503140 - Children Touching Mus-haf Without Wudu

the question

Can little children – four, five and six year old – who do not know how to do wudu hold the Quran without wudu in order to memorize and learn?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

I.

The scholars (may Allah have mercy on them) differed as to whether it is permissible for one who does not have wudu to hold the Mus-haf. Some of the scholars said that it is permissible for one who does not have wudu to hold the Mus-haf, because there is no clear, authentic evidence to indicate that it is not allowed for one who does not have wudu to touch the Mus-haf, and in principle nothing is required unless there is textual proof.

And some of the scholars said that it is not permissible to touch the Mus-haf except in a state of purity, because in the hadith of `Amr ibn Hazm, according to which the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him): “No one should touch the Quran except one who is pure,” what is meant by the one who is pure (tahir) here is one who is free of impurity, because in the verse about wudu, ghusl and tayammum, Allah, may He be Exalted, says: {Allah does not intend to make difficulty for you, but He intends to purify you} [al-Ma’idah 5:6]. And He says regarding menses: {And when they [wives] have purified themselves, then come to them from where Allah has ordained for you} [Al-Baqarah 2:222].

This view is more correct than the former view, because even though the word “one who is pure (tahir)” may refer to both intangible and tangible purity, what is most often the case in the religious texts (Quran and Sunnah) is that the word tahir is not used to describe something that

already has intangible purity. See: *Fatawa Nur `ala ad-Darb* by al-`Uthaymin, 5/2.

The view that it is not permissible to touch the Mus-haf without wudu is the view of the majority of scholars. This has been explained previously in a detailed answer on our website; please see no. 311712.

II.

The scholars differed regarding children touching the Mus-haf without wudu for the purpose of memorising and learning. The majority are of the view that it is permissible, and the Hanafis and Malikis – and one view among the Hanbalis – say that it is permissible in all cases, both for children who have reached the age of discernment and those who have not yet reached that age. The Shafa'is said that it is permissible only for those who have reached the age of discernment.

It says in *An-Nihayah fi Sharh al-Hidayah*: As for boys touching Mus-hafs and wooden boards in [traditional] schools and elsewhere, there is nothing wrong with that, because they are not required to purify themselves, even though they may be instructed to do that so that they will get used to it and it will become second nature to them.

End quote from *An-Nihayah fi Sharh al-Hidayah*, 1/235.

Al-Hasakfi al-Hanafi (may Allah have mercy on him) said: It is not disliked for a boy to touch the Mus-haf or board, and there is nothing wrong with handing it to him or taking it from him, because of necessity, for teaching a child to memorise when he is small is like engraving on stone.

End quote from *Ad-Durr al-Mukhtar Sharh Tanwir al-Absar*, p. 29.

Al-Khurashi al-Maliki (may Allah have mercy on him) said: It is permissible to touch a part (juz' or para) of the Quran for a boy who is learning…

What is meant by a part is as opposed to the complete Book, but it is a sizeable part.

Moreover, the correct view is that the learner can hold the complete Quran, because Ibn Bashir narrated that there was consensus that it is permissible to touch the complete Book.

End quote from *Sharh al-Khurashi `ala Mukhtasar Khalil*, 1/161.

Al-Ghazali (may Allah have mercy on him) said: The more correct view is that the teacher does not have to instruct the child who has reached the age of discernment to purify himself in order to touch the Mus-haf and the board, because it is difficult for him to maintain purity.

End quote from *Al-Wasit fil-Madhhab*, 1/331.

An-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Does the guardian or teacher have to oblige the child who has reached the age of discernment to purify himself (wudu) in order to hold the Mus-haf or board from which he is reading?

There are two well-known views, the more sound of which according to our companions is that he does not have to do that, because it is difficult (for the child).

End quote from *At-Tabyin fi Adab Hamalat al-Quran*, p. 196.

It says in *Al-Mawsu`at al-Fiqhiyyah*:

The Hanafis said: It is permissible for the child to touch the Quran or the board on which Quran is written in order to learn and memorise, and children are not required to purify themselves, but they may be instructed to do that so that they can get used to it and it can become second nature to them.

Malik said in *Al-Mukhtasar*: I think that it is permissible for children to touch the Mus-hafs without wudu for the purpose of learning.

And it was said that a small child should not touch the complete Mus-haf. This is the view of Ibn al-Musayyab.

The Shafa`is said: A child who has reached the age of discernment should not be prevented from touching and holding a Mus-haf or wooden board in order to learn from it, because of the need for him to learn and the difficulty of him constantly maintaining a state of purity.

An-Nawawi said: In my view it is permissible for children to hold the wooden boards because of necessity, as they need to learn and it is difficult for them to do wudu.

The Hanbalis said: There are two scholarly views regarding boys in kuttabs (traditional schools) touching the wooden boards on which Quran is written. One view is that it is permissible because it is a case of need, and if we were to stipulate that they should be in a state of purity, that would put them off memorising it.

End quote from *Al-Mawsu`at al-Fiqhiyyah al-Kuwaitiyyah*, 37/278.

From the above, we will realise that the majority of scholars are of the view that it is permissible for a child to touch the Mus-haf without wudu for the purpose of learning, whether he has reached the age of discernment or not.

This is easier for people, and is more effective in connecting the young generation to the Quran, and it is the view of the majority of scholars.

And Allah knows best.