

An Imaam whose Wife has Repented from her Evil Ways

Q: Salaah-401: We have an Imaam for the past five years who is an Aalim and a pious man who has never done anything unbecoming. However, people have recently discovered that his wife was guilty of having an affair and has even transgressed the bounds of the Shari'ah to engage in adultery. Our Imaam was extremely upset about it and was on the verge of divorcing her. She however regretted her crime, sincerely repented and begged her husband for forgiveness, promising never to repeat herself. He therefore refrained from divorcing her.

Is it permissible to perform salaah behind such an Imaam because some people claim that he is a Faasiq? Others claim that salaah behind him is perfectly valid because it was not him who perpetrated the crime. Who is right?

Answer: If the Imaam was in no way involved in her illicit affair, was not an accessory to it and found out only afterwards, he cannot be regarded to be a sinner or a Faasiq. This applies especially since he expressed anger when informed, separated from her until she repented and was even on the verge of divorcing her. The Qur'aan declares that no soul will be burdened with the sin of another. There will therefore be no harm in following him in salaah.

It is not necessary for a man to divorce his wife immediately upon hearing that she has committed adultery. He should divorce her only when she does not desist from her crime and when her crime encroaches upon his rights. And Allaah knows best what is most correct.

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