

Islamic 'Adult Breastfeeding' Fatwas Return

by Raymond Ibrahim

[Jihad Watch](#)

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Back in May 2007, Dr. Izzat Atiya, head of Al Azhar University's Department of Hadith, issued a *fatwa*, or Islamic legal decree, saying that female workers should "breastfeed" their male co-workers in order to work in each other's company. According to the [BBC](#):

He said that if a woman fed a male colleague "directly from her breast" at least five times they would establish a family bond and thus be allowed to be alone together at work. "Breast feeding an adult puts an end to the problem of the private meeting, and does not ban marriage," he ruled. "A woman at work can take off the veil or reveal her hair in front of someone whom she breastfed."

Atiya based his fatwa on a [hadith](#)—a documented saying or doing of Islam's prophet Muhammad and subsequently one of Sharia law's sources of jurisprudence. Many Egyptians naturally protested this decree—hadith or no hadith—though no one could really demonstrate how it was un-Islamic; for the fatwa conformed to the strictures of Islamic jurisprudence. Still, due to the protests—not many Egyptian women were eager to "breastfeed" their male coworkers—the fatwa receded, and that was that.

However, because it was never truly rebutted, it kept making comebacks.

For instance, three years later in 2010, a high-ranking Saudi, Sheikh Abdul Mohsin al-Abaican [issued a fatwa](#) confirming that "women could give their milk to men to establish a degree of maternal relations and get around a strict religious ban on mixing between unrelated men and women." But unlike Atiya's fatwa, "the man should take the milk, but not directly from the breast of the woman. He should drink it [from a cup] and then [he] becomes a relative of the family, a fact that allows him to come in contact with the women without breaking Islam's rules about mixing."

Now, a report titled "Kuwaiti Activists: Husband Breastfeeding from Wife not Prohibited," published earlier this month by [Arabic RT](#) (see also [Garaa News](#)) opens by announcing that "The adult breastfeeding fatwa has returned once again to the spotlight, after Kuwaiti Islamic activists supported the adult breastfeeding fatwa issued by the Egyptian Salafi, Sheikh Jamal al-Murakbi [different from Al Azhar's Sheikh Atiya]. This time around, the Kuwaitis examined the adult breastfeeding fatwa in the context of relations between a man and his wife."

While the Kuwaiti sheikhs all essentially agree that the activity is not strictly forbidden according to Sharia—only "disliked" (literally *makruh*)—they are divided over the particulars:

- Sheikh Nazim Misbahi, head of the Fatwa Committee of the Islamic Heritage Revival Society in Kuwait, supports the decree, agreeing that "it is not forbidden [*haram*] for a man to breastfeed from his wife."

- Sheikh Bassam al-Shatti, a Sharia professor, specifies: "If the husband deliberately sucks to obtain milk from the breast of his wife, this is forbidden; however, if it happens unintentionally during foreplay with his wife, then there is no problem—though it is disliked according to the four schools" of Sharia.
- Sheikh Sa'd al-Anzi stressed that "if the man, while being intimate with his wife, sucks her nipples, it is nothing, considered foreplay; but if the milk reaches his mouth, he should spit out—even if goes down in his stomach," i.e., vomit.

Consider for a moment the significance of these Islamic edicts: whether women "breastfeeding" coworkers (Egyptian fatwa, 2007), whether men drinking female breast-milk in a cup (Saudi fatwa, 2010), or whether Kuwaiti minutiae concerning bedroom foreplay—all these fatwas are reminders of the inescapable strictures of Sharia law; while these sheikhs offers various circumstances and interpretations concerning "adult breastfeeding," they are all confined to the words of the prophet of Islam.

This is precisely why, despite all the claims that Islam is perpetually being "misunderstood"—by terrorists, by "Islamophobes"—understanding what Islam commands and forbids is actually quite a simple matter: along with the Koran, determine what the prophet said in canonical hadiths.

It is, after all, no coincidence that the above mentioned Kuwaitis, like Sheikh Misbahi, were members of the delegation that recently went to ask Saudi Arabia's Grand Mufti about Islam's position on churches in the Arabian Peninsula: the same source that compelled the Grand Mufti to declare that [all churches must be destroyed](#), is the same source that advocates "adult breastfeeding": Muhammad and his teachings. All very straightforward, really.

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