

Differences between the salaah of Men and Women

Q: Salaah-574: Many women perform their Ruku, Sajdah and Qa'dah just like men. Is this correct? Please furnish a detailed reply.

Answer: Women are wrong when they perform their Ruku and Sajdah like men because there are many differences between the salaah of men and women. These are:

1. When calling out the Takbeer Tahreema, men raise the hands up to the ears, while women raise their hands to their chests.
2. Men fold the hands beneath the navel in such a manner that the thumb and little finger of the right hand encircles the wrist of the left hand, with the remaining three fingers placed on the forearm. All the fingers of the left hand will then be placed beneath the right forearm and must not be left to hang downwards. Women will place their hands on their chests with the palm of the right hand on top of the palm of the left hand without forming a ring with the fingers.
3. In Ruku, the man should bow in a manner that the head, back and posterior are all in line, while a woman should bend only so much that her hands can reach her knees. Her back should not be straight.
4. A man in Ruku will clasp the knees firmly with the fingers apart, while the woman will keep her fingers together and place the hands on the knees without clasping them. Her knees should also be slightly bent and not straight like those of men. Men should also keep their arms away from their sides and adopt an open posture, while women should keep the arms attached to her sides, keeping the ankles together in a sort of folded posture.
5. In Sajdah a man's thighs are kept apart from his belly, his arms away from his sides and his forearms and elbows off the ground. Women, on the other hand, will perform Sajdah with the thighs attached to her belly, her arms attached to her sides and her forearms spread upon the ground. Furthermore, men should have their feet erect with the toes facing Qibla, while women will have their feet stretched to the right and make Sajdah with her body kept as compact as possible. Her fingers will be kept together, facing the Qibla.
6. In Jalsa and Qa'dah, a man should keep his right foot erect with the toes facing the Qibla, spread his left foot on the ground and sit on it. Both hands should be placed on the thighs with the fingers facing Qibla and not pointing downwards. Women should extend both feet towards the right and sit on her left buttock.

NOTE: When performing the sajdah in the Masnoon method, a woman should take support from the ground when she proceeds from Ruku to Sajdah, extend both feet to the right and then immediately perform Sajdah. This helps in performing the Sajdah and it is the Masnoon method that has been practised from generation to generation. It can therefore not be called an act of Bid'ah. And Allaah knows best what is most correct.

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