

Section 8: Respect For Domestic and Personal Privacy

Sura An-Nur – Verse 58

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لِيَسْتَأْذِنَكُمْ الَّذِينَ مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَبْلُغُوا الْحُلُمَ مِنْكُمْ ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ مِنْ قَبْلِ صَلَاةِ الْفَجْرِ وَحِينَ تَضَعُونَ ثِيَابَكُمْ مِنَ الظَّهْرِ وَمِنْ بَعْدِ صَلَاةِ الْعِشَاءِ ثَلَاثُ عَوْرَاتٍ لَكُمْ لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَا عَلَيْهِمْ جُنَاحٌ بَعْدَهُنَّ طَوَّافُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ بَعْضُكُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ الْآيَاتِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

58. “O you who believe! Do let those whom your right hands possess, and those of you who have not reached to puberty, ask permission of you at three times (for coming into your room): before the morning prayer, and at midday when you put off your clothes, and after the night prayer. (These are) three times of privacy for you. It is no sin for you or for them (if) after those (three times), some of you go round attendant upon the others. Thus does Allah make clear the revelations for you; and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.”

Faithful parents are responsible for teaching Divine religious ordinances to their children. The place where parents habitually sleep must be separate and far from the sight of the children, otherwise, there was no need for taking permission, as man must allocate some hours for his wife during 24 hours and issues must not disturb them.

Islam is a religion for life and it is completely comprehensive. It has programs and plans for both common trivial issues such as entrance of children in parent's room (mentioned in this verse) and important matters such as the establishment of universal government.

Anyway, as we said before, the most important issue that is comprehensively discussed in this Sura is the matter of public chastity and righting against any sexual deviation.

This verse also is about one of these affairs that relate this issue and it explains its characteristics; the matter is concerned to the mature and immature issues' taking permission when they want to enter the room which belongs to their parents.

At first, it says:

“O you who believe! Do let those whom your right hands possess, and those of you who have not reached to puberty, ask permission of you at three times (for coming into your room): before the morning prayer, and at midday when you put off your clothes, and after the night prayer...”

As Raqib says in his book, Mufradat, and Firuz'abadi in Qamus, the Arabic word /zahirat/ means midday and about noontime when people take off their outer clothes and man and wife may be together privately.

“... (These are) three times of privacy for you...”

The Arabic word /'aurat/ originally is derived from the word /'ar/ meaning shame and fault. Since showing genital organs is the cause of fault and shame, in Arabic language it is called /'aurat/. Sometimes the word /'aurat/ is also used to mean an opening and cut in wall and dress and the like.

Sometimes it means absolutely fault. Anyway, using this word for these three times is for the matter that people do not compel themselves to be veiled fully as in other times they do and they consider these times their privacy.

It is obvious that this command only involves parents who must force their issues to do this, for children have not come of age yet so that they are not obligated to carry out divine duties, therefore parents are addressed here.

Moreover, the verse is applied to both girls and boys, and the word /'allaḡina/ (those) that is a masculine pronoun is not against generality of the concept of the verse, because in many cases this word is used for all people, as we read in the verse that obligates all Muslims to fast, in which the word /'allaḡina/ is used to address all Muslims. 1

It is necessary to mention that the verse is about children who can discern and comprehend sexual issues and genital organs, etc, because the matter of taking permission itself indicates that they at least understand what taking permission means. Using the phrase 'Thalatha 'aurat' (Three times of privacy) is another evidence for this meaning, too.

Whether this verse covers male slaves only or it covers female slaves, too, there are various narrations. The verse apparently involves all, that is, it refers to both groups, so the narrations that are in harmony

with the appearance of the verse can be preferred.

In the end of the verse, the Qur'an says:

"...It is no sin for you or for them (if) after those (three times), some of you go round attendant upon the others. Thus does Allah make clear the revelations for you; and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise."

The Qur'anic word /tawwafun/ is originally derived from the word /tawaf/, meaning walking about or around something, and since it is used in the form of exaggeration, it means frequency of this matter.

With regard to the Qur'anic phrase

/ba'dukum 'ala ba'din/ (some of you ... upon others)

that has come after it, the concept of the sentence is that you are allowed to do each other favour and to go and to come in other than these three times.

As Fazil Mighdad says in Kanz-ul-'Irfan, this sentence indicates that there is no need for taking permission in other times, because if they want to come and go frequently and they have to take permission, every time it will become a difficult job^{2.3}

Sura An-Nur – Verse 59

وَإِذَا بَلَغَ الْأَطْفَالُ مِنْكُمُ الْحُلُمَ فَلْيَسْتَأْذِنُوا كَمَا اسْتَأْذَنَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ
اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

59. "And when the children among you reach puberty then let them ask permission even as those before them used to ask it. Thus does Allah make clear His revelations for you. Allah is All-Knower, All-Wise."

Wet dream is a boundary of reaching the religious puberty.

The Arabic word /hulum/ and the word /'ihtilam/ means to see a wet dream when one is sleeping, and it is one of the signs of puberty. Of course, the signs of puberty for girls and boys are various and they are mentioned in detail in the treatises of authorities of imitation.

In this holy verse the ordinance of those who have reached puberty is mentioned.

It says:

“And when the children among you reach puberty then let them ask permission even as those before them used to ask it. ...”

The Arabic word /hulum/ means ‘intellect’ and implies puberty which is usually accompanied with an intellectual and mental mutation. It is sometimes said that the word /hulum/ means ‘dream’ and ‘dreaming’, and since, after puberty, the youth see some scenes in dream that cause them ejecting semen, this word has been used to mean puberty ironically.

Anyway, it is understood from this verse that the ordinance for those who have reached puberty is different from those who have not reached this status, because immature children are obligated to take permission only in three times, according to the previous verse, since their life is so mixed with their own parent’s that if they want to take permission every time, it will cause them difficulty.

Moreover, their sexual feelings are still undeveloped, but according to this verse, which has obliged them to take permission absolutely, matured youth in any condition must take permission every time they go to their parents.

This ordinance is for the place where parents are taking rest, otherwise, entering public room (if there is such a room), especially when others are there and there is nothing to cause problem, needs no permission.

It is also important to mention that the Qur’anic sentence:

“...even as those before them used to ask it..”

refers to the adults who were obligated to take permission whenever they wanted to enter their parents’ room and, in this verse, those who have just reached puberty are like the adults who were enjoined to ask permission.

In order to emphasize and attract the attentions, at the end of the verse, it says:

“...Thus does Allah make clear His revelations for you. Allah is All-Knower, All-Wise.”

This is just like the sentence that was at the end of the previous verse, but in that holy verse the word /al’ayat/ (the revelations) was used and in this verse the word /’ayatihi/ (His revelations) is used. However, there is not much difference in their meanings.

Some Details About Philosophy of Taking Permission:

Only giving heed to executing fixed punishments and flogging wrongdoers is not enough to eradicate a social mischief such as immodest unchaste actions. Such a treatment does not produce a good result in any one of social issues.

In fact we must have a package which includes intellectual cultural teachings, which is along with ethical and sentimental rules and correct Islamic teachings, and we must also create a sound social environment and then punishment can be considered as a factor along with them.

Consequently, this holy Sura, which is the Sura of chastity, begins with the act of flogging and punishment of adulterer and adulteress, and covers the issues such as paving ground for a sound marriage, observing Islamic veiling, prohibiting ogling, banning the act of accusing people to unchaste pollution, and, finally, children's taking permission at the time of entering parents' room.

This shows that no subtle thing about chastity is ignored in Islam.

Servants must take permission when they want to enter a room in which wife and husband exist. Matured children must take permission when they want to enter such a room, even immature children, who are always with parents, are also taught not to enter the parents' room without permission at least at three special times, (before morning ritual prayer, after night prayer, and at noon time when parents are taking rest).

This is a kind of Islamic politeness which is unfortunately observed less today. Although the holy Qur'an has mentioned it explicitly in the above holy verses, we see that this Islamic ordinance and its philosophy is less discussed in lectures and writings and it is not clear that why this decisive ordinance of the holy Qur'an has been ignored.

Although the verse apparently obligates people to observe this ordinance, even if we suppose that this ordinance is recommended, it must be talked about and its details must be discussed.

Contrary to what some simple-minded individuals, who think that children do make nothing of these issues and servants do not pay attention to them, it is proven that children (let alone adults) are extraordinarily sensitive to this matter and sometime parents' carelessness and children looking at scenes that they must not see, are the source of ethical deviations and even psychical maladies.

We have experimented the individuals who themselves confessed that as a result of the carelessness of their parents to this matter and that they observed them busy having a sexual intercourse those individuals had reached such a stage of sexual stimulation and psychical complex that they felt the enmity of their parents in them, nigh to kill them or perhaps, nigh to commit self-murder.

It is here that the value and magnificent of this Islamic ordinance appears that the issues and matter that scientists have found today, Islam foresighted in its ordinances fourteen centuries ago.

It is also necessary to recommend parents to take these matters earnest and to make their children accustomed to taking permission of entrance. They also must avoid actions, such as sleeping together in a room discerning children sleep, which may excite children as much as possible. You must know that these affairs have got extraordinarily educational effect on children's fate.

It is interesting that there is a tradition from the Prophet (S) who said:

“Be careful that you do not have sexual intercourse while a child is looking at you from cradle.”⁴

Sura An-Nur – Verse 60

وَالْقَوَاعِدُ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ اللَّاتِي لَا يَرْجُونَ نِكَاحًا فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْهِنَّ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ يَضَعْنَ
ثِيَابَهُنَّ غَيْرَ مُتَبَرِّجَاتٍ بِزِينَةٍ وَأَنْ يَسْتَعْفِفْنَ خَيْرٌ لَهُنَّ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

60. “And (as for) women advanced in years, who have no hope of marriage, it is no sin for them if they put off their (outer) clothes in such a way as not to show adornment. And if they refrain themselves, it is better for them; and Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.”

Islam rules are in accord with realities, necessities, needs, and social abilities. Therefore we should slacken it for an old woman who does not have inclination for husband and does not apply cosmetics.

Thus in this verse an exception for the ordinance of the veil of women is mentioned by which exempts old women from this ordinance. It says:

“And (as for) women advanced in years, who have no hope of marriage, it is no sin for them if they put off their (outer) clothes in such a way as not to show adornment...”

In fact, there are two conditions for this exception:

1. Reaching an age in which there is usually no hope of marriage in them. In other words, they have lost any sexual attraction completely.
2. They should not have any cosmetics when they take away their veil.

It is clear that with these two conditions there will be no mischief when veil is discarded in them. For this reason Islam exempts them from this ordinance.

It is also obvious that its purpose is not to be naked and to take off all clothes, but it means to remove outer garments that in some narrations it has been interpreted into veil (chador) and scarf.

In a tradition Imam Sadiq (as) about this verse says:

“The purpose (of it) is veil (chador) and scarf.”

The narrator says he asked Imam:

“Before every one?”

Imam said:

*“Before every one, but she must not apply cosmetics and she must not wear adornments.”*⁵

Some other narrations with the same content are narrated from Imams, Ahl-ul-Bayt (as).⁶

It is added at the end of the verse implying that yet if they refrain and cover themselves it is better for them, because from the view point of Islam the more a woman observes her veiling and chastity, she will be more admirable, pious, and pure.

The verse says:

“...And if they refrain themselves, it is better for them...”

Since some old women may misuse this calculated and lawful freedom and so have possibly improper talking with men and have impure thoughts altogether, in the end of the verse, as a warning, it says:

“...and Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.”

He hears what is told and He knows what is in the hearts and what is in minds.

In short, the matter of veiling is one of the stable and necessary ordinances of Islam, but the issues of how the veil should be is depended on the matter of not stirring sexual desires and saving chastity and modesty.

So, the principle that this group of women are excepted from the ordinance of veiling is not a matter of discussion among Islam scholars and learned people, because the text of the Qur'an expresses it, but there are some words about its characteristics, including: the age of these women, in what age the ordinance of 'women advanced in years' covers women.

In some Islamic narration, it has been interpreted as old women.⁷ While in other narrations it has been interpreted as women retirement from marriage.⁸ But some Islamic jurists and commentators think that it means the end of menstruation, the age of barrenness and people's reluctance to marry such women.⁹

Apparently, all of these meanings refer to one reality that women must get so old that no one would like to marry them, although some of such women may rarely get married.

Moreover, about the part of the body that these women can show, there are some different interpretations in Islamic Traditions, while the Holy Qur'an says vaguely that there is no problem for such women to take off their garments, of course, their outer clothes.

In some narrations we read the answer of this question that which garments can be taken off;

Imam Sadiq (as) has said:

“Chador.”¹⁰

While in other narration it has been interpreted as chador and scarf.¹¹

Apparently, there is no inconsistency between these Islamic traditions. The purpose is that there is no problem for such women to uncover their head and to bare their hair, neck, and face. Even in some traditions and jurists' words, the wrist is exempted, but we have no reasons about more than this very extension for its exemption.

Anyway, all of these are for the time that such women do not apply cosmetics, and to cover their hidden adornments as others are enjoined to do. Also they must not wear garments that attract attentions and, in other words, they are permitted to go out without (chador) and scarf while wearing a simple garment and without applying cosmetics.

Yet, this ordinance is not obligatory, but if they do veil themselves as other women do, it is more preferred, as it is explicitly mentioned in the end of the verse, because there is the possibility of deviation and offence in such people, although very rarely.

Sura An-Nur – Verse 61

لَيْسَ عَلَى الْأَعْمَى حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَى الْأَعْرَجِ حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَى الْمَرِيضِ حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَى
أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَنْ تَأْكُلُوا مِنْ بُيُوتِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ آبَائِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ إِخْوَانِكُمْ
أَوْ بُيُوتِ أَخَوَاتِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ أَعْمَامِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ عَمَّاتِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ أَخْوَالِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ
خَالَاتِكُمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتُمْ مَفَاتِحَهُ أَوْ صَدِيقِكُمْ لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَأْكُلُوا جَمِيعاً
أَوْ أَشْتَاتاً فَإِذَا دَخَلْتُمْ بُيُوتاً فَسَلِّمُوا عَلَى أَنْفُسِكُمْ تَحِيَّةً مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ مُبَارَكَةً طَيِّبَةً
كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ

61. “There is no blame upon the blind nor any blame upon the lame nor any blame upon the sick nor on yourselves that you eat from your houses, or the houses of your fathers, or the houses of your mothers, or the houses of your brothers, or the houses of your sisters, or the houses of your fathers' brothers, or the houses of your fathers' sisters, or the houses of your mothers' brothers, or the houses of your mothers' sisters, or (from that) whereof you hold the keys, or (from the house) of your friend. No sin shall it be for you whether you eat together or apart. But when you enter houses, salute one another with a greeting from Allah, blessed and good. Thus does Allah make clear His revelations for you, so that you might understand.”

Imam Baqir (as) said:

*“Before Islam the blind, the lame and the sick were not allowed to eat food with healthy people. This verse permitted them to eat food in group, with healthy people or if they wanted they could eat food lonely.”*¹²

Anyway, since the previous verses talked about taking permission at certain times or when entering special place of parents, the concerned verse is, in fact, an exception from this ordinance, indicating that a group can enter their relatives’ home and the like in certain conditions and without taking permission, and they can even eat food without having permission.

At first, the verse says:

“There is no blame upon the blind nor any blame upon the lame nor any blame upon the sick nor on yourselves that you eat from your houses...”

According to some narrations, before converting to Islam, the people of Medina prevented the blind, the lame and the sick to eat with them at a table. They did not eat with those people and they hated such a matter.

And, on the contrary, after Islam some people thought that this kind of people must eat lonely, not because they hated eating with them, but maybe because they thought that the blind could not see the existing good food while they could and they ate, which was against ethics, and also the lame and the sick were not as fast in eating as healthy people were so they tarried.

Anyway, they did not eat food with such people for any reason they had , so the blind, the lame and the sick withdrew themselves, because it was possible that they caused others to worry and also thought that this was a sin.

This matter was presented to the Prophet (S) and this verse was sent down, indicating that there is no blame upon the blind, nor any blame upon the lame nor any blame upon the sick, nor on yourselves that you eat food with together.¹³

The writer of *Jawami‘-ul-Jami‘* says: In the advent of Islam, some of believers brought the disabled and the afflicted persons to the houses of their wives, to the houses of their own offsprings, their relatives’ houses, and their friends’ houses, and they fed them.

Gradually these believers thought that this job might be counted a sin for them, and so they avoided this deed. Then this verse was sent down and indicated that this deed is not as sin.

The purpose of:

“There is no blame ... nor on yourselves...”

is that there is no heaviness and sin for you and for the believers who are like you.

Some have said that the sick and the poor did not eat and associate with other people, because they thought people might not like their company.

Some others have said that when Muslims wanted to go to war, they gave the key of their houses to the disabled so that these people could eat whatever they found in those houses. But they thought that this interference might be unlawful for them, then they avoided eating food of their houses. Then Allah said that there is no blame on them and you in this eating.

Then the holy Qur'an adds implying that there is not any blame on yourselves if you eat from these houses without permission: from your houses, (the objective is the children and wives which have been rendered into 'your houses').

The verse continues:

"...or the houses of your fathers, or the houses of your mothers, or the houses of your brothers, or the houses of your sisters, or the houses of your fathers' brothers, or the houses of your fathers' sisters, or the houses of your mothers' brothers, or the houses of your mothers' sisters, or (from that) whereof you hold the keys, or (from the house) of a friend. No sin shall it be for you whether you eat together or apart..."

It seems that, at the advent of Islam, some Muslims avoided eating food lonely and if they could not find anyone as company for eating food, they would remain hungry for a time. Then the Qur'an taught them that eating lonely, or with other persons, is lawful. 14

Some commentators have also said that some Arabs believed that, as a respect, the food of their guest must be served separately and they ought not to be with him during eating food (lest the guest might become shy or feel uneasy). This verse removed these considerations and taught them that this was not an admirable custom. 15

Another group of commentators have said that some people believed that the poor must not eat with the rich, and class division must be observed even at the time of eating food. The holy Qur'an rejected this wrong and unjust custom with the above sentence.

There is no problem if this verse refers to all of above affairs. Then the verse refers to another ethical matter, where it says:

"...But when you enter houses, salute one another with a greeting from Allah, blessed and good..."

And finally it says:

"...Thus does Allah make clear His revelations for you, so that you might understand."

That which houses are the purpose of the Qur'anic word /buyut/ (houses), some say that it refers to 11 houses that are mentioned in above.

Some others say it refers specially to mosques. But, as it is clear, the verse is unconditional and it embraces all houses, including those 11 ones which a person enters for eating food, or other houses such as: friends' houses and relatives' houses and so on, because there is no reason for limiting the vast concept of the verse.

There are some commentaries on the purpose of the Qur'anic phrase: /fa sallimu 'ala 'anfusikum/ 'saluting one another':

Some say that it means 'to salute one another' as in the story of the Children of Israel the holy Qur'an says /faqtulu 'anfusakum/:

"...and slay one another (the wrong doers)..."¹⁶

Some commentators say that , it means to greet to wife, issues and family, because they are considered as man himself and therefore, it is stated in the verse in the form of /'anfus/.

In the verse of mutual cursing (Sura 'Al-i-'Imran, No. 3, verse 61) we see such a meaning, and it shows that sometime when a person gets relationally closed to one another the word /'anfus/ (self, man himself) will be used, as Imam Ali's closeness to the Prophet (S) is stated in this way.

Some commentators say that this verse refers to the houses in which no one lives and when one wants to enter them one salutes himself with this sentence:

"Our greeting and peace will be from our Lord."

or

"Our peace be upon us and upon Allah's righteous servants, "

We think there is not any inconsistency between these commentaries; entering every home we must salute, believers must salute believers, household must salute each other, if there is no one we must salute ourselves, because all of these, in fact, refer to saluting oneself.

On the commentary of this verse, Imam Baqir (as) said:

*"The purpose of saluting household at the time of entering home is that they will naturally answer him and returns peace and salutation on himself, and this is saluting oneself."*¹⁷

Again, Imam Baqir (as) said:

"When a person enters his home and sees some one there so he must salute him (or her), and if there

is no one there, he must say, peace be upon us from Allah, as Allah has said in the holy Qur'an:

*'...a greeting from Allah, blessed and good...'*¹⁸

Some Points

1. Do we not need to take permission for eating others' food? As the above verse has mentioned, Allah has permitted man to eat food from close relatives' houses and some friends' houses and such like (on the whole these houses are 11).

In this verse taking permission was not mentioned as its condition and certainly it does not need taking permission, because when permission is taken we can eat everyone's food and it will not be limited to these 11 houses. But, is obtaining inward consent necessary as a condition because of intimacy and close acquaintance that is between two parties?

The holy verse apparently rejects this condition, too, and considers it enough if only he or she is likely consent.

But if the status of two parties is in a way that certainly there is no assent, although the verse apparently includes all cases from this viewpoint, it is not impossible that the verse excludes such a case, especially when such people are rare and general applications do not cover these rare people.

Therefore, the above verse particularizes, in a certain field, verses and narrations that limit using others' property to having permission from their owners save in a special boundary; but we repeat that this particularization is inside a certain field, such as eating food as it is necessary and without immoderation.

What was said above is well known among our Islamic jurists and some of it is mentioned explicitly in narrations from Ahl-ul-Bayt (as).

We read in an authentic narration that when Imam Sadiq (as) was asked about the Qur'anic phrase *'a sadiqikum/* (or of a friend), he said:

*"By Allah! Its purpose is that man enters his friend's (brother's) home and eats food without having permission."*¹⁹

There are numerous narrations mentioned that have the same concept and in them it is said that taking permission is not necessary in these cases.

On 'lack of corruption and immoderation', some narrations have also mentioned it explicitly.²⁰

The only thing that remains is a narration that is about this matter. It says:

"Only special nutritional materials can be eaten, not every food."

But since this narration is objected by Islamic jurists, its document would not be valid.

Some Islamic jurists have excepted some foods which are superior and special, and possibly the landlord has kept for himself or for an honored guest or for some particular times. It is not impossible that the verse excepts this case.²¹

2. The philosophy of this Islamic ordinance:

Comparing with other severe divine ordinances that prohibit usurpation, this ordinance may raise question how Islam permits such a thing while it is very exact and fastidious in the issue of usurping others' property.

We think that this question is proper for fully material environments, such as western societies, in which parents may force their children to go out of their house when they become a little old! And when parents get old and disable, they will be dismissed!

They do not want to be kind and gratitude towards them, because in those societies all affairs are based on economical and financial relationships and usually humane sentiments do not exist.

With regard to the Islamic culture and humane profound sentiments, especially between the members of the family, relatives and particular friends, which dominate this culture, there is nothing to get surprised at.

In fact, Islam considers close relationships of relatives and friends as being superior to these issues. This, in fact, indicates the ultimate friendship and peacefulness that must dominate an Islamic society, and conceits, exclusionisms, and selfishness must be wiped out from it.

Undoubtedly, the ordinances of usurpation exist in fields other than this, but in this special field Islam gives priority to sentimental issues and humane relationships and it is, in fact, an example for other relations of relatives and friends.

3. Who does /sadiq/ mean?

Undoubtedly friendship and friendliness has got a vast meaning, and here its purpose is certainly those special and close friends that have very close relationship with each other and whose relation necessitates going to each other's house and to eat from their food.

In such cases, as we said before, there is no need for being sure about the consent of other party, if only someone is not sure about the discontentment of that one, this will be enough.

Thus some commentators have said about this phrase that the purpose is a friend who treats sincerely with you in his friendship. Some others say that the purpose is a friend that usually has outwardly and inwardly the same relation with you. Apparently, all of these statements refer to one matter.

Meanwhile, in short, it gets clear that those who are not in this extent generous and forgiving toward their friends, are not in fact friend.

It is appropriate here to mention a tradition narrated from Imam Sadiq (as) who declared comprehensive conditions of friendship and its vast concept.

He (as) said:

“Friendship is materialized only when its conditions and terms are met. Count a person who has all of these terms, or some of them, as friend. And a person who has nothing of these terms is not a friend. (Conditions and terms of friendship)

A) His outward and inward are the same for you.

B) He considers your honour, reputation, and enhancement as his and he counts your fault and gracelessness as his.

C) His rank, wealth and status do not change his position toward you.

D) He does not withhold from you what he can do.

F) A person who has got all of the above attributes does not leave you alone when you are down on your luck.”²²

4. The commentary of /mamalaktum mafatihahu/ (**‘(from that) whereof you hold the keys’**):

In some occasions of revelation we read that at the advent of Islam, when Muslims went to war, they sometimes gave the key of their house to the disabled who could not fight and even permitted them to eat whatever food was in the house, but they avoided eating food, because they thought that this might be sin.

According to this narration, the purpose of this phrase is

‘the houses that you have become the owner of whose keys’²³

It has been narrated from Ibn Abbass who said the purpose of this sentence is man’s lawyer or agent due to his domestic animals, farming, ground, and water. Such person is permitted to eat fruit from the garden and to drink milk from the animals as much as he needs. Some others also have interpreted it as storekeeper who has the right to eat some of the foodstuff.

But, with regard to other groups that are mentioned in this verse, it seems that the purpose of the phrase is those who give the key of their house to other person for the sake of close relationship and trust. Their close relationship has caused them to be like close relatives and friends, whether he is formally lawyer or not.

If we read in some narrations that this phrase has been interpreted as a lawyer who is responsible for someone's property, it is, indeed, only expressing the extension of the meaning and it is not limited to it.

5. Salutation and greeting:

As we said before, the Arabic word /tahiyyat/ is derived from the word /hayat/ (life) and it means to pray for someone's health and life, whether this prayer is in the form of 'Salamun 'Alaykum' (peace on you), or 'As-Salamu 'Alayna' (Peace on us), or 'Hayyaka Allah' (Allah salutes you).

But usually every kind of expression of kindness that is done in the beginning of a meeting is called 'Tahiyyat'.

The purpose of the sentence:

"...a greeting from Allah, blessed and good..."

is to join greeting with Allah in a way, that is, the purpose of 'Salamun 'Alaykum' will be that 'Allah salutes you' or 'I ask Allah your health.', because in the opinion of a believer every prayer that is in this form is both full of blessings (Mubarak) and pure (Tayyib).

Some Islamic traditions on salutation and its importance and obligation to answer every kind of greeting:

1. The Prophet (S) said:

*"The stingiest person is the one who is reluctant to salute (and to greet), and the most generous person is one who spends his wealth and his life in the path of Allah."*²⁴

2. The Prophet (S) said:

*"Salutation is recommended and answering salutation is obligatory."*²⁵

3. Imam Hussayn (as) said:

*"Salutation has got 70 good points of which 69 belong to one who begins salutation and one belongs to one who answers it."*²⁶

4. Imam Sadiq (as) said:

"(This is the sign) of modesty that you salute to whom you meet."

5. Imam Sadiq (as) said:

"One who starts saluting is more prior to (have the blessing and favour of) Allah and the Prophet (S)."

6. Imam Rida (as) said:

“One who salutes the poor in a way that is different from the way he salutes the rich will meet Allah, Almighty and Glorious, on the Day of Hereafter while He is angry at him.”²⁷

7. The Prophet (S) said:

“The stingiest individual is one who meets other Muslim and does not salute him.”²⁸

8. Imam Ali (as) said:

“When someone salutes you, you salute him in a better way, and when someone confers you a blessing, you confer him a better blessing. But prior is the one who has started saluting and offering blessing.”²⁹

1. Sura Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 83

2. Kanz-ul-‘Irfan, Vol. 2, P. 225

3. If we look one more time to this Sura from the beginning, we find that the policy of prevention from indecency is behind its verses. For example, adulterer and adulteress should be punished before others’ eye (verse 1), their marriage is limited (verse 3), if without four witnesses false accusation is made, 80 stripes should be beaten (verse 4), those who falsely accuse the Prophet’s wife will be severely chastised (verse 11), if you heard a false accusation, you must deal with it (verse 12), if one likes spreading indecency, he will be severely chastised in couple (verse 19), do not follow the steps of satan (verse 21) those who accuse pure women falsely will be roughly punished (verse 23), the foul language is uttered by the wicked persons not you (verse 26), do not enter others’ house without taking permission and if they say you must return, you must accept and go back (verses 27–28), men and women must not gaze at the one who is within forbidden degrees (verses 30–31), women must not show their ornaments and must not dance everywhere and you must try for the marriage of those who are celibate and you must not fear from poverty (verse 32), and in this verse, your children and slaves must not enter your private room at times when you are at your ease and alone with your wife. Yes, all these commands are for preventing immodesty and immature puberty and saving face and decency.

4. Bihar-ul-‘Anwar, Vol. 103, p. 295

5. Wasa’il-ush-Shi’ah, the book of An-Nikah, Vol. 14, p. 147, Ch. 110

6. For more explanation refer to the above book (the same reference)

7. Wasa’il-ush-Shi’ah, Vol. 14, the book of An-Nikah, C. 110, Tradition No. 4

8. The above book

9. Jawahir, Vol. 29, p. 85, and Kanz-ul-‘Irfan, Vol. 2, p. 226

10. Wasa’il-ush-Shi’ah, the book of An-Nikah, C. 110, Tradition No. 1

11. The above book, Traditions 2 & 3

12. Nur-uth-Thaqalyn, the Commentary

13. Dur-ul-Manthur and Nur-uth-Thaqalyn, following the verse. A part of other commentators also have mentioned this narration in their books such as: Tabarsi in Majma‘-ul-Bayan, the deceased Fiyd in Tafsir-us-Safi, Fakhr-i-Razi in Tafsir-ul-Kabir, and Shaykh Tusi in Tibyan.

14. Tibyan, the Commentary, following the verse

15. Ibid

16. Sura Al-Baqarah, No.2, verse 54

17. Nur-uth-Thaqalyn, vol. 3, p. 627

18. Ibid

19. Wasa’il-ush-Shi’ah, Vol. 16, p. 434, the book of “At’imah wa Ashribah”, chapters of ‘Adab-ul-Ma’idah, C. 24, Tradition No. 1

20. Ibid
21. For more explanation refer to the book Jawahir-ul-Kalam, Vol. 36, p. 406
22. 'Usul-i-Kafi, Vol. 2, p. 467
23. Qurtabi, the Commentary, following the verse
24. Bihar, Vol. 73, p. 12
25. Ibid
26. Bihar, Vol. 75, p. 471
27. Wasa'il-ush-Shi'ah, Vol. 5, p. 442
28. Bihar, Vol. 75, p. 12
29. Nahj-ul-Balaqah, Translated by Fiydul-Islam, p. 1114

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