

# *Beating Women is Forbidden in Islam*

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TSEKOURA VIVIAN**

Revised the Arabic original text

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## *Beating Women is Forbidden in Islam*

### *Introduction*

*All praise belongs to Allah, the Lord all of the worlds, Who sent Muhammad ﷺ as a Messenger of glad tidings and as a warner, as well as to call the whole world to the Path of Allah, and as a bright light. May Allah's Blessings and peace be upon him, his family and his Companions.*

*This book was written as an answer to the claims of many people who are deceived and misled by Satan. The matter of beating women in Islam has been discussed in many gatherings and there are many websites addressing that matter, without understanding or having knowledge about this, and some of the enemies of Islam unjustly invent lies on that matter. They invent words that have neither roots nor branches, they are completely baseless. Therefore, I would like to put in the generous reader's hands the attitude of Islam on beating women and its differentiation with the attitudes of other religions, since Islam is the only religion that states the forbiddance of beating women, either young or older. So, I present for you the details of the matter, and then you can judge, after you have acquired knowledge and understanding on the matter.*

*The Author*

## *Chapter 1:*

### *Classification of actions based on the Islamic law (Shari'a)*

*All* human actions are divided according to the Islamic law in the following categories, in order to clarify whether an action is considered permissible or prohibited:

**1. Obligatory (Fard):** It is what Islamic law imposes on people, without any doubt, such as the obligation of prayer, of fasting, of Zakah (annual obligatory charity that the rich gives to the poor). These actions are obligatory, and whoever does them will be rewarded, while whoever neglects them will be punished.

**2. Preferable (Mustahab):** They are the actions that the Islamic law encourages people to do without having made them obligatory. Whoever does them will be rewarded, but whoever neglects them is not considered to have sinned, so he is not punished. Such actions are to brush one's teeth with the Siwak (a small piece of wood with bristles, like a brush) before prayer.

**3. Permissible (Mubah):** They are the acts which neither whoever does is rewarded nor the one who neglects is punished, such as walking, using the car or an airplane and any other everyday actions.

**4. Repugnant (Makrooh):** They are acts abstinence from which is encouraged by the Islamic Law, but there is no prohibition on them. So whoever abstains from them is rewarded, but the one who does them is not considered to have sinned and he is not punished. It is preferred to abstain from these acts and whatever may lead to them, but he who does them has not sinned. But the repetition of such actions and the habit of them leads to the violation of the limits that have been set by Allah and to the commission of an act which Allah has forbidden. The reason behind the fact that such actions are not considered sins, even though they are repugnant, is that sometimes it may be necessary to commit them. For example, Allah, the Almighty, hates divorce, but has not banned it as a mercy for His slaves, to release them if life circumstances require so.

**5. Forbidden (Haram):** They are the actions the Islamic Law forbids. So, whoever does them is considered to have sinned and is punished, while whoever abstains from them is rewarded. Such acts include the prohibition of alcohol consumption and adultery.

### *Distinction between the permissible and the forbidden*

**To** know the permissible and distinguish it from the forbidden is the backbone of Islam and the proof of faith, and it is connected to the actions of the heart, as it is connected to the actions of the body. The basic rule is that every act is permitted, and there are no impermissible acts except those specifically mentioned in the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as forbidden. The permissible acts are something pure, good, while the forbidden ones are something evil, obscene. And it is the Right of Allah, since He is the Creator, the Good-Doer and the Disposer of His slaves' affairs, to permit whatever He wants for His slaves and to forbid whatever He wants. But Allah, as a mercy from Him to His slaves, has made the legalization and the forbiddance of actions for logical causes, based on the benefit for people. Therefore, Allah has not permitted anything but good, and has not forbidden anything but evil.

### *Moving a deed from one category to another*

#### **1. Moving from the permissible to the forbidden and vice versa:**

A permissible deed can be transferred to the category of the prohibited if there is a reason that makes this deed instead of pleasing and good for the soul a bad and vile act that harms the soul. For example, while walking on the streets is a permissible act, it may be forbidden if the president of a country has set a command of curfew for some time for the safety of the citizens.

A forbidden deed may also be transferred to the category of the permissible if there is a reason that makes this deed necessary for a man's life to be preserved. For example, drinking alcohol is a forbidden action, but it may be permissible if a man is lost in the desert and is going to die of thirst while he has nothing available to drink but alcohol, in which case he may drink as much as needed in order to ensure his survival, without, however, transgressing this limit.

#### **2. Moving from the obligatory to the forbidden and vice versa:**

An obligatory deed may be moved to the category of the forbidden and a forbidden deed may be moved to the category of the obligatory. For example,

prayer is an obligatory deed, but it may become forbidden if a man is praying inside his house during an earthquake and it is certain that he will die unless he gets out of the house quickly. On the other hand, to attack someone and cut his leg is forbidden, but if a doctor has to cut a patient's leg to save his life, then this action becomes obligatory to him and if he does not do it he is considered to have committed a sin and a crime, for which he must be punished.

### **3. Moving from the repugnant to the category of the preferable or from preferable to the category of the forbidden:**

A repugnant deed may move to the category of the preferable, even to that of the obligatory. For example, divorce is in essence a repugnant deed, which Allah detests, but in some cases not to give one's wife a divorce can lead to forbidden deeds that the husband cannot prevent unless he gives a divorce, like when a wife is immoral and the husband cannot bring her back to the straight path. In this case it is preferable that the husband should give divorce to such a woman. Consequently, the repugnant action becomes preferable.

A preferable deed may also be moved to the category of the forbidden. For example, to clean one's teeth with As-Siwak is a preferable action. But it may become repugnant, or even forbidden, when, for example, one's teeth are about to fall and he knows that this will happen if he cleans them with As-Siwak. In this case to clean one's teeth with As-Siwak is opposing the Islamic rule **'not to harm, or cause any harm to anybody, not even yourself.'**

### ***Conclusion:***

***Based*** on what we have explained above, we conclude that Islam is not a blind religion that does not see or assess the circumstances of the everyday affairs of people. The blindness is in fact in the hearts of the enemies of Islam, who have no other purpose with the lies they invent against Islam but to put out the light of Allah with their mouths, and verily, Allah will complete His Light, even if the disbelievers do not like that. Maybe, dear reader, you have understood that Islam is not a religion of injustice, but it is a religion of justice, and as one of the Names of Allah is "Al-'Adl - The Just", the estimation of whether an action is forbidden or permissible in Islam is based on justice and not on blind judgement, while every form of injustice is forbidden in Islam.

## Chapter 2:

### *The Treatment of Wives in Light of the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah*

**In** light of the Verses of the Qur'an we see that Allah, the Exalted, ordered excellent treatment of the wife, generosity towards her, and the best cohabitation with her, even if there is not love from the heart. Allah, the All-Wise, said:

﴿ **And live with them in the best way. If you dislike them, it may be that you dislike a thing and Allah brings through it a great deal of good.** ﴾ (4:19)

The Prophet ﷺ said:

**“A believer man must not hate (his wife) believing woman; if he dislikes one of her characteristics he will be pleased with another.”** (Muslim)

Also, Allah clarifies that the woman has rights towards her husband, just as the husband has rights towards her. Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ **And they (women) have rights (over their husbands), similar (to those of their husbands) over them, to what is reasonable.** ﴾ (2:228)

And the Prophet's ﷺ last will before he died was that men should take care of their wives and honour them, and never treat them unfairly or violate their rights. The Prophet ﷺ said:

**“Treat the women in the best way.”**

And the Prophet ﷺ ordered men to behave well to their wives and be generous with them. He also clarified that the best of men is the one who treats his wife best. The Prophet ﷺ said:

**“The most complete in faith is the best in character. And the best of you is the one who is best to his wife.”** (At-Tirmidhi)

The Prophet ﷺ also said:

**“The best of you is the one who is best to his wife, and I am the best of you to my wives.”** (Ibn Majah)

Also, the Prophet ﷺ ordered his Companions to tolerate the mistakes of their women, clarifying the nature of the woman, in which Allah created her. The Prophet ﷺ said:

**“Treat the women in the best way. Verily, the woman was created from a rib and the most crooked portion of the rib is its upper part; if you try to straighten it, it will break, and if you leave it, it will remain crooked, so treat the women in the best way.”** (Al-Bukhari)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ also said:

**“Verily, woman was created from a rib. It shall not be straightened to you in anyway (i.e. she shall not behave exactly as you wish her to). Thus, if you enjoy her, you will enjoy her bent. And if you tried to straighten her, you would break her. And to break her means a divorce.”** (Mustakhraj Abi ‘Awana)

The Verses of the Holy Quran and Ahadith showing that the man should treat his wife in the best way are innumerable, and whoever wants to refer to them, he might as well do so.

***Did Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) ever beat any of his wives?***

**The** Prophet ﷺ is the good example which all Muslims should follow, as Allah the Exalted has ordered them to. Allah, the Exalted, says:

**﴿ Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah (Muhammad) you have a good example to follow, for whomever hopes for (the Meeting with) Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah much. ﴾** (33:21)

Allah, the Exalted, also described the noble Messenger's morals, saying in the Qur'an:

**﴿ And Verily, you (O Muhammad) are on an exalted (standard of) character. ﴾** (68:4)

The Prophet ﷺ applied his good morals in practice, from which people learned how to treat other people. The Prophet ﷺ said:

**“Verily, I was not sent but to perfect and complete the best ethics.”** (Malik in Al-Muata')



Do we then read in the Prophet's ﷺ biography or in his words (Ahadith) anything that shows that the Prophet ﷺ has ever beaten any woman or any child? Or do we even find in his enemies' words who lived during his time and saw him and heard him, any claim that would blame him for such a thing?

And let us look upon Aisha, the Prophet's wife, and what she said about him after his death, to see what kind of a husband he was:

**“His character was the Qur'an.”** (Ahmad)

**“The Prophet ﷺ has never beaten with his hand, neither a woman, nor a child.”** (Muslim)

And let us see what another wife of the Prophet ﷺ, Safiya, said about the Prophet ﷺ after his death:

**“Never have I seen anyone better on character than the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.”** (At-Tabarani)

And let us look at the words of the Prophet's servant, Anas bin Malik ؓ:

**“I remained in the service of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ for ten years. He never once told me 'Oof'. When I did something, he never asked me, why did you do so? When I did not do a certain task, he never asked me why I did not do it. And the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had the best character among all people. (and also possessed the most excellent features, so much so,) that I never felt a silk cloth, nor pure silk, nor any other thing softer than the palm (of the hand) of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Nor did I smell any musk or any other fragrance, more sweet smelling than the sweat of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.”** (At-Tirmidhi)

Anas bin Malik ؓ also said: **“I served the Prophet ﷺ for years. He has never insulted me, never hit me, never scolded me and never frowned to me. And he never reprimanded me about something he had ordered me and I neglected. And if someone of his family reprimanded me, he said; ‘Leave him alone! If it was to be done, it would.’”** (Al-Baghawi)

### *Chapter 3:*

#### *The thesis of Islam about beating women:*

#### *Is it allowed or forbidden in Islam?*

*The* sources of the Islamic Law are the Verses of the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ, and based on these two we will arrive at the judgment of Islam on beating women and in their light you, dear reader, can decide in which category of acts one should place beating women. That is, the category of the obligatory, the preferable, the permissible, the repugnant or the forbidden?

Iyas bin Abd Allah said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **“Do not beat women”**, then *(some other time, after the Prophet had forbidden beating women)* ‘Umar ibn Al-Khattab came to the Prophet ﷺ, saying to him: **“Women overcame their men, disobeying them and treating them with arrogance and bad manner.”** Then the Prophet ﷺ gave them permission to beat them *(making an exception for such cases)*. After that many women came to the Prophet's wives complaining about their husbands. And then the Prophet ﷺ said: **“Many women have come to Muhammad's wives complaining about their husbands, those men are not the best among you.”** (Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah, Ad-Darmi)

#### **From an analysis of this Hadith we can conclude the following:**

This hadith (saying of the Prophet ﷺ) includes three different sayings of the Prophet ﷺ, which he said on three different occasions and not only on one, single occasion.

#### **The first occasion:**

The Prophet ﷺ said **“Do not beat women.”**, and here ends the first occasion. Therefore, whoever heard these words from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ learnt with certainty that the Islamic view on beating women was that it is forbidden and that whoever does it is a sinner, since he has violated the Prophet's ﷺ command.

According to the above, I address my response to you, dear reader. If you were there during that time and heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say, **“Do not beat women”** would you say that beating women, according to the Islamic Law, is obligatory, preferable, permissible, repugnant or forbidden? And would you

consider that whoever did it would be rewarded or considered a sinner? And would you say that Islam oppresses women and allows beating them?

### **The second occasion:**

Now, let us move on to the second part of the hadith, in which ‘Umar ibn Al-Khattab came to the Prophet ﷺ, meaning that this happened on another occasion than when the Prophet ﷺ said: **“Do not beat women.”** ‘Umar came to complain about the women, saying: **“Women overcame their men, disobeying them and treating them with arrogance and a bad manner.”** Here and only here, as an exception, the Prophet ﷺ, taking into consideration the realistic circumstances of life, gave permission to beat one’s wife, but ONLY in such circumstances. But how should this beating be? This will be explained later on.

### **The third occasion:**

Now, let us move on to the third part of the hadith, **(After that many women came to the wives of the Prophet ﷺ complaining about their husbands. And then the Prophet ﷺ said: “Many women have come to Muhammad’s wives complaining about their husbands, those men are not the best among you.”)**. Here lies the final judgment about beating women in Islam, that it is a repugnant or a forbidden deed if the husband transgresses the limits set by Allah, which will be explained later on.

Do you understand from this hadith that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ commended whosoever beats his wife? Or did he encourage that one beats his wife? Or did he reprove whosoever beats his wife?!!! The Prophet’s Companions rushed to receive the pleasure of Allah’s Messenger ﷺ. And that is why they knew with certainty that he who beats his wife is not the one to receive the Messenger’s pleasure, quite the opposite. That is, he who does not beat his wife and forgives her mistakes is the one who will receive the pleasure of the Messenger ﷺ. And without any doubt, any deed that the Prophet ﷺ hated goes to the category of the repugnant acts, or even the forbidden ones.

*Can beating women be moved from the category of the repugnant to that of the forbidden?*

**We** saw that the basis for this subject in Islam and the first judgment of Islam about beating women makes the action forbidden. Then the action moved to the

category of the permissible acts for some specific reasons, and finally it was moved to the category of the repugnant. But when does beating women become forbidden? It is a forbidden action if it is an unjust transgression, without any reason, since every form of unjust transgression is forbidden in Islam. Allah, the Exalted, said in His Wise Book, warning against any form of injustice:

﴿ **And whoever among you commits injustice (i.e. sets up rivals to Allah), We shall make him taste a great torment.** ﴾ (25: 19)

Allah also said:

﴿ **And the unjust will have neither any *Wali* (Protector, Guardian), nor any Supporter.** ﴾ (42:8)

Allah's Messenger ﷺ said:

**“Fear and abstain from injustice (and oppression). Verily, injustice will turn into excessive darkness in the Day of Judgment.”** (Al-Bayhaqi)

Allah's Messenger ﷺ also said:

**“Fear the supplication of the oppressed, as there is no screen between it and Allah.”** (Al-Bukhari)

The Prophet ﷺ also said:

**“Fear the supplication of the oppressed, even if he is a disbeliever, as there is no screen for it (between itself and Allah).”** (Ahmad)

In addition, Islam did not only forbid hurting one's wife physically, but even verbally. Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ **Verily, those who accuse chaste women, who never even think of anything touching their chastity and are good believers – are cursed in this life and in the Hereafter, and for them will be a great torment.** ﴾ (24:23)

Allah, the Exalted, also says:

﴿ **And those who annoy believing men and women undeservedly, they bear (on themselves) the crime of slander and plain sin.** ﴾ (33:58)

The Prophet of Allah ﷺ also said:

**“The Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hand the people are safe, and the believer is the one from whom the people's lives and wealth are safe.”** (An-Nasa'i)



And notice that in the previous hadith the Prophet ﷺ said that **people** are safe from the hand and the tongue of a Muslim. He did not say that **Muslims** are safe.

Therefore, the one who claims that Islam encourages injustice or beating women invents a great slander and an enormous lie.

### *The judgment of an Islamic court concerning the beating of women*

*Now*, it is best to move on to the practical implementation of the subject to the everyday life by an Islamic court, namely to see the judgment of an Islamic court in a case of beating women. Islamic courts address this issue with much seriousness, protecting the rights of women and judging against the men who beat their wives. Here is an example.

**The newspaper *Riyadh* published the following news item on its website on December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2012:**

“The court of the town Al-Katif in Saudi Arabia sentenced a husband who had beaten his wife to 30 lashes in public view, so as for him to be an example for anyone else who may do the same act in the future. The judge also ordered the man to attend a ten-day seminar at an institute specialized in the art of treating women and family issues and finally to pass a written examination, the results of which would be attached to the case file.”

Similarly, all the courts in all the Islamic countries convict any man who beats his wife. The funny thing is that some women take advantage of this and intimidate or threaten their husbands. When they want to take revenge for something, they lightly hurt themselves and then falsely report to the authorities that their husbands did that, although the men are innocent!

The conclusion from the above case is that no sensible Muslim, who follows the teachings of Islam, does accept any injustice towards his wife, and that Islam, our religion, neither taught us, nor ordered us to do anything like this. On the contrary, Islam has prohibited all forms of injustice and has ordered forgiveness, patience, tolerance and confrontation of evil with goodness. And we should know that Islam has not made the beating of women a permissible act but made it an exception for some individual cases in which there is nothing

else to be done. Moreover, it surrounded it with specific conditions in order for this to happen very rarely and only to achieve a specific purpose, which is the protection of the home and morality in the society in general.

## *Chapter 4:*

### *The Islamic solution for the problem of the immoral wife*

*One* may ask:

*Isn't it better for the man to admonish his wife, instead of beating her?*

*Of* course! And verily, this is the Judgment of Allah, the All-Wise, Who said in His Book:

﴿ **As to those women on whose part you fear disobeying with arrogance, ill-conduct and rebellion, admonish them (first), (then if they persist), forsake them in bed (i.e. turn them your back), and (last) beat them (lightly, as a last solution if you have to, and nothing from the previous two steps has any result); but if they obey you, seek not against them means (of annoyance). Surely, Allah is Ever Most High, Most Great.** ﴾ (4:34)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ also said in his farewell pilgrimage:

**'Treat your wives in the best manner, they are like captives in your hands; you have no right to treat them otherwise, unless they are guilty of open indecency, and if they do so, then turn your back at them in bed, and beat them lightly, imperceptibly, but if they obey you, then do not wrong them in any way. Verily, you have rights over your wives and they have their rights over you.'** (At-Tirmidhi)

So, as we have seen, Allah, the All-Wise, the All-Knowing concerning the issues of His slaves, decreed the solution to the problem of an immoral wife to be in three stages, in the following way:

#### **The first stage: admonition and guidance:**

It is obligatory upon a man to follow the path of admonition and guidance to solve the problem with his wife if he saw signs of immorality in her behaviour, before he follows the path of turning his back at her in bed. This sequence is obligatory according to most scholars. Thus, the man should try to touch his wife's heart with nice words by which he will gain and soften her heart, making

her feel how important she is in his heart and that he admonishes her just because he wishes the good for her and the whole family.

Namely, the man should do everything he can, trying to admonish his wife in order to correct her behaviour. And we should take into account that admonition does not come from a cold heart or with a cruel manner, but verily, admonition means kindness in conversation in an effort to touch the heart of the person you admonish, and kindness in behaviour, for example a man giving a present to his wife, so that she accepts his words with a pleased heart and an open mind. It is also obligatory upon the intelligent wives, who are generally moral, to receive admonition from their husband's words, taking into consideration the future of their home and children. If, though, the woman is immoral and stubborn and neither admonition nor guidance seems to be effective, then the husband can resort to the second measure, as Allah ﷻ ordered us.

### **The second stage: turning the back in bed:**

As we have already explained, if the admonition has no result and the woman does not accept admonition or guidance, then it is allowed to her husband to turn his back to her in bed, refusing to have sexual intercourse with her for three days maximum, since if he continues for more than three days, he is emotionally abusing, not correcting her. The Prophet ﷺ said:

**‘It is not lawful for a Muslim to desert (stop talking to) his brother beyond three nights, the one turning one way and the other turning to the other way when they meet, the better of the two is one who is the first to greet the other.’ (Bukhari)**

The purpose of turning his back at his wife is for her to feel that her husband is really sad due to her behaviour. This solution also functions as a second chance for the wife so she can think the subject through in all its aspects.

But if the wife thought it over and decided to abandon her immoral behaviour and return to good manners, then it is obligatory for the husband to stop turning his back, forgive her and treat her nicely. But if she insists on her obstinacy and arrogance, not caring about guidance, and her husband finds no other solution, then he is allowed to take this final measure.

### **The third stage: the imperceptible beating with a Siwak:**

If a man tried and strived to correct the immoral behaviour of his wife through admonition, nice words and presents, but none of these had any effect on his wife, and then he tried turning his back in bed, and this again had no effect, then it is allowed for the husband to beat her imperceptibly using the Siwak.



‘Ataa’ said: ‘I asked Ibn ‘Abas what an imperceptible beating is like. He said: ‘With Siwak and anything similar to it.’ Furthermore, Al-Hasan Al-Basri said: ‘To be imperceptible.’

By Allah, what pain can the Siwak cause, dear reader?! And can you call beating one’s wife with As-Siwak domestic violence?! Here is a photo of Siwak (its size is that of a pencil), so as for the meaning of the word beating in Islam to be understood.



If, dear reader, you consider beating one’s wife imperceptibly with the Siwak domestic violence, come see how many Hollywood movies depict quarrels between men, or between a man and a woman, or between an employer and employees, in which quarrels one put his index finger on the chest of the other, threatening him or even beating him on the chest with his finger or with a pencil which he holds in his hand. And in many other cases a man slaps another. Furthermore, in many movies the wife reaches during her conversation with her husband the point of slapping him harshly on the face, or the conversation leads the man to slap his wife on the face and then he leaves the place. And Westerners do not consider any of those incidences domestic violence, they think instead that intense emotions led the man to beat his wife or vice versa. They still think that the husband and wife are civilized people. And here we should take into account that even slapping someone’s face is forbidden in Islam. But they attack Islam and falsely accuse it of encouraging violence. Please note that the stages of admonition, turning a husband’s back at his wife, and finally beating her are not a solution for everyday marital problems, but they apply only to the problem of immoral and arrogant behaviour of the wife.

For example, if a man tells his wife to cook rice and fish for him, but she forgets and cooks rice and chicken instead, then may we say that the three stages mentioned above, namely admonition, turning his back and light beating should be applied in this case?!!!

Of course not! These are small things which should pass peacefully, without even admonition. But if the wife is an immoral, stubborn woman and her husband starts noticing symptoms of immorality, disobedience and arrogance, which are very serious issues, then we are before a woman who needs correction in behaviour and guidance and a solution to this problem has to be found. Imagine, dear reader, this woman insisting on her obstinacy, arrogance and immoral behaviour that, in the end, will surely result in the destruction of her home and lead to divorce, while her husband did everything he could for a long time using the stage of admonition and guidance and that of turning his back, but she responded to none of it. Which is better and lesser harming in this case, divorce or light beating?!!

If to beat her is the one-eyed and divorce the blind, then the one-eyed is better than the blind! And verily, leaving a wife in such a behaviour would surely lead to the destruction of the whole family and certainly, as a consequence, to the destruction of the whole society.

## *Chapter 5:*

### *The Meaning of the Word 'Beating' in Islam*

**Before** organizations defending human rights in the world condemned domestic violence, Islam had preceded them in condemning domestic violence, promising to the one who commits it punishment in the worldly life and in the Hereafter. Furthermore, the prohibition of that crime is not limited in physical violence only, but also involves verbal abuse. The Prophet ﷺ said:

**“The Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hand the people are safe, and the believer is the one from whom the people's lives and wealth are safe.”** (An-Nasa'i)

The Prophet also ﷺ said:

**‘The true believer is not a sycophant, nor one who curses others, nor an immoral, nor one who speaks shameful words.’** (Al-Haithami)

One may ask, ‘how can Islam condemn violence when it permits the man, even as the final solution, to beat his wife if he sees that she is immoral?’

In order to answer that question we should firstly explain the difference between the meaning of the word ‘beating’ in our everyday life and the meaning of the word ‘beating’ in Islam. For example, today when one hears that a man has beaten his wife, an awful picture of this unjust violent man that beats his wife comes directly to one's mind; the picture depicts him beating his wife like a tornado with punches and kicks. Except for that picture, there is another one emerging on one's mind related to the poor abused woman, whose body is full of wounds, bruises and multiple fractures. This is the meaning of the word ‘beating’ nowadays, which we acquired through our daily experience and the many examples of barbaric men who beat their wives.

But if I told you that ‘I beat the eggs’, or ‘I beat a drum’, would you understand that I beat the eggs with punches and kicks? Or would you understand that I beat a drum with punches and kicks?! As a result, the meaning of the word ‘beating’ changes entirely depending on its linguistic context and according to the purpose of the speaker, his character, his morals. From all this we understand what he means when uttering the word ‘beating’. That's why the meaning of the word ‘beating’ in Islam is entirely different from the meaning of

the word as we perceive it today, since beating in the meaning as it is used today is strictly prohibited in Islam.

Thus, there is absolutely no chance that these two meanings could overlap, since each one of them contradicts the other. If we want to be unbiased we should say that there is no beating of women in Islam and Islam has not allowed anything like that. On the contrary, Islam has forbidden it, as it has forbidden a man to dishonour or offend his wife, or even to speak to her with shameful words. Verily, the meaning of the word ‘beating’ in Islam means nudges, whose aim is to turn a woman’s attention towards her husband and make her understand that she is erring towards the right of her husband and that her husband has the right to correct her behaviour. Islam has also set certain stages which precede the final stage of beating for the husband to solve the problem of his wife if he sees immoral conduct from her. It has made the stage of beating the last resort when the previous stages had no effect on her. Islam has imposed many limitations on the man and if he violates them he becomes a sinner who has transgressed the limits set by Allah, deserving punishment in the worldly life and the Hereafter. These limitations are the following:

### **1. To try to solve the problem gradually:**

The man should strive to solve the problem at the stage of admonition, and if that was fruitless, then he should resort to the second stage of turning his back, and if that was fruitless too, then he can resort to the last stage of the imperceptible beating.

### **2. The beating should be with a Siwak and be imperceptible:**

The Siwak is in the size of a pencil, as you can see in the picture above.

### **3. He should never touch the face and the sensitive parts of her body:**

If the husband does not find any other solution, except for resorting to beating his wife, then he should be careful not to transgress Allah’s limits. Allah has prohibited beating someone’s face in all cases. Furthermore, it is prohibited to beat the sensitive parts of the body, and whoever does it is a sinner. A man being permitted to beat his wife with As-Siwak means that the beating does not take place with the aim of causing pain or harm, so even with the Siwak it is prohibited to beat the face and other sensitive parts.

### **4. He should neither offend, nor dishonour his wife:**

The Prophet ﷺ said:



**‘The true believer is not a sycophant, nor one who curses others, nor an immoral, nor one who speaks shameful words.’ (Al-Haithami)**

And as we have said many times, the aim of the three stages that we have mentioned before is to correct the behavior of the wife and not to offend her. Offending never had a correcting function; on the contrary, it may escalate the problem instead of solving it.

**5. It should not be performed in any case before the children or other people:**

It is not allowed for the man to beat his wife or correct her before anyone else, especially before the children, as this concerns only the two spouses and no one else. If this took place before the children, it would firstly offend the wife and secondly harm the children’s upbringing. What kind of example would a man give to his children if he beat their mother before them?

**6. Not leaving marks on her body:**

The husband is considered to have sinned if he violates Allah’s limits and beats his wife leaving marks on her body, or making her bleed, or causing her a fracture. Whoever does that is a barbaric, violent man, who does not want to correct his wife’s problem but only wants to take revenge by leaving marks on her body. Such a man should be convicted and legally punished for his crime.

## *Chapter 6:*

### *The Issue of Beating Women in Other Religions*

*The* issue of beating women is not restricted to a specific time or place. That is why it is not connected with a specific era or a specific society, but it exists in all societies and eras without any exception. And whoever wants to study the place of women in ancient societies, there are many books that treat this subject and the place of women in ancient Roman, Greek, Chinese, Indian and other societies.

How did Judaism and Christianity deal with the phenomenon of beating women, which was widespread in ancient societies, even in the society of Jesus Christ ﷺ? Did Jesus Christ ﷺ ever speak about the prohibition of beating women? Are there texts in the Bible, either Old or New Testament, that prohibit the beating of women or even refer to it as a repugnant act? From specialized studies it seems that there is no reference to this subject.

As a result, does a Jew or a Christian man sin if he beats his wife, according to his religion? And what is his punishment according to the verses of the Bible? Obviously he does not sin as there is no verse in the Bible, neither in the New nor in the Old Testament, stating something like that.

Furthermore, the husband is not even condemned according to the state law, nor is he punished, except if there are marks of violence in his wife's body, such as fractures, bruises or wounds. But without manifest marks in her body, how can she prove that she was a victim of violence? In other words, an imperceptible beating is not condemned neither religiously nor legally by the Jews or Christians.

Let us also look into Buddhism and other religions of the Far East. Is there any reference in their holy texts that condemns the beating of women?

Of course there is no religious text in any religion that prohibits the beating of women, except in Islam! Even after moving the judgment of beating women from the category of the prohibited to the category of the repugnant, Islam still remains the only religion that clearly states that the beating of women is a repugnant act! But all the other religions do not refer to this subject, neither as something prohibited, nor repugnant.

Furthermore, there is no religion that sets limits for the man as to whether he can beat his wife, except Islam. In other words, if a Jew or a Christian or a Buddhist loses his temper and self-control in the heat of the moment and beats his wife, what are the limits that he must not transgress? Has Judaism, Christianity or Buddhism set limits for the man who lost his self-control and beat his wife, such as not to leave marks on her body, hit her face etc.? Of course not.

Someone who observes the reality of our everyday life will find a huge percentage of Jew, Christian or Buddhist men who beat their wives. Take a look, dear reader, at the lawsuits that are lodged at the police stations and courts in Europe and America, and you shall see an enormous number of men who have committed domestic violence against their wives and children.

Even in the Arab society before Islam, men used to beat their wives with lashes as though they were slaves, and this was something common; neither prohibited, nor illegal. But when the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ came, he condemned that practice with austerity. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

**‘Some of you lash their wives as a slave, and may wish to have sexual intercourse with them at the end of the day.’ [Bukhari]**

In this hadith the Prophet ﷺ condemns and reprimands the man who beats his wife in the morning and wishes to have sexual intercourse with her in the night!! In other words, how can you be rude and harsh with her in the morning and then expect and wish her tenderness and company at night?!!!

### *Quotes from the Bible on the Status of Women*

**Some** Christians constantly claim that Jesus Christ ﷺ was the first defender of the rights of women, that he gave them rights unlike any other religion and that the Bible treats women impartially and raises their status! But do those words correspond to the reality?

We all know that the Bible forbids women to enter the Holy Sanctuary of the Church, which contains the Holy Altar, whether the woman is a child, a teenager, or an elderly. This is not related to age, but it is related to gender. And the Bible, either Old or New Testament, does not include any mention that a woman is allowed to enter the Holy Sanctuary. Ordination is also forbidden for women. A woman is also not allowed to speak inside the church or teach

anyone inside the church. She is not allowed to receive ecclesiastical office, she can only receive the office of the deacon, which is actually a servant, not a priest! The Bible presents all kinds of ecclesiastical offices which are all restricted to men only, like the Priesthood of the first Patriarchs, such as Noah, Job, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, or the Aaronic Priesthood, the Priesthood of Melchizedek, the Priesthood of the Apostles and their bishop successors. All these are reserved for men and if a woman were to receive an ecclesiastical office, that would have been the Virgin Mary (ﷺ). But according to the teachings of Christianity a woman is deprived of all these.

**Let us look at some quotes from the Bible in order to see the status of a woman:**

**1. A woman is punished for her husband's sin:**

{And as for the prophet, and the priest, and the people, that shall say, The burden of the LORD, I will even punish that man and **his house** (i.e. his wife and children).} (Jeremiah 23:34)

**2. The burning of the adulteress:**

{And the daughter of any priest, if she profane herself by playing the whore, she profaneth her father: she shall be burnt with fire.} (Leviticus 21:9)

**3. Cutting the hand of a woman for irrational reasons:**

{<sup>11</sup>When men strive together one with another, and the wife of the one draweth near for to deliver her husband out of the hand of him that smiteth him, and putteth forth her hand, and taketh him by the secrets:  
<sup>12</sup>Then thou shalt cut off her hand, thine eye shall not pity her. } (Deuteronomy 25:11-12)

**4. The divorced, the widow and the adulteress are equal:**

{<sup>10</sup>And he that is the high priest...<sup>13</sup>shall take a wife in her virginity.  
<sup>14</sup>A widow, or a divorced woman, or profane, or a harlot, these shall he not take: but he shall take a virgin of his own people to wife. <sup>15</sup>Neither shall he profane his seed among his people: for I the Lord do sanctify him.} (Leviticus 21:10-13-14-15)

**5. Total submission of a woman to her husband:**

{<sup>22</sup>Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.  
<sup>23</sup>For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the



church: and he is the saviour of the body. <sup>24</sup>Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.} (Ephesians 5:22-24)

#### **6. Silence of women in the church:**

{Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.} (1 Corinthians 14:34-35)

#### **7. The woman is the cause of temptation:**

{Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.} (1 Timothy 2:11-15)

#### **8. Men rule over women:**

{Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands... Whose (women) adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord.} (1 Peter 3:1-6)

{Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.} (Genesis 3:16)

#### **9. Death of adulteresses by stoning:**

{<sup>13</sup> If any man take a wife, and go in unto her, and hate her, <sup>14</sup> And give occasions of speech against her, and bring up an evil name upon her, and say, I took this woman, and when I came to her, I found her not a maid: <sup>15</sup> Then shall the father of the damsel, and her mother, take and bring forth the tokens of the damsel's virginity unto the elders of the city in the gate: <sup>16</sup> And the damsel's father shall say unto the elders, I gave my daughter

unto this man to wife, and he hateth her; <sup>17</sup> And, lo, he hath given occasions of speech against her, saying, I found not thy daughter a maid; and yet these are the tokens of my daughter's virginity. And they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city. <sup>18</sup> And the elders of that city shall take that man and chastise him; <sup>19</sup> And they shall amerce him in an hundred shekels of silver, and give them unto the father of the damsel, because he hath brought up an evil name upon a virgin of Israel: and she shall be his wife; he may not put her away all his days. <sup>20</sup> But if this thing be true, and the tokens of virginity be not found for the damsel: <sup>21</sup> Then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her with stones that she die.} (Deuteronomy 22:13-21)

{If a man be found lying with a woman married to an husband, then they shall both of them die, both the man that lay with the woman, and the woman: so shalt thou put away evil from Israel.} (Deuteronomy 22:22)

{If a damsel that is a virgin be betrothed unto an husband, and a man find her in the city, and lie with her; Then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of that city, and ye shall stone them with stones that they die} (Deuteronomy 22:23-24)

#### **10. Women are inferior to men:**

{ <sup>3</sup> But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. <sup>4</sup> Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. <sup>5</sup> But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven. <sup>6</sup> For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered. <sup>7</sup> For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. <sup>8</sup> For the man is not of the woman: but the woman of the man. <sup>9</sup> Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man. <sup>10</sup> For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels.} (1 Corinthians 11:3-10)

#### **11. Didascalia Apostolorum about women:**

Didascalia Apostolorum, chapter 3 with the title ‘Women should be subjected to their husbands.’

{And a woman should be subjected to her husband, because the head of the woman is her husband...Fear, o woman, your husband. And be shy before him. And thank only him after God. And as we have said, offer him

comforts with your service, so as for your husband to encompass you...If you want to be a believer and God to be pleased with you, do not put on ornaments so as to please strangers and do not wish to wear light clothes which only fit to the adulteresses, so that you are not followed by those who chase such women. If you don't wear them in order to commit adultery, you will again be condemned for your ornaments alone, because in this way you force whomever sees you to follow you and lust you. Why you are not conservative, so as not to fall in sin and not to leave one fall in doubt (or jealousy) for your sake?! And if you sin just for that, you will fall too, as you will have become the reason of destroying the soul of that man. If you lead one to sin, he will be the cause for you to sin in many, as it is written in the Holy Bible: {When the wicked cometh, then cometh also contempt, and with ignominy reproach.} (Proverbs 18:3). Anyone who does that will be destroyed through sin and will go after the souls of the ignorant with impiety. Let her know what the Holy Bible says about whomever attributes lies to such (men). {The evil woman is more hateful than death, which is a trap for the ignorant.} {As the worm eats the wood, so a wicked woman destroys her husband} {It is better to live in a roof, than in a house with a contentious woman.} Do not be, o Christian women, like those women, if you wish to be believers. Take care of your husband in order to please him alone. **And when you walk on the street, cover your head with your garment**, because if you are covered with respect you will be safe from the eyes of the malignant. Do not decorate your face, which God created, because it lacks no ornament. Since whatever God created is very beautiful and needs no ornaments. And what is more from beauty changes the grace of the Creator. **Walk with your face looking to the ground and be entirely covered**. Stay away from any bath with men, as the traps of the malignant are many. A believing woman does not have bath with men. **And when she covers her face**, let her cover it with the fear of the eyes of strangers...And if you are a believer run away from any form of curiosity and from the many glances...{To live on the desert is better than living with a woman with a long tongue.}}.

## *Chapter 7:*

### *The Beating of Women in Western Christian Societies*

**Many** fanatics tried to raise some misconceptions about Islam, one of which is the beating of one's wife, using their usual magic scissors, with which they 'cut' from the Verses of the Holy Qur'an and the Prophet's sayings all the words that are before the word 'beat' and all the words that are after it, leaving just the word 'beat'. Namely, they cut the words that contradict their misconceptions and leave only those that seem to support them, thus trying with their dirty tricks to raise false misconceptions about Islam, entirely departing from the real truth and objectivity. In this way they do not present the subject in its complete form, but chopped, in order to raise misunderstanding and confuse other people. They also claim that they are the civilized ones who treat their wives in the best manner, but in fact they turn a blind eye to and ignore the following:

1. Most of those who loudly claim that they treat their wives in the best manner are in fact demonstrably lying and pretending.
2. Islam is the only religion that has mentioned the affectionate and merciful relationship between the spouses, and also prevents one from hurting his wife, either verbally or physically. Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ **And among His Signs is that He created for you wives from among yourselves, that you may find repose in them, and He has put between you affection and mercy. Verily, in that are indeed signs for a people who reflect.** ﴾ (30:21)

3. Islam is the only religion that condemned whoever insults and beats his wife, or looks at her down arrogantly as though her position were degraded in relation to his, 1400 years ago. This is considered a defect in the man who does it.

4. Islam encourages the best behavior towards one's wife, since all the Verses of the Qur'an and all the sayings of the Prophet ﷺ regarding the relation of the two spouses encourage the best behavior between them. Allah, the Exalted, says:

﴿ **And they (women) have rights (over their husbands), similar (to those of their husbands) over them, to what is reasonable.** ﴾ (2:228)

5. Islam has set rewards for the good behaviour amongst people and especially between the spouses. The Prophet ﷺ said:

**“Allah will reward you for whatever you spend with the intention of gaining Allah's Pleasure even if it were a mouthful of food you put into your wives mouth.”** (Al-Bukhari)

6. Islam has made the beating of women an exception, not a rule, only under certain circumstances that prevent the husband from resorting to beating her as a solution, except for very special cases, and only as a final solution, so as to prevent more serious calamities. That is because women are not the same in all eras, societies and families. What may work in one society may not work in another. On the contrary, it may escalate the situation instead of correcting it. And a behavior that may fit a woman may not fit another from a different society or era, no matter how hard one tries to make it fit.

7. The phenomenon of domestic violence is rampant in the most civilized countries of our century. How many Westerners attack their wives in front of other people, at airports, restaurants, in bars or even in the streets before the passersby? This is no secret, you may see it in the mass media. Additionally, how many Western women in America, Canada, Europe or Australia go to the police in order to sue their husbands because they were subjected to violence? These lawsuits are taken into no consideration if there are no manifest proofs, as we have mentioned before, such as fractures, bruises, bleeding etc. And whoever takes a look at the official statistics of police stations in America, Europe or Australia, will be convinced about that.

### *The spreading of beating women in Westerns societies*

**We** will submit the following comments to clarify the spreading of the phenomenon of domestic violence in the West:

1. The existence of numerous governmental and non-governmental organizations fighting the phenomenon of domestic violence against women and children, which have so far failed to curb it.
2. The existence of recurrent and ongoing media campaigns which encourage the direct call to the relevant authorities in case of observing the phenomenon of domestic violence from a neighbor.
3. We address the following questions to Western citizens:

Has it never happened to you to beat your wife, not even once?

Have you ever seen or heard your father beat your mother?

Have you heard that anyone of your relatives has ever beaten his wife?

Have you heard that anyone of your neighbours has ever beaten his wife?

The aim of these questions is only to prove the existence of the phenomenon of domestic violence from husbands towards their wives in Europe, America, Canada, Australia etc.

Finally, it can be clear to any unbiased person that Islam honours the woman, exalts her place from anything that can harm her dignity and has strictly warned against her being wronged. The Prophet ﷺ said:

**“O Allah, bear witness that I declare inviolable the rights of two weak ones: the orphans and the women.”**

(An-Nasa'i)