

It is not permissible for a woman to pray with her feet uncovered

Q: "Should a woman cover her feet when she prays?"

Shaikh al-Albaani:

"It is not permissible for her to pray with her feet uncovered, indeed it is not permissible for her to walk in the streets with her feet uncovered, because the feet are part of a woman's `awrah based on Allaah's Statement: {And let them not stamp their feet to make known what they conceal of their adornment}.¹ The woman during the Days of Ignorance used to wear what is known in the Arabic language as khalkhaal (anklet), meaning a bracelet with small bells. So when the woman walked, she – in order to turn the men's attention to her – would strike the ground with her feet so the anklet would make a noise and the men would hear that; and such was due to shaitaan's whisperings to her.

This means that the feet used to be covered. Because of what? Because of the jilbaab that the women were commanded to cast down from over their heads, according to Allaah's Statement: {O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their outer garments (jilbaabs) close upon themselves}.² And it is mentioned in an authentic hadeeth that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said one day during a gathering in which there were also women: 'Whoever drags his garment out of pride, Allaah will not look at him on the Day of Resurrection.' One of the women said: 'O Messenger of Allaah, then our feet will be exposed.' He ? said: 'let the women lengthen (their garments) by a hand-span.' She said: 'Then a wind will come and uncover (their feet).' He ? said: 'let them add another hand-span, i.e. (a total of) one cubit, and not go beyond that.'^{3 4}

In this manner, the jilbaab of the Muslim woman – at the time of the revelation of the above-mentioned verse: {to draw their outer garments (jilbaabs) close upon themselves} – used to cover the feet since the socks that are widespread nowadays among both women and men were not widespread at that time. The woman used to cover her shins and feet with the long jilbaab that resembles the `abaa.ah. Therefore it is not permissible for a Muslim woman to uncover her feet while she is on the street, and it is even more impermissible for her to pray with her feet uncovered.”

1 Surat un-Noor 24:31

2 Surat ul-Ahzaab 33:59

3 the Shaikh mentioned the general meaning, not the exact wording, of the woman’s speech

4 Saheeh at-Tirmidhi 1731, Saheeh Abi Daawood 4119

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