
Separate rooms for the women in the mosques

Compiled by Aboo Talhah Daawood Burbank (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ)

Article taken and slightly adapted from:
alitsaambissunnah.wordpress.com

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

[‘Silsilatul-Hudaa wan-Noor’ tape series of
Shaikh Muhammad Naasiruddeen al-Albaanee - (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ)^{1,2}]

Q. “O Shaikh, the hadeeth which occurs in Saheeh Muslim, where the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم)³ said, with the meaning: <<**The worst of the rows of the women is the first one, and the best of them is the last one.**>> So now, is that ruling, as is indicated by what is apparent from the hadeeth, the same in the closed rooms which are set up for that. Meaning in this closed places, for the women are now totally apart from the men; and it is well known that when (the scholars) spoke in explanation of the hadeeth they mentioned that the underlying reason for the first rows being the worst of them is that they are the closest ones to the men, as mentioned by an-Nawawee..”

A. (“Yes?”)

Q. “So does what is apparent from the hadeeth apply to these closed places now?”

A. “Upon my belief I am not able to answer this question, because I think that the questioner consents to this closing off being something legislated, whereas I do not hold that.”

Q. “Yes.”

A. “Because this is an innovation (bid`ah). Locking the women away, or enclosing them (in rooms) in the mosques, especially in spacious mosques, on account of the corruption in society; and confining them to a room where the movements of the Imaam will be hidden from them, so that they are sometimes liable to render their Prayer deficient, to the extent of its being null and void.

So in my belief locking the women away, in rooms specific to them in the mosques, is just the same as the row being cut by having an elongated minbar. Both of these are newly introduced affairs. So it is obligatory upon us to return to what the first Salaf were upon.

(We discussed this matter at length yesterday. Yes, the brother was present with us...the brother was with us...)

So it is said: The women today are different to the women of yesterday, and there can be added to that: this is something witnessed. So this saying results in the conclusion that it is therefore befitting that we should confine the women to these rooms, so that the men do not come across anything from that which should remain hidden from the women. So I gave a relatively long answer, and

¹ (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) (rahimahullaah) May Allaah have mercy on him

² Tape No. 329 (00:25:39), [repeated on tape no.351 (00:44:16)]

³ (صلى الله عليه وسلم) (sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him

Separate rooms for the women in the mosques

time was short, so I said, as part of a long discussion: that confining the women to these rooms is not a case of legislated masaalihul-mursalah (matters established for the welfare of the Muslims), since the reason for this confinement is a failing of the Islamic society- and it includes the women- to carry out legislated obligations. So if the women entered the mosques wearing the legislated jilbaab, then those who build these rooms would not have the idea entering their minds of confining the women to them. However when they witnessed, unfortunately, some women entering, some perhaps wearing a coat/jacket, or a "tunic", or what they call a "jilbaab" today, and it is not a jilbaab, down to their mid calves, or sometimes wearing transparent flesh coloured tights, and so on. So the gaze of the men was liable to see something that should be hidden. So therefore they said: We will screen the women away from the men in the mosque.

So I say: No! It is rather upon us to implement Islaam, and that we return the Islaamic society as a whole, not sections of it, to what was the practice in the initial time. So we contend with the society today. We want the Muslims to return: with their scholars, their students, and their common folk, to that which the Salaf were upon; not to (blind) following of madhhabs, but rather to "Allaah said.., His Messenger said..."

There will not be a prevention of having different views, just as there was at the beginning, but we do not want there to be restrictive (blind) following of madhhabs. We want the societies, the elite and the general folk, to return to what the Salaf were upon.

As with the case of the mosques. We do not want there to be elongated minbars. We do not want there to be extended minbars in the form of trickery to escape legislated prohibitions (al-Hiyal ash-Shar`iyyah). They realized that the older minbars sever the rows (for the Prayer), so now they come out to us from a minbar which he enters via the mihraab, and he ascends and then appears to the people upon a little raised platform. Why all this twisting and turning? (All that is needed) is three steps, and Allaah has sufficed the Believers so that they have no need to fight. The best guidance is the guidance of Muhammad. How many dirhams and deenaars does it cost to enable the khateeb to ascend to this platform? Based upon the claim: "We do not want to sever the rows." This claim is a good one. This is the case. However it can be attained without all of this unnecessary effort: take a minbar comprising three steps, and the problem is at an end. Likewise we do not want there to be all this decoration.

And lastly we do not want these rooms for the women. We want for the women what we want for the men: that which was previously present: that the women enter wearing hijaab, and the men move forward to the front rows.

Then in that case the previous hadeeth will apply: <<**The best of the rows of the women is the last one, and the worst of them is the first one.**>>

We do not want to reverse the indication of the hadeeth on account of the aberration that has appeared with the building of these rooms in the mosques."
