

Miscellaneous Issues of enjoining the good and forbidding evil

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Q 26: My sister is married to a man who does not pray. Since he is with us all the time, I have to associate with him, talk to him, and even at times help him in some work at his request. My question is, am I permitted by Islamic law to associate with, talk to and help him in some work? What is my duty towards him?

A: Nothing is obligatory for you except to enjoin him to the good and forbid him from evil in a continuous manner, whenever its conditions exist. If associating with him and assisting him do not encourage him to continue his negligence of prayer, there is no problem in it.

Q 27: Is it permissible for high-ranking Islamic clerics to visit and associate with tyrants and tyrannical rulers if it leads to a decrease in their tyranny?

A: If it is proved for the cleric in such cases that his links with the tyrant lead to prevention of tyranny and are effective in stopping him from the evil, or the cleric considers an important issue which has to be taken care of and followed up, there is no problem in it.

Q 28: I got married several years ago. I pay great attention to religious affairs and shar'ī matters and follow the late Imam Khomeini (q.). However, my wife, unfortunately, does not care much about religious matters. Sometimes, after a verbal argument, she offers prayer once in a while, and this is what bothers me very much. What is my duty in such a situation?

A: Your duty is to prepare the grounds for her to reform by every possible means, and to avoid any kind of rough behavior which might indicate bad temper and disharmony. Keep in mind that attending religious gatherings and associating with religious families have great effects on reforming her.

Q 29: A Muslim man comes to know from circumstantial evidence that his wife, though being a mother of several children, secretly commits acts against chastity while he does not have any shar'ī evidence to prove it (such as a witness who is ready to testify). How can he deal with this woman in accordance with Islamic law, knowing that his children are being raised by such a woman? How should one deal with a person, or persons, who commit such obscene deeds contrary to the divine laws if he becomes aware of them without possessing any evidence which can be presented in a shar'ī court?

A: It is obligatory to avoid suspicion and refrain from depending on conjectural evidences. If it is ascertained that a ḥarām act has been committed, it is obligatory to prevent her by reminding, advising, and forbidding evil. If forbidding her from evil is not effective, one may refer to competent judicial authorities if provable evidence is available.

Q 30: Is it permissible for a girl to guide a young man and help him with his studies etc. while observing Islamic norms?

A: Under the assumption in the question, there is no problem in it. However, one should try hard to avoid satanic temptations, and it is obligatory to observe the related shar'ī rules, e.g. to avoid being alone with a stranger in a place where nobody else may enter.

Q 31: What is the duty of employees in official departments and institutions when they occasionally observe certain organizational

and religious misconduct perpetrated by their high-ranking managers? Will the obligation be called off if the individual fears that his forbidding evil may provoke high-ranking authority or authorities to harm him?

A: If all conditions of enjoining the good and forbidding evil are present, they should enjoin the good and forbid evil. Otherwise, they have no obligation in this respect. This is the case when they fear considerable harm for themselves as a result of enjoining the good and forbidding evil and the country is not governed by an Islamic government. When there is an Islamic government that takes up the fulfillment of these divine duties, the obligation of those who are incapable of enjoining the good and forbidding evil is to inform official institutions assigned by the government to handle such a case and follow it up until corruption is uprooted.

Q 32: There is continuing misappropriation of public assets of Muslims in a government department, and there is someone who thinks that he can curtail this phenomenon if he takes charge of the department. However, it is impossible for him to acquire that post without bribing one of the managers. Is it permissible to give a bribe in order to prevent misappropriation of public assets, a measure which amounts to averting a major evil in the expense of a minor one?

A: The duty of those who become aware of violations of the law is to forbid the evil while observing its related shar'ī conditions and norms, and it is not permissible to resort to bribery and illegal methods in order to obtain an office, even if it is done for the purpose of preventing corruption. Of course, if this is assumed to occur in a country ruled by an Islamic government, the people's duty does not end simply with personal inability to enjoin the good and forbid evil, rather they must bring the matter to the attention of the related authorities and follow up on it.

Q 33: Is evil something relative so that one may compare the university environment with some worse environments, and make it an excuse to neglect forbidding evil with respect to some evils and avoid preventing them arguing that in comparison to other evils they are not considered ḥarām and evil?

A: There is no difference among the evils. Yet some the evils may be considered more ḥarām compared to others. In any case, forbidding evil is regarded a shar'ī obligation for everybody whenever its conditions exist, and its negligence is impermissible. As to this ruling, there is no difference between various evils, or between university environments and other settings.

Q 34: What rule applies to alcoholic drinks found with some foreign specialists in some institutions of an Islamic country and who drink them at home or in places assigned for their stay? What rule applies to their preparation and consumption of pork, as well as their conduct contrary to chastity and the people's ruling values? What is the duty of factory managers and those who have relations with them? What position is to be taken if the factory managers and related provincial authorities do not take any measures in these cases after being informed?

A: It is obligatory for the related authorities to order them not to openly commit such acts as drinking and eating unlawful meats and to refrain from doing so in public. As for matters which are against public chastity, they should not be allowed to commit them at all. In any case, the related authorities should take the due measures in this regard.

Q 35: Some brothers go to places — where improperly veiled women may be available at times — in order to enjoin the good and forbid the evil, and for advice and guidance. Are they allowed to look at these women, considering that they go there for the sake of enjoining the good?



A: There is no problem in the first unintentional look, but an intentional look at parts other than the face and hands — up to the wrists — is not permissible, even for the purpose of enjoining the good.

Q 36: What is the duty of devout youths in mixed universities in respect of the corruptions which are noticed in some of these universities?

A: It is obligatory for them, besides being careful not to get corrupted, to enjoin the good and forbid evil if the conditions are available and they have the ability to carry it out.