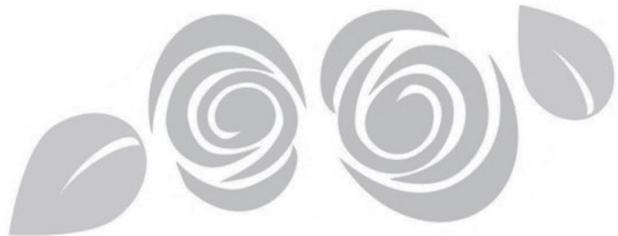


A Muslim Woman's
— GUIDE TO —
**MENSTRUATION
RULINGS**

WRITTEN & COMPILED BY
NAIELAH ACKBARALI



A Muslim Woman's Guide to Menstruation Rulings

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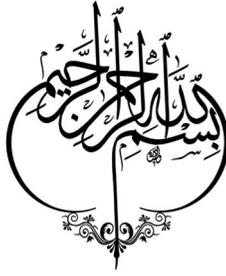
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*To my husband,
who supported me throughout my journey.*

Transliteration Table

ARABIC LETTER	ENGLISH TRANSLITERATION	ARABIC LETTER	ENGLISH TRANSLITERATION
ء	’	ض	ḍ
ا	a, ā	ط	ṭ
ب	b	ظ	ẓ
ت	t	ع	‘, ‘a, ‘i, ‘u
ث	th	غ	gh
ج	j	ف	f
ح	ḥ	ق	q
خ	kh	ك	k
د	d	ل	l
ذ	dh	م	m
ر	r	ن	n
ز	z	و	w, ū, u
س	s	ه	h
ش	sh	ي	y, ī, i
ص	ṣ		

ARABIC SYMBOL	ENGLISH TRANSLITERATION	ENGLISH TRANSLATION
	<i>ṣalla ‘Llāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam</i>	Allāh bless him and give him peace.
	<i>‘alahī as-salām</i>	Peace be upon him.
	<i>raḍiya ‘Llāhu ‘anhum</i>	May Allāh be pleased with them.
	<i>raḍiya ‘Llāhu ‘anhā</i>	May Allāh be pleased with her.
	<i>raḍiya ‘Llāhu ‘anhu</i>	May Allāh be pleased with him.

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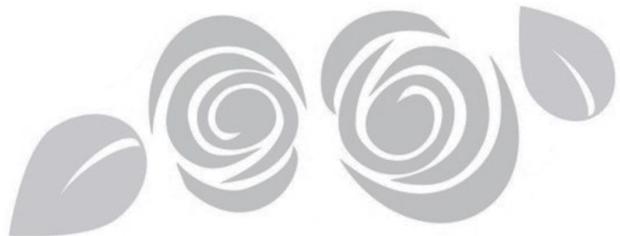
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Introduction

I was lost. I had pressing questions related to my menstrual cycle, but no one could help me.

I asked my friends, their mothers, and the women in my local community. Some attempted to give answers, which confused me more, while others shrugged their shoulders saying they did not know what to say.

I remember crying several times over my situation, feeling like I could not win. I hated my period. I felt hopeless with the rulings.

After several years of living in ignorance and sheer guessing, I finally met learned people who could answer my questions. I was relieved from one perspective but overwhelmed from another.

I had to learn the rulings from century-old *fiqh* books. I had to ask embarrassing questions to male teachers. I had to spend years of my life trying to seek this knowledge from several scholars. I even studied the rulings from different schools of law (*madhāhib*) searching for answers. It has been a long twenty-year journey.

Over the years, I began to meet more women like myself. Women who had urgent questions but could not always find someone to give them the answer they needed. They had other obstacles in their path that stopped them from learning the rulings in detail. Many times, they could not grasp the foundational principles to take their studies further.

I wrote this book with the intention to help women understand the rulings related to menstruation and how to practice them. I do not want women to struggle the way that I did in trying to put the puzzle pieces together. I want to make learning this subject easy and accessible to as many women as possible.

When menstruation is taught, it is usually one of two extremes. It is either oversimplified so that women do not gain the full picture of what the rulings entail, or it is overly complicated so that women leave feeling hopeless in grasping what is taught.

I intended to produce a work that was the middle way. This book is not a beginner's book, but it is not advanced either. I pray that every woman who reads it will understand its details, even if it takes a few times to digest certain points. The basis of studying knowledge is

repetition, and hopefully with it being in a book format, it will make revision of the concepts easier.

Menstruation is known to be one of the most difficult chapters to master in the books of Islamic law (*fiqh*) due to its fine details, terse definitions, and numerous rulings that are connected to other chapters of *fiqh*. However, at the same time, its practical application in a woman's life cannot be ignored.

God-fearingness (*taqwā*) is the key to success in this Life and the Next. Allāh Most High tells us that He loves those who are God-fearing (*Āli 'Imrān*, 3:76). Thus, it is imperative to learn the rulings of menstruation and make the effort to apply them in one's life. Learning and practicing this knowledge are for Allāh Most High's sake. With His assistance, anything is possible.

ABOUT THIS BOOK

This guide is designed to be practical, engaging, and easy to read.

- ✧ Inspirational content based on verses of the Qur'ān and stories from the lives of the female Companions  introduces each chapter.
- ✧ Core topics and their related rulings are organized into structured chapters.
- ✧ Legal rulings are broken down into simplified portions and categorized by numbered headings.
- ✧ Bullet point lists, tables, charts, and picture diagrams are utilized to consolidate the knowledge shared.
- ✧ Tables, charts, and picture diagrams are labeled for easy referencing.
- ✧ Blurbs that highlight concepts to remember are included in relevant places.
- ✧ Icons are used to direct and help the reader. A list of the icons along with their meanings can be found in Table i.

- ❖ Review questions are provided at the end of each chapter to test the reader's comprehension.
- ❖ Answers to the most popular questions that women ask are detailed in the final chapter.
- ❖ Relevant medical information is mentioned.
- ❖ A summary of the rulings related to menstruation, lochia, and purity spans is given in the Appendix section for a quick overview.
- ❖ A glossary of terms is provided for any words that are unfamiliar to the reader.

Table i: Key for Icons

ICONS	MEANING
	Represents the start of a chapter along with its contents.
	Points out an associated ruling or important detail.
	Describes the topic further.
	Alerts the reader to a must-know issue.
	Indicates that a related diagram, table, or chart is available.
	Directs the reader to another relevant section or chapter.
	Signifies a common question with its answer.
	Draws attention to important things to remember.

ADVICE TO THE READER

Before beginning, there are a few things to note about this book.

Firstly, the rulings in this guide are based on the *Ḥanafī madhhab*. Each school of law (*madhhab*) has developed its own specific methodology to understand what has been conveyed about

menstruation from the Qur'ān and the *Sunna*. This may lead to notable differences of opinion amongst scholars. As such, women should not be surprised if they come across rulings different from the ones mentioned in this book.

The reason this guide focuses on teaching one *madhhab* is because it is easier to learn the rulings from one *madhhab* instead of the rulings across the various schools of law in one go. Sometimes it can cause more confusion than good.

However, the *Ḥanafī madhhab's* way of resolving menstruation issues may not be practical for every person's circumstance. Consequently, each woman should choose the *madhhab* that works best for her situation, providing that she has access to a teacher who can help her.

The differences of opinion are a mercy for the *ummah*, especially when there is a need to take them. As long as a woman is following the Prophet's ﷺ way, this is what matters.



What is a *madhhab*? What is the *Ḥanafī madhhab*?

The Sacred Law rulings are derived primarily from the Qur'ān, the *Sunna*, scholarly consensus (*ijmā'*), and legal analogy (*qiyās*). A *madhhab* is a school of law that unites scholars upon a common methodology concerning how to understand, interpret, and derive legal rulings from the guidance of Allāh Most High and His beloved Messenger ﷺ.

There are four main schools of law (*madhāhib*) in Sunni Islam: the *Ḥanafī*, *Mālikī*, *Shāfi'ī*, and *Ḥanbalī madhhab*. A very common misconception is that following a *madhhab* means following the opinion of the founder instead of the Qur'ān and the *Sunna*. This is not true. Rather it is about following a legal methodology to understand and apply the Qur'ān and the *Sunna*. The system of law provided by each *madhhab* was further developed and refined by scholars throughout each century up to today's times.

The *Ḥanafī madhhab* is one of the four traditional schools. Its eponym is the 8th-century Kufan scholar, Abū Ḥanīfa an-Nu'mān ibn Thābit, whose legal views were preserved primarily by his two disciples, Imām Abū Yūsuf and Imām Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan ash-Shaybānī. May Allāh have mercy on them.

Secondly, although this guide will give a strong foundation for menstruation rulings, reading it with a teacher – or asking one’s questions to a teacher – must be a priority.

Finally, each chapter of this guide is a layer of knowledge that builds upon the previous chapters. Therefore, it is not recommended to skip sections.

Before starting, test your current knowledge of the rulings with the quiz below. The answer key is given on the following page, and detailed answers are explained throughout the guide.

TRUE OR FALSE QUESTIONS

- 1 Only red blood can be considered menstruation.
- 2 The least amount of days menstruation can be is different for each woman, and it is based on her body’s cycle.
- 3 The spotting of blood is not menstruation. Menstruation starts when bleeding becomes a constant flow.
- 4 Every time bleeding stops, a woman is obliged to take a purificatory shower (*ghusl*).
- 5 The maximum amount of days menstruation can be is 10 days (240 hours). Any bleeding that exceeds this amount will be ruled as abnormal bleeding (*istiḥāḍa*).
- 6 If the bleeding exceeds 10 days, all 10 days are menstruation. Thereafter, a woman uses 10 days as her menstrual habit and 15 days as her purity habit until her situation normalizes.
- 7 A purity span of at least 15 days (360 hours) free of blood must follow menstruation.
- 8 If a woman starts bleeding before 15 days of purity elapses, she keeps praying until she reaches the completion of day 15.
- 9 Bleeding during labor is considered lochia (*nifās*).
- 10 If a woman’s lochia (*nifās*) stops before 40 days, she waits until 40 days finishes before taking a purificatory shower (*ghusl*).

ANSWER KEY: All false except numbers 5 and 7.

PART ONE:

Adopting The Right Mindset

Chapter 1

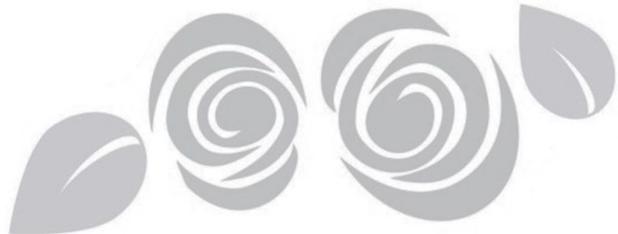
WRITTEN FOR THE DAUGHTERS OF ADAM

Chapter 2

WHAT YOU WEREN'T TOLD GROWING UP

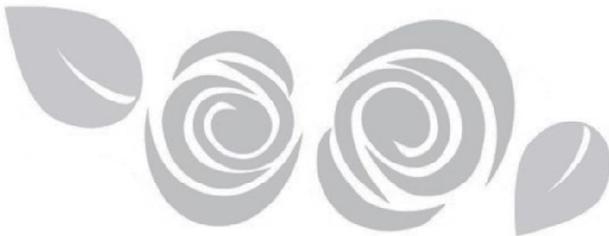
Chapter 3

COLORS, FLOWS, AND DISCHARGES



This is a thing
which Allāh has
written for the
daughters of
Adam ﷺ

Bukhārī



Chapter 1

Written for the Daughters of Adam ﷺ



IN THIS CHAPTER

- ◇ The Prophet's ﷺ explanation of menstruation
- ◇ The Islamic view on menstruation
- ◇ How the Prophet ﷺ treated menstruating women

It was the tenth year after the *hijra*, the last year of the Prophet Muḥammad's ﷺ life. Yet, no one knew that his ﷺ demise was to come. The Prophet ﷺ intended to undertake *ḥajj* during this year. It was the only *ḥajj* that the Prophet ﷺ performed after it became compulsory. Less than three months later, he ﷺ would suddenly fall sick and pass away.

Thousands of the Companions ﷺ came from various parts of the Arabian Peninsula to complete the *ḥajj* with the Prophet ﷺ. As for his wives ﷺ, all of them accompanied him to Makkah during his final pilgrimage.

The Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ left Madīna when there were only five days remaining of the month of *Dhū 'l Qa 'da*. They entered into a state of pilgrim sanctity (*iḥrām*) just a few miles outside of Madīna at Dhūl Ḥulayfah, which is known as Masjid ash-Shajara in today's times.

The Prophet ﷺ ordered those with him to intend what they wanted. There are different intentions that a pilgrim can make for *ḥajj*. A pilgrim can intend to do *ḥajj* only (*ifrād*), or a *ḥajj* and an *'umra* together with the same intention (*qirān*), or an *'umra* by itself and a *ḥajj* by itself (*tamattu'*). The Prophet's ﷺ beloved wife Lady *'Ā'isha* ﷺ intended to do the latter type, which is an *'umra* and a *ḥajj* with separate intentions.

The Companions ﷺ were so excited to perform the *ḥajj*. They chanted the *talbiya* throughout their trip down to Makkah. One can only dream of how elated their spirits were and the immense honor that they must have felt to be part of the Prophet's pilgrimage ﷺ.

The Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ entered Makkah on the fourth of *Dhū 'l Ḥijjah*, prepared to complete the sacred rites due upon them. However, Lady 'Ā'isha ؓ started to menstruate before that at Sarif, a location that is approximately ten miles outside of Makkah.

She was already in the state of pilgrim sanctity, and not knowing what was to come, she became deeply saddened by the thought that she could not do *ḥajj* at all.

In her own narration, she describes what happened and says:

"We set out with the Prophet ﷺ for *ḥajj*, and we were not making mention of anything except *ḥajj*. When we reached Sarif, I got my menses. When the Prophet ﷺ came to me, I was crying. He ﷺ asked, 'Why are you weeping?' I said, 'I wish – by Allāh! - that I had not performed *ḥajj* this year.' He asked, 'Perhaps you got your menses?' I replied, 'Yes.' He then said, 'This is a thing which Allāh has written for the daughters of Adam. So do what all the pilgrims do except that you do not perform the *ṭawāf* around the Ka'ba until you are (ritually) pure.'"

(*Bukhārī*, 305)

Lady 'Ā'isha ؓ was crying out of disappointment. She did not want to miss the momentous experience of *ḥajj*, but what could she do? In those days, there were no hormonal medications that existed to stop her menstrual flow.

She had to submit to Allāh Most High's will, but it was nevertheless a heartbreaking moment for her – even to the extent that she wished that she had not performed *ḥajj* that year! Little did she know that this would be the only *ḥajj* that her beloved husband ﷺ would perform, and he ﷺ would die only a few months later in her own arms.

The Prophet ﷺ response to Lady ‘Ā’isha’s crying was exemplary in many ways. Firstly, he ﷺ knew why she was crying. This is the type of loving relationship that they had with each other. He ﷺ could sense his wife’s emotional state.

Secondly, he was gentle in his approach. He ﷺ saw that she was in pain and reached out to her in a caring way. His words comforted and consoled her worries. And what were his words? That women are the daughters of Prophet Adam ﷺ.

Sometimes people think that menstruation is dirty and disgusting, but the Prophet ﷺ elevated women to the lofty status of being the progeny of the first Prophet to mankind because of their monthly cycles.

This *ḥadīth* also proves that menstruation is not a punishment. Rather, menstruation is natural and normal – something which Allāh Most High has ordained for all women until the end of time.

In fact, Allāh Most High ﷻ honored women with their monthly cycles. If it were not for menstruation, Muslim women could not get pregnant, have children, and continue to uphold the lifeline of the *ummah*.

The Prophet ﷺ informed Lady ‘Ā’isha ﷺ that she could perform *ḥajj*, but she could not do the *ṭawāf*. This is the only *ḥajj* ritual that a menstruating women must avoid until her menstruation ceases.

She can do everything else: camp at Minā, stand at ‘Arafat, sleep at Muzdalifa, stone the *jamarāt*, carry out the slaughtering, make *dhikr*, supplicate, engage in repentance, make *ṣalawāt*, and much more.

Lady ‘Ā’isha ﷺ followed through with the Prophetic instruction. She exited her pilgrim state for ‘*umra* and entered into a new pilgrim state for *ḥajj*. She completed the standing at ‘Arafat, and when her menstruation ended she performed the *ṭawāf* on ‘*Id* day.

She accepted that this is what Allāh Most High had willed for her. Furthermore, she was still able to benefit and have a spiritual experience despite her circumstance.

In another narration, Lady ‘Ā’isha ﷺ told the Prophet ﷺ that everyone else had completed a *ḥajj* and an ‘*umra* but she had only done a *ḥajj*. The Prophet ﷺ ordered her brother, ‘Abdur Raḥmān

ibn Abī Bakr ﷺ, to take her to Tan‘īm so that she could enter into a state of pilgrim sanctity for ‘umra. (*Muslim*, 1213)

In today’s times, this location is demarcated by a mosque known as Masjid ‘Ā’isha. It is where everyone goes nowadays to enter into pilgrim sanctity (*iḥrām*) for ‘umra once they are in Makkah.

Because of Lady ‘Ā’isha’s situation ﷺ, Muslim women know what to do when they experience menstruation during *ḥajj*. More than this, all Muslims know where to go if they want to perform another ‘umra. Her trial, her pain, and her worry over her menstruation became a symbol of Islam – landmarked by a *masjid* that people will use until the end of time.

MENSTRUATION IS A BLESSING, NOT A PUNISHMENT

It is quite common for women to complain about their period woes. The cramping, the headaches, and the messy bleeding on a monthly basis could be viewed as inconvenient.

However, believing women must overlook the emotional highs and lows of their menstrual cycle and direct their focus upon what the religion of Islam says about menstruation.

Islam does not consider menstruation to be a punishment. Rather, menstruation is viewed as a natural process that normal, healthy women experience throughout their lifetime.

A menstruating woman is not dirty, but rather from a legal perspective she is ritually impure for the duration that she is menstruating. This classification has legal consequences and not spiritual consequences.

As such, a menstruating woman is instructed by Allāh Most High to stop certain forms of worship, and every second that she obeys these commands, it is worship if done for Allāh Most High’s sake.

The rulings of menstruation have other benefits. They make a woman aware of her body, so that she takes care of it. They instill a longing for her to perform certain acts of worship, so she is keen to pray and fast once her bleeding ends. They compel her to learn the Islamic sciences, so she increases in love for her religion. They keep her conscious of her Lord’s commands, so she is avid to obey His orders throughout her days and nights.

Menstruation is not a barrier to a woman's spirituality. Instead, it is an opportunity to learn how to devote herself to Allāh Most High in a different way. Following the rulings and living them out in her daily life is a means for reward.

Medically speaking, it is impossible for a woman to become pregnant if she cannot menstruate, which is the case for young children and postmenopausal women. The blessing of being able to menstruate is quite clear for the one who reflects.

The first time a girl sees menstrual blood, her body is signaling to her that she is growing into a young woman. She is now physically able to start conceiving. In fact, only by the occurrence of menstruation is a woman given the opportunity to begin and nurture a righteous family.

For most women, Allāh Most High gives them this chance once a month for a series of decades to attempt conception and enjoy the blessing of raising pious children. Surely, the wondrous joys experienced during parenthood would never be possible without first experiencing menstruation.

HOW THE PROPHET ﷺ TREATED MENSTRUATING WOMEN

The Prophet ﷺ instructed the Companions ﷺ with how to interact with menstruating women, and he ﷺ also demonstrated the best of ways through his own noble behavior. The following are a few notable examples from the Prophet's ﷺ life.

Anas ibn Malik ؓ relates, "Among the Jews at the time of the Prophet ﷺ when one of their women would menstruate, they would not eat with her, and they would not remain in the same houses with menstruating women. So, the Companions ﷺ of the Prophet asked the Prophet ﷺ (about how to interact with them) and thereafter Allāh revealed the verse, 'And they ask you about menstruation. Say: It is an impurity. So, keep away from women during menstruation...' to the end of the verse. The Prophet ﷺ then said, 'Do everything with her except sexual intercourse.'"

(Muslim, 302)

The Mother of the Believers Maymūna ؓ said, “The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ touched his wives over the *izār* (lower garment) when they were menstruating.”

(Muslim, 294)

These *aḥādīth* demonstrate that a husband must still act favorably and lovingly towards his wife even while she is menstruating. A man should not ignore his menstruating wife but continue to live with her as companions for the sake of Allāh Most High. He can eat with her, drink with her, and dwell in the same house as her.

Additionally, the given responses indicate that it is permissible to touch her, and even to sexually stimulate her, providing that the husband does not directly touch the skin between her navel and knee.

The Mother of the Believers ‘Ā’isha ؓ said, “The Prophet ﷺ would recline on my lap while I was menstruating, and he ﷺ would recite the Qur’ān.”

(Bukhārī, 297)

In another *ḥadīth* ‘Ā’isha ؓ also said, “I would drink while menstruating, then pass the vessel to the Prophet ﷺ. He would place his mouth on the (same) place as my mouth and drink...”

(Muslim, 300)

The Prophet ﷺ continued to be intimately affectionate with his wives even while they were menstruating. He ﷺ did not act repulsed by them or turn away from being in their company. Rather, he ﷺ sought their comfort by laying in their laps and sharing their food.

These *aḥādīth* also prove that a menstruating woman is physically pure. Her limbs, skin, and sweat are not filthy. Moreover, when she drinks from a container, her saliva does not render the water

impure. This shows that menstruation is merely an intangible state of ritual impurity and nothing more.

The Mother of the Believers Umm Salama رضي الله عنها said, “I was lying down with the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم under a black, wool cover. Suddenly, I started to menstruate. I left quietly to put on clothing worn for menstruation. He صلى الله عليه وسلم said, ‘Did you get your menses?’ I said, ‘Yes.’ He صلى الله عليه وسلم called out to me to lie down again with him under the cover.”

(*Bukhārī*, 322)

This *ḥadīth* illustrates the permissibility of sleeping next to a menstruating woman and lying with her under the same cover. Women wore different clothing during menstruation to avoid soiling their everyday garments with filth, which is similar to what women do in today’s times.

What is interesting is that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم specifically requested for Lady Umm Salama رضي الله عنها to return and lay by his side so that he could enjoy her companionship. This is another proof that a menstruating woman is not of a lower status in Islam. She remains under the protection and care of those who love her.

The Mother of the Believers ‘Ā’isha رضي الله عنها said, “The Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم said to me, ‘Get me the prayer mat from the prayer area.’ I replied, ‘I am menstruating.’ He said, ‘Verily, your menstruation is not in your hand.’”

(*Muslim*, 298)

In another *ḥadīth* she رضي الله عنها said, “I used to wash the head of the Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم while I was in a state of menstruation.”

(*Muslim*, 297)

The meaning of the phrase ‘not in your hand’ in the first *ḥadīth* shows that only the place where menstrual blood exits needs to be avoided. As for the rest of a menstruating woman’s body, it is pure.

Both reports indicate that a menstruating woman can still live her life and carry on with her regular worldly routine, even while in this state. Menstruation does not prevent her from being of service to others, like her family or her community.

The Mother of the Believers Maymūna رضي الله عنها related that she would be menstruating and not praying. She would lie next to the Prophet’s صلى الله عليه وسلم prayer area while he would pray on a prayer mat. She said, “When he prostrated, some of his clothing would touch me.”

(*Bukhārī*, 333)

One can only imagine how close Lady Maymūna رضي الله عنها must have been to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for his clothes to touch her while in prayer. He صلى الله عليه وسلم never shunned his menstruating wives or pushed them away.

Thus, what is understood from the previously mentioned *aḥādīth* is that menstruation is natural, healthy, and normal. It is a matter which Allāh Most High has willed for women until the end of time. Therefore, a woman who experiences it should be treated with the same amount of honor, dignity, and love that she would receive if she was not in a state of menstruation.

It is through the Prophet’s صلى الله عليه وسلم teachings that one learns the right mindset to adopt when approaching menstruation rulings and understanding their details.

DOS & DON'TS DURING MENSTRUATION

Sometimes it is hard to accept the list of dos and don’ts that apply to a menstruating woman. It is doubly difficult during *Ramaḍān* when everyone is fasting, and even more so during *‘umra* and *ḥajj*. It is a common complaint from menstruating ladies that they feel left out.

Allāh Most High says:

“But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. And Allāh Knows, while you know not.”

(*al-Baqara*, 2:216)

Scholars unanimously agree that all Sacred Law rulings have a benefit in them, even if humans cannot rationally deduce it. Allāh Most High loves His creation, and He will always decree what is best for them.

It is true that during a woman’s menstruation certain acts of worship cannot be performed. Yet, one must keep in mind that they are only a select number, and many more acts remain permissible. Allāh Most High is not closing the doors of worship during the time of menstruation.

Allāh Most High clearly says in the Qur’ān:

“I did not create the *jinn* and humans except to worship Me.”

(*al-Dhāriyāt*, 51:56)

Furthermore, if a menstruating woman avoids certain actions with the intention to submit to Allāh Most High’s command, she is actually worshipping Allāh the entire time that she refrains from these acts.

It has been said, “Her praying while pure is worship and her refraining from prayer while menstruating is worship. All of it is worship.” Thus, a menstruating woman is rewarded for submitting to Allāh Most High’s command, and in reality, she is not losing out on anything.

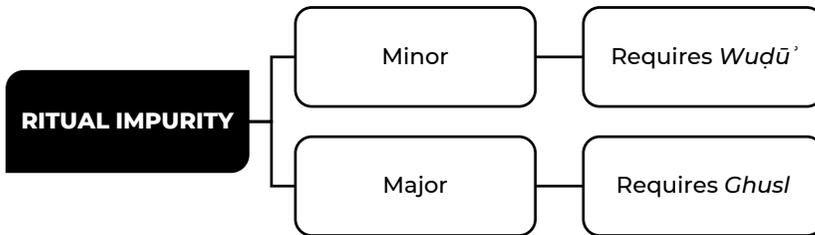
1.1 DEFINITION OF RITUAL IMPURITY

According to the Sacred Law, ritual impurity is an intangible state that prevents the performance of certain acts of worship, like praying. The state of ritual impurity is lifted by ablution (*wuḍūʿ*), the purificatory shower (*ghusl*), or dry ablution (*tayammum*).

✔ These are ritual acts of cleanliness that were revealed by Allāh Most High and taught to the believers through the Prophet ﷺ.

⚠ The Arabic words *wuḍūʿ* and *ghusl* will be used throughout this guide, rather than their English translations.

Chart 1a: Types of Ritual Impurity



1.2 TYPES OF RITUAL IMPURITY

There are two types of ritual impurity: minor and major.

- ✦ **Minor ritual impurity** (*al-ḥadath al-aṣghar*) is a state that necessitates *wuḍūʿ*, like after sleeping, urinating, or flatulence.
- ✦ **Major ritual impurity** (*al-ḥadath al-akbar*) is a state that necessitates *ghusl*, like the state of sexual impurity (*janāba*) after engaging in sexual intercourse or ejaculating.

→ The *ghusl* is described in Sections 6.2 to 6.3.

🔍 Compare the classifications of ritual impurity in Chart 1a.

1.3 MENSTRUATION & MAJOR RITUAL IMPURITY

Based on sound scholarship and clear evidence from the Qur’ān and the *Sunna*, a menstruating woman follows similar rulings to a person in major ritual impurity.

Thus, the only way a menstruating woman can lift her state of ritual impurity is by performing a *ghusl*. However, the *ghusl* is not valid until she stops bleeding within the possible days of menses, or her bleeding reaches the menstrual maximum.

Consequently, she will need to refrain from a handful of actions until her time comes to take a *ghusl*.

✓ The same ruling applies to a woman who is in a state of lochia (*nifās*).

1.4 IMPERMISSIBLE ACTS DURING MENSTRUATION

According to the *Hanafī madhhab*, there are nine actions that a woman in a state of menstruation (*hayḍ*) or lochia (*nifās*) needs to avoid:

❶ Performing the ritual prayer or prostrating.

❷ Fasting.

❸ Touching the Qur’ān.

❹ Reciting the Qur’ān.

❺ Entering any mosque.

❻ Making *ṭawāf*.

❼ Engaging in sexual intercourse.

❽ Being directly touched between the navel to the knee.

❾ Being divorced.

→ Each of these prohibitions are discussed in detail in Chapter 9.

﴿ Whoever does good, whether male or female, and is a believer, We will surely bless them with a good life, and We will certainly reward them according to the best of their deeds. ﴾

(*an-Nahl*, 16:97)

1.5 PERMISSIBLE ACTS DURING MENSTRUATION

Even though the list in Section 1.4 may seem limiting, there are numerous acts of worship that remain permissible.

In the *Ḥanafī madhhab*, it is an overall recommendation that a menstruating woman make *wuḍūʿ* for each prayer time, sit in her usual place of worship, and make remembrance (*dhikr*) for the time it takes her to normally pray so that she does not lose her habit of worship.

A menstruating woman can also:

- ✧ Supplicate for whatever she wishes.
- ✧ Make remembrance (*dhikr*) of Allāh Most High.
- ✧ Repent (make *tawba*) to Allāh Most High.
- ✧ Listen to the Qurʾān.
- ✧ Make *ṣalawāt* on the Prophet ﷺ.
- ✧ Beg for forgiveness (*istighfār*) and the pardon of her sins (*ʿafū*).
- ✧ Demonstrate good character towards her spouse, parents, children, and fellow Muslims.
- ✧ Memorize any Prophetic *duʿāʿ*.
- ✧ Teach, study, and review sacred knowledge.
- ✧ Give in charity.
- ✧ Perform acts of service to others.
- ✧ Read the *sīra* and stories about the Companions (*ṣaḥāba*) or righteous people (*ṣalīhīn*).

- ❖ Practice gratitude for her blessings.
- ❖ Practice patience and contentment with her trials.
- ❖ Forgive those who wronged her.
- ❖ Reflect about Allāh Most High's great signs.
- ❖ Read *ḥadīth*, like *Riyāḍ aṣ-Ṣalīhīn* or Imam al-Nawawī's forty *ḥadīth* collection.
- ❖ Listen to religious lectures.

The feeling of being limited only increases when a woman focuses on what she cannot do while menstruating. However, if she focuses on what she can do in the circumstance that Allāh Most High placed her in, her heart will be filled with contentment.

Thus, there is nothing dreadful or awful about the prohibitions or rulings related to menstruation. Rather, what matters is a person's attitude towards them.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why was the Mother of the Believers 'Ā'isha رضي الله عنها disappointed when she started menstruating during *ḥajj*?
2. What did the Prophet ﷺ tell her in response?
3. Is menstruation a punishment? Why or why not?
4. How did the Prophet ﷺ treat menstruating women?
5. What is the difference between major and minor ritual impurity? Which category does menstruation fall under?
6. Which acts must a menstruating woman avoid?
7. Which acts are permissible for her to perform?

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