983 - Can Women Go to the Mosque?

the question

Here in my country (Surinam, South America), the Ahl al-Sunnah wa’l-Jama‘ah forbid women to go to the mosque, saying that the first Imam (Imam Abu Hanifah) learned to do what pleases the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), and he had said once that it is better for the women to perform prayer at home, because there is more reward in that, and as we come here to earn reward, it is better to do this.
Is it right to forbid women to go to the mosque? If so, where in the Holy Quran or the hadith can I find this?

Summary of answer

Women's prayer at home is better than praying in the mosque, but this does not mean that women are not permitted to go to the mosque.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Is a woman's prayer at home better than praying in the mosque?

There is no doubt that a woman’s prayer in her house is better for her than praying in the mosque, as is indicated by the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He said: "Do not prevent your women from going to the mosque, even though their houses are better for them." (Reported by Abu Dawud in al-Sunan, Bab ma ja-a fi khuruj al-nisa ila’l-masjid: Bab al-tashdid fi dhalik. See also Sahih al-Jami‘, no. 7458)

Whenever a woman prays in a place that is more private and more hidden, that is better for her, as the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "A woman's prayer in her house is better than her prayer in her courtyard, and her prayer in her bedroom is better than her prayer in her house." (Reported by Abu Dawud in al-Sunan, Bab ma ja-a fi khuruj al-nisa ila'l-masjid. See also Sahh al-Jami', no. 3833).

Umm Humayd, the wife of Abu Humayd al-Sa'idi reported that she came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and said: "O Messenger of Allah, I love to pray with you." He said: "I know that you love to pray with me, but praying in your house is better for you than praying in your courtyard, and praying in your courtyard is better for you than praying in the mosque of your people, and praying in the mosque of your people is better for you than praying in my mosque." So she ordered that a prayer-place be built for her in the furthest and darkest part of her house, and she always prayed there until she met Allah (i.e., until she died). (Reported by Imam Ahmad; the men of its isnad are trustworthy)

Can women go to mosques?

But the fact that praying at home is preferable does not mean that that women are not permitted to go to the mosque, as is clear from the following hadith:

From 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar, who said: "I heard the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) say: 'Do not prevent your women from going to the mosque if they ask your permission.'" Bilal ibn 'Abdullah said, "By Allah, we will prevent them." (Ibn 'Umar) turned to him and told him off in an unprecedented fashion, saying: "I tell you what the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon Him) said, and you say 'By Allah, we will prevent them'!!" (Reported by Muslim, 667)

Conditions for the permission for women to go to mosques

But there are conditions attached to the permission for women to go to the mosque , as follows:

1. She should wear complete hijab .
2. She should not go out wearing perfume .
3. She should have the permission of her husband.

Her going out should not involve any other kind of prohibited acts, such as being alone in a car with a non-mahram driver. If a woman does something wrong like that, her husband or guardian has the right to stop her; in fact it is his duty to do so.

And Allah knows best.