

## Exposing the Glitters

on

# The Merits of Polygyny

By his eminent Shaykh, Abdul 'AzeezbnAbdillaahBnBaaz.

*(rahimahullahta'aalaa)*

*Translated from the book:*

*'Idh-haarulBayyinaat 'anMahaasiniTa'addudizZawjaat'*

*Daarullstiqamah, Egypt, 1426AH (2005AD).*

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In the name of Allaah, the Generally Beneficent, the Especially Merciful.

All praise is due to Allaah, mayHe exalt the mention of the Messenger of Allaah, his household his companions and those who take to his guidance.

To proceed;

The issue of polygyny is an important and delicate one. It concerns every Muslim as the enemies of Islaam have much bias against it and they have given it much condemnation. It is also a matter of concern to all Muslims since such condemnations have had great and awful repercussions.

We have had much of such ill-fated opinions concerning the matter in prints and over the media houses; all being inspirations from the allies of Shaytaan, tentacles of the enemies of Allaah and the confused Muslims who follow the steps of Allaah's enemies in their hatred against Islaam. Such persons might have turned apostates, inadvertent.

Meanwhile, as it is said, polygyny is one of the virtues of Islaam. It was legalized long ago in earlier legislations too (before the advent of prophet Muhammad). In the Torah and the testaments, the provision was even extended such that prophet Daawud (*'alayhis salaam*) was said to have a hundred wives.

In an authentic narration too, prophet Sulaymaan (*'alayhis salaam*) was reported to have said: **'I Shall cohabit with ninety women (wives) tonight and each shall bear a boy who shall (grow up to) fight in the path of Allaah '**.<sup>1</sup>

Such provision was available in the legislations of the old, the Torah and the Gospels which the Jews, the Christians and their allies (even among Muslims) – who are the liars and most deviant people- claim to follow. Conversely however, they condemn it in the Sharee'ah of Muhammad (*sallalLaahu 'alayhiwasallam*). They did so in order to distort the Message and to connive against Islam, the Prophet and the Sharee'ah.

We later found among their allies, the affiliates of the Masons, Communism and others among the ignoramuses -those who falsely claim Islaam even though they are great liars- follow suite.

Polygyny is an express legislation by Allaah as He said:

***"And if you fear that you will not deal justly with the orphangirls, then marry those that please you of [other] women, two or three or four. But if you fear that you will not be just, then [marry only] one or those your right hands possess [i.e., slaves]. That is more suitable that you may not incline [to injustice]."*** (Nisaa', 3)

For the fact that in the past (before the revelation of the above verse,) some people do marry the orphan without giving her the appropriate dowry as with their colleagues, Allaah then ordered them to give the orphans their dowries without denying them or being unjust with them by siphoning their wealth to their pockets. He then says:

***"And if you fear that you will not deal justly with the orphangirls, then marry those that please you of [other] women, two or three or four. But if you fear that you will not be just, then [marry only] one or those your right hands possess [i.e., slaves]. That is more suitable that you may not incline [to injustice]."*** (Nisaa', 3)

In the fundamentals of the Islamic Jurisprudence (*usuul*), the imperative case in the above verse implies compulsion and to say it implies permissibility, one would

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<sup>1</sup>Recorded by al Bukhaaree (#5242) and Muslim (#1645) as reported Abu Hurayrah (*radiyalLaahu 'anh*).

need another evidence to say so. Therefore, since the Sunnah of the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhiwasallam*), his practices and the practices of the Muslims have shown that it is supererogatory, it remains like that. Thus, if a Muslim is capable, needs it and sees that it is well with him, it is legal for him. Nevertheless, if he is not capable or he has any deterrent, he should remain with one wife.

Even though, most women may abhor polygyny, their detest is of no importance since they do detest what which could profit them while they do admire what may cause them harm. Their rejection may lead to proliferation of immorality and illegitimate children and as such, will any reasonable Muslim wish that? No Muslim will wish such!

That girls are married as a second, third or fourth wife is better than they remain in the house without husbands. As such, that she is entitled to one fourth, half or one-third of a man is better than she remains with nothing. Also, when a man takes the second, third or fourth wife, he does that by looking into the benefits he will achieve therefrom and so, he marries whatever number he desires as the Sharee'ah prescribes it.

The man however should also be just and should select pious woman as the prophet (*sallallaahu'alayhiwasallam*) had said: **“a woman is married for four reasons; for her wealth, for her beauty, for her family status and for her religious devotions, so choose a devout woman, may your hand be smeared with dust’.**<sup>2</sup>

So, let the unmarried man go for righteous women while unmarried women and her guardian should go for the righteous among men. They should not marry their daughters to all dicks and harry among the infidels, those who shun Salaah and the drunk who beat women and are not kind to them.

It is expected of a woman and her guardian not to be only concerned with the family status of the man, with fact that he is employed, that he is a business tycoon or that he is unmarried; not all these are the yardstick. The yardstick is that she chooses a righteous man whom even if he is a poor person, Allaah will enrich him from His bounty as He says:

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<sup>2</sup>Recorded by al Bukhaaree (#5090) and Muslim (#1466) from the reports of Abu Hurayrah (radiyallahu 'anh). I say: the phrase 'may your hand be smeared with dust' means; 'so that you will not become a loser'-translator.

***‘And marry the unmarried among you and the righteous among your male slaves and female slaves. If they should be poor, Allaah will enrich them from His bounty, and Allaah is all-Encompassing and Knowing.’*** (Nuur, 32)

In an authentic hadeeth, the Prophet says: **‘Allaah has promised His assistance for three persons...’** he mentioned among them, **‘the one who gets married to be chaste’<sup>3</sup>**.

So, the one who marries for chastity awaits Allaah’s assistance even if he had to borrow money or mortgage his property because of that as Allaah will assist him over his debt. The Prophet (*sallallahu‘alayhiwasallam*) have said: **‘whoever takes people’s wealth with the aim of refunding it, Allaah will assist him in settling the debt and he who takes it with the aim of embezzling it, Allaah will waste him.’** Recorded by al-Bukhaaree.<sup>4</sup>

It is thus imperative for the youth to get married and not to take excuse with schooling or other reasons such as ‘am not employed yet’, ‘I’ve not perfected so and so’ and other useless excuses that debars him from marriage although he may engage in immoral conducts with women. This operates everywhere except he whom Allaah spares.

Such is the case with female youths too who take excuses with learning and teaching but fall into immoral conducts which affects their dignity and their families’.

It is an obligation bound on all to co-operate with one another on this issue; a co-operation on righteousness and piety by letting the unmarried among men and women get married. They are to co-operate on this irrespective of whether the man has one, two or three wives. It is no issue that a woman is the second, the third or the fourth.

The husband is thus obliged to fear Allaah as much as he can. Allaah The Exalted says:

***‘And you will never be able to be equal [in feeling] between wives, even if you should strive [to do so]. So do not incline completely [toward one] and leave another hanging.’***(Nisaa’, 129)

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<sup>3</sup>Recorded by Tirmidheee (#1655), Nasaa’ee (#3120) and IbnMaajah (#2518) from the hadeeth of Abu Hurayrah (radiyallahu ‘anh). Al Albaani graded it as sound in SaheehJaami’ (#3050).

<sup>4</sup>Recorded by al Bukhaaree (#2387) from the reports of Abu Hurayrah (*radiyallaahu ‘anh*).

The people of ill-will do employ the above verse in their condemnation of polygyny<sup>5</sup> with their self desires and in order to misrepresent issues. What are beyond our ability are issues that have to do with the mind. Aa'isha (*radiyallaahu'anhaa*) would say: 'the messenger of Allaah do share things among us with equity and would say: **'O Allaah, this is my sharing regarding that which am capable, do not hold me to ransom regarding that which You are capable and I am not.'**<sup>6</sup>

Even though, some of the scholars have opined that it is not obligatory on him (*sallallaahu'alayhiwasallam*) to treat women equally and that he has the right ignore whomever he desires among his wives as Allaah says:

***'You [O Muhammad], may put aside whom you will of them or take to yourself whom you will.'*** (Ahzaab, 51) and despite that, he (*sallallahu 'alayhiwasallam*) was equitable with his wives in all matters he is able.

But for the love and inclinations of the mind and all associated matters such as passion and its prerequisites, these lie in the Hands of Allaah and the man is never in their control. As such, he has the right to have likeness for one over the others since he can never treat them equally in that regard. It follows therefore that he has the right to copulate with, kiss and show love to her than others. This is no sin on him and that is why Allaah says:

***'So do not incline completely [toward one]'*** (Nisaa', 129)

This is regarding *complete* inclination, but for some form of inclinations – which no one can do without- , it is excusable. Then, the husband must be mindful of Allaah regarding all issues at home, such that he does not cause troubles between women. So, when he is just and is mindful of Allaah regarding his words, spending and manners of address as far as he could, Allaah will make things easy for him, He will make them submissive to him and will rectify their condition as it happened to the righteous of old and present.

Nevertheless, when he is unjust, they will be given upper hand over him as a result. When he is just and he seeks virtues among them, Allaah will guide them and will assist him over them. Whenever a problem ensues, he will be able to

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<sup>5</sup> They have also employed verses such as: ***'And We created you in pairs'*** (*Naba'*, 8) and ***'And of all things We created two mates [i.e., counterparts]'*** (*Dhaariyaat* 49). Such evidences are inappropriate since they only tell us the might of Allaah in creation and not legislation.  
*Translator.*

<sup>6</sup> Recorded by AbooDaawud (2134), Tirmidheee (1140), Nasaa'ee (3943) and IbnMaajah (1971) from the hadeeth of Aa'ishah. Al Albaani graded it as weak in *SaheehJaami'* (4593).

rectify it with wisdom and good words until the problem is settled and calmness prevails.

More so, This life is full of troubles; it is not impossible that polygyny may cause some problems as other things may equally cause problems; the troubles, tribulations and trials in this life are unending. It is not an abode of continual happiness and merrymaking but an abode of wailing, sorrow, tribulations and trials.

The Messengers of Allaah (*'alayhimus salaam*) suffer the greatest forms of tribulations and they are followed by the righteous people who are also followed by those next to them in righteousness. So, polygyny has a lot of advantages although someone may be afraid of it because of his penury, because of his fear for his fishwife and for other reasons.

When someone has the opportunity of practicing polygyny with ease, he would have done a virtue among Muslims by making girls chaste, this is better and good. But if he is not capable, there is no sin on him.

Then, let the unmarried among the youths fear Allaah in marrying early and avoid making flimsy excuses since the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhiwasallam*) has said in an authentic hadeeth: **“O youths, whoever has the means among you, let him get married as that is better to make him lower his gaze and makes him chaste the better. But he, who is not able, let him fast as that would castrate him”<sup>7</sup>**

In addition, there is much benefit in polygyny for the woman and the man although the woman may ignore such benefits out of her selfish desires, her jealousy and her hatred for her co wives. A woman will menstruate for a number of days leaving the man *'idle'*. She may also experience post partum bleeding for several days during the year while he might possess a strong sexual urge and needs a woman to keep him chaste, what do we expect him to do?

What if the woman could not bear children early enough or she is even barren, what do we expect him to do? Will he divorce her? Divorcing her is inappropriate. That he marries a second or third wife is better than divorce as after the divorce, no one may ask of her hand or that a worse person may go for her.

In essence, there are many advantages in polygyny; a woman may be sick and may need the attention of someone else to take care of her husband... the

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<sup>7</sup>Recorded by al Bukhaaree (#5060) and Muslim (#1400) from the reports of Abdul LaahbnMas'uud(*radiyallahu 'anh*).

advantages are so numerous and the reasons for choosing polygyny are also numerous. However, people of ill-will may not ponder over these and would rather ignore them in disregard.

By obligation, a believer in Allaah has to hasten to goodness, make impact with the truth and to treat the truth with justice, better approach and good comments wherever he is.

He should be wary of trailing the path of the agents and allies of Shaytaan, people of ill-will or that he follows them after such and such personalities.

Rather, the truth is to be followed in all matters; on the issue of polygyny and others. We pray Allaah for guidance and good luck. We pray Allaah to guide the Muslims to what will benefit them and that with which is their salvation. We also pray him to assist the Muslim rulers in establishing the Sharee'ah of Allaah by judging by it.

You are all aware of one of the Muslim presidents who prohibited polygyny and wanted to punish someone who took a second wife. However, when they told him that the other woman is a girl friend, he pardoned him even though he had committed an illegal act. This is a clear misplacement of issues and I know the country where this happened and I have wrote to condemn the incidence.

In essence, for this to have happened, several other cases we are not aware would have also occurred and a Muslim has to seek Allaah's refuge from Shaytaan in all issues the allies of Shaytaan have talked about. He should seek protection with the book of Allaah and the Sunnah of the Prophet ('*alayhis salaam*) when announcing the truth.

It is an obligation on the scholars wherever they are; be it on the print media, over the radio, on the television, in written works, in public addresses, in the Friday *khutbah* and in public gatherings until those people are silenced. Those, who already have dominance over the media and are representatives of Shaytaan and his allies among the Christians, the Jews and others.

By obligation too, the people of Eemaan (Muslims) should be smarter and stronger than them in refuting their evil and in nipping their immoralities in the bud.

We beseech Allaah to guide all Muslims and give them a good ending. We ask Him to increase us in knowledge and guidance and to benefit us with what we know. May Allaah exalt the mention of our noble prophet, his households and his companions and render them safe from every derogatory thing.

# Questions & Answers

## Question One:

Considering what operates in our environment, we see many contradictions; we encourage marriage among youths while at the same time, many of them cannot afford to marry even a wife and as a result, they troop to countries of the Kuffaar to engage in immoralities. When they mixed-up with them, they contacted many dangerous diseases. Why then shall we not strive to solve these two problems simultaneously for a better solution?

## Answer:

May Allaah bless you. This is true but the scholars have strongly encouraged the two issues. The first issue is that they conscientiously encouraged that the youths get married as they also encourage families on marrying-out their daughters and they discourage celibacy. They also encourage sermons on polygyny such that girls will not remain at home unmarried. All these were being encouraged and it is upon the youths to get married while girls should accept to get married too. It is a duty bound on the families to encourage their daughters on marriage even if she is to become the second or third wife until virtues spread everywhere. Sometimes, polygyny may even become obligatory as situations might necessitate that such as when a man cannot be chaste with one woman and he is able.

## Question Two:

I need a correct explanation over this ambiguous issue which goes thus; as Islam allows polygyny, it is advantageous to the man as it makes him chaste, is polygyny advantageous to a woman too?



### Answer:

There are many benefits in it for the woman. Haven't you heard that women shall become so many that a man will suffice fifty women as the prophet has said: **"Before the end time, ignorance shall dominate, zinaa shall proliferate, intoxicants will be drunk and women will become so many such that only one man would stand for a fifty women."**<sup>8</sup>

That a man would stand to cater for fifty women, a greater number is now being witnessed; intoxicants are now being drunk in most places on earth; knowledge is hardly found on earth while ignorance preponderates; and -from reports,- women had become so many.

The fact that a man will have to cater for fifty women will soon happen as he (*sallaLaahu 'alayhiwasallam*) had said. In some reports, after the Second World War, the number of deaths between the warring countries left more than fifty women to be catered for by a single man in certain countries. We seek Allaah's safety and peace as this shall soon happen in the future.

To make it clearer, when we have ten women who remain at home without husbands and a man with a wife already marries one of them as a second wife, will this not benefit the first wife?

She may fall sick, menstruate, undergo post partum bleeding every year and so on and these could lead to her divorce as a last resort.....

Also, if she is the third or the fourth, this could even be more beneficial as divorce or a perpetual discord with her husband could be prevented with the presence of the other woman. The man is consoled as he stays with all of them each per day and this may reduce discord, as he will have a lesser chance of having troubles or finding faults with the others; he will always be concerned with all of them.

### Question Three:

Is it permissible to take a second wife upon the condition that she will be denied some rights such as to please the first wife? If after informing the first wife, he

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<sup>8</sup>Recorded by al Bukhaaree (#81) and Muslim (#2671) from the reports of AnasbnMaalik (radiyallahu 'anh).

failed in some of the conditions, can the first wife take the husband up because of that?

**Answer:**

He has the right to make such conditions that she will be entitled to one or two of three nights, one night in four or one night in five. There is no sin in that new condition if she agrees with it. He may even make it a condition that she will have no night.

Sawdah (*radiyyaLaahuanhaa*) consented to remain with the prophet (*sallaLaahu 'alyhiwasallam*) without a share of a night and he accepted that and her night was given to Aishah (*radiyyaLaahuanhaa*). So, there is no sin on her to remain with him upon such conditions....

**Question Four:**

Is it right for a woman to seek divorce from her husband because he takes a second wife who will have to leave with her on the ground that this could cause her inconvenience and emotional upset.

**Answer:**

She has no such a right in as much as the husband is just and he discharges his duties. But if he is unjust, she may request divorce.

**Question Five:**

Is it right for a man to take a second wife without any reason necessitating that?

**Answer:**

Yes. Allaah says:

***“Marry those that please you of [other] women”*** (Nisaa, 2)

The phrase, *‘Please you’* means that ‘you so desire’ or ‘is well with you’. Therefore, he has the right to marry even without a cause as he has every advantage in doing that.

When a man has an increased passion for women, it assists in sexual powers and the ability to bear more children, which is ultimately desirable. A man may marry because he wants children or because he wants to be distant from the trials of immorality.

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