

305015 - Description of the ihram garments, and what is the ka'b of the foot?

the question

With regard to the type of footwear that it is permissible to wear during Hajj, the Hanafis, especially Muhammad al-Hasan ash-Shaybaani, say that the ka'b is the instep of the foot. The reason for that is that the Arabic word ka'b may refer to both the ankle bone and the instep of the foot. Therefore it is more prudent to understand that what is meant is the instep of the foot with regard to this issue, in such a way that it means that these are the only two parts that must be left uncovered by any type of footwear that is permissible for a man to wear whilst in ihram. So which part of the foot must be left uncovered when wearing footwear that is allowed in ihram according to the following madhabs: 1. Maaliki, 2. Shaafa'i, and 3. Hanbali? I hope that you can mention your sources as you usually do. Is there a particular way prescribed in the Sunnah with regard to wearing white for ihram?

Detailed answer

Firstly:

It was narrated from 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) that a man said: O Messenger of Allah, what clothes may the muhrim (pilgrim in ihram) wear? The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "He should not wear a chemise, turban, trousers, burnoose or khuffayn, except in the case of one who cannot find sandals, in which case he may wear khuffayn, but he should cut them so that they come lower than the ka'b." Narrated by al-Bukhaari (1543) and Muslim (1177).

The Hanafis are of the view that the ka'b is the top and middle of the foot, where the straps [of one's sandals] are tied.

However, according to the majority of Maalikis, Shaafa'is and Hanbalis, the ka'b is the protruding bone of the joint where the foot meets the leg (i.e., the ankle).

It says in al-Mawsoo'ah al-Fiqhiyyah al-Kuwaitiyyah (2/153):

Whoever cannot find sandals should cut the khuffayn to come lower than the ka'b and wear them, as stated in the hadith.

This is the view of the three madhhabs, the Hanafis, Maalikis and Shaafa'is, and is mentioned in one report from Ahmad.

The majority of scholars interpreted the ka'b, below which the khuff should come, as referring to the two protruding bones at the joint between the leg and the foot (ankle).

The Hanafis interpreted it as referring to the joint of the mid-foot, where the straps of one's sandals are tied, the reason being that the Arabic word ka'b may refer to that joint or to the protruding (ankle) bone, so it should be understood as referring to that in order to be on the safe side. End quote.

Al-Haafiz Ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The words "let him cut them so that they come lower than the ka'b", in the report of Ibn Abi Dhi'b referred to above at the end of Kitaab al-'Ilm, appear as "so that they come below the ka'b."

What is meant is that the ka'b should be uncovered when in a state of ihram, and the ka'b is the protruding bone at the joint between the leg and the foot (ankle). This is supported by the report that Ibn Abi Shaybah narrated from Jareer, from Hishaam ibn 'Urwah, from his father, who said: If the muhrim has no choice but to wear the khuffayn, let him cut their tops off, and leave as much as will enable him to keep them on his feet.

Muhammad ibn al-Hasan and those of the Hanafis who followed him said: The word "ka'b" here refers to the bone at the mid-foot, where the straps of one's sandals are tied.

It was said that this meaning is not known to the linguists, and that it is not proven from Muhammad [ibn al-Hasan], and that the reason why this was narrated from him is that Hishaam ibn 'Ubaydillah ar-Raazi heard him say concerning some issue: If the muhrim

cannot find sandals, he should cut down his khuffayn, and Muhammad pointed to the position where they should be cut, and Hishaam narrated it as the place up to which the foot should be washed when doing wudoo'.

Some scholars commented on the report from Abu Haneefah, such as Ibn Battaal, who said that the ka'b is the top of the foot, and the fact that this was narrated from Muhammad ibn al-Hasan – assuming that it was soundly narrated from him – does not necessarily mean that this was the view of Abu Haneefah.

End quote from Fath al-Baari (3/403).

The correct view is that of the majority of scholars, and is also the view of the majority of linguists.

Al-Waahidi said: No attention is to be paid to the view of those who say that the ka'b is the top of the foot, because that is contrary to the linguistic meaning and is contrary to what could be understood from the report and from the consensus of the scholars.

End quote from al-Baseet (7/285).

Secondly:

The Sunnah is for the pilgrim performing Hajj or 'umrah to enter ihram wearing a rida' (upper garment) and izaar (lower garment).

It was narrated from Ibn 'Umar that a man called out and said: O Messenger of Allah, what clothes should the muhrim avoid? He said: "He should not wear trousers, a chemise, a burnoose, or a turban, or any garment dyed with saffron or wars. Each of you should enter ihram wearing an izaar and rida'..." Narrated by Imam Ahmad in al-Musnad (8/500); classed as saheeh by the commentators on al-Musnad, and by Shaykh al-Albaani in Irwaa' al-Ghaleel (4/293).

The rida' is a piece of cloth that is worn on the upper part of the body. It is worn by placing it on the shoulders, with the ends coming over the chest.

The izaar is wrapped around the lower part of the body.

Az-Zubaydi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The izaar is well-known; it is a wrapper, and some scholars explained it as being that which covers the lower body. The ridaa' is that which covers the upper body. Both of them are not tailored. It was said that the izaar is that which is worn below the shoulders, on the lower part of the body, and the ridaa' is that which is worn over the shoulders and back. And it was said that the izaar is that which covers the lower part of the body and is not tailored. All of these views are sound.

End quote from Taaji al-'Aroos (10/43).

It is not stipulated that the ihram garments should be white, but if they are white then that is better, and this is the custom of the Muslims.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

It is mustahabb to enter ihram wearing two clean garments, and if they are white, that is better...

It is permissible to enter ihram wearing white or other permissible colours.

End quote from Majmoo' al-Fataawa (26/109),

Ibn Qudaamah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

It is mustahaab for [the ihram garments] to be clean, either new or freshly laundered, because we regard it as mustahabb to be clean in body, so by the same token his garments should be clean, like one who is attending Jumu'ah prayers.

It is best for them to be white, because the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "The best of your garments are those which are white, so dress your living in them and shroud your dead in them."

End quote from al-Mughni (5/77).

And Allah knows best.