

2564 - Reading Qur'aan during menses

the question

Is it permissible to read Quran while a women is having mensus (periods)?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

This is one of the issues on which the scholars, may Allaah have mercy on them, differed.

The majority of fuqahaa' say that it is haraam for a woman to recite Qur'aan during her period, until she is taahir (pure) again. The only exceptions they make is in the case of dhikr (remembrance of Allaah) and phrases that are not intended as tilaawah (recitation), such as saying "Bismillaahi'r-Rahmaani'r-Raheem" or "Innaa Lillaahi wa innaa ilayhi raaji'oon", or other phrases from the Qur'aan which are repeated as general du'aa's.

They base their evidence for forbidding menstruating women to recite Qur'aan on several things, including the following:

1. Menstruation is seen as coming under the rulings that apply to one who is junub (in a state of impurity following sexual intercourse), because both states require ghusl. This is based on the hadeeth narrated by 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib (may Allaah be pleased with him), according to which the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) used to teach the Qur'aan and he never prevented anyone from learning it except those who were in a state of janaabah (impurity)."

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(Reported by Abu Dawood, 1/281; al-Tirmidhi, 146; al-Nisaa'i, 1/144; Ibn Maajah, 1/207; Ahmad, 1/84; Ibn Khuzaymah [??], 1/104. Al-Tirmidhi said: a saheeh hasan hadeeth. Al-Haafiz ibn Hajar said: the truth is that it is the type of hasan hadeeth that could be used as evidence).

The hadeeth of Ibn 'Umar (may Allaah be pleased with them both), according to which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "The menstruating woman and the one who is in a state of impurity (janaabah) should not recite anything of the Qur'aan."

(Reported by al-Tirmidhi, 131; Ibn Maajah, 595; al-Daaraqutni (1/117); al-Bayhaqi, 1/89. This is a da'eef hadeeth, because it was reported by Ismaa'eel ibn 'Ayyaash from the Hijaazis, and his reports from them are da'eef as is well known to those who are conversant with the study of hadeeth. Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah said (21/460): it is a da'eef hadeeth by the unanimous agreement of the scholars of hadeeth. See Nasb al-Raayah, 1/195; al-Talkhees al-Habeer, 1/183).

Some scholars say that it is permitted for a menstruating woman to recite Qur'aan. This is the opinion of Maalik, and one opinion narrated from Ahmad, which Ibn Taymiyah preferred and which al-Shawkaani believed to be correct. The scholars based the following points on this opinion:

1. The principle is that things are allowed and permitted unless there is evidence to the contrary. There is no such evidence to say that a menstruating woman is not allowed to recite Qur'aan. Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah said: "There is no clear, saheeh text to indicate that a menstruating woman is forbidden to recite Qur'aan... It is known that women used to menstruate at the time of the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), and he did not forbid them to recite Qur'aan, or to remember Allaah (dhikr) and offer du'aa'."
2. Allaah, may He be glorified and exalted, commands (Muslims) to recite Qur'aan. He praises the one who does so, and promises him (or her) a great reward. No one is excluded from this

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except the one concerning whom there is solid evidence (daleel), and there is no such evidence in the case of menstruating women, as stated above.

3. The analogy between the menstruating woman and the one who is in a state of janaabah is made despite the fact that there are differences between them. The one who is in a state of janaabah has the option of removing the “barrier” by making ghusl, unlike the menstruating woman. A woman’s period usually lasts for some length of time, whereas the person who is in a state of janaabah is required to do ghusl when the time for prayer comes.
4. Preventing a menstruating woman from reciting Qur’aan deprives her of the chance to earn reward, and it may make her forget something of the Qur’aan, or she may need to recite it for the purposes of teaching or learning.

From the above, it is clear that the evidence of those who allow a menstruating woman to recite Qur’aan is stronger. If a woman wants to err on the side of caution, she can limit her recitation to the passages which she is afraid of forgetting.

It is very important to note that what we have been discussing here is restricted to what a menstruating woman recites from memory. When it comes to reading from the Mus-haf (the Arabic text itself), a different rule applies. The correct view of the scholars is that it is forbidden to touch the mus-haf when one is in any kind of state of impurity, because Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): “... which none can touch except the purified.” [al-Waaqi’ah 56:79]. In a letter to ‘Amr ibn Hazm, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) told the people of Yemen: “No one should touch the Qur’aan except one who is taahir (pure).”

(Reported by Maalik, 1/199; al-Nisaa’i, 8/57; Ibn Hibbaan, 793; al-Bayhaqi, 1/87. Al-Haafiz ibn Hajar said: A group of scholars classed this hadeeth as saheeh because it is so well known. Al-Shaafi’i

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said: It is proven by them that it was a letter sent by the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him). Ibn 'Abd al-Barr said: "This letter is famous among the scholars of seerah, and is so well known among the scholars that it does not need an isnaad. It is like tawaatur because the people accepted and recognized it. Shaykh al-Albani said that its is saheeh. Al-Talkhees al-Habeer, 4/17. See also: Nasb al-Raayah, 1/196; Irwaa' al-Ghaleel, 1/158).

(Haashiyat Ibn 'Aabideen, 1/159; al-Majmoo', 1/356; Kashshaaf al-Qinaa', 1/147; al-Mughni, 3/461; Nayl al-Awtaar, 1/226; Majmoo' al-Fataawaa, 21/460; al-Sharh al-Mumti' li'l-Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen, 1/291)

And Allaah knows best.