157874 - Ruling on a man offering condolences to a woman

the question

Is it permissible for a man to offer condolences to a woman, or for a woman to offer condolences to a man?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

It is Sunnah for a Muslim to offer condolences to his brother; this includes both men and women.

But Islam bars the way to fitnah (temptation) and seeks to ward off negative consequences and evils as much as possible. For a man to offer condolences to a woman, or vice versa, may allow the Shaytaan to make inroads. Hence the scholars have stated that a man should not offer condolences to a young woman unless she is one of his mahrams.

In the case of an old woman, some of the scholars granted a concession allowing offering condolences to her, because she is not like a young woman in terms of there being any fear of her being a cause of fitnah. Nevertheless, it is better to refrain from offering condolences to her too.

It says in *al-Ghurar al-Bahiyyah* (2/124): No men should offer condolences to a young woman except her mahrams and her husband. End quote.

In *Hashiyat Ibn 'Abidin* it says: It says in *Sharh al-Munyah*: Offering condolences is recommended (mustahabb) for men and women who are not a cause of fitnah…"(*Radd al-Muhtar* 2/240).

Sahnun said: Condolences should not be offered to a young woman and may be offered to an old woman, but not doing so is preferable."(*Mawahib al-Jalil* (2/230). See also: *adh-Dhakhirah* 2/481).

Ibn Qudamah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: A non-mahram man should not offer

condolences to young women, for fear of fitnah."(A*l-Mughni* 2/212).

And Allah knows best.