

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allāh, Most Merciful and Compassionate

Question. On Spiritual Lows During Menstruation

Dear Shaykha,

When I'm menstruating I often feel spiritually down due to not being able to pray and recite Qur'an. This feeling becomes worse during Ramadān when I can't fast and attend tarāwīh prayers. I also become concerned when I can't recite sūrat al-Kāhf. This is a recurrent problem for me and even though I know that I'm rewarded for obeying Allāh's command during my menses, I am still bothered. Please advise.

Answer

There are **six** important principles to keep in mind.

First. The objective behind worship is God, Himself, while deeds are just a means.

As you stated, obedience in devotional matters, be it in the form of action or abstention, is the source of divine reward. In essence, though, the menstrual cycle isn't an abstention from worship as much as it is a redirection to another form of devotion that is even greater. All people can pray, but only a woman can bear a child. In a very real way, menses is a monthly reminder that the status of a mother is even greater than that of a worshipper. Just as it is known from the Sunnah that a scholar's rank is higher than a worshipper due to the extension of benefit to others, so is the station of motherhood just as lofty in that its fruits extend to the family and community. Every time we menstruate, dear sister, we are being reminded of a blessing even greater than worship — the blessing of life.

This reminder is also important for **new mothers** who, having been compelled by childrearing to decrease ritual worship, erroneously associate it with a diminished spiritual state. It's quite the contrary. When we pray, we nurture our souls. When we become mothers, we nurture the soul of another. Is there any doubt as to which is superior? **Women have huge spiritual potential.**

On the other hand, if a **woman isn't able to have a child**, does this diminish her femininity or status with God? By the very principles we have expounded, the answer is clear. The point isn't the worship nor our insistence on it taking a particular form. The point is God, regardless of circumstance. Contentment with who we are, as women, and our decree, as God's servants, is directly related to contentment in Him.

As for the meaning of the hadīth that, on the outer, seems to denote women with "inferior intellect", read our commentary [here](#).



Second. At times of inability, God records for His servant the very same reward He grants during times of ability. Consider the following reports.

‘Uqbah bin ‘Āmir (Allāh be well pleased with him) said that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Each day, every deed [of a servant of Allāh] is recorded and sealed. When a believer becomes ill, the angels say to Allāh, ‘Oh, our Lord! You’ve confined so and so servant of yours.’ The Lord, Almighty and Glorious, replies, ‘Record and seal for the servant the same deeds that he did when healthy, until he recovers from illness or dies.’” (Ahmad)

Abū Mūsā (Allāh be well pleased with him) narrated that he heard the Prophet ﷺ say many times, “When a servant of Allāh is accustomed to doing a good work, then becomes ill or goes on journey, what he was accustomed to doing when he was well and staying at home will be recorded for him.” (Abū Dāwūd)

“When a servant is ill, the angels are commanded to write the best of his good deeds, which he used to do before illness or traveling.” (Musannaf Ibn Abī Shaybah and Mu’jam al-Tabarānī al-Awsat)

These reports refer to illness that may afflict one at any time by God’s will. If a servant is patient with the affliction, God grants both expiation of sin and the same reward accrued during times of health. The case of a menstruating woman is no different. She will be rewarded for her obedience in abstaining from prayer, granted the reward of all prayers missed, and expiation from sin for any physical hardships associated with her period. [Dear sister, while on menses, you are actually receiving three positive recompenses.](#) Rejoice in the blessings of your Lord and don’t feel down at all.

Third. God is of such unfathomable generosity that He grants reward in accordance to the best of our deeds.

Allāh says, (16:97)

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

To whoever, male or female, does good deeds and has faith, We shall give a good life and reward them according to the best of their actions.

Recall, for a moment, the greatest prayer you’ve ever performed, that blessed instance in which your presence with God was strongest and most pure. God will grant us recompense in accordance to the most superior of our deeds. As such, in extending the principle of ‘absentee worship’, this means that a menstruating woman will not only get the reward of her missed prayers, but will receive the reward of the *best* of her prayers. How can this possibly be cause for feeling anything but exuberant gratitude during menses?



Fourth. On ‘Absentee Worship’

Since we now know that our ‘absentee worship’ will be judged by the best of our deeds, it would be from [spiritual intelligence](#) to proactively perfect all the worship we do when able, as a store for times when we’re not. God never causes the reward for righteousness to be lost¹ and He, while having no need for our devotion, seeks out our best times with Him to carry us in harder times. God doesn’t judge us the way people do. He judges us with such Merciful Care beyond what the human mind can fathom. In fact, the only parable the Prophet ﷺ ever gave of the Mercy of God is the mercy of a mother². From this, it should become as clear as day why God deals with a menstruating woman with such beautiful benevolence. God is never absent from you, so never be absent from Him by forgetting His Favors.

Fifth. Practical tips.

To ensure that our ‘absentee worship’ is accepted, we certainly must guarantee that our present worship is accepted. This requires sound sacred knowledge. I would highly recommend, dear sister, that you set aside an Islamic book or lesson series to attend to monthly. During your menses, use the opportunity to accelerate your Islamic learning. This would add a [fourth level](#) of reward to your days of menses.

Sixth. The Crown of Gratitude.

If, to crown all of this, your heart is uplifted by beholding divine gratitude as we have explained, you would have a [reward beyond measure](#).

Allāh says, (83:26)

خِتَامُهُ مِسْكٌ ۗ وَفِي ذَلِكَ فَلْيَتَنَافَسِ الْمُتَنَافِسُونَ
So, in this, let those vie, compete.

May all your days, during menses and otherwise, be blessed.

May Allāh’s infinite peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allāh, his pure progeny & folk, along with his gleaming companions, illuminated inheritors, and all loyal followers until the Last Day.

We conclude with the Praise of Allāh, Lord of the Worlds.

¹ Allāh says, (3:171) [rejoicing] in Allāh’s blessing and favor, and that Allāh will not let the reward of the believers be lost.

² ‘Umar ibn al-Khattāb (Allāh be well pleased with him) reported, “Some prisoners of war were brought to the Prophet ﷺ and a nursing woman was among them. Whenever she found a child among the prisoners, she would bring it to her chest and nurse it. The Prophet ﷺ said to us, “**Do you think this woman would throw her child into the fire?**” We said, “No, not if she were able to prevent it.” The Prophet said, “**Allāh is more merciful to His servants than this mother is to her child.**” (Bukhārī, Muslim)

