

وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الزِّنَا

”And do not come close to *zinā*”

(Al-Isrā 17:32)

An open letter to the Muslim brothers and sisters regarding the mixing of genders and activities – in real life and on social media!

Introduction

In the Name of Allāh the Most Merciful, the Most Beneficent. And may the peace and abundant blessings of Allāh be upon the pure Messenger of Allāh, Muhammad ibn ‘Abdillāh – whose entire lineage was free from *zinā* – and upon his family, companions and those who follow him until the Day of Judgment. And thereafter:

The mixing of genders have become very common in the time that we live in. The Muslim and Muslimah are therefore obliged to do their very best in staying away from interacting with the opposite gender as much as it is possible and refraining from doing anything which can lead to *zinā*. Unfortunately – and the subject of this text are those people who entered into the religion of Islām – there are still those men and women who do not comply with the borders of Allāh when it comes to *zinā*. Some allow mixing between the genders without any need for this, some put their pictures on the internet for full display of everyone and some even speak privately directly with the opposite gender which are not a *mahram* to them without a third person being present. It is as if the people have forgotten that *zinā* is not merely illegal sexual intercourse. Did they not listen to the words of Allāh – the Exalted – when He said:

وَلَا تَقْرُبُوا الزِّنَا إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا

“And do not come close to *zinā* (unlawful sexual intercourse). Verily, it is an immorality and an evil way.” (Al-Isrā 17:32)

As-Sa’dī – *rahimahullāh* – said in his *tafsīr* of the verse:

وَالنَّهْيُ عَنْ قُرْبَانِهِ أَتْلَعُ مِنَ النَّهْيِ عَنْ مُجَرَّدِ فِعْلِهِ لِأَنَّ ذَلِكَ يَشْمَلُ النَّهْيَ عَنْ جَمِيعِ مُقَدِّمَاتِهِ وَدَوَائِعِهِ فَإِنَّ " مَنْ حَامَ حَوْلَ الْحِمَى يُوشِكُ أَنْ يَفْعَ فِيهِ " خُصُوصًا هَذَا الْأَمْرَ الَّذِي فِي كَثِيرٍ مِنَ النَّفُوسِ أَقْوَى دَاعٍ إِلَيْهِ .

“And the prohibition of coming close to it, is more clear that the prohibition of merely doing it, because this includes the prohibition of everything which leads to it and calls for it. Because verily: ‘Whoever circles around a protected place he will be on the verge of falling into it.’ Especially this matter where there in many souls are a stronger caller towards it.”

(Tafsīr As-Sa’dī – Sūrah Al-Isrā)

And the Prophet (*sallAllāhu alayhi wa sallam*) also made clear that *zinā* is not only illegal sexual intercourse when he (*sallAllāhu alayhi wa sallam*) said:

كُلُّ ابْنِ آدَمَ لَهُ حَظُّهُ مِنَ الزِّنَا ، فَرْنَا الْعَيْنَيْنِ النَّظْرَ ، وَرْنَا الْيَدَيْنِ الْبَطْشَ ، وَرْنَا الرَّجْلَيْنِ الْمَشْيَ ، وَرْنَا الْفَمَ الْقُبْلَ ، وَالْقَلْبَ يَهْوَى وَيَتَمَنَّى ، وَيُصَدِّقُ ذَلِكَ أَوْ يُكَذِّبُهُ الْفَرْجُ

“Every son of Adam has his share of zinā. The zinā of the two eyes is looking (at what is forbidden), the zinā of the two hands is grabbing (what is forbidden), the zinā of the two feet is walking (towards what is forbidden) and the zinā of the mouth is kissing. The heart longs for and hopes while the private parts rejects this or confirms it.”

(Imām Ahmad – Sahīh on the conditions of Muslim)

So do all these evidences not include speaking with a non-*mahram* in private – whether it be in real life or on social media? And do they not include looking at the opposite gender with desire – whether it be in real life or on social media? And do they not include the free mixing with the opposite gender with no necessity for this – whether it be in real life or on social media? There is no doubt that these evidences include all this along with the fact that they clarify the element of sin in all of the mentioned deeds.

The sane Muslim and Muslimah wants a righteous spouse to build his or her family with. But what many people has forgotten is, that if they themselves indulge in forbidden things, then Allāh might give them a spouse which is equal to the level of piety and purity – or disobedience and wickedness – that they themselves are on. This is according to one narration regarding the words of Allāh – the Exalted – where He said:

الْحَبِيبَاتُ لِلْحَبِيبِينَ وَالْحَبِيبُونَ لِلْحَبِيبَاتِ وَالطَّيِّبَاتُ لِلطَّيِّبِينَ وَالطَّيِّبُونَ لِلطَّيِّبَاتِ

“The bad women for the bad men (or bad statements are for bad people) and the bad men are for the bad women (or bad people for bad statements). And the good women for the good men (or good statements are for good people) and the good men are for the good women (or good people for good statements).” (An-Nūr 24:26)

Ibn Kathīr – *rahimahullāh* – said in his *tafsīr* of the verse:

وَقَالَ عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنُ زَيْدٍ بْنُ أَسْلَمَ: الْحَبِيبَاتُ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ لِلْحَبِيبِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ ، وَالْحَبِيبُونَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ لِلْحَبِيبَاتِ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ ، وَالطَّيِّبَاتُ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ لِلطَّيِّبِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ ، وَالطَّيِّبُونَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ لِلطَّيِّبَاتِ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ .

وَهَذَا - أَيْضًا - يَرْجِعُ إِلَى مَا قَالَهُ أَوْلَايَاكَ بِاللَّازِمِ ، أَيْ : مَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَائِشَةَ زَوْجَةً لِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِلَّا وَهِيَ طَيِّبَةٌ؛ لِأَنَّهُ أَطْيَبُ مِنْ كُلِّ طَيِّبٍ مِنَ الْبَشَرِ ، وَلَوْ كَانَتْ خَبِيثَةً لَمَا صَلَحَتْ لَهُ ، لَا شَرْعًا وَلَا قَدَرًا؛

“And ‘Abdur-Rahmān ibn Zayd ibn Al-Aslam said: The dirty of the women for the dirty of the men, and the dirty of the men for the dirty of the women. And the good of the women for the good of the men, and the good of the men for the good of the women.

And this – also – returns to what these (mufasssirūn) have said with necessity, that: Allāh would never make ‘Āishah the wife of the Prophet (sallAllāhu alayhi wa sallam) except if she was good (and pure). Because he is better than all good of the people. And if ‘Āishah was dirty (and unpure) she would not have been suitable for him, not in the Islamic Law nor in the qadr (decree).”

(Tafsīr ibn Kathir – Sūrah An-Nūr)

Based upon this we say, that whoever thinks – man or woman – that they can act immorally and thereafter acquire themselves a righteous spouse – before having made *taubah* (repentance) from their immorality and not returned back to it – then this person is disillusioned and has fallen in the trap of shaytān – may the curse of Allāh be upon him.

Whoever begins their search for a spouse in a *halāl* (permitted, allowed) way, and puts his trust in Allāh, then Allāh do not forsake the believing men and woman even for a blink of an eye.

وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا (2) وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ

“And whoever fears Allāh then He will make for him a way out. And He will provide for him from where he does not expect. And whoever puts his trust in Allah then He is sufficient for him.” (At-Talāq 65:2-3)

And whoever begins their search for a spouse in *harām* (prohibited, forbidden), then let them blame no-one but themselves when they find themselves drowning in problems and regret.

We ask Allāh for strength to realize our mistakes and to listen to the advice and follow the best thereof. Verily is Allāh Oft-Forgiving for those who turn to Him in repentance.

To my brothers who commit immoralities

As-Salāmu ‘Alaykum

My brothers, do you not know that because of you, a Muslim father, brother or *walī* cannot feel secure regarding those in his care? Because of you an honest man who seeks to get married should fear if the *muwahhidah* he is asking for has perhaps spoken with another man? Do you not know that you are the main reason for *fasād* spreading among the Muslims? And do you not fear what punishment – either in *dunyā* or *ākhirah* – that Allāh might have in store for you for the honors of other Muslims you have violated by speaking with, looking at and mixing freely with the opposite gender in a way which is forbidden?

You must realize that your situation is one of two – if you flee from one of them you will reach the other.

(1) Either you speak with other women and look at them while not allowing this for your own mother, sister or other female relatives – this makes you a person who possesses traits of *nifāq* (hypocrisy). Allāh – the Exalted – has already addressed you in this issue, saying:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ (2) كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ﴾

“O you who believe! Why do you say that which you do not do yourselves? Most hateful with Allāh is, that you say that which you do not do yourselves.” (As-Saff 61:2-3)

As-Sa’dī – *rahimahullah* – said in his *tafsīr* of the verse:

أي: لِمَ تَقُولُونَ الْحَيْرَ وَتَحْتُونَ عَلَيْهِ، وَرَبَّمَا مَدَّحْتُمْ بِهِ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَفْعَلُونَهُ، وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الشَّرِّ وَرَبَّمَا نَزَّهْتُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ عَنْهُ، وَأَنْتُمْ مُتَلَوِّثُونَ مُتَصِفُونَ بِهِ. فَهَلْ تَلِيْقُ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ هَذِهِ الْحَالَةُ الدَّمِيمَةُ؟ أَمْ مِنْ أَكْبَرِ الْمَقْتِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ يَقُولَ الْعَبْدُ مَا لَا يَفْعَلُ؟ وَهَذَا يَنْبَغِي لِلْأَمْرِ بِالْخَيْرِ أَنْ يَكُونَ أَوَّلَ النَّاسِ إِلَيْهِ مُبَادَرَةً، وَلِلنَّاهِي عَنِ الشَّرِّ أَنْ يَكُونَ أَبْعَدَ النَّاسِ عَنْهُ، قَالَ تَعَالَى:

“This means: Why do you say that which is good and encourage towards it, and perhaps you pride yourselves with this while you (actually) do not do it yourself. And you forbid the evil and perhaps you deem yourselves above it while you are soaked in it and described with it. So is this criticized situation suitable for the believers? Or is it among the most hateful with Allāh that the slave says what he himself do not do? Due to this the one who invites towards the good should be the first of people to take initiative towards it, and for the one who forbids the evil that he among the people is furthest away from it. The Exalted said:

﴿ أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴾

“Do you order the people towards righteousness and forget yourselves, while you recite the Scripture? Then will you not reason?” (Al-Baqarah 2:44)”

(Tafsir As-Sa’di – Sūrah As-Saff)

And these words are especially suitable for you my brother who post religious quotes and pictures on social media while priding yourself with being a caller towards good and a forbiddener of evil, but privately you chat with women and look at their photos – perhaps even not with the intention of marrying in the end. If you are capable of contacting the sister directly then you are also capable of contacting her *walī*. And if your intentions is purely for marriage then you know that a valid marriage can never take place except with the presence and accept of her *walī*, so why not go to him directly?

The Prophet (*sallAllāhu alayhi wa sallam*) said:

لَا نِكَاحَ إِلَّا بِوَلِيٍّ

“There is no nikāh (marriage) except with a walī.”

(Abu Dawūd, At-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah – Classified as Sahīh)

So in reality by speaking to her directly you are disclosing your bad intention. A good and pure intention is followed by good and pure actions. And good and pure actions are only those who are in accordance with the Qurān and Sunnah. So ponder over your situation compared to the words of the Messenger (*sallAllāhu alayhi wa sallam*) when he said:

مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلَا يَخْلُونَ بِامْرَأَةٍ لَيْسَ مَعَهَا ذُو مَحْرَمٍ مِنْهَا ، فَإِنَّ ثَالِثَهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ

“Whoever believes in Allāh and the Last Day, then let him not under any circumstances be alone with a woman who do not have with her someone who is her mahram. Because verily the shaytān is the third among them.”

(Narrated by Ahmad – Classified Sahīh by Al-Hākim and Adh-Dhahabī agreed with him)

And you know very well – my dear brother – that chatting online in private can be just as harmful and encouraging towards evil, as being alone with someone in real life.

(2) The other situation you may be in is, that you speak with women and look at them while not caring if anyone does the same to your mother or sister or other female relatives – this makes you a *dayyūth*. The Prophet (*sallAllāhu alayhi wa sallam*) said:

ثَلَاثَةٌ قَدْ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْجَنَّةَ مُدْمِنُ الْخَمْرِ وَالْعَاقُ وَالَّذِي يُقْرِ فِي أَهْلِهِ الْحَبْثَ

“Allāh has verily forbidden the paradise for three people. The habitual drunkard, the disobedient (toward his parents) and the the dayyūth who acknowledges immorality for his family.”

(Ahmad and An-Nisāi)

And the Prophet (*sallAllāhu alayhi wa sallam*) also said:

ثَلَاثَةٌ لَا يَنْظُرُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ إِلَيْهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ الْعَاقُ لِوَالِدَيْهِ وَالْمَرْأَةُ الْمُتَرَجِّلَةُ وَالَّذِي يُقْرِ فِي أَهْلِهِ الْحَبْثَ

“Allāh – the Mighty and Majestic – will not look at three persons on the Day of Judgment. The disobedient to his parents, the woman who imitates men and the dayyūth.”

(Sunan An-Nisāi As-Sughrā)

Ibn Taymiyyah – *rahimahullāh* – said:

والدبوث: الذي لا غيرة له

“And ad-dayyūth is the one who has no ghīrah (protective jealousy).”

(Majmū’ Al-Fatāwā 32/141)

And your fundamental problem is, that you have not acted upon the words of Allāh – the Exalted – when He said:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلَائِكَةٌ غِلَاظٌ شِدَادٌ لَا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ﴾

“O you who believe! Ward off from yourselves and your families a Fire, whose fuel is men and stones, over which are (appointed) angels stern and severe, who do not disobey Allāh in what he orders them, but they do that which they are commanded.”

(At-Tahrīm 66:6)

And when you don't find this warning and recommendation relevant for yourself, naturally you don't consider it relevant to others as well.

Have you not thought of the words of the Prophet (sallAllāhu alayhi wa sallam) to a young man who came to him and asked him to allow zinā for him? While the other people rebuked him, the Prophet made sure to teach him and all of us a lesson; that zinā is not only a harm to ourselves, rather for the entire society and it violates the honor of our brothers and sisters. Abu Umāmah – radiAllāhu 'anhu – narrates:

إِنَّ فَتًى شَابًّا أَتَى النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ائْذَنْ لِي بِالزَّيْنَةِ فَأَقْبَلَ الْقَوْمُ عَلَيْهِ فَرَجَرُوهُ قَالُوا مَهْ مَهْ فَقَالَ اذْنُهُ فَدَنَا مِنْهُ قَرِيبًا قَالَ فَجَلَسَ قَالَ أَتُحِبُّهُ لِأُمِّكَ قَالَ لَا وَاللَّهِ جَعَلَنِي اللَّهُ فِدَاءَكَ قَالَ وَلَا النَّاسُ يُحِبُّونَهُ لِأُمَّهَاتِهِمْ قَالَ أَتُحِبُّهُ لِابْنَتِكَ قَالَ لَا وَاللَّهِ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ جَعَلَنِي اللَّهُ فِدَاءَكَ قَالَ وَلَا النَّاسُ يُحِبُّونَهُ لِبَنَاتِهِمْ قَالَ أَتُحِبُّهُ لِأَخْتِكَ قَالَ لَا وَاللَّهِ جَعَلَنِي اللَّهُ فِدَاءَكَ قَالَ وَلَا النَّاسُ يُحِبُّونَهُ لِأَخَوَاتِهِمْ قَالَ أَتُحِبُّهُ لِعَمَّتِكَ قَالَ لَا وَاللَّهِ جَعَلَنِي اللَّهُ فِدَاءَكَ قَالَ وَلَا النَّاسُ يُحِبُّونَهُ لِعَمَّاتِهِمْ قَالَ أَتُحِبُّهُ لِخَالَاتِكَ قَالَ لَا وَاللَّهِ جَعَلَنِي اللَّهُ فِدَاءَكَ قَالَ وَلَا النَّاسُ يُحِبُّونَهُ لِخَالَاتِهِمْ قَالَ فَوَضَعَ يَدَهُ عَلَيْهِ وَقَالَ اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ ذَنْبَهُ وَطَهِّرْ قَلْبَهُ وَحَصِّنْ فَرْجَهُ فَلَمْ يَكُنْ بَعْدُ ذَلِكَ الْفَتَى يَلْتَفِتُ إِلَى شَيْءٍ

“A young man came to the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, and he said: ‘O Messenger of Allāh, give me permission to commit adultery.’ The people turned to rebuke him, saying: ‘Quiet! Quiet!’ The Prophet said: ‘Come here.’ The young man came close to him. He (Abu Umāmah) said: So he sat down. The Prophet said: ‘Would you like that for your mother?’ The man said: ‘No, by Allāh, may I be sacrificed for you.’ He answered: ‘Nor would the people like it for their mothers.’ He (The Prophet) said: ‘Would you like that for your daughter?’ The man said: ‘No, by Allāh, may I be sacrificed for you.’ He answered: ‘Nor do the people like it for their daughters.’ The Prophet said: ‘Would you like that for your sister?’ The man said: ‘No, by Allāh, may I be sacrificed for you.’ He answered: ‘Nor do the people like it for their sisters.’ The Prophet said: ‘Would you like that for your aunts?’ The man said: ‘No, by Allāh, may I be sacrificed for you.’ He answered: ‘Nor would the people like it for their aunts.’ The Prophet placed his hand on him and he said: ‘O Allāh, forgive his sins, purify his heart, and guard his chastity.’ After that, the young man never again turned to anything (sinful).”

(Musnad Imām Ahmad)

So my dear brother, where are you compared to this? Have you considered the advice of the Prophet (sallAllāhu alayhi wa sallam) to this young man and applied it upon yourself? The

obvious thing to do would be to remind him of the punishment upon himself for this evil act, but what is even worse than the punishment of one man is the violation of the honors of the Muslims and the corruption of the society.

And know, that if the warning from the Prophet (*sallAllāhu alayhi wa sallam*) towards the *dayyūth* does not have any effect on you, then you have a serious problem with your *īmān*. Because what fear of Allāh is left, if the slave does not fear the Punishment of *Al-Wāhid Al-Qahhār*? Nor does he worry that Allāh will not look at him on the Day of Judgment. We seek refuge with Allāh from this apparent loss.

No matter which way you are upon – of the two described ways – your path is an evil and immoral path. If we are not men enough to establish the borders of Allāh on earth, then who after the *Muwahhidūn* should do it?

The time for repenting and turning to Allāh has come.

To my sisters who commit immoralities

As-Salāmu 'Alaykunna

You – the *Muwahhidāt* of today – have all been chosen by Allāh along with all *Muwahhidūn*. Allāh has chosen us to accept this religion and follow it and represent it to the world. And have the sisters read what the first thing Allāh said about the best of all women when He chose her among all other women? He – the Exalted – said:

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَا مَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاكِ وَطَهَّرَكِ وَاصْطَفَاكِ عَلَى نِسَاءِ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

“And when the angels said: ‘O Maryam! Verily, Allāh has chosen you and purified you, and chosen you above the women of the ‘ālamīn (mankind and jinn).” (Āli ‘Imrān 3:42)

So Allāh chose her and purified her, because it is only suitable that those whom Allāh chose are purified and clean, both from *shirk* and *kufr* but also from immoralities and sin. Thereby we can see that when Allāh chooses us we must also purify ourselves.

From studying the Qurān we learn that those women mentioned in the Qurān – as positive examples – were purified women who possessed the quality of *hayā* (shyness). Perhaps the sisters have neglected to study the women mentioned in the Qurān, and the women mentioned in the *sīrah* and the women who were mentioned as good examples from the *salaf*? Maryam – the mother of ‘Īsā (*‘alayhimā as-salām*) – was a young unmarried woman who had never been touched by a man. And what did she say when Jibrīl appeared before her in the form of a beautiful man?

﴿فَاتَّخَذَتْ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ حِجَابًا فَأَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهَا رُوحَنَا فَتَمَثَّلَ لَهَا بَشَرًا سَوِيًّا (17) قَالَتْ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ مِنْكَ﴾

﴿إِنْ كُنْتُ نَقِيًّا﴾

“She placed a screen (to screen herself) from them; then We sent to her Our Ruh (Jibril), and he appeared before her in the form of a man in all respects. She said: ‘Verily! I seek refuge with the Most Beneficent (Allāh) from you, if you do fear Allāh.’” (Maryam 19:18)

At-Tabarī – *rahimahullāh* – mentioned a narration from As-Suddī in his *tafsīr* of the verse where he said:

فَقَالَتْ : إِنِّي أَعُوذُ أَيُّهَا الرَّجُلُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ مِنْكَ ، تَقُولُ : أَسْتَجِيرُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ مِنْكَ أَنْ تَنَالَ مِنِّي مَا حَرَّمَهُ عَلَيْكَ إِنْ كُنْتُ ذَا تَقْوَى لَهُ تَتَّقِي مُحَارَمَهُ ، وَتَحْتَنِبُ مَعَاصِيَهُ ؛ لِأَنَّ مَنْ كَانَ لِلَّهِ تَقِيًّا ، فَإِنَّهُ يَحْتَنِبُ ذَلِكَ ،

“So she said: I verily seek refuge – O man – with Ar-Rahmān from you. She is saying: I seek protection with Ar-Rahmān from you that you should achieve from me what He has forbidden for you (i.e. illegal sexual intercourse), if you really are a possessor of taqwā for Him and you avoid what He has forbidden, and you keep away from sinning against Him. Because the one who has taqwā for Allāh, he verily keeps away from this.”

(Tafsīr At-Tabarī – Sūrah Maraym)

Unfortunately sisters, this is not the case for you who answer with anything else but this, when a strange man approaches you – in real life or on the internet – and he speaks with you about that which should not be said between two strange persons.

A woman should fight whatever calls her towards immorality and always try to maintain her honor and dignity, even if she does not have a Muslim *walī* or someone who is capable of keeping her under control. This is the real beauty of a woman; that she knows that Allāh is pleased with her shyness and her keeping away from strange men, and due to this – and only this – she apply the borders of Allāh upon herself even when no-one among the creation is watching.

It might happen that a sister is forced to speak with a non-*mahram* man due to a necessity. First and foremost you must strive your very best to find a righteous *walī* and to obey him when he takes care of your affairs and show patience in this, in order for you to be able to avoid direct contact with strange men. But if it is absolutely necessary that there should be any direct contact with a man then the sisters must follow the examples as found in the Qurān. Allāh – the Exalted – informs us about the two women who had some help from Prophet Mūsā (*alayhi as-salām*) with giving their flock of animals some water. He said:

﴿وَلَمَّا وَرَدَ مَاءَ مَدْيَنَ وَجَدَ عَلَيْهِ أُمَّةٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ يَسْقُونَ وَوَجَدَ مِنْ دُونِهِمُ امْرَأَتَيْنِ تَذُودَانِ قَالَ مَا خَطْبُكُمَا قَالَتَا لَا نَسْقِي حَتَّى يُصْدِرَ الرِّعَاءُ وَأَبُونَا شَيْخٌ كَبِيرٌ (23) فَسَقَى لَهُمَا ثُمَّ تَوَلَّى إِلَى الظِّلِّ فَقَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي لِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ إِلَيَّ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَقِيرٌ (24) فَجَاءَتْهُ إِحْدَاهُمَا تَمْشِي عَلَى اسْتِحْيَاءٍ قَالَتْ إِنَّ أَبِي يَدْعُوكَ لِيَجْزِيَكَ أَجْرَ مَا سَقَيْتَ لَنَا فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُ وَقَصَّ عَلَيْهِ الْقَصَصَ قَالَ لَا تَخَفْ نَجَوْتَ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾

“And when he arrived at the water 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 turned back to shade, and said: 'My Lord! Truly, I am in need of whatever good that You bestow on me!' Then one of the two women came to him, walking shyly. She said: 'Verily, my father calls you that he may reward you for having watered (our flocks) for us.'" (Al-Qasas 28:23-25)

As-Sa'di – rahimahullāh – said in his *tafsīr* of the 25th verse:

فَأَرْسَلَ أَبُوهُمَا إِحْدَاهُمَا إِلَى مُوسَى، فَجَاءَتْهُ تَمْشِي عَلَى اسْتِحْيَاءٍ وَهَذَا يُدَلُّ عَلَى كَرَمِ غُضْرِهَا، وَحُلُقِهَا الْحَسَنِ، فَإِنَّ الْحَيَاءَ مِنَ الْأَخْلَاقِ الْفَاضِلَةِ، وَخُصُوصًا فِي النِّسَاءِ

"So their father sent one of them to Mūsā. So she came to him *walking shyly*. And this shows her honorable type and her beautiful manners. Because verily is the hayā (shyness) from the excellent behavior and especially with women."

(Tafsīr As-Sa'dī – Sūrah Al-Qasas)

At-Tabarī – rahimahullāh – narrated in his *tafsīr* that 'Umar ibn Al-Khattāb (*radiAllāhu 'anhu*) said regarding the words of Allāh:

﴿فَجَاءَتْهُ إِحْدَاهُمَا تَمْشِي عَلَى اسْتِحْيَاءٍ﴾

"Then one of the two women came to him, walking shyly" (Al-Qasas 28:25)

قَالَ : لَمْ تَكُنْ سَلْفَعًا مِنَ النِّسَاءِ خَرَّاجَةً وَلَا جَاءَةً ، فَأَتَتْهُ بِيَدِهَا عَلَى وَجْهِهَا : إِنَّ أَبِي يَدْعُوكَ لِيَجْزِيَكَ أَجْرَ مَا سَقَيْتَ لَنَا

"He ('Umar) said: She was not a *salfa'* (indecent and running around) from the women who knows about everything. She said with her hand on her face (covering it): 'Verily, my father calls you that he may reward you for having watered (our flocks) for us.'"

First of all notice that Allāh – the Creators of the Heavens and the Earth – mentioned her shyness in His Book which is a *hujjah* upon all of the worlds. Thereafter notice that these women – may the sisters of today take them as an example – did not say anything except what was necessary. They did not speak with Mūsā over several days, weeks or months in private. They did not come to him both of them to invite him to their father. And they did not imply anything immoral nor show off anything of themselves and their beauty. Rather they kept every form of contact at a minimum while displaying modesty, shyness and good behavior.

Verily these are the successful women in *dunyā* and in *ākhirah*. These are the women that Allāh praise and the women which Allāh has chosen to mention in his book.

Then there are those who dress up and put on make-up when they go out, or wear revealing clothes or display pictures of themselves on the internet for the whole world to see. Have you not considered that every time a man looks at you, you carry the burden of displaying yourself and the burden of his sin for looking at you? Allāh – the Exalted – said:

﴿وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَىٰ وَأَقِمْنَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتِينَ الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِعْنَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ﴾

“And stay in your houses, and do not display yourselves like that of the times of ignorance, and perform the *Salāh*, and give the *Zakāt* and obey Allāh and His Messenger.” (Al-Ahzab 33:33)

As-Sadi – *rahimahullāh* – said in his *tafsīr* of this verse:

وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ أَيُّ: أَقْرَبْنَ فِيهَا، لِأَنَّهُ أَسْلَمَ وَأَحْفَظُ لَكُمْ، وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَى أَيُّ: لَا تُكْثِرْنَ الْخُرُوجَ مُتَجَمِّلَاتٍ أَوْ مُتَطَيِّبَاتٍ، كَعَادَةِ أَهْلِ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَى، الَّذِينَ لَا عِلْمَ عِنْدَهُمْ وَلَا دِينَ، فَكُلُّ هَذَا دَفْعٌ لِلشَّرِّ وَأَسْبَابِهِ .

“And stay in your houses. This means: Remain in them because it is safer and more protected for you. And do not display yourselves like that of the times of ignorance. This means: Do not go out a lot while you are beautified and perfumed, which is the habit of the people of the jāhiliyyah. Those who have no knowledge nor religion. All of this protects against the evil and what leads to it.”

(Tafsir As-Sa’di – Sūrah Al-Ahzāb)

We say: Just like the women are ordered to stay in their houses and only come out for a need, then likewise they should not be available for others on social media.

And the Prophet (*sallAllāhu alayhi wa sallam*) said:

صِنْفَانِ مِنْ أَهْلِ النَّارِ لَمْ أَرَهُمَا قَوْمٌ مَعَهُمْ سِيَاطٌ كَأَذْنَابِ الْبَقَرِ يَضْرِبُونَ بِهَا النَّاسَ وَنِسَاءٌ كَاسِيَاتٌ عَارِيَاتٌ مُمِيلَاتٌ مَائِلَاتٍ رُءُوسُهُنَّ كَأَسْنِمَةِ الْبُخْتِ الْمَائِلَةِ لَا يَدْخُلْنَ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَا يَخْرُجْنَ رِيحُهَا وَرِيحُهَا لِيُوجِدَ مِنْ مَسِيرَةٍ كَذَا وَكَذَا

“There are two types of the people of Hell that I have not seen yet: men with whips like the tails of cattle, with which they strike the people, and women who are clothed yet naked, walking with an enticing gait, with something on their heads that looks like the humps of camels, leaning to one side. They will never enter Paradise or even smell its fragrance, although its fragrance can be detected from such and such a distance.”

(Sahīh Muslim)

So the Messenger cursed the women who dress up when they go out and thereby they are attractive to men and a source of *fitnah* for them. The Islamic Law has called for the exact opposite by ordering the separation of men and women in all aspects. And this separation and avoiding that they should be mixed and see each other for no reason, extends in Islam to one of the most beloved acts of worship with Allāh; the prayer in congregation. The Prophet (*sallAllāhu alayhi wa sallam*) said:

حَيْرُ صُفُوفِ الرِّجَالِ أَوَّلُهَا وَشَرُّهَا آخِرُهَا وَحَيْرُ صُفُوفِ النِّسَاءِ آخِرُهَا وَشَرُّهَا أَوَّلُهَا

"The best of the rows of the men are the first of them (closest to the Imām) and the worst of them are the last. And the best rows of the women are the last (furthest from them Imām) and the worst of them are the first."

(Narrated by Muslim)

So the sisters must realize their responsibility for not adding to the corruption between the Muslims, and that they don't seek to be a *fitnah* for brothers by displaying what should only be displayed for the husband, or by accepting to speak with a non-*mahram* man. The only one whom damage is done to is yourself. Allāh – the Exalted said:

﴿وَلَا تَكْسِبُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ إِلَّا عَلَيْهَا وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُم مَّرْجِعُكُمْ﴾

"And no person earns any (sin) except against himself, and no bearer of burdens shall bear the burden of another. Then unto your Lord is your return." (Al-An'ām 6:164)

And He said:

﴿إِنْ أَحْسَنْتُمْ أَحْسَنْتُمْ لِأَنفُسِكُمْ وَإِنْ أَسَأْتُمْ فَلَهَا﴾

"If you do good, you do good for your own selves, and if you do evil then (you do it) against yourselves." (Al-Isrā 17:7)

And lastly remember, that even if you don't have anyone who cares for protecting you against immoralities, and you yourself might have become so corrupt that you yourself do not care for protecting your honor and dignity – by not indulging in what we have discussed – then Allāh cares and Allāh has *ghīrah* for His believing slaves. Al-Mughīrah (*radiAllāhu 'anhu*) narrates:

قَالَ سَعْدُ بْنُ عُبَادَةَ : لَوْ رَأَيْتُ رَجُلًا مَعَ امْرَأَتِي لَضَرَبْتُهُ بِالسَّيْفِ غَيْرُ مُصْفِحٍ عَنْهُ ، فَبَلَغَ ذَلِكَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ
عَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ : أَتَعْجَبُونَ مِنْ غَيْرَةِ سَعْدٍ ؟ فَوَ اللَّهُ لَا تَأْأَغِيرُ مِنْهُ ، وَاللَّهِ أَغْيَرُ مِنِّي ، مِنْ أَجْلِ غَيْرَةِ اللَّهِ حَرَّمَ الْفَوَاحِشَ
مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَّنَ

“Sa’d bin ‘Ubādah said: ‘If I saw a man with my wife, I would strike him (behead him) with the blade of my sword.’ These news reached Allāh’s Messenger (sallAllāhu alayhi wa sallam) who then said: ‘Are you astonished at Sa’d’s ghīrah. By Allāh, I have more ghīrah than he, and Allāh has more ghīrah than I. And because of the ghīrah of Allāh, He prohibited al-fawāhish (illegal sexual intercourse, immoral deeds etc.) done in open and in secret.’”

(Sahīh Al-Bukhārī)

So do not be neglectful towards Allāh when He is not neglectful towards you. And do not belittle having *ghīrah* (protective jealousy) for yourself when Allāh did not belittle it while He is free from having any need for us or our honor. How evil is it for a woman to display her beauty not only to the Muslim men, but also to the disbelievers who are not entitled to see even the flip flops of the Muslim women.

Verily those who forget Allāh then Allāh will forget them.

-Completed-

I ask Allāh to guide us to what He loves and is pleased with. *Allahumma Āmīn.*

Your brother,

Abu Hājar