11886 - Are Women Allowed to Wear Gold Rings?

the question

Some of the women among us are confused because of the fatwa of the scholar Muhammad Naasir al-Deen al-Albaani, the muhaddith (hadith scholar) of Syria, in his book Adaab al-Zafaaf (The Etiquettes of Marriage and Wedding) concerning the prohibition of wearing gold rings in general.

There are women who have given up wearing them, and they describe the women who do wear them as being misguided and misguiding others.

What do you say about the wearing of gold rings in particular? We urgently need your evidence and fatwa, because the matter has gotten out of control. May Allah forgive you and increase you in abundance of knowledge.

Summary of answer

It is permissible for women to wear various kinds of adornment, of both silver and gold, of all types, such as necklaces, rings, bracelets, bangles, and everything that is worn on the neck and elsewhere, and everything that is ordinarily worn.

Detailed answer

Women are permitted to wear gold, in the form of rings and otherwise, because of the general meaning of the verse (interpretation of the meaning),

“(Like they then for Allah) a creature who is brought up in adornments (wearing silk and gold ornaments, i.e. women), and who in dispute cannot make herself clear?” [al-Zukhruf 43:18],

Where Allah mentions that wearing adornments is an attribute of women; this includes gold and other things. And Ahmad, Abu Dawud and al-Nasai narrated with a good chain of transmission from Amir al-Muminin ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib (may Allah be pleased with him) that

“These two [gold and silk] are forbidden for the males of my ummah.” Ibn Majah added in one narration, “and permitted for the females.”

It was narrated by Ahmad and al-Nasai, and by al-Tirmidhi who classed it as authentic, and by Abu Dawud, and by al-Hakim who classed it as authentic, and by al-Tabarani, and classed as authentic by Ibn Hazm, from Abu Musa al-Ash’ari (may Allah be pleased with him), that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

“Gold and silk have been permitted for the females of my ummah, and forbidden for the males.”

It was criticized for there being a gap [in the isnad] between Sa’id ibn Abi Hind and Abu Musa, but there is no reliable evidence for that. We have mentioned above those who classed it as authentic. Even if we assume that the criticism mentioned is valid, it is still supported by other sahih hadiths, as is the well-known principle among the imams of hadith.

This was the view of the scholars of the salaf. More than one of them narrated that there was consensus (ijma’) that it is permissible for women to wear gold. We will mention the views of some of them in order to make the matter more clear.

Al-Jassas said in his Tafsir (vol. 3, p. 388) in his discussion of gold: “The reports narrated from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and from the Sahabah stating that it is permitted for women are clearer and more well-known than the reports which suggest that it is not allowed. The evidence of the ayah [he is referring to the ayah which we have quoted above] also indicates that it is permissible for women.

The practice of women wearing jewellery has been widespread from the time of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the Companions until the present day, without anyone denouncing them for doing that. Such a widespread practice cannot be objected to on the grounds of some solitary reports.”

Ilkiya al-Harrasi said in Tafsir al-Quran (vol. 4, p. 391), in his commentary on the verse “a creature who is brought up in adornments” [al-Zukhruf 43:18 – interpretation of the meaning]:

“This indicates that jewellery is permissible for women. There is proven scholarly consensus (ijma’) on this point, and the reports concerning that are innumerable.”

Al-Bayhaqi said in al-Sunan al-Kubra (vol. 4, p. 142), when he mentioned some of the hadiths which indicate that gold and silk are permissible for women, without discussing the texts in detail:

“These and similar reports indicate that it is permissible for women to adorn themselves with gold. The fact that there is consensus that this is permissible for them indicates that the reports which indicate that it is haram for women have been abrogated.”

Al-Nawawi said in al-Majmu’ (vol. 6, p. 40):

“The Muslims are agreed that it is permissible for women to wear various kinds of adornment, of silver, gold and silk, by consensus, because of the authentic hadiths.”

He also said (vol. 6, p. 40):

“The Muslims are agreed that it is permissible for women to wear various kinds of adornment, of both silver and gold, of all types, such as necklaces, rings , bracelets, bangles, and everything that is worn on the neck and elsewhere, and everything that is ordinarily worn. There is no dispute on this matter at all.”

He said in his commentary on Sahih Muslim, in the chapter on the prohibition of gold rings for men, and the abrogation of their being permissible which had existed at the beginning of Islam:

“The Muslims are agreed that gold rings are permissible for women.”

Al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) said in his commentary on the hadith of al-Bara – “The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) forbade seven things, he forbade gold rings…” – (vol. 10, p. 317):

“The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) forbade gold rings, or making rings of gold, to men only , not women. It has been reported that there is scholarly consensus concerning their being permissible for women.”

The fact that gold is permitted for women in general, whether it is formed into rings or not, is proven by the two hadith quoted above, and by the comments of the scholars mentioned above, and by the scholarly consensus that the following hadiths are to be accepted:

- The hadith narrated by Abu Dawud and al-Nasai from ‘Amr ibn Shu’ayb from his father from his grandfather, that a woman came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) with a daughter of hers, on whose hand were two heavy bangles of gold. He said to her, “Do you pay zakah on these?” She said, “No.” He said, “Would you be happy if Allah were to give you two bracelets of fire on the Day of Resurrection because of these?” So she took them off and threw them to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), saying, “They are for Allah and His Messenger.” The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) explained to her the obligation to pay zakah on the two bangles mentioned, but he did not rebuke her for putting them on her daughter. This indicated that that is permissible, although they were formed into the shape of circles. The hadith is sahih and its isnad is jayyid, as was pointed out by al-Hafiz in al-Bulugh.
- 2 – It was narrated in Sunan Abi Dawud with a sahih isnad from ‘Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) that she said: “Some jewellery came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as a gift from the Negus (the ruler of Abyssinia), as a gift to him. It included a gold ring in which was set an Abyssinian stone. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) picked it up hesitantly with a stick or with his fingers, then he called Umamah the daughter of Abu’l-‘As and his daughter Zaynab. He said, ‘Adorn yourself with this, O my daughter.’” The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) gave a ring to Umamah, which was formed from a circle of gold, and said, “Adorn yourself with this.” This indicates that gold formed into a circle is permissible on the basis of this report.

Abu Dawud and al-Daraqutni narrated, and al-Hakim classed as sahih, as stated in Bulugh al-Maram, a report from Umm Salamah (may Allah be pleased with her) that she used to wear anklets of gold. She said, “O Messenger of Allah, is this kanz (stored wealth)?” He said, “If you pay the zakah on it, it is not kanz.”

With regard to the hadiths which appear to forbid women wearing gold, they are shadhdh (“odd”), and contradict those which are more sahih and stronger. The imams of hadith have stated that what is said in the hadiths with jayyid isnads but goes against hadiths which are more sahih, and they cannot be reconciled, and the chronology is not known, such reports are to be regarded as shadhdh (“odd”) and unreliable, and they are not to be followed. Al-Hafiz al-'Iraqi (may Allah have mercy on him) said in al-Alfiyyah:

“An odd report is one in which a trustworthy person says something which goes against the majority.

Al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar said in al-Nukhbah:

“If it is contradicted by something that is more correct, then the correct report should be adopted and the one that contradicts it is odd.”

They also stated that the condition for a sahih hadith to be accepted is that it should not be shadhdh (odd). There is no doubt that the hadiths which state that gold is haram for women, even if we accept that their isnads are free of faults, cannot be reconciled with the sahih hadiths which indicate that gold is permissible for females, when we do not know which reports came first. So they have to be regarded as shadhdh and not sahih, following this shar’i principle which is accepted by the scholars. What our brother ‘Allamah Shaykh Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani has mentioned in his book Adab al-Zafaf, reconciling these reports with the hadiths which permit (gold to women) by interpreting the prohibition as applying to gold formed into circles and the permission as applying to other kinds of jewellery, is not correct and is not in accordance with the hadiths which indicate that gold is permitted, because the hadiths permit rings , which are in the form of a circle, and they permit bangles, which are in the form of a circle. So what we have mentioned becomes clear. Moreover the hadiths which indicate that gold is permitted are general and are not restricted in meaning. So we must follow them because they are general in meaning and because their isnads are sahih. This is supported by the reports narrated by a group of the scholars that there was consensus that the hadiths which indicate that gold is forbidden were abrogated, as we have quoted from them above. This is the truth beyond a doubt. Hence confusion may be dispelled and the ruling of shari’ah becomes

clear: there is no doubt that gold is permitted to the females of this ummah and is forbidden to the males. And Allah is the Source of strength. Praise be to Allah the Lord of the Worlds, and may Allah send blessings and peace upon our Prophet Muhammad and his family and Companions.

Source: *Majmu' Fatawa wa Maqalat Sh. Ibn Baz 6/440*

And Allah knows best.