

228222 - Is it permissible to wipe thin socks when doing wudoo'?

the question

I heard in a lecture that the scholars permitted wiping over socks through which the skin cannot be seen, but I have read that it is permissible to wipe over socks even if they are thin. Which of the two opinions is more correct?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly

It is established in the Prophet's Sunnah that one may wipe over the khuffayn (a kind of leather slipper that covers the ankle).

The majority of scholars include socks under this ruling.

What is meant by socks, as was stated by al-Khaleel al-Faraaheedi, is a covering for the feet. See: al-'Ayn (6/113).

In Mawaahib al-Jaleel (1/318) it says: Socks are a kind of footwear in the shape of the khuff, made of linen, cotton or other fabric. End quote.

The difference between socks and khuffaayn is that the khuffaayn are made of leather, whereas socks are not made of leather; rather they are made of wool, linen, cotton or other fabrics.

At the present time, socks are also made of nylon (or synthetic fabrics).

Secondly:

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There is no saheeh report from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) about wiping over socks.

With regard to the hadith narrated by at-Tirmidhi (99) via Abu Qays from Huzayl ibn Shurahbeel from al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah, who said: The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) did wudoo' and wiped over his socks and sandals - it is a da'eef (weak) and shaadhhdh (odd) hadith.

Abu Dawood said in as-Sunan (159):

'Abd ar-Rahmaan ibn Mahdi did not narrate this hadith, because what is well known from al-Mugheerah is that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) wiped over the khuffayn. End quote.

'Ali ibn al-Madeeni said: The hadith of al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah (about wiping over the khuffayn) was narrated from al-Mugheerah by the people of Madinah, the people of Kufah, and the people of Basra. It was narrated by Huzayl ibn Shurahbeel from al-Mugheerah, but he said: And he wiped over his socks - and he (Huzayl) differed from other narrators.

End quote from as-Sunan al-Kubra by al-Bayhaqi (1/284)

Al-Mufaddal ibn Ghassaan said: I asked Yahya ibn Ma'een about this hadith and he said: All the narrators narrated it in reference to the khuffayn, apart from Abu Qays.

End quote from as-Sunan al-Kubra by al-Bayhaqi (1/284)

Among those who also classed it as da'eef were Sufyaan ath-Thawri, Imam Ahmad, Ibn Ma'een, Muslim, an-Nasaa'i, al-'Uqayli, ad-Daaraqutni and al-Bayhaqi.

An-Nawawi said: These are the leading scholars of hadith. Although at-Tirmidhi said it was a hasan hadith, these scholars take precedence over him; in fact if any one of them was the only one to

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hold that view, he would still take precedence over at-Tirmidhi, according to the consensus of the people of knowledge.

End quote from al-Majmoo' Sharh al-Muhadhdhab (1/500).

But there are saheeh reports about wiping over the socks from the Sahaabah.

Ibn al-Mundhir said:

The permissibility of wiping over the socks was narrated from nine of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him: 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib, 'Ammar ibn Yaasir, Abu Mas'ood, Anas ibn Maalik, Ibn 'Umar, al-Bara' ibn 'Aazib, Bilaal, Abu Umaamah and Sahl ibn Sa'd.

End quote from al-Awsat (1/462)

Ibn al-Qayyim said: Abu Dawood added Abu Umaamah, 'Amr ibn Hurayth, 'Umar and Ibn 'Abbaas. Thus there were thirteen Sahaabah (who held this view).

So the view that it is permissible is based on these Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them), not the hadith of Abu Qays.

Ahmad stated that it is permissible to wipe over the socks, and he said that the report of Ibn Qays was flawed.

That stems from his fair-mindedness and justice, may Allah have mercy on him. Rather he based it on the view of these Sahaabah, and clear analogy, because there is no clear difference between socks and khuffayn that would make the ruling different.

End quote from Tahdheeb as-Sunan (1/187)

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Ibn Qudaamah said: The Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them) wiped over the socks, and there was no one who disagreed with them during their own time, therefore it is consensus.

End quote from al-Mughni (1/215)

Similarly, there is no difference between the khuffayn and sock, if you think about it.

Shaykh al-Islam [Ibn Taymiyah] said:

The difference between socks and khuffayn is that the former are made of wool and the latter are made of leather.

It is known that such differences do not have any impact on shar'i rulings. It makes no difference whether it is made of leather, cotton, linen or wool.

By the same token, it makes no difference whether garments worn in ihram are black or white. ... The most that can be said is that leather is longer lasting than wool, but this does not affect the ruling, just as it is not affected if the leather is durable.

Moreover, it is well-known that the need to wipe over one is the same as the need to wipe over the other. As they are same in terms of the reason and need for wiping, differentiating between them would be differentiating between two similar things, which is contrary to the fairness and common sense that are promoted by the Qur'an and Sunnah, and that with which Allah sent down His Books and sent His Messengers.

Those who differentiate between them on the grounds that one is permeable and the other is not has mentioned a difference that does not affect anything.

End quote from Majmoo' al-Fataawa (21/214)

Thirdly:

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The majority of those scholars who regard it is permissible to wipe over the socks stipulated that in order for it to be permissible to wipe over them, they should be thick and it should be possible to walk in them. See: al-Mabsoot (1/102); al-Majmoo' (1/483); al-Insaaf (1/170)

That is because the ruling on socks is the same as the ruling on khuffayn, and the khuffayn can only be thick, so socks cannot take the place of khuffayn unless they are like them.

Al-Kaasaani said: If (the socks) are thin and let water through, then it is not permissible to wipe over them, according to scholarly consensus.

End quote from Badaa'i' as-Sanaa'i' (1/10)

Ibn al-Qattaan al-Faasi said: All scholars are unanimously agreed that if the socks are not thick, it is not permissible to wipe over them.

End quote from al-Iqnaa' fi Masaa'il al-Ijmaa' (no. 351)

Shaykh al-Islam [Ibn Taymiyah} was asked: Is it permissible to wipe over socks, like the khuff, or not?

He said: Yes, it is permissible to wipe over the socks if one can walk in them, whether they are made of leather or not.

End quote from Majmoo' al-Fataawa (21/213)

And he said: If they are thin, they cannot be wiped over, because usually one cannot walk in such socks and there is no need to wipe over them.

End quote from Sharh 'Umdat al-Fiqh (1/251)

In Fataawa al-Lajnah ad-Daa'imah (5/267) it says: The socks must be thick, and what is beneath

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them should not be visible. End quote.

And they said: It is permissible to wipe over anything that covers the feet and is worn on them, such as khuffayn and thick socks.

End quote from Fataawa al-Lajnah ad-Daa'imah (4/101)

Similarly, Shaykh Muhammad ibn Ibraaheem said: It is permissible to wipe over socks and the like, whether they are made of wool, camel hair, goat hair, cotton or other materials, if they are thick and cover the place that it is obligatory to wash, and they fulfil all the necessary conditions.

End quote from Fataawa wa Rasaa'il ash-Shaykh Muhammad ibn Ibraaheem (2/66)

And he said: But if the sock is thin and shows the skin, then it cannot be wiped over.

End quote from Fataawa ash-Shaykh Muhammad ibn Ibraaheem (2/68)

Shaykh Ibn Baaz said: One of the conditions (for it to be permissible (to wipe over the socks) is that the socks should be thick and covering. If they are thin, it is not permissible to wipe over them, because in that case the foot is as if it is uncovered.

End quote from Fataawa ash-Shaykh Ibn Baaz (10/110)

Some of the scholars regarded it as permissible to wipe over the socks in all cases.

An-Nawawi said: Our companions narrated from 'Umar and 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with them) that it is permissible to wipe over the socks, even if they are thin. They also narrated that from Abu Yoosuf, Muhammad, Ishaq and Dawood.

End quote from al-Majmoo' Sharh al-Muhadhdhab (1/500)

This is the view that was regarded as more likely to be correct by Shaykh al-Albaani and Shaykh

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Ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on them)

But what we have mentioned above is the view of the majority of scholars, and it is the more correct view, because the basis for regarding it as permissible is an analogy with the khuffayn, and thin socks are not like the khuffayn, so no analogy can be made with them.

The socks that the Sahaabah used to wipe over were thick, because thin socks were not known until recently.

Imam Ahmad said: It is not acceptable to wipe over the socks unless they are thick socks. ... The people only used to wipe over socks because for them they were equivalent to the khuffayn, so they took the place of the khuffayn on a man's feet, and a man used to come and go wearing them.

End quote from al-Mughni by Ibn Qudaamah (1/216)

If it is asked: why did the scholars stipulate these conditions with regard to socks?

Al-Mubaarakfoori said: The basic rule is that the feet are to be washed, as is the apparent meaning of the Qur'an, and turning to alternatives is not permissible except on the basis of saheeh hadiths, the soundness of which is agreed upon among the leading scholars of hadith, such as the hadiths which speak of wiping over the khuffayn. So it is permissible to turn from washing the feet to wiping over the khuffayn, and there is no difference of scholarly opinion on that point.

But with regard to the hadiths which speak of wiping over the socks, there is some difference of opinion among the leading scholars in the field concerning their soundness. So how can it be permissible to turn from washing the feet to wiping over the socks in all cases?

Because of that, they stipulated these restrictions on the permissibility of wiping over the socks, so that the socks in question would come under the same heading as the khuffayn and thus be

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included in the hadiths that speak of the khuffayn.

If the socks are thick and can be kept on the feet without being tied, and it is possible to walk in them, then undoubtedly there is no significant difference between this type of socks and the khuffayn, because they are like the khuffayn. But if they are thin and cannot be kept on the feet without being tied, and it is not possible to walk far in them, then they are not like the khuffayn, and undoubtedly there is a significant difference between them and the khuffayn.

Do you not see that the khuffayn are like sandals, and if sandals are not available, a man can come and go wearing the khuffayn, and walk wherever he wants? So wearing the khuffayn does not require him to take them off when walking, so he does not have to take them off by day or by night; rather he can wear them for several days and nights, and it would be difficult for him to take them off every time he does wudoo'.

In contrast, for the one who wears thin socks, every time he wants to walk he has to take them off several times during the day and night, and in this case it is not difficult for him to take them off every time he does wudoo'. This difference dictates that the concession should be granted to the one who wears khuffayn but not to the one who wears thin socks. Making an analogy in this case would be making an analogy despite the difference.

End quote from Tuhfat al-Ahwadhi (1/285)

Conclusion:

The view of the majority of scholars is that it is not allowed to wipe over thin socks, and that the permissibility (of wiping over socks) is limited to thick socks.

And Allah knows best.