112048 - A wife should not let anyone enter her husband’s home except with his permission

the question

When should a husband or wife allow or not allow others ‘mahrams or non-mahrams’ to enter the couple’s home?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The marital home is a noble and honourable home, which Allah has commanded both spouses to protect; the wife in particular is commanded to protect the trust of this home, because she is the lady of the house.

It was narrated from Jabir that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said in the Farewell Khutbah:

“Fear Allah with regard to women, for you have taken them as a trust from Allah, and intimacy with them has become permissible to you by the word of Allah. Your rights over them are that they should not allow anyone whom you dislike to sit on your furniture. If they do that, then hit them, but in a manner that does not cause injury or leave a mark. Their rights over you are that you should provide for them and clothe them in a reasonable manner.” Narrated by Muslim (1218).

The issue of permission to enter the marital home may be summed up in the following points:

Firstly:

If the husband gives his wife clear permission to admit a specific person who is one of her mahrams or a woman, or if his permission is general, then it is permissible for the wife in that case to admit them to his house, according to scholarly consensus.

Secondly:

If the husband has remained silent and not given permission, then she should do what she thinks is most likely to be appropriate, and allow to enter his house those whom she thinks her husband would most likely not mind if they entered his house, of those for whom it is permissible to enter upon the wife in her husband's absence of mahrams and women. But if she thinks it most likely that her husband would not want a specific person to enter the house in his absence, then it is not permissible for her to admit him. This is according to scholarly consensus.

It says in al-Mawsoo'ah al-Fiqhiyyah (30/125):

One of the husband's rights over his wife is that she should not allow anyone to enter his house except with his permission, because of the report narrated by Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him), that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "No woman should fast when her husband is present without his permission, and she should not allow anyone to enter his house when he is present without his permission." Narrated by al-Bukhari (4899) and Muslim (1026).

Ibn Hajar quoted al-Nawawi as saying: This hadeeth indicates that the wife should not overlook the right of the husband not to let anyone enter his house except with his permission. This is to be understood as referring to situations where she does not know whether her husband would approve. But if she knows that her husband would approve of it, then there is no sin on her, such as one whose custom is to admit guests to a place that is prepared for them, whether he is present or not, so admitting them does not need special permission from him.

To sum up, his permission is important and must be taken into account, whether it is specific or in general terms. End quote.

Thirdly:

If the husband has clearly stated that he does not want a specific person to be admitted, or anyone to enter his house in his absence, then it is haram for her to allow anyone to enter her

husband’s house.

But does the husband have the right to tell his wife not to allow her parents or mahrams to enter and visit her?

There is a difference of opinion among the scholars concerning this issue and there are two views: that it is permitted and that it is not permitted.

It says in al-Mawsoo’ah al-Fiqhiyyah (24:82):

The correct view according to the Hanafi madhhab, which is also the Maliki view, is that the husband should not prevent the wife’s parents from entering upon her once a week, and he should not prevent other mahrams from doing so once a year. The same applies to her children from another husband if they are small; the husband should not prevent them from entering upon her once every day. But if he thinks that her parents will corrupt her, then they should be allowed to enter with a woman appointed by the husband whom he trusts, and her wages are to be paid by him.

The Shaafi’i view, which is also one view among the Hanafis, is that he may disallow them to enter, the reason being that the house is his property and he has the right to forbid anyone to enter his property.

The Hanbalis are of the view that the husband does not have the right to forbid her parents to visit her, because that is severing ties of kinship. But if he knows from circumstantial evidence that some harm will be caused by their visit, or by the visit of one of them, then he may forbid it. End quote.

The most correct of these opinions is that the husband has no right to prevent his wife’s parents and mahrams from visiting her, because that is severing ties of kinship, and severing ties of kinship is haram in all cases. So it is not permissible for the husband to try to cause something haram to happen, rather he should strive to reconcile and uphold ties of kinship. It is well known that honouring the wife’s mahrams is honouring the wife and keeping good company with her. The

Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “The best of you is the one who is best to his family.” Narrated by al-Tirmidhi (3895); he said: this is a saheeh ghareeb hasan hadeeth. It was also classed as saheeh by al-Albani in al-Saheehah (1174).

If he is suspicious about one of his wife’s mahrams or he thinks it most likely that one of them or one of the parents will try to cause trouble between him and his wife, then in that case it is permissible for him to prevent them from visiting, so as to ward off trouble, and there is no sin on him in that case.

Please see question no. 10680.

And Allah knows best.