



THE RULING ON THE WOMAN LEADING MEN IN THE CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER¹

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Q: Is it permissible in Islam for the woman to be the *Imaam* of a *Masjid*? What are the conditions for her to be an *Imaam*, may you be rewarded with gratitude?

A: It is not permissible for the woman to lead men in prayer as the Prophet ﷺ said: “Cause the women to be placed at the end as Allah has caused them to be placed behind”. Therefore, the *Imaamah* (leading in prayer) in the *Masjid* is a *Wilaayah* (a form of leadership) and *al-Wilaayah* is not valid except for the men. “The people who have a woman lead them will not be successful” as he ﷺ said. That is because the *Imaamah* of the woman is an issue that has exceptions according to some of the Scholars of the *Hanaabilah* but it is a weak statement which states that the woman can lead the men in *Taraaweeh* when she is an excellent reciter and all of the men are illiterate. She is behind them while they are in front of her however there is no evidence for this so in short it is not permissible for the woman to lead the men in prayer. Yes the woman can lead women like her; there is nothing wrong with her leading the women. There is no objection with this as it was relayed by Umm Waraqah did with some of her relatives whom were not permissible for her to marry. As for

¹ Arabic source: <http://fatawa.al-islam.com/fatawa/Display.asp?FatwaID=1153&ParentID=2&Page=1>

(leading) the men she is not related to or the general form of *al-Wilaayah* likes holding the *Imamah* of a *Masjid*, then no.