



In essence, a house is nothing more than a place of shelter and refuge in which a person lives. Hence, in the past, homes were simple and often small structures, yet were open to family and guests alike, housing them happily and comfortably for as long as they required.

As time passed, however, houses ‘evolved’. Boundaries expanded, fences rose, rooms multiplied, floors were tiled and carpeted, walls were painted, gardens bloomed, pools sparkled, air conditioners were installed, and in general, everything ‘improved’.

Some of these improvements, such as appliances, led to more ease and a better “quality of life”. While improvements such as electric fencing led to increased security. Other improvements like painting, etc. fulfilled the purpose of making the home appear presentable e.g. painting the wall.

However, in the present context, there are certain features in people’s homes that are deliberately installed for the purpose of show and ostentation. The sole motive is to impress people - to woo them until they ‘Ooh!’ and ‘Aah!’ and the home becomes the talk of the town. In many instances “interior decorators” are hired at great cost – merely to “decorate” in elaborate style so that it is most “impressive”. Whether it is in the form of a ‘show’ kitchen (a kitchen that is not built to serve the function of a kitchen but rather to ‘show off’) or ornate chandeliers, or the exclusive imported table, etc. that are bought solely to impress people – it is condemned in Islam and will undoubtedly cause our home to be deprived of divine blessings.

Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) has explained in a hadeeth that it is sufficient for each member of the house to have one bed, while an extra bed should be kept for guests. Any additional bed that is kept for the purpose of show, ostentation and impressing people is for Shaitaan. (Saheeh Muslim #5452)

From this hadeeth, we understand that ostentation and showing off in our homes is pleasing to Shaitaan and displeasing to Allah Ta'ala. Hence, there is no harm in us making our homes comfortable – provided we are living within our means and are not involved in extravagance and other sins. However, we should not decorate our homes with the intention of impressing people. Doing so will earn the displeasure of Allah Ta'ala and cause our homes to be bereft of barakah (divine blessings), happiness and peace. If the barakah is lost, the end result will be what often happens – a fabulous and elaborate HOUSE which is anything but a HOME (a place of warmth, love, understanding and happiness).