
Women in Islamic Society - Mixing on Social Occasi

Posted by innocence_seeker - 2007/09/04 07:27

When we assess the nature of Islamic society, particularly to determine to what extent should men and women be segregated, we need to look at the first Muslim community in Madinah, because that was the community established by the Prophet. He lived among them, correcting their mistakes and providing guidance on all aspects of human life. When we look at authentic reports of incidents or behavior, we deduce what was acceptable and what was not. We should remember that the Prophet did not stay quiet when he saw something wrong. It is part of the mission assigned to him that he should declare what was acceptable at the moment such declaration was needed.

The need is obviously clear when something is done. If the Prophet objected to it, people would immediately refrain from it. If he did not object, then that indicated its permissibility. If he encouraged or commended a practice, it became a Sunnah. Since people often speak about Islamic society being segregated, we need to assess how much segregation was practiced in the Muslim society in Madinah. We will certainly find much that shows that society to be a mixed one.

A good indicator is found in the events of common joy, such as weddings and celebrations. The first such occasion was at the time when the Prophet arrived in Madinah. Its people were awaiting his arrival with much anticipation. They used to go out every day to welcome him when he approached. The Prophet was traveling with his companion, Abu Bakr. Abu Bakr reports: "We reached Madinah at night, and people disputed as to who will be the Prophet's host. He said: 'I will stay with the Al-Najjar clan, the maternal uncles of Abd Al-Muttalib (the Prophet's grandfather) . They will take this as a favor.' Men and women were on top of their homes, and children and servants were in the roads calling out, 'O, Muhammad! O, Messenger of God! O, Muhammad! O, Messenger of God!'" (Related by Muslim)

Ibn Abbas reports on what he saw on the day when Makkah fell to Islam and the Prophet entered the city: "People crowded around the Prophet saying: 'This is Muhammad! This is Muhammad!' Even young women came out of doors." (Related by Muslim)

Both of these occasions were public events in which we see men and women taking part alongside each other, with no objection from the Prophet. The two occasions took place eight years apart, which means that there was nothing in the Prophet's guidance throughout this period to prevent such participation. If it is said that the people of Makkah were not Muslim at the time, the Prophet would have pointed out to them that now that Islam was widely accepted in Makkah, their practice should not be repeated, but he did not. Indeed we see the Prophet encouraging joyous celebration of weddings, particularly among the Ansar whom he knew to love to have fun. Aishah reports: "I prepared a woman's wedding to a man from the Ansar. The Prophet said to me: 'Aishah, did you not have any entertainment? The Ansar love to have entertainment' ." (Related by Al-Bukahri) In another version, the Prophet said to her: "You should have sent with the bride a maid to play the tambourine and sing."

We need to establish what the Prophet meant by entertainment. Perhaps we should look here at the usage of the same word in the Qur'anic verse speaking about people's behavior at the time of prayer on Fridays. "Whenever they observe trade or entertainment, they scatter toward it, leaving you (Prophet) standing there. Say, 'what is with God is better than any entertainment or trade. God is the best provider'." (62: 11) Al-Tabari mentions several reports explaining this verse, but then he comments that the one reported by Jabir is perhaps the more accurate one because he was one of them and saw these events. Jabir says: "When young women got married, a procession with drums and wood-wind instruments was organized. People would go to join these, leaving the Prophet giving his sermon. God then revealed the verse disapproving their behavior."

We find that playing music and singing was common practice at weddings in Madinah. Al-Rubayyi' Bint Mu'awwidh reports: "The Prophet came to us when my wedding was over, and he sat on my bed, as close as you are seated now. Some maids of ours played the tambourine and sang, praising those of our people who were killed in the Battle of Badr. One of them said in her singing: 'Among us we have a Prophet who knows what will happen tomorrow.' The Prophet told her: 'Stop this and continue with what you were saying before.'" (Related by Al-Bukahri)

In commenting on this Hadith, Ibn Hajar quotes Al-Muhallab: "This Hadith confirms the desirability to publicize marriage by playing the tambourine and singing. It also indicates that the ruler may attend a wedding, even though it involves entertainment, as long as such entertainment remains within what is permissible. "

Ibn Hajar also quotes a Hadith related by Al-Tabarani quoting Aishah: "The Prophet passed by women from the Ansar celebrating a wedding and singing poetry that included a reference to someone as knowing what will happen tomorrow. He said: 'No one knows what will happen tomorrow other than God'."

On both occasions we see the Prophet objecting to something said, because it is contrary to Islamic teachings and untrue. He did not object to the practice of singing or playing music on a joyous occasion like a wedding. In fact, he encouraged that. When there was a wedding which his wife, Aishah, organized, he told her that she should have arranged for some entertainment and singing. We also note that in Madinah men attended such singing at the time of weddings.

Post edited by: innocence_seeker, at: 2007/09/04 07:30

Ramdhan is approaching, take care of minor details

Posted by innocence_seeker - 2007/09/04 08:01

NOSE DROPS, EYE DROPS

Can a person who is sick inhale some menthol type medicine through the nose to clear the head during fasting in Ramadan? Can a person put eye drops in their eye during Fasting in Ramadan?

It is not permissible to inhale medicine during fasting. It is permissible to use eye drops during fasting.

SWIMMING

Can one swim while fasting ?

It is permissible. Care should be taken that no water enters the mouth. It will, however, be best to abstain and use the precious moments of this month in Ibaadat.

BREASTFEEDING

I am breastfeeding my 5-month old daughter - can I fast during Ramadan? The iftar time will be 8:30pm. If fasting affects lactation should I continue or make up the days later?

It is permissible to fast whilst breastfeeding. However, if fasting affects lactation, you may make up for the fasts later.

SWALLOWING MUCUS

If someone has a throat infection and is coughing up green or yellow colored sputum, if such sputum is swallowed will this invalidate the fast? Similarly if someone has a runny nose from the flu or common cold which is producing clear mucus, if this mucus is swallowed will the fast be invalidated?

Swallowing Mucus or sputum does not invalidate the fast.

TOOTHPASTE & BRUSHING TEETH

1. I was wondering if brushing with miswaak allowed (which has a taste to it), why isn't brushing with tooth paste allowed?

It is permissible to make miswak while fasting. To use tooth paste in the state of fasting is Makrooh (disliked). The minimum taste in the miswak is unlike the strong taste in the paste. Furthermore the paste is a solid substance and liquidifies more in the mouth thereby having the potential of going down the throat.

2. Is it permissible to brush teeth while fasting?

It is makrooh to use toothpaste during fasting. One may use the miswaak during fasting.

BLOOD TEST

1. If blood is taken out of the body, does this break the fast?

Taking out blood during fasting does not invalidate the fast.

2. I am diabetic and I am prone to fainting - can I take blood tests to monitor my blood sugar during ramadan?

Shari'ah (laws of Islam) are balanced and have taken into consideration different circumstances. If a person is ill to such an extent that he will faint due to fasting, then he will be excused from fasting. Such a person may give Fidyah (compensation) for not fasting. However, taking blood tests during fasting is permissible and that does not invalidate the fast.

INJECTIONS WHILST FASTING

Is it permissible to take an injection while fasting and does that nullify the fast?

It is permissible to take an injection during fasting. The injection does not nullify the fast. (Ahsanul Fataawa vol.4 pg.432)

ASTHMA PUMP

I am an asthma patient. Is it permissible for me to use the inhaler during fasting? The inhaler contains salbutamol (liquid medication). If it is not permissible, what should I do when I get an asthma attack during fasting?

Since the inhaler contains a medication (salbutamol), the use of it in the state of fasting will invalidate the fast. We advise you take medication at the time of Suhoor to avoid an asthma attack. However, should you get the attack during fasting, if there is no adequate alternative which does not break the fast, you may use the inhaler and make-up for that fast later (make Qadhaa).

LIP BALMS

Are you allowed to put anything on your lips during fasting, such as lip balm or vaseline to help them from burning?

It is permissible to use a lip balm in the state of fasting.

Fatwas are by Mufti Ebrahim Desai -Taken from Islam.tc.]

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Dr. Saadullah Khan Kaleem, First PhD in Urdu Liter

Posted by khizer - 2007/12/21 04:31

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