

WOMEN'S PRAYER RULINGS: APPLIED PERSPECTIVES FROM THE RASHIDUN CALIPHS

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Abstract

In the contemporary era, the rapid expansion of print and electronic media has transformed the human world into a highly interconnected global village. Within this globalized context, anti-religious forces are employing modern resources with significant innovation and skill to mislead the new generation of the Muslim Ummah, instilling notions of atheism, secularism, and an overarching aversion to organized religion. The modern generation, driven by empirical education and scientific inquiry, increasingly demands logic, evidence, and rational reality over pure emotional devotion. Consequently, presenting the Islamic faith through mere literary reverence and emotional attachment is no longer sufficient. There is a pressing need to address the intellectual requirements of this new generation using arguments grounded in utility, pragmatism, and material reality. Failure to do so risks reducing Islam to a purely theoretical and bookish religion, isolated to places of worship and detached from practical, daily life. In this context, it is immensely crucial to present the monumental importance and utility of the Companions of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) with logical arguments. The jurisprudential (Fiqhi) and legislative dimensions of the works of the Rightly Guided Caliphs hold paramount importance. Researching these historical rulings along modern lines is a critical religious, spiritual, and ideological necessity. This article presents a comprehensive, applied review of the works and verdicts of the Rightly Guided Caliphs specifically related to the rulings of prayer (Salah) concerning women, aiming to bridge the gap between historical Islamic jurisprudence and contemporary societal challenges.

Keywords: Jurisprudential Rulings, Materialism, Survival of Religion, Rightly Guided Caliphs, Muslim Ummah, Rulings of Prayer, Islamic Feminine Jurisprudence, Contemporary Application.

1. INTRODUCTION

The revered Companions (Sahabah) of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) were the primordial bearers of the authentic religion of Islam and his most sincere, devoted followers [1]. They demonstrated an unparalleled commitment, never hesitating to sacrifice their lives, properties, honor, comfort, personal belongings, and even their homeland for the propagation, support, and ultimate protection of the Islamic faith [1]. Historically and theologically, the Companions serve as the first, most excellent, and most reliable intermediaries in the transmission of the religion between the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) and the broader Muslim Ummah [1]. The Almighty Allah has endowed this primary group with profound attributes of chastity, trustworthiness, truthfulness, reliability, and purity, to such an extent that entire human history remains incapable of presenting a parallel or analogous community following the era of the Prophets [1].

In the Holy Quran, Allah the Exalted has repeatedly declared the sincerity, divine devotion (Lillahiyyat), piety (Taqwa), and righteous guidance of this blessed group, announcing His divine pleasure with them and His forgiveness for any shortcomings they might have inadvertently committed [1]. Similarly, the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) frequently expounded upon the virtues and merits of the Companions in his sayings (Ahadith), consistently instructing the Ummah to treat them with the utmost reverence, respect, and good conduct [1].

However, the sociological and technological realities of the present era pose unprecedented challenges to this historical reverence. The omnipresence and hyper-accessibility of print and electronic media have effectively reduced the globe to a localized village [1]. Anti-religious ideologies and secular forces are actively utilizing these modern mediums with extraordinary innovation and psychological skill. Their primary objective is to intellectually disorient the new generation of the Ummah, systematically embedding seeds of atheism (Ilhad) and a general aversion to religion [1].

Conversely, the intellectual paradigm of the modern youth has shifted drastically. The contemporary generation is fundamentally empirical; they demand logic, concrete evidence, and tangible reality [1]. The time has inevitably arrived where religious scholars and researchers must transcend traditional pedagogical methods that rely solely on literature, devotion, and emotional appeals [1]. To effectively convince and satisfy the inquiries of this new generation, Islamic principles must be articulated through arguments that acknowledge material realities and practical utility [1]. If the Muslim intellectual community fails to adapt to this methodology, the impending danger is that Islam, much like certain historical trajectories of Judaism and Christianity, may become relegated to a merely theoretical, bookish theology—withdrawn entirely from the socio-political and practical spheres of life, surviving only within the confined walls of mosques and worship centers [1].

Within this critical ideological framework, it is absolutely essential to reintroduce the importance and practical utility of the Companions to the new generation, utilizing arguments based on realism and practical benefit [1]. The modern mind must be convinced that the Companions were not mythological figures or mere characters of legendary folklore; rather, they were the absolute embodiments of profound knowledge, practical action, truthfulness, and integrity [1]. Their scholarship, jurisprudential acumen (Fiqhah), and reliability were unparalleled. Their sayings and actions act as binding proofs (Hujjah) and foundational guidance for the Ummah [1]. By meticulously studying their character and biographies, and by adhering to their sciences, the modern Muslim can discover the most optimal and pragmatic solutions to the complex, seemingly insoluble problems of the contemporary world [1].

In this scholarly pursuit, the jurisprudential (Fiqhi) and legislative (Tashree'i) aspects of the works of the Rightly Guided Caliphs possess an undeniably supreme significance [1]. Studying and researching these texts through modern academic methodologies is not just an academic exercise; it is a vital religious, spiritual, and ideological necessity for the modern generation [1]. The primary objective of this article is to conduct an applied, qualitative review of the works and verdicts (Athar) of the Rightly Guided Caliphs that specifically pertain to the rulings of Prayer (Salah) concerning women, extracting legal principles that can be applied to modern socio-religious life [1].

2. THE FUNDAMENTAL ISLAMIC PRINCIPLE REGARDING WOMEN'S ATTENDANCE IN THE MOSQUE

The first major theme explored in the jurisprudential works of the Companions is the socio-religious right of women to attend the mosque for congregational prayers. This issue requires a delicate balance between patriarchal protective instincts (Ghayrah) and the explicit allowances granted by the Prophetic tradition.

2.1. Textual Evidence and Historical Context The foundational text governing this principle is narrated through the chain of Yusuf bin Musa, who reported from Abu Usamah, from Ubaidullah bin Umar, from Nafi, from the esteemed Companion Abdullah bin Umar (May Allah be pleased with them).

Abdullah bin Umar stated: "There was a wife of Umar who used to attend the Fajr (dawn) and Isha (night) prayers in congregation at the mosque. She was asked: 'Why do you go out (to the mosque) when you know that Umar dislikes it and feels protective jealousy (Ghayrah)?' She replied, 'What prevents him from forbidding me?' The questioner said, 'What prevents him is the statement of the Messenger of Allah (Peace Be Upon Him): Do not prevent the female servants of Allah from the mosques of Allah.'" [2]

2.2. Jurisprudential Analysis (Fiqhi Tahqeeq) A meticulous collection and investigation (Jam' wa Tahqeeq) of this narration reveal a fundamental legislative principle in Islamic law: If a woman desires to go to the mosque for prayer, it is jurisprudentially incorrect to categorically forbid her based solely on personal dislike or male protective jealousy.

Despite Umar bin al-Khattab's (May Allah be pleased with him) personal discomfort and natural jealousy regarding his wife going to the mosque, he strictly adhered to the legislative command of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) and refrained from prohibiting her [1]. In this specific context, the Arabic term "Yakrahu Dhalik" (he dislikes it) must not be interpreted in the strict Fiqhi terminology as something inherently "Haram" (forbidden) or "Makruh" (reprehensible in Islamic law) [1]. Rather, the context dictates that it refers to his natural, personal human preference and intrinsic protective jealousy.

This foundational principle was fiercely protected and maintained by Abdullah bin Umar himself. Historical records indicate that when one of his sons, upon hearing this specific Hadith of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him), rebelliously stated, "By Allah, we will surely prevent them," Abdullah bin Umar became intensely furious. He

sharply rebuked his son, stating, "I am narrating to you the command of the Messenger of Allah (Peace Be Upon Him), and you speak of forbidding them?" The eminent Hadith scholar, Sheikh Al-Albani, has classified this narration in Sunan Ibn Majah as authentic (Sahih) [3]. This incident serves as a robust, historical example of the principle that personal opinion, societal norm, or individual preference can never be given precedence over an authentic Sunnah (Prophetic tradition).

The wife of Umar al-Farooq mentioned in this narration was the honorable Atikah bint Zayd, the sister of the prominent Companion Saeed bin Zayd [1]. She was deeply committed to performing the Isha and Fajr prayers in the congregation at the mosque. Her dedication was so profound that even on the tragic day when Umar al-Farooq was fatally attacked with a poisoned dagger in the mosque, she was present within the congregation [1]. Although Umar found her presence in the public space of the mosque unpleasant due to his protective nature, he surrendered his personal will to the divine law.

According to this Hadith, women are unequivocally permitted to attend the mosque. However, Islamic jurisprudence places specific conditions on this permission: they must observe proper Hijab (modesty), avoid wearing perfume, and abstain from other forms of adornment (Zeenah) that attract unwarranted attention [1]. Commenting on this Hadith, the great scholar Imam Ibn Abd al-Barr states: "The Fiqh (jurisprudential understanding) derived from this Hadith is that it is permissible for a woman to go to the mosque at night, and its generality encompasses every prayer." [4]

During the blessed era of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him), women regularly attended the mosque for prayers. The Prophet never prevented them, nor did any of the Companions prevent the women of their households from attending. If anyone attempted to enforce such a prohibition, they faced strict opposition from the senior Companions. This Athar (narration from a Companion), transmitted through Abdullah bin Umar, clarifies a vital jurisprudential and ethical matter. It represents a beautiful synthesis of Islamic social norms, natural human jealousy (Ghayrah Fitriyyah), a woman's right to participate in communal worship, and absolute adherence to the Prophetic Sunnah [1].

2.3. Contemporary Applications (Asri Itlaqat) In the modern context, the preferred and most robust scholarly stance (Rajih Mawqif) is that it is legally permissible for women to attend the mosque for obligatory prayers, religious education, and other Islamically sanctioned purposes [1]. If a woman expresses the desire to attend the mosque, forbidding her absolutely based merely on cultural traditions, societal norms, personal dislike, or unguided jealousy stands in direct contradiction to the explicit Hadith: "Do not prevent the female servants of Allah from the mosques of Allah." [2]

However, the application of this ruling comes with essential caveats. When venturing to the mosque, a woman must meticulously observe the Islamic dress code (Hijab), maintain dignity (Waqar), avoid ostentatious display of beauty (Tabarruj), strictly refrain from applying perfumes, and ensure she is protected from potential harm or societal trials (Fitnah) [1]. Concurrently, one must acknowledge the authentically reported Ahadith that emphasize the superiority and greater reward of a woman's prayer within the confines of her home. Therefore, the "permission to attend the mosque" and the "superiority of praying at home" should not be viewed as contradictory or mutually exclusive, but rather as providing a balanced, flexible framework catering to different circumstances and spiritual needs [1].

3. THE RULINGS REGARDING A WOMAN'S AWRAH (CONCEALMENT) AND ATTIRE DURING PRAYER

The physical presentation and attire of a Muslim during prayer are subject to strict jurisprudential guidelines, aiming to maintain modesty, respect, and focus before the Almighty. This is particularly detailed concerning female attire.

3.1. Textual Evidence and Historical Context The primary text is narrated by Imam Malik, from Muhammad bin Zayd bin Qunfudh, from his mother, who stated that she asked Umm Salamah, the esteemed wife of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him): "In what garments should a woman perform her prayer?" Umm Salamah replied: "She should pray in a Khimar (headscarf) and a Dir' Sabiq (a long, expansive tunic) that completely conceals the upper part of her feet." [5]

3.2. Jurisprudential Analysis (Fihi Tahqeeq) This ruling is preserved as a Mawquf narration (a statement terminating at a Companion) from Sayyidah Umm Salamah. Several prominent Hadith scholars have verified its authenticity. Hafiz Abd al-Haq al-Ishbili stated: "This is the authentic statement from Umm Salamah" [1]. Similarly, Hafiz Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani recorded that the leading scholars of Hadith confirmed its authenticity as a Mawquf narration [6].

The narrations in this chapter establish that it is absolutely mandatory for a woman to wear clothing during prayer that completely covers her entire body, ensuring the strict preservation of her Awrah (the parts of the body that must be concealed according to Islamic law). When Umm Salamah was asked about the appropriate prayer

garments for a woman, she specified the "Khimar" (a covering for the head and neck) and the "Dir' Sabiq" (a long, sweeping dress that covers the body down to the feet, including the tops of the feet) [5].

This methodology is further corroborated by Sayyiduna Ubaidullah al-Khawlani, who reported seeing the Mother of the Believers, Sayyidah Maymunah, performing her prayers wearing a long tunic and a headscarf, without wearing a separate lower garment (Izar). This demonstrates that if the primary garment is expansive and sufficiently covers the entire body, the addition of extra layers or specific lower garments is not a strict legal condition [7].

Furthermore, an incident regarding Sayyidah Aisha is highly illuminating. It is reported that she stood up to pray wearing a tunic and a headscarf. Observing this, a female servant immediately placed another cloth over her. This highlights the profound emphasis the Wives of the Prophet and the female Companions placed on maximizing their concealment, modesty, and Hijab during the sacred act of prayer [8].

The legal validity of this practice is definitively anchored by the explicit Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him): "Allah does not accept the prayer of a menstruating woman (i.e., a woman who has reached the age of puberty) except with a Khimar." [9]

Synthesizing these Ahadith and Athar, the jurisprudential conclusion is that it is legislated and mandatory for a woman to wear garments that comprehensively cover her head, neck, torso, and extending down to her feet during prayer [1]. The preservation of the Awrah during Salah is of extraordinary importance. The collective practice of the female Companions and the Mothers of the Believers clearly indicates that maximum care should be taken to observe modesty and dignity while standing in prayer.

3.3. Contemporary Applications (Asri Itlaqat) In the modern era, translating these historical guidelines into practical application does not require adherence to a single, culturally specific style of clothing [1]. The Islamic legal objective is the fulfillment of the conditions of Awrah, not the promotion of a specific fashion. Therefore, a designated prayer shawl (Chador), an Abaya, a Jilbab, a long frock, or any other culturally appropriate garment can fulfill the Shari'ah requirement [1].

The fundamental conditions are that the garment must adequately cover the hair, head, neck, and the entirety of the required Awrah [1]. Furthermore, the fabric must not be transparent or sheer to the extent that the skin color is visible underneath. The Shari'ah focuses on the realization of concealment (Tahaqquq al-Satr), ignoring the modern names or fashion trends associated with the clothing. If a woman's regular clothing is excessively tight, outlining the physical contours of her body, she is required to don a loose, expansive outer wrap or an alternative concealing garment over it before commencing her prayer [1].

4. THE PRESCRIBED METHODOLOGY FOR ALERTING THE IMAM DURING PRAYER

In congregational prayers, human error on the part of the Imam (the prayer leader) is a recognized possibility. Islamic law provides structured, gender-specific methods for the congregation to alert the Imam to a mistake without invalidating the prayer.

4.1. Textual Evidence and Historical Context Abd al-Razzaq narrates from Ibn Jurayj, who said: "Ata informed me that he heard Abu Hurairah saying: 'Tasbeeh (saying SubhanAllah) is for men, and Tasfeeq (clapping) is for women.'" [10]

4.2. Jurisprudential Analysis (Fiqhi Tahqeeq) This narration is an authentic Mawquf statement from Sayyiduna Abu Hurairah [1]. Analyzing the chain of transmission (Isnad): Abd al-Razzaq bin Hammam is a reliable (Thiqah) narrator; Hafiz Ibn Jurayj is also highly reliable and a profound jurist. Although Ibn Jurayj was known to sometimes practice Tadles (omitting the name of an immediate narrator), in this specific chain, he explicitly used the term "Akhbarani" (he informed me), establishing direct contact. The narrator he heard from is Ata bin Abi Rabah, a highly reliable jurist. Therefore, the chain of transmission is definitively continuous (Muttasil) and authentic (Sahih) [1].

The core subject matter of this narration is overwhelmingly supported by several independent, authentic Marfu' (elevated directly to the Prophet) chains of transmission. Both Imam al-Bukhari and Imam Muslim have recorded it in their respective Sahih collections [11]. Imam al-Tirmidhi classified it as "Hasan Sahih" (fair and authentic), Ibn Hibban included it in his Sahih, Sheikh Shu'aib al-Arnaut declared the chain in Musnad Ahmad to be authentic upon the stringent conditions of the two Sheikhs (Bukhari and Muslim), and Sheikh al-Albani authenticated the version found in Sunan Abi Dawud [11]. Thus, the authenticity of this ruling is unanimously confirmed by multiple leading scholars and various chains of transmission.

The Marfu' Hadith, directly quoting the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) through Abu Hurairah, states: "Tasbeeh is for men, and Tasfeeq is for women." [12]. Imam al-Tirmidhi commented on this, affirming it as a "Hasan Sahih" tradition [13].

The precise context, timing, and objective of this ruling are vividly clarified in an authentic Hadith narrated by Sahl bin Sa'd, where the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) stated: "Whoever encounters something in his prayer (that requires drawing attention to), let him say: 'SubhanAllah'... and indeed, clapping is only for women." [14]. This

narration explicitly establishes that this command is specifically designed for situations within the prayer where an urgent matter arises—such as the Imam forgetting a verse, making a mistake in the physical postures, or any other necessary alert.

In the Musannaf of Abd al-Razzaq, this very Hadith is also recorded as a Marfu' tradition from Abu Hurairah: "The Messenger of Allah said: 'Tasbeeh is for men, and Tasfeeq is for women in prayer.'" [15].

It is worth noting a minor scholarly divergence within this same textual tradition. The narrator Ata bin Abi Rabah expressed a personal preference, stating: "And it is more beloved to Ata that women say Tasbeeh rather than clapping." [16]. However, in the rigorous methodology of Islamic jurisprudence, this statement is classified as the personal Ijtihad (independent reasoning) of a Tabi'i (follower of the Companions). When juxtaposed against an explicit, authentic Marfu' textual proof (Nass) directly from the Prophet, the Prophetic methodology takes absolute precedence.

Consequently, the fatwa of Abu Hurairah is established through an authentic chain, and the exact ruling is independently corroborated as a Prophetic command. The Hadith of Sahl bin Sa'd defines the application: men must say "SubhanAllah" aloud, and women must clap their hands. The personal preference of Ata is academically noted but superseded by the explicit text [1].

4.3. Contemporary Applications (Asri Itlaqat) In contemporary settings—such as local mosques, Taraweeh congregations during Ramadan, women-only congregational prayers, or mixed congregations where a partition is present—the legal application remains consistent [1]. If the Imam makes an error that requires correction, the legislated method for a woman is to perform Tasfeeq (clapping), while men must say "SubhanAllah."

It is crucial to differentiate this ritualistic clapping from cultural clapping. The Tasfeeq in prayer is not an expression of joy, applause, or appreciation. It is a functional, restrained striking of the hands (often described as striking the palm of one hand against the back of the other) designed purely to produce a sound that alerts the Imam without violating the prohibition of extraneous speech during Salah [1]. This ruling highlights the Shari'ah's meticulous design in maintaining the solemnity and concentration of the prayer while accommodating the need for congregational correction.

5. THE INJUNCTION REGARDING PASSING IN FRONT OF A PRAYING PERSON

Maintaining the sanctity and focus of the prayer space is a critical component of Islamic ritual law. The concept of a "Sutrah" (a physical barrier placed in front of the praying person) is central to this, and specific rulings apply when entities cross this sacred boundary.

5.1. Textual Evidence and Historical Context The text is narrated through Abu Dawud (al-Tayalisi) and Ghundar, from Shu'ba, from Ubaidullah bin Abi Bakr, who said: "I heard Anas saying: 'The woman, the donkey, and the dog cut (interrupt/invalidate) the prayer.'" [17]

5.2. Jurisprudential Analysis (Fiqhi Tahqeeq) This Athar features an authentic chain of transmission (Sahih al-Isnad) [1]. Abu Dawud al-Tayalisi (Sulayman bin Dawud al-Basri) is a reliable memorizer of Hadith. Although some scholars have noted occasional illusions (Awham) in some of his narrations, in this specific instance, he is strongly corroborated (Mutaba'ah) by highly reliable narrators like Ghundar and Hajjaj bin Minhaj. Ghundar (Muhammad bin Ja'far al-Basri) is universally recognized as highly reliable, particularly holding immense authority in the narrations transmitted from Shu'ba. Shu'ba bin al-Hajjaj is an Imam, a Hafiz, and meticulously precise. Ubaidullah bin Abi Bakr bin Anas is a reliable Tabi'i; leading authorities such as Imam Ahmad, Yahya bin Ma'in, Abu Dawud, and al-Nasa'i have all verified his trustworthiness [1].

The stance adopted by Sayyiduna Anas bin Malik is not an isolated piece of independent reasoning (Ijtihad). It is vigorously supported by explicit, authentic Marfu' Ahadith. For instance, Sayyiduna Abu Dharr narrated that the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) said: "When one of you stands to pray, he is screened if there is something in front of him equal to the back of a saddle. If there is not something in front of him equal to the back of a saddle, then his prayer is cut by the donkey, the woman, and the black dog." [18]. Imam al-Tirmidhi narrated this and classified the Hadith of Abu Dharr as "Hasan Sahih" [19], and Sheikh al-Albani also declared it authentic [20].

An independent Marfu' narration conveying the exact same meaning is reported from Sayyiduna Abu Hurairah: "The prayer is cut by the woman, the donkey, and the dog, and this is prevented by something like the back of a saddle." [21]. This narration is also found in the Musnad of Imam Ahmad with an authentic chain, verified by Sheikh Shu'aib al-Arnaut [22].

These two authentic Prophetic narrations provide powerful backing to the Mawquf statement of Anas. Furthermore, a narration from Sayyiduna Ibn Abbas adds a crucial clarifying detail: "The prayer is cut by the menstruating woman (i.e., adult woman) and the dog." [23]. The phrase "Al-Mar'ah al-Ha'iz" (the menstruating woman) does not mean a woman currently experiencing her menses; rather, in jurisprudential terminology, it designates a female who has reached the age of biological maturity (puberty).

Regarding the narration of Ibn Abbas, there is an academic discussion concerning its status as Marfu' (Prophetic) or Mawquf (from the Companion). Imam Abu Dawud explicitly mentioned that Shu'ba narrated it as Marfu',

whereas narrators like Sa'eed bin Abi 'Arubah, Hisham al-Dastawa'i, and Hammam narrated it via Qatadah as Mawquf upon Ibn Abbas. Despite this technical divergence, Imam al-Albani has authenticated its chain [24].

In apparent contrast to these narrations is a highly authentic Hadith from the Mother of the Believers, Sayyidah Aisha. When it was mentioned in her presence that a woman, a donkey, and a dog cut the prayer, she strongly objected, stating: "You have compared us to donkeys and dogs! By Allah, I have seen the Messenger of Allah praying while I lay on the bed between him and the Qiblah (direction of prayer)." [25]

While this narration seemingly contradicts the previous texts, scholars of Hadith and Fiqh have successfully reconciled (Tatbeeq) them [1]. The narrations of Abu Dharr and Abu Hurairah specifically address the legal ruling of a woman passing or walking across the space in front of the praying person (Murur). Conversely, the narration of Aisha explicitly describes her lying down and being stationary in front of him. Therefore, the mere physical presence or stationary existence of a woman in front of a praying person is fundamentally different from the act of traversing the sacred space between the worshipper and their Sutra. Due to this clear contextual distinction, both sets of authentic narrations are harmoniously integrated into Islamic law. Imam al-Albani also elucidated this exact distinction, clarifying that Aisha's Hadith involves lying down, not crossing [26].

However, significant scholarly debate exists regarding the precise Fiqhi interpretation of the word "cut" (Yaqta'u) used in these Ahadith. One group of scholars adopted the apparent, literal meaning of the texts, concluding that the crossing of a woman, a donkey, or a black dog literally invalidates (Batil) the prayer, requiring it to be repeated. Imam Ibn al-Mundhir, validating the Hadith of Abu Dharr as flawless, preferred acting upon its apparent meaning. He cited similar positions from prominent figures like Anas, Hasan al-Basri, and Abu al-Ahwas [27].

On the other hand, the vast majority (Jumhur) of jurists interpreted "cutting" not as a nullification of the prayer's legal validity, but as a severe reduction in its perfection, humility (Khushu'), and spiritual focus. Imam Ahmad reportedly hesitated regarding the woman and the donkey; Imam al-Tirmidhi quoted him saying, "In my heart, there is some hesitation regarding the donkey and the woman," though he held that the black dog does invalidate the prayer [28].

A comprehensive comparative analysis of the textual corpus reveals that the Athar of Anas is authentically established and originates from explicit Prophetic Ahadith. The narrations of Abu Dharr and Abu Hurairah are explicit, and Ibn Abbas adds the condition of the woman being an adult. Since Aisha's Hadith relates to a stationary position rather than crossing, it does not directly oppose the Ahadith of crossing.

Based on the apparent textual evidence, the stronger view appears to be that an adult woman passing between a praying person and their Sutra (or when no Sutra is present) falls under the severe warning of "cutting the prayer" [1]. However, because the interpretation of "cutting"—whether it means total invalidation or merely a loss of spiritual perfection—is a matter of renowned scholarly dispute, maintaining intellectual caution is necessary. The literalist approach of Ibn al-Mundhir and a faction of Ahl al-Hadith possesses strong textual backing, while the metaphorical interpretation of the Jumhur remains a deeply established and respected jurisprudential stance [1].

5.3. Contemporary Applications (Asri Itlaqat) The most vital practical application of this research in the modern era is the strict observance of the Sutra and the avoidance of crossing in front of someone deep in prayer [1]. This is particularly critical in densely populated environments such as mega-mosques, Islamic schools (Madaris), crowded homes, airports, shopping malls, and large public gatherings.

The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) commanded worshippers to actively stop anyone attempting to cross between them and their Sutra. It is imperative to understand—and to teach the modern generation—that this ruling is not rooted in misogyny or any degradation of a woman's honor and status [1]. Rather, it is strictly associated with the unique devotional protocols (Ta'abbudi Ahkam) of Salah and the preservation of the worshipper's spiritual concentration (Khushu'). Sayyidah Aisha's authentic narration serves as a definitive proof that a woman's mere presence in front of a praying person is entirely permissible and does not harm the prayer [1]. The legal prohibition is exclusively restricted to the act of crossing. Therefore, robust educational efforts must be made to teach both men and women the etiquettes of prayer, the necessity of using a Sutra, and the grave impropriety of walking across a person engaged in Salah [1].

6. SPATIAL CONSTRAINTS AND THE DYNAMICS OF CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER

The physical arrangement of worshippers in a congregation (Saff) is strictly regulated in Islamic law. However, Fiqh provides built-in flexibility to accommodate extreme spatial limitations, demonstrating the pragmatic nature of the Shari'ah.

6.1. Textual Evidence and Historical Context The text is narrated through Abu al-Mughirah, from Safwan, from Abd al-Rahman bin Jubayr bin Nufayr, from al-Harith bin Muawiyah al-Kindi.

Al-Harith traveled to Umar bin al-Khattab in Madinah to ask him about three specific issues. Umar asked, "What brings you here?" He replied, "I came to ask you about three matters." Umar asked, "What are they?" Al-Harith explained the first issue: "Sometimes, my wife and I are in a very narrow, tight room (Bina' Dayyiq), and the time

for prayer arrives. If she and I pray, and she stands beside me (in line), she is parallel to me. But if she stands behind me (as is the normal rule), she ends up outside the room."

Umar replied: "Put a cloth as a barrier (Screen) between you and her, and then you may pray with her parallel to you, if you wish."

He then asked about praying two Rak'ahs after the Asr prayer. Umar replied: "The Messenger of Allah forbade me from those two Rak'ahs." Lastly, he asked about storytelling/preaching (Qasas), saying, "The people urge me to preach to them." Umar said: "Do as you wish," seemingly reluctant to forbid him entirely. Al-Harith said, "I only want to follow your opinion." Umar then warned him: "I fear for you that you will preach and elevate yourself above them in your heart, and you will continue to preach and elevate yourself until you imagine that you are above them like the Pleiades (the highest stars), and then Allah will place you under their feet on the Day of Judgment to that exact degree." [29]

6.2. Jurisprudential Analysis (Fiqhi Tahqeeq) This Athar is an authentically established Mawquf narration from Umar bin al-Khattab. The renowned Hadith scholar Ahmad Shakir declared its chain to be Sahih (authentic), while Shu'aib al-Arnaut and Ibn Kathir classified it as Hasan (good) [1].

In normal circumstances, the established Sunnah dictates that when a woman prays in a congregation with a man (even if it is just a husband and wife), the woman must stand behind the man, not parallel to him in the same row. This is clearly evidenced by the narration of Anas bin Malik, who stated: "An orphan and I prayed in our house behind the Prophet, and my mother, Umm Sulaym, stood behind us." [30]. This Muttafaq 'Alayh (agreed upon by Bukhari and Muslim) Hadith delineates the fundamental spatial arrangement of a mixed congregation.

In another variation, Anas stated: "The orphan and I formed a row behind him (the Prophet), and the old woman stood behind us." [31].

Furthermore, Abu Hurairah narrates that the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) said: "The best rows for men are the first ones, and the worst are the last ones. And the best rows for women are the last ones, and the worst are the first ones." [32].

These authentic Marfu' Ahadith categorically establish the general Sunnah: men stand in the front, and women stand behind them. Even if the congregation consists of only one man (the Imam) and one woman, she does not stand beside him; she forms a row behind him. An authentic Mawquf statement from Abdullah bin Mas'ud also corroborates this general arrangement [33].

However, juxtaposed against this general rule is the specific Fatwa of Umar bin al-Khattab, which addresses a state of necessity (Darurah) or extreme spatial constraint (Idtirar). In the scenario presented by al-Harith, the physical dimensions of the room made it physically impossible for the woman to stand behind the man without exiting the structure entirely. Faced with this specific difficulty, Umar utilized his profound Fiqhi insight to issue a concession (Rukhsa). He permitted the husband and wife to stand parallel to each other on the condition that a physical barrier (a cloth or screen) was placed between them. Therefore, this specific Athar does not contradict the general Sunnah of row formation; rather, it provides a highly practical legal exception based on necessity and spatial limitation [1].

6.3. Contemporary Applications (Asri Itlaqat) This specific ruling from Umar bin al-Khattab offers immense practical convenience and flexibility for modern Muslims facing spatial limitations [1]. In contemporary scenarios such as traveling on trains or planes, staying in small hotel rooms, being confined to a hospital ward, residing in temporary refugee camps, or living in extremely cramped apartments, it may be physically impossible for a husband and wife (or Mahram relatives) to establish the standard front-and-back row formation.

Under normal circumstances, every effort must be made for the woman to stand behind the man [1]. However, if the space genuinely does not permit this without causing undue hardship or forcing someone out of the designated prayer area, this historical Athar provides the legal leeway to hang a curtain, place a physical divider, or set up a cloth barrier between them, allowing them to pray side-by-side [1]. This application perfectly illustrates the dynamism of Islamic jurisprudence and its ability to provide practical solutions without compromising the foundational principles of modesty and proper worship.

7. CONCLUSION

The Rightly Guided Caliphs and the esteemed Companions (May Allah be pleased with them) are the most reliable, unparalleled bedrock for the transmission of the Quran and the Prophetic Sunnah. The explicit texts of Islamic primary sources bear witness to their piety, truthfulness, and divine guidance. In the face of modern ideological onslaughts propagated through global media, addressing the complex inquiries of the rationalist, empirically-minded new generation requires more than traditional emotional rhetoric. It demands a rigorous, logical, and practical articulation of Islamic utility [1].

It is an urgent intellectual duty to demonstrate to the contemporary youth that the Companions were the greatest pragmatic scholars of human history, whose profound jurisprudential reasoning (Fiqahat) offers robust, logical solutions to the intricate socio-religious dilemmas of the modern era [1]. Exploring the continuum of Islamic knowledge through the modern, qualitative study of the Athar of the Companions fulfills a crucial ideological

mandate. This article's applied analysis of the verdicts of the Rightly Guided Caliphs concerning women's prayer highlights the innate flexibility, profound logic, and eternal applicability of Islamic jurisprudence.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the applied analysis presented in this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Mosque Infrastructure:** Mosques and Islamic community centers must structurally accommodate women by designating dignified, appropriately partitioned areas, allowing them to participate in congregational prayers and religious education within the bounds of Shari'ah, free from cultural prohibition.
2. **Education on Attire:** Educational campaigns should emphasize that Islamic prayer attire is defined by its function (complete concealment of the Awrah without being tight or transparent) rather than its cultural name or modern fashion trend.
3. **Awareness of Prayer Etiquette:** Extensive awareness must be raised in public spaces, airports, and crowded areas regarding the critical importance of utilizing a Sutrah during prayer and the severe prohibition of crossing directly in front of a praying individual.
4. **Flexibility in Confined Spaces:** Pastoral care workers, travel guides, and hospital chaplains should be educated on the Fiqhi concessions regarding prayer formations, specifically the permissibility for a husband and wife to pray side-by-side with a barrier in extremely confined spaces where the standard row formation is impossible.

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