

# Can Women Offer Prayer In The Area Outside Of The Masjid?

Darulifta Ahlesunnat

(Dawateislami)

## Question

What do the noble scholars and jurists of Islamic law say about the following: I read a Fatwa in which women were prohibited from offering Salah in the Masjid. The reasoning mentioned was that Hazrat Farooq A'zam رضى الله تعالى عنه prohibited women from the masjids in his era of caliphate. My question is, if we don't allow the women inside the masjid but make an area outside in which they offer salah with the Imam, is there any issue with this? This way, they aren't coming inside the masjid but also offering salah with Jama'ah.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْجَوَابُ بِعَوْنِ الْمَلِكِ الْوَهَّابِ اللَّهُمَّ هِدَايَةَ الْحَقِّ وَالصَّوَابِ

The ruling of Shari'ah is that women aren't allowed to come for Jama'ah, regardless of whether it takes place in the masjid, alley, field, or hall, for the day prayers or night prayers, Jum'ah or Eid, Salat Tasbih, Taraweeh, or the daily prayers, whether the female is old or young. In any case, them joining the Jama'ah is impermissible.

Saying that because Hazrat Umar Farooq رضى الله تعالى عنه prohibited women from coming to the masjid, therefore, they should be allowed to go to an area near the masjid, is incorrect and shows ignorance from the wisdom of Shari'ah. In the era of The Messenger ﷺ, the women were allowed to come to the masjid. But even then, they were instructed not to come in nice clothing and jewelry, not apply fragrance, and leave immediately after the salah ends before the men. Even after all these conditions and even though the Imam of the Prophets عليهم السلام would lead the salah himself in Masjid Nabawi, The Holy Prophet ﷺ would advise the women to offer salah in their homes as this is better than offering salah in the masjid. Better than offering salah in the courtyard of their homes is offering salah in the rooms.

Thus, it is stated:

عن عبد الله بن سويد الانصاري، عن عمته أم حميد امرأة أبي حميد الساعدي، أنها جاءت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فقالت: يا رسول الله، إني أحب الصلاة معك، قال: "قد علمت أنك تحبين الصلاة معي، وصلاتك في بيتك خير لك من صلاتك في حجرتك، وصلاتك في حجرتك خير من صلاتك في دارك، وصلاتك في دارك خير لك من صلاتك في مسجد قومك، وصلاتك في مسجد قومك خير لك من صلاتك في مسجدك"، قال: فأمرت فبني لها مسجداً في أقصى شيء من بيتها وأظلمه، فكانت تصلي فيه حتى لقيت الله عز وجل

Translation: It is narrated by Abdullah Bin Suwaid al-Ansari, that his aunt Umm Humaid, the wife of Abu Humaid Sa'idee رضى الله تعالى عنها, came in the court of The Messenger ﷺ and said: I love to offer salah with you. The Prophet ﷺ said: I know that you like this, but it is better for you to offer salah in a corner rather than in the middle of the room. Offering salah in the room is better than offering salah in the courtyard. Offering salah in your home is better than offering salah in the local masjid. Offering salah in the local masjid is better than offering salah in my masjid (Masjid Nabawi). Hazrat Abdullah Bin Suwaid رضى الله تعالى عنه states that his aunt (Hazrat Umm Humaid رضى الله تعالى عنها) made her prayer area in the darkest corner of her house and offered salah therein until her passing. (Musnad Ahmad, Hadith of Umm Humaid, Vol. 45, p. 37, Publ. Beirut)

It is stated in another Hadith:

عن عبد الله عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: صلاة المرأة في بيتها أفضل من صلاتها في حجرتها، وصلاتها في مخدعها أفضل من صلاتها في بيتها

Translation: Abdullah رضى الله تعالى عنه states that The Prophet ﷺ stated: It is better for a woman to offer salah in a room than in the courtyard. Praying in any tight corner of the room is better than praying in the open area of the room. (Sunan Abi Dawood, Chapter of what was narrated about women attending the Masjid, Vol. 1, p. 94, Publ. Lahore)

After the era of The Prophet ﷺ, the state of the women began changing. Some women began adorning themselves when coming for Jama'ah, applied fragrance, and beautified themselves. Therefore, to close the doors to fitna, the second caliph of Islam, Umar Farooq رضى الله تعالى عنه prohibited them from attending the Jama'ah

of men. He gave this verdict in the presence of the blessed companions عليهم الرضوان. None of them objected to this because they understood the religion. Some women even came to 'Aishah رضى الله تعالى عنها and requested her: we would go to the masjid to attend the Jama'ah in the blessed era of The Prophet ﷺ and now Hazrat Umar رضى الله تعالى عنه is prohibiting us. The blessed wife of the Prophet ﷺ, the one who understood the nature of the Prophet ﷺ, a great scholar, Muftiyah, Mujtahidah, about whom The Prophet ﷺ said: oh people, learn a third of your religion from this Humairah (i.e. 'Aishah رضى الله تعالى عنها), Hazrat 'Aishah رضى الله تعالى عنها said: After observing what has gotten into the women, if The Prophet ﷺ were to observe it, he would also prohibit them. It is as if she wants to say that though Hazrat Farooq A'zam رضى الله تعالى عنه prohibited them from attending Jama'ah, but this decision is supported by The Prophet ﷺ.

**In short, women were not prohibited from the masjid; they were prohibited from exiting the house to offer salah in the Jama'ah of men,** whether this Jama'ah happens in a masjid or any other place. The goal behind this prohibition was to stop the spread of fitna caused by women leaving their homes with adornment. This possibility of fitna is found in masjids and places other than masjids as well.

Remember, the era in which Hazrat Umar Farooq رضى الله تعالى عنه prohibited women from attending the Jama'ah is referred to as 'خير' (one of the best era) i.e. the era of the Sahabah and Tabi'. People had the fear of Allah and possessed pure mindsets. They had modesty and shame. Even then, Hazrat 'Aisha رضى الله تعالى عنها stated, "After seeing what has gotten into the women..." The point of saying this was to completely prohibit them because if The Prophet ﷺ would see this, he would also prohibit them. On the other hand, this era is filled with immodesty, unlawful gazing, fitna, fashion, nude clothing, colorful and sparkling burqa' in the name of veils and Hijab, exposing of beauty in odd ways, beautifying themselves

before leaving their homes, etc. If Hazrat Umar Farooq رضى الله تعالى عنه or Hazrat 'Aishah رضى الله تعالى عنها were present in this era, what would they say about these women? Since the Shari'ah hasn't obligated Jum'ah and Eid upon them and has kept greater reward for them in offering salah in their homes, therefore, they must carry out their worship inside their homes and not go to the Eid grounds etc.

Mentioning the prohibition of women attending the Jama'ah, it is stated in *Sahih al-Bukhari*:

عن عائشة رضي الله عنها، قالت: لو أدرك رسول الله صلى الله تعالى عليه وسلم ما أحدث النساء لمنعهن المسجد كما منعت نساء بني إسرائيل

Translation: It has been narrated from 'Aishah رضى الله تعالى عنها that she said: If The Messenger ﷺ was present to see what has occurred amongst the women, he would definitely prohibit them from the Masjid just like the women of Bani Israel were prohibited. (Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Azan, Chapter of women attending the masjid, Vol. 1, p. 120, Publ. Karachi)

In the explanation of the aforementioned Hadith, it is stated in *Umdah al-Qari Sharah Sahih Bukhari*:

قوله "ما أحدث النساء" أي ما أحدثت من الزينة والطيب وحسن الثياب ونحوها (قلت) لو شاهدت عائشة رضي الله تعالى عنهما ما أحدث نساء هذا الزمان من أنواع البدع والمنكرات لكانت أشد إنكارا... الخ

Translation: The statement 'what has occurred amongst the women' refers to the beautification, applying fragrance, expensive clothing, etc. I say 'If Hazrat 'Aishah رضى الله تعالى عنها were to witness the various innovations and prohibitions that have occurred in this era, she would strictly prohibit them from the Masjids.' (Umdah al-Qari, Book of the Salah timings, Vol. 6, p. 158, Publ. Beirut)

Allamah Badr-uddin 'Aini Hanafi رحمه الله تعالى عليه (D. 855 AH/ 1451 GC) writes:

ولهذا منع أبو حنيفة العجائز أيضاً عن الخروج إلى الظهرين لذلك المعنى. على أنه قد روي عن عائشة رضي الله عنها قالت: "لو أدرك رسول الله ما أحدث النساء لمنعهن المسجد" الحديث، لما يجي الآن، والفتوى في هذا الزمان على عدم الخروج في حق الكل مطلقاً، لشيوع الفساد، وعموم المصيبة

Translation: This is why Imam Abu Hanifah prohibited even the elderly from attending the day prayers. The proof for this is that

which has been narrated from 'Aishah رضى الله تعالى عنها that she said: If The Messenger of Allah ﷺ were to observe what has gotten into the women, he would definitely prohibit them from the Masjid; this narration will come ahead. In this era, the fatwa is that women will completely be prohibited from attending the masjid because of the widespread Fitna. (Sunan Abi Dawood Lil 'Aini, Book of Salah, Vol. 3, p. 51, Publ. Riyad)

It is stated in *Tanwir al-Absar* and *Al-Durr al-Mukhtar*:  
(ويكره حضورهن الجماعة) ولولجمعة وعيد ووعظ (مطلقا) ولوعجوز اليل (على المذهب) المفتى به لفساد الزمان

Translation: According to the Mufta Bih opinion, due to the corruption of the era, it is unrestrictedly Makruh for women to attend the Jama'ah, including for Jum'ah, Eid, gatherings, even if they are old and even at nighttime. (Tanwir al-Absar Wa Al-Durr al-Mukhtar, Book of Salah, Vol. 2, Pg. 367, Publ. Quetta)

وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ وَرَسُولُهُ أَعْلَمُ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

(Allah Almighty knows best and His Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ knows best.)

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**Dar-ul-Ifta Ahlesunnat (Dawat-e-Islami)**



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