

73339 - Jumu'ah prayer is not obligatory for women

the question

Is Jumu'ah prayer obligatory for women too, or only for men? How should a woman pray? I am a woman and I do not have any place in the mosque. Can I pray Jumu'ah at home by myself? Will I attain the reward for Jumu'ah?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The scholars are agreed that Jumu'ah prayer is not obligatory for women, and that they may pray four rak'ahs of Zuhr in their homes.

Ibn al-Mundhir (may Allaah have mercy on him) says in al-Ijmaa' (no. 52):

They are unanimously agreed that Jumu'ah is not obligatory for women. End quote.

The evidence for that is the hadeeth of Taariq ibn Shihaab (may Allaah be pleased with him) according to which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Jumu'ah is a duty that is required of every Muslim in congregation, except four: a slave, a woman, a child or one who is sick." Narrated by Abu Dawood 91067). Al-Nawawi said in al-Majmoo' (4/482): its isnaad is saheeh according to the conditions of the two Shaykhs (al-Bukhaari and Muslim). Ibn Rajab said in Fath al-Baari (5/327): its isnaad is saheeh. Ibn Katheer said in Irshaad al-Faqeeh (1/190): its isnaad is jayyid. It was also classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Jaami' (3111).

The reason why Jumu'ah is not obligatory for women is that sharee'ah does not encourage women

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to attend places where men gather, because of the negative consequences to which that may lead, as happens nowadays in many workplaces where men and women mix. See also Badaa'i' al-Sanaa'i' (1/258).

If a woman adheres to the shar'i conditions for her going out to the mosque, such as not wearing adornments and perfume, then there is nothing wrong with her attending Jumu'ah prayers in the mosque and praying two rak'ahs behind the imam, in which case she does not need to pray Zuhr.

Ibn al-Mundhir (may Allaah have mercy on him) said in al-Ijmaa' (no. 52, 53):

They are unanimously agreed that if women join the imam and pray with him, that is sufficient for them. End quote.

Ibn Qudaamah (may Allaah have mercy on him) said in al-Mughni (2/88):

But if she prays Jumu'ah it is valid, because for women to pray in congregation is valid, as the women used to pray with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) in congregation. End quote.

With regard to praying Jumu'ah in the home on one's own, this is not valid for either a man or a woman, because Jumu'ah prayer is only valid when done in congregation, as stated in the hadeeth of the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) quoted above: "Jumu'ah is a duty that is required of every Muslim in congregation."

If a group wanted to pray Jumu'ah in the house, this is also not valid, because Jumu'ah prayer is prescribed in order for the Muslims to gather together in one place for prayer and to listen to the khutbah and benefit from it. Hence it is not permissible for there to be numerous Jumu'ah prayers in one city unless there is a need for that, such as if the city is very large or there is no jaami' mosque that can hold all the people.

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Based on this, if you do not go to the mosque to pray Jumu'ah, then you should pray Zuhr at home.

It says in Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa'imah (7/337):

If a woman prays Jumu'ah with the imam, that is sufficient and she does not have to pray Zuhr; it is not permissible for her to pray Zuhr that day. But if she prays on her own then she can only pray Zuhr, and she cannot pray Jumu'ah. End quote.

It is better for a woman to pray Zuhr in her house, because of the general meaning of the words of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him): "Do not prevent your women from going to the mosques, although their houses are better for them." Narrated by Abu Dawood (567); classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh Abi Dawood.

If she wants to go to Jumu'ah, then she has to avoid perfume and adornments, and not crowd together with men in the streets.

And Allaah knows best.