



In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Beneficent

Khuf

SHOES/LEATHER SOCKS

EVIDENCE OF WIPING OVER LEATHER SOCKS

In the Qur'an, Allah ﷻ has commanded us to wash our feet while making wudu, thus, it should not be permissible to simply wipe over our socks instead. However, in *Shari'ah*, if a Qur'anic command is modified in light of ahadith, certain rules must be followed:

1. The hadith, on the basis of which the modification is made, must not have just a single source; it must be narrated by many continuous sources (*mutawatir*) or it must be quite well known.
2. The hadith must date after the revelation of the Qur'anic verse.

Since these conditions are well met on the issue of wiping over leather socks (khuf), there is no dissent among the ummah about its permissibility, which is evident from numerous ahadith.

حدثني سبعون من اصحاب النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم ان رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم مسح علي الخفين.
(فتح الباري، تفسير قرطبي)

Hasan Basri *rahmatullahi alayh* said, "Seventy companions have mentioned to me that the Prophet of Allah ﷺ wiped over leather socks." (*Tafseer Qurtubi v 6 p 93, Fath-al-Bari v 1 p 306*)

و نقل الحافظ في الفتح عن ابن المبارك ليس في المسح علي الخفين عن الصحابة اختلاف. (فتح الباري)

Hafiz Ibn Hajar has reported from Abdullah bin Mubarak in *Fath-al-Bari* that there was no dissent among the companions about wiping over leather socks. (*Fath-al-Bari v 1 p 305*)

Some compilers of ahadith counted the number of sahabah who narrated the permissibility of wiping over leather socks and found eighty; among them were the ten sahabah who were given the glad tidings of paradise by the Prophet ﷺ during their lifetime. Thus, the first condition of modifying the Qur'anic command was met.

The following hadith meets the second condition, namely that this practice of the Prophet ﷺ was reported after the revelation of the Qur'anic verse:

عن جرير بن عبد الله البجلي انه بال ثم توضأ و مسح علي خفيه فقيل له اتفعل هذا فقال نعم رايت رسول الله صلي الله عليه و سلم بال ثم توضأ و مسح علي خفيه قال اعمش قال ابراهيم كان يعجبهم هذا الحديث لان اسلام جرير كان بعد نزول المائدة. (مسلم, بخاري, ترمذي, نسائي, ابن ماجه, مسند احمد)

Jarir bin Abdullah ﷺ urinated, then performed ablution and wiped over his leather socks. It was said to him, "Do you do like this?" He said, "Yes, I saw that the Prophet of Allah ﷺ urinated, then performed ablution, and then wiped over his shoes." A'mash said, "Ibrahim had observed that this hadith was a surprise for them (the people) because Jarir had embraced Islam after the revelation of Surah al-Ma'ida." (*Muslim h 401, Bukhari h 374, Tirmidhi h 86, Nasai h 117, Ibn Majah h 536, Musnad Ahmad h 18439*)

Although this issue of wiping over leather socks (khuf) has been proven to be beyond guess-work, it is very important to understand the conditions under which this was practiced in the days of the Prophet ﷺ:

1. The leather socks must cover the feet, including the ankles.
2. It is possible to walk in them for two to three miles. *Khuf* (leather socks) in those days were worn as shoes and not as socks like we wear them today. People used to travel wearing those khuf. They normally wore slippers and when they traveled, they would wear the khuf.

Note: It is only permissible to make masah over leather socks if they were worn after performing wudu. Masah is not permissible if wudu was not performed beforehand.

عَنِ الْمُغِيرَةِ عَنْ أَبِيهِ قَالَ كُنْتُ مَعَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ذَاتَ لَيْلَةٍ فِي مَسِيرٍ فَقَالَ لِي أَمْعَكَ مَاءٌ قُلْتُ نَعَمْ فَنَزَلَ عَن رَاحِلَتِهِ فَمَشَى حَتَّى تَوَارَى فِي سَوَادِ اللَّيْلِ ثُمَّ جَاءَ فَأَفْرَعْتُ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْإِدَاوَةِ فَعَسَلَ وَجْهَهُ وَعَلِيهِ حَبَّةٌ مِنْ صُوفٍ فَلَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ أَنْ يُخْرِجَ ذِرَاعِيهِ مِنْهَا حَتَّى أَخْرَجَهُمَا مِنْ أَسْفَلِ الْحَبَّةِ فَعَسَلَ ذِرَاعِيهِ وَمَسَحَ بِرَأْسِهِ ثُمَّ أَهْوَيْتُ لِأَنْزِعَ خُفَيْهِ فَقَالَ دَعَهُمَا فَإِنِّي أَدْخَلْتُهُمَا طَاهِرَتَيْنِ وَمَسَحَ عَلَيْهِمَا. (بخاري, مسلم, نسائي, ابو داود, مسند احمد)

Al-Mughira ﷺ narrated: One night I was with the Prophet ﷺ on a journey. He asked (me), "Have you got water with you?" I replied, "Yes." So he got down from his she-camel and went away till he disappeared in the darkness of the night. Then he came back and I poured water for him from the pot (for the ablution). He washed his face and hands while he was wearing a woolen cloak (the sleeves of which were narrow), so he could not take his arms out of it. So he took them out from underneath the cloak. Then he washed his forearms and passed his wet hands over his head. Then I tried to take off his khufs, but he said, "Leave them, for I have performed ablution before putting them on." And so he passed his wet hands over them. (*Bukhari p 119, Muslim h 408, Nasai h 124, Abu Dawood h 130, Musnad Ahmad h 17440*)

THE PROPER METHOD FOR PERFORMING MASAH

Masah on khuf (leather socks) is only performed on top of the feet. The proper way to wipe the socks is to place the first three fingers of the hand on top of the foot (by the toes) and slide them back to the top of the ankle bone. The right hand should be used to wipe the right foot and the left hand for the left foot.

عن عليّ لو كان الدين بالرأي لكان أسفل الخف أولى بالمسح من أعلاه وقد رأيت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يمسح على ظاهر خفيه. (ابو داؤد, دارمي)

Ali رضي الله عنه narrated, "If the Deen were based on opinion, it would be more important to wipe the bottom of the shoe than the upper, but I have seen the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم wiping over the upper part of his shoes." (*Abu Dawood h 140, Darimi h 709*)

عن المغيرة بن شعبة قال رأيت رسول الله -صلى الله عليه وسلم- بال ثم جاء حتى توضأ ومسح على خفيه ووضع يده اليمنى على خفه الأيمن، ويده اليسرى على خفه الأيسر، ثم مسح أعلاههما مسحة واحدة حتى كأنني أنظر إلى أصابع رسول الله -صلى الله عليه وسلم- على الخفين. (البيهقي, ابن أبي شيبة)

Mughirah ibn Shu'bah رضي الله عنه narrated: I saw the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم urinate, perform ablution and wipe over his socks placing his right hand on top of his right foot and his left hand over his left foot and pulled them back once till I saw his wet finger marks on his socks. (*Bayhaqi v 1 p 292, Ibn Abi Shaybah v 1 p 170*)

VALIDITY PERIOD OF THE MASAH

The maximum duration of validity for the masah is three days and three nights for a traveller. For a resident, the masah is valid for a period of one day and one night (twenty-four hours). Afterwards, one must remove the leather socks and wash the feet for wudu.

عن شريح بن هانئ قال أتيت عائشة أسألها عن المسح على الخفين فقالت عليك بابن أبي طالب فسئل فإنه كان يسافر مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم. فسألناه فقال جعل رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ثلاثة أيام وكيايهم للمسافر ويوماً وليلة للمقيم. (مسلم, نسائي, ابن ماجه)

Shuraih bin Hani رضي الله عنه said: I came to A'isha *radhiallahu anha* to ask her about wiping over leather socks. She said, "You better ask (Ali) the son of Abu Talib رضي الله عنه for he used to travel with Allah's Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم." We asked him and he said, "Allah's Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم stipulated (the upper limit) of three days and three nights for a traveller and one day and one night for the resident." (*Muslim h 414, Nasai h 129, Ibn Majah h 545*)

عَنْ خُزَيْمَةَ بْنِ ثَابِتٍ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنَّهُ سُئِلَ عَنِ الْمَسْحِ عَلَى الْخُفِّينِ فَقَالَ لِلْمَسَافِرِ ثَلَاثَةَ وِلْمَقِيمٍ يَوْمٍ. (ترمذي)

Khuzaimah bin Thabit رضي الله عنه narrated: The Prophet ﷺ was asked about wiping over leather socks. He replied, "The traveler may perform masah for three days and the resident for one day." (*Tirmidhi h 88*)

Note: The validity period for masah begins when the first wudu, after which the socks were worn, becomes invalid.

FACTORS THAT INVALIDATE MASAH

1. Every time wudu becomes invalid, masah also becomes invalid.
2. Removing a foot or part thereof from the sock. In this case, both feet will have to be washed again.
3. The expiry of the validity period.

Note: masah over leather socks is permissible only for performing wudu. If ghusl (taking a bath) becomes obligatory, the socks must be removed to wash the feet.

عَنْ صَفْوَانَ بْنِ عَسَّالٍ قَالَ كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَأْمُرُنَا إِذَا كُنَّا سَفْرًا أَنْ لَا نَنْزِعَ خِفَافَنَا ثَلَاثَةَ أَيَّامٍ وَلَيَالِيَهُنَّ إِلَّا مِنْ جَنَابَةٍ وَلَكِنْ مِنْ غَائِطٍ وَبَوْلٍ وَتَوَمٍّ. (ترمذي, نسائي, ابن ماجه, مسند احمد)

Safwan bin 'Asal رضي الله عنه narrated: The Prophet of Allah ﷺ used to tell us, "Perform masah over the socks for three days and nights during travel. Do not take the socks off for going to the toilet, but take them off if ghusl is required." (*Tirmidhi h 89, Nasai h 137, Ibn Majah h 471, Musnad Ahmad h 17401*)

ABOUT MASAH OVER REGULAR SOCKS

In Arabic, "khuf" refers to shoes that cover the entire foot including the ankle. Since khuf is translated as "leather socks" these days, people confuse them with today's regular socks and, therefore, consider it permissible to make masah over them as well. It is very clear from studying the ahadith that khuf were not socks, but rather shoes.

In *Bukhari*, there is a hadith which talks about a man who brought water out of a well for a thirsty dog in his khuf. The words of the hadith are: "So he filled his khuf with water." It is impossible to use today's regular socks, which are usually made of cotton or nylon, to carry or hold water.

It is also clear from the ahadith that they used to go out and walk with these khuf without wearing shoes over them. They used to travel wearing these khuf. Today, the use of socks is completely different. We wear shoes over our ordinary socks and to consider these socks the same as khuf is incorrect. This misunderstanding arises from not understanding the proper meaning and use of khufs. It is impermissible to perform over the socks we normally wear today.

In *Shari'ah*, it is not permissible to guess and use deductive logic to understand or modify rulings. For example, when performing wudu, we are required to wash our arms up to the elbows; also, our wudu is nullified if we break wind. We do not know the reasoning behind these rulings. Why should our arms be washed upto the elbows, or how does breaking wind make us unclean? We simply follow these commands and perform wudu accordingly.

Similarly, it is incomprehensible how wiping over khufs is the same as washing our feet in wudu, but since we are not permitted to modify any other prescribed rules of performing wudu, we cannot deduce that our regular socks are the same as khuf. If one begins to get into such deductive reasoning, who is to say that performing masah over gloves or a helmet is impermissible.

There are some ahadith regarding masah over regular socks, but all of them are weak except the hadith narrated by Mughira bin Shu'aba رضي الله عنه. The following opinions of the scholars of ahadith about this hadith provide sufficient understanding of such ahadith:

عن مغيرة بن شعبة ان النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم توضأ و مسح علي الجوربين و النعلين.

Mughira bin Shu'aba رضي الله عنه narrated: The Prophet ﷺ made masah over his jorab (socks) and shoes.

قال ابو داودَ كان عبد الرحمن بن مهدي لا يحدّث بهذا الحديث لان المعروف عن المغيرة عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم مسح علي الخفين. (ابو داود)

Abu Dawood *rahmatullahi alayh* said that Abdul Rahman bin Mehdi [the teacher of Imam Bukhari and a highly respected scholar of ahadith] did not used to mention this hadith, for all the other well known ahadith narrated by Mughira bin Shu'aba رضي الله عنه about wiping over socks are regarding masah over leather socks. (*Abu Dawood h 137*)

Perhaps, the narrator mistakenly used the word jorab, which means sock, instead of khuf as has been mentioned in all other ahadith narrated by him.

Abu Dawood *rahmatullahi alayh* has also mentioned the names of a number of sahabah who used to wipe over socks, but all of them are without evidence and, therefore, not credible. Imam Nasai *rahmatullahi alayh*, after mentioning this hadith, classified it as hasan sahih. However, Imam Nawawi *rahmatullahi alayh* said that Imam Nasai *rahmatullahi alayh* made a mistake here because all the other scholars of ahadith have agreed upon this hadith being weak. Imam Bayhaqi *rahmatullahi alayh*, in his book *Al-Ma'rifa*, mentions this hadith and then adds:

وذلك حديث منكر ضعفه سفيان الثوري و عبد الرحمن بن مهدي و احمد بن حنبل و يحي بن معين و علي ابن المديني و مسلم بن الحجاج و المعروف عن المغيرة حديث المسح علي الخفين. و اخرج في سنن الكبرى قال ابو محمد (يعني يحي بن منصور) رايت مسلم بن الحجاج ضعف هذا الخبر و قال ابو قيس الاودي و هزيل بن شرحبيل لا يحتملان و خصوصا مع مخالفتها الاجلة الذين رواوا هذا الخبر عن المغيرة فقالوا مسح علي الخفين و قال لا يترك ظاهر القران بمثل ابي قيس و هزيل. (البيهقي)

“This hadith is *munkar*, for Sufyan Thauri, Abdul Rahman bin Mahdi, Imam Ahmed, Yahyah bin Mu'een, Ali bin Al Madeeni and Imam Muslim have declared it weak; the hadith narrated by Mughira bin Shu'aba clearly mentions masah over leather socks. Imam Bayhaqi, in his book *Sunan-al-Kubra*, has also reported from Abu Muhammad that Imam Muslim has classified this hadith as weak and said that Abu Qais Audi and Huzail bin Shurahbeel, among the chain of narrators, are untrustworthy, especially because they have opposed well respected tabi'een (in this regard). When they narrated this hadith from Mughira bin Shu'aba, he clearly

said that the Prophet ﷺ made masah over the leather socks. He also said, "I will not leave the command of the Qur'an because of a narration from people like Abu Qais and Huzail." (*Bayhaqi v 1 p 284*)

قال عبد الرحمن بن مهدي لسفيان الثوري لو حدثتني عن ابي قيس عن هزيل ما قبلته منك فقال سفيان
الحديث ضعيف. (البيهقي)

Abdul Rahman bin Mahdi said to Sufyan Thauri, "Even if you (who are very well respected) will narrate to me the hadith of Abu Qais that he reports from Huzail, I will not accept it." Sufyan Thauri replied, "This hadith is weak." (*Bayhaqi v 1 p 284*)

قال عليُّ ابنُ المَدِينِيّ: حَدِيثُ الْمُغِيرَةَ بْنِ شُعْبَةَ فِي الْمَسْحِ رَوَاهُ عَنِ الْمُغِيرَةَ أَهْلُ الْمَدِينَةِ وَأَهْلُ الْكُوفَةِ وَأَهْلُ الْبَصْرَةِ ، وَرَوَاهُ هُزَيْلُ بْنُ شُرْحِبِيلَ عَنِ الْمُغِيرَةَ إِلَّا أَنَّهُ قَالَ : وَمَسَحَ عَلَى الْجُورِيِّينَ وَخَالَفَ النَّاسَ. (البيهقي)

Ali bin Madeeni said: The scholars of ahadith from Madinah, Kufa, and Basra narrated the hadith of Mughira bin Shu'aba (that the Prophet ﷺ performed masah over leather socks). But, when Huzail bin Shurahbeel narrated this hadith from Mughira bin Shu'aba, he said that the Prophet ﷺ wiped over regular socks. Thus, he went against all the other narrators and scholars. (*Bayhaqi v 1 p 284*)

It is now clear that the ahadith about masah over regular socks are weak. Even if these were sahih ahadith, it would still not be permissible to make masah over today's regular socks because of the principle, noted previously, that two conditions must be met in all rulings of *fiqh*:

1. The hadith must be successive and continuous, or very popular. The hadith pertaining to masah on regular socks is a single narration.
2. The hadith must date after the revelation of the Qur'anic verse. Here there is no evidence whether the Prophet ﷺ performed masah over regular socks before or after the revelation of the verse about wudu. Therefore, the command of the Qur'an may not be modified in this regard.

It was also explained that deductive reasoning may not be used in this regard. That is why Imam Muslim strictly prohibited making masah on regular socks. Kasani *rahmatullahi alayh* has reported a consensus on the point that if the socks are thin, masah is not permissible on them:

ان كانا رقيقين يشقّان الماء لا يجوز المسح عليهما بالاجماع.(البدائع)

There is a consensus of scholars that if the socks are thin and water penetrates through, masah will not be permissible on them. (*Al-Bada'i v 1 p 10*)

Note: If there are socks that can be used as shoes and one can walk around with them without wearing something else on top of them, masah would be permissible on them. This permissibility has been reported by Imam Nasai on the authority of Sufyan Thauri, Ibn Al-Mubarak, Imam Shafi'i, Imam Ahmad, and Ishaq *rahmatullahi alayhum*.