

they then go back [to their normal relationship], Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

2:227. But if they decide upon divorce, Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

This refers to a type of oath that has to do only with the wife regarding a particular matter. It is an oath whereby the husband swears not to have intercourse with his wife, without specifying a time limit, or specifying a time limit of less or more than four months.

With regard to the one who swears not to have intercourse with his wife, if it is for a period of less than four months, this is like any other oath, and if he breaks it he has to offer expiation, but if he fulfils the term, he does not have to do anything and his wife can make no claim against him, because he has the right to abstain for four months.

However, if it is an oath of permanent abstention, or for a period longer than four months, a limit of four months from the time of the oath must be imposed on him, if his wife demands that, because that is her right. When that period comes to an end, he should be instructed to go back to normal intimate relations; if he does so, then he is not required to do anything apart from offering expiation for his oath. However, if he refuses, then he should be forced to divorce her. If he refuses to divorce her, the judge should issue the divorce.

But resuming normal relations with his wife is more liked by Allah (ﷻ), hence He said: ﴿if they then go back [to their normal relationship]﴾ that is, if they go back to what they swore to abstain from, which is intercourse, then ﴿Allah is Oft-Forgiving﴾ and will forgive them for what they did of swearing that oath, because of their going back.

﴿Most Merciful﴾ as He has ordained expiation and a way out from their oath, and has not made it binding upon them as an unbreakable commitment from which they cannot free themselves. By His mercy