229189 - He goes out to call people to Allah and leaves his family despite their need for him

the question

I am a Swedish revert to Islam, Alhamdulillah.

Me and my husband live with our 3 children ages 7,2 and 1 years old in my country, Sweden. My husband has recently started to go out with the Tabligh even though I objected to it because he is needed at home. My family are non Muslims and I do not see them often, my husband's family doesn't live here and yet he has no problem going away every month for some days for what he calls Khuruj. I have asked him if he at least could stay in our town and maybe do i'tikaf, one night at a time, but it is at least 3 days. Could you please explain what does it mean, is it from the Sunnah? Because every time I ask he says I cannot object, and he leaves me and our children with Allah to look after and he tells me the story of Ibrahim ('alayhi as-salam) when he left Hagar in the desert.

I think with our circumstances, living where we are, there is so much fitna I do not even take the bus inside the city and many things happens at night in our neighbourhood, so is it right of him to leave us like this and should I be confident when he says he leave us with Allah?

My husband is a good husband Alhamdulillah, although he has a hot temper. He hates fatwas, and respects the scholars but says we must see what the Quran and the Sunnah says, Alhamdulillah. Could you please advice us how to solve this and please tell us about this Khuruj in the light of Quran and Sunnah.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

There is no doubt that those who are most deserving of a person’s care, protection, concern, upbringing and call are his family, the members of his own household.

Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“O you who believe! Ward off yourselves and your families against a Fire (Hell) …”

[al-Tahreem 66:6].

And the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Each of you is a shepherd and each of you is responsible for his flock. The ruler of the people is a shepherd and is responsible for his flock. A man is the shepherd of his household and is responsible for his flock. A woman is the shepherd of her husband’s house and children and is responsible for her flock. The slave is the shepherd of his master’s wealth and is responsible for it.”

Narrated by al-Bukhari (893) and Muslim (1829).

If a man has shar‘i obligations having to do with the rights of Allah and with the rights of His creation, and he himself wants to strive in some good causes and do a lot of supererogatory deeds, then he is enjoined to strike a balance between all these rights, and he should give precedence to those which are obligatory over those which are recommended and encouraged. If he has too many duties, then he should strive to combine all these interests, whenever it is possible to do so.

If there is a conflict between some of them and others, or he is not able to combine them, then he must give priority to the more important of them over others, and he should start with the most binding of obligations upon him, then move to those that are less important.

It is proven in Saheeh al-Bukhari (1968) from ‘Awn ibn Abi Juhayfah, that his father said:

The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) established the bond of brotherhood between Salman and Abu ad-Darda. Salman visited Abu ad-Darda and saw Umm ad-Darda looking umkempt. He said to her: What is the matter with you? She said: Your brother Abu ad-Darda has

no need of worldly matters. Abu ad-Darda came and made some food for him. Salman said: Eat (with me). Abu ad-Darda said: I am fasting. Salman said: I will not eat until you eat – so Abu ad-Darda ate. When night came, Abu ad-Darda wentto get up (to pray) and Salman said: Sleep, so he slept. Then he went to get up again and Salman said: Sleep. Then towards the end of the night, Salman said: Now get up – and they prayed.

Salman said to him: Verily your Lord has a right over you, your own self has a right over you, and your wife has a right over you, so give each one who has a right, his right.

Then he came to the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and told him about that, and the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Salman is right.”

In this hadith we see that one should strike a balance between all duties, and not pay excessive attention to some at the expense of others.

Secondly:

A man’s care and protection of his family includes taking care of whatever they need in their lives of maintenance and accommodation, as is obligatory. That also includes protecting them from anything that may pose a danger to them, whether that has to do with their lives, their honour or their wealth. He is enjoined to take care of them and protect them in all those ways.

This is something that varies from one time and place to another. If a man is in a place where his family will be safe if he leaves them, either because they are surrounded by other family members and they have someone to take care of their affairs, or because the place where they reside is generally safe, and there are few causes of fitnah there, then in that case it is permissible for him to travel and leave them, or to go out to take care of his own interests, to an extent that will not cause them any difficulty or harm.

But if his family are in a place where their lives, wealth or honour are not safe, or they fear fitnah in that place, then what he must do is stay with them and not go out and leave them, except in the case of absolute necessity, in which case he must pay attention to providing means of care

and protection for them, or appointing someone to look after them, or moving to another place that is more safe.

It was narrated that ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr ibn al-‘As said: A man came to the Prophet of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and said: I swear my allegiance to you, that I will migrate and engage in jihad, seeking reward from Allah. He said: “Are either of your parents alive?’ He said: Yes, both of them. He said: “Are you seeking reward from Allah?” He said: Yes. He said: “Then go back to your parents and be a good companion to them.”

Narrated by al-Bukhari (1671) and Muslim (2549)

Shaykh Muhammad ibn ‘Allan as-Siddeeqi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The Lawgiver waived the obligation of migration in his case, giving precedence to the rights of his parents. Even though migration was obligatory for him, it conflicted with something that was more obligatory than it, namely the rights of parents. If it was not obligatory, then that which is obligatory would take precedence, but this is only applicable in the case of one whose religious commitment is safe in the place where they (his parents) are. But if he fears for his religious commitment, then he must flee for the sake of protecting it, and leave behind his parents and children, as the Muhajiroon did, who are Allah’s chosen elite among His slaves.

End quote from Daleel al-Faliheen li Turuq Riyadh as-Saliheen (2/463)

In fact some of the scholars stated that in such a case, where a person fears that if he leaves his family alone in the place where they are they may be exposed to harm or danger, the obligation of offering prayer in congregation is waived for him, despite the fact that it quickly ends and requires little time.

It says in Kashshaf al-Qina‘ (1/456):

Yes, if his going to the mosque will lead to leaving his family on their own, then he must establish the prayer in his house, so as to fulfil the obligation. End quote.

In fact they also stated that one of the aims of sharee'ah, to which the man should pay attention, is keenness to give company to his family, even if that is only for a short time.

It says in Tuhfat al-Muhtaj (2/471): He has the choice when coming back (from Friday prayer) between riding and walking.

Ash-Sharwani said in his commentary thereon:

This is to be understood as meaning: unless there is something good he wants to do (in which case he should come back quickly), such as giving company to his family, or doing some religious duties concerning them, and so on, or he wants to protect his faculties from falling into sin that may be expected when one is outside the home.

As that is the case:

What is prescribed for the husband, if you are living in a place where you and your family are not safe, is for him to stay with the members of his household, and he can still do all the things that he wants to do of da'wah, good deeds, prayer, and i'tikaf. He can still do those things in the same area or city in which you are living. With regard to fulfilling these aims of sharee'ah, it is not stipulated that they should be done in one place and not another, and they are not rituals in which it is stipulated that one should be in Makkah or Madinah. Rather they are kinds of good deeds which a person may do in the place where he is, in his own neighbourhood and city. Thus he may combine doing all kinds of good deeds with giving each one who has a right his right, and he will not be like the one who builds a castle but destroys the city.

For more information, please see the answers to questions no. 155577 and 3043.

Thirdly:

With regard to the husband quoting the story of the Prophet of Allah Ibraheem (peace be upon him), which was narrated by al-Bukhari (3364) from Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him), in which it says:

“Then Ibraheem brought her and her (infant) son Isma'eel, whom she was nursing, and left them beside the House (the Ka‘bah) near a tree, above Zamzam in the upper part of the mosque. At that time there was no one in Makkah, and there was no water there. He left them there, and he left with them a sack in which there were some dates, and a waterskin in which there was some water. Then Ibraheem turned to leave, and the mother of Isma‘eel followed him, saying: O Ibraheem, where are you going and leaving us in this valley, in which there is no one and nothing? She said this to him several times, but he did not pay any attention to her. Then she said to him: Is it Allah Who has commanded you to do this? He said: Yes. She said: Then He will not forsake us. Then she went back, and Ibraheem kept walking until, when he reached the mountain pass where they could not see him, he turned to face the Ka‘bah, then he offered supplication with these words, raising his hands and saying: “O Lord, ‘I have made some of my offspring to dwell in an uncultivable valley by Your Sacred House (the Ka‘bah at Makkah); in order, O our Lord, that they may perform As-Salat (Iqamat-as-Salat), so fill some hearts among men with love towards them, and (O Allah) provide them with fruits so that they may give thanks’ [Ibraheem 14:37]” –

his quoting of this story as evidence is entirely inappropriate, and has nothing to do with your story or your situation at all.

Ibraheem (peace be upon him) only left his wife and son in that place, in the sacred land of Allah, beside the Sacred House of Allah, for a legitimate shar‘i purpose, based on the wisdom of Allah, that would be served by them residing in that place.

The mother of Isma‘eel was not aware of the wisdom of Allah behind her staying in that place, in which there was no cultivation or water, and no people to keep her company, but she asked the Prophet of Allah Ibraheem whether he was doing that to them on the command of Allah, and he replied: Yes. So she submitted to the command of Allah and said: Then Allah will not forsake us.

The one Who revealed to Ibraheem (peace be upon him) that he should do this action, which appeared to be contrary to proper conduct and what people usually do, was Allah.

It was not an idea that Ibraheem (peace be upon him) came up with by himself; rather it was a

revelation from Allah.

Has Allah revealed to us or commanded us that one of us should fall short in protecting his family and the members of his household, then say that he was entrusting them to the care of Allah?

So why did the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) instruct that Sahabi to go back to his parents and be kind and keep them company? Allah, may He be exalted, instructed His Close Friend Ibraheem to sacrifice his son Isma'eel (peace be upon them both), but can it be valid – whether according to reason or religious teaching – for a man to neglect his family and children, let alone expose them to harm and danger, let alone go and sacrifice one of them, giving as his reason the fact that Ibraheem (peace be upon him) did that?

Can it be valid for a man to leave his family members in the desert, in a land where there is no cultivation and no water, and leave them, then say that Ibraheem (peace be upon him) did that?

But after all that, and before all that, we advise you to try to reach an understanding with your husband about this problem, in a calm manner and avoiding trying to prove him wrong. Rather you should try to avoid angering him, as much as you are able, and try to explain to him that you understand and respect his convictions, but all you are asking him to do is to pay attention to your needs and your circumstances in the place where you and your family are living, and that he should do whatever he can to have a moderate, balanced approach, and make some effort so that you do not reach the stage of tension in the relationship or exacerbation of the problems between you.

We ask Allah to make things easy for you, and to make your husband treat you well and make you treat him well, and to keep you together in the best way.

And Allah knows best.