13995 - Can Men Pray on Behalf of Women during Menses?

the question

Should a woman pray for the missed prayers when she becomes clean after her periods? Also I would like if someone else can pray for a woman who is having her periods like a husband doing all the prayers twice one for himself and one for his wife. Please advice me?

Summary of answer

In Islam, a woman is exempt from praying during her menstrual period and is not required to make up missed prayers. Moreover, no one is allowed to perform prayers on behalf of another person, including one’s spouse.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Why Women Are Exempt from Prayer During Menstruation

When a woman has her period, she is spared the obligation of having to pray; indeed if a woman were to pray at that time she would be considered to be sinning and disobeying her Lord by doing so, and her prayers would not be accepted.

Allah has excused her from having to pray at the time of her period, and this is what is meant by the deficiency in her religious commitment as mentioned in the Hadith of Abu Sa`id Al-Khudri (may Allah be pleased with him) who said, “The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) went out and said: ‘O women… I have not seen anyone more deficient in intelligence and religion than you. A cautious and sensible man could be led astray by some of you.’ The women asked, ‘O Messenger of Allah, what is deficient in our religion and intelligence?’ He said, ‘Is not the evidence of one woman equal to half the testimony of one man?’ They said, ‘Yes.’ He said,

‘This is the deficiency in her intelligence. Isn't it true that a woman can neither pray nor fast during her menses?’ The women said, ‘Yes.’ He said, ‘This is the deficiency in her religion.’” (Narrated by Al-Bukhari, 293; Muslim, 114).

The Difference between Making Up Fasts and Prayers

It was narrated that Mu`adhah said: “I asked `Aishah: ‘Why is it that a woman who menstruates has to make up her fasts but not her prayers?’ She said, ‘That [menstruation] used to happen to us and we were commanded to make up our fasts but we were not commanded to make up our prayers.” (Narrated by Al-Bukhari, 310; Muslim, 508 – this version was narrated by him)

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

“This ruling – i.e., that prayers should not be made up) is agreed upon by all the Muslims, that menstruating women and women who bleed following childbirth do not have to pray or fast at the times when prayers or fasts are due; they are unanimously agreed that they do not have to make up the prayers, and they are unanimously agreed that they do have to make up the fasts. The scholars said, the difference between them is that the prayers are many and are repeated, so it would be difficult to make them up, unlike the fasts.” (End quote from *Sharh Muslim*, 4/26)

Can Anyone Else Make Up Prayers on Her Behalf?

It was said that when a woman is menstruating, she is not obliged to perform the prayers at all, so it is not permissible for her to make up the prayers after she becomes pure (i.e., after her period ends). So how can someone else make up her prayers for her? Her husband does not need to make them up for her. This is apart from the fact that prayers cannot be made up for another person. `Abdullah ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: “No one should pray on behalf of another.”

Every Muslim should keep away from innovating something in the religion for which Allah has not granted permission.

For more details, please refer to the following answers: 49671, 220644, 366204, 94839, 50282, 190253, 70438, 65784, 198233

And Allah knows best.