

102260 - The view of the majority with regard to letting garments hang below the ankle (isbaal)

the question

I heard that the majority's opinion regarding Isbaal (wearing one's clothes below the ankle) is that it is makrouh; because of what Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him said and the prophet's answer to it when he (PBUH) said: "you are not one of them" meaning one of those who do Isbaal out of pride.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

If a man lets his garment hang down below the ankle with the intention of being conceited and showing off, this is haraam and there is no difference of scholarly opinion concerning that, rather it is a major sin.

In the answer to question no. [762](#) we have quoted some of the ahaadeeth which speak of the prohibition on that.

With regard to the one who lets his garment hang below his ankle with no intention of being conceited and showing off, the scholars differed in this case and there are three points of view: that it is haraam, that it is makrooh and that it is permissible and not makrooh.

The majority of scholars from the four madhhabs are of the view that it is not haraam. There follow some of the comments of the scholars from different madhhabs concerning that:

Ibn Muflih said in al-Adaab al-Shar'iyah (3/521):

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Abu Haneefah (may Allaah be pleased with him) wore an expansive rida' and let it drag on the ground. It was said to him: Are we not forbidden to do this? He said: That is for those who show off and we are not among them. End quote.

See: al-Fataawa al-Hindiyyah (5/333).

With regard to the Maalikis, some of them were of the view that it is haraam, such as Ibn al-'Arabi and al-Quraafi.

Ibn al-'Arabi said in 'Aaridat al-Ahwadhi (7/238):

It is not permissible for a man to let his garment go beyond his ankle and say that he is not being arrogant by doing so, because the text mentions the prohibition and refers to the reason, and it is not permissible for anyone to say I am not one of those referred to in the text, because the reason does not apply to me, because that attitude goes against sharee'ah and is an unacceptable claim. It is a kind of arrogance to make one's garment and izaar longer, so he is definitely lying. End quote.

Other Maalikis are of the view that it is makrooh and not haraam.

Al-Haafiz Ibn 'Abd al-Barr said in al-Tamheed (3/244):

This hadeeth indicates that the one who lets his garment drag for a reason other than pride and arrogance is not subject to the warning mentioned, but letting the izaar, chemise and any other garment drag is blameworthy in all cases. End quote.

It says in Haashiyat al-'Adawi (2/453):

There is a difference of opinion concerning that which comes lower than the ankles if it is not done out of arrogance. Al-Hattaab - a Maaliki scholar - concluded that it is not haraam, rather it is makrooh. Al-Tadhkirah - a book by Imam al-Quraafi - concluded that it is haraam.

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It seems that the most likely to be correct is the view that it is emphatically makrooh. End quote.

With regard to the Shaafa'is, they stated that it is not haraam unless it is done with the intention of showing off.

Imam al-Shaafa'i (may Allaah have mercy on him) said, as was quoted from him by al-Nawawi in al-Majmoo' (3/177): It is not permissible to let the garment hang low when praying or otherwise in order to show off. As for letting the garment hang low for reasons other than showing off when praying, it is not as serious, because of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said to Abu Bakr (may Allaah be pleased with him) when he told him that his izaar slipped down on one side: "You are not one of them (i.e., those who let the garment hang down out of pride)." End quote.

And al-Nawawi said in Sharh Muslim (14/62):

It is not permissible to let the garment hang down below the ankles if it is done in order to show off. If it is done for any other reason then it is makrooh. The apparent meaning of the ahaadeeth which limit it to letting the garment drag in order to show off indicates that it is haraam specifically when done to show off. This was stated by al-Shaafa'i who differentiated between different cases. End quote.

Some of the Shaafa'is - such as al-Dhahabi and al-Haafiz Ibn Hajar - were of the view that it is haraam.

Al-Dhahabi said in Siyar A'laam al-Nubala' (3/234), in response to the one who lets his garment hang below the ankle and says 'I am not doing that to show off':

You see him behaving in an arrogant manner and thinking of himself as not one of them (those who are arrogant), but this is a foolish notion. And you see him looking at a text that is general in meaning, and he limits its meaning on the basis of another, separate hadeeth, to conclude that it

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is only haraam when it is done in order to show off!

So he allows a concession based on the words of al-Siddeeq (Abu Bakr), who said: O Messenger of Allaah, my izaar slips down, and he said: “O Abu Bakr, you are not one of those who do that to show off.”

We say: Abu Bakr (may Allaah be pleased with him) did not tie his izaar in such a way that it hung below the ankles in the first place, rather he tied it so that it came above the ankle, but it slipped down after that.

And the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “The izaar of the believer should come to mid-calf, but it does not matter if it comes between (that point) and the ankle.” The same prohibition applies to the one who lets his trousers cover his ankles, or makes his sleeves too long. All of that is showing off which is deeply hidden in the psyche. End quote.

With regard to the Hanbalis, they stated that it is not haraam.

It says in al-Iqnaa’ (1/139):

It is makrooh for a man’s garment to come below his ankle unnecessarily. End quote.

Ibn Qudaamah said in al-Mughni (2/298): It is makrooh to let the chemise, izaar and trousers come below the ankle, and if he does that in order to show off then it is haraam. End quote.

Ibn Muflih said in al-Adaab al-Shar’iyyah (3/521):

Shaykh Taqiy al-Deen (Ibn Taymiyah – may Allaah have mercy on him) favoured the view that it is not haraam, but he did not mention whether it is makrooh or not. End quote.

See: Sharh al-‘Umdah by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (p. 361-362).

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Al-San'aani (may Allaah have mercy on him) was of the view that it is haraam, and he wrote a book concerning that entitled *Istifa' al-Aqwaal fi Tahreem al-Isbaal 'ala al-Rijaal*.

The view that it is haraam is the view favoured by most of our contemporary scholars, such as Shaykh Ibn Baaz, Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen, Shaykh Ibn Jibreen, Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan, the scholars of the Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas and others.

For more information, please see the answer to question no. [70491](#).

And Allaah knows best.