103960 - Ruling on kissing and embracing one wife in front of her co-wives!

the question

Is it lawful to kiss and embrace (wives) in front of other wives. Is it haram if the other wife can see when having intimacy (not intercourse) with them with clothes on?.

Detailed answer

Allah has prescribed the rulings of sharee'ah as guidance for mankind, and there is nothing in them that is off-putting or shameful. Rather it is guidance to the best of conduct. The one who ponders these rulings and understands them will not need to think hard in order to work out that what is mentioned in the question about the husband kissing and touching his wife in the presence of his other wives is undoubtedly an abhorrent and off-putting action which is contrary to sharee'ah, decency and modesty.

Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

If a person is uncertain about the ruling on something, whether it is permissible or forbidden, he should look at where it leads to and whether there are any bad consequences. If there are any clearly negative consequences that outweigh anything else, then it is impossible for the Lawgiver to have enjoined it or permitted it; rather it is definitively known that it is forbidden, especially if it is something that leads to that which incurs the wrath of Allah and His Messenger. Those who have insight will not doubt that this is haraam.

End quote from Madaarij as-Saalikeen, 1/496

The basic principle concerning marital relationships is that they remain private and do not include anyone other than the husband and his wife. Hence we may understand why Allah, may He be exalted, forbade children who have reached the age of discernment from entering their parents' rooms at times of sleep, rest and siesta. The only reason for that is the fear that the child's gaze may fall upon some 'awrah, kissing or intercourse, which is the most serious of the three. Hence too we may understand the reason why Allah, may He be exalted, forbade spouses

to speak of what happens between them in the marital bed. Were it not that it is not permitted to speak of what happens between the spouses of their intimate relationship, it would not be forbidden for children who have reached the age of discernment to enter at times of privacy or for the spouses to tell people about what happens between them in the marital bed.

We think that what we have said is completely clear. If we add to that what you have mentioned about this taking place in front of the co-wives of that wife, that is more emphatically prohibited and forbidden, because of what it causes of jealousy, severing ties between co-wives, and resentment against the husband. All of these are things that sharee'ah dislikes to exist in the lives of Muslims and there is no way that Islam could allow that.

Ibn Qudaamah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

He should not have intimate relations where anyone can see them or hear them, and he should not kiss her or touch her in the presence of other people.

Ahmad said: I do not like any option except concealing that completely.

Al-Hasan said, concerning a man who has intercourse with one wife where the other can hear it: They used to disapprove of any sound of intimacy being audible to others.

And he should not speak of what happens between him and his wife. End quote from al-Mughni, 8/136

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Ibraaheem (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked about the ruling on kissing one's wife in front of other people.

He replied:

Some people -- Allah forbid -- who are badly behaved may kiss their wives in front of other people and so on. This is something that is not permitted. End quote.

Fatawa ash-Shaykh Muhammad ibn Ibraaheem, 10/277

The husband should develop the attitude of modesty and instil that in the hearts and minds of his wives and children.

And Allah knows best.