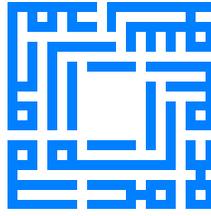




**Advanced Level Topics of Study for:  
Women's Prayer Method (Hanafi)**



## The Method for Women's Prayer According to the Hanafi Madhab

We learn in the light of Quran & authentic Sunnah that there are minor differences in the salah of males and females. However, if one relies on the practice of Umm ud-Dardaa as a proof for women to pray exactly like men, that is unsubstantiated for several reasons. Few of the strong evidences are mentioned below.

Ibn Abi Shaybah narrates: "Makhul reports that Umm ud-Dardaa used to sit like males in Salah." (al-Musannafl-Ibn Abi Shaybah: vol. 1 p 270)

(Imam Bukhari has also quoted this statement. However, he has not mentioned any chain of narrators for it. It is for this reason I have quoted the work of Ibn Abi Shaybah)

It is incorrect to use this athar for the following reasons:

**1.** Hafizh Jamaal ud-Din Yusuf al-Mizzi has mentioned her among the Taabi'in. (Tahzheeb al-Kamaal fi-Asmaa ir-Rijal: vol.22 p 464). The practice of a lone tabi'i is incorrect to adopt even if it may not be contrary to the principles.

Hafiz Ibn Hajar Asqalaani states in Fath ul-Baari: "The practice of a lone Tabi'i, even though it may not contradict any principle, will not be used as proof." (Fath ul-Baari: vol. 2 p 243)

Hafizh Ibn Hajar has only counted her among the Taabi'in. He says: "It can be realised from the narration of Makhul that that narration refers to the younger Umm ud-Dardaa, the Tabi'iyah, not the elder sahabiyyah because Makhulmet the former not the latter." (Ibid)

**2.** Even if it accepted that she was a Sahabiyyah, then the narration becomes munqati' and will not be acceptable according to the principles of the Muhaddithin. It will also be regarded as her opinion. She did not encourage anyone else to follow her practice. Neither did she present any action or statement of Rasulullah nor the fatwa of any Khalifah.

Accordingly, with regard to the salah of women, the position of this opinion in the face of the practically adopted method of the ummah (tawaatur) is like the position of shaazqira'a has opposed to mutawaatir qira'ah. It is very clear that no muslim leaves the mutawaatir qira'ah for the shaazqira'ah.

3. Furthermore, if one examines the words of this narration carefully, it supports the view of the majority. The sitting posture of Umm ud-Dardaa has been compared to the posture of males in this narration which infers that the posture of the other Sahaabiyyaat was different as mentioned previously.

4. Imam Abu Ja'far at-Tahaawi rahimahullah has narrated the following hadith: "Ibrahim Abi Abalah reports that he saw Umm ud-Dardaa performing Salah cross-legged" (Tuhfat al-Akhyarbi-Tarteebi SharhMushkil al-Aathaar li-Abi Ja'farat-Tahaawi: vol. 2 p 338, and Hafizh Mizzi has narrated this atharin Tahzheeb al-Kamaal: vol. 22 p 468)

This narration contradicts the one mentioned by Ibn Abi Shaybah rahimahullah. It will accordingly not remain worthy of substantiating any Shar'i law.

In another narration of Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah (vol. 1 p270), one finds the following words: Ibrahim said: "A woman should sit in salah as a man does. "This quotation indicates permissibility." But this doesn't mean that a woman should do so as a man does in salah.

#### **Chapter 4 – Proofs from Prophetic Hadiths**

Imam Bayhaqi has mentioned a principle which is the basis of the differences found in the salah of males and females.

He says: "The separating factor between the laws of salah of males and females is that of concealment . A woman is commanded to do all those actions which are more concealing for her." (as-Sunan al-Kubra alil-Bayhaqi: vol. 2 p 222)

#### **RAISING THE HANDS**

Hafidh Nur ud-Din Haythami states: Wa'il ibn Hujr states that Rasulullah said to him, "O Ibn Hujr, when you perform salah, raise your hands till your ears while a woman should raise her hands till her chest ." (Majma' uz-Zawaa'id: vol. 2 p 103, and I'laa us-Sunan: vol. 2 p 156)

Imam Abu Bakr Ibn Abi Shaybah narrates: "Abd Rabbih Ibn Zaytun said that he saw Umm ud-Dardaa raising her hands parallel to her shoulders when beginning salah." (al-Musannaf li-Ibn Abi Shaybah: vol. 1 p 239)

Ibn Abi Shaybah has also narrated: "Ataa was asked how a woman should raise her hands in salah. He replied that she should raise them till her breast." (Ibid)

Based at Makkah, Ataa [the great Follower (tabi`i) and imam] used to issue this fatwa.

Ibn Abi Shaybah narrates: "Hammad ibn Salamah al-Basri used to say that a woman should raise her hands parallel to her breast when beginning salah." (Ibid)

Hammad was based at Kufa and he used to issue this fatwa. The narration of Ibn Jurayj has been mentioned as follows: Ibn Jurayj said, "I asked Ataa whether a woman should gesture with her hands like a male when making takbir. Ataa replied that she should not raise her hands like a male. Then he practically indicated with his hands how it should be done by lowering his hands and drawing them very close to his body. Then he said, "In the raising of the hands, a woman is unlike a man . And if she leaves that, there is no harm."

The Muslim Ummah continued this practice over the centuries. Imam Zuhri used to issue the same fatwa in Madinah al-Munawwarah.

## **PLACING THE HANDS**

Allamah Abdul-Hayy Luckhnawi writes: "As for women, the jurists are unanimous that it is sunnah for them to place their hands on their bosoms." (as-Si'aayah: vol. 2 p 152) There is ijmaa' on this issue.

## **SAJDAH**

Imam Abu Dawud has narrated the following hadith in his Maraaseel: (Arabic text)

Translation: "Yazid ibn Abi Habib states that Rasulullah passed by two women who were performing their salah. He said to them, "When you prostrate, then make the parts of your body touch the ground because a woman is unlike a man in these aspects." (Maraaseel Abi Dawud p 118; and its like in as-Sunan al-Kubra alil- Bayhaqi: vol. 2 p 223)

Imam Bayhaqi narrates the following hadith: Abdullah Ibn Umar reports that Rasulullah said, "When a woman sits during salah, she should place her one thigh over the other and when she prostrates, she must attach the stomach to her thighs so that is more concealing for her. Indeed, Allah looks at her and tells the angels, "O My angels! Bear witness hat I have forgiven her." (as-Sunan al-Kubra alil-Bayhaqi: vol. 2 p 223)

Imam Abu Bakr Ibn Abi Shaybah narrates the following statement of Ali: "It is reported that Ali said: "When a woman performs salah, she must practise ihtifaaz and keep her thighs close together." (al-Musannaf li-Ibn Abi Shaybah: vol. 1 p 270 and it has been taken many ways, Abdur-Razzaq has taken it from Isra'il from Abu Is'haq from Harith from Ali and Ibn Abi Shaybah took it from Abul-Ahwas from Abu Is'haq and Bayhaqi took it from Abul-Ahwas, with the mentioned sanad)

Imam Abdur-Razzaq has quoted the following hadith in his Musannaf: Ali says, "When a woman prostrates, she must practise ihtifaz and keep her thighs close to her stomach." (al-Musannaf li-Abdir-Razzaq: vol. 3 p 138)

"Ihtifaaz": to lean on one side and rest on the posterior. (See Lugaat al-Hadith: vol. 1 p 98) The following narration has been quoted by Bayhaqi: "Ali said: "When a woman

performs sajdah she must keep her thighs close together." (as-Sunan al-Kubra alil-Bayhaqi: vol. 2 p 222)

The following narration appears in Kanz ul-Ummal: "Ibn Umar states that when a woman prostrates, she must let her stomach touch her thighs in order to make herself completely concealed." (Kanz ul-Ummal: vol. 4 p 117)

Imam Ibn Abi Shaybah narrates: "Ibrahim says that when a woman prostrates she should join her thighs to her stomach without raising her posterior and without stretching her limbs out like a male." (al-Musannaf li-Ibn Abi Shaybah: vol. 1 p 270)

The following words have been narrated by Ibrahim Nakha'i: "Ibrahim said that when a woman prostrates she must draw her thighs inwards and place her stomach on them." (Ibid)

Mujaahid: "Muhaahid used to dislike that a man attach his stomach to his thighs as a woman does." (Ibid)

Hasan al-Basri: "Hishaam reports from Hasan who says that woman should draw herself closely together in sajdah." (Ibid)

Imam Abdur-Razzaq narrates: Ibrahim says, "A woman used to be commanded to place her arm and her stomach on her thigh when she goes into sajdah and not to spread her limbs out as a male does so that her buttocks are not raised." (al-Musannaf li-Abdir-Razzaq: vol. 3 p 138)

Allamah Muhammad Taahir al-Gujaraati narrates: "When a lady performs salah, she must contract herself when she sits down and when she goes into sajdah and she must not spread her limbs out." (Majma' Bihar l-Anwaar: vol. 1 p 521)

Based on these narrations, the Fuqahaa have issued the following ruling: "A woman should contract herself in sajdah and join her stomach to her thighs because this is more concealing for her." (al-Hidaayah: vol. 1 p 53)

## **THE SITTING POSITION**

It is mentioned in the Musnad of Imam Abu Hanifah rahimahullah: "Abdullah ibn Umar was asked how women performed their salah during the era of Rasulullah. He replied that initially they performed tarabbu'. Then they were ordered to themselves close together and lean onto one side by resting on their left buttocks and completely contracting themselves." (Jaami' ul-Masaaneed: vol. 1 p 400)

Taraabu' is to sit cross legged. This narration indicates that initially the women sat in the position of tarabbu' but this command was later abrogated and they were ordered to draw themselves close together and lean onto one side by resting on their left buttocks and completely contracting themselves.

Sheikh Abu'l-Wafaa Afghaani writes: "This is the most authentic narration of this chapter i.e. the sitting position of women . It is for this reason that Imam Abu Hanifah has made it the basis of his madh'hab." (Ta'leeqash-Sheikh Abul-Wafaa Afghaani ala Kitab il-Aathaar lil-Imam Muhammad ash-Shaybaani: vol. 1 p 208)

Abu Bakr Ibn Abi Shaybah narrates: When Ibn Abbas was asked about the Salah of a woman, he replied, "She must draw herself close together and lean onto one side by resting on her left buttock." (al-Musannaf li-Ibn Abi Shaybah: vol. 1 p270)

In another narration of Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah (vol . 1 p270), one finds the following words: (Arabic text)

Translation: Ibrahim said: "A woman should sit in salah as a man does." This quotation indicates permissibility.

The following narration is also quoted by Ibn Abi Shaybah: Khalid ibn Lajlaaj said that women were commanded with tarabbu' when they sat in salah and they should not sit like men on their buttocks. That is in order that nothing happens." (al-Musannaf li-Ibn Abi Shaybah: vol. 1 p 270)

The Fuqahaa took these narrations into consideration and delivered the following ruling: "A woman should sit on her left buttock and position her legs out on her right hand side because that is more concealing for her." (al-Hidaayah: vol. 1 p 55)

The above narrations indicate that Ibrahim Nakha'i used to issue the fatwa in Kufain accordance with this practise, while in Madinah Mujhaahiddid likewise as did Hasan Basri in Basrah.

These ahaadith and aathaar clearly indicate that the salah of females differs from that of males

## **Chapter 5 – What the Fuqaha Say**

### **The Hanafi Madh-hab**

Allaamah Muhammad Amin Ibn Abidin as-Shami rahimahullah: "A woman should not raise her hands till her shoulders. She should not take her hands out of her sleeves. She should place one palm over the other on her breast . She should bend only slightly in ruku'. She will not spread her fingers out in ruku' but rather keep them close together and place her palms on her knees without clasping them. She should bend her knees slightly. She should contract herself in ruku' and sajdah. She should place her arms flat on the ground. She should sit with her legs out and resting on her posterior in tashahhud. In tashahud she should keep her fingers close together. If any mistake occurs in salah, she should clap her hands without uttering anything. She cannot make imamah of a male. It is makruh to have a female only congregation. The female imam will stand in their midst. It is makruh for her to attend the congregation. In a mixed congregation the females will stand at the rear. Jumu'ah is not obligatory for her, but if she attends it, she will be

absolved of responsibility. Neither is Eid compulsory on her nor the takbir of tashriq. It is not mustahab for her to perform Fajr when it brightens up. In the loud salahs she will not raise her voice." (Radd al-Mukhtaar: vol. 1 p 504; see al-Bahr ar-Raa'iq: vol. 1 320)

He says in another place: "A woman should bend slightly in ruku; without spreading her fingers out completely. However, she must contract herself and place her palms on her knees and bend them slightly . She must not spread out her arms as this is more concealing for her." (Ibid p 494)

Mulla Ali Qaari rahimahullah: "A woman will raise her hands till her shoulder (when performing takbir tahrimah)." (Fath bab al-`Inayah bi-sharh an-niqayah: vol. 1 p 239, see p 242, 262 and 265; and al-Fataawaa al-Aalamkiriyyah: vol. 1 p 73

Allaamah Badr ud-Din al-Ayni: "According to Umm ud-Dardaam Ataa, Zuhri and Hamaad and others, a woman should raise her hands till her breasts." (al-Binayah fi sharh al-Hidaayah: vol. 2 p 187)

Muhammad ibn Muqaatil narrates the same verdict from the Hanafi jurists. (Ibid)

Burhanud-Din al-Marghinaani rahimahullah, the author of al-Hidaayah states that this is the correct and accepted version. (al-Hidaayah: vol. 1 p 50)

It is stated in the Fataawaa Aalamgiriyyah: "As for a female she must bend slightly in ruku' without spreading her fingers out. She must keep them together on her knees by merely placing the palms. She must bend her knees slightly and not spread her arms out.

A female should not spread out in ruku' and sajdah while she will sit on her legs. In sajdah she will make her stomach rest on her thighs .

A woman will sit on her left buttock and position her legs out to the right side." (al-Fataawaa al-Alamkiriyyah: vol. 1 p 75)

Imam Abu Ja'far at-Tahaawi rahimahullah: "As for a woman, our scholars (Hanafi) state that she should sit in a manner that is most concealing." (Mukhtasar ikhtilaaf al-ulamaa': vol. 1 p212)

Sheikh Muhammad Zakariyya al-Kaandhlawi rahimahullah: "It is unconditionally preferable according to us (Hanafi jurists) for a woman to sit on her buttocks with her legs positioned out to the right hand side. " (Awjaz al-Masaalik: vol. 1 p 258)

Allaamah Abd ul-Hayy al-Lukhnawi rahimahullah: "A woman differs from a man in many of the actions of salah..."(as-Si'aayah: vol.2 p 205)

He then goes on to list the differences as mentioned by the other jurists.

And Allah knows best.

