



# Does touching a woman nullify ablution?

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Does touching a woman nullify ablution?

With regards to if touching a woman would nullify ablution, the scholars have provided three different opinions.

First Opinion: Touching a woman nullifies one's ablution under all circumstances.

That is, if done with sexual desire, without sexual desire, with intention, without intention or even unknowingly. This is the opinion of Ash-Shaafi'ee's رحمه الله Madh-hab.

As this is the opinion of the Shaafi'ee Madh-hab, it is a common belief among us that touching in this way will nullify ablution. However, this opinion is the weakest among the opinions based on the evidences. In this matter, Imām ash-Shaafi'ee رحمه الله mentioned:

Due to how the meaning of 'contact' has is derived from some evidences. From them, Allāh said: (أَوْ لَأَمْسْتُمْ النِّسَاءَ) "or if you have been in contact with women."

He said that because the literal meaning of the Aāyah is 'contact'. However, there is no doubt that when we look at the meaning of contact from the Thafseer, we know that it is not just about physical contact.

Second Opinion: The view of Al-Imām Abu Haneefah رحمه الله or the view of the Hanafee Madh-hab. This Madh-hab states that with sexual desire or without sexual desire, or in any way touching will not nullify ablution. However, that ablution will be nullified if something like pre-seminal fluid comes out. Touching itself will not nullify ablution. The evidences include that the Prophet's ﷺ wives were in physical contact with him. Among them, the narration in al-Bukhāri (382):

'Aaishah رضي الله عنها said, "I used to stretch my legs in front of the Prophet ﷺ while he was praying. When the Prophet ﷺ goes to prostration, he moves my legs aside and I would withdraw my leg, and when he stands up, I would stretch my legs (again)."

In this Madh-hab it is said that if physical contact with women nullifies ablution, ablution as well as prayer will be invalidated. And there are other opinions based on this statement.

Third Opinion: This is the opinion explained with details. That is if a woman is touched with sexual desire ablution will be nullified and if touched without sexual desire it will not nullify the ablution.

This is the view of Al-Māliki Madh-hab and the view of Al-Hanabilah Madh-hab.

The people of these two Madh-habs reconciled the evidence in the Aāyah (أَوْ لَأَمْسْتُمْ النِّسَاءَ) "or if you have been in contact with women" that the 'contact' here means sexual intercourse.

That means if you have had sexual intercourse with your wives. This is how the Sahabi Abdillah bin Abbās رضي الله عنهما explained. Meaning if the contact included sexual desire ablution will be nullified.

From all the above evidence, the most authentic opinion is that touching a woman will not nullify ablution. Even if the contact was with sexual desire or without sexual desire. The situation that touching nullifies ablution is when the private part is touched.

Or if due to contact something like pre-seminal fluid is discharged. However, just physical contact is not a reason that nullifies ablution.

The reason being that there is no evidence for this. And there are narrations that the Prophet ﷺ was in physical contact with his wives and did not perform ablution afterwards. Among them, the Hadeeth,

(أن النبي ﷺ قبل بعض نسائه ثم صلى ولم يتوضأ)

"Indeed the Prophet ﷺ used to kiss some of his wives (and then went out to pray). He did not perform ablution after that". Although this Hadeeth has a weakness in the chain of narration, due to this Hadeeth being narrated from many routes, scholars have stated that this is a proof for this matter.

This opinion is the preferred opinion by Shaikh-ul-Islam ibn Thaymiyyah (12/222). And from the biggest scholars of recent times, Ibn Baaz (10/134) and Ibn Uthaymeen (1/286) رحمهم الله adopted this view.

And this is how it is stated by the Fatwah Committee of Saudi Arabia, Al-Lajnah Ad-Dā'i'mah (5/266)

I hope that the issue is clearly understood.