

How Long can a Man be Separated from his Wife?

Question: There are many men from India working here in Dubai Many, are in debt and also married to religious women who are staying with dignity with their family and relatives in India. Although their families take care that their chastity is safeguarded" the question of their marital rights crops up Because of their poor financial situation, they cannot afford to bring their wives here and it is gradually becoming increasingly difficult for them to visit regularly. As a result, they remains separated from their wives for a year, two years and often even longer. Does the Shari'ah allow this?

Answer: It is certainly most imperative to take the woman's needs and rights into consideration. Just as a man needs a woman. so too do women need men. In fact, her need is even greater.

Ghunyatul Taalibeen (Vol. 1 Pg.33) makes it clear that a man may not forsake sexual intercourse if he does not desire it because it is the right of his wife. Failing to fulfil this right may lead to great harm because her desire is greater than his.

Hadhrat Abu Hurayrah RADI. reports that Rasulullaah SAW. Said The, desire of a woman exceeds that of a man 99 times. but the difference is that Allaah has given her modesty (because of which her desires remain under control) " It has also been said that of the ten parts of desire, women have nine and men have only one, It states also that a man may not leave his wife for more than four months. Should he need to be out for more than six months and does not return when she summons him, despite being able to return. the ruler may separate the two if she requests it.

Jurists therefore state that a man may not leave his wife for longer than four months without her consent. While Ameerul Mu'mineen Hadhrat Umar RADI. was patrolling the streets of Madinah one night, he overheard a woman saying the following two couplets out of her longing for her husband:

"By Allaah! Had it not been for the Allaah Whom I tear so the feet of this bed would have now been shaking long ago."

When he enquired the reason for this, she told Hadhrat Umar RADI. that her husband had been out in Jihaad for a very long time and the long separation made her chant these couplets. Worried about this, Hadhrat Umar RADI. then asked his daughter Hadhrat Hafsah RADI. indicate to him how long a woman is able to live without her husband When she indicated a duration of four months, Hadhrat Umar RADI. issued a decree that every married soldier be allowed to return home after four months.

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