12451 - Where Should a Woman Leading Other Women Stand?

the question

Although the woman's prayer is best in her house, does she get the same reward as men for praying in congregation, at home or in the masjid? Does she also get that 27 times the reward for praying on her own in her house?

What is the evidence for women leading other women in prayer, and that the imam stands in the same row, and not ahead like the men?

Summary of answer

If women pray in congregation, then the one who is leading them should stand in the middle of the row, because that is more concealing, and a woman is required to cover as much as possible.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Is it better for women to pray at home?

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymin said: “The Sunnah indicates that it is better for a woman to pray at home , no matter where she is, whether she is in Makkah or elsewhere. Hence the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Do not prevent the female slaves of Allah from coming to the mosques of Allah, but their houses are better for them.”

He said that when he was in Madinah, even though prayer in the Prophet’s Mosque brings more reward, because a woman’s prayer in her own house is more covering for her and farther removed from temptation (fitnah), so if she is in her house then this is preferable and is better.” (See al-Fatawa al-Jami’ah li’l-Mar-ah al-Muslimah, vol. 1, p. 207)

The multiplied reward for praying in congregation applies only to men. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said to a woman, “I know that you like to pray with me… but your prayer in your house is better for you than your praying in the mosque of your people…” This hadith was narrated by Ahmad (Musnad, Baqi al-Ansar, 25842; classed as hasan by al-Albani in Sahih al-Targhib wa’l-Tarhib, no. 337)

Where should a woman leading other women stand?

Ibn Qudamah said: “It is Sunnah, when a woman wants to lead other women in prayer , for her to stand in the middle of the row in all cases, because they are `awrah.” (Al-Mughni, vol. 1, p. 347)

Al-Nawawi said: “The Sunnah is for a woman who is leading other women in prayer to stand in the middle of the row, because of the reports which state that `Aishah and Umm Salamah led other women and they stood in the midst of them.” (Al-Majmu’ Sharh al-Muhadhdab, vol. 4, p. 192)

If women pray in congregation , then the one who is leading them should stand in the middle of the row, because that is more concealing, and a woman is required to cover as much as possible.

It is known that if a woman stands in the midst of other women it is more concealing than if she were to stand in front of them. The evidence for that is the reports which were narrated from `Aishah and Umm Salamah (may Allah be pleased with them), “When a woman leads other women in prayer, she should stand in the middle of them.” This was the action of the female Companions, and the more correct view is that this action of the female Companions is to be taken as proof because there is no text narrated to the contrary. If a woman is leading one other woman in prayer, she should stand as a man stands with one other man.” (See al-Sharh al-Mumti’ by Ibn ‘Uthaymin, vol. 4, p. 387)

For more, please see this answer: 13757 .

And Allah knows best.