

FATWA

Masah over regular socks.

Q. Is the salah of a person valid if he performs masah over regular cotton socks? If I am performing salah with this person, myself being the Imam, would I still receive the reward that is normally given for salah in Jamaat? If this person leads the Salah, would MY Salah be valid?

A. The scholars have allowed the performance of masah over cloth or cotton socks when certain conditions are met.

According to the Mazhab of Imam Abu Hanifa (A.R.), the following conditions must be met:

1. It stays up for itself on the feet.
2. A person can walk with these socks (alone) to a distance of three miles without the socks being torn.
3. It is so thick that water is not able to seep through the socks to enter the feet.
4. A person is not able to see his feet through the socks.

According to the Mazhab of Imam Malik (A.R.), it states that these socks, (cotton or cloth) must be made with leather inside and outside so that it resembles the leather socks (Khufain) and a person may be able to walk upon them. Only then, it would be permissible to make masah over them.

According to the Mazhab of Imam Shafi (A.R), it states that an allowance would be granted to perform masah over these socks, (cotton or cloth), when the following conditions are met:

1. They must be thick and heavy to the extent that it is not transparent and nothing can penetrate it (like water) and one can walk continuously upon them.
2. The sole of these socks must be made with leather.

According to Imam Ahmad (A.R), he says that the following conditions must be met in order that a person performs masah on these socks:

1. It must be very thick, to the extent that no part of one's foot becomes visible.
2. It remains firmly gripped onto the feet and a person is able to walk continuously with these socks.

All the above great Imams possessed great knowledge in the Sciences of Tafseer, Hadith and Fiqh and their explanations are in accordance to what is mentioned in the traditions concerning masah over the non-leather socks.

These traditions have been misunderstood by many; hence many people continue to make masah over their regular cotton socks which in reality is opposed to the meaning of the traditions.

In the traditions it is evident that the Prophet (S.A) made masah over the leather socks (known as Khufain in Arabic) and he also made masah over the non-leather socks (known as Jurabain in Arabic). However, the 'Jurabain' or non-leather socks which were worn by him were such that they were thick being covered with leather at times or having the sole as leather at other times. (Al Fiqhul Islami Wa Adilatih Vol. Pg. 498).

It is based on the nature of socks worn by the Prophet (S.A) that the Imams of Fiqh and other great scholars have concluded that the above mentioned conditions must exist in order to perform masah over the non leather socks.

One reason for the misunderstanding which is present among many is the usage of the word 'socks' by many authors when translating the original Arabic words of 'Khufain' or 'Jurabain'. Many authors do not explain 'the type of socks' referred to in the traditions, hence many understand it to be the modern day cotton, woolen or nylon socks, which is a grave error and misunderstanding.

It is the unanimous agreement (Ijmaa of all the Imams of Fiqh) that if the socks are thin and water can seep through and enter into them, masah would not be permissible upon them. (Bada'ius Sana'i)

With this explanation it is clear that the present day cotton and nylon socks do not fulfill the conditions mentioned above. As such, it will not be permissible to make masah over these socks.

If a person performs salaah after having done masah on these socks, his salaah will not be valid and he must repeat his salaah after making proper wuzu by washing the feet. (Raddul Mukhtar, Al Bahru Raiq)

If you are leading such a person in salaah, then you will get the blessings of having performed salaah in Jamaah since you are not accountable for the action of the person.

If such a person leads you in salaah, then your salaah will not be in order, you must repeat your salaah. (Fatawa Darul Uloom Deoband)

And Allah knows best.

Mufti Waseem Khan