66824 - Ruling on entering bathhouses and uncovering the awrah for a massage

the question

Is it permissible for a person to go to traditional bathhouses during Ramadan and have a massage, knowing that the masseur in the bathhouse will see me naked, in addition to my uncovering myself in front of the other people in the bathhouse? Will this affect the fast?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

It is not permissible to go to those bathhouses in which these evils occur, whether in Ramadan or at any other time, but entering them during Ramadan is more sinful. Fasting does not only mean giving up food, drink and intercourse, rather it means giving up all haraam things and keeping away from all evil actions.

It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Whoever does not give up false speech and acting upon it, there is no need for him to give up his food and drink.” Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 1804.

‘Umar ibn al-Khattaab (may Allah be pleased with him) said: “Fasting is not just (giving up) food and drink, rather it is giving up lying, falsehood and idle talk.”

Jaabir ibn ‘Abd-Allah al-Ansaari (may Allah be pleased with him) said: “When you fast, then let your hearing, your sight and your tongue fast from lying and sin, stop abusing servants and be tranquil and dignified on the day when you fast. Do not let the day when you do not fast and the day when you fast be the same.”

What happens in those bathhouses, such as uncovering and touching the ‘awrah, are evil actions, and Allah describes His believing slaves as being those who lower their gaze and guard their private parts (against sin). Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And those who guard their chastity (i.e. private parts, from illegal sexual acts)

6. Except from their wives or (the slaves) that their right hands possess, __ for then, they are free from blame”

[al-Mu’minoon 23:5,6]

Indeed, Allah enjoins that, as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Tell the believing men to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts). That is purer for them. Verily, Allah is All-Aware of what they do”

[al-Noor 24:30]

If you ponder the end of the verse, you will find a stern warning against going against the command to lower the gaze and guard the private parts. It was narrated from Mu’aawiyah ibn Haydah al-Qushayri (may Allah be pleased with him) that he said: I said: O Messenger of Allah, with regard to our ‘awrah, what may we uncover of it and what must we conceal? He said: “Cover your ‘awrah except from your wife and those whom your right hand possesses (i.e., concubines).” I said, O Messenger of Allah, what if a man is with another man? He said, “If you can make sure that no one sees it, then do not let anyone see it.” I said, O Messenger of Allah, what if one of us is alone? He said, “Allah is more deserving that you should feel shy before Him than people.” Narrated and classed as hasan by al-Timridhi (2769); narrated by Ibn Maajah (1920); classed as hasan by al-Albaani in Saheeh Sunan Ibn Maajah.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) expressly forbade one man to look at the ‘awrah of another, or one woman to look at the ‘awrah of another. It was narrated from Abu Sa’eed al-Khudri (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of

Allah be upon him) said: “No man should look at the ‘awrah of another man, and no woman should look at the ‘awrah of another woman.” Narrated by Muslim, 338.

It is well known that looking at ‘awrahs and touching and massaging parts of the body may provoke desire and lead to temptation and evil. This massage is not a medical treatment such that we can say that is it permissible subject to certain conditions. Rather it is a kind of pleasure which can be done at home by one’s wife or using machines. This is not something that can be regarded as a necessity.

Hence going to these bathhouses is haraam, and doing it in Ramadan is even more haraam and reduces the reward of the one who fasts, and it may erase his reward altogether. See the answer to question no. 50063.

We ask Allah to guide you to the right path.

And Allah knows best.