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The Value of Chastity in Islam

Dr. Ashabullah Awab

Assistant Professor of Islamic Culture Department Sharia Faculty- Kabul University.



Abstract: In Islam, chastity is one of the most important and basic subjects since a healthy Islamic society depends on observing chastity. Whenever a society lacks chastity, that society will definitely face big difficulties and successive convulsions. Thus, Non-Muslims use various methods and means against Muslim youth to get them to commit immoral actions including not safeguarding their chastity in order to harm Muslim communities severely. One of the severe problems that Muslims suffered from is the nonobservance of chastity. The recognition of chastity, its importance, manifestations, principles, causes, and effects of not protecting chastity are described in this research.

Keywords: Islam, Sharia, chastity, women, deviation

Introduction:

Praise be to Allah; peace and salutation of Allah be Upon His Prophet Mohammad. Having said that, Allah has shown his servants the way to live, so Muslims can achieve success in this world and hereafter when they follow the Qur'an and Sunna of the Messenger of Allah Mohammad (PBUH). If we look at the Islamic world today, we will notice that the Islamic world is facing many problems, and one of these problems is not observing chastity.

On the one hand, many Muslims are unaware of the command to implement chastity, and on the other hand, they are wandering after the desires of the world due to which the Islamic world has suffered a vast loss. I will explain this issue based on my little knowledge so that these ignorant people become aware of it.

Research questions: The following questions are answered in this research:

1-What is chastity?

- 2- What is the value of chastity?
- 3-What are the principles of chastity?

4-What are the reasons for not observing chastity?

Research Method: The method of this study is analytical and descriptive. I strived to analyze and explain the recognition of chastity, its importance, principles, and the reasons for not practicing chastity from the perspective of Islam.

Importance of research: The subject of chastity is considered one of the most significant topics that every Muslim must be aware of it because at the present time, immorality has increased among Muslims, which has caused a severe blow to all Muslim communities. However, Allah Almighty commanded on observing the chastity, He says: But let them who find not [the means for] marriage abstain [from sexual relations] until Allah enriches them from His bounty(Surah Noor, verse 33)

Research objectives: Research which are related to religious issues aim to serve the Islamic religion, and in the second step, there are the objectives that the researcher has imagined when choosing the topic, so my purpose from this writing is to serve the Islamic religion and wake up the Muslims as most of them are unaware of chastity and they think that chastity is nefarious and optional matter, despite the fact that it is one of the important and obligatory subjects which directly affects the Islamic society.

Literature Review: Many writings have been done about chastity in various languages, some of which are briefly mentioned as follows:

1. Bakr Abu Zayd, Hirasat al-Fadilah, Dar al-Aasima for publication and distribution, Riyadh, 1426 AH.

2. Jamal bin Abdul Rahman, Wala Taqrabu al-Fawahish, Ministry of Endowments, Riyadh.

3. Al-Aqili, Yahya bin Sulaiman, al-Efa wa Manhaj al-Istifaf, Dar al-Dawa, Alexandria, 1198 AD.

These writings have been published in the Arabic language in the form of books and some of them in the form of academic articles in magazines and websites, but I want to analyze this subject in the English language.

The main topic: Before discussing the main topic, it will be necessary to understand chastity and its value first, and then know its manifestations, principles, effects, and also the reasons for not applying chastity. Thus, this research has been divided into the following four chapters:

Chapter 1:Meaning of the word *Efat* and its derivatives:

The word *Efat* is an Arabic word which has been taken from its root *Ifah*which has many meanings, such as keeping away from the forbidden things, chastity, avoiding from begging, trouble and difficulty, but it is mostly used for the meaning of chastity. Mukhtar al-Sahah, (p. 389). Ibn Manzoor, Lisan al-Arab, (9/253). Ibn Faris, Mujam Muqays al-Lagha, (4/3). Ibrahim Mustafa and others, al-Mu'jam al-Wasit, (2/611).

Chastity in the Islamic context: There are different definitions of chastity, some of them are as below:

- 1- Chastity is the state of the soul in which the soul can overcome lust. Raghib al-Isfahani, al-Mufardat fi Gharib al-Qur'an, (2/440.).
- 2- Chastity is the moderate state of sensuality that is between extremity (excess) and deficiency,

and chaste is a person who behaves according to Sharia. Al-Jarjani, Al-Tarifat, (p. 243.)

In light of the previous definitions, I as a researcher can say that the modest state of protecting one's self from unlawful things and refraining from drowning in optional permissible things is called chastity.

Derivatives of the word Chastity:

There are many words and terms in Islam that are similar to chastity, some of which are as below:

Ihsan: The state of being married: As Allah Almighty has said: And those who accuse chaste women(Surah Noor, verse 33), Cleanliness: as Allah Almighty has said: they are people who keep themselves pure.(Surat al- Namal, 56), Protecting one's chastity: As Allah Almighty has said: Tell the believing men to reduce [some] of their vision and guard their private parts. That is purer for them (Surat al-Noor, 30)

As a result of the above terms, it can be inferred that there are some other words that are used instead of chastity, such as Ihsaan (state of being married), purity, and protection of the private parts.

Chapter 2: The importance and manifestation of chastity:

This chapter is divided into two parts for further clarity:

Part One: The Importance of Chastity:

Chastity has great importance and value in a person's life and society, which is indicated as follows:

1- The importance of chastity regarding a person:

Chastity is very important in a person's life, some of the reasons for its importance are described below:

- Achievinggoodness: Those who are unable to marry, Allah has commanded them to be chaste.But to modestly refrain [from that] is better for them. And Allāh is Hearing and Knowing.(Surat al-Nur, verse: (60.)
- AchievingPurity: Allah has ordered Muslims to turn away their gazes from non-mahram women.Tell the believing men to reduce [some] of their vision and guard their private parts. That is purer for them (Surat al-Noor, 30). (Surat al-Nur, verse: (30.)
- Avoiding bad thoughts: Allah has forbidden women to speak softly and lowly. If you fear Allāh, then do not be soft in speech [to men], lest he in whose heart is disease should covet, but speak with appropriate speech.(Surah Al-Nur, Verse: Al-Ahzab, (32.)
- Achieving the promise made with the pious: A chaste person refrains from getting close to his lusts as well as prostitutes, as Allah Almighty has said: he who fears Allāh and is patient, then indeed, Allāh does not allow to be lost the reward of those who do good. (Surat Yusaf verse: (90). Mawardi (may Allah have mercy on him) said in the explanation of this verse: whoever avoids adultery and perseveres in celibacy, Allah does not waste the reward of the righteous. Al-Mawardi, Al-Nukatt al-Ayoun, (4/75.)

2- The importance of chastity in society:

Every society develops by practicing chastity. A society that does not practice chastity, has many problems, so chastity is very important for the society, which is indicated in the following points:

1- With chastity, the five objectives of Islam are safeguarded, which are the preservation of the self;

the preservation of the reason; the preservation of the religion; the preservation of the property/monetary; and the preservation of lineage.

2- With chastity, the security of families and communities is protected. In a society where there is no chastity, there are all kinds of problems, and with the establishment of chastity, a righteous family is created since one of the main purposes of marriage is creating a righteous family, the birth of righteous children, as Allah, the Exalted, narrated about Zakariya, (PBUH):At that, Zechariah called upon his Lord, saying, "My Lord, grant me from Yourself a good offspring.(Surah Al-Imran, verse: (38). Al-Qurtubi (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "Zariya Tayyaba" is the generation that is pure and pious. Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami llahkam al-Qur'an, (4/72.)

Part Two: a manifestation of Chastity:

There are many signs of chastity, some of which are as follows:

- 1. **Protecting the language:** The language is the translator of the heart and conscience, and a means of expression. People communicate with each other through language. It enhances love among people if it is used properly, but if it is misused, it destroys brotherhood and love among the people.
- 2. Lowering the eyes: Allah has ordered the Muslims to lower the eyes as mentioned in this verse, Tell the believing men to reduce [some] of their vision and guard their private parts. That is purer for them. Indeed, Allāh is [fully] Aware of what they do (Surat al-Nur, verse, (30). Saboni (may Allah have mercy on him) has said: The secret behind mentioning lowering of the eyesbefore keeping one's private organ's chastity is that looking at the non-mahram causes adultery, so looking at them is a preface for falling in adultery. Al-Sabuni, Muhammad Ali, Rawai' al-Bayan Tafsir Ayat al-Ahkam, (2/148.)
- 3. **Safeguarding private parts**: Safeguarding private parts is a sign of a true believer. Allah Almighty has said: And they who guard their private parts(Surah Al-Mu'minun, verse: (5). For this reason, scholars have determined some means to protect private parts, some of them are: marrying, fasting, lowering the eyes, not getting alone with a woman in a place, etc., as it comes in a Hadith of Messenger of Allah (PBUH) has mentioned this issue, he said: A man is never alone with a woman, but Satan is with them. Al-Bukhari, Sahih Al-Bukhari, (7/38) Hadith number: (5233.(
- 4. **Observing Hijab (veiling):** As Allah Almighty has said: (Surat al-Nur, verse: (31). Al-Alusi (may Allah have mercy on him) said in the interpretation of this verse: Women have been ordered to cover their private parts with clothes from which nothing of her body can be seen. Thus, they are ordered to cover their chest so that nothing is visible. Al-Alusi, Rooh al-Ma'ani, (6/53.) In another place, Allah Almighty has said:O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the

In another place, Allah Almighty has said:O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to bring down over themselves [part] of their outer garments. That is more suitable that they will be known and not be abused(Surah Al-Ahzab, Verse: 59). Sayyid Qutb (may Allah have mercy on him) said in the interpretation of this verse: Allah commanded his Messenger (PBUH) to order his wives, daughters and the women of the believers to cover their bodies, heads, whenever they go out for some work so that they are safe from the harm of wicked people. Sayyid Qutb, Fi Zilal al- Qur'an, (22 2880.)

Chapter 3: Principles of chastity and reasons for deviation from it:

This chapter consists of two parts:

Part I: Principles and Basics of Chastity:

There are many principles of chastity, the most important of which are mentioned below:

1. Having faith in Allah:

Good manners are one of the requirements of having faith in Allah. Messenger of Allah, (PBUH) said: Faith has seventy parts and modesty is one part of it. (Muslim, Sahih Muslim, (1/63) Hadith number: (57).

Muslims have to adopt great manners after having firm belief because Allah has commanded them to have good morals and has forbidden bad actions and morals.

2. Having faith in Hereafter:

The link between having faith in Hereafter and chastity is that a chaste Muslim believes that by being chaste, Allah will reward him on the Day of Judgment, so he/she adopts chastity and refrains from sins, as Allah, the Exalted, said: But as for he who feared the position of his Lord and prevented the soul from [unlawful] inclination, Then indeed, Paradise will be [his] refuge. Surat al-Naz'at, verse: (40-41.)

Sayyid Qutb (may Allah have mercy on him) said: A person who fears standing in front of Allah does not commit sins, he concentrates on doing righteous deeds instead. Sayyid Qutb, in Fi Zilal al-Qur'an (7/449.)

3. feeling the meditation of Allah:

Allah knows the hearts of His servants, their hidden secrets, and the desires that pass through the soul of them. An awareness of Allah's meditation and fear from him boosts a person's resistance against soul and Satan. Thus, at this time a person keeps away from sins. Allah Almighty has said: And know that Allāh knows what is within yourselves, so beware of Him. And know that Allāh is Forgiving and Forbearing (Surat al-Baqarah, verse: (235.)

In addition, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) has pointed to the mediation of Allah: Worship Allah as you see Him, if you do not see Him, He sees you. Al-Bukhari, Sahih Al-Bukhari, (1/19) Hadith number: (50.)

Therefore, it is necessary for a Muslim to put his soul, actions, speech, and thoughts under meditation, not to talk obscenely and uselessly, to refrain from committing sins, and to purify his soul. Ibn al-Jawzi Said al-Khatir, (S: 207.)

4. Jihad with self:

One of the basic principles of chastity is fighting against one's own self. In order to fulfill the commands of Allah, A Muslim need to fight against himself. This is why Allah said: And those who strive for Us - We will surely guide them to Our ways. And indeed, Allāh is with the doers of good (Surat al-Ankabut, verse: (69.)

In this verse, Allah has promised guidance and help to reach the paths of goodness and Paradise and to achieve success in achieving them. Al-Razi. Fakhr al-Din, Mafatih al-Ghaib. (25/80.)

5. **Remembering Allah**:

Allah Almighty has ordered his servants to remember him, as He said:O you who have believed, remember Allāh with much remembrance (Surah al-Ahzab Verse: (41.)

No specific place or time has been set for the remembrance of Allah. One can remember Allah Almighty everywhere and all the time, as has said: And remember your Lord much and exalt [Him with praise] in the evening and the morning. (Surat al-Imran, verse: (41). And the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: The example of those who remember Allah and those who do not remember Allah is like the living and the dead. al-Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari. (8/86), Hadith number: (6407.)

Thus, not remembering Allah has caused their hearts to become hard, so by remembering Allah their hearts will become soft again. Al Qasimi. Muhammad Jamal al-Din, Muhasan al-Tawail, (8/285.)

6. Obliging women to wear hijab:

It is forbidden for a woman to perform those actions that cause sedition and people's lusts. Therefore, Allah Almighty has said: And when you ask [his wives] for something, ask them from behind a partition(Surah al-Ahzab Verse: (53.)

Thus, the Islamic hijab must have certain characteristics, such as covering the entire body, the hijab itself will not be decorative, and the hijab should not be thin.

7. Staying at home for women:

Islamic Sharia has ordered all women to stay at home and they cannot go out of the house without any logical reason, as Allah Almighty has said: And abide in your houses and do not display yourselves as [was] the display of the former times of ignorance. (Surat al-Ahzab, verse: (33.)

In the interpretation of this verse, Sabuni (may Allah have mercy on him) said: The overdress of the time of ignorance was that women would go out to the city in such a way that their beauty would be revealed and they would cover those parts of the body that they did not see the need to cover. Al-Sabuni: Safwa al-Tafaseer, (3/524). Al-Alusi, (may Allah have mercy on him) said: For a woman, "Tabarj" means that she reveals her beauty to others, which it is obligatory to cover. Al-Alusi, Rooh al-Ma'ani, (8/11.)

8. Encouraging young people to get married:

Islamic Shari'ah has ordered Muslims on marriage because marriage is an important reason for lowering the eyes and protecting the private parts. The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: "O young people! Whoever among you can marry, should marry because it helps him lower his gaze and guard his modesty) Al-Bukhari, Sahih Al-Bukhari, (7/3) Hadith number: (5066.)

Part 2: Causes of deviation from chastity:

There are many reasons for deviating from chastity, the most important of which are mentioned as below:

1- Weakness of faith:

For every believer, faith is very important. Goodness in this world and the hereafter depends on correct and firm faith. True faith makes a person's life blissful, as Allah Almighty has said: They who believe and do not mix their belief with injustice - those who will have security, and they are [rightly] guided. (Surah al-An'am, verse: (82)

2- Transgressing the bounds of Sharia:

For those who apply Allah's limits to themselves, Allah has prepared paradise and blessings for them, and those who violate the Allah's limits severe punishments have been prepared for them, as Allah said: These are the limits [set by] Allāh, and whoever obeys Allāh and His Messenger will be admitted by Him to gardens [in Paradise] under which rivers flow, abiding eternally therein; and that is the great attainment(Surat al-Nisa, verse: (13.)

Saadi (may Allah have mercy on him) said in the interpretation of this verse: Whoever obeys the limits of Allah and His Prophet, Allah Almighty will take him/her to paradises under which the rivers will be flowing. Al-Saadi, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman, (p. 170.)

3- Refusing marriage:

Marriage is an important thing which Allah Almighty has made it permissible for safeguarding chastity. Therefore, it has been strictly ordered by Allah Almighty in many verses, as Allah said: And if you fear that you will not deal justly with the orphan girls, 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]. (Surah al-Nisa, verse: (3).) Also, the Messenger of Allah, (PBUH) said: (O all young people! Whoever is able to marry, let him marry.) Thus, anyone who refuses marriage is definitely avoiding the pursuit of chastity and will fall in sins.

4- Unsound and bad friend:

A bad friend has a negative effect on a person's life and morals, so a Muslim should choose good friends and keep away from bad friends. Allah Almighty has said:O you who have believed, fear Allāh and be with those who are true.(Surah al-Tawba, verse: (119.)

5- Corrupt media:

The media is depicted as a source of power by various powerful countries. So much attention has been paid to the media to the extent that it has become a significant source of strength. Therefore, Allah Almighty ordered Muslims to prepare all kinds of power against their enemies, as he said: And prepare against them whatever you are able of power and of steeds of war by which you may terrify the enemy of Allāh and your enemy and others besides them whom you do not know [but] whom Allāh knows (Surah al-Anfal, verse: (60.)

In the current era, there are many corrupt media that play a role in promoting lusts and desires, so the Islamic government must change the face of such media strongly and it should encourage people to follow Islamic rules and chastity so that they become an example of this blessed verse in which Allah

Almighty said: And who is better in speech than one who invites to Allāh and does righteousness and says, "Indeed, I am of the Muslims. (Surat-Fussilat, verse: (23.)

6- Absence of enjoining the good and forbidding the evil

It is necessary for every Muslim to enjoin goodness and forbid evil in his community. This is why the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: when one of you sees an evil deed, he should change it with his hand. If he cannot, then with his tongue. If he cannot, then with his heart. Muslim, Sahih Muslim, (1/69) Hadith number: (49.)

Based on this, enjoining the good and forbidding the evil is considered an important pillar in Islamic society. If this pillar is destroyed, stability in that society and the chastity and honor of the people will not be protected.

Chapter 4: The effect of chastity and its examples:

This chapter is divided into two parts, one is about the effect of chastity and the other is about an example, the details of which are described below:

Part I: Effects of Chastity:

There are many effects of chastity, some of them are as follows:

> Satisfaction:

Satisfaction is the sweet fruit with which the human heart finds peace and tranquility. Satisfaction can be obtained when a person adopts the path of chastity and keeps himself away from sins. Therefore, Satisfaction is obtained by worshiping and remembering Allah. Allah has said: Those who have believed and whose hearts are assured by the remembrance of Allāh. Unquestionably, by the remembrance of Allāh hearts are assured. (Surat al-Ra'd, verse: (28.)

> Salvation from the wrath of Allah:

One of the most important commandments of Allah is that a person should have good morals, for the status of man rises because of good morals, one of which is chastity. Thus, whoever has chastity, will be loved by Allah Almighty forever, and he will be safe from his anger.

> Sitting under the shade of the Throne:

The person who has adopted chastity will be under the shadow of the Throne of Allah on the Day of Judgment, as the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) has stated in this hadith: "There are seven whom Allah will shade in His Shade on the Day when there is no shade except His Shade. One of them is a man who is called by a woman of beauty and position [for illegal intercourse], but he says: 'I fear Allah'; Allah. Al-Bukhari, Sahih Al-Bukhari, (8/163) Hadith number: (6806.)

Part 2: Examples of chastity:

There are many examples of chastity and pure soul people, some of which are described below:

The stories of chastity of many prophets have been mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, and I am quoting the example of Yusuf (peace be upon him): When Yusuf (peace be upon him) was improperly invited by

the wife of Azizof Egypt, he refused her demand and kept himself. In this regard, Allah Almighty has said: And she, in whose house he was, sought to seduce him. She closed the doors and said, "Come, you." He said, "[I seek] the refuge of Allāh. Indeed, he is my master, who has made good my residence. Indeed, wrongdoers will not succeed. (Surat Yusuf, verse: (23.)

Also, the event of Maryam (peace be upon her) is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, that she is a pure domain and a chaste woman. Allah Almighty has said about her: And [mention] the one who guarded her chastity [i.e., Mary], so We blew into her [garment] through Our angel [i.e., Gabriel], and We made her and her son a sign for the worlds.(Surah al-Anbiya, verse: (91.)

Saadi, may Allah have mercy on him) said: Maryam, (peace be upon her) is the most distinguished woman among all women, and Allah named a chapter after her in the Holy Qur'an and has made the story of Maryam an example for the believers. She was obedient to her creator, and Allah has praised her for her chastity. Al-Saadi, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman, (p. 1032.(

Outcomes:

In conclusion, I want to briefly mention the important results that have been achieved in this study in the following points:

- 1. Efat is an Arabic word which literally means chastity, and in the Islamic context, the power of sensuality which is the moderate state that lies between extremes and excesses is called *Efat*.
- 2. The word chastity has some similar words, such as Ihsan, and purity.
- 3. With chastity, the five objectives of the Islamic Sharia are protected, such as religion, self, property...
- 4. There must be some conditions in the Islamic hijab, which include: covering the whole body, the hijab itself should not be attractive.
- 5. The reasons for deviating from chastity include weakness of faith, nonobservance of Allah's law, avoiding marriage, and having evil friends.
- 6. Chastity has some effects, some of which are peace of mind, safety from the wrath of Allah, and sitting under the shade of the Throne of Allah on the Day of Resurrection.

Suggestions:

- At the present time, this topic is very essential. Students in universities should write monographs for bachelor's degrees and a thesis for master's and Ph.D. degrees.
- Chastity is the wish of every wise and healthy person. We Muslims should get our families and those who are under our supervision to practice it seriously.

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