

*Prohibitions that are
taken too lightly*



Prohibitions that are taken too lightly

By: *Sheikh*

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Introduction

Praise be to Allaah; we praise Him and seek His help and forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allaah from the evil of our own souls and from our evil deeds. Whomever Allaah guides will never be led astray, and whomever Allaah leaves astray, no-one will guide. I bear witness that there is no god worthy of worship but Allaah alone, with no partners or associates, and I bear witness that Muhammad, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, is His slave and Messenger.

Allaah, may He be glorified and exalted, has laid down obligations which we are not permitted to ignore, and has set limits which we are not permitted to transgress, and has set out prohibitions which we are not allowed to violate.

The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“Whatever Allaah has permitted in His Book is allowed, and whatever He has prohibited is forbidden; whatever He has remained silent about is a concession, so accept the concession of Allaah, for Allaah is never forgetful.”** Then he, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, recited the *Aayah* (verse) (what means): *{ . . . and your Lord is never forgetful }* [Qur'aan 19:64] (Reported by Al-Haakim, 2/375; classed as *Hasan* by al-Albaani in *Ghaayat al-Maraam*, p. 14)

The things which have been prohibited are the boundaries or limits set by Allaah The Almighty:

{...And whosoever transgresses the set limits of Allaah, then indeed he has wronged himself...}[Qur'aan 65:1]

Allaah The Almighty has issued a warning to the one who transgresses His set limits and violates His prohibitions, as He Says (what means): *{And whosoever disobeys Allaah and His Messenger, and transgresses His limits, He will cast him into the Fire, to abide therein; and he shall have a disgraceful torment.}* [Qur'aan 4:14]

Avoiding that which has been forbidden is a duty, because the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“Whatever you have been prohibited to do, avoid it, and whatever you have been commanded to do, do as much of it as you can.”** (Reported by Muslim, *Kitaab al-fadaa'il*, Hadeeth no. 130, Abdul-Baaqi edition)

It is well-known that some of those who follow their desires, who are weak at heart and have little knowledge, become irritated when they hear lists of prohibitions. They grumble and mutter: *“Everything is Haraam, you haven't left us anything that is not forbidden! You make our lives boring and miserable. You don't talk about anything but what is Haraam, but religion is supposed to be easy, not strict, and Allaah is Forgiving and Merciful.”*

In response to such remarks, we say:

Allaah, may He be glorified, rules as He wills and there is none to put back His judgment. He is All-Wise and Aware, and He allows whatever He wills and forbids whatever He wills, may He be glorified. One of the basic principles of our being His slaves is that we should accept whatever He decrees and submit fully to it. His rulings stem from His knowledge, wisdom and justice, and are not a matter of frivolity or foolish whims, as He Says (what means): *{And the Word of your Lord has been fulfilled in truth and in justice. None can change His words. And He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.}* [Qur'aan 6:115]

Allaah The Almighty has explained to us the governing principle behind allowing and prohibiting various things (what means):

{ . . . He allows them as lawful at-Tayyibaat [i.e., all good and lawful] as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons, foods, etc.], and prohibits them as unlawful al-Khabaa'ith }

So what is good and pure is *Halaal* (lawful), and what is evil and unclean is *Haraam* (unlawful).

The right to determine what is *Halaal* and what is *Haraam* belongs to Allaah The Almighty alone. Whoever claims this right or affirms it for someone else is a *Kaafir* (disbeliever), whose extreme *Kufr* places him beyond the pale of Islaam, as Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): *{Or have they partners with Allaah (false gods) who have instituted for them a religion which Allaah has not allowed? . . .}* [Qur'aan 42:21]

Furthermore, no one is allowed to speak about matters of *Halaal* and *Haraam* except those who have knowledge of the Qur'aan and *Sunnah* (Prophetic tradition). Allaah The Almighty has issued a stern warning to those who speak about *Halaal* and *Haraam* with no knowledge (which means): *{And say not concerning that which your tongues out forth falsely: 'This is lawful and this is forbidden,' so as to invent lies against Allaah. . . }* [Qur'aan 16:116]

Things which are definitively forbidden have been clearly stated in the Qur'aan and *Sunnah*, as Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): *{Say: 'Come, I will recite what your Lord has prohibited you from: join not anything in worship with Him; be good and dutiful to your parents; kill not your children because of poverty - We provide sustenance for you and for them; come not near to al-Fawaahish [shameful sins, illicit sexual intercourse, etc.] whether committed openly or secretly; and kill not anyone whom Allaah has forbidden, except for a just cause [according to Islaamic law]. This He has commanded you that you may understand.}* [Qur'aan 6:151]

The *Sunnah* also mentions many prohibitions; for example, the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Allaah has forbidden the sale of wine [intoxicants], dead meat, pork and idols."** (Reported by Abu Daawood, 3486; see also *Saheeh Abu Daawood*, 977). He, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, also said: **"Whatever Allaah has forbidden, its price is also forbidden."** (Reported by ad-Daaraqutni, 3/7; it is a *Saheeh Hadeeth*)

Some texts mention specific types or groups of prohibitions, such as when Allaah forbids certain types of food (which mean): *{Forbidden to you [for food] are: al-Maytah [the dead animals - cattle-beast not slaughtered], blood, the flesh of swine, and the meat of that which has been slaughtered as a sacrifice for others than Allaah, or has been slaughtered for idols, etc., or on which Allaah's name has not been mentioned while slaughtering, and that which has been killed by strangling, or by a violent blow, or by a headlong fall, or by the goring of horns - and that which has been (partly) eaten by a wild animal - unless you are able to slaughter it [before its death] - and that which is sacrificed [slaughtered] on an-Nusub [stone altars]. Forbidden [also] is to use arrows seeking luck or decision . . . }* [Qur'aan 5:3]

Allaah The Almighty has also mentioned that which is forbidden with regard to marriage, as He Says (what means): *{Forbidden to you [for marriage] are: your mothers, your daughters, your sisters, your father's sisters, your mother's sisters, your brother's daughters, your sister's daughters, your foster mother who gave you suck, your foster milk suckling sisters, your wives' mothers ... }* [Qur'aan 4:23]

Allaah The Almighty also mentions what kind of earnings are forbidden, as He Says (what means): *{... Allaah has permitted trading and forbidden Riba [usury] ... }* [Qur'aan 2:275]

Allaah, Who is Merciful towards His slaves, has permitted innumerable good things, of many kinds. He has not described the permitted things in detail because they are so many; in contrast, He has described the prohibitions in detail because they are limited, so that we will be aware of them and can avoid them. Allaah The Almighty Says (what means):

- { . . . He has explained to you in detail what is forbidden to you, except under compulsion of necessity . . . } [Qur'aan 6:119]
- {O mankind! Eat of that which is lawful and good on the earth . . . } [Qur'aan 2:168]

It is a part of His Mercy that He has made all things *Halaal* (permissible) in principle, except where there is proof or evidence (*Daleel*) that they are *Haraam* (impermissible). This is part of His generosity and bounty towards His slaves, for which we must obey Him, and give praise and thanks.

When some people hear a detailed list of the things that are *Haraam*, they become alarmed about the rules of the *Sharee'ah* (Islaamic law). This is due to their weak faith and poor understanding of Islaam. One cannot help wondering whether these people really want to be given a list of every type of thing that is *Halaal*, so that they can be convinced that Islaam is easy! Do they require us to enumerate every type of good thing so that they can rest assured that Islaam will not make their lives dreary?

Do they want to be told that the meats of camels, cattle, sheep, rabbits, deer, goats, chickens, pigeons, ducks, geese and ostriches over which the name of Allaah has been mentioned, and fish and locusts, are *Halaal*?

That vegetables, herbs, fruits and edible seeds are *Halaal*?

That water, milk, honey, oil and vinegar are *Halaal*?

That salt, seasonings and spices are *Halaal*?

That using wood, iron, sand, stones, plastic, glass and rubber is *Halaal*?

That travelling via riding-beasts, cars, trains, ships and airplanes is *Halaal*?

That using air-conditioners, fridges, washing-machines, tumble-dryers, mills, dough-mixers, meat-grinders, juicers, medical instruments, engineering tools, calculators, microscopes, telescopes, machinery for extracting water, oil and minerals, filters for purifying water, printing presses and so on is *Halaal*?

That wearing cotton, linen, wool, camel hair, fur, permitted leathers, nylon and polyester is *Halaal*?

That in principle marriage, buying, selling, sponsorship, bills of exchange, renting, professions and trades such as carpentry, metalworking, repairing machines and tending sheep are all *Halaal*?

I wonder what would happen if all this were to be explained in detail to them, as Allaah The Exalted Says (what means): *{And what is wrong with these people that they fail to understand any word?}* [Qur'aan 4:78]

As regards their claim that Islaam is easy, this is true, but they are twisting the truth to try and prove something that is false. What is meant by saying that Islaam is easy is not that it is in accordance with their desires and opinions, but that it is easy in accordance with what the *Sharee'ah* has brought. There is a huge difference between violating prohibitions by making false claims about Islaam being easy – although it is easy, beyond any doubt – and availing oneself of legitimate concessions such as being allowed to join or shorten prayers; to break one's fast when travelling; to wipe one's socks when performing *Wudhoo'* (ablutions) – for one day and one night for a person who is not travelling, and for three days and three nights in the case of travelling; to perform *Tayammum* when one is afraid to use water; to join two prayers together when one is sick or when rain is falling; to look at a non-*Mahram* woman for purposes of marriage; to have the choice, in the case of making expiation for a broken vow, between freeing a slave or feeding or clothing the poor; to eat the meat of dead animals when necessary – and other kinds of concessions allowed by the *Sharee'ah*.

In addition to the above, the Muslim should realize that one principle underlies all the prohibitions in Islaam: Allaah The Almighty is testing His slaves by means of these prohibitions, to see what they will do. One of the things that distinguishes the people of Paradise from the people of Hell is that the people of Hell indulge in the desires with which the Fire is surrounded, whereas the people of Paradise patiently endure the hardships with which the Garden is surrounded. Were it not for this test, the obedient would not be distinguished from the disobedient. People of faith look at the difficulties involved from the perspective of the reward they will earn by pleasing Allaah, so obedience becomes easy for them. The hypocrites, on the other hand, view these difficulties as a matter of pain, suffering and deprivation, so obedience becomes a heavy burden on them.

By foregoing what is prohibited, the obedient person gains much more: whoever forsakes something for the sake of Allaah, Allaah will compensate him with something better, and he will enjoy the sweet taste of faith in his heart.

This paper discusses a number of the prohibitions that have been proven in *Sharee'ah*, based on evidence from the Qur'aan and *Sunnah*. (Some scholars have grouped the prohibitions under headings such as *al-Kabaa'ir* or major sins. Among the best books on the

topic is *Tanbeeh al-Ghaafileen 'an A'maal al-Jaahileen* by Ibn al-Nahhaas ad-Dimashqi, may Allaah have mercy on him). These prohibitions include actions which are widely practiced among many Muslims. By mentioning them my intention is to correct and advise people. I ask Allaah to guide me and my Muslim brothers, and to help us to adhere to the limits which He has set and to avoid the things that He has prohibited, and to save us from our evil deeds. And Allaah is the Best to guard, and He is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy.

Shirk - associating partners with Allaah

This is the most serious of all prohibitions, according to the *Hadeeth* (narration) narrated by Abu Bakrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, who said: “*The Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: ‘Shall I not tell you of the most serious of the major sins?’ three times. We said: ‘Of course, O Messenger of Allaah!’ He, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: ‘Associating anything in worship with Allaah . . .’*” (Reported by Al-Bukhaari and Muslim; see Al-Bukhaari, no. 2511, *al-Bagha* edition)

Every other sin may be forgiven by Allaah The Almighty, apart from *Shirk*, which requires specific repentance, as Allaah Says (what means): ***{Verily, Allaah forgives not that partners should be set up with Him in worship, but He forgives except that [anything else] to whom He pleases . . .}*** [Qur'aan 4:48]

Among the forms of *Shirk* which are particularly widespread in Muslim countries are:

Grave-worship

This is the belief that dead *Awliyaa'* (“saints”) can fulfill one’s needs or help one at times of distress, and calling upon them for aid. Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): ***{And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him . . .}*** [Qur'aan 17:23]

Similarly, they call upon dead prophets, righteous people and others to intercede for them or to rescue them from some calamity, but Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): ***{Is not He [better than your gods] Who responds to the distressed one, when he calls Him, and Who removes the evil, and makes you inheritors of the earth, generations after generations? Is there any Ilaah [god] with Allaah? . . .}*** [Qur'aan 27:62]

Some of them have adopted the habit of mentioning the name of a *Shaykh* or *Waliyy* (“saint”) when they stand up, or sit down, or stumble, or encounter problems or distress, so they might say: “O Muhammad!” or “O 'Ali!” or “O Husayn!” or “O Badawi!” or “O Jeelaani!” or “O Shaathili!” or “O Rifaa'i!” - or they may call upon al-'Aydaroos or Sayyidah Zaynab or

Ibn 'Alwaan. Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): **{Verily those whom you call upon besides Allaah are slaves like you...}** [Qur'aan 7:194]

Some of those who worship graves walk around them as if in *Tawaaaf* (circumambulation), and acknowledge their corners, or touch them, kiss them, wipe their faces with their dust, prostrate towards them when they see them, or stand before them in fear and humility, praying for whatever they need of healing from some disease, or for a child, or for help with some difficulty. Sometimes they call upon the occupant of the grave, saying: "O my master, I have come to you from far away, so do not let me down." But Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): **{And who is more astray than he who invokes besides Allah those who will not respond to him until the Day of Resurrection [i.e. never], and they, of their invocation, are unaware.}** [Qur'aan 46:5]

The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Whoever dies while calling on someone else as a rival to Allaah, will enter Hell."** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, *al-Fat-h*, 8/176)

Some of them shave their heads at the graves, and some have books with titles like *Manaasik Hajj al-Mashaahid* ("The Rituals of Pilgrimage to Shrines"), '*Mashaahid*' or shrines referring to the graves or tombs of the *Awliyaa'*. Some of them believe that the *Awliyaa'* are running the affairs of the universe and that they have the power to benefit or harm. Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): **{And if Allaah touches you with hurt, there is none who can remove it but He; and if He intends any good for you, there is no one who can repel His Favor . . .}** [Qur'aan 10:107]

It is also *Shirk* to make a vow to any other than Allaah The Almighty, as is done by those who vow to bring candles or lights for the occupants of the graves.

Another manifestation of *Ash-Shirk al-Akbar* (major *Shirk*) is:

Sacrificing to anything other than Allaah The Almighty

Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): **{Therefore turn in prayer to your Lord, and sacrifice [to Him only]}** [Qur'aan 108:2] This means, sacrifice to Allaah and in the name of Allaah. The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Allaah will curse the one who sacrifices to anything other than Allaah."** (Reported by Imaam Muslim, may Allaah have mercy on him, in his *Saheeh*, no. 1978, 'Abdul-Baaqi edition)

This sin combines two *Haraam* deeds: that of sacrificing to anything other than Allaah The Almighty and that of sacrificing in the name of anything other than Allaah The Almighty, both of which make the meat of the animal slaughtered *Haraam*. One of the forms of

sacrificing to anything other than Allaah which was known during the first *Jaahiliyyah* and is still widespread nowadays is the practice of “offering a sacrifice to the *Jinn*,” whereby upon buying or constructing a house, or digging a well, people slaughter an animal at its entrance, out of fear of harm from the resident *Jinn*. (See *Tayseer al-'Azeez al-Hameed*, al-Iftaa' edition, p. 158)

Ash-Shirk al-Akbar is the sin of allowing what Allaah The Almighty has forbidden and forbidding what Allaah The Almighty has allowed, or believing that anyone has the right to do so except Allaah The Almighty, or referring matters for judgment to *Jaahili* (non-Islaamic) courts freely and voluntarily, and believing that this is permissible.

Allaah The Almighty has mentioned this form of major *Kufr* in the Qur'aan, in the verse (which means): *{They [Jews and Christians] took their rabbis and their monks to their lords besides Allaah [by obeying them in things which they made lawful or unlawful according to their own desires without being ordered by Allaah]. . .}* [Qur'aan 9:31] When 'Adiyy ibn Haatim, may Allaah be pleased with him, heard the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, recite this *Aayah*, he said: “*But they were not worshipping them.*” The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, replied: “**Yes, but they permitted things that Allaah had forbidden, and the people accepted this, and they forbade things that Allaah had allowed, and the people accepted this too, and this is a form of worshipping them.**” (Reported by Al-Bayhaqi in *as-Sunan al-Kubraa*, 10/116. See also At-Tirmithi, no. 3095. Al-Albaani classed it as *Hasan* (sound) in *Ghaayat al-Maraam*, p. 19)

Allaah The Almighty also Says (what means): *{Say: 'Tell me, what provision Allaah has sent down to you, and you have made of it lawful and unlawful.' Say: 'Has Allaah permitted you [to do so], or do you invent a lie against Allaah?}* [Qur'aan 10:59]

Other widespread forms of *Shirk* are:

Magic, fortune-telling and divination

Magic (*Sihir*) is an act of *Kufr*, and one of the seven sins which doom a person to Hell. It causes harm but no benefit. Allaah The Almighty Says of the one who learns it (what means):

- *{ . . . And they learn that which harms them and profits them not . . .}* [Qur'aan 2:102]
- *{ . . . and the magician will never be successful, no matter what amount [of skill] he may attain.}* [Qur'aan 20:69]
- *{ . . . Sulaymaan [Solomon, may Allaah exalt his mention] did not disbelieve, but the Shayaateen [devils] disbelieved, teaching men magic and such things as came down at Babylon to the two angels, Haaroot and Maaroot, but neither of these two*

[angels] taught anyone [such things] things till they had said, 'We are only for trial, so disbelieve not [by learning this magic from us].' . . .} [Qur'aan 2:102]

The prescribed punishment for the one who practices magic is death, and his income is *Haraam* and impure. But people who are ignorant wrongdoers and weak in faith go to magicians to help them harm someone or take revenge on someone. Some people commit the sin of going to a magician to ask his help in undoing the magic of someone else, when they should turn to Allaah to help them and heal them, by reciting His words, such as the *Soorahs* (Chapters) that offer protection (*al-Falaq* and *an-Naas*), and so on.

Fortune-tellers and their ilk are *Kaafirs* who disbelieve in Allaah The Almighty, because they claim knowledge of the *Ghayb* (Unseen), but no one has knowledge of the Unseen except Him. Many of these fortune-tellers take advantage of simple-minded people and take their money. They use many methods such as drawing lines in the sand, throwing sea-shells, reading palms, teacups (or coffee cups), crystal balls and mirrors, and so on. If they get it right one time, they get it wrong ninety-nine times, but ignorant people remember only the one time when these liars get something right. They go to them to find out about the future, whether they will be successful in marriage or business, or to help them find something they have lost, and so on.

The ruling concerning the person who visits a fortune-teller is: if he believes what he says, he is a *Kaafir* who has left Islaam, on the basis of the *Hadeeth* in which the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“Whoever goes to a fortune-teller or a soothsayer and believes in what he says has disbelieved in what was revealed to Muhammad.”** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 2/429; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 5939) If a person does not believe that they have knowledge of the Unseen, but he goes out of curiosity or whatever else, he is not a *Kaafir*, but his prayers will not be accepted for forty days, as the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“Whoever goes to a fortune-teller and asks him about something, his prayers will not be accepted for forty nights.”** (Reported by Muslim, 4/1751) –though it is still obligatory to pray and to repent of this sin.

Astrology, or believing that the stars and planets have an influence on people's lives and events

Zayd ibn Khaalid al-Juhani, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported:

“The Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, led us in the morning prayer at al-Hudaybiyyah after rain had fallen during the night. When he had finished, he turned around to face the people and said: ‘Do you know what your Lord says?’ They said: ‘Allaah and His Messenger know best.’ He, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: ‘[Allaah Says]: This morning one of My slaves became a believer in Me and one became a disbeliever.

As for the one who said: “We have been given rain by the grace and mercy of Allaah,” he is a believer in Me and a disbeliever in the stars; as for the one who said: “We have been given rain by such-and-such a star,” he is a disbeliever in Me and a believer in the stars.’” (Reported by Al-Bukhaari; see *Fat-h al-Baari*, 2/333)

Similarly, the one who reads the horoscopes in newspapers and magazines and believes what they say about the influence of the stars and planets is a *Mushrik* (polytheist), and the one who reads them for entertainment is a sinner, because it is not permitted to entertain oneself by reading things that contain *Shirk*, as the Shaytaan will try to lead him to *Shirk* through this.

Yet another form of *Shirk* is:

Believing that certain things can bring benefit when the Creator has not made them so

For example, some people believe in amulets and spells, or wearing certain types of pearls or seashells or metal earrings and so on, on the advice of fortune-tellers or magicians or in accordance with inherited customs. So they hang them around their own or their children’s necks to ward off the evil eye – or so they claim – or they tie them onto their bodies or hang them in their cars and homes, or wear rings with special stones, thinking that these things can relieve or ward off distress. This, without a doubt, is contrary to the idea of relying on Allaah The Almighty, and will only result in making a person even more weak, like seeking medicine in a *Haraam* way. These amulets obviously contain much *Shirk*, such as seeking the help of some *Jinns* and devils, or vague drawings and illegible writing. Some of these liars even write *Aayaat* from the Qur’aan, or mix them with words of *Shirk*, or write them with impure substances such as menstrual blood. Hanging up these amulets or tying them to one’s body is *Haraam* because the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“Whoever hangs up an amulet is guilty of *Shirk*.”** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 4/156; see also *as-Silsilah as-Saheehah*, no. 492)

If the one who does this believes that these things can cause benefit or harm instead of Allaah The Almighty, he is a *Mushrik* who is guilty of *ash-Shirk al-Akbar*. If he believes that they are a means of causing benefit or harm, then he is a *Mushrik* who is guilty of *ash-Shirk al-Asghar* (minor *Shirk*), which includes *Shirk* that consists of attributing causes to things other than Allaah The Almighty.

Showing off in worship

Among the conditions for any good deed to be acceptable are that it should be free of any kind of showing off and within the framework of the *Sunnah*. The person who performs acts of worship, like praying, in order to be seen by other people is a *Mushrik* and his deed is

unacceptable. Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): *{Verily, the hypocrites seek to deceive Allaah, but it is He Who deceives them. And when they stand up for prayer, they stand with laziness and to be seen of men, and they do not remember Allaah but little.}* [Qur'aan 4:142]

Similarly, the person who does a good deed so that news of it will reach other people has also fallen into the sin of *Shirk*. The threat of punishment for the one who does this was reported in the *Hadeeth* narrated by Ibn 'Abbaas, may Allaah be pleased with him and his father, in which the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Whoever does things to be seen and heard by others, Allaah will cause him to be seen and heard as an example to others."** (Reported by Muslim, 4/2289) Whoever does any act of worship for the sake of Allaah and other people, his deeds will be unacceptable, as is stated in the *Hadeeth Qudsi*: **"I am so self-sufficient that I am in no need of having an associate. Thus he who does a deed for someone else's sake as well as Mine will have that deed renounced by Me to him who he associated with Me."** (Reported by Muslim, no. 2985)

It may happen that a person starts to do a deed for the sake of Allaah, then the urge to show off comes over him. If he resists that impulse, his deed will still be acceptable, but if he submits willingly to it, then in the opinion of most of the scholars, his deed will be unacceptable.

Superstitious belief in omens

This is a form of pessimism, as Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): *{But whenever good came to them, they said, 'Ours is this.' And if evil afflicted them, they ascribed it to evil omens connected with Musa and those with him . . .}* [Qur'aan 7:131]

Before Islaam, if one of the Arabs wanted to do something like travelling, he would take hold of a bird and release it: if it flew to the right, he would take this as a good omen and proceed with his plans, but if it flew to the left, he would take it as a bad omen and cancel his plans. The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, gave his verdict on this practice when he, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"At-Tayrah [observing birds for omens] is *Shirk*."** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 1/389; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 3955)

This kind of *Haraam* belief that goes against *Tawheed* (Islaamic monotheism) also includes the practice of regarding certain times etc., as inauspicious, such as not holding a wedding in the month of *Safar*, or regarding the last Wednesday of every month as a day of evil omen and ongoing calamity, or believing that numbers such as 13, or certain names, are "unlucky." It is also *Haraam* to believe that handicapped or disabled people are bad omens, such as going to open one's store but turning back upon seeing a one-eyed man. All of this is *Haraam* and is part of the *Shirk* for which the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa*

sallam, disowned people. 'Imraan ibn Husayn, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"He is not one of us who observes birds for omens or has someone else do this for him, or who predicts the future or asks someone else to do it for him, [and I think he said] or who practices magic or asks someone else to do it for him."** (Reported by At-Tabaraani in *al-Kabeer*, 18/162; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'* 5435)

The expiation required from the person who commits any of these sins is mentioned in the *Hadeeth* reported by Abdullaah ibn 'Amr, may Allaah be pleased with him: *"The Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: 'Whoever was turned away from doing something because of a bad omen is guilty of Shirk.' The people asked: 'O Messenger of Allaah, what expiation is there for doing that?' He, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: 'That he should say: 'O Allaah, there is no goodness except Your goodness and no omen except your omen and there is no god but You.'"* (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 2/220; *as-Silsilah as-Saheehah*, 1065)

Pessimism is a part of everyone's nature, to a greater or lesser extent; the best cure for it is *Tawakkul* (reliance upon Allaah), as Ibn Mas'ood, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: *"There is no one among us (who will not feel pessimistic sometimes), but when we rely on Allaah, He makes that feeling go away."* (Reported by Abu Daawood, no. 3910; see also *as-Silsilah as-Saheehah*, 430)

Swearing by something other than Allaah

Allaah The Almighty may swear by whatever of His creatures He wills, but His creatures are not permitted to swear by anything other than Allaah The Almighty. Many people swear all kinds of oaths by things other than Allaah, but swearing by something is like glorifying it, and it is not right to glorify anything or anyone other than Allaah. Ibn 'Umar, may Allaah be pleased with him and his father, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Allaah has prohibited that you should swear by your fathers. If anyone swears, let him swear by Allaah, or else remain silent."** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari; see *al-Fat-h*, 11/530) Ibn 'Umar, may Allaah be pleased with him and his father, also reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Whoever swears by something other than Allaah is guilty of Shirk."** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 2/125; see *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 6204) The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, also said: **"Whoever swears by trustworthiness is not one of us."** (Reported by Abu Daawood 3253; see also *as-Silsilah as-Saheehah*, no. 94)

It is not permitted to swear by the *Ka'bah*, by trustworthiness, by honor, by help, by the blessing of so-and-so, by the life of so-and-so, by the virtue of the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, by the virtue of a *Waliyy*, by one's father and mother, by the

heads of one's children, etc. All of that is *Haraam*, and the expiation for doing it is to say *La ilaaha ill-Allaah*, as is stated in the *Saheeh* (authentic) *Hadeeth*: **"Whoever swears and says: 'By al-Laat' or 'By al-'Uzza,' let him say 'La ilaaha ill-Allaah [there is no god worthy of worship except Allaah].'"** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, *al-Fat-h*, 11/536)

There are other phrases that similarly involve *Shirk* and are therefore forbidden, but that are often spoken by Muslims, such as: "I seek refuge with Allaah and with you," "I am depending on Allaah and on you," "This is from Allaah and from you," "I have no-one but Allaah and you," "I have Allaah in heaven and I have you on earth," "If it were not for Allaah and so-and-so," "I disown Islaam," "Time has let me down" (and every other expression which involves cursing time, like saying, "This is a bad time," "This is an unlucky time," "Time is a betrayer," etc., because cursing time is an insult to Allaah, Who has created time), references to "Nature's way." Names that imply being a slave of anyone other than Allaah The Almighty, such as 'Abdul-Maseeh (slave of the Messiah), 'Abdun-Nabi (slave of the Prophet), 'Abdur-Rasool (slave of the Messenger) and 'Abdul-Husayn (slave of al-Husayn), are also forbidden.

There are also modern expressions which are contrary to *Tawheed* and are therefore *Haraam*, such as "Islaamic socialism," "Islaamic democracy," "The will of the people is the will of Allaah," "Religion is for Allaah and the land is for the people," "In the name of Arabism," "In the name of the revolution" etc.

It is also *Haraam* to use titles such as "King of kings" or "Judge of judges" for human beings; to address *Munafiqeen* (hypocrites) or *Kuffaar* with titles like "Sayyid (master)" (whether speaking Arabic or other languages), to use the words: "If only..." – which imply discontent and regret, and open the way for the Shaytaan – and to say: "O Allaah, forgive me if You want to." (For more information, see *Mu'jam al-Manahi al-Lafdhiyyah*)

Sitting with hypocrites and wrongdoers to enjoy their company or to keep them company

Many of those who do not have strong faith deliberately sit with people who are immoral and sinful. They may even sit with those who attack the *Sharee'ah* and make fun of Islaam and the people who adhere to it strictly. There is no doubt that this is a forbidden deed, one which could undermine a person's belief. Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): ***{And when you see those who engage in a false conversation about Our Verses by mocking at them, stay away from them till they turn to another topic. And if Shaytaan causes you to forget, then after the remembrance sit not in the company of those people who are the Dhaalimoon [polytheists and wrongdoers, etc.]} [Qur'aan 6:68]***

In that case it is not permitted to sit with them, even if they are closely-related or are very kind and good company, except for the purposes of *Da'wah* (calling to Allaah) or refuting their false talk. But accepting and remaining quiet about their conduct is not permitted.

Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): *{They [the hypocrites] swear to you [Muslims] that you may be pleased with them, but if you are pleased with them, certainly Allaah is not pleased with the people who are al-Faasiqoon [rebellious, disobedient to Allaah].}* [Qur'aan 9:96]

Lack of composure in prayer

One of the worst forms of theft or cheating is cheating in prayer. The Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"The worst type of thief is the one who steals from his prayer."** The people asked: "O Messenger of Allaah, how can a person steal from his prayer?" He, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"By not doing Rukoo' [bowing] and Sujood [prostration] properly."** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 5/310; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 997) This lack of composure and failure to pause in *Rukoo'* and *Sujood* and to stand up straight after *Rukoo'* or sit up properly between *Sujoods* may be observed in many of those who pray, and hardly any mosque is free of examples of people who do not have the proper composure in prayer. Correct composure is one of the pillars of prayer, without which prayer is invalid. This is a serious matter. The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"A man's prayer is not good enough until his back is straight in Rukoo' and Sujood."** (Reported by Abu Daawood, 1/533; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 7224)

There is no doubt that lacking the proper composure is bad, and the person who is guilty of this deserves to be reprimanded and threatened with punishment. Abu 'Abdullaah al-Ash'ari, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, led his Companions in prayer, then he sat with a group of them. A man came in and started to pray, but made his movements rapid like a chicken pecking the ground. The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Do you see this? Whoever dies having done this has died outside of the community of Muhammad, and his prayer is like a crow pecking blood. The person who bows then pecks in his Sujood is like a hungry man who eats no more than one or two dates - what good will that do him?"** (Reported by Ibn Khuzaymah in his *Saheeh* 1/332; see also al-Albaani, *Sifat Salaat an-Nabi* (The Prophet's Prayer Described), 131)

Zayd ibn Wahb, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: *"Huthayfah saw a man who was not performing Rukoo' and Sujood properly. He said: 'You have not prayed, and if you were to die, you would die on a way other than that revealed by Allaah to Muhammad, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam.'"* (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, see *al-Fat-h*, 2/274) Once a person is aware of this ruling, if he fails to perform prayer with the proper composure, he should repeat it and repent to Allaah The Almighty for what is past; he does not need to repeat all of his previous prayers as is indicated by the *Hadeeth*: **"Repeat your prayer, for you have not prayed."**

Fidgeting and making unnecessary movements in prayer

Hardly any of the people who pray are free from this problem, because they are not following the command of Allaah (which means): { . . . *And stand before Allaah with obedience* } [Qur'aan 2:238]; and they fail to understand the words of Allaah (which mean): {*Successful indeed are the believers, those who offer their Salaat with all solemnity and full submissiveness.*} [Qur'aan 23:1-2]

When the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, was asked about smoothing the earth before prostrating, he, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“Do not wipe it when you are praying; if you have to, then just smooth the gravel once.”** (Reported by Abu Daawood, 1/581; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 7452) The scholars mentioned that continuous, excessive, unnecessary movement invalidates one's prayer. How can those who fidget stand before Allaah The Almighty, looking at their watches, straightening their clothes, putting their fingers in their noses, looking to the right and the left and up to the sky, and not fearing that Allaah The Almighty may take away their sight or the Shaytaan may steal their prayer?

Deliberately anticipating the movements of the Imaam (when praying in congregation)

Man is hasty by nature, as it says in the Qur'aan (what means): { . . . *and man is ever hasty . . .* } [Qur'aan 17:11] The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“Deliberation is from Allaah and haste is from Shaytaan.”** (Reported by Al-Bayhaqi in *as-Sunan al-Kubra*, 10/104; see also *as-Silsilah*, 1795) One often notices, when praying in congregation, people to the left and right anticipating the *Imaam* in *Rukoo'*, *Sujood* and the *Takbeeraat* that signal changes in position – one even notices it in oneself too, sometimes. People may even precede the *Imaam* in giving *Salaam* at the end of the prayer. This is a matter which may appear unimportant to many, but the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, issued a stern warning when he said: **“Does the person who raises his head before the Imaam not fear that Allaah may turn his head into the head of a donkey?”** (Reported by Muslim, 1/320-321) If a person is required to come to the prayer with dignity and composure, how then should he be during the prayer itself?

Some people are confused about this issue and seek to compensate by delaying their movements after the *Imaam*; these people should know that the *Fuqahaa'* (jurists), may Allaah have mercy on them, have described an excellent way to control the matter, which is that the person following the *Imaam* should only start his movements after the *Imaam* has finished pronouncing the *raa'* (“r”) of “*Allaahu Akbar*”; then the person following the *Imaam* is permitted to move, and not before or after. The Companions of the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, used to be very keen to avoid anticipating his movements when he led them in prayer. One of them, al-Baraa' ibn 'Aazib, may Allaah be pleased with him, said that they used to pray behind the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*: “When he raised his head from *Rukoo'*, I would never see anyone bending his back in *Sujood* until the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, had placed his forehead on the ground, then

everyone would go down in Sujood behind him.” (Reported by Muslim, no. 474, ‘Abdul-Baaqi edition) When the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, grew older, and became rather slow in his movements, he, *sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, told the people praying behind him: **“O people, I have gained weight, so do not anticipate me in performing Rukoo’ and Sujood.”** (Reported by Al-Bayhaqi, 2/93 and classed as *Hasan* in *Irwaaa’ al-Ghaleel*, 2/290) The *Imaam* is obliged to follow the *Sunnah* in making *Takbeer* when he prays, as reported in the *Hadeeth* narrated by Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him:

“When the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, stood up to pray, he would say the Takbeer when he stood up and when he bowed . . . then he would say the Takbeer when he went down for Sujood and when he raised his head, then when he went down for Sujood again and when he raised his head again. Then he would repeat this throughout the whole prayer until it was finished, and he would say the Takbeer when he stood up after completing two Rak’ahs (units of prayer).” (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, no. 756, *al-Baghaa* edition)

If the *Imaam* pronounces the *Takbeer* at the same time as he makes the movements, and the people following him strive to follow the guidelines mentioned here, then they will have performed the congregational prayer correctly.

Coming to the mosque after eating onions or garlic, or anything that has an offensive smell

Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): **{O Children of Aadam! Take your adornment [by wearing your clean clothes] while praying . . .}** [Qur'aan 7:31] Jaabir, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: *“The Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, said: ‘Whoever eats garlic or onions, let him keep away from us’, or ‘let him keep away from our mosque and stay in his house.’”* (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, see *al-Fat-h*, 2/339) According to a report narrated by Muslim, the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“Whoever eats onions or garlic or leeks, let him not come near our mosque, because the angels will be offended by what is offensive to the sons of Aadam.”** (Reported by Muslim, no. 1/395) ‘Umar ibn al-Khattaab, may Allaah be pleased with him, addressed the people one Friday and said: *“O people, you eat two things that I think come from bad plants: onions and garlic. I saw the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, when he noticed this smell coming from a man in the mosque, order him to go out to al-Baqee’. Whoever wants to eat these things, let him cook them to death (i.e. well).”* (Reported by Muslim, 1/396)

We might also include here those who come to the mosque straight from work, with unpleasant odors emanating from their armpits and socks. Even worse than these are smokers who have the habit of consuming their *Haraam* cigarettes then coming to the mosque and disturbing the worshippers of Allaah, people and angels alike, with their smell.

Zina - fornication and adultery

One of the aims of the Islaamic *Sharee'ah* is to preserve honor and lineage, so *Zina* (unlawful sexual intercourse) is forbidden. Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): **{And come not near to unlawful sexual intercourse. Verily it is a Faahishah [a great sin] and an evil way [that leads to Hell unless Allaah forgives]}** [Qur'aan 17:32]

The *Sharee'ah* blocks all the ways and means that could lead to *Zina*, by enjoining *Hijaab* (Islaamic covering) and lowering the gaze, and by forbidding being alone with a non-*Mahram* woman, etc.

The married man who commits adultery deserves the worst kind of punishment, which is stoning to death, so that he may taste the results of his deeds and so that every part of his body may suffer just as every part of his body enjoyed the illicit liaison. The fornicator who was previously unmarried is to be punished with the maximum number of lashes mentioned in *Sharee'ah*, which is one hundred lashes, in addition to the scandal of this punishment being witnessed by a group of believers, and the humiliation of being banished from his city and the scene of his crime for one full year.

In the *Barzakh*, the punishment for men and women who were guilty of *Zina* is that they will be in an oven whose top is narrow and whose bottom is wide, with a fire beneath it, and they will be naked therein. When the heat of the fire increases, they will scream and rise up until they nearly come out of the top, then when the fire decreases, they will fall back down. This will repeated over and over until the onset of the Hour.

What is even worse is when a man continues to commit adultery even when he grows old, death approaches and Allaah The Almighty gives him the opportunity to repent. Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"There are three to whom Allaah will not speak on the Day of Resurrection, nor praise, nor look at; theirs will be a painful torment: an old man who commits *Zina*, a king who lies, and a poor man who is arrogant."** (Reported by Muslim, 1/102-103) Among the worst of incomes is the earnings of a prostitute which she takes before committing *Zina*, and the immoral woman who earns her living by selling herself is deprived of having her prayers answered when the gates of heaven are opened at midnight. (The *Hadeeth* regarding this is in *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 2971) Being in need or being poor are not acceptable excuses for transgressing the limits set by Allaah The Almighty. There is an old saying that the free woman would rather starve than eat by displaying her breasts, so how about her private parts then?

Nowadays all the doors of immorality have been opened, and the Shaytaan and his supporters have facilitated the committing of sins for people. This has been followed by the spread of *Tabarruj* (wanton display) and unveiling among women, people allowing their gazes to wander to things they should not look at, an increase in mixing between the sexes,

the popularity of immoral magazines and lewd films, increased travel to corrupt countries and the establishment of a market for prostitution, an increase in the violation of honor, and an increase in the number of illegitimate births and abortions.

O Allaah, we ask you to show us Your mercy and to protect us from immorality; we ask You to purify our hearts and to keep our private parts chaste, and to place a barrier between us and what is *Haraam*.

Sodomy (Homosexuality)

Sodomy, or intercourse between two males, was the crime of the people of Loot, may Allaah exalt his mention. Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): *{And [remember] Loot, when he said to his people: 'You commit al-Faahishah [sodomy - the worst sin] which none has preceded you in [committing] among the 'Aalameen [mankind and Jinns]. Verily, you commit sodomy with men, and rob the wayfarer, and practice al-Munkar [disbelief, polytheism and every kind of evil deed] in your meetings.' . . .}* [Qur'aan 29:29]

Because of the repulsive nature and enormity of this sin, Allaah The Almighty inflicted four kinds of punishment which He had never before inflicted in combination upon any other people; they were: these people would be blinded, their city would be turned upside-down, stones of baked clay, piled up, would be rained down upon them, and an awful cry would be sent upon them.

In Islaam, those guilty of this crime are to be killed by the sword, according to the soundest opinion. This punishment is to be carried out on both the one who does this and the one to whom it is done, if it is done freely and by choice. Ibn 'Abbaas, may Allaah be pleased with him and his father, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Whomever you find committing the sin of the people of Loot, kill them – both the one who does it and the one to whom it is done."** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 1/300; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 6565) The modern-day spread of incurable diseases – like the killer AIDS, caused by this corruption – that were unknown to our predecessors, is an indication of the wisdom of the *Sharee'ah* in prescribing this severe punishment.

Not allowing one's husband to have marital relations for no legitimate reason

Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"If a man calls his wife to his bed, and she refuses, and he goes to sleep angry with her, the angels will curse her until morning."** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari; see *al-Fat-h*, 6/314)

Many women, when they have an argument with their husbands, 'punish' them – so they think – by denying them their marital rights. This may result in major corruption if the husband is tempted to do something *Haraam*, or it may backfire on the wife if the husband starts to think seriously of taking another wife.

A wife should hasten to respond to her husband's call if he wants her, in obedience to the words of the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*: **"If a man calls his wife to his bed, let her respond, even if she is riding on the back of a camel [i.e., very busy]."** (See *Zawaa'id al-Bazaar*, 2/181; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 547)

At the same time, the husband must show consideration towards his wife if she is sick, pregnant or depressed, so as to maintain harmony and prevent discontent or hatred.

Asking one's husband for a divorce for no legitimate reason

Many women hasten to demand a divorce from their husbands at the least argument, or if their husbands do not give them what they want of money. Some women may be egged on by troublemakers among their relatives or neighbors to challenge their husbands with provocative words such as: *"If you were a real man, you would divorce me!"* The dire results of divorce are well known: breakdown of the family and children roaming the streets. A person may come to regret divorce when it is too late. For all these reasons and others, the *Sharee'ah* wisely prohibited such actions. Thawbaan, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Any woman who asks her husband for a divorce with no sound reason will be deprived of smelling the fragrance of Paradise."** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 5.277; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 2703). 'Uqbah ibn 'Aamir, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Woman who ask for divorce and women who contend unnecessarily with their husbands are hypocrites."** (Reported by At-Tabaraani in *al-Kabeer*, 17/339; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 1934) But if there is a sound reason, such as the husband abandoning prayer, drinking or taking drugs, or forcing his wife to do something *Haraam*, or oppressing her and making her suffer by denying her the rights granted to her by Islaam, and he does not listen to advice to mend his ways, then in this case there is nothing wrong with a woman seeking divorce for her own sake and for the sake of her religion.

Ath-Thihaar

One of the expressions of the first *Jaahiliyyah* that is still widespread in this *Ummah* is the phenomenon of *adh-Dhihaar*, whereby a man says to his wife: *"You are to me like the back of my mother,"* or *"You are as forbidden for me as my sister,"* and other similarly ugly statements whose repulsive nature was confirmed by the *Sharee'ah*, because of the oppression of women involved. Allaah The Almighty referred to this in the Qur'aan, Saying (what

means): *{Those among you who make their wives unlawful to them by saying to them, 'You are like my mother's back,' they cannot be their mothers. None can be their mothers except those who gave them birth. And verily, they utter an ill word and a lie. And verily, Allaah is Oft-Pardoning, Oft-Forgiving.}* [Qur'aan 58:2]

The *Sharee'ah* has imposed a heavy penalty (*Kaffaarah*) for this crime, similar to that required for killing a person by mistake or for having intercourse during the day in *Ramadhaan*; the person who has committed *adh-Dhihaar* is not permitted to approach his wife until he has paid this penalty. Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): *{And those who make unlawful to them [their wives, by zihar], and wish to free themselves from what they uttered, [the penalty] in that case [is] the freeing of a slave before they touch each other. That is an admonition to you [so that you may not return to such an ill thing]. And Allaah is All-Aware of what you do. And he who finds not [the money for freeing a slave] must fast two successive months before they both touch each other. And for him who is unable to do so, he should feed sixty Miskeen (poor). That is in order that you may have perfect faith in Allaah and His Messenger. And for disbelievers, there is a painful torment.}* [Qur'aan 58:3-4]

Having intercourse with one's wife during her period

Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): *{They ask you concerning menstruation. Say: that is an Athaa [a harmful thing for a husband to have sexual intercourse with his wife while she is having her menses], therefore keep away from women during menses and go not unto them till they have purified [from menses and have taken a bath] . . .}* [Qur'aan 2:222]

So a man is not permitted to approach his wife until her period has ended and she has taken a ritual bath (*Ghusl*). Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): *{ . . . And when they have purified themselves, then go in unto them as Allaah has ordained for you . . .}* [Qur'aan 2:222]

The repulsive nature of this sin is indicated by the words of the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*: **"Whoever has intercourse with a menstruating women, or with a woman in her rectum, or goes to a fortune-teller, has disbelieved in what was revealed to Muhammad."** (Reported by At-Tirmithi from Abu Hurayrah, 1/243; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 5918)

Whoever does this by mistake, not deliberately, does not have to pay any penalty, but the person who does it deliberately and with full knowledge of what he is doing must pay the penalty, which according to the scholars with the soundest knowledge is one dinar or half a dinar. Some scholars say that there is a choice in the amount to be paid; others say that if a man has intercourse with his wife at the beginning of her period, when the flow of blood is heavy, he must pay one dinar, and if he does it at the end of her period when the flow is

light, he must pay half a *Dinaar*. In modern terms, a *Dinaar* is equal to 25.4 grams of gold: this or the equivalent amount of currency must be given in charity.

Having intercourse with one's wife in her rectum

Some perverted people who have little faith do not hesitate to have intercourse with a woman in her rectum (the place from which excrement emerges). This is a major sin, and the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, cursed the one who does this. Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"He is cursed, the one who has intercourse with a woman in her rectum."** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 2/479; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 5865). Indeed, the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi was sallam*, said: **"Whoever has intercourse with a menstruating woman, or with a woman in her rectum, or goes to a fortune-teller, has disbelieved in what was revealed to Muhammad."** (Reported by At-Tirmithi from Abu Hurayrah, 1/243; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 5918).

Although there are many righteous and sensible women who refuse to do this, there are many husbands who threaten their wives with divorce if they do not comply. Some husbands even deceive their wives who may be too shy to ask a scholar about this matter; they tell them that this is *Halaal*, and they may even misquote the Qur'aan to support their claim (which means): *{Your wives are a tilth for you, so go to your tilth when or how you will . . .}* [Qur'aan, 2:223]. But it is well-known that the *Sunnah* explains the Qur'aan, and the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, stated that it is permitted to have intercourse with one's wife in whatever way one wishes, approaching from the front or the back, so long as intercourse is in the place from which a child is born (the vagina); it is obvious that the anus, from which excrement is produced, is not the place from which a child is born. One of the reasons for this crime is the fact that many people enter what should be a clean and pure married life with an inheritance of dirty, *Haraam*, *Jaahili*, perverted practices, or memories filled with scenes from lewd movies for which they have not repented to Allaah. It is also well known that this deed is *Haraam* even if both parties consent to it; mutual consent to a *Haraam* deed does not make it *Halaal*.

Not treating co-wives fairly

One of the things that Allaah The Almighty has enjoined in His Book is fair treatment of co-wives. Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): *{You will never be able to do perfect justice between wives even if it is your ardent desire, so do not incline too much to one of them [by giving her more of your time and provision] so as to leave the other hanging [i.e., neither divorced nor married]. And if you do justice, and do all that is right and fear Allaah by keeping away from all that is wrong, then Allaah is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.}* [Qur'aan 4:129]

The justice that is required here is a fair division of nights, and giving each wife her rights as regards spending and clothing. This does not refer to emotions or love, because man has no control over his feelings. But some people, when they marry more than one wife, favor one and neglect the other, spending more time with one wife and spending more on her, and ignoring the other. This is *Haraam*, and the person who does this will come on the Day of Resurrection in the condition described by the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, in the *Hadeeth* narrated by Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him: **“Whoever has two wives and gives one of them preferential treatment, he will come on the Day of Resurrection with half of his body leaning.”** (Narrated by Abu Daawood, 2/601; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 6491)

Being alone with a non-Mahram woman

Shaytaan is always keen to tempt people and make them commit *Haraam* deeds. For this reason, Allaah The Almighty warned us, Saying (what means): **{O you who believe! Follow not the footsteps of the Shaytaan. And whosoever follows the footsteps of the Shaytaan, then, verily he commands al-Fahshaa' [indecenty] and al-Munkar [evil deeds] . . .}** [Qur'aan 24:21]

The Shaytaan runs through the veins of humankind like blood, and one of the ways in which he induces people to commit indecent acts is by leading a man to be alone with a non-*Mahram* woman. Islaam blocks this way by forbidding such conduct, as the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“No man is alone with a [non-Mahram] woman, but Shaytaan will be the third among them.”** (Reported by At-Tirmithi, 3/474; see also *Mishkaat al-Masaabeeh*, 3118) Ibn 'Umar, may Allaah be pleased with him and his father, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“From this day on, no man should enter upon a woman whose husband is absent unless there is another man or two with him.”** (Reported by Muslim, 4/1711) It is not permitted for a man to be alone in a house, room or car with a non-*Mahram* woman, including his brother's wife or a servant. Similarly a female patient should not be alone with a doctor, and so on. Many people are careless about this matter, whether because they trust themselves or for some other reason, with the results that many commit indecent acts or take the steps that lead to them, which in turn results in the tragedies of confused lineage and illegitimate births.

Shaking hands with a non-Mahram woman

This is one of the cases where incorrect social customs have taken precedence over the laws of Allaah The Almighty, to such an extent that if you try to talk to people and show them evidence that this is wrong, they will accuse you of being backward, having a complex, trying to break family ties, doubting their good intentions, etc. Shaking hands with female

cousins, brothers' wives and uncles' wives is now easier than drinking water in our society, but if we look properly we will understand the seriousness of the matter.

The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"If one of you were to be stabbed in the head with an iron needle it would be better for him than touching a woman whom he is not permitted to touch."** (Reported by At-Tabaraani, 20/212; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 4921) There is no doubt that this is an act of *Zina*, because the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"The eyes may commit Zina, the hands may commit Zina, the feet may commit Zina and the private parts may commit Zina."** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 1/412; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 4921)

Is there anyone more pure in heart than Muhammad, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*? Yet still he said: **"I do not shake hands with women."** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 6/357; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 7054, and *al-Isaabah*, 4/354, *Daar al-Kitaab al-'Arabi* edition) And he said: **"I do not touch the hands of women."** (Reported by At-Tabaraani in *al-Kabeer*, 24/342; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 7054 and *al-Isaabah*, 4/354, *Dar al-Kutub al-'Arabi* edition)

'Aa'ishah, may Allaah be pleased with her, said: *"No, by Allaah, the hand of the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, never touched the hand of a [non-Mahram] woman. He received the Bay'ah [pledge of allegiance] from them by word only."* (Reported by Muslim, 3/489) Let them fear Allaah, those people who threaten their pious wives with divorce if they do not shake hands with their brothers.

We should also note that placing a barrier such as a piece of cloth is of no use; it is still *Haraam* to shake hands with a non-Mahram woman.

A woman wearing perfume when going out or passing by non-Mahram men

This practice is widespread nowadays, despite the stern warning of the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, who said: **"Any woman who applies perfume and then goes out among the people so that they could smell her fragrance is a *Zaaniyah* [fornicator or adulteress]."** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 4/418; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 105) Some women are very careless and take the matter too lightly, especially in front of drivers, shopkeepers, school porters, etc., even though the *Sharee'ah* states very strictly that the woman who wears perfume must wash herself like a person must wash when in a state of *Janaanah* (i.e., perform *Ghusl*), if she wants to go out to the mosque.

The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Any woman who wears perfume then goes out to the mosque, so that the fragrance can be discerned, her prayers will not be accepted until she performs *Ghusl* like the *Ghusl* to be performed when in a state of *Janaabah*."** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 2/444; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 2703)

We complain to Allaah The Almighty about the *Bukhoor* and 'Ood (types of incense) used at weddings and women's parties before people leave, and the use of strong-smelling perfumes in market-places, means of transportation and mixed gatherings of men and women in the mosques even during the nights of *Ramadhaan*. Islaam tells us that women's perfume should be that which has color but little smell. We ask Allaah The Almighty not to despise us and not to punish righteous men and women for the deeds of foolish men and women. May He guide us all to the Straight Path.

A woman travelling without a Mahram

The Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"It is not permitted for the woman who believes in Allaah and the Last Day to travel one day's distance without the presence of a Mahram."** (Reported by Muslim, 2/977) When a woman travels without a *Mahram*, this encourages corrupt people to prey on her because of her weakness; at the very least, her honor will be harmed. This prohibition applies also to a woman travelling by plane, even if - as is often claimed - one *Mahram* sees her off at one end and another *Mahram* meets her at the other. Who is going to sit next to her during the journey? What if technical problems divert the plane to another airport, or the flight is delayed? What if...? There are too many stories of things that went wrong. For a person to be considered a *Mahram*, he must meet four conditions: he should be a Muslim, over the age of puberty, of sound mind, and male.

Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: *"The Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: 'No woman who believes in Allaah and the Last Day should travel a distance of three days' journey or more unless her father, son, husband, brother or other Mahram is with her.'"* (Reported by Muslim, 2/977)

Deliberately looking at a non-Mahram woman

Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): *{Tell the believing men to lower their gaze [from looking at forbidden things], and to protect their private parts [from illegal sexual acts, etc.] That is purer for them. Verily, Allaah is All-Aware of what they do.}* [Qur'aan 24:30]

The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"The adultery of the eyes is by looking"** (i.e. by looking at what Allaah The Almighty has forbidden) (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, see *Fat-h al-Baari*, 11/26) Looking for a legitimate purpose is exempted from this rule, such as looking at a woman for marriage purposes, or a doctor examining a patient for medical reasons, etc. Women are equally forbidden to look at non-*Mahram* men, as Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): *{And tell the believing women to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things) and to protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts, etc.) . . .}* [Qur'aan 24:31]

Men are also forbidden to look with desire at a man with a hairless or beautiful face. Men are forbidden to look at the *'Awwrah* of other men, and women are forbidden to look at the *'Awwrah* of other women. If it is forbidden to look at something, it is forbidden to touch it, even over clothing. One of the ways in which the Shaytaan deceives people is by making them think that there is nothing wrong with looking at pictures in magazines or watching movies, because what is seen is not “real,” even though such images clearly cause so much damage by provoking desires.

Seeing one's womenfolk behaving in an immoral fashion and keeping silent

Ibn 'Umar, may Allaah be pleased with him and his father, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“There are three whom Allaah will deprive of Paradise: the one who drinks intoxicants, the one who is disobedient to his parents, and the one who accepts immoral conduct on the part of his family.”** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 2/69; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 3047) One of the many examples of this in modern times is men turning a blind eye to their daughters or wives contacting non-*Mahram* men and chatting with them in a way that may be described as “romantic,” or accepting one of the women of his household being alone with a non-*Mahram* man, or allowing them to sit alone with a driver or another employee, or letting them go out without proper *Hijaab*, so that everyone may look at them, or bringing home immoral magazines and movies.

Making false claims about a child's lineage, or denying one's own child

According to the *Sharee'ah*, it is not permissible for a Muslim to claim to belong to anyone other than his father, or to claim to belong to a people of whom he is not a member. Some people may do this for material gains, and may obtain documentation to “confirm” their false identity officially. Some people may do this out of hatred towards a father who abandoned them when they were children. All of this is *Haraam*, and may lead to much chaos and corruption in a number of fields, such as knowing who is one's *Mahram*, marriage, inheritance and so on. Sa'd and Abu Bakrah, may Allaah be pleased with them, both reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“Whoever knowingly claims to belong to anyone other than his father, Paradise will be denied him.”** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari; see *Fat-h al-Bari*, 8/45) It is also forbidden to tamper with lineages or make false claims about a person's descent.

There are some people who, when they want to fight dirty in arguments with their wives, accuse them of immoral conduct and disown their children, without any proof, when the child was born “in their bed” (i.e. is the husband's child and no-one else's). Then there are some wives who betray their husbands' trust and become pregnant with another man's child, but claim that it belongs to the husband. The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, issued a stern warning against such conduct. Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased

with him, reported that when *Aayat al-Mulaa'anah* [Refer to the Qur'aan 24:7] was revealed, the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"The woman who brings into a people someone who does not belong to them has nothing to do with Allaah, and Allaah will not admit her to His Paradise. Any man who denies his own child when he is looking at him, Allaah will conceal Himself from him and expose him before all the people."** (Reported by Abu Daawood, 2/695; see also *Mishkaat al-Masaabeeh*, 3316)

Consuming Riba (usury or interest)

In the Qur'aan, Allaah The Almighty does not declare war on anyone except the people who deal in *Riba*, Saying (what means): **{O you who believe! Be afraid of Allaah and give up what remains (due to you) of Riba [from now onward], if you are [really] believers. And if you do not do it, then take a message of war from Allaah and His Messenger.}** [Qur'aan 2:278-279]

This is sufficient to explain the abhorrence of this deed in the sight of Allaah, may He be glorified.

One may easily discern the extent of devastation, at the individual and the international level, caused by dealing with *Riba* - such as bankruptcy, recession, economic stagnation, inability to repay loans, high levels of unemployment, collapse of many companies and institutions, etc. Daily toil has become a never-ending struggle to pay off interest on loans and societies have become class-ridden structures in which huge wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few. Perhaps all this is a manifestation of the war threatened by Allaah to those who deal in *Riba*.

Everyone who has something to do with *Riba*, whether he is one of the main parties involved or is a middleman or facilitator, has been cursed by Muhammad, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*. Jaabir, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, cursed **"the one who consumes Riba, the one who gives it to others, the one who writes it down and the one who witnesses it."** He, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"They are all the same."** (Reported by Muslim, 3/1219) Based on this, it is not permitted to do work that involves writing interest-based contracts and conditions, paying or receiving *Riba*, depositing it or guarding it. Generally speaking, it is *Haraam* to be directly or indirectly involved with *Riba* in any way, shape or form.

The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, was keen to explain the ugliness of this major sin. 'Abdullaah ibn Mas'ood, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"There are seventy-three types of Riba, the least of which is as abhorrent as a man having intercourse with his own mother and worst of which is [violating] a Muslim's honor and sanctity."** (Reported by Al-Haakim in

al-Mustadrak, 2/37; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 3533) 'Abdullah ibn Handhalah, may Allaah be pleased with him and his father, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Knowingly consuming a Dirham of Riba is worse for a man than committing adultery thirty-six times."** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 5/225; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 3375)

The prohibition on *Riba* does not just apply to deals between rich and poor, as some people think; it is a general prohibition that applies to every person and every situation. How many rich people and big businessmen have gone bankrupt because of *Riba*! The least harm *Riba* does is to destroy the blessing (*Barakah*) of the money, even if a person's wealth is great. The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Even if Riba is much, it will end up being a small amount."** (Reported by Al-Haakim, 2/37; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 3542) This does not refer to whether the ratio of interest is high or low; all *Riba* is *Haram*, and the one who deals with it will be raised up on the Day of Resurrection like the one who stands, being beaten by the Shaytaan, resulting in insanity and epilepsy.

Still, in spite of the enormity of this sin, Allaah The Almighty has told us to repent from it and has explained how to do so. Allaah The Almighty Says to those who deal in *Riba* (what means): { . . . **but if you repent, you shall have your capital sums. Deal not unjustly [by asking more than your capital sums], and you shall not be dealt with unjustly [by receiving less than your capital sums].** } [Qur'aan 2:279] This is quintessential justice.

The believer must despise this major sin and feel its abhorrence, even if he puts his money in interest-based banks because he has no other choice and is afraid that his money may be lost or stolen otherwise. He should feel that he is being compelled by necessity to do this, like one who eats dead meat, or worse. At the same time, he should seek the forgiveness of Allaah and try to find an alternative if he can. He is not permitted to ask the bank for interest, and if the bank deposits it in his account, he must get rid of it in whatever way is permissible. This money cannot be counted as *Sadaqah* (charity), because Allaah The Almighty is Pure and accepts only that which is pure. A person cannot benefit from this money by using it to buy food, drink, clothing, transportation or housing; he cannot use it to fulfill obligations such as spending on his wife, child or parents, or to pay *Zakaah* or taxes, or to defend himself in court. Rather, he should just get rid of it, for fear of the wrath of Allaah.

Concealing a product's faults at the time of sale

The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, once passed by a pile of food that was for sale. He put his hand in it and felt dampness, so he, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, asked: **"What is this, O seller of the food?"** He said: *"It was rained on, O Messenger of Allaah."* The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Why do you not put it on top, so that**

people can see it? Whoever deceives [the people] is not one of us.” (Reported by Muslim, 1/99)

There are many traders nowadays who do not fear Allaah The Almighty, and try to conceal faults by wrapping it in plastic, putting faulty produce in the bottom of the box, using chemicals and the like to make a product look good, or concealing noises in engines that may indicate a fault – so that when the purchaser brings a product home, it soon starts to wear out. Some traders change expiry dates, or prevent the buyer from examining or trying out a product. Many of those who sell cars or other types of equipment do not point out the product’s faults. All of this is *Haraam*, as the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“The Muslim is the brother of his fellow Muslim. The Muslim is not permitted to sell to his brother anything which is faulty without pointing out the faults to him.”** (Reported by Ibn Maajah, 2/754; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami’*, 6705) Some traders even think that their responsibility ends when they tell buyers at an auction: *“I am selling a heap of metal, a heap of metal...”* This is a sale in which there is no blessing, as the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“The two parties involved in a sale have the choice [to end it - i.e. the sale is not final] until they part. If both have been truthful and honest about any faults, the sale will be blessed, but if they have lied and concealed any faults, the blessing of the sale will be lost.”** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari; see *al-Fat-h*, 4/328)

Artificially inflating prices

This refers to the practice of artificially inflating the price with no intention of buying, in order to deceive others, thus pushing them to add more to the price they are offering. The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“Do not artificially inflate prices.”** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, see *Fat-h al-Baari*, 10/484). This is undoubtedly a form of deceit, and the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“Double-dealing and cheating will end in Hell.”** (See *Silsilat al-Ahaadeeth al-Saheehah*, 1057) Many salesmen at auctions and in car salesrooms are earning tainted and *Haraam* incomes because of the many *Haraam* things that they do, such as conspiring to artificially inflate prices and deceive purchasers, or to lower the price of one of their products, or conversely pretending to be customers and raising the prices at auctions to deceive and cheat.

Trading after the second call to prayer on Friday

Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): ***{O you who believe! When the call is proclaimed for the Salaah (prayer) on the day of Friday [Jumu’ah prayer], come to the remembrance of Allaah and leave off business [and every other thing], that is better for you if you did but know!}*** [Qur’aan 62:9]

Some people continue trading in their stores and in front of the mosque even after the second call to prayer; those who buy from them also share in their guilt, even if they only buy a *Siwaak* (natural toothbrush). According to the soundest opinion, this sale is invalid. Some owners of restaurants, bakeries and factories force their employees to work at the time of *Jumu'ah* prayers; even if this leads to an apparent increase in earnings, they will ultimately be losers in reality. The employee is obliged to act in accordance with the teaching of the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*: **“There is no obedience to a created being if it involves disobedience to Allaah.”** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 1/129; Ahmad Shaakir said: *“Its Isnaad is Saheeh”*, no. 1065)

Gambling

Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): *{O you who believe! Intoxicants [all kinds of alcoholic drinks], gambling, al-Ansaab [stone altars for sacrifices to idols, etc.], and al-Azlaam [arrows for seeking luck or decision] are an abomination of the Shaytaan's handiwork. So avoid [strictly all] that abomination, in order that you may be successful.}* [Qur'aan 5:90]

Gambling was very common during the *Jaahiliyyah*; in one of the most well-known forms of gambling, ten people would buy a camel, each paying an equal share, then they would throw down arrows – a form of drawing lots. Seven people would win unequal shares and three would be left empty-handed.

Nowadays there are many forms of gambling, including:

Lotteries and raffles, in which people pay money to buy numbers, then numbers are drawn for first prize, second prize, and so on for a variety of prizes. This is *Haraam*, even when it is supposedly done for charity.

Buying a product which includes something unknown, or paying for a number for a draw which will decide who gets what.

Another modern form of gambling is insurance, such as life insurance, car insurance, product insurance, insurance against fire or theft, third party insurance, comprehensive insurance, and so on. There are so many types of insurance that some singers even insure their voices!

All of the above are forms of gambling. Nowadays there are even clubs that are devoted exclusively to gambling, in which there are so-called “green tables” (roulette tables) just for people to commit this sin. Other forms of gambling include betting on horse races and other

sports, fruit-machines and the like in amusement centers, and competitions in which the victors win prizes, as a group of scholars have stated.

Theft

Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): *{Cut off [from the wrist joint] the [right] hand of the thief, male or female, as a recompense for that which they have committed, a punishment by way of example from Allaah. And Allaah is All-Powerful, All-Wise.}* [Qur'aan 5:38]

One of the worst forms of this sin is theft from the pilgrims who come on *Hajj* and *'Umrah* to the Ancient House of Allaah. This kind of thief has no respect for the limits set by Allaah The Almighty in the best region on earth and around the House of Allaah. In the report about *Salaat al-Kusoof* (the eclipse prayer), it is reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Hell was brought near, and that was when you saw me stepping backwards, because I feared that its heat would touch me. I saw therein the man with the crooked stick dragging his intestines in the Fire. He used to steal from the *Hujjaaj* (pilgrims) with his crooked stick. If they spotted him, he would say: 'This got caught on my stick,' and if they did not spot him, he would take whatever he had stolen . . ."**

Another of the worst forms of theft is stealing from the public purse. Some of those who do this say: *"We are only doing what others do."* They do not realize that what they are doing is effectively stealing from all the Muslims, because the public purse belongs to all the Muslims. Imitating those who do not fear Allaah The Almighty is no excuse. Some people steal from the wealth of the disbelievers on the grounds that they are disbelievers, but this is wrong; the only disbelievers whose wealth we are allowed to take away are those who are actively fighting the Muslims, which does not apply to every disbelieving individual or company.

Another form of theft is pick-pocketing, stealing something from a person's pocket without him realizing. Some thieves enter people's houses as visitors and steal from them. Some steal from their guests' bags. Some – including women – go into stores and hide things in their pockets or under their clothing. Some think that the theft of small or cheap items is of little consequence, but the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Allaah has cursed the thief who steals an egg and has his hand cut off, and the thief who steals a rope and has his hand cut off."** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, see *Fat-h al-Baari*, 12/81)

Everyone who steals something must first repent to Allaah The Almighty, then return the item to its rightful owner, whether openly or secretly, in person or via a third party. If he fails to find the rightful owner or his heirs after much effort, then he should give the

property in charity, with the intention that the reward should be given to the rightful owner.

Offering or accepting bribes

Giving a bribe to a *Qaadhi* or judge to make him turn a blind eye to the truth or to make a false claim succeed is a sin, because it leads to oppression and injustice for the person who is in the right, and it spreads corruption. Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): ***{And eat up not one another's property unjustly, nor give bribery to the rulers that you may knowingly eat up a part of the property of others sinfully.}*** [Qur'aan 2:188]

Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Allaah has cursed those who give and accept bribes with regard to judging."** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 2/387; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 5069) However, payments made in order to reach the truth or avert injustice when there is no other way of doing so are not included in this warning.

Bribery is so widespread nowadays that it more of a source of income than the regular salary for some workers. Some companies even include bribes as a factor in their budgets, under a variety of headings, and some dealings cannot begin or end without the payment of a bribe. Much harm is caused to the poor and many safeguards are broken because of bribes. Bribery is a cause of corruption whereby employees act against their employers, and one can only get good service if one pays a bribe – the person who refuses to pay will get shoddy or late service, and people who come after him but are willing to pay will be served before him.

Because of bribery, a great deal of money which is due to employers ends up in the pockets of sales representatives and those responsible for making company purchases. It is little wonder, then that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, prayed to Allaah The Almighty to deprive all those involved of His Mercy. 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: *"The Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: 'The curse of Allaah be upon the one who gives a bribe and the one who accepts it.'"* (Reported by Ibn Maajah, 2313; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 5114)

Seizing land by force

When there is no fear of Allaah, strength and cunning are a disaster because the one who possesses these qualities uses them to oppress others, such as seizing other people's possessions, including their land. The punishment for this is extremely severe. 'Abdullaah ibn 'Umar, may Allaah be pleased with them both, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Whoever seizes any piece of land unlawfully, on the**

Day of Resurrection Allaah will make the ground swallow him up to the seventh depth of the earth.” (Reported by Al-Bukhaari; see *al-Fat-h*)

Ya’la ibn Murrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“Any man who seizes a hand span of land, Allaah will tell him to dig it** (according to At-Tabaraani: **to bring it**) **to the seventh depth of the earth, then it will be placed around his neck on the Day of Resurrection, until Allaah has finished judging mankind.”** (Reported by At-Tabaraani in *al-Kabeer*, 22/270; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami’*, 9/27)

This also includes changing landmarks and boundaries in order to make one’s own land bigger at the expense of a neighbor, as is indicated by the words of the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*: **“Allaah has cursed the one who changes the boundary-markers of the land.”** (Reported by Muslim, with commentary by an-Nawawi, 13/141)

Accepting a gift in return for interceding

To have a position of high standing among people is one of the blessings of Allaah to His slave, if he is grateful. One way in which a person may give thanks for this blessing is by using his position to benefit other Muslims. This is part of the general meaning of the *Hadeeth*: **“Whoever among you is able to benefit his brother, then let him do so.”** (Reported by Muslim, 4/1726) The person who uses his position to benefit others by averting injustice or bringing some good, without doing anything that is *Haraam* or infringes on the rights of others, will be rewarded by Allaah The Almighty, so long as his intention is sincere, as the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, told us: **“Intercede, you will be rewarded.”** (Reported by Abu Daawood, 5132; the *Hadeeth* is also reported in *as-Saheehayn*, see *Fat-h al-Baari*, 10/450, *Kitaab al-Adab*, *Baab Ta’aawun al-Mu’mineen Ba’duhum Ba’dan*)

It is not permitted to accept anything in return for this intercession or mediation. Evidence for this may be seen in the *Hadeeth* narrated by Abu Umaamah, may Allaah be pleased with him in which the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“Whoever intercedes for someone then accepts a gift (in return for it), has committed a serious type of Riba.”** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 5/261; see *Saheeh al-Jaami’*, 6292)

Some people offer the opportunity to benefit from their position, in return for a sum of money, in order to help someone get a job, or a transfer from one office or area to another, or treatment for the sick, etc. The soundest opinion is that this exchange is *Haraam*, because of the *Hadeeth* of Abu Umaamah, may Allaah be pleased with him, quoted above, the apparent meaning of which is that accepting such gifts is wrong, even if no agreement was previously made. (From the spoken statements of ‘Abdul-‘Azeez ibn Baaz)

The reward which the good-doer will receive from Allaah The Almighty on the Day of Judgment should be sufficient. A man came to al-Hasan ibn Sahl, may Allaah have mercy on him, asking him to intercede for him in some matter, which he did; then the man came to thank him. Al-Hasan ibn Sahl, may Allaah have mercy on him, said to him: "*Why are you thanking us? We believe that Zakaah is due on positions of rank just as it is due on wealth.*" (Ibn Muflih, *al-Aadaab al-Shar'iyah*, 2/176)

It is worth pointing out here that there is a difference between hiring someone to do legal paperwork for you and paying him wages in return, which has to do with the legitimate hiring of labor, and using a person's position to intercede for you in return for money, which is *Haraam*.

Hiring someone and benefitting from his labor, then not paying him his wages

The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, encouraged speedy payment of wages to people hired for their labor. He, *sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: "**Give the hired man his wages before his sweat dries.**" (Reported by Ibn Maajah, 2/817; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 1493)

One form of oppression or injustice that is common in Muslim societies is the failure to give employees and workers their rights. This takes many forms, for example:

- Denying an employee's rights in totality, where the employee has no proof of his rights. He may have lost his dues in this world, but he will not lose them before Allaah on the Day of Resurrection. So the oppressor who consumed the money due to the victim will be brought forth, and his victim will be given some of his *Hasanaat* in compensation (i.e. some of the oppressor's good deeds will be added to his victim's credit). If the *Hasanaat* are not enough, some of the victim's *Sayyi'at* (bad deeds) will be added to the oppressor, and then he will be thrown into Hell.
- Not giving the employee his full rights. Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): **{Woe to al-Mutaffifeen [those who give less in measure and weight, i.e. decrease the rights of others].}** [Qur'aan 83:1] One example of this is the action of some bosses who bring workers from their homelands with a contract to pay a certain wage. Once the people are committed and have started to work for him, he goes and changes the contracts, altering them to state a lower wage than the one actually agreed upon. The employees stay because they have no choice and have no proof of their rights; all they can do is complain to Allaah The Almighty. If the employer is a Muslim and the employee is not, this lowering of wages is a way of turning people away from the Straight Path, and he will carry his sin.
- Making the employee do extra work or put in longer hours, without paying him overtime or giving him any more than the basic salary.

- Some bosses delay payment of wages and pay up only after much struggle, complaining, chasing and court cases. Their aim may be to make the employee give up his claim to his rightful wages and stop asking; or they may want to invest this money, perhaps by lending it for interest. Meanwhile, the poor employee cannot buy his daily bread or send anything home to his needy wife and children for whose sake he left to work overseas. Woe to those oppressors on that painful Day! Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“Allaah says: ‘There are three whom I will oppose on the Day of Resurrection: a man who gives his word, swearing by Me, then breaks it, a man who sells a free man into slavery and keeps the money, and a man who hires another and benefits from his labor, then does not pay him his wages.’”** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, see *Fat-h al-Baari*, 4/447)

Not giving gifts equally to one’s children

Some people show favoritism in the way they give gifts to some of their children but not others. According to the soundest opinion, doing this is *Haraam* unless there is some legitimate reason, such as one child being in greater need than the others due to sickness, being in debt, being rewarded for having memorized the entire Qur’aan, being unable to find a job, having a large family, being a full-time student, etc. When a father gives something to one of his children who is in need, he should have the intention to give similarly to any other children of his should the need arise. General proof of this principle may be seen in the *Aayah* (which means): { . . . *Be just: that is nearer to piety, and fear Allaah . . .* } [Qur'aan 5:8]

Specific evidence is found in the report of an-Nu’maan ibn Basheer, may Allaah be pleased with him, whose father brought him to the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and said: “I have given this son of mine a slave that I had.” The Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, asked him: **“Did you give all your children a similar gift?”** He said: “No.” The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“Then take [the gift] back.”** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, see *al-Fat-h*, 5/211) According to another report, the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“Fear Allaah and be fair to your children,”** so he went away and took his gift back. (*al-Fat-h* 5/211) According to a third report, he, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“Do not ask me to be a witness, for I will not bear witness to injustice.”** (Reported by Muslim, 3/1243)

Sons may be given twice as much as daughters, as in the case of inheritance, according to Imaam Ahmad, may Allaah have mercy on him (Abu Daawood, *Masaa'il al-Imaam Ahmad*, 204; Imaam Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allaah have mercy upon him, explained this in more detail in his footnotes). However, there are some families where fathers do not fear Allaah, and their favoritism creates hatred and jealousy among the children. A father may give one child

more because he looks like his paternal uncles, and give less to another child because he looks like his maternal uncles; or he may give more to the children of one wife and less to the children of another wife; or he may put one wife's children in private schools, but not the other wife's children. This will ultimately backfire on him, because in most cases the one who is deprived in this way will not respect his father or treat him kindly in the future. The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, asked the man who showed favoritism to one son: **"Do you not want all your children to respect you equally?"** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 4/269; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami*, 1623)

Asking people for money when one is not in need

Sahl ibn al-Handhaliyyah, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Whoever asks people for money when he has what is sufficient for him is only asking for more of the embers of Hell."** They asked him: "O Messenger of Allaah, what is sufficient so that he does not have to ask for more?" He, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Having enough to eat lunch and dinner."** (Reported by Abu Daawood, 2/281; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 6280) Ibn Mas'ood, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Whoever asks the people for money when he has what is sufficient for him will come on the Day of Judgment with scratches and lacerations on his face."** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 1/388; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 6255) Some beggars come to the mosques, interrupting people's worship with their complaints; some of them lie, bringing forged papers and telling tall stories; some of them distribute their family members around different mosques, then they regroup and move on to other mosques. Some of these people may in fact be well-off, to an extent which only Allaah knows; only when they die do others find out what they have left behind. Meanwhile, there are others who are truly in need, but people are not aware of it and may think they have enough, because they are too proud and do not beg of people at all; nobody knows their true situation, so no-one gives them charity.

Seeking a loan with no intention of paying it back

The dues owed by one person to another are very important in the sight of Allaah The Almighty, so much so that if a person falls short in his duties towards Him, he may be forgiven if he repents, but when it comes to the rights of other people, he has to fulfill them before the Day comes, when *Deenaars* and *Dirhams* will be of no avail, and only good and bad deeds will count. Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): **{Verily, Allaah commands that you should render back the trusts to those to whom they are due . . .}** [Qur'aan 4:58]

One of the widespread problems in our society is this casual approach to loans; some people take out loans not for some urgent need but because they want to expand their businesses or keep up with others by buying new cars or furniture or other temporary luxuries of this life.

Often these people let themselves in for the confusion of installment plans, which are dubious or maybe even *Haraam*.

A casual approach to loans leads people to delay repayments, which in turn leads to loss and financial ruin of others. Warning of the consequences of this deed, the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“Whoever takes people’s money with the intention of paying them back, Allaah will pay him back, but whoever takes people’s money with the intention of wasting it, Allaah will destroy him.”** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari; see *Fat-h al-Baari*, 5/54) People take the matter of loans very lightly, but in the sight of Allaah it is a serious matter, so much so that even the *Shaheed* (martyr), with his immense reward and high status, is not free of the consequences of debt. Evidence of this is seen in the *Hadeeth* in which the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“Glory be to Allaah, Who has revealed the seriousness of debt. By the One in Whose hand is my soul, if a man were slain in the way of Allaah, then brought back to life, then killed again and brought back to life again, then killed a third time, but he owed a debt, he would not be admitted to Paradise until his debt was paid off.”** (Reported by An-Nasaa’i; see *al-Mujtabaa*, 7/314, and *Saheeh al-Jaami’*, 3594)

Now will these squanderers be deterred from such a casual approach?

Consuming Haraam wealth

The person who does not fear Allaah The Almighty does not care where he earns his money or how he spends it; his only concern is to increase his bank balance, even if it is *Haraam* and ill-gotten by means of theft, bribery, extortion, forgery, selling *Haraam* things, *Riba*, consuming an orphan’s wealth, earnings from *Haraam* work like fortune-telling, immorality or singing, stealing from the Muslim treasury or public property, taking people’s money by coercion or high-pressure sales tactics, begging when one is not in need, etc. Then he buys food, clothing and transportation with this ill-gotten money, and builds or rents a house, and furnishes it, and fills his stomach with *Haraam* food. The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“Any flesh that grows from ill-gotten gains is more deserving of being touched by Hell-fire . . .”** (Reported by At-Tabaraani in *al-Kabeer*, 19/136; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami’*, 4495) On the Day of Resurrection, each person will be asked how he earned money and on what he spent it, and there will be doom and loss. Anyone who still has *Haraam* money should hasten to get rid of it; if it is due to anyone else, then he should hasten to return it and ask for his forgiveness before there comes a Day on which *Dinaars* and *Dirhams* will be of no avail, and all that will count will be good deeds and bad ones.

Drinking Khamr (intoxicants) - even if a single drop

Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): { . . . *Intoxicants [all kinds of alcoholic drinks], gambling, al-Ansaab [stone altars for sacrifices to idols, etc.] and al-Azlaam [arrows for seeking luck or decision] are an abomination of the Shaytaan's handiwork. So avoid [strictly] all that [abomination] in order that you may be successful.* } [Qur'aan 5:90]

The command to avoid these things is the strongest indication that they are forbidden. *Khamr* (wine, alcohol) is compared to *Al-Ansaab*, which were idols of the disbelievers; there is no excuse for those who argue that the Qur'aan does not say it is forbidden but only tells us to avoid it!

The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, also issued a stern warning to the one who drinks *Khamr*. Jaabir, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that he, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Allaah has promised the one who drinks *Khamr* that He will make him drink the mud of *Khibaal*."** The people asked: "O Messenger of Allaah, what is the mud of *Khibaal*?" He, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"The sweat of the people of Hell, or the juice of the people of Hell."** (Reported by Muslim, 3/1587) Ibn 'Abbaas reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Whoever dies and has the habit of drinking *Khamr*, he will meet Allaah as one who worships idols."** (Reported by At-Tabaraani, 12/45; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 6525)

Nowadays there are very many kinds of *Khamr*, with many names in Arabic and other languages, such as *Ji'ah* (beer), alcohol, *Araq* ("arrack"), vodka, champagne, etc. There has appeared in this *Ummah* the type of person described by the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*: **"Some people of my *Ummah* will drink *Khamr*, calling it by another name."** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 5/342; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 5453) So they may call it "spirits" instead of *Khamr*, as an attempt to practice deception and distort the facts. Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): **{*They (think to) deceive Allaah and those who believe, while they only deceive themselves, and perceive (it) not!*}** [Qur'aan 2:9]

Islaam imposes strict controls on this matter, and deals with it decisively so that there is no room for misunderstanding. The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Every intoxicant is *Khamr* and every intoxicant is *Haraam*."** (Reported by Muslim, 3/1587) Everything that has the effect of clouding the mind is *Haraam*, whether in large or small amounts. (The *Hadeeth*: **"Whatever causes intoxication in large amounts, a small amount of it is *Haraam*,"** was reported by Abu Daawood, no. 3681; see *Saheeh Abu Daawood*, no. 3128). No matter how many different names there are, they all refer to one thing, and the ruling concerning it is well-known.

Finally, the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, issued a warning to those who drink *Khamr*:

“Whoever drinks *Khamr* and becomes intoxicated, his prayers will not be accepted for forty days, and if he dies he will enter Hell, and if he repents Allaah will accept his repentance. If he drinks again and becomes intoxicated again, his prayers will not be accepted for forty days, and if he dies he will enter Hell, and if he repents Allaah will accept his repentance. If he drinks again and becomes intoxicated again, his prayers will not be accepted for forty days, and if he dies he will enter Hell, and if he repents Allaah will accept his repentance. If he drinks a fourth time, Allaah promises that He will make him drink from the mud of *Khibaal* on the Day of Resurrection. The people asked: “O Messenger of Allaah, what is the mud of *Khibaal*?” He, *sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“The juice of the people of Hell.”** (Reported by Ibn Maajah, no. 3377; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami’*, 6313)

Using vessels of gold and silver, or eating and drinking from them

Nowadays hardly any household goods stores are free of vessels made of gold and silver, or plated with these metals. The same applies to homes of rich people and many hotels. This kind of thing has become one of the precious gifts that people give one another on special occasions. Some people may not have these things at home, but they use them in other people’s homes and when invited to a meal. All of these are actions which are forbidden in Islaam. The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, issued a stern warning about using such vessels. Umm Salamah, may Allaah be pleased with her, reported that he, *sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“The one who eats or drinks from a vessel of gold or silver is putting fire from Hell into his stomach.”** (Reported by Muslim, 3/1634) This ruling applies to every kind of vessel or utensil that is made of gold or silver, such as plates, forks, spoons, knives, trays on which food is offered to guests, boxes of sweets which are given to wedding guests, and so on.

Some people might say: “We are not using them; we are just putting them on display in a glass case.” This is not permitted either, to prevent any possibility of these things being used. (From the spoken statements of Shaykh ‘Abdul-‘Azeez ibn Baaz, may Allaah have mercy on him.)

Bearing false witness

Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): { . . . ***So shun the abomination [worship] of idols, and shun lying speech [false statements] - Hunafaa’ Lillah [i.e., to worship none but Allaah], not associating partners [in worship, etc.] unto Him . . .*** } [Qur’aan 22:30-31]

‘Abdur-Rahmaan ibn Abi Bakrah, may Allaah be pleased with him and his father, reported that his father said: “We were with the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, when he said: **‘I fear for you three major sins’ - three times: ‘associating partners with Allaah,**

disobedience to parents, and -' - he, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, was reclining but he sat up at this point and said: **'- and bearing false witness.'** He kept repeating this with such fervor that we wished he would stop (for his own sake)." (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, see *al-Fat-h*, 5/261)

The warning against bearing false witness was uttered repeatedly because people take it too lightly and there are many motives for doing so, such as hatred and envy. The resulting corruption is great indeed: how many people have lost their rights because of false witness! How many innocent people have been treated unjustly, and how many people have gained what they did not deserve, because of it!

An example of the ways in which people take this matter lightly is what sometimes happens in the courts, when a person might say to someone he has only just met: "Testify for me and I will testify for you." So one might testify for the other in a case where he does not have the necessary knowledge of what really happened, like testifying that this person owns a piece of land or a house, or recommending him when he has never seen him before that day in court. This is lying and false witness, whereas testimony should be as described in the Book of Allaah: **{... we testify not except according to what we know ...}** [Qur'aan 12:81]

Listening to music and musical instruments

Ibn Mas'ood, may Allaah be pleased with him, used to swear by Allaah The Almighty that the *Aayah* (which means): **{And of mankind is he who purchases idle talk to mislead [men] from the Path of Allaah ...}** [Qur'aan 31:6] referred to singing. Abu 'Aamir and Abu Maalik al-Ash'ari, may Allaah be pleased with them both, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Among my Ummah will be those who make permissible al-Hirra [Zina], silk, Khamr and musical instruments ..."** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari; see *al-Fat-h*, 10/51) Anas, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"In this Ummah there will be punishments of earthquakes, showers of stones and deformity [transformation into animals]; that will be when the people drink Khamr, listen to female singers and play musical instruments."** (See *as-Silsilah as-Saheehah*, 2203; attributed to Ibn Abu Ad-Dunyaa, *Dhamm al-Malaahi*; the *Hadeeth* was narrated by At-Tirmithi, no. 2212)

The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, forbade the *Koobah* (a kind of drum), and described the flute as the voice of the immoral fool. The early scholars such as Imaam Ahmad, may Allaah have mercy on him, stated that musical instruments such as the 'Ood (lute), *Tamboor* (a long-necked stringed instrument), reed flute, *Rabaab* (stringed instrument resembling a fiddle) and cymbal, were *Haraam*; no doubt modern instruments such as the violin, *Qaanoon* (stringed musical instrument resembling a zither), organ, piano, guitar, etc., are also included in the his prohibition of musical instruments, because their effect and impact is greater than that of the ancient instruments mentioned in some *Ahaadeeth*. They

are even more intoxicating than *Khamr*, as scholars such as Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allaah have mercy on him, mentioned. No doubt the prohibition, and the sin involved, are greater when the music is accompanied by singing and the voices of female singers, and it is even worse when the lyrics speak of love and describe physical beauty. Hence the scholars said that singing paves the way for *Zina* (fornication or adultery), and that it makes hypocrisy grow in the heart. Generally speaking, music and singing form one of the greatest temptations of our times.

What is very difficult is the fact that nowadays music is a part of so many things, such as clocks, doorbells, children's toys, computers, telephones, etc., and avoiding it takes a great deal of determination. Allaah is the source of help.

Gossip and backbiting

Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): **{And do not spy or backbite each other. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his brother when dead? You would detest it.}** [Qur'aan 49:12]

The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, explained the meaning of this *Aayah*. He said: **"Do you know what Gheebah [gossip or backbiting] is?"** They said: *"Allaah and His Messenger know best."* He, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"To say something about your brother that he does not want to be said."** He was asked: *"What do you think if what is said about him is true?"* He, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"If what you say about him is true, this is backbiting, and if what you say about him is not true, this is a lie."** (Reported by Muslim, 4/2001)

Gossip or backbiting means saying something about a Muslim which may be true but which he does not like to hear spoken, whether it be about his physical appearance, his adherence to religion, his worldly affairs, his self, his behavior or his character. There are many forms of gossip, including talking about a person's faults and imitating him to make fun of him.

People take the matter of *Gheebah* very lightly, although it is very serious in the sight of Allaah, as is indicated by the words of the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*: **"There are seventy-two forms of Riba, the least of which is as bad as a man having intercourse with his own mother, and the worst of which is when a man slanders the honor of his brother."** (*Silsilat as-Saheeh*, 1871)

The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, encouraged us to do defend the person whom we are hearing others backbiting, when he, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Whoever defends the honor of his Muslim brother, Allaah will protect his face from the Fire on the Day of Resurrection."** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 6/450; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 6238).

Slander

Some people go about repeating the words of others to cause trouble between people; this is one of the greatest causes of broken relations and stirring up feelings of hatred among people. Allaah The Almighty condemned the one who does this, Saying (what means): **{And obey not everyone who swears much, - and is considered worthless, a slanderer, going about with calumnies.}** [Qur'aan 68:10-11]

Huthayfah, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"No eavesdropper will enter Paradise."** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, see *al-Fat-h*, 10/472; "eavesdropper" here refers to a person who eavesdrops on others without their knowing, then goes and tells others what he has heard)

Ibn 'Abbaas, may Allaah be pleased with him and his father, said: *"The Prophet of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, passed by one of the gardens of Madeenah, and heard the sound of two people being punished in their graves. The Prophet of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: 'They are being punished, but they are not being punished for any major sin; one of them used never to clean himself properly after urinating, and the other used to spread malicious slander . . .'"* (Reported by Al-Bukhaari; see *Fat-h al-Baari*, 1/317)

One of the worst forms of this sin is to cause trouble between a husband and wife, or vice versa, or to tell one's boss what other employees are saying, in order to create trouble. All of this is *Haraam*.

Looking into people's houses without their permission

Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): **{O you who believe! Enter not houses other than your own, until you have asked permission and greeted those in them . . .}** [Qur'aan 24:27]

The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, explained that the reason why permission was to be sought was for fear that the person seeking to enter might see something private in the house: **"The rule of seeking permission has been established for the sake of [not] seeing."** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, see *Fat-h al-Baari*, 11/24) Nowadays, when houses and buildings are too close to one another or even attached, and doors and windows face one another, the possibility of neighbors seeing one another has increased greatly. Many people do not lower their gaze, and some of those who live on higher floors may deliberately look down from their roofs and windows into neighboring homes that are lower than their own. This is an act of betrayal and an invasion of their neighbors' privacy, as well as being the way that leads to *Haraam* deeds. A great deal of misery and trouble has resulted from this, and that fact that the *Sharee'ah* counts the eye of the one who spies as worthless is sufficient proof of the seriousness of the matter. The Messenger of Allaah,

sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: **"Whoever looks into somebody's house without their permission, it is permissible for them to put out his eye."** (Reported by Muslim, 3/1699) According to another report, he, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Put out his eye, and there will be no penalty or retribution."** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 2/385; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 6022)

Two people conversing privately to the exclusion of a third

This is one of the problems that exist in social gatherings, and it is one of the ways in which the Shaytaan divides the Muslims and makes some of them hate others. The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, explained the rule and the wisdom behind it: **"If you are three, then two should not converse privately to the exclusion of a third until you are joined by other people, because this will make him sad."** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, see *Fat-h al-Baari*, 11/83) This also includes three people talking privately to the exclusion of a fourth, and so on, and two people speaking in a language which the third does not understand, because this is undoubtedly a form of disdain towards the third, and gives the impression that they intend to hurt him, etc.

Isbaal - wearing clothes that come down below the ankles

One of the things which people treat as insignificant, although it is serious in the sight of Allaah, is *Isbaal*, which means lengthening one's clothes below the ankles; some people let their clothes touch the ground, and some allow them to drag on the floor behind them.

Abu Tharr, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"There are three to whom Allaah will not speak on the Day of Resurrection, nor look at nor praise: the one who wears his lower garment below the ankles; the one who reminds others of his gifts or favors; and the one who sells his product by means of lies and false oaths."** (Reported by Muslim, 1/102)

The one who says: *"I am not wearing my clothes below my ankles out of arrogance"* is in fact praising himself in a way that is unacceptable. The warning against *Isbaal* is issued to all, regardless of whether they do it out of arrogance or not, as the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Whatever part of the lower garment is below the ankles is in Hell."** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 6/254; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 5571) The person whose *Isbaal* is the result of arrogance will be more severely punished than the one who has no such intention, as the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Whoever trails his garment out of pride, Allaah will not even look at him on the Day of Resurrection."** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, no. 3465, *al-Bagha* edition) - this is because he is combining two sins in one action.

Wearing any clothes below the ankle is *Haraam*, as is indicated in the *Hadeeth* narrated by Ibn 'Umar, may Allaah be pleased with him and his father, that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Isbaal may be done with an Izaar [lower garment], Qamees [shirt or upper garment] and 'Amaamah [turban]; whoever drags any part of them on the ground out of pride, Allaah will not look at him on the Day of Resurrection."** (Reported by Abu Daawood, 4/353; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 2770) Women are permitted to lengthen their garments by one or two hand-spans to cover the feet or as a precaution against anything being uncovered by the wind, etc., but it is not permitted to do more than that, as is done with some wedding dresses which may have a train several meters long, which has to be carried behind the bride.

Men wearing gold in any shape or form

Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Silk and gold have been permitted for the females of my Ummah, and have been forbidden for the males."** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 4/393; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 207)

The market nowadays is filled with any number of items designed for men, such as watches, spectacles, buttons, pens, chains and so-called "medallions," made of gold of various standards, or completely gold-plated. One of the common sins occurs in competitions where among the prizes are men's gold watches.

Ibn 'Abbaas, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, saw a man wearing a gold ring; he took it and threw it aside, saying: **"Would any of you take a burning ember from Hell and hold it in his hand?"** After the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, had gone away, someone suggested to the man: "Why do you not take your ring and benefit from it (i.e. sell it)?" He said: "No, by Allaah, I will never take it back when the Messenger of Allaah has thrown it aside." (Reported by Muslim, 3/1655)

Women wearing short, tight or see-through clothes

One of the ways in which our enemies are attacking us in modern times is by means of the fashions which they design and promote, and which have become popular among Muslims. These fashions do not cover anything, because they are so short, transparent or tight; many of them are inappropriate for wearing even in front of other women or one's own *Mahrams*! The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, told us that these kinds of clothes would appear among the women of the end times, as was reported in the *Hadeeth* narrated by Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him: **"There are two types of the people of Hell that I have not seen: people who have whips like the tails of cattle, with which they strike the**

people; and women who are dressed but naked, walking with an enticing gait, with their hair looking like the humps of camels, leaning sideways. They will not enter Paradise or even smell its fragrance, although its fragrance can be detected from such-and-such a distance." (Reported by Muslim, 3/1680)

Also included in this type of clothes are the garments worn by some women which have long slits from the hem, or pieces cut out here and there; when the woman wearing this sits down, her *'Awrah* becomes visible, apart from the fact that by wearing such clothes a woman is resembling the disbelievers and following their fashions and trends of revealing clothes. We ask Allaah The Almighty to keep us safe from all that. Another serious matter as regards clothing is the bad pictures which appear on some clothes, such as pictures of singers and rock groups, bottles of wine etc., pictures of animate beings which are forbidden in Islaam, crosses, logos of immoral clubs and societies, or bad words which do not befit people of honor, which may be written in foreign languages.

Wearing wigs and hairpieces, whether made from natural or artificial hair, for men and women

Asmaa' bint Abi Bakr, may Allaah be pleased with her, said: "A woman came to the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and said: 'O Messenger of Allaah, I have a daughter who is going to be married; she had a fever and lost much of her hair - can I attach false hair to her head?' He, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: '**Allaah has cursed the one who attaches false hair and the one who has this done.**'" (Reported by Muslim, 3/1676) Jaabir ibn 'Abdullaah, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: "The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, issued strict instructions that no woman should add anything to her head." (Reported by Muslim, 3/1679)

Examples of this include the things known nowadays as wigs and hair extensions, and the many evil things with which salons are crowded. Also included are the artificial wigs worn by some debauched and immoral actors and actresses.

Men resembling women and women resembling men, in dress, speech and appearance

Part of the *Fitrah* (sound innate disposition of humankind) is that men should preserve the masculinity which Allaah The Almighty has created in them, and women should preserve the femininity which Allaah The Almighty has created in them. Without this, decent human life becomes impossible. Men resembling women and vice versa is something which goes against man's innate nature and opens the door to corruption and widespread promiscuity. The ruling in the *Sharee'ah* is that when it is stated that the person who does a thing is cursed, that thing is *Haraam*. Ibn 'Abbaas, may Allaah be pleased with him and his father, reported that the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: "**Allaah has cursed**

the men who make themselves look like women and the women who make themselves look like men." (Reported by Al-Bukhaari; see *al-Fat-h*, 10/332) Ibn 'Abbaas, may Allaah be pleased with him and his father, also reported that the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Allaah has cursed effeminate men and masculine women."** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, see *al-Fat-h*, 3\10/333) The resemblance may be in the way they move, walk and speak.

The clothes of men and women should be different in style, details and color. The evidence that the two sexes should not resemble one another in dress is found in the *Hadeeth* narrated by Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, in which the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Allaah has cursed the man who wears women's clothes and the woman who wear men's clothes."** (Reported by Abu Daawood, 4/355; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 5071)

Dyeing one's hair black

The correct opinion is that it is *Haraam* to do this, because of the warning mentioned in the *Hadeeth*: **"At the end of time there will be people who dye their hair black like the crops of pigeons; they will never smell the fragrance of Paradise."** (Reported by Abu Daawood, 4/419; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 8153) This practice is widespread among those who have grey hairs, which they cover with black dye; this leads to many evils, such as deceit, and cheating people by boasting of something which is not true. It is true that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, used to dye his grey hairs with henna, which gave a yellowish, reddish or brownish hue. When Abu Quhaafah, whose hair and beard was as white as *Thughaamah* (a plant whose leaves and flowers are intensely white) was brought to him on the day of the Conquest of Makkah, the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Change this with something, but avoid black."** (Reported by Muslim, 3/1663) The correct view is that women are like men in this regard: they are not permitted to dye any hairs black that are not black.

Having pictures of animate beings on clothing, walls or paper, etc.

'Abdullaah ibn Mas'ood, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"The people who will be most severely punished by Allaah on the Day of Resurrection are the picture-makers."** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, see *al-Fat-h*, 10/382) Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Allaah Says: 'Who does more wrong than the one who tries to create something like My creation; let him create a grain of wheat or an ear of corn . . .'"** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, see *Fat-h al-Baari*, 10/385) Ibn 'Abbaas, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: *"Every picture-maker will be in the Fire, and for each picture that he made he will be given a soul, and he will be punished in Hell."* Ibn 'Abbaas

said: "If you must make pictures, draw trees and things that do not possess a soul." (Reported by Muslim, 3/1671) These *Ahaadeeth* clearly indicate that it is *Haraam* to make images of animate beings, whether they are humans or different kinds of animals, whether the images are two- or three dimensional. Pictures are forbidden whether they are drawn, engraved, carved, etched or cast from moulds. The *Ahaadeeth* which forbid making pictures cover all these methods.

The Muslim should accept what the *Sharee'ah* says, without arguing. Some may say: "Well, I am not worshipping these pictures or prostrating to them!" But if you look closely and think about just one of the bad effects of the widespread presence of pictures in our times, you will understand the wisdom behind this prohibition: one of these is the provocation of sexual desire which leads to immorality.

The Muslim should not keep any pictures of animate beings in his house, because this prevents the angels from entering his home. The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: "**The angels do not enter a house where there is a dog or pictures.**" (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, see *al-Fat-h*, 10/380) In many houses there are even statues, some of which represent the gods of the disbelievers, which are kept for decoration; these are more *Haraam* than other kinds, just as pictures which are hung up are worse than pictures which are not hung up. How often have pictures led to glorification and grief, and led to boasting! We should not say that the pictures are kept for memories, for true memories of dear fellow-Muslims lie in the heart, and one remembers them by praying for forgiveness and mercy for them. One should remove all these pictures, or blot them out, except when it is too difficult to do so, as with these pictures which are all over food packaging, or in encyclopedias and reference books; even then, you should try to remove it, and to be careful about the bad pictures in some books. It is permissible to keep some necessary pictures, such as those on identity cards and licenses, or pictures which are walked on (such as pictures on carpets). **{So keep your duty to Allaah and fear Him as much as you can . . .}** [Qur'aan 64:16]

Lying about one's dreams

Some people deliberately fabricate dreams and visions that they have not really seen, as a means of gaining spiritual prestige and fame, or for some material gains, or to scare their enemies, and the like. Many of the common people have a strong belief in dreams and are easily deceived by such lies about them. The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, gave a stern warning to whoever does this: "**One of the worst types of lie is for a man to claim to belong to someone other than his real father, or to claim to have seen something which he did not see, or to attribute to the Messenger of Allaah words that he did not say.**" (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, see *al-Fat-h*, 6/540) The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, also said: "**Whoever claims to have seen a dream which he did not see will be ordered to tie two grains together, and he will never be able to do it . . .**" (Reported by Al-

Bukhaari; see *al-Fat-h*, 12/427) Tying two grains together is impossible, so the punishment will suit the crime.

Sitting or walking on graves, or answering the call of nature in a graveyard

Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"If any of you were to sit on a live coal and let it burn his clothes until it reached his skin, this would be better for him than sitting on a grave."** (Reported by Muslim, 2/667) As for stepping on graves, many people do this, and when a person is buried you can see people who do not care where they walk (even wearing shoes sometimes) on neighboring graves, with no respect for the dead. The seriousness of this matter is clear from the words of the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*: **"If I were to walk on coals or on a sword, or to mend my shoe with my own foot, this would be better for me than walking on the grave of a Muslim."** (Reported by Ibn Maajah, 1/499; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 5038) So what about those who take over the site of a graveyard and build companies or homes there?

As for responding to the call of nature in a graveyard, this is something done by people who have no morals at all. When they feel the need, they jump over the wall of the graveyard and offend the dead with their unpleasant odors and impure waste matter. The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"I would not care if it were in the middle of the graveyard or in the middle of the marketplace"** i.e. answering the call of nature in a graveyard is like uncovering one's *'Awwrah* and answering the call of nature in front of people in a marketplace. Those who deliberately throw their trash into graveyards (especially those which are abandoned and whose walls are broken down) are included in this condemnation. Among the etiquette required of those who visit graveyards is taking off their shoes when they want to walk between graves.

Not cleaning oneself properly after passing water

One of the beauties of Islaam is that it teaches everything that will improve and reform humankind, including how to remove impurities by cleaning oneself properly after urinating or defecating. But some people are very careless about this matter, and allow their clothes and bodies to become contaminated, thus causing their prayers to be invalidated. The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, told us that this is one of the causes for the punishment in the grave. Ibn 'Abbaas, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: *"The Prophet of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, passed by one of the gardens of Madeenah, and heard the sound of two men being punished in their graves. The Prophet of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "They are being punished, but they are not being punished for any major sin. One of them used not to clean himself properly after urinating, and the other used to spread malicious gossip."* (Reported by Al-Bukhaari; see *Fat-h al-Baari*, 1/317)

Indeed, the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said that **"most of the punishment of the grave will be because of urine."** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 2/326; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 1213) Not cleaning oneself properly after urinating also includes undue haste in completing the action, or deliberately urinating in a position or place where the urine can come back on oneself, or failing to clean oneself afterwards, or not cleaning oneself properly. Modern imitation of the disbelievers has reached such an extent that some rest rooms for men contain wall-mounted urinals which are open to view, so a person who uses them is urinating in full view of anyone who comes and goes with no shame, in the midst of impurity. Thus he combines two abhorrent and forbidden acts in one deed: not hiding his private parts from the view of others, and nor cleaning himself properly after urinating.

Eavesdropping on people who do not want to be heard

Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): { . . . *And spy not [on one another] . . .* } [Qur'aan 49:12]

Ibn 'Abbaas, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Whoever listens to people's conversations without their permission will have molten lead poured into his ears on the Day of Resurrection . . ."** (Reported by At-Tabaraani in *al-Kabeer*, 11/248-249; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 6004)

If this person then goes and tells others of the conversation he overheard in order to cause trouble for them, then his sin of spying is compounded by another sin, as the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"The eavesdropper will not enter Paradise."** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, see *Fath al-Baari*, 10/472)

Being a bad neighbor

Allaah The Almighty has enjoined kind treatment of neighbors in the Qur'aan, where He Says (what means): {*Worship Allaah and join none with Him in worship, and do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, the poor, the neighbor who is near of kin, the neighbor who is a stranger, the companion by your side, the wayfarer [you meet], and those slaves whom your right hands possess. Verily, Allaah does not like such as are proud and boastful.*} [Qur'aan 4:36]

Harming a neighbor is *Haraam* because of the greatness of his rights. Abu Shurayh, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"By Allaah, he does not believe, by Allaah, he does not believe, by Allaah, he does not believe."** He was asked: "Who, O Messenger of Allaah?" He, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*,

said: **"The one from whose harm his neighbor is not safe."** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, see *Fat-h al-Baari*, 10/443)

The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, regarded the praise or criticism of a neighbor as a measure of a person's goodness or badness. Ibn Mas'ood, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that a man said to the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*: "O Messenger of Allaah, how may I know if I am doing well or not?" The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"If you hear your neighbor say that you are good, then you are doing well, and if you hear him saying that you are bad, you are not doing well."** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 1/402, see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 623)

Harming a neighbor may take many forms, including: not allowing him to fix a piece of wood to a shared wall or fence; expanding one's dwelling in such a way as to deprive him of sun or air without his permission; opening windows overlooking his house and looking out of them in an invasion of his privacy; disturbing him with loud sounds such as hammering or shouting, especially when he is asleep or resting; or throwing trash in front of his door. The sin of such deeds is increased when they are done to a neighbor, as the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"If a man were to commit adultery with ten women, it would be better for him than committing adultery with the wife of his neighbor, and if a man were to steal from ten houses, it would be better for him than stealing from the house of his neighbor."** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari in *al-Adab al-Mufrad*, no. 103; see also *as-Silsilah as-Saheehah*, 65) Some treacherous people take advantage of a neighbor's absence during his night shift to enter his house and commit immoral acts. Woe to them of the punishment of a painful Day!

Writing a will for the purpose of harming one of the heirs

One of the basic principles of the *Sharee'ah* is that there should be neither harming nor reciprocating harm. One example of this harm is writing a will that deprives one or some of the legitimate heirs of his or their rights. Such a person is warned by the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*: **"Whoever harms [others], Allaah will harm him, and whoever makes things difficult for others, Allaah will make things difficult for him."** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 3/453; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 6348) Ways in which a person's will can harm others is by denying an heir of his rights, or giving an heir more than he is entitled to in the *Sharee'ah*, or by bequeathing more than a third to any one person.

In places where people are not subject to the rule of the *Sharee'ah*, it may be difficult for a person to take what is his by rights granted by Allaah The Almighty, because courts that apply man-made laws may order that the unfair will registered with a lawyer be executed. Allaah The Almighty Said (what means): **{Woe to them for what their hands have written and woe to them for that they earn thereby.}** [Qur'aan 2:79]

Playing with dice

Many popular games involve elements that are *Haraam*; among them are games in which pieces are moved according to the throw of a dice, such as backgammon, etc. The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, warned that these dice open the door to gambling: **"Whoever plays with dice, it is as if he dipped his finger in the flesh and blood of swine."** (Reported by Muslim, 4/1770) Abu Moosa, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Whoever plays with dice has disobeyed Allaah and His Messenger."** (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 4/394; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 6505)

Cursing a believer or someone who does not deserve to be cursed

Many people do not control their tongues at times of anger, and are quick to curse people, animals, inanimate objects, days, hours, etc. They may even curse themselves and their children, or a husband may curse his wife and vice versa. This is a very serious matter. Abu Zayd Thaabit ibn adh-Dhahhaak al-Ansari, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **". . . whoever curses a believer, it is as if he killed him."** (Reported Al-Bukhaari, see *Fat-h al-Baari*, 10/465) Because cursing is more common among women, the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, explained that this would be one of the reasons for them entering Hell, and that those who curse will not be intercessors on the Day of Resurrection. More serious than that is the fact that the curse will come back on the one who utters it, if he says it unfairly; in that case he will have prayed against himself and excluded himself from the mercy of Allaah.

Wailing (at the time of bereavement)

One of the *Haraam* deeds that some women do is to raise their voices in screaming and eulogizing the dead, striking their faces, tearing their clothes, cutting or tearing out their hair, etc. All of this indicates that a person does not accept the decree of Allaah and is not bearing disaster with fortitude and patience. The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, cursed the one who does this. Abu Umaamah, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, cursed the woman who strikes her face, tears her clothes and cries out about woe and doom. (Reported by Ibn Maajah, 1/505; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 5068) 'Abdullaah ibn Mas'ood, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"He is not one of us who strikes his cheeks, tears his clothes and prays with the supplication of the *Jaahiliyyah*."** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, see *Fat-h al-Baari*, 3/163) The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"If the woman who wails does not repent before her death, she will be raised on the Day of Resurrection wearing a shirt of tar and a garment of scabs."** (Reported by Muslim, no. 934)

Striking or branding the face

Jaabir, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: "*The Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, forbade striking or branding the face.*" (Reported by Muslim, 3/1673)

Branding animals in the face is done to make a distinguishing mark so that each animal's owner may be known and the animal may be returned to him if it is lost. This is *Haraam*, because it causes suffering and deformity. If people claim that this is their tribal custom and that a distinguishing mark is necessary, it should be made on some other part of the animal, not on the face.

Abandoning a Muslim brother for more than three days with no legitimate reason

This is one of the ways in which the Shaytaan causes division among Muslims, and those who follow in the footsteps of the Shaytaan may forsake a Muslim brother for no legitimate reason, but because of a dispute over money or some trivial disagreement. This division may continue for a lifetime, with one swearing that he will never speak to the other and vowing never to set foot in his house, turning away if he sees him in the street and ignoring him if he happens to encounter him in a gathering, shaking hands with everyone else but him. This is a cause of weakness in the Muslim community, hence the ruling concerning this is decisive and the warning against it is stern. Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: "**It is not permitted for a Muslim to forsake his brother for more than three (days); whoever does this and dies, he will enter Hell.**" (Reported by Abu Daawood, 5/215; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 7635)

Abu Khuraash al-Aslami, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: "**Whoever forsakes his brother for a year, it is as if he has shed his blood.**" (Reported by Al-Bukhaari in *al-Adab al-Mufrad*, hadeeth no. 406; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 6557)

It is bad enough that division among Muslims results in their being deprived of the forgiveness of Allaah, may He be glorified. Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: "**The deeds of the people are shown to Allaah twice a week, on Mondays and Thursdays; He forgives all His believing slaves, except for the one between whom and his brother is enmity. He says: 'Leave these two until they reconcile.'**" (Reported by Muslim, 4/1988)

Whichever of the two parties repents to Allaah must then go back to his brother and greet him with *Salaam*; if he does this and the other person ignores him, then the former is free of blame and the responsibility falls upon the latter. Abu Ayyoob reported that the Prophet of

Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"It is not permissible for a man to forsake his brother for more than three nights, each turning away if they meet. The better of the two is the one who is the first to greet the other with *Salaam*."** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, *Fat-h al-Baari*, 10/492)

There may be cases where there is a legitimate reason for forsaking a person, such as his not praying, or persisting in immorality. If forsaking him will benefit him by bringing him to his senses and making him see the error of his ways, then it is obligatory to forsake him, but if it will only make him more stubborn and persistent in his sin, then it is not right to forsake him, because nothing is achieved by doing so. Forsaking him will only make matters worse, so the right thing to do is to continue treating him kindly, and advising and reminding him.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this is what Allaah The Almighty has enabled me to write about the prohibitions that are widely ignored. This is a lengthy topic, and in order that readers may further benefit, another chapter is needed, in which a group of prohibitions mentioned in the Qur'aan and *Sunnah* will be listed. This will appear as a separate work, *In shaa' Allaah*. I ask Allaah, may He be glorified and exalted, by His Most Beautiful Names, to give us enough awareness and fear of Him to keep us away from sin, and enough devotion and obedience to Him to help us reach His Paradise, to forgive us for our sins and by His grace to make us content with what He has permitted and keep us away from what He has forbidden. May He accept our repentance and cleanse us from sin, for He is the All-Hearing, the One Who answers prayers. May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon the Unlettered Prophet, Muhammad, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and upon all his family and Companions. All praise be to Allaah, Lord of the Worlds.