617369 - Is it permissible for a menstruating woman to lie if her mahrams ask her whether she prayed?

the question

If a female is menstruating, and someone asks her in a public place whether she prayed, or her father or her brother ask her, is it permissible for her to lie if she is embarrassed, and to say: Yes, I prayed?

Summary of answer

It is permissible for a girl, if she feels too embarrassed to tell her mahrams that she is menstruating, to use a double entendre if they ask her about her prayer.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

I.

If a person is in an embarrassing situation, there is nothing wrong with using a double entendre to avoid embarrassment in this situation. That includes if a woman feels too shy to tell her father or brother that she is menstruating. So there is nothing wrong with using a double entendre, by saying “I prayed” – referring to the prayer she offered during the time when she was not menstruating.

Al-Bukhari (may Allah have mercy on him) included a chapter in his *Sahih* entitled: Using double entendres is an alternative to lying (no. 116).

It was narrated that `A’ishah said: The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “If one of you breaks wind whilst praying, let him take hold of his nose and then leave.” Narrated by

Abu Dawud, 1114; classed as authentic by al-Albani.

At-Turbashti (may Allah have mercy on him) said: He instructed him to take hold of his nose to give the impression to others that he has a nosebleed; this is an action to give a wrong impression for which he gave a concession and told people to do it, so that the Shaytan would not whisper to him to keep praying out of embarrassment in front of people. It also indicates that one should conceal breaking wind in this situation.

End quote from *Al-Muyassar fi Sharh Masabih as-Sunnah* by at-Turbashti, 1/270.

Ibn al-Athir (may Allah have mercy on him) said: In a previous hadith about breaking wind whilst praying, it says: let him take hold of his nose and leave. He only instructed him to do that in order to give the impression to other worshippers that he has a nosebleed. This is a kind of etiquette intended to conceal something shameful, avoid embarrassment and give the impression of something inoffensive in order to conceal something objectionable. It does not come under the heading of lying or showing off; rather it comes under the heading of modesty and bashfulness, and seeking to be safe from people's talk.

End quote from *An-Nihayah fi Gharib al-Hadith wal-Athar*, 1/75.

It was narrated that Anas ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him) said: A son of Abu Talhah fell sick; Abu Talhah went out and the boy died. When Abu Talhah returned, he said: What happened to my son? Umm Sulaym said: He is calmer than he was. She brought him his dinner and he ate, then he had intercourse with her, and when it was over she said: Bury the boy. The next morning Abu Talhah went to the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and told him what had happened. He said: "Did you spend the night together?" He said: Yes. He said: "O Allah, bless them." She gave birth to a boy. Narrated by al-Bukhari, 5470; and Muslim, 2144.

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

This indicates that double entendres may be used when necessary, because she said: "He is calmer than he was," even though what could be understood from it is that his illness was abating

and he was now more comfortable, and was still alive.

In order for using double entendres to be permissible, it is stipulated that they should not undermine the rights of anyone.

Sharh an-Nawawi ‘ala Muslim, 14/124.

‘Umar said: Double entendres are sufficient to save the Muslim from lying.

Sahih al-Adab al-Mufrad, p. 330.

‘Imran ibn Husayn (may Allah be pleased with him) said: Double entendres are permissible in order to avoid lying. Narrated by al-Bukhari in *Al-Adab al-Mufrad* with an authentic (sahih) isnad. *Sahih al-Adab al-Mufrad*, p. 319.

A number of the early generations (salaf) did that, as has been explained in detail previously. Please see question no. 27261.

II.

We should point out that a woman should not conceal the fact that she is menstruating in all situations, because that could cause some shar`i problems, as happened to some girls who concealed the fact that they were menstruating from their mahrams when they were doing Hajj or `umrah, and they ended up doing tawaf whilst menstruating, and going back not having completed Hajj or `umrah.

In this situation, the woman is obliged to disclose the fact that she is menstruating, and there is nothing wrong with that, because menstruation is something that Allah has ordained for the daughters of Adam. When that happened to `A’ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) when she was on her way to Hajj, she told the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) about that, and he told her that menstruation was something decreed that Allah had ordained for the daughters of Adam, and there was nothing shameful about it, and he explained to her what she should do, as he (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “This is something that Allah has

decreed for the daughters of Adam. Do what the pilgrims do, but do not circumambulate the House…" Narrated by al-Bukhari, 290; Muslim, 1211.

For more information, please see the answer to question no. 45865.

And Allah knows best.