

**Title:** Women – The Greatest Temptation

**Original Title:** النساء أعظم فتنة ومسئولية الرجل اتجاه المرأة

**Original Author:** Muḥammad Ibn Ṣāliḥ al-'Uthaymīn

﴿ زُيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ حُبُّ الشَّهَوَاتِ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ ﴾

**Beautified for people is the love of that which they desire:**

# Women

T H E G R E A T E S T T E M P T A T I O N

A FRIDAY SERMON BY:

Muḥammad Ibn Ṣāliḥ al-'Uthaymīn<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This is a sermon given by Muḥammad Ibn Ṣāliḥ al-'Uthaymīn before a Friday prayer. The complete opening and closing supplications of the scholar have been omitted. The Arabic text and audio, at the time of translation, is available at: [http://www.ibnothaimen.com/all/khotab/article\\_265.shtml](http://www.ibnothaimen.com/all/khotab/article_265.shtml).

Oh Muslims, there is a certain well known pastime of tribulation and temptation into which many people fall today. Unfortunately, this issue does not negatively affect only the individuals who fall into it. Rather, its consequences affect others as Allah ( تعالى ) says:

﴿ وَاتَّقُوا فِتْنَةً لَا تُصِيبَنَّ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْكُمْ خَاصَّةً ۖ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ  
الْعِقَابِ ﴾

**Beware of a trial which will not afflict only those who have transgressed  
among you exclusively, and know that Allah is severe in penalty.<sup>2</sup>**

Muslims, the tribulations to which I refer are temptations pertaining to (the unlawful admiration of) women, and it is such trials about which the messenger ( صلى الله عليه وسلم ) said:

« مَا تَرَكْتُ بَعْدِي فِتْنَةً أَضَرَّ عَلَى الرَّجَالِ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ »

I will not leave behind a trial more harmful to men than (the temptations of)  
women.<sup>3</sup>

It is a trial which the shameful ones readily partake in, one that affects their desires, blinds their eyes, and destroys their judgment. This eventually leads them to following

<sup>2</sup> The Quran, Sūrah al-Anfāl, 8:25

<sup>3</sup> Collected by al-Bukhārī. Allah confirms this in Sūrah Āli-'Imrān, 3:14, as He mentions various things people covet, beginning the list with women:

﴿ زُيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ حُبُّ الشَّهَوَاتِ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ ﴾

**Beautified for people is the love of that which they desire: women...**

women around in the streets and shopping malls, flirting with them, whistling at them and whispering to them. They may even go so far as to touch or grope women in public as if they are completely unconcerned with others around them. Perhaps they see others as insignificant as if they were cattle. This is because such people are immersed in their own lust. They belittle morality and they defy societal norms. They are fearless before Allah ( عزَّ وجلَّ ) as they choose ways (to support their desires) other than the respectable ways of sensible people.

We must, as a believing Muslim people, renounce these activities perpetrated by such immoral individuals. We detest these types of behaviors because they contradict the characteristics and qualities of believers in Allah and the last day. We disapprove of such actions because they are means leading one closer to adultery or fornication about which Allah ( تعالى ) says:

﴿ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الزَّوْنَىٰ إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا ﴾

**And do not approach adultery, fornication. Certainly, it has always been immoral and an evil way.<sup>4</sup>**

We condemn this behavior (of chasing after women, watching them desirously, flirting with them, etc.) because it infringes upon personal safety and security, and it could lead to community fear, panic (among women), and societal disorder. And we criticize it because it may inevitably bring about a swift, overwhelming and inclusive punishment. Allah ( عزَّ وجلَّ ) says:

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<sup>4</sup> Sūrah al-Isrā, 17:32

﴿وَإِذَا أَرَدْنَا أَنْ نُهْلِكَ قَرْيَةً أَمَرْنَا مُتْرَفِيهَا فَفَسَقُوا فِيهَا فَحَقَّ عَلَيْهَا الْقَوْلُ فَدَمَّرْنَاَهَا تَدْمِيرًا﴾

**When we intend to destroy a town, we command its affluent ones, but they defiantly disobey. So the word comes into effect upon it, and we destroy it with complete destruction.**<sup>5</sup>

Here, ﴿**We command**﴾ is a type of universal responsibility befitting those of affluence and power (to enforce change in society). Allah mentions the ﴿**affluent ones**﴾ because it is often the rich and powerful who immerse themselves in sin. And if they refuse to change, ﴿**The word comes into effect upon it, and we destroy it with complete destruction.**﴾ After mentioning His punishment for adultery and fornication (among other sins), Allah then speaks about the exception, those who will avoid punishment, the true worshippers of the Most-Merciful:

﴿وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ يَلْقَ أَثَامًا \* يُضَاعَفْ لَهُ الْعَذَابُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَيَخْلُدْ فِيهِ مُهَانًا \* إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولَئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا﴾

**Whoever does that incurs sin. The punishment will be multiplied upon him and he will abide therein disgraced, except for those who repent, believe, and do righteous deeds. For them, Allah will replace their bad deeds with good ones and Allah is ever forgiving, merciful.**<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Sūrah al-Isrā, 17:16

<sup>6</sup> Sūrah al-Furqān, 25:68-70

Oh Muslims. You who try to safeguard your dignity and protect the women in your care, immoral qualities and shameful behaviors such as these to which some people degenerate—and such behavior was not prevalent in our society until recently—weaken your religion, weaken your honorable protectiveness of women, and spread the means leading to tribulations and societal problems.

### *Weakening of One's Religion*

As for the weakening of one's religion, these people who follow women around, being tested with admiring and flirting with them, had they been strong in religion, they would not dare do the kinds of things they do with women. Such actions result in their sinning against Allah (عزّ وجلّ) and preoccupying themselves with and giving preference to the creation instead of the creator. Allah (عزّ وجلّ) says:

﴿ قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ذَلِكَ أَزْكَى لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴾

**Tell the believing men to lower their gazes and protect their private parts.**

**That is purer for them. Allah is certainly aware of everything they do.<sup>7</sup>**

### *The Weakening of One's Honorable Protectiveness of Women*

As for the weakening of one's honorable protectiveness – the praiseworthy type of respectful jealousy one should have of women – individuals afflicted with this temptation to “chase women,” had they had the complete respectful honor for women, they would

<sup>7</sup> Sūrah al-Nūr, 24:30

not dare chase after the women of their brothers (in faith), the women (sisters, daughters, mothers) of their fellow citizens, thereby putting those women into the same types of temptations and tribulations. The type of religious brotherhood we have obliges men to respect and honor his brothers' womenfolk and those of his fellow citizens, having the same kind of commendable jealousy for their honor and chastity as he has for his own female relatives.

I would ask these men: Would you be happy to know that someone chases after your own wife out of desire for her? Or your daughter, your sister, or other female relatives? Would you like people flirting with them? If he would hate such behavior with his own women, why would he allow his own desires to tempt him into doing the same things with other women? I warn these individuals who have been afflicted with such admiration of women from the very actions which would allow another man to gain influence over his own women. I advise them to prevent his relatives from becoming afflicted with such trials.

### *The Spreading of Tribulations & Societal Problems*

The tribulations and temptations to admire and chase after women are many. Such behavior (because of its popularity and influence) leads to various forms of widespread media, including audio, visual, and written publications, being placed in the hands of our young men and women. They have newspapers and magazines filled with images and articles that arouse their desires, stimulate their emotions, and kindle the fires of passion. Even worse than this media is that which comes to our land from abroad, or sometimes even from our own citizens. We ask Allah to guide them and to protect us from their evil.

Another way this tribulation may spread is by the very blessings which Allah has bestowed on this land: the comfort of its society, its excess wealth, good food, and the overall security and prosperity of our society. Oftentimes, such luxuries lead one's heart to become empty and the body to become idle from inactivity or unemployment. This is why you almost always find these young men to be one of two types. They are often unsuccessful men who have no careers to occupy their time or attention. They live off the prosperity of other wealthy, successful men. They neither know a skill, nor try to learn one. They do not work towards a specific occupation or official career. Thus, his desires get the better of him and leave him in a perpetual downfall.

Or they may often be men who may work but they waste the results of their labor, wasting their earnings, unconcerned with its value or what results from the bad consequences of their actions. But as for a dignified, determined believer, he does not allow his personality to deteriorate to the point of such shallow yet despicable behavior.

Other ways these temptations spread is what some women of immoral conduct themselves perpetrate in their choice of clothing, their appearance, and lustful behaviors. By these choices, they are inclined to promote this type of tribulation. Such conduct was foreign to our righteous predecessors. Some women go to shopping centers to flaunt themselves, to exhibit their beauty with the most attractive clothing they own. They may then throw over it a thin cloak but one that might be shortened or raised up so that her attractive clothing underneath is displayed. They are dressed yet still appear naked, wearing the types of garments the women of Hell wear. The prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

« صِنْفَانِ مِنَ أَهْلِ النَّارِ لَمْ أَرَهُمَا قَوْمٌ مَعَهُمْ سِيَاطٌ كَأَذْنَابِ الْبَقَرِ يَضْرِبُونَ بِهَا  
النَّاسَ وَنِسَاءٌ كَاسِيَاتٌ عَارِيَاتٌ مُمِيلَاتٌ مَائِلَاتٌ رُءُوسُهُنَّ كَأَسْنِمَةِ الْبُخْتِ  
الْمَائِلَةِ لَا يَدْخُلْنَ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَا يَجِدْنَ رِيحَهَا وَإِنَّ رِيحَهَا لِيُوجَدُ مِنْ مَسِيرَةِ كَذَا  
وَكَذَا »

There are two types of the people of Hell that I have never seen: (1) People with whips like the tails of cattle with which they beat people, and (2) women who are dressed but appear naked, walking with an enticing strut with their heads looking like the humps of camels. They will never enter Paradise, nor even smell its fragrance although its scent can be perceived from such and such a distance.<sup>8</sup>

Some women also frequent shopping centers adorned with gold jewelry or elegant watches, walking in such a manner and revealing her hands (in an attractive, seductive way) to entice those who see her even though Allah ( عزَّ وجلَّ ) says:

﴿ وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ بِأَرْجُلِهِنَّ لِيُعْلَمَ مَا يُخْفِينَ مِنْ زِينَتِهِنَّ ﴾

**They (believing women) should not strike their feet in such a manner that the adornment they hide may be known.<sup>9</sup>**

Other women go out perfumed, sometimes choosing to wear the strongest, most fragrant perfume so that almost every man she passes who smells her scent, she allures him with it. The prophet ( صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ) said about this:

<sup>8</sup> Collected by Muslim

<sup>9</sup> Sūrah al-Nūr, 24:31

« أَيُّمَا امْرَأَةٍ أَصَابَتْ بِخُورًا فَلَا تَشْهَدُ مَعَنَا الْعِشَاءَ الْآخِرَةَ »

Any woman who has been around incense should not join us in the last evening prayer.<sup>10</sup>

And in another narration, he (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

« الْمَرْأَةُ إِذَا اسْتَعْطَرَتْ فَمَرَّتْ بِالْمَجْلِسِ فَهِيَ كَذَا وَكَذَا »

A woman, if she wears perfume and then passes by a gathering (of men), she is this and that (meaning: a type of adulterer, fornicator).<sup>11</sup>

Other women frequent the malls unveiled or wearing a thin veil that barely conceals her face. Perhaps it is even worn as a way of beautifying her face, or just to hide some blemish on her face. Still other women may cover their faces yet they wear the veil so tightly that their nose, eyebrows, and cheeks are shown. These are no doubt temptations.

You also find women roaming shopping centers in a strutting, swaying manner and joke and giggle with their girlfriends. Sometimes they visit shops, with or without need, to chat with the salesman, prolonging their conversation. Perhaps she requests an item

<sup>10</sup> Collected by al-Nasāī and al-Albānī said it is authentic in *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Nasāī* (no. 4739)

<sup>11</sup> Collected by al-Tirmidhī and al-Albānī said it is authentic in *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī* (no. 2237). In a similar narration collected by al-Nasāī and graded as authentic by al-Albānī in *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Nasāī* (no. 4737), the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) explicitly said:

« أَيُّمَا امْرَأَةٍ اسْتَعْطَرَتْ فَمَرَّتْ عَلَى قَوْمٍ لِيَجِدُوا مِنْ رِيحِهَا فَهِيَ زَانِيَةٌ »

Any woman who wears perfume and then passes by people so that they smell her fragrance, she is an adulterer, fornicator.

stored in the back of the shop that she actually does not want; she just wants to keep chatting with the salesman. Yet Allah (عزّ وجلّ) told the prophet's wives (صلى الله عليه وعلى آله) – and they were considered the “mothers of the believers,” they were the most pure and farthest from any behaviors or situations of temptation – Allah told them:

﴿ فَلَا تَخْضَعْنَ بِالْقَوْلِ فَيَطْمَعَ الَّذِي فِي قَلْبِهِ مَرَضٌ وَقُلْنَ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا ﴾

**Do not be soft in speech (to men) for fear that he in whose heart is a disease should desire (you), but speak in an honorable manner.<sup>12</sup>**

Muslims, we have described some things regarding the sickness but is there a cure? The answer is yes and there are several types of medicine thanks to Allah.

We are a Muslim nation practicing the religion of Islam, and Allah (تبارك وتعالى) has clarified the general responsibilities a man has regarding his family members and the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) has spoken about this as well. As for Allah (عزّ وجلّ), He says in His noble book:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلَائِكَةٌ غِلَاظٌ شِدَادٌ لَا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ ﴾

**You who believe, protect yourselves and your families from a fire whose fuel is people and stones over which are (appointed) angels, stern and**

<sup>12</sup> Sūrah al-Aḥzāb, 33:32

**severe. They do not disobey Allah in what He commands them but do as they are commanded.**<sup>13</sup>

As for the Sunnah, the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

« كُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ ، الإِمَامُ رَاعٍ وَمَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ ، وَالرَّجُلُ رَاعٍ فِي أَهْلِهِ وَهُوَ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ ، وَالْمَرْأَةُ رَاعِيَةٌ فِي بَيْتِ زَوْجِهَا وَمَسْئُولَةٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهَا ، وَالْخَادِمُ رَاعٍ فِي مَالِ سَيِّدِهِ وَمَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ ، فَكُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ وَمَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ »

Each of you is a shepherd and each of you is responsible for his flock. The leader is a shepherd and responsible for his flock (i.e., citizens). A man is a shepherd over his family and responsible for his flock. A woman is a shepherd in her husband's home and responsible for her flock. And a servant, worker is a shepherd over the property of his master, boss. So each of you is a shepherd and is responsible for his flock.<sup>14</sup>

Worshippers of Allah, fear Allah and fulfill your responsibilities. Continuously prevent and discourage the women in your care from visiting shopping centers to behave in manners that contradict religious rulings.

I ask Allah to help us and you with regards to the medicine of integrity and honor, to guide us and guide others with us for He is capable of all things. All thanks are for Allah,

<sup>13</sup> Sūrah al-Taḥrīm, 66:6

<sup>14</sup> Collected by al-Bukhārī

the lord of the worlds, and may Allah send peace and prayers on our prophet, Muhammad, and upon his family and companions.

*Ibn al-'Uthaymīn continues in the second part of his Friday sermon...*

Oh Muslim brothers. You, men who are caretakers of women, men who are responsible for your families, fear Allah with respect to yourselves and families. Cultivate in them respectable manners and praiseworthy characteristics, and discourage them from becoming the very means which lead to temptations and tribulations. You are men and they are women and men have been charged with taking care of women because of what Allah has given one over the other and because men (are obliged to) spend their wealth to support them.<sup>15</sup> A man should neither be (helpless, having no influence) as if he were simply a rock in his house, nor should he be as if he is one of the women. Rather, he must act like a man in every sense of the word. Be shepherds; be responsible and influential so that you live among your families as men.

Some people go to great measures to ensure their financial stability, carefully watching their expenses, their checkbooks and bookkeeping. Yet they neglect their family members for whom they are personally and immediately responsible. Such a man, were he to lose a single sheep from his flock (a single coin, for example), he would search right and left for it until it is found. All the while, he remains unconcerned that his family members, his sons and daughters, are losing their manners and good character.

<sup>15</sup> This is based on the verse in Sūrah al-Nisā, 4:34:

﴿الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِ﴾

**Men are protectors and maintainers of women by what Allah has given one over the other and what they spend (to support them) from their wealth.**

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**Original Author:** Muḥammad Ibn Ṣāliḥ al-'Uthaymīn

Fulfill the obligations Allah has placed over you. This is my advice I present to you as I remind you that you are responsible for your families because Allah told you this and the prophet ( صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ) has charged you with this. Do you want to waste this trust you have been given? Do you want to be unable to answer when you are made to stand in front of Allah and asked about this trust?

Fear Allah and take seriously the obligations Allah has placed on you. Do not neglect and waste your chances at raising your family. If you fail in the upbringing of your family and this man fails his family and that man fails, soon the entire society becomes corrupt. Society is a conglomeration made up of individuals, so when the individuals become corrupt the entire population is corrupt.

I conclude this speech of mine asking Allah ( تعالی ) to assist us and you all in fulfilling our responsibilities we have regarding the safeguarding of our families. Oh Allah, help us care for our families, providing the best care for them.

اللهم أعنا على رعاية أهلنا أحسن رعاية

