

# **How to Make My Wedding Halal**

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ

## Preface

With the many challenges Muslims face in today's modern world, the most difficult challenge is how we can preserve our Islamic foundation and keep our cultural heritage. We are proud to be part of a religion that is so strong in belief and rich in faith, and this is what has allowed us to survive against all odds. The only way we are able to honour this legacy is by strengthening our understanding of Islam, ensuring that we purify our souls by adhering to the commands of Allah *subĤĤnahÙ wa taĤĤĤĤ* and abstaining from disobeying Him.

The process of marriage has indeed become a complicated issue in our society. Instead of realising that marriage is only a means to complete your purpose in life and fulfil half your religion, most direct their focus on a wedding ceremony that is far from Islamic or compliant to the Shari'ah. So much energy is consumed in preparing superficial rituals and excessive money is spent on things that carry no real value. Many Muslims have adopted Westernised practices in their ceremonies. We have abandoned our treasures and distanced ourselves from our role models – the MaĤĤÙmĤn (a.s.) – and turned to imitate the West.

The first steps a couple make in their new life together should not be to invite ĤarĤm and ShaiĤĤn to be a part of their sacred celebration, but to avoid anything that would bring Allah's discontent. It is of utmost importance to follow the *sunnah* of marriage in its true Islamic form, and with this the couple will be showered with His satisfaction and blessings, *in shĤĤ Allah*.

This booklet is a brief explanation of how we are able to make our marriage ceremonies Shari'ah compliant. It was written in Arabic with the title "كيف تكون أعراسنا شرعية", by a well-known scholar His Eminence Seyid SĤmi Khudhra, published by *DĤr al-MaĤĤjah al-BaiĤĤĤĤ*, Beirut, 2011.

Hopefully this will be beneficial in bringing awareness to the parents and the youth of our community in making drastic changes to how we see marriage and wedding ceremonies. All of us have a duty of preserving our faith and conveying this *amĤĤnah* to the next generation, so that they can carry on with the message of Ahlul Bayt (a.s.).

We ask Allah *taĤĤĤĤ* to grant us higher levels of *taqwĤĤ*, *Ĥiffah* and *ĤayĤĤĤĤ*. May the Almighty make us aware of our duties, enabling us to become among the *mumahidĤn* of our Awaited Imam (may Allah hasten his reappearance).

## Introduction

When we have a happy occasion or celebration, one of the first of things that come to our mind is music, singing, dancing, clapping, etc.

It is for this reason that when we want to express our happiness in weddings (or other similar functions) we perform these very things. Some even think that this is the only way, and that there can be no celebration, happiness or joy without them.



Today's media has certainly played a part in expanding such perceptions, and has without doubt assisted in making us comfortable with them being the *norm*. In a short period of time, this will become an accepted practice and rejecting it will be considered abhorrent. This will lead to achieving some of the signs of the End of Time, which is the spreading of music and singing.

From the religious side, it has now turned into being something that holds various *ijtihad* views and it falls under different titles.

We ask Almighty Allah to make us steadfast and grant us the certitude we need to keep our hearts from slipping or our *nafs* becoming weak, from now until the Awaited Saviour (a.a.f.) returns and establishes the right and eradicates the wrong.

So, is it really the case that happiness in weddings can only be achieved by this way?

Is this something our righteous forefathers practised?

Is it the way scholars, jurists and wise people express their joy in their happy events?

Is there no more use of giving advice for the sake of Almighty God, and to revive the *sunnah* of His beloved Messenger (Ō.a.w.)?

## How Can There Be Real Happiness?

As a result of the atmosphere we are in and due to a rise of certain circumstances, with an increase of those who remember the Hereafter and are endeavouring towards it, many think that happiness cannot be achieved except through music, singing, dancing and all that usually accompanies it. Many also assume that this is an issue related to our contemporary world, and so is its prohibition.

However, real happiness is in serving your fellow brothers and sisters, fulfilling their needs, meeting with them, having good times with them, and being humorous and generous. It is when you remove their grief, increase their status, observe their rights, and so on. There are numerous Islamic traditions that refer to these noble acts.

It is for this reason that our religion has spoken about weddings, gatherings and humour, in that it brings tranquillity and harmony and it removes social alienation in this life.

As for committing forbidden or dubious acts, being engrossed in materialism, or entering into excessive false extravagance and imitating people of this *dunya* world (such as tyrants with their inattentiveness or debauch people who are well asleep), these are tests and tribulations for us, and for them. Nobody will be saved from it except for those whom Allah *ta'ÁÁÁ* wishes.

It is unfortunate that our human values and relationships are gradually fading away. Real love, compassion and truthfulness in all its forms are disappearing, and are being replaced with false illusive happiness.

This is why we see people of *dunya* and corrupt people who are being called ‘artists’ apparently living in such bliss, but we then find out their true state of being in so much misery. This explains why certain misfortunes happen to them a lot more than anybody else, like repeated divorces, bad manners, extreme loneliness, depression and suicide.

Without doubt the level of happiness among labourers or farmers is a lot more than those kinds of people.

Real happiness is not in vanity (*Yabath*), false entertainment (*lahÚ*), excessive eating, luxurious food, extravagant details, assorted clothing, imitating materialistic or deviant people, or by clapping, singing and dancing.

These kinds of acts, in most cases – as we commonly see – bring about regret and hidden sorrows.

But such acts as respecting your brethren, gathering with them, humour, generosity, listening and smiling, leave real happiness and beautiful memories that will stay for a long time.

The Messenger of Allah (Ò.a.w.) has said:

"أسعدُ الناس من خالطَ كرامَ الناس."  
"The happiest of people are those who mix with noble people."<sup>1</sup>

The Commander of the faithful ImÁm ÝAID (a.s.) has said:

"سرور المؤمن بطاعة ربه وحزنه على ذنبه."  
"The happiness of a believer is in obedience to his Lord and his grief is in him sinning."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Mizan al-Hikmah*, h.8578.

<sup>2</sup> *Ghurur al-Áikam*, h. 2345, 5594.

## Can Happiness Only Be Achieved Through Haram?

My Beloved Brother/Sister,

Be truthful to yourself, and do not deceive yourself, as its harm will be upon you, God forbid.

How many times have dubious acts resulted in long regrets, and how many times has staying away from it brought you ease and comfort with a relaxing sleep, far from being restless throughout the night?

It is regretful enough for you to see how these illusive happy events waste your time, your money and your efforts, and tomorrow your container of actions will be opened and it will be empty of any righteous deeds.

Is that not enough of a loss and regret?

The Commander of the faithful ImÁm ÝAID (a.s.) says:

"أكثر سرورك على ما قدمت من الخير، وحزنك على ما فات منه."  
"Increase your happiness in good things that you have presented, and increase your grief in good things that you have passed."<sup>3</sup>

He (a.s.) also said in a letter he wrote to Abdullah ibn Abbas:

"....فَلْيَكُنْ سُرُورُكَ بِمَا نَلْتَمِنْ مِنْ آخِرَتِكَ، وَلْيَكُنْ أَسْفُكَ عَلَى مَا فَاتَكَ مِنْهَا، وَمَا نَلْتَمِنْ مِنْ دُنْيَاكَ فَلَا تُكْثِرْ بِهِ فَرَحًا، وَمَا فَاتَكَ مِنْهَا فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَيْهِ جَزَاءً، وَلْيَكُنْ هَمُّكَ فِيمَا بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ."  
"Your happiness should be in what you secure in regard to your next life and your grief should be for what you miss in respect thereof. Do not be much pleased on what you secure from this world, nor be extremely grieved over what you miss out of it. Your concern should be about what is to come after death."<sup>4</sup>

As a result of what he heard Ibn ÝAbbÁs said:

"ما انتفعت بكلام بعد كلام رسول الله كانتفاعي بهذا الكلام."  
"Apart from the sayings of the Messenger of Allah (Ò.a.w.), I have never benefitted from any saying more than I did from this."

The exaggerated practices and luxurious expenditures do not end, and we can see that it is rather on the rise, with worthless competition and the spreading of jealousy, enmity, showing-off and ignorance.

This is most certainly nowhere from Islam.

However, if the atmosphere was as we mentioned, then it would leave positive and good effects that would never be forgotten.

## Real Happiness

<sup>3</sup> *Ghurar al-Íikam*, h. 2345, 5594.

<sup>4</sup> *Nahj al-BalÁghah*, Letter 22.

Therefore, real happiness, as ImÁm ÝAlÐ (a.s.) says in *Nahj al-BalÁghah* is:

"إِطْفَاءُ بَاطِلٍ أَوْ إِحْيَاءُ حَقٍّ."  
"To extinguish the false and revive the truth."<sup>5</sup>

So who other than us is more worthy of taking the role of ‘extinguishing the false’ that happens around us, with what is publicly done in prohibited wedding ceremonies, and to ‘revive the truth’ which is the traditions of Islam that we neglect (as if we don’t want them – God forbid)?

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<sup>5</sup> *Nahj al-BalÁghah*, Letter 66.

## A Proposed Example of a SharĪḌ Wedding

Based on what has been said, here are some proposed practical steps for a wedding celebration that has no prohibition (*ĪarĀm*) and no dubious acts (*shubĥah*). It will have some traditions that have been buried, abandoned or neglected due to people leaning by their instinct towards amusement, entertainment and vanity, or wanting to be free of restrictions and turning to the forbidden. As the narration quotes that the Prophet (Ō.a.w.) has said:

"فوالله لو أمرتهم أن لا يأتوا الجحون لأتوها"

“By God, if I would have commanded them not to go to *al-ĪajŪn* they would go there.”<sup>6</sup>

**One:** Gaining blessings by reciting holy verses of from the Noble Quran, like:

From *NŪrah al-NŪr*, verse 32-34.

﴿وَأَنْكِحُوا الْأَيَامَىٰ مِنْكُمْ وَالصَّالِحِينَ مِنْ عِبَادِكُمْ وَإِمَائِكُمْ إِنْ يَكُونُوا فُقَرَاءَ يُغْنِهِمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٢﴾ وَلَيْسَتَغُفَبَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَجِدُونَ نِكَاحًا حَتَّىٰ يُغْنِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَالَّذِينَ يَبْتَغُونَ الْكِتَابَ مِمَّا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ فَكَاتِبُوهُمْ إِنْ عَلِمْتُمْ فِيهِمْ خَيْرًا وَأَنْتُمْ مِنْ مَالِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي آتَاكُمْ وَلَا تُكْرَهُوا فَتَيَاتِكُمْ عَلَى الْبِغَاءِ إِنْ أَرَدْنَ تَحَصُّنًا لِيَبْتِغُوا عَرَضَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَمَنْ يُكْرِهِنَّ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِكْرَاهِهِنَّ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾ وَلَقَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ آيَاتٍ مُبَيِّنَاتٍ وَمَثَلًا مِنَ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ﴾

“And marry the unmarried among you and the righteous among your male slaves and female slaves. If they should be poor, Allah will enrich them from His bounty, and Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing. But let them who find not [the means for] marriage abstain [from sexual relations] until Allah enriches them from His bounty. And those who seek a contract [for eventual emancipation] from among whom your right hands possess - then make a contract with them if you know there is within them goodness and give them from the wealth of Allah which He has given you. And do not compel your slave girls to prostitution, if they desire chastity, to seek [thereby] the temporary interests of worldly life. And if someone should compel them, then indeed, Allah is [to them], after their compulsion, Forgiving and Merciful. And We have certainly sent down to you distinct verses and examples from those who passed on before you and an admonition for those who fear Allah.”<sup>7</sup>

From *NŪrah al-RŪm*, verses 20-22:

﴿وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ إِذَا أَنْتُمْ بَشَرٌ تَنْتَشِرُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالاخْتِلافِ اللَّسَانِيَّةِ وَاللَّوَانِيَّةِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّلْعَالَمِينَ﴾

“And of His signs is that He created you from dust; then, suddenly you were human beings dispersing [throughout the earth]. And of His signs is that He created for you from yourselves mates that you may find tranquillity in

<sup>6</sup> Al-ĪajŪn is the name of a well-known area that used to be close the holy city of Meccah. It was also called MaqĀbir Quraish. This statement is similar to the famous proverb of ‘anything prohibited becomes desired’, or the English equivalent is ‘forbidden fruit are sweet’. So, if the Prophet (Ō.a.w.) had commanded them not to visit this place, even if only a few would have previously thought of going there, most would be pushed by curiosity and want to go.

<sup>7</sup> Quran, 24:32-34.

*them; and He placed between [the two of] you affection and mercy. Indeed in that are signs for a people who give contemplate. And of His signs are the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your languages and your colours. Indeed in that are signs for those of knowledge.”<sup>8</sup>*

It would be a good idea to recite this following verse from ÑÛrah al-RaÝd in such celebrations:

﴿وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلًا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَذُرِّيَّةً ۖ وَمَا كَانَ لِرَسُولٍ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ بِآيَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۗ لِكُلِّ أَجَلٍ كِتَابٌ﴾

*“And We have already sent messengers before you and assigned to them wives and descendants. And it was not for a messenger to come with a sign except by permission of Allah. For every term is a decree.”<sup>9</sup>*

The following verses would also be appropriate to recite:

- ÑÛrah ÐÁl ÝImrÁn, verses 33-47.
- ÑÛrah al-Naíl, verses 72-74.
- ÑÛrah al-FurqÁn, verses 74-76.

These are examples of verses chosen from the holy Quran, and it is possible to select other relevant verses for different types of celebrations.

It has been mentioned that it is recommended to remember Allah *taÝÁlÁ* at times of pleasure. Our master ImÁm MuÁammad al-BÁqir (a.s.) has said:

"في التوراة مكتوب... يا موسى... اذكرني في خلواتك وعند سرور لذاتك أذكرك عند غفلاتك."  
"It is written in the Torah..... O Moses, remember Me when you are alone, when you are happy in your pleasures, and I will remember you when you are inattentive."<sup>10</sup>

**Two:** A short speech, concise and brief, by a scholar or an elder pious person, and speaking in particular about issues related to the following topics:

Marriage, chastity, safeguarding yourself, a Muslim family, having children, keeping a good relationship, respecting your spouse, helping with affairs of this life and the hereafter, observing rights, good manners, encouraging marriage, characteristics of a spouse, upbringing of children, advice on how to avoid misunderstandings and so on...

There are hundreds of traditions that speak about these specific topics and that can be used in a short speech.

**Three:** Conduct the marriage contract in a calm and slow manner, making sure all the religious conditions and etiquettes are observed. This is the part of the marriage ceremony that everyone likes and enjoys.

**Four:** Having well-organised seating arrangements where people are equally distributed, for example, different tables so that they can engage in productive useful discussions. It can also be arranged in such a way where one person speaks and the majority can listen to the beneficial discussion, like how it would be in a house or a round table. Of course, this is all to be done with strict observance of no mixing between genders.

<sup>8</sup> Quran, 30: 20-22.

<sup>9</sup> Quran, 13:38.

<sup>10</sup> *AmÁIÐ al-ÑadÛq*, p. 210, h. 6.

**Five:** In the next segment of the celebration there is no objection in doing certain things like reciting pieces of beneficial poetry appropriate for the occasion, compiled by our great scholars or righteous people, or any other enjoyable and beneficial programs. This, accompanied with decorating our gathering with sending salutations to Prophet Muhammad (Ò.a.w.) and his Progeny (a.s.).

**Six:** Giving out sweets appropriate for the occasion according to your capability.

However, there is an important point that must be made here. Sometimes the highly recommended act<sup>11</sup> of having a banquet (*walÐmah*) in a wedding has become neglected, and has been replaced with varieties of sweets and drinks. So, if one is able to have a feast then that would be better and is recommended.

It is not necessary at all for there to be a variety of dishes and colours, as has recently become common in our IftÁr feasts during the holy month of RamaÃÁn. Having a variety of food is in itself something religiously detested (*makrÛh*), and it is also regarded as one of the signs of the End of Time.

This is why serving a variety of dishes must be avoided and the food must be limited to one or two kinds.

Based on this there will not be any excessive expenses, so with the same price of spending on cakes and sweets one can spend that on the one dish *walÐmah*.

**Seven:** Coming out in the wedding procession. For those who want to attend:

1. In villages or local areas, the procession can be on foot.
2. In a city or between cities, cars can be used, as long as it will not disturb the people or do something that would harm them, like beeping horns, loud and harmful fireworks, etc.

**Eight:** It is necessary to replace the wedding guest gift known as a bonbonniere, which at most times can be considered as either *ÍarÁm* or *makrÛh* and never used, with giving out sets of small beneficial Islamic books, wrapped in an attractive presentable way, and its effects and usage will stay as long as Almighty Allah wishes.

This is an outstanding example of ongoing charity (*Òadaqah jÁriyah*) that we would love for us to start our marriage life with. Here are some suggestions for the titles of these booklets or pamphlets, along with this very book you have now:

- Dear Sister in Islam
- A letter to my daughter on the occasion of her marriage
- What is fashion?
- Why does faith weaken?
- The morals of the Prophet (Ò.a.w.)
- Some advice for the Hereafter
- Dear Father
- The path of the right-minded
- A series on spiritual etiquettes

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<sup>11</sup> Mustahab Mu'akkad.

## Things That Should be Avoided in Weddings

**One: Extravagance:** In all its forms, and the most apparent of forms is in food, clothes and flowers. Some hold their wedding ceremonies in hotels or reception centres and (without exaggeration) spend tens of thousands of dollars. Worse than this are the clothes and the dresses that are sewn and tailored specifically for the bride and groom and their relatives that also reach the price mark of tens of thousands of dollars. As for flowers, some import them from other countries based on their colour and the season, wasting money that could secure a permanently stable life for whole families.

Do the people who do this have a happy conscience? Do such things bring them happiness and joy?

Have they not heard what Allah *ta'ÁAlÁ* has said?:

﴿وَابْتَغِ فِيمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ﴾

*“But seek, through that which Allah has given you, the home of the Hereafter.”*<sup>12</sup>

Are they seeking the Hereafter with these acts that they are doing?

﴿ذُلُّكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَفْرَحُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَمْرَحُونَ﴾

*“That was because you used to exult upon the earth without right and you used to behave insolently.”*<sup>13</sup>

As for someone who is ashamed in front of others, we say what Allah Almighty has said:

﴿وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ﴾

*“And Allah does not like prideful boasters.”*<sup>14</sup>

**Two: Music:** This is something that we have really been stricken with in today’s society, even among the observant and religious families, knowing that its prohibition is one of the fundamental tenants of our religion – Islam.

Among the quick effects of forbidden music and singing is it brings misfortune, it plants hypocrisy, distances angels and annuls supplications and so on.

ImÁm YÁIÐ (a.s.) wrote to MÁlik al-Ashtar ordering him to be God-wary and to give preference to His obedience:

"أَمْرُهُ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ، وَإِيتَارِ طَاعَتِهِ، وَاتِّبَاعِ مَا أَمَرَ بِهِ فِي كِتَابِهِ: مِنْ فَرَائِضِهِ وَسُنَنِهِ، الَّتِي لَا يَسْعَدُ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا بِاتِّبَاعِهَا، وَلَا يَشْقَى إِلَّا مَعَ جُحُودِهَا وَإِضَاعَتِهَا..."

*“...to follow what He has commanded in His Book [Quran] out of His obligatory and elective commands, without following which one cannot achieve virtue, nor (can one) be evil save by opposing them and ignoring them...”*<sup>15</sup>

He (a.s.) also said:

“لا يسعد امرؤ إلا بطاعة الله سبحانه ولا يشقى امرؤ إلا بمعصية الله.”

<sup>12</sup> Quran, 28:77.

<sup>13</sup> Quran, 40:75.

<sup>14</sup> Quran, 57:23.

<sup>15</sup> *Nahj al-BalÁghah*, Letter 53.

“A person cannot be happy except through obedience to Almighty God, and a person cannot be wretched except by sinning God.”<sup>16</sup>

And:

"زُبَّ طَرِبَ يَعُودُ بِالْحَرْبِ."

“How common it is that unlawful pleasure leads to battles [i.e. corruption].”<sup>17</sup>

**Important Note:** In recent years it has become commonly accepted by some who do not fully grasp the Islamic rulings that all kinds of music and singing are permissible in weddings. They say they asked a person or organisation, and they allowed them to use all kinds of music that are publicly available – whatever the words may be and whoever they may be, whether corrupt or debauched. They permitted that which Almighty Allah has prohibited. Maybe this is out of naivety, ignorance, or by purely succumbing to the norms of the society and accepting the environment.

The interesting fact is that common people are extremely shocked by the behaviour of these corrupt and debauched singers, and with their pure instinct they are surprised as to how such indecent things can be permitted, and how the likes of such people can be singing. Yet they still listen to their music!

Our religious duty towards this is to explain the following points:

1. As just mentioned, the principle or the fundamental tenant in Islam is that music and singing (*ghinÁP*) is clearly prohibited.
2. Singing in weddings is an exemption, on the condition that:
  - a. The singer (male or female) is not from among the corrupt or debauch (note that jurists commonly say female singers in weddings, and not male singers).
  - b. It does not entail lying or obscene language.
  - c. It is not accompanied with any other forbidden act, like forbidden music.
  - d. Certain things are not done that would be bad to the gathering and it would attribute to being a gathering of *munkar* or a singing event.
  - e. It is restricted to the night of the wedding ceremony, and not before or after it.
  - f. The meaning of permissible singing in weddings are things like nasheeds, poems and appropriate chants without being mixed with any prohibited act or an avenue to enter into practices that were forbidden the day before.

We do not want to repeat here that singing itself is forbidden, even if the singer was singing in a room all alone by himself; and even if the singing was of the Quran, nasheeds, eulogies, or anything else.

We recommend you to refer to the detailed writings on this subject, and to books of Islamic jurisprudence.

When the late ImÁm Khomeini explained this topic, at the end of the part of singing in weddings he finished it off by saying: “The precaution is to avoid it all-together.”

This is what a person of piety and faith would do.

How truthful is the statement of Almighty Allah when He says to His Prophet David (a.s.):

﴿وَلَا تَتَّبِعِ الْهَوَىٰ فَيُضِلَّكَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ﴾

“..and do not follow [your own] desire, as it will lead you astray from the way of Allah.”<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> *ÝUyÛn al-Íikam wa al-MawÁPiÁ*, p. 543. *MizÁn al-Íikmah*, h. 8551.

<sup>17</sup> *Ghurar al-Íikam*, h. 5281.

<sup>18</sup> Quran, 38:26.

Following this, based on the path of the people of piety and precaution, and so that our weddings are Islamic and *sharĪĎ*, we recommend, as our revered jurists have, that one totally avoids all dubious acts (*shubahĀt*), so that it doesn't become an avenue for the weak-hearted or those who have fragile faith and are inclined towards committing *ĪarĀm*.

It has been proven by experience that the majority of people like 'exemptions' and those who give it, and along with that is the majority of people do not precisely know the religious limits in *ĪalĀl* and *ĪarĀm*.

The reality of life can testify to this, and there is a statement where ImĀm ŸAĪĎ (a.s.) says:

"وَلَا تُرَخِّصُوا لِأَنْفُسِكُمْ، فَتَذْهَبَ بِكُمْ الرَّخْصُ."

"Do not give excuses to yourself, because these excuses will lead you away."<sup>19</sup>

**Three: Mixing:** As it is extremely difficult to observe the religious boundaries and protocols, like looking, touching, smiling, listening, admiring, dress code, displaying of beauty, and so on. These occur in normal gatherings, so what would be the case if it is a wedding ceremony?

Our beloved Messenger of Allah (Ò.a.w.) took an oath of allegiance from the woman that they would not sit with men privately.

He (Ò.a.w.) has said:

"مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلَا يَبِيتُ فِي مَوْضِعٍ يَسْمَعُ نَفْسَ امْرَأَةٍ لَيْسَتْ لَهُ بِمَحْرَمٍ."

"He who believes in Allah *taĪĀĀ* and in Judgment Day must never sleep in a place where he hears the breath of a woman who is non-maĀram to him."<sup>20</sup>

**Four: Beeping Car horns:** Along with disturbing the peace of streets and creating congestion and traffic, this annoying practice has absolutely no benefit. The noise pollution that horns make is indeed transgressing the rights of others, especially in that this usually happens after the wedding ceremony late at night when others are trying to rest.

**Five: Showing-off and boasting about house furniture and other materialistic things** – In recent years a new custom has become common, where the bride and groom take their guests and those who come to congratulate them on a tour of all the rooms in their house and everything that they have, even their wardrobe and newly purchased items.

A blessing visit to the newlyweds is indeed recommended, but boastfully displaying prices and showing off luxuries is a denounced practise. People vary in their financial capabilities, so we must all consider this. The step towards marriage is to safeguard the *nafs*, and it is not to open a new hole in it, having already temptation towards evil (*ammĀrah bil-suĀ*).

The Messenger of Allah (Ò.a.w.) has said:

"مَنْ نَظَرَ إِلَى مَا فِي أَيْدِي النَّاسِ، طَالَ حُزْنُهُ وَدَامَ أَسْفَهُ."

"He who looks at what other people possess will have long heartache and continuous regrets."<sup>21</sup>

He (Ò.a.w.) also said when this following verse descended:

﴿وَلَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَىٰ مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهِ أَزْوَاجًا مِنْهُمْ﴾

<sup>19</sup> *Nahj al-BalĀghah*, Sermon 86.

<sup>20</sup> *WasĀĪl al-ShĎĪa*, vol. 14, part 99.

<sup>21</sup> *AĪĀm al-DĎn*, p. 294.

“Do not extend your eyes toward that by which We have given enjoyment to [certain] categories of the disbelievers.”<sup>22</sup>

“...وَمَنْ رَمَى بِبَصَرِهِ إِلَى مَا فِي يَدِ غَيْرِهِ كَثُرَ هُمُّهُ وَلَمْ يُشْفَ غِيظُهُ.”

“...He who casts his eyes on things that are in the possession of others, his worries will increase and his rage will be unfulfilled.”<sup>23</sup>

**Six: Exaggerative concern about the quality and decorations of the invitation cards** – We all know that the purpose for the invitation card is to invite guests to the celebration, with the place and time, or to congratulate them, and the card itself is not the goal.

So, why have we lately noticed a rise in the excessive concern about invitation cards? Whether it be the quality of the paper, the designs and decorations, the gold colours and writing, the lavish envelopes and covers, and other pricey additions, even though the fate of these cards is to be wasted or thrown away.

If just one of these cards is costly, then what is to be expected for hundreds of them to cost? And they will all end up in the rubbish bin.

**Seven: Gatherings of Amusement and Inattentiveness** – Some weddings turn into gatherings of amusement (*lahŪ*), frivolity (*Ŷabath*) and inattentiveness (*ghaflah*). We have been commanded to remember Allah *taŶĀla*, even if we were to go to the markets, enter the bathroom, see the moon, eat food, when it rains, and so on.

So what would be the case if we start our weddings with *ghafhah* and *lahu*?

The Commander of the faithful (a.s.) has said the following traditions:

“لا يُفْلِحُ مَنْ وَلِيَ بِاللَّعِبِ، وَاسْتَهْتَرَ بِاللَّهْوِ وَالطَّرْبِ.”

“He who is fond of vanity and is unrestrained towards amusement and illicit pleasure (*Ūarab*) will never be successful.”<sup>24</sup>

“مَجَالِسُ اللَّهْوِ تَفْسِدُ الْإِيمَانَ.”

“Gathering of amusement corrupts one’s faith.”<sup>25</sup>

“لا تَغْرُبْكَ الْعَاجِلَةُ بِزُورِ الْمَلَاهِي، فَإِنَّ اللَّهْوَ يَنْقُطِعُ وَيُلْزِمُكَ مَا اكْتَسَبْتَ مِنَ الْمَأْتَمِ.”

“Do not let the thrush of the falsity of places of amusement deceive you, for amusement stops and what will continue is what you have accumulated in wrong-doings.”<sup>26</sup>

**Eight: Not to expose yourself in-front of those who might describe your features to men** – In women gatherings, the bride and female participants must be careful not to expose themselves too much in such a way that would be inappropriate, or dress indecently, or wear clothes that imitate debauch and shameless women.

Islam emphasises on the fact that women need to safeguard themselves from others who might have a tendency to describe their features to men. Our customs and our values teach us to be aware of these issues, and completely avoid such predicaments.

**Important Note:** One of the merciful blessings Almighty Allah has bestowed upon women is He has given specific rulings regarding women, and this in general indicates His compassionate concern towards them, with trying to preserve and safeguard them.

<sup>22</sup> Quran, 15: 88.

<sup>23</sup> *TafsŶr al-QummŶ*, p. 356.

<sup>24</sup> *Ghurar al-Ŷikam*, h. 3333, 7969.

<sup>25</sup> *Ghurar al-Ŷikam*, h. 2165.

<sup>26</sup> *Ghurar al-Ŷikam*, h. 455.

If only we return this favour with thanking Him, being content and showing our submission to Him.

The Almighty has relieved women from performing many ritual and religious acts for their sake, and if this is the case, then why aren't women of today considerate in observing their Islamic rulings and in particular with these gatherings and luxurious expenditures?

## Mustahab Things in Weddings That Have Become Abandoned or Neglected

**One: Giving out food:** For one or two days.<sup>27</sup>

It is narrated that the holy Prophet (Ò.a.w.) has said:

"إِنَّ مِنْ سُنَنِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ الْإِطْعَامَ عِنْدَ التَّزْوِيجِ."  
"One of the traditions of Messengers is feeding people at marriages."<sup>28</sup>

He (Ò.a.w.) fed people when he married MaimÛnah bint al-ÁÁarith.

In another tradition he says:

"الْوَلِيمَةُ أَوَّلُ يَوْمٍ حَقٌّ، وَالثَّانِي مَعْرُوفٌ، وَمَا زَادَ رِيَاءَ وَسَمْعَةً."  
"A banquet for the first day is a right, and for the second day is generosity, and anything more than that is for flattery and fame."<sup>29</sup>

**Two: Delivering a Sermon:** This is before the marriage contract, and in front of people, explaining the benefits, virtues and blessings of marriage and safeguarding the *nafs* (some suggestions for topics have already been given in previous pages).

The sermon should include: Praising Allah the Exalted, giving salutations to the Prophet (Ò.a.w.) and his Progeny (a.s.), advising people to become God-wary, speak about an appropriately chosen topic and then mention the groom and the bride.<sup>30</sup>

**Three: Having witnesses and doing it public:** The marriage should be publicised, and a group of people should witness it. This is useful as a testimony for lineage and inheritance purposes.<sup>31</sup>

**Four: The recommendation of saying *TakbÐr* and the bride mounting a horse:** Saying *TakbÐr* (*Allahu Akbar*) is something that Gabriel (a.s.) did at the wedding procession (*zafÁf*) of Seyidah FÁÔimah al-ZahrÁP (a.s.) when taken to her husband the Commander of the faithful ImÁM ÝÝAID ibn Abi ÓÁlib (a.s.). Gabriel (a.s.) did *TakbÐr*, the angel Michael did *TakbÐr*, and the Prophet did *TakbÐr*, and this tradition of *TakbÐr* became a tradition for brides from that very night.

As for riding on a horse, for example, this is something that the Messenger of Allah (Ò.a.w.) did on the night of the wedding of his daughter Fatimah (a.s.) where he brought a grey coloured mule and asked her to ride it. He then told Salman to steer it.<sup>32</sup>

This case is one of the circumstances where it is no longer *makrÛh* for a woman to sit on a saddle.<sup>33</sup>

**Five: Getting Married at Night:** Because Almighty Allah has made the night a time of rest and tranquillity, and a partner is also tranquil.<sup>34</sup>

**Six: Minimising Marriage Expenses and Decreasing Nuptial Gifts (*mahr*):** One of the blessings of a woman is her being simple in her expenses and low in her *mahr*, and an unfortunate bad sign is her having a large *mahr*.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>27</sup> *WasÁPil al-ShÐÝah*, vol. 14, part 40.

<sup>28</sup> *al-MaÁasin*, vol. 2, p. 428. *al-KÁfÐ*, vol. 5, p. 367.

<sup>29</sup> *al-KÁfÐ*, vol. 5, p. 368.

<sup>30</sup> *WasÁPil al-ShÐÝah*, vol. 14, part 41-42.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, part 43.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, part 37.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, part 93.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, part 37.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, part 52.

**Seven: Praying Two Rak'at and Supplication:** This is to be done at two times:

A. When he wants to get married, he prays a two rak'at prayer, extols Almighty God, and says:

"اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ أَتَزَوَّجَ ، اللَّهُمَّ فَقَدِّرْ لِي مِنَ النِّسَاءِ أَحْسَنَهُنَّ خُلُقاً وَخُلُقاً، وَ أَعْفَنَ فَرْجاً، وَأَحْفَظَهُنَّ لِي فِي نَفْسِهَا وَمَالِي، وَأَوْسَعَهُنَّ رِزْقاً، وَأَعْظَمَهُنَّ بَرَكَهً، وَقِيِّضْ لِي مِنْهَا وَلِداً طَيِّباً، تَجْعَلْهُ لِي خَلِفاً صَالِحاً فِي حَيَاتِي وَبَعْدَ مَوْتِي."

“O Allah! I want to get married. O Allah! Grant me from among the women one who is the best in morals and looks, the most chaste in modesty, one who protects for me herself and my wealth, one who is vast in her sustenance and abundant in blessings. Grant me from her pure children who will become a righteous offspring for me in my life and after my death.”

One must repeatedly recite this supplication, and keep in mind the important priorities and qualities a Muslim must look for in marriage, and how it should be and what one must ask for. Now, compare this to how our world is today and what we wish for!!

B. On the *Zaf'af* night the groom is to say:

"اللَّهُمَّ عَلَى كِتَابِكَ تَزَوَّجْتَهَا، وَفِي أَمَانَتِكَ أَخَذْتُهَا، وَبِكَلِمَاتِكَ اسْتَحَلَلْتُ فَرْجَهَا، فَإِنْ قَضَيْتَ لِي فِي رَحْمَتِكَ شَيْئاً فَاجْعَلْهُ مُسْلِماً سَوِيّاً وَلَا تَجْعَلْهُ شَرِكاً لِلشَّيْطَانِ."

“O Allah! By Your Book I married her and I have taken her through Your trust and have made her lawful for myself by Your words. Therefore, if You have decreed for me a child from her, then make him blessed and healthy, and do not let the Satan have any part in him.”

The groom must remember Allah *ta'Ala* and invoke Him when he is with her.<sup>36</sup>

**Eight: Congratulating for the Marriage:** To pray for the newlyweds and wish them “the best and blessings” and not prosperity and children. There is a difference between the two.<sup>37</sup>

**Nine: Removing the bride's shoes and washing her feet:** This is one of the detailed *musta'ab* acts that have been mentioned in the etiquettes of weddings, and it is highly recommended to encourage such a practice, for the sake of Allah Almighty, even though we do not completely perceive the secrets and reasons behind it, but we wilfully submit to it.

It is *musta'ab* for the groom to remove the bride's shoes while she is seated, and pour water over her feet, and then spill that water at the house door, outwards.

Among the benefits this has is it repels many forms of poverty from the house, and it brings many forms of blessings. Mercy will descend and hover around the bride's head until the blessing reaches all corners of the house, and the bride will be safe from numerous illnesses.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., part 53.

<sup>37</sup> This is based on a tradition narrated in *Was'Al al-Sh'Alah*, vol. 14, part 142, where Ab'U 'Abdullah al-Barq' narrates: When the Messenger of Allah (Ō.a.w.) married off F'Almah (a.s.) people said: “With prosperity and children!” And he (Ō.a.w.) replied saying: “No, but with goodness and blessings.”

[قالوا: بالرفاء والبنين، فقال (ص): لا بل على الخير والبركة]

<sup>38</sup> The complete tradition is in *Was'Al al-Sh'Alah*, vol. 14, part 147.