

The second question of Fatwa no. 1434

Q 2: I bought a television and said to my wife, "If you watch any program except religious ones, you will be unlawful to me." One day I came home and saw a serial on the TV. I asked her about it, and she said that she had forgotten to turn it off after a religious program. What is the Islamic ruling on this matter?

A: If the reality is as you mentioned, and she had forgotten to turn the TV off after watching a religious program, your oath is not broken. However, it is not permissible for a husband to say to his wife, "If you do such-and-such, you will be unlawful to me," as this is an infringement upon the Prerogatives of Allah Who is the Only One Who has the right to declare anything as Halal (lawful) or Haram (prohibited). Allah (Exalted be He) says:

O you who believe! Make not unlawful the Tayyibât (all that is good as regards foods, things, deeds, beliefs, persons) which Allâh has made lawful to you, and transgress not. Verily, Allâh does not like the transgressors.

He also says:

O Prophet! Why do you forbid (for yourself) that which Allâh has allowed to you, seeking to please your wives? And Allâh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

Your wife should not turn the TV on to watch programs other than religious ones. She should also pay attention and turn the TV off when a religious program ends. As for you, you will have to perform the Kaffarah (expiation) for a broken oath, if she deliberately turns the TV on for the programs you wanted to prevent her from watching. This is because such words come under the ruling of oaths, according to the more correct of the two opinions maintained by the scholars.

It is obligatory that you and your wife should not turn the TV on for watching prohibited programs, such as music and singing, serials that are Munkar (that which is unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect), and other programs that contain any content that is declared Haram by Allah.

May Allah grant us success. May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and his Companions.

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