



# *Dangers in the Home*

*By: Sheikh*

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## **In the Name of Allaah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful**

Praise be to Allaah. We praise Him and seek His help and forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allaah from the evil of our own selves and from our evil deeds. Whomsoever Allaah guides cannot be led astray, and whomsoever Allaah leaves astray cannot be guided. I bear witness that there is no god worthy of worship but Allaah alone, with no partner or associate, and I bear witness that Muhammad, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, is His slave and Messenger.

Putting things right in the home is a great trust and huge responsibility which every Muslim man and woman should undertake as Allaah The Almighty commands, by running the affairs of their homes in accordance with the rules set out by Allaah The Almighty. One of the ways of achieving this is by ridding the home of evil things.

The following discussion aims to bring to light some of the evils that actually happen in some homes and that have become tools of destruction for the nests in which the future generations of the *Ummah* (Muslim nation) are being raised. This concise paper highlights some of these evils, and explains some *Haraam* (forbidden) matters in order to caution readers about them. It is a gift to every seeker of truth who is looking for methods of change, so that he or she can implement the command of the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*: **"Whoever of you sees an evil action, let him change it with his hand [by taking action], and if he cannot, then with his tongue [by speaking out], and if he cannot, then with his heart [by feeling that it is wrong] and that is the weakest of faith."** (Reported by Muslim in his *Saheeh*, 1/69)

This discussion expands upon some forbidden or evil matters that have already been mentioned in brief in *40 Recommendations for the Muslim Home*.

## Evils in the Home

**Advice:** Beware of allowing non-*Mahram* (marriageable male) relatives to enter upon the wife in the home when the husband is absent.

Some homes are not free of the presence of relatives of the husband who are not his wife's *Mahrams* (unmarriageable male guardians). They may be living in his home with him due to particular circumstances, such as being students or single. These relatives enter the home without anyone raising an eyebrow, because they are known in the neighborhood as being relatives – brothers, nephews or uncles – of the head of the household. This relaxed attitude could generate a lot of evil which will earn the wrath of Allaah The Almighty if it is not controlled and brought within the limits set by Him. The basic principle in this matter is the *Hadeeth* (narration) of the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*: "**Beware of entering upon women.**" A man from among the *Ansaar* (Helpers) said: "O Messenger of Allaah, what do you think about the brother-in-law?" He, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: "**The brother-in-law is death!**" (Reported by al-Bukhaari, *Fat-h al-Baari*, 9/330)

An-Nawawi, may Allaah have mercy on him, said:

*"What is being referred to in this Hadeeth is the husband's relatives, apart from his father and sons. These [his father and sons] are Mahrams for his wife and can be alone with her, therefore they are not described as 'death'. What is referred to here is his [the husband's] brother, nephew, uncle and cousin, and others whom his wife would be permitted to marry if she were not already married. Usually people take the matter lightly with regard to these relatives, so a man may be alone with his brother's wife. Thus he is likened to death, indicating that he should be prevented from being alone with her even more than a stranger should."* (*Fath al-Baari*, 9/331)

The phrase 'the brother-in-law is death' has a number of meanings, including:

- The woman's being alone with her brother-in-law may lead to spiritual destruction if she commits sin
- It may lead to death if she commits the immoral act (fornication or adultery) and the punishment of stoning is carried out on her
- It may lead to the woman being destroyed if her husband leaves her because his jealousy leads him to divorce her
- It may mean, beware of being alone with a non-*Mahram* woman just as you would beware of death
- It may mean that being alone with a non-*Mahram* woman is as bad as death. It was also said that it means, let the brother-in-law die rather than be alone with a non-*Mahram* woman.

All this stems from the concern of Islam to preserve families and households, and to prevent the tools of destruction from reaching them in the first place. Having learned what the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said, what do you think now of those husbands who tell their wives:

*"If my brother comes and I am not here, let him into the sitting room", or a wife who tells a guest: "Go into the sitting room", when there is no one else present in the house?*

To those who raise the issue of trust as an excuse, saying: *"I trust my wife, and I trust my brother, or my cousin"*, we say, your trust is all well and good, and you should not be suspicious when you have no cause to be, but you should know that the *Hadeeth* of the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*: **"No man is alone with a non-Mahram woman, but the Shaytaan (Satan, the devil) is the third one present with them."** (Reported by at-Tirmithi, 1171) includes the most pious of people as well as the most corrupt. Islam does not exempt anyone from such rulings.

A small addition here is that, whilst writing these few lines, we heard about a problematic situation in which, to cut a long story short, a man married a woman and brought her to live in his family home, where she lived happily with him. Then his younger brother began to visit her when her husband was absent and address her romantically, which resulted in two things: first, she began to dislike her own husband intensely, and second, she fell in love with his brother. But she was not able to divorce her husband, nor was she able to do what she wanted with his brother. This was the grievous penalty.

This story illustrates just one level of corruption, beyond which there are many more, and which culminate in immoral actions (fornication or adultery) and the birth of illegitimate children.

**Advice:** Segregate men and women during family visits.

People are naturally gregarious and sociable; they need friends, and friendships entail visiting one another.

When there are visits between families, we should block the path of evil by preventing *Ikhtilaat* (inter-mixing between men and women). One of the indications that such inter-mixing is *Haraam* is the Qur'aanic verse (which means):

*{And when you ask them (his wives) for anything you want, ask them from behind a screen; that is purer for your hearts and for their hearts.}* [Qur'aan 33:53]

If we were to look for the evil results of inter-mixing during family visits, we would find many objectionable consequences, such as:

- In most cases the *Hijaab* (Islaamic attire) of women in these mixed gatherings is non-existent or improper, so a woman may display her beauty before someone in front of whom it is not permissible for her to uncover herself. Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): *{And tell the believing women not to reveal their adornment.}* [Qur'aan 24:31]. It may be that a woman adorns herself for strangers in a mixed gathering in a way that she never does for her own husband.

- When men see women in one gathering, this is a cause of corruption in the religion and morals, and provokes desires in a forbidden manner.
- In a mixed gathering, the husband and wife may argue with or ignore one another in an alarming fashion. A man might look or wink at another's wife, or he may laugh and joke with her, and she with him. After the couple returns home, the settling of scores would begin. The man might inquire: *"Why did you laugh at what so-and-so said, when he did not say anything funny?"* The woman would counter: *"And why did you wink at so-and-so?"* The man would retort: *"When he spoke, you understood him quickly, but you do not understand what I say at all!"* Thus they would trade accusations and the matter could end in enmity and even divorce.
- Some men and women may regret their luck in marriage, when a man compares his wife to his friend's wife, or a woman compares her husband to her friend's husband. A man may say to himself: *"So-and-so talks well and answers questions; she is well-educated and my wife is ignorant; she has no education"* and a woman may say to herself: *"So-and-so is so lucky! Her husband is smart and eloquent, and my husband is so boring and speaks without thinking!"* This spoils the marital relationship or leads to bad treatment.
- Some people may show off to one another in mixed gatherings, by pretending to have what that they do not really possess. So a man may issue instructions to his wife in front of other men and pretend that he has a strong personality, but when he is alone with her at home he is as tame as a house cat. A woman may borrow gold and wear it so that the other people see that she has such and such. However, the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"The one who shows off with something that does not belong to him is like one who wears a garment of falsehood."** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, *Fat-h Al-Baari*, 9/317)
- Late-night mixed gatherings result in wasting time, sins of the tongue, and leaving small children at home alone (so that they do not disturb their parents' evening with their cries!)
- Late-night mixed gatherings could develop to the extent of involving many kinds of major sins, such as drinking and gambling, especially among the so-called "upper classes". One of the major sins that occur during these gatherings is mimicking the *Kuffaar* (disbelievers) and imitating them in fashion trends and various customs. The Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Whoever imitates a people is one of them."** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad in *al-Musnad*, 2/50; *Saheeh al-Jaami?*, 2828, 6025)

**Advice:** Beware of the dangers of having male drivers and female servants in the home.

Striving to ward off evil is a religious duty, and closing the doors of evil and *Fitnah* (temptation) is one of the priorities of *Sharee'ah* (Islamic law). A great deal of *Fitnah* and sin has come to us through servants and drivers, but many people do not pay attention to this, and if they do notice it, they do not take it seriously. A person may be stung repeatedly from the same place, but he may not feel the pain; or he may hear of a disaster that happened near his own home, but he does not learn from it. This stems from weak faith and a failure to feel that Allaah The Almighty is near, which are failings that affect the hearts of many people in today's age. We will

briefly explain the bad effects of having servants and drivers in the home, so that it will be a reminder to the one who has the eyes to see or who wants to follow the right path in his home.

Having female servants in the home presents men, especially young men, with *Fitnah* and temptation, through their adornment and being alone with them. We hear so many stories, one after another, of some of the youth being led astray, the reason being that the servant being alone in the presence of a young man, or a young man took advantage of the fact that no one else was home and molested the servant. Some young men have told their families frankly about what happened, and the families did not respond; in other cases the family may have discovered something, but their response was bereft of any sense of honor or protective zeal. {*O Yoosuf (Joseph)! Turn away from this! (O woman!) Ask forgiveness for your sin. Verily, you were of the sinful.*} [Qur'aan 12:29]. So the fire remains close to the fuel, and the situation is left as it is, with no changes being made. It has also happened that servants have taught misbehavior to the daughters of the household.

In addition, the lady of the house neglects her duties, forgets her responsibilities and becomes accustomed to laziness; then when the servant has to leave, things become very hard indeed for her.

The children of the house would also receive a bad upbringing. Some aspects of this include:

- The children learn *Kufr* (disbelief) from *Kaafir* (disbelieving) servants, Christians, Buddhists, etc. There are children who make the sign of the cross on their heads and two sides of their chests, as they have seen a Christian woman doing when she prays, and she tells them: "*This is something sweet from Christ.*" A child may see a servant praying to a statue of Buddha, or another celebrating her people's festivals and conveying to our children her feelings of joy, so they get used to taking part in festivals of *Kufr*.
- The children are also deprived of their mother's love and care, which is an essential part of their upbringing and psychological well-being. A servant cannot make up this lack for a child who is not hers.
- The child's Arabic will be corrupted because it is mixed with foreign words, so he grows up lacking something, which will have an adverse effect on his education in school.

Some heads of households feel the financial strain of paying salaries for drivers and servants. Then there are family disputes that arise over who should pay these salaries, especially in households where the wife is employed. If the wife stayed at home instead of working outside, she would spare herself a lot of trouble. The fact of the matter is that in many cases we create trouble for ourselves, then we demand a solution, and often the solution that we come up with is far from decisive.

Getting used to having servants has created dependency and negative character traits. Some women may include having a servant as a condition in their marriage contract; others may plan on bringing their family's servant with them when they get married. Thus our daughters have lost the ability to deal independently with anything in the home, no matter how small it is.

When women brought servants into their homes, they started to have a lot of free time and did not know what to do with it. So some women began to sleep a lot, and some are never home because they are always going to gatherings here and there, where they gossip and backbite and waste their time. The result will be regret on the Day of Resurrection.

The harms of keeping servants and drivers could come to the members of the family in different ways, for example:

- They may perform witchcraft and magic, which can cause the separation of husband and wife, or cause physical harm.
- The possessions of the family may be harmed, because of theft.
- The family's reputation may be damaged, as many decent homes are turned into dens of immorality and corruption in the absence of their owners. One hears of female servants who receive men when the homeowners are absent.
- The freedom of men (those who fear Allaah) within their own homes is restricted, as is also the case for those who try to call their families to put things in order.
- Women end up being alone with drivers who are strangers (non-*Mahrams*) to them, in the house or car, and women do not refrain from going out wearing adornments and perfume in front of the drivers. They act as if he is one of their *Mahrams* or even closer, and because they go out with them so often and talk to them so much, the psychological barrier is broken down which may result in committing forbidden actions. The frequency of such incidents in our society demonstrates to those who have the eyes to see just how serious the matter is.
- Bringing servants and drivers from all sorts of *Kaafir* nations, which clearly goes against the Prophet's specific orders that *Kaafirs* should not be allowed into the Arabian Peninsula. There is absolutely no need to do this, as it is possible to bring Muslims in if there is a need for workers. Added to this is the fact that employing *Kaafirs* strengthens the economies of *Kaafir* nations, as the employees transfer their salaries to their homelands, even though Muslims should have priority in this matter. By mixing so much with these *Kaafirs*, Muslim employees can no longer make a distinction between them and Muslims, which gradually destroys the concept of *al-Walaa wal-Baraa'* (loyalty and allegiance, vs. enmity and disavowal) in their minds. Added to this is the ugly role played by some agency owners who have no fear of Allaah The Almighty, who claim that there are no Muslim employees. These people may engage in deceit and trickery, so that after a driver or servant who is described as a Muslim in official papers has arrived, the head of the household discovers that this is a lie, or the new employee may be playing a role that started in his country of origin, where the agency taught him a few Islaamic words so that he could pose as a Muslim in front of the family that employs him.
- Family breakup, due to an affair with a female servant.

Look at what really happens; think how many divorces have taken place because of servants, and how many servants have become pregnant with illegitimate children. Then ask the people

working in hospital maternity departments, or find out about police reports detailing the problems caused by illegitimate children born as a result of the temptation posed by female servants. Then try to understand the extent of the spread of venereal diseases which have been brought into our society because of that. It is then that you will understand the vicious circle we are in because of bringing female servants into our homes.

Think about the misconceptions that these servants and drivers have about Islam, when they see the behavior of those who claim to be Muslim. Ask yourself: what kind of obstacles are we placing in front of them by our own behavior? How are we preventing them from discovering the way of Allaah The Almighty by the things that we do to them? How could they possibly enter a religion when this is the state of those who claim to belong to it?

All these issues and others have led some scholars to think that it is not permissible to bring female servants into the home in the manner in which this is done nowadays, and that it is obligatory to put a stop to *Fitnah* and close the door to evil. (See the *Fatwa* of Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen on this issue)

In order to comply with the command of Allaah The Almighty (which means): *{and when you give your word, say the truth.}* [Qur'aan 6:152], we should point out the following:

**First:** we do not deny the fact that some servants and drivers are sincere Muslims, possibly more sincere than the members of the household. We have heard of a servant who keeps a *Mushaf* (hardcopy of the Qur'aan) on the shelf in the kitchen so that she can read it whenever she finishes her work, and a driver who prays *Fajr* in the mosque even before his employer does.

**Second:** we are not ignoring the real needs that people sometimes have for essential reasons, such as requiring the help of servants in a large house, or when a family has a lot of children, or when a family member is chronically ill or has disabilities, or when there is hard work that the wife cannot do on her own. But what we Muslims should ask is: who is applying Islamic conditions and taking religious precautions when bringing servants and drivers into the home? How many of those who bring drivers into the home can truly guarantee that the driver will not be alone with one of his womenfolk, or that the man will not be alone with a female servant? The employer has to tell the female servant to observe *Hijaab*, and he should not deliberately look at her adornment. If he comes home and no one is there but the servant, he should not enter. He should not accept any servants except those who are sincerely Muslim, and so on.

This is why everyone who has servants or drivers in his home should make sure that such people are there only for a legitimate need and that the Islaamic conditions are being properly fulfilled. The story of Yoosuf, may Allaah exalt his mention, contains a valuable lesson for us with regard to this matter. It clearly indicates the *Fitnah* that exists when there are servants and drivers in the house, and that evil may be initiated by members of the household, even if the servants are people who fear Allaah. Allaah The Almighty Says (what means):

{*And she, in whose house he was, sought to seduce him (to do an evil act), she closed the doors and said: 'Come on, O you!' He said: 'I seek refuge in Allaah (or Allaah forbid)!'*} [Qur'aan 12:23]

We suggest that those who complain that things are too difficult in their homes without servants do the following:

- Buy ready-made food from shops; use paper plates; use laundry services; have the house cleaned by workers who are supervised by the man of the house; ask relatives to help care for the children when necessary, such as when the wife is recovering from childbirth.
- If this is not enough, the family could seek the help of a temporary servant, under proper Islaamic conditions, and when there is no longer any need for her services she may be dismissed. However, there are still risks attached to this solution.
- It is better if the servant is paid by the hour so that she can do her job then leave the house. Whatever the case, things should be done only as they are needed.

We have discussed this matter at length because the problem is so widespread in our society. It may be different in other countries. Before closing this discussion we should mention some matters pertaining to *Taqwa* or fear of Allaah:

- 1- Everyone who has sources of *Fitnah* in his home, whether from servants or from anything else, should fear Allaah and remove them from his home.
- 2- Everyone who thinks that he is going to impose Islamic conditions when bringing a servant to his home should fear Allaah and realize that many of these conditions will become less stringent as time goes by.
- 3- Everyone who has a *Kaafir* servant in the Arabian Peninsula should present Islaam to him or her in the best possible way. If he or she becomes Muslim, all well and good, otherwise the servant should be sent back to wherever he or she came from.

We end this discussion on servants and drivers with a story that contains an important lesson about the dangers of having servants in the home, about referring to the Qur'aan and *Sunnah* (Prophetic tradition), rejecting every ruling that contradicts the *Sharee'ah*, consulting the people of knowledge and purifying the Islaamic society through application of the punishments prescribed by Allaah The Almighty.

Abu Hurayrah and Zayd ibn Khaalid, may Allaah be pleased with them, said:

*"We were with the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, when a man stood up and said: 'I urge you by Allaah to judge between us according to the Book of Allaah.' His opponent, who was more knowledgeable, stood up and said: 'Judge between us according to the Book of Allaah and give me permission to speak.' The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: 'Speak.' He said: 'This son*

of mine was employed as a servant by this man, and committed Zina (adultery) with his wife. I gave him one hundred sheep and a servant in compensation [for the damage to his honor], then I consulted some of those who have knowledge, and they told me that my son should be flogged one hundred times and exiled for a year [because he was unmarried], and that the woman should be stoned [because she was married and consented to the act].’ The Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, said: **‘By the One in Whose hand is my soul, I will judge between you according to the Book of Allaah. Take back the hundred sheep and the servant. Your son is to be flogged one hundred times and exiled for one year. O Unays, go to this man's wife tomorrow and if she confesses, then stone her.’** [Unays] went to her the next day and she confessed, so he stoned her.’” (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, *Fat-h Al-Baari*, 12/136)

Note that one of the things that must upset every Muslim who cares about the rulings of Islam is what happens in some homes, where cleaners and maintenance workers enter the presence of women when they are wearing their nightdresses and everyday clothes. Do these women think that these people are not men in front of whom Allaah The Almighty has commanded them to observe *Hijaab*? Yet another evil that is present in some homes is that non-*Mahram* men teach adolescent girls, or women teach adolescent boys without wearing *Hijaab*.

**Advice:** Expel effeminate men from your homes.

Al-Bukhaari, may Allaah have mercy on him, narrated in his *Saheeh*, in a chapter on expelling men who imitate women from homes, the *Hadeeth* of Ibn ‘Abbaas, may Allaah be pleased with him, who said: “The Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, cursed men who imitate women and women who imitate men, and said: **‘Expel them from your homes.’** The Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, expelled so and so [a man]. And ‘Umar expelled so and so [a woman].” (Reported by Al-Bukhaari in *Kitaab al-Libaas*, chapter 62, *Fat-h Al-Baari*, 10/333)

Then Al-Bukhaari, may Allaah have mercy on him, quoted the *Hadeeth* of Umm Salamah, may Allaah be pleased with her, which he narrated under the title “What is forbidden of men who imitate women entering upon women”:

“From Umm Salamah, may Allaah be pleased with her, who said that the Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, was in her house, where there was also an effeminate man, who told her brother ‘Abdullaah ibn Abi Umayyah: ‘If Allaah wills that you conquer at-Taa’if tomorrow, I will show you the daughter of Ghaylaan; she has four folds of fat in front and eight behind.’ The Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, said: **‘This person should not enter upon you.’**” (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, chapter 113, *Fat-h Al-Baari*, 9/333)

An effeminate man, or *Mukhannath*, is defined as a man who may resemble women physically, or through imitation of their movements and speech, and so on. If it is physical i.e. this is the way that he was made, then there is no blame on him, but he must try as much as he can to change this resemblance. If he is imitating women deliberately he is described as *Mukhannath*, whether he commits the evil deed (homosexual acts) or not.

The effeminate man being referred to here – who was like a servant – used to enter the houses of the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, because he was considered an old male servant who lacked vigor (Refer to the Qur'aan 24:31)

When the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, realized that this person could describe women very precisely and that he was describing a woman as having four folds of fat in front and eight behind (four on each side), he ordered that he should be thrown out and not allowed to enter his wives' apartments, because of the mischief that he could cause, such as possibly describing the women he saw to strangers, or having a bad influence on the members of the household, such as leading women to imitate men, or men to imitate women, by walking in a coquettish manner or speaking softly, or bringing about worse mischief than that.

So how about the situation nowadays, when we see many of these servants imitating the opposite sex, especially the *Kaafirs* who are living in Muslim homes and who we know for certain are having a bad influence on Muslim boys and girls. There is even a group known as 'the third sex' who wear make-up and dress in women's clothes. What a disaster this is for the *Ummah* which is supposed to be the *Ummah* of *Jihaad*!

If you want to know more about how the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, opposed this 'third sex' and how his Companions, may Allaah be pleased with them, fought with their sense of honor against such things, think about this *Hadeeth*:

Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that an effeminate man who had dyed his hands with henna (as women do) was brought to the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and it was said: "O Messenger of Allaah! This man is imitating women." So he banished him to *al-Baqee'* [as a punishment, this man was sent to an isolated place, and this was also in order to protect others] It was said: "Why do you not kill him?" He, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: "**I have been forbidden to kill those who pray.**" (Reported by Abu Daawood, 4928, and others; see *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 2502)

**Advice:** Beware of the dangers of the small screen.

Nowadays, hardly any home is free of some device that includes a screen, and very few of these devices are put to wholesome or beneficial uses. In the majority of cases, they are employed in causing harm and destruction, especially VCRs and DVD players that are used for watching films. With the arrival of satellite dishes which bring serials and programs directly into Muslim homes, and the widespread sale and exchange of movies, it has become nearly impossible to control these devices.

The impact on our *'Aqeedah* is especially damaging, as many programs may show the symbols of the *Kuffaar* and their false religious symbols, such as the cross, Buddha, their temples and idols and their gods and goddesses of love, good, evil, light, distress and rain. There are also several missionary films that call on people to venerate the religion of Christianity and become Christians. In addition, there are programs that give the impression that some created beings

could compete with Allaah The Almighty in creating and giving life and death; some of the scenes in them show people bringing the dead back to life by using a cross or a magic wand.

Entire lists can be composed of the harmful and corrupting influence of modern devices and gadgets; after thinking about them, let all those who want to earn the pleasure of Allaah The Almighty and avoid His wrath do what they can to change the situation.