71202 - How can a person who is partially paralyzed do wudoo’ and pray?

the question

There is a woman who is affected by partial paralysis and it is difficult for her to do wudoo’.

My question: How can she do wudoo’ or tayammum?

Should earth be brought to her, or what?

Can she do tayammum striking her hands on the wall (even though there is no dust on it) or what should she do?

How should her tayammum be done?

How should her prayer be done?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

If a person is sick and cannot bring water and do wudoo’ with it, or he is incapable of moving, his situation should be examined further:

If there is someone who can bring water at the time of prayer and help him to do wudoo’, then wudoo’ is obligatory in his case.

If there is no one who can help him do wudoo’, then it is prescribed for him to do tayammum in that case, and he comes under the same ruling as one who does not have any water and cannot find any.

That is because Allaah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“So keep your duty to Allaah and fear Him as much as you can”

[al-Taghaabun 64:16]

And the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “If I command you do a thing, do as much of it as you can.” Narrated by al-Bukhaari (7277); Muslim (1337).

Ibn Qudaamah (may Allaah have mercy on him) said in al-Mughni (1/151):

If a person is sick and unable to move, and there is no one who can bring him water, then he is like one who has no water, because he has no way to obtain any water. So he is like one who finds a well but has no means of drawing water from it.

If he has someone who can bring him water before the time for prayer ends, then he is like one who can find water, because he is in the same position as one who finds something with which to draw water within that time.

If he is afraid that the time will end before he comes, then Ibn Abi Moosa said: he may do tayammum, and he does not have to repeat wudoo’. This is the view of al-Hasan, because he is without water during the time for prayer, so he is exactly like one who has no water. End quote.

Al-Mardaawi said in al-Insaaf (1/265):

If the sick person is unable to move and there is no one to do wudoo’ for him, then he comes under the same ruling as one who has no water.

If he fears that the time for prayer will end if he waits for someone to do wudoo’ for him, he should do tayammum and pray, and he does not have to repeat it according to the correct view. End quote.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allaah have mercy on him) said in Sharh al-‘Umdah (1/433-434):

If he is not able to use water because he is unable to move to where the water is, and he does not have anyone to bring water to him, then he is like one who has no water. If he has someone who can bring water to him within the time (for the prayer), then he is like one who has water. End quote.

It says in al-Mawsoo'ah al-Fiqhiyyah (14/260):

The one who is incapacitated and cannot use water should do tayammum, and he does not have to repeat it, like one who is forced, detained or tied up near water, or one who is afraid of animals, whether he is travelling or not, because he comes under the same ruling as one who has no water. The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Clean earth is a means of purification for the Muslim, even if he cannot find water for ten years. When he finds water, he should let it touch his skin, for that is good." End quote.

See also question no. 20935.

Secondly:

If he is able to wash some of the parts of the body that are washed in wudoo', but his sickness prevents him from washing the rest, then he has to wash whatever he can of the parts that are washed in wudoo', and he should do tayammum instead of the parts that he cannot wash. This has been explained in the answer to question no. 67614.

Thirdly:

With regard to how tayammum is done:

Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen said in al-Sharh al-Mumti' (1/488):

In my view, how it is to be done in accordance with the Sunnah is as follows: he should strike the earth with his hands once, without spreading the fingers, and wipe his face with his hands, then he should wipe one hand with the other. Thus tayammum will be completed. End quote.

It has been described in detail in question no. 21074.

Fourthly:

If a sick person who is unable to use water does tayammum, then it becomes easier for him to use water after he has finished his prayer, he does not have to repeat it, because he has done what is

required of him and what he is commanded to do.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah said in Sharh al-'Umdah (1/425):

Because Allaah enjoined one prayer at a specific time which is to be done according to what one is able to do, and the condition is waived in the event that one is unable to fulfil it. The words of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), "Clean earth is a means of purification for the Muslim" and "Soil is sufficient for you" indicate that it takes the place of water in all cases. End quote.

Fifthly:

The scholars differed with regard to doing tayammum by striking the walls of one's house, based on their differences of opinion as to the meaning of the verse in which Allaah says (Interpretation of the meaning):

"perform Tayammum with clean earth"

[al-Nisa' 4:43]

The correct view is that what is meant by sa'eed (clean earth) is the face of the earth, whether it is dirt, sand or stones, etc.

Based on this, if the wall is not covered with anything, then it is permissible to use it for tayammum, whether there is dust on it or not, because it is made of clean earth. But if it is covered with wood or paint, then this wood or paint is not sa'eed (clean earth) and it is not valid to use it for tayammum, unless there is dust on it, because dust comes under the heading of sa'eed.

See also question no. 36774.

Sixthly:

With regard to the way in which a sick person who is unable to move should pray:

It says in al-Mawsoo'ah al-Fiqhiyyah (26/208):

The sick person or the one who is suffering partial paralysis should do those pillars (essential parts) of the prayer that he is able to, according to the majority of fuqaha', because the one who is unable to do something is not obliged to do it. If he is unable to stand, he may pray sitting and he should bow and prostrate. If he is unable to do that, then he should pray sitting and lean forward for bowing and prostration, leaning more for prostration than bowing. If he is unable to sit, then he should lie down and use gestures, because the essential parts are waived if one is unable to do them, and he should do as much as he is able.

'Imraan ibn Husayn (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: I fell sick and the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) visited me and said: "Pray standing, and if you cannot, then sitting, and if you cannot, then lying on your side, making gestures." End quote.

Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan was asked: I have a father who is sick and paralyzed on the left side of his body, which he is completely unable to move. Hence he cannot walk or move or do anything for himself or relieve himself. This has been the case for ten years. But three or four months ago this sickness got even worse. Is it permissible for him to stop praying for this reason, because he cannot purify himself for prayer?

If it is not permissible, how should he purify himself and pray?

What should he do about the prayers that he missed in the past because of his sickness, because he thought that so long as he was like that, he was excused from praying?

He replied:

The Muslim is not excused from praying so long as he is of sound mind, but he should pray according to his situation, because Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"So keep your duty to Allaah and fear Him as much as you can"

[al-Taghaabun 64:16]

And the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Pray standing, and if you cannot, then sitting, and if you cannot, then lying on your side.”

If your father who is stricken with paralysis can do wudoo’ by himself using his sound hand, or if someone else can help him to do wudoo’, then he must do that.

If he is not able to do wudoo’ using water, then he must do tayammum using earth.

If he cannot do tayammum by himself, then someone else should do tayammum for him: one of his family who is taking care of him or one of those who are present should strike his hands on the ground, and wipe his face and hands, intending that to be a purification for him, then he should pray according to his situation, sitting or lying on his side, gesturing with his head for bowing and prostrating, according to what he is able to do.

If he cannot gesture with his head because of the paralysis, then he may indicate bowing and prostrating with his eyes.

Religion is easy, praise be to Allaah, but that does not mean that he should give up praying altogether. Rather he should pray according to his situation as we have described. And he has to make up the prayers that he missed, as best he can. End quote.

Al-Muntaqa min Fataawa al-Fawzaan (4/no. 27)

And Allaah knows best.