



## Women going out for `Eid prayer

Fatwa No. 8072

**Q:** Your Eminence, I am the Imam of Al-Masjid Al-Jami` (the large mosque where Jumu`ah [Friday] Prayers are held) in Al-Far`, a village in the province of Al-`Ays located in Yanbu`. People in our neighborhood do not allow women and children to attend Salat-ul-`Eid (the Festival Prayer). I drew their attention two days in advance before the last `Eid-ul-Fitr (the Festival of Breaking the Fast) that this contradicts the Sunnah and that they should follow the Sunnah of our Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and bring women and children to the Musalla (a place for Prayer). I only intended to revive this deserted Sunnah. I started with my family, my wife and children, but unfortunately no other women attended the Salah. People even criticized me for bringing my children and wife to the `Eid Prayer; some complained to an officer in the Ministry of Endowments in Yanbu` Al Bahr who asked me not to repeat this act again as they claim it distracts those offering Salah. I would like that your Eminence issue a Fatwa explaining the ruling regarding this matter and to warn from even more grievous habits such as,

( Part No : 8, Page No: 286)

women going out and shaking hands with non-Mahram males (not a spouse or an unmarriageable relative), kissing their heads, etc, despite I have been warning them against these habits in Friday Khutbahs (sermons) on every occasion. I would like, your Eminence, that the Fatwa be read to them on Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer before the `Eid. May Allah reward you and all Muslims!

**A: Firstly,** it is an act of Sunnah that women go out to Salat-ul-`Eid. It is recorded in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) and others on the authority of Um `Atiyyah (may Allah be pleased with her) that she said, "we are ordered" and in another narration, ( The Prophet (peace be upon him) commanded us to bring out adolescent girls, menstruating women and virgins, but the menstruating women were to stay away from the prayer, but were to witness goodness and the gathering of the Muslims. )In another narration( We were ordered to go out (for `Eid) and also to take along with us adolescent girls and virgins staying in seclusion. )and in the narration of Al-Tirmidhy , ( The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) used to allow the adolescent girls, and virgins staying in seclusion to go out for the two `Eids. As for the menstruating women, they should keep away from the place of prayer but they could present themselves at the religious gathering and invocation of Muslims. Upon this one of them (women) said, 'O Messenger of Allah! Is there any harm for a woman to stay at home if she does not have a garment?' He (peace be upon him) said, 'Her sister (in Islam) should lend her a garment.' )In the narration of Al-Nasa'iy,

( Part No : 8, Page No: 287)

( Hafsah bint Sirin said that Um `Atiyyah never mentioned the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon

him) without saying, "may my father be sacrificed for him." I asked her, "Did you hear the Prophet (peace be upon him) say such and such?" She replied, "Yes, may my father be sacrificed for him, I heard him saying that we should bring out the young girls and those who were secluded, or the young girls who were secluded, and the menstruating women, so that they could witness the blessings of `Eid and see the gathering of the believers, but those who were menstruating were to keep away from the prayer-place itself." »Therefore, it becomes clear that is a stressed act of Sunnah to let women go out to Salat-ul-`Eid provided that they go out modestly dressed (in accordance with the Islamic code of woman's dress) and do not reveal their attractions, as is known from other evidence.

With regard to letting discerning boys go out to `Eid Prayer, Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer, etc., this is something which is well known and is allowed in Islam, due to the many proofs to that effect.

**Secondly,** it is forbidden to shake hands with a non-Mahram woman (not a spouse or an unmarriageable relative) for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, « I do not shake hands with women. » `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said, « The hand of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) never touched the hand of any woman, but he only used to take their pledge of allegiance orally. »

**( Part No : 8, Page No: 288)**

That is because shaking hands with non-Mahram women (women lawful to marry) is one of the reasons of Fitnah (temptation).

May Allah grant us success! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and Companions!

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