

# AN EASILY AVOIDABLE MISTAKE SOME LADIES MAKE IN THEIR PRAYERS

*In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Ever Merciful...*

It happens that some ladies neglect the issue of covering the feet properly for prayer, while it is an issue which leads to prayer being invalid and unaccepted, according to the majority of Islam's scholars.

**Sometimes we underestimate the priority of an issue, and sometimes that can have very serious consequences!**

Allah, the Exalted and Most High, commands us to tell the believing women to cover themselves fully with their modest garments. He says:

﴿وَقُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَرِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا ط  
وَلِيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَى جُيُوبِهِنَّ﴾ [التُّور : ٣١]

**"And say to the believing women that they are to lower their gazes and protect their private parts, and they are not to expose their beauty, except for what is apparent of it, and they must cover their bodies with their khimaars..." (24:31)**

**"Except for what is apparent of it,"** refers to the face and the hands, according to Ibn 'Abbaas and the majority of the scholars.(1)

And Allah, the Most High, says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لَأَزُوجِكَ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَاءِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلَابِيبِهِنَّ  
ذَلِكَ أَدْنَىٰ أَنْ يُعْرَفْنَ فَلَا يُؤْذَيْنَ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ﴿٥٩﴾﴾ [الْحَزَاب]

**"O you Prophet! Tell your wives, daughters, and the [other] women among the believers to cover themselves [fully] with their *jilbaabs* (modest garments). This is so they could be recognized and not harmed. Allah is Oft Forgiving and Ever Merciful." (33:59)**

In these Verses, Allah commands ladies to wear *hijaab*, mentioning specifically the *khimaar* and *jilbaab*, which are modest garments worn to cover the entire body, from head to toe.

This is required when they are out in public, in situations visible to men not part of their immediate family, or in prayer. The 31st Verse of *Soorah an-Noor*, quoted previously, goes on to list the close family members around whom a woman does not need to cover completely.

As for during prayer, the Messenger of Allah (may Allah raise his rank and grant him peace) said:

«لَا يَقْبَلُ اللَّهُ صَلَاةَ حَائِضٍ إِلَّا بِخِمَارٍ.»

**"Allah does not accept the prayer of adult lady not dressed in a *khimaar*."(2)**

It is reported that **Umm Salamah**, the Mother of the Believers (may Allah be pleased with her), was asked about what a lady needs to wear when she prays. She replied:

"نُصَلِّي فِي الْخِمَارِ وَالذَّرْعِ السَّابِغِ إِذَا غَيَّبَ ظُهُورَ قَدَمَيْهَا."

"She prays in a *khimaar* and a long garment which covers over her feet."(3)

**Shaykh Ibn Baaz** (may Allah have Mercy on him) said:

"لَا تُقْبَلُ صَلَاتُهَا إِلَّا بِخِمَارٍ، يَعْنِي سَاتِرٍ، فَلَا بُدَّ مِنْ سِتْرِ شَعْرِهَا كُلِّهِ، وَبَدَنِهَا كُلِّهِ فِي الصَّلَاةِ،  
حَتَّى أَقْدَامَهَا تَسْتُرُهَا، إِمَّا بِالْجَوَارِبِ، أَوْ بِالثَّوْبِ السَّاتِرِ الْمُرْتَحِي الَّذِي يَسْتُرُ قَدَمَيْهَا."

"Her prayer is not accepted without being dressed in a *khimaar*, meaning: which is fully covering. So she must cover her hair, entirely, as well as her entire body during prayer. **She must even cover her feet**, either with socks or with a long garment that hangs low enough to cover her feet."(4)

The majority of the scholars consider the prayer of a lady with her feet exposed to be **invalid**, with the exception of some incidental exposure of the bottoms of her feet in prostrations.

**What about *qadhaa'* (repeating the prayer after covering the feet)?**

- **Regarding a lady who is incapable of covering** (completely) because she does not have access to enough clothing, or because she is in prison and prevented from covering fully, or because of winds that blow her garments in a way that exposes her in the prayer, or any other excuse which is outside of her control, then she has fulfilled her duty, and no *qadhaa'* or anything further is required from her.
- **When capable of covering, regarding a prayer that was just offered** in such a way (with the feet exposed), a lady is to be told to repeat the prayer, as it was invalid.
- **Regarding prayers offered in the past**, the times of which have ended, then hopefully Allah would excuse what was done in the past because of ignorance of the ruling, and Allah knows best.
- **Regarding a lady who knows this ruling, but neglects this issue intentionally**, then may Allah aid her in fulfilling genuine repentance and in overcoming whatever has led to such disastrous neglect in her worship of Allah. She should fear Allah and be afraid that a small matter of easily correctable negligence leads to great loss on the Day of Judgment. She should seriously consider that the first matter of all her deeds she will be questioned about on the Day of Judgment is incorrect and invalid with her Creator, and then all the rest of her deeds would all be similar, and this she would be absolutely ruined on the Day of Reckoning!

The Prophet (may Allah raise his rank and grant him peace) said:

«إِنَّ أَوَّلَ مَا يُحَاسَبُ بِهِ الْعَبْدُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مِنْ عَمَلِهِ الصَّلَاةُ،  
فَإِنْ صَلَحَتْ فَقَدْ أَفْلَحَ وَأَنْجَحَ، وَإِنْ فَسَدَتْ فَقَدْ خَابَ وَخَسِرَ.»

"Indeed, the first of a worshipper's actions he/she will be questioned about on the Day of Judgment is the prayer. If it is sound, he/she is successful and triumphant. If it is corrupt, he/she fails and loses."(5)

In another hadeeth:

«أَوَّلُ مَا يُحَاسَبُ بِهِ الْعَبْدُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ الصَّلَاةُ،  
فَإِنْ صَلَحَتْ صَلَحَ لَهُ سَائِرُ عَمَلِهِ، وَإِنْ فَسَدَتْ فَسَدَ سَائِرُ عَمَلِهِ.»

**"The first thing a worshipper will be questioned about on the Day of Judgment is the prayer. If it is sound, all of the rest of his/her deeds will be sound. If it is corrupt, all the rest of his/her deeds will be corrupt."**(6)

So being that this issue is an easy one to correct, let us fear Allah and be more diligent in our worship, so our sworn enemy does not lead us into ruin and destruction in the Hereafter with an issue so easily correctable!

### **What about that "minority" opinion held by some scholars?**

While there is a position among a minority of the scholars that the woman's feet are not required to be covered in prayer, ask yourself the following questions in all sincerity:

- When Allah has commanded me to cover myself fully, how certain am I that **HE**, the Lofty and Exalted, has exempted my feet from this command?
- Am I upon clear, doubt-free evidence that **ALLAH HIMSELF** has exempted my feet from His Command to cover my body?
- Am I comfortable offering a prayer that the **majority** of Muslim scholars throughout history would classify as **invalid**?
- How important is it to me to stick to such a position when covering my feet is so easy; something that would remove me from an issue of differing over such a serious matter of such potentially disastrous results?

May Allah grant us success in worshipping Him in the best way, and may He forgive us and all the believing men and women.

And Allah knows best.

*Written by: Moosaa Richardson (1447.06.06)*

### **FOOTNOTES:**

(1) *Tafseer* of Ibn Katheer (24:31)

(2) As narrated by 'Aa'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) and collected by Ahmad, Aboo Daawood, at-Tirmitheer, Ibn Maajah, and others; authenticated in *Irwa' al-Ghaleel* (196).

(3) Collected by Maalik in his *al-Muwatta'* and Aboo Daawood.

(4) As found on the shaykh's official website

(5) As narrated by Aboo Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) and collected by Aboo Daawood, at-Tirmitheer, and Ibn Maajah; authenticated in *Saheeh Sunan Abee Daawood* (no.810-812)

(6) Collected by at-Tabaraanee in his *al-Mujam al-Owsat*. See: *Silsilat al-Ahaadeeth as-Saheehah* (no.1358).