

Looking at Others and Marriage

One of the greatest gifts from Allah is the gift of sight. We must use this great blessing in the path towards perfection and to improve ourselves and others around us, and must prevent ourselves from looking at those people whom we are not allowed to look at, although looking at the natural or apparent parts of the bodies, as long as it does not intrude on the rights of others is not a problem. Protecting others from looking at others and protecting oneself from looking at others whom one is a Non-mahram to has specifics, of which some will be explained in this chapter.

Issue 435: A Mahram is that person who one is able to look at – to a certain extent more than others, and with whom marriage is Haram.

Issue 436: The following people are Mahram to a boy and to a man:

- Mother and Grandmother.
- Daughter and the daughter of his child.
- Sister.
- Niece – Daughter of his sister.
- Niece – Daughter of his brother.
- Aunt (Father's sister) – His own aunt, and his mother's and father's aunt.
- Aunt (Mother's sister) – His own aunt, and his mother's and father's aunt.

This group of people, by their own blood relations are Mahram, and another group are also Mahram by marriage on the son or man. These include:

- Wife.
- Mother-in-Law and Grandmother.

- Wife of the father (Stepmother).
- Wife of the son.

The brother's wife and the sister of the wife are Non-Mahrams. Issue 437: These people are Mahram to the girl and woman:

- Father and Grandfather.
- Son and the son of her child.
- Brother.
- Nephew – Son of her sister.
- Nephew – Son of her brother.
- Uncle (Father's brother) Her own uncle, and her mother's and father's uncle.
- Uncle (Mother's brother) Her own uncle, and her mother's and father's uncle.

This group of people, by their own blood relations are Mahram, and another group are also Mahram by marriage on the girl or woman. These include:

- Husband.
- Father-in-Law and the husband's Grandfather.
- Husband of the daughter.

The husband of her sister and the brother of her husband are Non-Mahrams. With the exception of those who have been listed, it is possible that others, by way of marriage, and with certain conditions may become Mahram of each other – these exceptions are mentioned in the detailed books of Fiqh.

Issue 438: If a woman breast feeds a child by the specific conditions mentioned in the books of Fiqh, that child will become a Mahram of that woman and others. For a better understanding of this rule, please refer to the "Islamic Laws" rule number 2473.

Issue 439: With the exception of the husband and wife, it is haram to look at any other person with the intention of deriving pleasure, even if it is of the same sex, for example a man looking at another man, or of the opposite sex, for example, a man looking at a woman, even if he/she is a Mahram or an Non-Mahram, and this rule holds the same for looking at any part of the body.

Issue 440: The boy and the man may look at the complete body of a woman who is their Mahram with the exception of the private parts, and without the intention of deriving pleasure.

Issue 441: The boy and the man are not allowed to look at the body and hair of a Non-M ahram woman, but to look at the hands, up to the wrist and the face, in that amount that must be washed in wudhu – without the intention pleasure is no problem.

Issue 442: The girl and woman are allowed to look at the head, face, hands and feet of Non-Mahram men, as long as it is done without the intention of deriving pleasure, and as long as it is in the area not usually covered.

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