45514 - Can Muslim Spouses Have Intercourse Naked?

the question

I was told by Islamic teacher that "Janabah" or intimacy of spouses is not permitted if uncovered by sheet or blanket, because angels who are present are ashamed and insulted by naked bodies of spouses in the state of Janabah. So spouses must cover their bodies with a blanket during intimacy and must not uncover naked bodies. I am really confused, because I know Hadiths which are opposite of it. I would appreciate it if you solve this misunderstanding.

Summary of answer

There is no authentic Hadith which says that it is forbidden to be naked when having intercourse with one's spouse, and the basic principle is that that is permitted, and there is proof that supports this basic principle.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Prohibition is an Islamic ruling which cannot be attributed to the Shari`ah without sound Shar`i evidence that is proven from the Book of Allah or the Sunnah of His Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

The majority of Hanafi, Shafi`i and Maliki scholars (may Allah have mercy on them) are of the view that it is permissible for the spouses to be naked when having intercourse . The Hanbalis are of the view that it is disliked to be naked and not covered when having intercourse, and they quote Hadiths as evidence for that, but none of them are sound, for example:

- Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "When one of you goes in unto his wife, let him be

covered, for if he is not covered, the angels feel shy and depart, then if they have a child, the devil will have a share of him." This was narrated by At-Tabarani in Al-Mu`jam Al-Awsat (1/63), and by Al-Bazzar who classed it as inauthentic, as it says in Nasab Ar-Rayah (4/247).

- `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "When one of you goes in unto his wife, let him cover and not be naked like donkeys." This was narrated by At-Tabarani in Al-Mu`jam Al-Kabir, 10/196, and by Al-Bayhaqi, who classed it as da'eef (weak) (7/193). Its Isnad includes Mandal ibn 'Ali, who is da'eef.

It was also narrated by Ibn Majah (1921) from the hadith of 'Utbah ibn 'Abd-Allah Al-Sulami, who was classed as inauthentic by Al-Albani in Irwa' Al-Ghalil (2009).

- Abu Umamah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "When one of you goes in unto his wife, let him cover himself and his wife, and not be naked like donkeys." This was narrated by At-Tabarani (8/164). Its Isnad (chain of narration) includes `Afir ibn Ma'dan who is inauthentic, as was stated in Majma` Az-Zawa'id (4/293).

As it is established that these Hadiths are inauthentic, it is not valid to quote them as evidence that it is obligatory to be covered and to say that it is forbidden to be naked when having intercourse. The basic principle is that it is permissible for spouses to enjoy looking at and touching one another.

The majority of scholars have quoted as evidence that it is permissible the Hadith of Bahz ibn Hakim, from his father, from his grandfather, who said: I said, O Messenger of Allah, with regard to our `Awrah, what may we uncover of it and what must we conceal? He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) 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 the people live close together? 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 sound by At-Tirmidhi, 2794 and Ibn

Majah, 1920. Classed as sound by Al-Albani in Sahih At-Tirmidhi)

They also quoted as evidence an inauthentic Hadith, narrated from `Abdullah ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) who said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Beware of being naked, for you have with you those who never leave you except when you defecate, and when a man goes in unto his wife, so feel shy of them and respect them." (Narrated by At-Tirmidhi, 2800. Its Isnad (chain of narration) includes Layth ibn Abu Sulaym, who made mistakes and was classed as inauthentic by Al-Albani in Irwa' Al-Ghalil, 64)

In conclusion, there is no authentic Hadith which says that it is forbidden to be naked when having intercourse with one's spouse, and the basic principle is that that is permitted, and there is proof that supports this basic principle.

For more, see these answers: 6976 , 2167 , and 3801 .

And Allah knows best.