

Islam Question & Answer

General Supervisor:
Shaykh Muhammad Saalih al-Munajjid

75879 - Attending prayers in congregation in a mosque where women are uncovered when doing wudoo'

the question

In our Muslim country at most of the masajid here, when I go for prayer I see some women who enter the masjid after they take off their shoes in front of men. Also when they make wudu' they fold their sleeves up and uncover a part of their lower legs and stand beside men for wudu'. What should I do? Shall I pray at home and stop going to the masjid? Especially that we are young men and have strong desires.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allaah.

Attending prayers in congregation with the Muslims is obligatory, as we have stated in many answers. See no. [8918](#) and [120](#). You should strive to pray in congregation in a mosque in which the call to prayer is given and you should try to do wudoo' in your house or place of work. If you have to do wudoo' in the mosque, then you should lower your gaze and try to keep away from places where women are, because Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Tell the believing men to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts). That is purer for them”

[al-Noor 24:30]

We also advise believing women to fear Allaah with regard to coming to the mosque. They should realize that they are coming to a place that is one of the noblest places on earth to perform an act of worship that is one of the greatest acts of worship. So it is not befitting for them to disobey their Lord by uncovering that which He has commanded them to cover, and it is not right for her to

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crowd with men in the place where they do wudoo'. If they cannot find a place to do wudoo' then they should pray in their homes and that is better for them and brings a greater reward, as it says in Sunan Abi Dawood (570) and elsewhere. It was narrated from 'Abd-Allaah ibn Mas'ood (may Allaah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "A woman's prayer in her house is better than her prayer in her courtyard, and her prayer in her cabinet is better than her prayer in her courtyard." Classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh Abi Dawood.

It says in 'Awn al-Ma'bood:

"A woman's prayer in her house" means the inner room, as it is more concealing. "Is better than her prayer in her courtyard" refers to the area inside the (traditional Arabic) house onto which all the doors of the house open, which is less concealing than the inner room. And "and her prayer in her cabinet" this refers to a small room inside a large house, in which she keeps her precious things such.

"better than her prayer in her house" because a woman should be concealed as much as possible.

In Sunan al-Tirmidhi (1173) it is narrated from 'Abd-Allaah ibn Mas'ood (may Allaah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Woman is 'awrah and when she goes out the Shaytaan gets his hopes up (of tempting her and tempting others by her)."

Ibn Khuzaymah (1686) and al-Tabaraani (9481) added: "And she is never closer to the Countenance of Allaah than when she is in the innermost part of her house."

Classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in al-Silsilah al-Saheehah (2688).

It is not permissible for a Muslim woman to annoy the Muslims by uncovering that which Allaah has enjoined her to cover of her arms and legs. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

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“O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks (veils) all over their bodies (i.e. screen themselves completely except the eyes or one eye to see the way). That will be better, that they should be known (as free respectable women) so as not to be annoyed. And Allaah is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful”

[al-Ahzaab 33:59]

She should not crowd with men in their places, or annoy them by mixing with them in a manner that is not permissible or that will cause them hardship.

Abu Dawood (5272) narrated from Hamzah ibn Abi Usayd al-Ansaari that he heard the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) say, as he was leaving the mosque, and men were mixing with women in the street, the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said to the women: “Draw back, and do not walk in the middle of the road; keep to the sides of the road.” Then the women used to keep so close to the walls that their garments would catch on the walls because they kept so close to them. Classed as hasan by al-Albaani in Saheeh Abi Dawood.

If this is the ruling with regard to walking in the street, when a women is observing complete hijab and wrapping her clothes around her properly, then how about in the case of wudoo’, when the calves and forearms are uncovered?

To sum up: You should avoid places of fitnah and mixing as much as you can, and choose for yourself the mosque where it is least likely that women go or uncover their ‘awrahs there. Try to do wudoo’ in your house, and avoid places of fitnah.

And Allaah knows best.