

39186 - Ruling on a woman performing the adhaan

the question

What is the ruling on a woman performing the adhaan for men?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allaah.

For fourteen hundred years the custom among the Muslims has been that the adhaan has not been performed by anyone except men. This alone should be sufficient evidence that women are not allowed to perform the adhaan for men. Going against this is going against the way of the believers. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And whoever contradicts and opposes the Messenger (Muhammad) after the right path has been shown clearly to him, and follows other than the believers’ way, We shall keep him in the path he has chosen, and burn him in Hell — what an evil destination!”

[al-Nisa’ 4:115]

The matter would be too clear to need any evidence or argument, were it not for the fact that there are people whose eyes have been sealed by Allaah and who are arguing about matters that should be regarded as firmly-established aspects of this religion.

The evidence for that from the Sunnah is as follows:

1 - al-Bukhaari (604) and Muslim (377) narrated that Ibn ‘Umar (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: When the Muslims came to Madeenah, they used to gather and wait for the prayer, and there was no call for the prayer. One day they spoke about that and some of them said, “Let us use a bell like the bell of the Christians.” Others said, “No, let us use a horn like the horn of the Jews.”

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'Umar said, "Why don't you send a man to give the call to prayer?" The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, "O Bilaal, get up and call the people to prayer."

This hadeeth indicates that the decision of the Sahaabah was that no one should give the call to prayer except men, and there is no room for women to do that, because 'Umar said, "Why don't you send a man to give the call to prayer?"

2 - al-Bukhaari (684) and Muslim (421) narrated from Sahl ibn Sa'd al-Saa'idi (may Allaah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Whoever notices anything amiss during the prayer, let him say tasbeeh, for if he does so it will be noticed; and clapping is only for women."

al-Haafiz said:

It is as if women are not allowed to say tasbeeh because they are enjoined to keep their voices low in prayer at all times, because of the fear of fitnah. End quote.

If women are forbidden to alert the imam by speaking if he makes a mistake, and should clap instead, so that they will not raise their voices in the presence of men, then how can it be allowed for a woman to give the adhaan?

The scholars are agreed that it is not prescribed for women to give the adhaan for men. There follow some of their comments on this topic:

It says in Badaa'i' al-Sanaa'i' (1/411) (Hanafi):

It is not allowed for a woman to give the adhaan, according to all the reports.

It says in Mawaahib al-Jaleel (2/87) (Maaliki):

The adhaan of a woman is not valid. End quote.

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Al-Shaafa'i said in al-Umm (1/84):

A woman should not give the call to prayer, and if she gives the adhaan for men, her adhaan is not valid (and they should repeat it). End quote.

It says in al-Insaaf (1/395) (Hanbali):

The adhaan of a woman is not valid. End quote.