193236 - Her outward appearance is like other girls but she does not have female organs; she has male organs. What should she do?

the question

I am a girl from Algeria. I have lived my entire life as a girl, although I do not feel that way at all. I used to play with boys and behave like them, and I have been sexually attracted to girls from a very early age, but I resist my inclinations as much as possible, especially in university and with my friends. I did not reach puberty as girls do, and I did not start to menstruate. My body is like that of any other girl, and my family has not noticed my problem; they did not realise my problem when I was born. I have some deformity in my genitals; I have testicles and I do not have a vagina. I was afraid that I might be a homosexual (lesbian) – Allah forbid – so I was hesitant to be checked by a doctor, but recently I went for a checkup and did a lot of tests which discovered that I do not have a uterus or ovaries, and that my genotype is 46xy i.e., male, and all the masculine features and indications are very normal, without any abnormality. The only problem in my physical make-up is that my body does not respond to testosterone, which gives the body and voice the male characteristics. After doing all these tests, I now feel helpless and do not know what I should do. I feel very uncomfortable from a religious point of view. What should I do, as I mix with my female friends and my brothers' wives, and I see their 'awrahs, as is also the case with my female colleagues at work?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

What we advise you to do in this situation is to show the results of these examinations and tests to trustworthy doctors. If you do that, and the doctors think that the male characteristics are more prevalent in you, then there is nothing wrong, in that case, with undergoing the necessary surgery to correct the situation and enhance your real gender. It says in a statement by the Islamic Fiqh

Council that is connected to the Muslim World League, in the sixth statement issued in 1409 AH at its eleventh session:

“With regard to one who has in his physical makeup both male and female characteristics, we should see which is prevalent in his case. If masculine characteristics are prevalent, then it is permissible to treat him medically in order to remove any ambiguity about his masculinity. If feminine characteristics are prevalent, then it is permissible to treat her medically in order to remove any ambiguity about her femininity. That may be done whether the treatment is by means of surgery or hormone therapy, because this is a disease, and the purpose of treatment is to heal disease, not to change the creation of Allah, may He be glorified and exalted. End quote.

What you must do is hasten to deal with it and make your family understand the seriousness of the issue, and the seriousness of continuing to mix with non-mahram females in particular, especially in this situation when you have masculine inclinations and desires. It is not permissible for you to see anything of women’s ‘awrahs, or to be alone with non-mahram women, or to be alone with non-mahram men, because you may also be a temptation to them, until your treatment is complete and the doctors have determined your real nature..

In al-Iqnaa‘ fi Hill Alfaaz Abi Shujaa‘ (2/407) it says: With regard to an intersex person whose case is ambiguous or unclear, he should be treated with extreme caution, and be regarded as a man with regard to women, and as a woman with regard to men, so it is not permissible for any non-mahram man or woman to be alone with this individual. End quote.

And Allah knows best.