

PROPHETIC PATH

JOURNEY TO MEET THE LORD OF THE WORLDS

Body Stage Sins of the Eyes

1. Introduction

Our eyes are a direct feeder into our mind, images that we see cannot be erased from our mind, hence we need to be very careful of what we look at.

These are the sins that we need to avoid.

2. Summary of Sins to Avoid

1. Gazing at the opposite sex
2. Watching unlawful films
3. Looking at obscene magazines or newspapers
4. Excessive looking at vain worldly materials

A FURTHER EXPLANATION OF SOME OF THE SINS:

1. Gazing at the opposite sex

The Prophet ﷺ said “Beware! In every man’s destiny there are tests of adultery (zina). There is no running away from it. It will catch up with you.”

Allah ﷻ has placed the test of zina in every individual's life and therefore each person to walk this earth will be tested through it, in one form or another. Adultery (zina) can take place with the eyes, ears, tongue, hands, private parts or the mind.

Zina is not limited to sexual intercourse, but rather in this hadith it demonstrates that zina can amount to anything which takes a person away from the obedience of Allah ﷻ. For example zina of the eyes is to look at things that invite you to sin and zina of the mind is to think about the evil acts.

Allah ﷻ says to the Prophet ﷺ “Say to the faithful that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that will make for greater purity for them; and Allah ﷻ is well acquainted with all that they do.” Surah Nur, 30.

In this ayah, Allah ﷻ is ordering us to turn away from evil and whenever Allah ﷻ has told us not to do something in the Quran it becomes haraam. Think about how Allah ﷻ connects the issue of lowering the gaze with the issue of protecting the private parts (guarding one's chastity) in these verses and how lowering the gaze is mentioned first, before protecting the private parts, because the eyes influences the heart. A person naturally sees a man and a woman and looks at him or her. However, what is meant here is to look at the opposite sex with lust and having sexual feelings. The criterion for the look of lust is to look continuously or several times.

Allah ﷻ says, "Do not go near fornication and adultery, it is an abomination and an evil way." Quran 17:32.

This sin is so hateful in the sight of Our Lord that He commanded us to not even go near it. Despite what anyone may say, looking upon that which one is not supposed to is going near adultery. For an illicit affair begins with a lustful glance.

Once a blind man came into the house of the Prophet ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ told Ummul Mumineen Aisha (may Allah ﷻ be pleased with her) to go behind a curtain. She replied, "O Prophet ﷺ of Allah ﷻ, he is blind. How can he see us?" The Prophet ﷺ replied: "He may be blind, but you are not blind." Ahmad. From this hadith we can deduce that just as it is forbidden for a man to look at a non-mahram woman, it is similarly forbidden for a woman to look at a non-mahram man. Both men and women need to guard their glances in order to protect their faith and modesty. The glance opens the door to lustful looking, which in turn slowly and surely takes one down the road to adultery or fornication. Another hadith describes the gaze of a non-mahram as one of the arrows of the Shaitan. These arrows tear into the fabric of our rooh/soul, shredding it to bits so that we are not able to return victoriously to Allah ﷻ with the intact, wholesome rooh that Allah ﷻ sent us with into this world.

This is what the Prophet ﷺ said, "O Ali, do not let what you see first be distorted by what you see later. You will not be responsible for what you see first, but your second impression will be judged." Abu Dawud, Buraidah.

It is one of the blessings of the Prophet ﷺ's Ummah that we will not be accountable for our first glance. It is forbidden for a man to intentionally look at a non-mahram woman whether for the first or the second time. However, a sudden glance is pardoned, provided that the gaze is lowered immediately and no further looking is resumed. If the man continues to look at the woman or lowers his gaze and then looks at her again, then by this he is committing a sin. A look has the same effect on the heart as an arrow has on its victim. If it does not kill him, it will wound him. It is like a spark of fire on dried grass if it does not burn all of it, it will still burn some of it.

The eye is attracted to everything that moves. Imagination is as quick as the eye, and is capable of changing the shape, colour, and meaning of whatever the eye sees. It leads people to look at honest covered women and undress them in their mind. But the faithful should have the will to put a stop to this imagination.

2. Watching unlawful films, looking at obscene magazines or newspapers

The rule is that anything that is unlawful to look at in real-life is also unlawful to look at when depicted in a life like way. Therefore, pornography in magazines, billboards, posters, electronic screens, projector screens, so forth, are all unlawful. As for the other photographs e.g. of a panda bear, a properly dressed human, or a building, they are generally permissible to look at.

There are many contradictions regarding TV and surfing the internet as there could be harm or benefit. We must avoid what Allah ﷻ has forbidden e.g watching obscene movies, which shows nudeness, reprehensible things, singing, musical instruments and misleading ideas. As watching these movies involves witnessing evil and wrongdoing which will cause hardness and disease in the heart, which then makes a person take the laws of Allah ﷻ lightly. Which causes us to find doing righteous things more difficult like praying in congregation and other obligations.

Allah ﷻ has said, “To see things one should not see, is one of the poisonous arrow of the devil. Whoever hides from this due to his love and fear of Me, I will give him such faith that his heart will be totally filled.”

Those who are ignorant and blind to the truth are led by their egos, their personal devils, to distort the beauty, harmony and purity of reality into the chaos of their imagination, where everything unlawful, ugly, and sinful becomes permissible. Ugliness is in the eye, not outside it. It is the eye that sins, sinfulness is not in what is seen. What a dirty eye sees is its own imagination.

3. Excessive looking at vain worldly materials

One should lower their gaze from viewing sensual images e.g. of the opposite gender, cars, houses, yachts, jewellery, clothes, shoes, athletic equipment, food, other material possessions etc. in real life or in photographs.

The person travelling on the path should refrain from looking at anything that the lower self wants. This is because images that are viewed with the eye imprint a stamp on the heart and as long as the heart is stamped with the images of created things, the soul will not be able to perceive the light of the Divine.

Allah ﷻ has made the eyes the reflection of the heart. If a person lowers their gaze, the desire in his heart will be reduced, but if a person looks and stares, the desire in their heart will be provoked and exacerbated.