «أَنْصُرِي أَيْتُهَا الْمَرْأَةُ، وَأَعْلِمِي مَنْ خَلْفَكَ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ أَنَّ حُسْنَ تَبَعْلٍ إِذَا كَانَ» **"Go back, O woman, and inform the women behind you that a wife's excellent treatment of her husband, her seeking of his pleasure, and her compliance with his wishes are equivalent to all of that."** Thus, the believing wife does not view satisfying her husband's intimate needs as a burden or a concession; rather, she sees it as a means of drawing closer to Allah (swt) and a righteous deed that helps safeguard herself, her husband, and her home. The more she fulfills this right

with willingness, kindness, and affection, the more perfectly she embodies the concept of ma'ruf (good conduct) and the greater her reward becomes. Conversely, a wife's refusal to satisfy her husband's intimate needs without a valid Shariah excuse—or her neglect of this right and failure to fulfill it in a manner that brings him satisfaction and peace of mind—constitutes a failure to uphold a significant marital obligation. Shariah Law classifies this as a form of nushuz (marital disobedience), if the refusal is deliberate and involves a persistent denial of the husband's Shariah right.

Thirdly: the impact of this failure is not limited to the husband alone; it extends to the entire marital relationship. It can breed coldness and aversion, sow the seeds of conflict, and weaken the affection that Allah (swt) established as the foundation of life between spouses. Often, this underlying cause goes unmentioned during disputes or divorce proceedings; observers may mistakenly attribute the conflict to other issues—specifically those voiced during mediation or before a judge. Shariah Law emphasizes the preservation of this right, viewing it as essential for safeguarding the family and closing the door to the widespread temptations prevalent in the world today—temptations that have contributed to rising divorce rates.

Fourthly: while the husband's right to intimate fulfillment is affirmed, the marital relationship cannot be built merely on one party demanding their Shariah rights while neglecting the rights of the other. The husband has a Shariah obligation to provide financial support, clothing, housing, care, and protection; he is also commanded to treat his wife with kindness, gentleness, and compassion. A Muslim household cannot thrive through coercion or coldness; rather, it flourishes when both spouses strive to fulfill their respective Shariah obligations and when each views the other's happiness and contentment as an act of obedience to Allah (swt). In this way, married life transforms into a source of tranquility, mercy, and affection, and the mutual fulfillment of intimate needs becomes a fortress for the family and a path to divine reward. Finally, some might consider discussing this matter a breach of modesty; however, as previously mentioned, there is no place for false modesty in matters of Deen—especially when the issue involves the potential destruction of the family and a grave sin befalling one of the spouses. This is particularly relevant given the prevalence of immodesty, vice, and pornography. These factors make the mutual obligation of spouses to satisfy one another's needs—thereby preserving chastity—even more critical; neglecting this Shariah obligation is a grave sin, as it can drive a husband or wife toward vice, causing immorality to spread among the believers, incurring sin for both parties, and leading to the disintegration of the family. Therefore, this issue must be treated with the seriousness it deserves, rather than being mocked, trivialized, or dismissed as a peripheral matter. Allah (swt) said, **﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُحِبُّونَ أَنْ تَشِيعَ الْفَاحِشَةُ فِي الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ ۖ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ ۗ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُحِبُّونَ أَنْ تَشِيعَ الْفَاحِشَةُ فِي الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ﴾** “Indeed, those who like that immorality should be spread among those who have believed will have a painful punishment in this world and the Hereafter; and Allah knows and you do not know.” [TMQ Surah An-Nur: 19].

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by
Bilal Al-Muhajir – Wilayah Pakistan