

HIJAAB

IN THE LIGHT OF THE QUR'AAN AND SUNNAH

INSPIRING INCIDENTS OF THE SAHAABAH
رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُنَّ, TAABI'EEN AND PIOUS PREDECESSORS
رَحِمَهُمُ اللَّهُ UPHOLDING HIJAAB IN THEIR LIVES

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The author, editors and typesetters humbly request your duas for them, their parents, families, Mashaayikh and Asaatizah.

Compiled By: Mufti Zakaria Makada

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Madrasah Ta'leemuddeen

4 Third Avenue

P.O. Box 26393

Isipingo Beach

4115

South Africa

Tel: (+27) 31 902 9818

Fax: (+27) 31 902 5681

E-mail: info@ihyaauddeen.co.za

Websites: <http://ihyaauddeen.co.za>

<http://muftionline.co.za>

<http://whatisislam.co.za>

<http://al-islam.co.za>

<http://ihyaaussunnah.com>

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INTRODUCTION

Islam is the perfect code of life. It provides man with complete guidance in all spheres of his life and teaches him how to conduct and fulfill his worldly and deeni needs.

Islam advocates respecting human rights and promotes sublime conduct when dealing and interacting with the creation. In aspects of honesty, trustworthiness, justice, kindness to parents, respect to elders, fulfilling the rights of people, and decency in manner, speech and dressing, Islam is second to none.

From among the core values that Islam encourages one to adopt is the quality of hayaa (shame and respect). Hayaa (shame and respect) is the stepping stone to acquiring the true morals, values and ethics of Islam.

After examining the various laws and injunctions of Islam, whether relating to the domestic, social or economic aspects of one's life, one will reach the conclusion that the element of hayaa (shame and respect) forms an integral part of all practices.

Rasulullah ﷺ has said:

لكل دين خلق وخلق الإسلام الحياء

Every religion has a distinguishing characteristic, and the distinguishing characteristic of Islam is hayaa (shame and respect).¹

The mubaarak lifestyle of Rasulullah ﷺ was an embodiment and exposition of hayaa (shame and modesty).

From his ibaadah to his eating, sleeping, interacting and even attending the call of nature, every action he carried out portrayed the highest levels of shame and modesty. In every dimension of his mubaarak life, he ensured that the desired degree of hayaa was never compromised.

When one examines this integral branch of Islam – hayaa - one finds that it can never be upheld without fulfilling the laws of purdah between males and females.

Though hayaa relates to all departments of one's deeni and worldly life, and purdah is one of the many branches of hayaa, upholding purdah in one's worldly and deeni life is extremely important and essential, as it will assist one to fulfil one's deeni obligations correctly in the manner Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has commanded.

¹ موطأ الإمام مالك، الرقم: ١٦١٠

In today's modern world, we find that there is an attack on the basic values and practices of Islam – especially the practice of purdah.

Some modernists argue that there is no need to uphold purdah and opine that the practice of purdah is archaic and outdated and holds the modern woman back from progress.

This book aims to eradicate this false notion and establishes that upholding hayaa and purdah is the only way to reach Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and earn success in this world and the next. Similarly, this book proves that not adhering to purdah is the formula to destroy a nation.

Therefore, in today's times, when immorality and shamelessness has become so widespread, there is even more need for upholding purdah compared to the centuries that passed.

May Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى accept this kitaab and make it a means for the mubaarak sunnah to spread in the entire world.

CHAPTER ONE

THE POSITION OF WOMEN BEFORE THE ADVENT OF ISLAM

The advent of Islam occurred at a time when the world was engulfed in sin and was steeped in the lowest ebb of darkness.

This era was regarded as the darkest age in the history of mankind. Cheating, robbing, killing, gambling, usurping the rights of orphans and widows and even burying female infants alive was the order of the day.

Women were degraded to such an extent that the European countries did not even accept women to be human beings!

Women had no place in religion and were considered unfit for engaging in worship. In some councils of Rome, it was decided, after much discussion, that a woman is a dirty animal.

Among the Arabs, it was considered permissible for a father to kill or even bury his daughter alive! In fact, this heinous crime was deemed to be a mark of honour and a standard of nobility.

There were some who held the opinion that a woman's life had no value. Hence, if a person killed a woman, he did not have to pay blood-money or be charged with retaliatory action.

As far as the Hindus were concerned, when the husband died, his wife too was burnt alive with his dead body.

In the year 586 AC, France showed its 'compassion' for women by passing a resolution – after great deliberation and controversy – that a woman is actually a human being, but she has been created for the sole purpose of serving man!

In essence, immorality and indecency had reached its pinnacle, where women had no social recognition and were openly ill-treated and physically abused.

It was in this age of ignorance and oppression that Rasulullah ﷺ – may our lives be sacrificed for him – was sent to rescue mankind from the darkness of kufr and usher them into the light of Imaan.

THE POSITION OF WOMEN AFTER THE ADVENT OF ISLAM

Rasulullah ﷺ strove to rescue the Arabs from the wrong practices they were immersed in and instill within them the true values of Islam.

The light of Islam began to spread until the golden era eventually dawned upon the world, where the nation that was once accustomed to physically and emotionally ill-treating their women became the greatest benefactors of mankind and the greatest protectors of women's rights the world had ever seen!

The men of such a nation, who at one time would deprive their women of all rights and degrade them to being inherited among the belongings of the deceased, were now upholding the honour of their women and fulfilling their rights.

They now treated their women with the greatest compassion and mercy and safeguarded them against every type of worldly and deeni harm.

All this was purely on account of them upholding the Mubaarak Sunnah of Rasulullah ﷺ and the teachings of Islam in their lives.

THE HONOUR ISLAM HAS AFFORDED TO WOMEN

In Islam, a woman has been afforded honour and dignity. She is considered to be extremely valuable and precious.

Hence, Islam strives to protect a woman and safeguard her at all times, just as a valuable pearl and diamond is safeguarded and protected.

Islam is not like the West which degrades a woman to the low position of a mere commodity. In the West, a woman is so cheap that she is stripped of her honour, dignity and respect and her beauty is sold to the highest bidder by using her picture to sell products and entice customers.

Hence, whether it is soap, cosmetic products, clothing or any other commodity, it is accompanied by the woman's picture which aims to make the product more appealing and attractive.

On the contrary, Islam has afforded such honour and respect to women that even in the Qur'aan Majeed, Allah ﷻ commands that the rights of women be upheld and that they be treated with dignity and respect.

Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى says:

وَعَايِشُهُنَّ بِالْعُرُوفِ

Deal with them (your wives) in a good manner (with respect and dignity).²

Similarly, in the Mubaarak Hadith, Rasulallah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ has mentioned, “The best among you are those who treat their wives kindly, and I am the best of you in treating my wives with kindness.”³

The Advice of Rasulallah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ on the Occasion of the Farewell Hajj

On the occasion of the Farewell Hajj, while addressing the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, Rasulallah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ emphasized the importance of fulfilling the rights of women in the following words:

“Fear Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى regarding women, for you have taken them (into your nikaah) with the trust of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى (i.e. they are an amaanah from Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى).”

² سورة النساء: ١٩

³ سنن الترمذي، الرقم: ٣٨٩٥، وقال: هذا حديث حسن صحيح

Rasulullah ﷺ also said, “As for the rights that you owe to your wives, then it is that you treat them well in providing clothing and sustenance for them.”⁴

Islam has advocated kindness and compassion towards women at every juncture. Hence, Rasulullah ﷺ taught the Ummah that to spend on one's wife and to keep her happy is actually an act of ibaadah (worship).

Even at the time of divorce, when the couple find themselves incompatible or cannot reconcile their differences and wish to separate, Islam commands the husband to separate with dignity and respect, and not to oppress her in any way.

In essence, there is no religion that has bestowed such kindness, compassion and honour to women like the kindness, compassion and honour afforded to them by Islam.

⁴ صحيح مسلم، الرقم: ١٢١٨ ، سنن الترمذي، الرقم: ١١٦٣

CHAPTER TWO

HIJAAB IN ISLAM

When the topic of hijaab (commonly known as purdah to many people), is discussed, then generally, it is the aspect of covering that comes to mind.

Some people associate hijaab with a woman wearing a scarf, while others associate it with a woman wearing a niqaab (i.e. a veil to cover the face).

Some people understand hijaab to refer to a woman covering her entire body (i.e. a scarf to cover her hair, a niqaab to cover her face, and modest, loose, flowing garments to cover her entire body).

However, these notions do not capture the full meaning of hijaab (purdah) in Islam. Though a woman dressing modestly might be one of the components in the broader picture of hijaab (purdah), the concept of hijaab in Islam is not confined to a woman's dressing.

Rather, Islam has a very wide and comprehensive meaning of *hijaab* (*purdah*) which encompasses the entire life of a woman when dealing with the opposite gender.

The Comprehensive Meaning of Hijaab

This aspect of adopting *hijaab* (*purdah*) when dealing with the opposite gender applies to every department of human living, whether it be in one's domestic life or social life.

If one has to try and give an apt explanation of *hijaab* (*purdah*) in Islam, then perhaps it could be explained as a woman adopting modesty and shame when dealing with the opposite gender, in every department of her life, according to the dictates of *shari'ah*.

Before understanding the various teachings of *deen* that pertain to the injunction of *hijaab* (*purdah*), it is incumbent upon us to understand a woman's place and designated role in Islam.

If a woman remains in her place, which Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى had decided for her, then she will be a means of bringing goodness to herself and will be protected from the harmful elements of society.

A Woman's Place and Designated Role in Islam

In the Qur'aan Majeed, Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى commands women to remain in their homes, and not to leave their homes (unless they have a valid need).

Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى says:

وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَى

*And remain in your homes and do not emerge, making a display of your beauty, as it used to be displayed in the days of earlier ignorance...*⁵

Similarly, in the Mubaarak Hadith, we find that Rasulallah ﷺ had designated the roles for the men and women of his Ummah to follow in their lives.

On the occasion, when Hazrat Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ married Hazrat Faatimah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, Rasulallah ﷺ advised them regarding the manner in which they should conduct themselves in the nikaah.

Rasulallah ﷺ outlined the duties and responsibilities of each spouse, instructing Hazrat Faatimah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا to attend to the duties within the home and Hazrat Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ to fulfil the responsibilities out of the home.

From this Hadith, we understand that each spouse has been allocated their specific duties and responsibilities.

The Role of the Husband and Wife

The husband's duty and responsibility is to fulfil the needs and requirements of his wife and family, such as providing them with food, clothing, shelter, etc.

⁵ سورة الأحزاب: ٣٣

He is thus required to leave the home in order to generate an income through which he will be able to fulfil his responsibilities.

On the other hand, the wife has been commanded to remain within the confines of the home and not to leave the home except at the time of need, as she has been allocated the duty of tending to the internal affairs of the home.

Hence, she should serve her husband, take care of the children and manage the affairs of the home such as cooking, keeping the home tidy, etc.

If each spouse acts responsibly and fulfils their respective duties and responsibilities, the home will run smoothly and harmoniously and the family will be happy and prosperous. Each spouse will be able to fulfil the rights they owe to Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and the rights they owe to each other.

Furthermore, both parents will be able to focus on instilling Islamic values into the children and giving them the correct upbringing which they require.

The Only Path of Salvation

Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى sent Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ with the greatest kitaab – the Qur’aan Majeed, and the greatest shari’ah which will stand the test of time until the Day of Qiyaamah.

Hence, if one wishes to acquire goodness from its source and safeguard his life and respect from the onslaughts and attacks of every type of evil which the world can present, then he can only find such protection and security through following the commands and lifestyle of the leader of mankind, the Imaam of all the Ambiyaa and Rasuls عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ of the past – Hazrat Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

In the Mubaarak Hadith, Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ mentioned:

“There is no action that will draw you close to Jannah except that I have commanded you to carry it out, and there is no action that will draw you close to Jahannum except that I have prohibited you from perpetrating it.”⁶

Hazrat Abdur Rahmaan bin Amr Sulami رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ reports that he heard Hazrat Irbaadh bin Saariyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ once mention the following:

⁶ المستدرک علی الصحیحین للحاکم، الرقم: ۲۱۳۶، ورجاله رجال البخاری إلا أحمد بن إبراهیم بن ملحان وهو ثقة وسعيد بن أبي أمية ولم يذكر له جرح ولا تعديل

On one occasion, Rasulullah ﷺ delivered such advices to us that the eyes of the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ began to flow with tears and their hearts were filled with fear.

Hearing the advices, we said to Rasulullah ﷺ, “O Rasul of Allah ﷺ! These advices seem to be the advices of a person who is soon to depart (from the world). So what do you instruct us to do (after your demise)?”

Rasulullah ﷺ replied, “I have left you (to tread) upon a clear path (the path of deen). Its night is like its day (in clarity i.e. everything is clear). The person who will move off this path after me will definitely be destroyed. Those of you who will live after me will certainly see abundant differences, so (at that time,) you should firmly hold onto that which you recognize as my Sunnah, and the Sunnah of the rightly guided Khulafaa.”⁷

From these two Ahaadith mentioned above, we understand that following the laws of deen and the Mubaarak Sunnah of Rasulullah ﷺ is the only way to attain salvation and success in this world and the next.

Hence, the roles which Rasulullah ﷺ had designated for men and women – if they fully adhere to these roles, then they will gain success.

⁷ سنن ابن ماجه، الرقم: ٤٣، المسند المستخرج على صحيح مسلم لأبي نعيم، الرقم: ٣، وقال: وهذا حديث جيد من صحيح حديث الشاميين

The Best for Women

Among the core teachings of deen is that men and women observe purdah and hijab and do not have contact with one another. This will maintain purity and chastity in their hearts and lives.

On one occasion, Hazrat Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was seated by Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ when Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ asked, “What is best for a woman?” All the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ remained silent and nobody answered.

Hazrat Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, “When I returned home, I informed Faatimah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا regarding the question which Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ posed before the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, and asked her the same question, ‘What is best for a woman?’

“In answer, she replied, ‘The best thing is that they do not see men and nor do men see them.’”

Hazrat Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ then said, “When I mentioned her answer to Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, he became delighted and pleased and said, ‘Faatimah is part of me.’”⁸

⁸ مسند البزار، الرقم: ٥٢٦، حلية الأولياء ٤٠/٢، واللفظ له، وإسناده ضعيف كما في كثر العمال، الرقم: ٤٦٠١٢

Rasulullah ﷺ was Sent as a Mercy for Mankind

Rasulullah ﷺ was sent as a mercy for mankind until the end of time. Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى describes the unprecedented love which Rasulallah ﷺ had for mankind in the following verse of the Qur'aan Majeed:

لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُم بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٢٨﴾

Surely there has come to you a Rasul from among you: it grieves him that you should face hardship, he is ardently anxious for your welfare, and to the believers he is most kind and extremely merciful.⁹

Such was the unparalleled love and concern of Rasulallah ﷺ for the Ummah to be saved from Jahannum that Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى consoles him in the Qur'aan Majeed saying:

لَعَلَّكَ بَاخِعٌ نَّفْسَكَ أَلَّا يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٢٩﴾

Perhaps, (O Muhammad ﷺ), you would kill yourself with grief on account of them not becoming believers.¹⁰

It is reported from Hazrat Abu Hurairah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that Rasulallah ﷺ said, “My example and the example of the people is like that of a man who lit a fire. When the fire illuminated its

⁹ سورة التوبة: ١٢٨

¹⁰ سورة الشعراء: ٣

surroundings, then the moths, and other creatures that have the tendency to enter the fire, began to plunge into it.

“The man began trying to prevent them from doing so, but they (resisted his efforts and) continued plunging into the fire. (That is my example and your example, i.e. the Ummah).

“I am holding you around the waist, (restraining you) from the fire, yet you (resist my efforts and) plunge into the fire (of Jahannum).”¹¹

When this was the unfathomable extent of Rasulullah’s ﷺ love for his Ummah, then undoubtedly, every command which he gave his Ummah was filled with love and mercy, and goodness and benefit.

Thus, it is inconceivable for any believer to think that the command which Rasulullah ﷺ gave the women of the Ummah, for them to remain within their homes and adopt purdah and hijab, is a command which is cruel and oppressive, or a means of holding them back from progress.

Hence, through the Ummah following every command, we will gain the mercy of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and happiness in the world, and through the Ummah abandoning His command, we will acquire the displeasure of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and undergo difficulties and grief in this world.

¹¹ صحيح البخاري، الرقم: ٦٤٨٣

CHAPTER THREE

THE INCEPTION OF HIJAAB

In regard to the inception of hijaab and purdah, some Ahaadith explain that the law of hijaab and purdah was revealed after the statement of Hazrat Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

It is reported in Saheeh Bukhaari that Hazrat Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ mentioned, “I once addressed Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and said, ‘O Rasul of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ! Pious and impious people enter your home to meet you, so if you instruct your wives to adopt hijaab (it will be better, as people with wrong intentions will not be able to look at them).’” It was then that Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى revealed the verse of hijaab.”¹²

The Muhadditheen explain that after Hazrat Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ spoke to Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ did not give him any answer, as nothing was revealed to him from the side of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

¹² صحيح البخاري، الرقم: ٤٧٩٠

Other Ahaadith mention that the law of hijaab and purdah was revealed on the occasion of the waleemah of Hazrat Zainab bint Jahsh رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا.

The Waleemah of Hazrat Zainab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا

Hazrat Anas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ describes the occasion of the waleemah and the revelation of this verse in the following narration. He says:

Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ married his respected wife (Hazrat Zainab bint Jahsh رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا) and spent the night with her.

The following day, when the waleemah was taking place, my mother, Hazrat Ummu Sulaim رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, prepared some hays (a dish made from dates, cheese and ghee), placed it in a utensil and said to me, “O Anas! Take this to Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Say to him, ‘My mother has sent this for you and she conveys salaam to you. My mother said, ‘O Rasul of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ! This is a small gift for you from our side!’”

I thus took it to Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and said, “My mother conveys salaam to you, and she said, ‘O Rasul of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ! This is a small gift for you from our side!’”

Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ then instructed me to place the dish down, after which he took the names of certain Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ saying, “Go and call for me so-and-so, and so-and-so, and whoever else you meet.”

I thus went out and called the people whom Rasulullah ﷺ had mentioned by name, and also called whoever else I met. The total number of the people I called was close to three hundred.

Rasulullah ﷺ then told me to bring the utensil with the hays, and the people began to enter, until the room was full.

Rasulullah ﷺ then instructed the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ to sit in groups of ten and take turns to eat. Rasulullah ﷺ also told the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ that each person should eat from the side of the platter that was closest to him.

In this manner, the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ ate to their fill. As one group completed eating, another group entered and took their place, until everyone had eaten.

After everyone had eaten, Rasulullah ﷺ instructed me to pick up the utensil. On picking it up, it still contained so much of food that I was not sure whether it contained more food when I had initially placed it down, or whether it contained more food now, when I was picking it up.

Thereafter, a few people remained seated in the home of Rasulullah ﷺ, engaged in conversation with one another. While they were in conversation, Rasulullah ﷺ was also seated and his respected wife was in one corner, away from the men, facing the wall (out of hayaa for the men).

Rasulullah ﷺ was waiting for these few people to leave so that he may spend time with his respected wife, but these people did not realize.

Hence, their remaining seated caused Rasulullah ﷺ to feel uncomfortable, due to which he left his home and went to make salaam to his other respected wives.

When Rasulullah ﷺ thereafter returned to his home, and the people seated inside saw him return, they realized that he was waiting for them to leave. They thus woke up and departed.

It was at that time that the verse of hijab was revealed.

When Rasulullah ﷺ thereafter entered his home, and I went forward to enter with him, he lowered the curtain between me and him (and prevented me from entering the home).

Shortly thereafter, Rasulullah ﷺ came out and recited these verses to the people.

Hazrat Anas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ also mentioned, “I was the first person to come to know of these verses of hijab and purdah, and it was then that the respected wives of Rasulullah ﷺ (and the other women of the Ummah) went into hijab.”¹³

¹³ صحيح مسلم، الرقم: ١٤٢٨

The Verse of Hijaab

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَدْخُلُوا بُيُوتَ النَّبِيِّ إِلَّا أَنْ يُؤْذَنَ لَكُمْ إِلَى طَعَامٍ غَيْرِ نَبْزِينٍ إِنَّهُ وَلَكِنْ إِذَا دُعِيتُمْ فَادْخُلُوا إِذَا طَعِمْتُمْ فَانْتَشِرُوا وَلَا مُسْتَأْنِسِينَ لِحَدِيثٍ ۚ إِنَّ ذَلِكُمْ كَانَ يُؤْذَى النَّبِيَّ فَيَسْتَحْيِي مِنْكُمْ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَسْتَحْيِي مِنَ الْحَقِّ ۚ وَإِذَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُنَّ مَتَاعًا فَسْأَلُوهُنَّ مِنْ وَرَاءِ حِجَابٍ ۚ ذَلِكُمْ أَطْهَرُ لِقُلُوبِكُمْ وَقُلُوبِهِنَّ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ لَكُمْ أَنْ تُؤْذُوا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَلَا أَنْ تُنْكِرُوا أَرْوَاجَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ أَبَدًا ۚ إِنَّ ذَلِكُمْ كَانَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَظِيمًا ﴿٥٧﴾

O you who believe! Do not enter the houses of Nabi ﷺ, except when you are permitted for a meal, not (arriving so early as) to wait for its preparation. But when you are invited, then enter, and once you have eaten, then (leave and) disperse, and (do) not (sit for long) wanting to remain for conversation. This (conduct of yours of remaining engaged in conversation in his home for some while after the meal) hurts Nabi ﷺ, but he feels shy of (telling) you (about it, as it relates to his personal self), but Allah is not shy of the truth (i.e. of openly correcting you). And when you ask anything from them (the blessed wives of Rasulullah ﷺ), ask them from behind a curtain. That is better for the purity of your hearts and their hearts. It is not allowed for you that you hurt Allah's Messenger ﷺ, nor that you ever marry his wives after him. Indeed, it would be a very great sin in the sight of Allah.

The Ulama have unanimously concurred that the abovementioned verse of the Qur'aan Majeed was the first verse to be revealed in regard to the laws of purdah and hijaab, and it was revealed on the occasion of the waleemah of Hazrat Zainab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا. Hence, this verse marked the inception of hijaab.

In reconciliation between the narration of Hazrat Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, which was mentioned above, and the narration of the waleemah of Hazrat Zainab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, the Ulama have explained that Hazrat Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ first mentioned his concern of hijaab to Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ regarding the Azwaaj-e-Mutahharaat, and thereafter, on the occasion of the waleemah of Hazrat Zainab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, the verse of hijaab was revealed.

Hence, some narrations attribute the cause for the revelation of the verse of hijaab to the statement of Hazrat Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, while other narrations attribute it to the waleemah of Hazrat Zainab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا.

Permission Granted to Leave the Home for Fulfilling a Valid Need

It is reported in the narration of Saheeh Bukhaari that after the law of hijaab and purdah was revealed, on one occasion, Hazrat Saudah bint Zam'ah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا left her home, during the night, to relieve herself.

On account of Hazrat Saudah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا being weighty (and tall, as mentioned in other narrations), those who saw her would immediately recognize her – though she was clad in hijaab.

When Hazrat Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ noticed this, he was displeased with her coming out of the home, and hence he called out to her and said, “O Saudah! By Allah! You are not concealed from us (i.e. the

men are still able to recognize you)! So see how you are coming out of your home!”

When Hazrat Saudah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا thereafter returned home, she mentioned what had transpired to Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, and also mentioned the remark of Hazrat Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.

It was the great desire of Hazrat Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ that the women should not leave their homes, and the purpose of his address to Hazrat Saudah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا was to tell her that it would have been better for her to fulfil her need of relieving herself within the home.

Until this point, the Arabs (men and women) would leave the home to relieve themselves. It was only later on that toilets were developed in the homes.

Hence, Hazrat Saudah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا left her home to relieve herself while she was well clad in purdah, and she also left at night as this would be a further means of purdah and concealment.

At the time when Hazrat Saudah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا returned home and mentioned the incident to Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, he was engaged in eating the evening meal, and he was holding a bone with meat in his blessed hand. At that moment, while Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was eating the meal, Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى revealed wahi to him.

After the revelation of the wahi ceased, Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was still holding the bone in his hand, and he said (to his respected

wives), “Permission has been granted to you (women) to leave your homes to fulfil your needs.”¹⁴

From this, we understand that permission was granted for the women to leave their homes to fulfil valid needs such as meeting one’s parents, visiting the sick, offering condolences to the bereaved, taking part in the ghusl of the mayyit, performing umrah, attending a waleemah, etc. on condition that the laws of purdah are upheld.

Incident of the Grandmother of Qari Siddeeq Baandwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ Upholding Purdah

The respected grandmother of Hazrat Qari Siddeeq Ahmad Baandwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ was a woman of great virtue and piety. She understood the value of time and hence as soon as she would complete her household duties, she would immediately engage in zikr and ibaadah.

One of the many outstanding qualities that she possessed was her concern for purdah. She was so particular in this regard, that when she would go to visit her sister’s home every week, she would insist on going at night (so that the darkness would aid in concealing her).

¹⁴ صحيح البخاري، الرقم: ٤٧٩٥

Furthermore, she would send little boys out to survey the streets. It was only when she would receive their assurance that there were no men on her route that she would don the complete niquaab and swiftly depart for her sister's home.

A further point which highlights her concern for purdah was that she would repeatedly instruct the washerwomen to ensure that they did not wash her clothing in any place where men would be able to see it.

After the clothes would be washed, she would not allow the washerwomen to hang them to dry in public. Rather, she would make them bring her wet clothing back to her home where she would herself hang it to dry, ensuring that it would not be seen by any men.¹⁵

¹⁵ حیاتِ صدیق: ٦٤ ، تذکرة الصديق: ١٣٦/١

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PURPOSE OF PURDAH IN ISLAM

The deen of Islam is a deen of purity, and the purpose for shari'ah instituting the law of purdah for males and females is so that they may acquire the purity of Islam in their hearts and lives.

When males and females lead a life of purity, righteousness and chastity, at heart, in their limbs, and in their association and interaction, they will be able to acquire the special proximity and closeness of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and success in both worlds.

Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى mentions in the Qur'aan Majeed:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى

*Indeed, successful is the one who purifies himself.*¹⁶

Furthermore, leading a life of purity and chastity will cause the true beauty and goodness of Islam to be witnessed in the lives of Muslims.

¹⁶ سورة الأعلى: ١٤

The respect and happiness that is sought through nikaah will be found. The benefit of family relations in the correct sense will be achieved.

Muslims will be able to fulfill the rights which they owe to Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and the servants in general, and this will be the cause for them radiating true Islam in the world.

The Disastrous Consequences of Not Adhering to Purdah

On the contrary, if purdah is not upheld, then the adverse effects will be that a person will surpass the limits of shari'ah. He will initiate illicit relationships and will lead a carefree life without any morals and scruples.

This, in turn, will negatively impact on his marital life, plunging it into turmoil, turbulence, and discord, eventually resulting in a divorce. Thereafter, through the severance of the nikaah, both families will be split apart leaving the children torn between them to suffer and become delinquents in society.

At times, the non-adherence to the laws of purdah leads one to pre-marital relationships, and at times, to infidelity.

At times it even leads to a complete breakdown and degeneration of moral values, decency and shame, where a person even gets involved in things that are far worse than zina, such as gay or lesbian relationships.

All these sins are so destructive that individually, they are sufficient to bring about a host of calamities in their wake, the worst of which is to forsake Islam entirely.

Statement of Hazrat Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ

Hazrat Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ once said, “Restrain these souls from fulfilling their haraam desires, because they are constantly in search for the fulfilment of desires.

“If you do not restrain them, they will drag you to a most terrible end. Indeed, what I have mentioned to you is the truth. Though it might be difficult to practice upon, it will bring about a good end.

“On the contrary, practicing on wrong might be easy, but it will bring about a disastrous outcome. Refraining from sin is better than (committing the sin and thereafter) treating and remedying it with taubah and repentance.

“Many a gaze gave rise to passion, and single moment’s passion caused a lengthy period of grief.”¹⁷

If one has to analyze the fitnahs found in the world, then one will realize that most of them stem from the root cause of not adhering to purdah, and not remaining within the limits of shari’ah when dealing with males and females in general.

¹⁷ البيان والتبيين: ٩٤/٣

It is for this purpose that shari'ah has commanded males and females to adopt purdah which will serve as a defense system to prevent haraam and evil influences entering into one's deen, one's life, the life of one's family and the life of the Muslims in general.

When each person will uphold this department in his life, then he will safeguard himself, his deen, his family and family life, and he will contribute to the environment remaining pure and society being protected.

Incident of the Muazzin who Lost His Imaan due to Not Observing Purdah

It is reported that there was once a muazzin named Saalih in the city of Baghdad. He was known for his piety and was blessed to call out the azaan for forty years! However, it was a single, poisonous glance that destroyed this man and rendered his forty years of calling out the azaan worthless. His lamentable downfall transpired in the following manner:

One day, while Saalih was climbing the minaret to call out the azaan, his gaze fell on the daughter of the Christian neighbour whose home was adjacent to the masjid. As soon as his gaze fell on her, he became infatuated and fell in love with her. He thus came to her house and knocked on the door. The girl called out from inside the home, "Who is there?" he replied, "Saalih, the muazzin."

When the girl opened the door, he entered the home and embraced her. The Christian girl was shocked and exclaimed, “You people are the ones in whom people trust, so how is it that you are behaving in this deceitful manner?” He replied, “I really want to be with you and marry you, and if you do not agree to marry me, then I will kill you.”

The girl retorted saying, “I am only prepared to marry you if you leave your religion.” There and then, the muazzin left Islam and declared, “I disassociate myself from Islam and from the deen which Muhammad ﷺ brought.”

However, the girl was still not satisfied and said, “You only spoke these words so that you can have your way with me. After you are done with me, you will return to your deen. To prove that you truly wish to be with me, eat some pork.”

Without hesitating, Saalih placed the pork into his mouth and consumed it. The girl then requested him to consume wine, and he willingly did so.

Finally, as the wine affected his mind and intoxicated him, he tried to approach her. However, she went into a room and locked the door. She then called out to him and said, “Climb onto the roof of the house and wait for my father to come. When he arrives then he will perform our nikaah.”

Saalih then climbed onto the roof, but due to his intoxicated state, he fell to the ground and died.

The girl came out and concealed his body with a cloth. Later on, when her father arrived and she informed him of what had transpired, they took the body at night and dumped it in the street.

Thereafter, when the people learnt of the fate of the muazzin, and his reneging from Islam, they dumped his body at a rubbish pile.¹⁸

From this incident, we understand the sad plight and lamentable outcome of the person who called out the azaan for forty years.

When we examine this incident, we find that the point of failure came when he did not observe strict purdah, and perhaps had the evil habit of looking at women.

This, in turn, led to him falling in love with the girl and then bringing upon himself the evil consequences which we have seen, the worst of which was him leaving the fold of Islam.

¹⁸ ذم الهوى: ص ٣٤٤

CHAPTER FIVE

THE BEAUTY AND PERFECTION OF THE INJUNCTIONS OF ISLAM

When we compare the deen of Islam to the previous religions, we find that Islam did not only declare sinful actions and evil deeds to be haraam, but also declared the pathways that lead to sin and evil as haraam.

This has been done in order to protect a person and secure him from falling into sin.

Wine

Consider the example of wine which was permissible in the previous religions, but has been declared impermissible in Islam.

The reason for Islam declaring wine as haraam is that the harms of wine outweigh the benefits, and it is a means which leads one to committing many other sins.

Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى mentions in the Qur'aan Majeed:

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالنَّبِيرِ قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ وَإِثْمُهُمَا أَكْبَرُ مِنْ نَّفْعِهِمَا ط

They ask you (O Rasulullah ﷺ) regarding wine and gambling, say, "In them is great sin and some benefit for people, and their sin is greater than their benefit."¹⁹

Once a person drinks wine, he will become intoxicated, and in the state of intoxication, he will commit the most vile of crimes and heinous of sins.

Picture-Making and Photography

Similarly, in the previous nations, making pictures of animate objects, such as carving idols, etc. was permissible. However, it has been deemed haraam in Islam.

The reason is that picture making has the potential to lead people towards worshipping the pictures, just as they used to worship statues and idols, and this is how shirk had commenced in the world.

Hence, just as the sin itself is prohibited, Islam had also prohibited the means that could lead to the sin being committed.

¹⁹ سورة البقرة: ٢١٩

Purdah and Segregation

Likewise, Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى had commanded that segregation take place and purdah be upheld between non-mahram males and females so that there is no type of contact between them.

The reason is that contact, in whatever form it may be (e.g. through the gaze, communicating, interacting, etc.) is the starting point for one falling into zina.

In the Qur'aan Majeed, Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى says:

قُلْ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ذٰلِكَ أَزْكٰى لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ
 ﴿٢٤﴾ وَقُلْ لِّلْمُؤْمِنٰتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ

*Say to the believing men that they must lower their gazes and guard their private parts; it is more pure for them. Surely Allah is All-Aware of what they do. And tell the believing women that they must lower their gazes and guard their private parts...*²⁰

The Mufasssireen explain that in this verse, Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى first commanded the believing men and women to lower their gazes, and thereafter commanded them to guard their private parts.

The reason for the command of lowering the gaze being mentioned first is that the eyes are the window to the heart. When a person casts a lustful gaze, then the destructive blaze of

lust is ignited in the heart, and this leads to a person committing sins with his private parts and falling into zina.²¹

A Bedouin Describing the Process of Haraam Love

It is reported that once, Imaam Asma'ee رَحِمَهُ اللهُ met a Bedouin and said to him, “Describe the manner in which haraam love is created in the heart and how it progresses.”

The Bedouin replied, “The seed of haraam love is planted by casting a lustful glance. Visiting the beloved is the water which irrigates this seed. This haraam love then increases through remaining in the company of the beloved, and decreases through forsaking and separating from the beloved, and the harvest of this haraam love is to commit sin (i.e. to commit zina).”²²

The Poisonous Arrow of Iblees

Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “The (impermissible lustful) glance is a poisoned arrow from the arrows of Iblees. The one who leaves it out (i.e. looking at haraam), out of the fear of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى,

²¹ تفسير ابن كثير: ٣٩/٦ ، روضة المحبين: ص ٩٢

²² ذم الهوى: ص ٥٩٢

Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will reward him by blessing him with such imaan that he will perceive its sweetness in his heart.”²³

In this Hadith, the evil glance has not merely been compared to an arrow. Rather, it has been compared to a poisoned arrow.

The reason for this is that just as the evil effects of poison spread through the body, fatally affecting all the limbs and vital organs, similarly the ill-effects of the haraam, lustful glance linger in the spiritual heart and continue to affect a person, thereby spurring all the limbs towards committing sins.

Hence, shari’ah had commanded that strict purdah be observed between all non-mahram men and women, and shari’ah has declared it haraam for them to cast lustful glances at each other.

In essence, the deen of Islam is so complete, perfect and comprehensive that it has closed and sealed off all the avenues that lead to the sin, in the interest of maintaining purity and chastity among people.

²³ المعجم الكبير للطبراني، الرقم: ١٠٣٦٢، وفيه عبد الرحمن بن إسحاق الواسطي وهو ضعيف كما في مجمع الزوائد، الرقم:

Refraining from Casting Lustful Glances

It is for this reason that Rasulallah ﷺ emphasized the importance of guarding the sight and refraining from casting lustful gazes.

On one occasion, Rasulallah ﷺ said to Hazrat Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, “O Ali! Do not follow the first (accidental) glance with a second glance, as the first (accidental) glance was not a sin for you, whereas the second is a sin for you.”²⁴

The Seed of Sin Planted through the Lustful Glance

Hazrat Zun Noon Misri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was once asked, “What is the root cause for a person to fall into sin?” Hazrat Zun Noon رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ explained:

“Sinning commences with a lustful glance. The lustful glance leads to (haraam) feelings and thoughts being created in the mind.

“If one treats and remedies the haraam thoughts by turning to Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى in repentance, the haraam thoughts will cease and disappear. If not, they will progress until they are accompanied

²⁴ سنن أبي داود، الرقم: ٢١٤٩، المستدرک علی الصحیحین للحاکم، الرقم: ٢٧٨٨، وقال: هذا حديث صحيح على شرط مسلم، ولم يخرجاه ووافقه الذهبي

by whispers and insinuations of shaitaan towards evil and sin. This, in turn, gives rise to feelings of lust.

“All of this transpires internally (in the mind), and (until this point,) the action of sin and evil has not yet manifested through the action of the limbs.

“If the lust is remedied and addressed (through sincere taubah and reforming oneself, one will be safe,) but if not, then it will progress until it becomes a strong, irresistible urge to commit the sin, and if this urge is not remedied then one’s entire mind will become engulfed in thoughts of haraam and sin (thereafter, the actual sin of zina takes place).”²⁵

Incident of a Pious Person Losing His Imaan through Casting a Lustful Gaze

A pious person narrates the following incident:

I was once seated in the company of Hazrat Hasan Basri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ when a group of people passed by, dragging along with them the body of a dead man. When Hazrat Hasan رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ saw the dead man, he recognized him and suddenly fell unconscious.

After he had regained consciousness, I asked him what had caused him such a shock that he had fallen unconscious. He replied, “At one time, this man (referring to the dead man whose

²⁵ حلية الأولياء: ١٧/٨

body was being dragged along) who passed away was among the most devoted worshippers of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, the most devout ascetics (who renounced the temporary pleasures of the world due to being devoted to the worship of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى), and the most pious of people.” Hearing this, I entreated him saying, “O Abu Sa’eed! Please inform us of what transpired with him and how he arrived at this lamentable end!”

Hazrat Hasan رَحِمَهُ اللهُ then mentioned the following incident:

One day, this man had left his home, proceeding towards the masjid to perform salaah. However, en-route to the masjid, his gaze fell upon a beautiful, young Christian girl. As soon as he saw her, he became infatuated with her, but when he proposed to her, she refused saying, “I will not marry you unless you become a Christian.”

Initially, he did not oblige her and went on his way, but as time passed, his yearning for her continued to increase. He then succumbed to her wish and left the fold of Islam, entering into Christianity.

After he had become a Christian, and did what she had asked of him, she said to him, “You are a man who is bereft of goodness! You have forsaken your religion, which was important to you for your entire life, simply for the sake of lust that is of no value! Indeed, I too am forsaking my religion – but not for the same reason.

“I am doing so in order to achieve a blissful existence that never comes to an end, an eternal existence under the care of the One Supreme Being - Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى who is totally Independent from every creation, and every creation is totally dependent upon Him.”

Saying this, she recited Surah Ikhlaas (Surah Qul Huwallah - which makes mention of the divine qualities of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, of Him being Alone in His Being and Divine Attributes, and in specific, His quality of being totally Independent of the entire creation, while the entire creation is totally dependent upon Him).

When the people had heard about what she had said, they approached her and asked her, “Did you memorize this surah before this day (before embracing Islam)?” She replied, “No, by Allah, I never knew this surah before! But when this man was persisting in his desire to marry me, I saw a dream. In the dream, I saw the fire of Jahannum and my place in it was shown to me. I became terrified and panic stricken.

“Maalik - the angel who is the gatekeeper of Jahannum – said to me, ‘Do not be afraid or sad, for Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has ransomed you (i.e. saved you) from Jahannum in exchange of this man who renounced Islam (i.e. he will take the place in Jahannum which you would have taken had Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى not saved you).’

“Maalik then took me by my hand and admitted me into Jannah. On entering Jannah, I found a scroll on which the following verse of the Qur’aan Majeed was inscribed:

يَبْحُوثُ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيُثَبِّتُ ۖ وَعِنْدَهُ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ ﴿٣٩﴾

Allah wipes out what He wishes and affirms (what he wishes, in the Lowh-e-Mahfooz), and by Him is the Mother of the Book (i.e. the knowledge of taqdeer is by Him).²⁶

“Maalik then recited Surah Ikhlaas to me, and I began to repeat it (until I memorized it). Thus, on awakening from the dream, I found that I had memorized the surah and could remember it.”

Hazrat Hasan Basri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ then concluded saying, “In this manner, the Christian girl embraced Islam, and the man – whose dead body you had just seen being dragged away – was executed for his apostasy – and I ask Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى to keep us firm and steadfast upon guidance and to grant us safety and success!”²⁷

²⁶ سورة الرعد: ٣٩

²⁷ بحر الدموع: ص ٧٦-٧٧

CHAPTER SIX

THE FITNAHS OF THIS TIME

Over the last five decades, the world has made such astounding progress and advancement in technology that was never before witnessed in human history.

The means of communication have expanded extensively through modern day inventions such as the satellites, television, cell phones, computers, internet, etc.

Hence, a person in the east can communicate with a person in the west with complete ease and comfort whilst sipping a cup of tea.

Volumes of information can easily be accessed in a matter of seconds from websites around the globe. One is able to find solutions for complex problems from health to finance or most issues that affect our daily life.

At the press of a button, one is confronted by an explosion of information from all over the world.

Undoubtedly, there are innumerable advantages and enormous benefits that man can reap by means of these modern day inventions.

However, due to his curious nature and inquisitive mind, man began to explore any and every way of using these inventions.

He did not restrict himself to the halaal avenues only. Instead, he broke all barriers and began to drown himself in haraam.

Technology, the Cause of Moral and Spiritual Degeneration

As is well known, technology (the cell phone and internet) was not born alone. Rather it brought along with its birth a host of fitnahs and a tsunami of immorality and vice. Hence, the result is nothing but widespread corruption and havoc being created in the world.

Man has surpassed all limits and has broken all bounds in disobeying Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى via these mediums of so called “human advancement and progress”.

By the press of a button, one is able to view the worst of sins committed on the face of this earth!

Every imaginable way that can spur up man’s carnal desires and arouse his sexual passions is accessible by all and sundry without any restrictions.

Through the “blessing” of Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, etc. one is able to freely interact with the opposite sex, present a video of his/her personal life and display it before the world without going to Hollywood.

Countless illicit relationships are initiated through social networks such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, etc. Hence, many of the numerous cases of broken homes and shattered marriages are the direct result of the misuse of the cell phone and internet.

In short, the degeneration of Islamic morals and values in the Muslim Ummah is taking place faster than an avalanche on account of these “hell phones, webs and nets” of Shaitaan.

When one analyses the root cause of all these fitnahs, one realizes that they all stem from the misuse of the eyes. This, thereafter, leads to one not adopting purdah and breaking the barriers of shari’ah.

It is for this reason that Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى commanded the believers in the Qur’aan Majeed to lower their gazes from haraam. Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى says:

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ أَزْكَىٰ لَهُمْ ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ
(٣٠) وَقُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ

“Say to the believing men that they must lower their gazes and guard their private parts; it is more pure for them. Surely Allah is All-Aware of what they do. And tell the believing women that they must lower their gazes and guard their private parts...”²⁸

The Fitnah of Intermingling and Mixed Gatherings

In today's times, the fitnah of intermingling and mixed gatherings has become the order of the day.

It is extremely unfortunate to see that even people who are apparently deeni-conscious at other times in their lives – at the time of a nikaah, they seem to abandon their deeni principles and get involved in haraam.

In many functions, apart from the intermingling of men and women, there is music and photography, and a host of other impermissible elements.

In certain nikaahs, Muslims have begun to emulate the kuffaar in their wedding functions where the bride and groom walk down the aisle accompanied by music playing in the background.

At times, the music is substituted with nazams with drums while the entire wedding is videoed.

If any of the family members do not wish to participate in this haraam function, in order to safeguard their deen, then they are viewed by other family members as people who are 'breaking family ties' – not realizing that these types of impermissible gatherings (which go against the very fabric of hayaa and Islamic values) only draw down the wrath of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

Hence, in reality, those who do not attend are not ‘breaking family ties’ – rather those who host these types of functions are ‘breaking ties with Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى’!

The Fitnah of Co-Ed Institutes

Another contemporary fitnah is the fitnah of co-ed institutes. In current times, children are enrolled into schools to acquire secular education with the aim of securing a better future.

Once the schooling career ends, they proceed to universities where they further their studies to acquire a degree. All these years of effort are aimed at securing the financial future of the child.

There is no doubt that shari’ah has permitted a person to work towards improving his worldly life. However, shari’ah has commanded that in the interim, he should ensure that no harm comes to his deen.

Therefore, while pursuing a worldly degree, and while earning wealth after qualifying as well, he should ensure that he is, at no point, disobedient and disloyal to Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

Anti-Islamic Environment

At a young age, the child is admitted into these un-Islamic co-ed schools where boys and girls freely intermingle and haraam relationships are initiated.

Generally, the mindset of a person and his outlook are shaped by the environment he is in and the company he keeps.

For innocent, modest children, striking an illicit relationship becomes easy when they find themselves in an anti-Islamic environment where everybody around them is involved in some illicit activity.

Many Muslim children from respectable homes have been lured and duped into haraam activities, such as drugs, partying, alcohol, zina, etc., on account of the overwhelming influence of the evil environment.

Many such problems have commenced through wrong company initiated in schools and universities. All this is grossly on account of the fact that the law of purdah, which shari'ah had commanded, was not upheld.

Life Orientation

The syllabus in these institutes includes Life Orientation as a subject. In this subject, sexual education is openly and freely discussed in the class between the teacher and the male and female students.

The outcome of this is evident as the seeds of zina are being deliberately sown in the hearts and minds of these students.

In some schools, advice is even given to practise safe-sex instead of falling pregnant – may Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى forbid!

Students are also taught about disgusting acts such as masturbation and homosexuality, and are told that these are natural and healthy and are a part of 'self-exploration'. They are made to believe that there is nothing for one to feel ashamed of if one commits these acts or behaves in this manner.

All this ignites the wrong thoughts and feelings within the child, which then spur him/her to experiment in haraam avenues, thus leading to the worst of sins being perpetrated such as zina, gay and lesbian relationships, etc.

Hence, if each person wishes to safeguard his deen and the deen of his family, they should educate their children in accordance to the principles of shari'ah and shield them from such haraam and evil environments.

Incident of Barseesaa

Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbaas رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا narrated the following incident:

During the period between the nubuwwah of Nabi Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام and Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, there was a pious monk named Barseesaa. Such was his piety that for seventy years, he had remained in his monastery, worshipping Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and not disobeying Him for a single moment, until Iblees began to despair and lose hope in misguiding him and leading him astray.

Eventually, Iblees summoned the most rebellious and evil of his shayaateen and asked them, “Which one of you will suffice me in leading Barseesaa astray?” One shaitaan, who was extremely wicked and evil, responded saying, “I will attend to misguiding him for you.”

This shaitaan then donned the garb of a monk, and even shaved the center of his head (in the style of the monks). After adopting the appearance of a monk, he came to the monastery of Barseesaa and called out to him, but Barseesaa did not respond. The reason is that Barseesaa would remain engaged in salaah for ten days consecutively, only taking break for one day thereafter, and would similarly fast for many days at a time.

When the shaitaan saw that Barseesaa had not responded to him, he decided to engage in ibaadah outside the monastery. Sometime thereafter, when Barseesaa completed his salaah, he noticed the ‘person’ outside the monastery. He saw a person standing in salaah, dressed in the garb of a monk, and thus regretted not responding to him.

He thus called out to him and asked, “What do you want?” The shaitaan (in the appearance of the monk) replied, “I want to remain in your company so that I may benefit and acquire true character from you, learn how to worship correctly from you, and so that we may engage in worship together.” However, Barseesaa responded, “I am preoccupied with my worship and

cannot attend to you.” Saying this, he recommenced performing salaah.

However, the shaitaan also recommenced performing salaah, outside the monastery. Finally, when Barseesaa saw the extent to which the man was exerting himself in the worship of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, he relented and asked him again, “What do you want?” The shaitaan replied, “Permit me to enter the monastery and come up to you.” Barseesaa granted him permission, and he thus entered and joined him in worship.

The shaitaan then stayed with Barseesaa for one year. During this entire period, he would fast for forty days consecutively, only taking a break thereafter for one day. Likewise, he would perform salaah continuously for forty days after which he would only take a break for one day. At times, he would even continue his worship for eighty days! When Barseesaa saw the manner in which this man was exerting himself in worship, he began to regard his own efforts as insignificant in comparison.

Eventually, after gaining his trust and respect, the shaitaan one day said to him, “I know certain special duas which are such that if a person is suffering from any sickness or malady or even from insanity – Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will immediately cure him.” Saying this, the shaitaan taught him these duas. The shaitaan then returned to Iblees and declared, “Now, I have most certainly destroyed him!”

The shaitaan then went to a man in his original form of a jinn and began strangling him, causing him to have fits. Dressed as a common person, he then came to the man's family, and advised them to go to Barseesaa, who had a cure for the man's affliction.

The family thus took the man to Barseesaa who recited the duas which the shaitaan had taught him. As soon as he recited these duas, the shaitaan ceased to strangle the man and he appeared to make a miraculous recovery.

In the same manner, this shaitaan went to other people as well. He would strangle them, causing it to appear as though they were suffering from fits of madness, after which he would direct them to Barseesaa to be cured. These people would come to Barseesaa, and after treating them, they would immediately be cured.

Finally, the shaitaan went to a certain princess who had three brothers. Their father had been king, but after his demise, he had appointed his brother, who was a king in the Banu Israa'eel, as his successor to the throne. On coming to the princess, Barseesaa began to strangle her as well.

Thereafter, he came to her brothers, in human form, as a doctor who wished to treat her. He then said to them, "The shaitaan that is causing her illness is very strong, and I cannot gain control over him. Hence, you should take her to Barseesaa and leave her with him. When the shaitaan comes to her to affect her, Barseesaa will treat her and she will be cured."

However, the brothers were aware of Barseesaa's piety and thus responded, "Barseesaa will never agree to this and will not allow us to leave her with him." The shaitaan then suggested, "If he does not agree, then build another monastery next to his monastery and leave her inside it. Say to Barseesaa, 'We are leaving our sister as an amaanah (trust) by you, so ensure that you look after her.'"

The brothers asked Barseesaa if they could leave their sister with him, and when he refused, they accordingly built another monastery close by and left their sister inside it.

One day thereafter, as Barseesaa completed performing his salaah, his gaze fell upon the princess, and on seeing her extraordinary beauty, he fell in love with her. The shaitaan then came to her and began to strangle her. On seeing her in distress, Barseesaa broke his salaah and rushed to assist her. He came to her and recited the dua he was taught, after which the shaitaan left her, due to which it appeared as though she had been cured. Barseesaa then returned to his monastery and recommenced his salaah.

However, the shaitaan again returned and strangled her, causing Barseesaa to come to her assistance again. Furthermore, when strangling her, the shaitaan would cause her body and beauty to become exposed to Barseesaa, thus aggravating his desire for her.

The shaitaan then began his evil whispers to Barseesaa. He said to him, “Why don’t you sleep with her? You will never find another woman as beautiful as her! After you sleep with her, you can make taubah and repent for the sin.” Shaitaan continued to assail Barseesa with these evil thoughts, until he finally caved in to the temptation and slept with her.

However, the princess fell pregnant, and as time passed, the signs of the pregnancy became obvious and apparent. At this point, the shaitaan said to Barseesaa, “You have brought shame and disgrace to yourself (by committing zina with the princess and causing her to become pregnant)! Why do you not kill her and hide her body? You can repent afterwards, and in this way, you will protect your reputation and dignity in society. If the brothers ask you regarding their sister, you can tell them that the shaitaan which would attack her came to her and took her away.”

Barseesaa thus waited for night to fall, after which he killed her and buried her body. Thereafter, he returned to his monastery and recommenced performing salaah. However, as he had been burying the body, the shaitaan pulled on the corner of the princess’ clothing, causing it to protrude above the ground and reveal the concealed grave.

The shaitaan thereafter came to the brothers of the princess in a dream and said to them, “Barseesaa slept with your sister and

made her pregnant. He then killed her and buried her in such-and-such mountain.”

On awakening, the brothers were greatly affected and immediately came to Barseesaa. However, on asking him regarding their sister, he replied, “The shaitaan affecting her has taken her away.” The brothers believed Barseesaa and thus returned home.

The following night, the shaitaan again came to the brothers in a dream. This time, he informed them of the place where she was buried and told them that on coming to that place, they would find a corner of her clothing protruding from the ground, revealing the location of the grave.

The brothers thus proceeded to the place they were informed of in the dream, and accordingly, they found the corpse of their sister and discovered that she had indeed been murdered. The brothers were enraged and rushed to the monastery of Barseesaa which they razed to the ground, forcing him to come out. They then brought him before the king where he confessed to his crimes, after which the decision was passed for him to be executed.

Finally, as Barseesaa was about to be crucified, the shaitaan came to him and said, “Do you recognize me?” When Barseesaa said no, the shaitaan said, “I am the one who taught you the duas to recite for people to be cured.”

The shaitaan then said to him, “Were you not afraid of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, and were you not ashamed before Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, while you were supposed to be the greatest worshipper of the Banu Israa’eel? This was not enough for you, so you had to go and bring disgrace to yourself and even confess against yourself! Now, if you pass away in this condition, no other person who is treading on your path as a monk will gain respect among people.”

Barseesaa asked him, “What should I do?” The shaitaan replied, “Do just one thing for me, and I will save you from them, and I will seize their eyes (blinding them).” Barseesaa asked, “What do you want me to do?” The shaitaan answered, “Just perform one sajdah to me.”

Out of desperation, Barseesaa said, “I will do so.” He then placed his head on the ground before the shaitaan. At that moment, the shaitaan said to him, “O Barseesaa! This is what I wanted from you all along! Your outcome is that you have committed kufr and rejected your Rabb. I now no longer have anything to do with you!”

Saying this, the shaitaan abandoned Barseesaa, and it was at that time that he was killed as a disbeliever.²⁹

²⁹ الجامع لأحكام القرآن للقرطبي: ٣٧/١٨-٣٩

CHAPTER SEVEN

HIJAAB IN THE LIVES OF THE SAHAABAH رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُنَّ AND TAABI'EEN رَحِمَهُمُ اللَّهُ

Shari'ah commands men and women to observe segregation and purdah between themselves in such a manner that their sight does not fall on each other.

The purpose for shari'ah commanding them to guard their gazes is that the first glance has the potential to spark the flame of fitnah in their hearts. Hence, the purpose of such a command (apart from the gazes being guarded,) is to prevent any form of contact being found between the two.

When examining the lives of the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُنَّ and Taabi'een رَحِمَهُمُ اللَّهُ and the manner in which they upheld purdah, we notice that their purdah was not confined to just sufficing on concealing themselves with modest clothing and wearing the nikaab (the veil) before non-mahrams.

Rather, they ensured that there is absolutely no contact between the non-mahram men and women.

Women and Men Not Coming into Contact with Each Other

Once, Rasulullah ﷺ questioned the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ as to what was the most beneficial thing for women (i.e. the thing most beloved in the sight of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and most safeguarding for their deen). None of the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ had given any answer to Rasulullah ﷺ in that gathering.

When Hazrat Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ returned home and informed Hazrat Faatimah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا regarding the question Nabi ﷺ posed to the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, she spontaneously answered, “The thing most beneficial for women and most beloved in the sight of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى (in safeguarding their deen) is that they do not see men and that men do not see them (i.e. they do not have any contact with men and vice versa).”

When Rasulullah ﷺ was informed of the response of Hazrat Faatimah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, Nabi ﷺ said, “Faatimah is part of me.”^{See 8}

From this Hadith, we understand that just as men are commanded to observe strict purdah from non-mahram women, similarly non-mahram women are commanded to observe strict purdah from non-mahram men and protect themselves from being seen by non-mahram men so that they do not become the cause for inciting lust in men.

Women Protecting themselves from the Gazes of Men

Hazrat Aaishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا herself mentions, “During the Farewell Hajj with Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, whenever any men used to pass by us (the wives of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), we used to conceal our faces with a cloth (in such a manner that the cloth would be suspended before our faces and not touch our faces) so that we would not be seen by the men. Only after the men had passed would we lift the cloth.”³⁰

The Azwaaj-e-Mutahharaat conducted themselves in this manner to teach the women of the Ummah the level of caution that they need to exercise with non-mahram men.

This can be further understood by the following incident wherein Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ commanded his Azwaaj-e-Mutahharaat (pure wives) to observe purdah with a blind Sahaabi and guard their gazes from looking at him.

Women not Looking at Non-Mahram Men

Hazrat Ummu Salamah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا reported, “Once, Maymoonah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا and I were seated with Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. It was just then that Abdullah bin Umami Maktoom رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ (the blind Sahaabi) entered the presence of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

³⁰ سنن أبي داود، الرقم: ١٨٣٣، وقال الحافظ ابن حجر رحمه الله في الدراية، الرقم: ٤٨٢: وفي إسناده يزيد بن أبي زياد وهو ضعيف

Rasulullah ﷺ immediately commanded Maymoonah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا and I to observe purdah from the blind Sahaabi.

I said, 'O Nabi of Allah ﷺ! Is he not blind and unable to see us (i.e. what is the need for us to move away from the gathering and make purdah from him)?'

Nabi ﷺ replied, 'Are you two also blind?' (i.e. you are able to see him, hence you need to observe purdah from him)."³¹

The Spontaneous Reaction of Hazrat Aaishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا when Seeing a Non- Mahram

The Expedition of Banul Mustaliq occurred during the month of Sha'baan 5 A.H. Together with the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ who accompanied Rasulullah ﷺ on this expedition, Rasulullah ﷺ also took his respected wife, Hazrat Aaishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا along with him.

On the return journey, they had halted for the night at a place close to Madinah Munawwarah. Prior to the time of departure, Hazrat Aaishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا went some distance away from the camp site to take care of her physical needs. However, when she returned, she realized that her necklace had fallen off and therefore, she went back in search of it. In the process of

³¹ سنن الترمذي، الرقم: ٢٧٧٨، وقال: هذا حديث حسن صحيح

searching for her necklace, she was delayed, and upon returning to the camp site, she found that the army had already departed.

Since Hazrat Aaishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا was very light in weight at that time, the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ who had lifted the hawdaj (a curtained carriage) and placed it on the camel's back did not even realize that she was not inside.

After Hazrat Aaishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا had found the necklace, she returned to the place where the army had been camped, thinking that when they find her missing, they will return to the place where they last left her (i.e. the place where the army had been camped). She then covered herself with her shawl, and fell asleep on the ground.

Hazrat Safwaan bin Mu'attal رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ requested Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ to allow him to follow the army from behind so that if any person had dropped or left behind any personal item, he would be able to pick it up, bring it to the army and return it to the owner. Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ permitted him to do so.

Hence, while Hazrat Safwaan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was traveling behind the army, he came to the place where Hazrat Aaishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا was sleeping. He noticed the figure of a person sleeping, and recognized that the person sleeping on the ground was Hazrat Aaishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا. He recognized her as the shawl had fallen from her face while she was asleep,) and he had seen her in the era before the laws of hijab (purdah) were revealed.

Hazrat Aaishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا mentions, “As soon as he saw me, he loudly recited, ‘innaa lillaahi wa innaa ilaihi raaji’oon’, causing me to awaken. On awakening, my spontaneous reaction was to cover my face and conceal it from him. By Allah! We did not speak anything to one another, nor did I hear any word from him besides his reciting of ‘innaa lillaah’.

“He then brought his camel to me, made it kneel, and then turned his face away, allowing me to climb onto the camel. He then led the camel, until we reached the army.”³²

The Women of the Ansaar

Hazrat Safiyyah bintu Shaibah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا reports:

On one occasion, we were in the company of Hazrat Aaishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا when we made mention of certain women of the Quraish and their great virtue.

Hazrat Aaishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا said, “Certainly, these women of the Quraish possess great virtue. However, by Allah, I have not seen women who possess more virtue than the women of the Ansaar in accepting the command of the Qur’aan Majeed and bringing Imaan in that which was revealed in the Qur’aan Majeed.”

Hazrat Aaishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا then elaborated saying, “When the verse of Surah Noor was revealed:

³² صحيح البخاري، الرقم: ٤٧٥٠، فتح الباري ٤٦٣/٨

وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُرُجِنَّ عَلَى جُيُوبِهِنَّ

And they (the believing women) should wrap (a portion of) their scarves over their chests (i.e. they were commanded to cover the upper portion of the chest and neck).³³

The men of the Ansaar went to their women and recited this verse to them. Each man of the Ansaar would recite it to his wife, daughter, sister and to every one of his female relatives.

On hearing this command of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, every single one of them immediately tore a piece from her clothing and used it to cover herself, wholeheartedly submitting and accepting the command of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى in the Qur'aan Majeed.³⁴

Note: Initially, it was the habit of Arab women that when they wore scarves, they would not wrap them beneath the chin. Rather, the scarf would cover the head and hang down behind their backs. In this manner, their necks and the upper portion of their chests would remain exposed.

³³ سورة النور: ٣١

³⁴ سنن أبي داود، الرقم: ٤١٠٠، تفسير ابن أبي حاتم، الرقم: ١٤٤٠٦، وسكت عنه الحافظ في الفتح ٤٩٠/٨، وقد التزم في الأحاديث التي سكت عنها في الفتح ألا تقل درجتها عن الحسن فقد قال في مقدمته المسماة بمهدي الساري (ص ٧): ثم أستخرج ثانيا ما يتعلق به غرض صحيح في ذلك الحديث من الفوائد المثنية والاسنادية من تنمات وزيادات وكشف غامض وتصريح مدلس بسماع ومتابعة سامع من شيخ اختلط قبل ذلك منتزعا كل ذلك من أمهات المسانيد والجوامع والمستخرجات والأجزاء والفوائد بشرط الصحة أو الحسن فيما أورده من ذلك

Hence, this verse instructed the women to tie their scarves beneath their chins so that the scarf would also cover their necks and chests.³⁵

Hazrat Salmaan Faarsi رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ Protecting the Respect of his Wife

Hazrat Salmaan Faarsi رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ married a woman from Kindah and spent the first night of his marriage at his in-law's home. On that night, he walked towards their home, accompanied by some of his friends.

On reaching the home, he turned to them and said, "Return to your homes – may Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى reward you!" Hazrat Salmaan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ did not allow them to enter the home (and meet his wife) as is done by foolish people.

When Hazrat Salmaan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ looked at the home and observed that it was decorated with drapes, he remarked, "Does your home have a fever, or has the Ka'bah moved to Kindah?" They replied, "Neither does our home have a fever, nor has the Ka'bah moved to Kindah (rather, we have done this to decorate the home)."

Hazrat Salmaan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ refused to enter the home, until every drape was removed – except for the drape covering the doorway (as this drape fulfilled the function of purdah).

³⁵ فتح الباري: ٦٢٧/٨، الدر المنضود: ١٨٤/٦

Thereafter, on entering the home, he saw abundant items and goods. He thus asked, “To whom do all these items and goods belong?” His wife’s family answered, “They belong to you and your wife.”

Hazrat Salmaan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ replied, “This is not what my beloved friend, Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, advised me. My beloved friend, Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, advised me that my possessions of the world should be exactly like the provisions of a traveller (i.e. they should not be abundant and in excess).”

Hazrat Salmaan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ then saw attendants and thus enquired, “Whose attendants are these?” His wife’s family responded, “They are your attendants and the attendants of your wife.”

Hazrat Salmaan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ again replied, “This is not what my beloved friend, Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, advised me. My beloved friend, Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, advised me that I should not keep any slave girls, unless I will marry them or I will get them married. If I keep them without doing this, and they thereafter commit zina, then I will also bear responsibility for their sin, without their sin being decreased in any way.”

Hazrat Salmaan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ then addressed the women seated by his wife and said, “Will you please go, and leave my wife and I in privacy?” The women agreed and left, after which Hazrat Salmaan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ went to the door of the room and closed it, lowering the curtain as well.

He then sat by his wife and passed his hand over her forelock, making dua for barakah (blessings).

He then asked her, “Will you do something that I wish to ask of you?” His wife respectfully answered, “You are in the position of one who must be obeyed (as you are my husband).”

Hazrat Salmaan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ thus said, “My beloved friend, Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, advised me that when I am united with my wife, then we should unite on the obedience of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.” Saying this, they both stood and performed a few rakaats of nafl salaah. Thereafter, they spent the night together.

The following morning, his companions came to him and enquired, “How did you find your wife?” However, Hazrat Salmaan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ ignored them. They then repeated the question, but he again ignored them, until finally, when they asked him for the third time, he said:

“Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has created curtains, inner rooms and doors so that you can maintain the privacy and secrecy of what occurs inside the home. It is sufficient for you to enquire regarding that which is public.

“As for that which is private, do not ask about it. I heard Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ mentioning that those who discuss this (i.e.

bedroom activities) are like two donkeys, openly mating on the roadside.”³⁶

Incident of Imaam Abu Hanifah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ

Hazrat Khaarijah bin Mus’ab رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ mentions the following incident:

On one occasion, I departed for hajj, leaving my slave girl in the care of Imaam Abu Hanifah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ.

I remained in Makkah Mukarramah for approximately four months, and upon my return, I asked Imaam Abu Hanifah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, “How did you find the character of my slave girl and her assisting in the chores of your home when I was away?”

Imaam Abu Hanifah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ replied, “The person whom Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has entrusted to protect the knowledge of the Qur’aan Majeed (and the sunnah) and the knowledge of halaal and haraam for the benefit of the people (i.e. he imparts the injunctions of deen to the people) – such a person needs to safeguard himself from falling into any type of fitnah (sin). By Allah! From the time you left her with my household, until the time you returned from hajj, I did not look at your slave girl!”

I thereafter asked my slave girl to give me her impression of Imaam Abu Hanifah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ and to describe his character within the home.

³⁶ حلية الأولياء ٢٥٦/١

She answered, “I have never seen nor heard of a man such as him. From the time I entered his home, I never saw him sleep on the bed, nor did I see him take a fardh bath at any time of the day or night.

“On the Day of Jumu’ah, I would see him go out to perform the Fajr Salaah. Thereafter, he would return home and would perform the Dhuha (Chaasht) Salaah. However, he would not lengthen this salaah, as he would leave home early and proceed to the masjid.

“He would have a bath and apply a little ‘itr (perfume) before proceeding to the masjid. I never once saw him eating to his fill, and he would eat towards the end of the night. After eating, he would sleep for a short while, and thereafter, he would proceed for salaah.”³⁷

³⁷ أخبار أبي حنيفة وأصحابه: ص ٤٩

CHAPTER EIGHT

WARNINGS FOR THE WOMEN WHO VIOLATE PURDAH AND HIJAAB

In many Ahaadith, Rasulullah ﷺ cautioned the women of his Ummah against exposing themselves before non-mahram men thereby becoming the cause for inciting them towards sin.

In one Hadith, Rasulullah ﷺ said, “May the curse of Allah ﷻ be upon the man who casts lustful glances at the beauty of a woman, as well as the woman who is viewed (the woman who reveals her beauty, allowing strange men to view her).”³⁸

In another Hadith, Rasulullah ﷺ said, “The example of the woman who proudly displays her beauty before non-mahram

³⁸ شعب الإيمان، الرقم: ٧٣٩٩، قال العلامة السيوطي رحمه الله في تدريب الراوي ٣٣١/١: أو في مؤلف معتبر كتصانيف البيهقي، فقد التزم أن لا يخرج فيها حديثا يعلمه موضوعا

males is that of a woman who will be in darkness on the Day of Qiyaamah and will have no light.”³⁹

In yet another narration, Rasulullah ﷺ had mentioned that the women who dress inappropriately and come before non-mahram men will be deprived from entering Jannah. They will have to remain in Jahannum until Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى purifies them and forgives them.

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ mentioned that Rasulullah ﷺ said, “There will be women in my Ummah who although clothed, will still be naked (i.e they will wear tight fitting or transparent clothing, or clothing that does not conceal the entire body), they will attract men to themselves, and they themselves will be attracted to men. They will neither enter Jannah, nor will they perceive its fragrance, even though its fragrance is perceivable from a distance of five hundred years.”⁴⁰

From these Ahaadith, it is clear that just as it is the obligation and responsibility of men to lower their gazes and refrain from casting lustful glances at non-mahram women, similarly it is the obligation and responsibility of women to conceal themselves from non-mahram men and refrain from inciting lust in them.

³⁹ سنن الترمذي، الرقم: ١١٦٧، وقال: هذا حديث لا نعرفه إلا من حديث موسى بن عبيدة، وموسى بن عبيدة يضعف في الحديث من قبل حفظه، وهو صدوق

⁴⁰ صحيح مسلم، الرقم: ٢١٢٨، موطأ الإمام مالك، الرقم: ٣٣٨٤

Thus, the notion which some people have, that a woman may dress as she wishes, and the onus and responsibility lies solely with the man to lower his gaze, is completely incorrect, as shari'ah has made both the men and the women answerable and accountable for their actions.

WARNINGS FOR MEN WHO TOUCH NON-MAHRAM WOMEN

It is reported in the Hadith that when a person casts lustful glances at a non-mahram woman, then Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى becomes angry. This is on account of the fact that the person committing the sin has entered a forbidden territory. This can be resembled to an intruder who enters the private property of the king.

Hence, when a person becomes worthy of the wrath of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, just by casting lustful glances at non-mahram women, then one can imagine the serious consequence of touching a non-mahram woman and committing zina with her.

Below are a few Ahaadith that shed light on the evil consequence and the severity of the punishment of committing such evils.

Worse than a Needle Being Pierced into the Head

Hazrat Ma'qil ibn Yasaar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ reports that Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "It is better for a person that an iron needle be pierced into his head than for him to touch a woman whom it is not permissible for him to touch".⁴¹

Worse than Touching a Swine Messed in Mud

Hazrat Abu Umaamah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ reports that Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Abstain from being in seclusion with women. By the qasam of that Being in whose control lies my life, no man secludes himself with a strange woman but shaitaan joins them. And it is better for a person to touch a swine which is messed in mud than to allow his shoulder to touch the shoulder of a strange woman (in a crowd)."⁴²

Being Made to Consume Rotten Meat in Jahannum

During the journey of Israa and Mi'raaj, Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ passed by a group of people who had two pots before them.

⁴¹ المعجم الكبير للطبراني، الرقم: ٤٨٦، ورجاله رجال الصحيح كما في مجمع الزوائد، الرقم: ٧٧١٨

⁴² المعجم الكبير للطبراني، الرقم: ٧٨٣٠، وفيه علي بن يزيد الألهاني، وهو ضعيف جدا، وفيه توثيق كذا في مجمع الزوائد، الرقم:

One pot was filled with cooked meat, while the other was filled with meat that was raw and rotten. These people were eating the raw and rotten meat and were leaving the cooked meat.

When Rasulullah ﷺ asked Hazrat Jibreel عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ as to who these people were, Hazrat Jibreel عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ said, “These are the men from your Ummah who had pure and halaal wives, but they would spend the night with adulteresses and unchaste women and remain with them until the morning.

“They are also the women of your Ummah who had pure and halaal husbands, but they would leave their pure husbands and spend the night with adulterers and unchaste men.”⁴³

⁴³مسند البزار، الرقم: ٩٥١٨، قال العلامة الهيثمي رحمه الله في مجمع الزوائد، الرقم: ٢٣٥: رواه البزار ورجاله موثقون إلا أن الربيع بن أنس قال: عن أبي العالية أو غيره فتابعه مجهول، شرح الزرقاني على المواهب اللدنية: ٨٨-٨٧/٨

CHAPTER NINE

THE COMPLETE, PERFECT AND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF SHARI'AH

The shari'ah of Islam has presented man with a plan which is so complete, perfect and comprehensive, that if a person adheres to it, he will certainly be saved from falling into sin.

Since the avenues that lead to sin are many, and there are many situations and conditions in which one may be exposed to temptation and sin, shari'ah has instructed women to uphold ten injunctions of purdah and hijab when interacting with males.

The Ten Injunctions of Hijaab when Interacting with Non-Mahram Males

Shari'ah has commanded that a woman observe ten injunctions of hijab when interacting with non-mahram males. This is in order for her to protect herself as well as keep the environment pure from fitnah.

Before explaining the ten injunctions, it is important for a Muslim woman to have the correct mindset and understanding of deen.

She should understand that purdah does not only apply to people outside the home, rather there are certain injunctions of purdah that apply within the home as well.

Hayaa and Purdah in the Home

A Muslim woman should understand that she owes her allegiance and loyalty to Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى at every moment, whether she is in the home or out of the home, or whether she is out on a journey or associating with her family at a family function.

Wherever she may be, she should be mindful of her obligation to her Creator and uphold the standards of Hayaa and purdah within her life.

Even in the confines of her home, she should ensure that she is clad modestly. At times, there are other people present in the home with whom observing purdah is compulsory e.g. the male servants or other non-mahram family members.

Hence, at no time should she reveal her face, hair or any portion of her body that has to be covered before them. Similarly, she should not wear tight fitting or revealing clothing in their presence.

If there are no non-mahrams present in the home, though it will be permissible for her to adorn herself and expose her hair before her husband and children, she should bear in mind that she has to impart Islamic values to her children and be a role model for them to follow.

She should therefore ensure that she dresses modestly at all times and does not wear revealing or tight-fitting clothing in the home. Similarly, she should cover her hair at all times so that she is not deprived of the company of the Malaa'ikah.

We will next discuss the ten injunctions of hijaab and purdah when interacting with non-mahram males, whether in the home or out of the home.

The First Injunction – Protecting the Gaze

The first injunction is the injunction of protecting the gaze. Allah ﷻ says in the Qur'aan Majeed:

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ذَٰلِكَ أَزْكَىٰ لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ
(٣٠) وَقُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ

*Say to the believing men that they must lower their gazes and guard their private parts; it is more pure for them. Surely Allah is All-Aware of what they do. And tell the believing women that they must lower their gazes and guard their private parts...*⁴⁴

⁴⁴ سورة النور: ٣٠

In this verse, Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى commands the believers to protect their gazes and private parts from shameless works.

The Mufasssireen explain that this verse encompasses all evil from the beginning until the end. The chain of sin commences with the evil glance. A person first looks at a woman, and then the desire enters his heart to speak, and then he goes further to touch, and then a haraam relationship is initiated, then he flirts, and thereafter he enters into the act of zina.

Hence, Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى commanded the male and female believers to lower their gazes at all times.

The Second Injunction – Remaining in the Confines of the Home

The second injunction of hijab is for a woman to remain within the confines of her home and not leave her home without a valid excuse.

Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى says:

وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَى

*And remain in your homes and do not emerge, making a display of your beauty, as it used to be displayed in the days of earlier ignorance...*⁴⁵

⁴⁵ سورة الأحزاب: ٣٣

In the Mubaarak Hadith, Rasulullah ﷺ mentioned that the moment a woman leaves her home, she is vulnerable to the attack of shaitaan and is at risk of leading men into temptation.

Rasulullah ﷺ said, “A woman should remain concealed (from the eyes of strange men). When she leaves her home, shaitaan stares at her (to mislead her and make her appear attractive in the eyes of men).”⁴⁶

Final Advice of Rasulullah ﷺ to his Respected Wives

It is reported from Hazrat Abu Hurairah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that Rasulullah ﷺ, while addressing his pure wives on the occasion of Hajjatul Wadaa, said:

“After this (completing the rites of hajj,) remain in your homes (i.e. do not leave your homes without a valid need).”

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ mentions that it was on account of this statement of Rasulullah ﷺ that Hazrat Zainab bint Jahsh and Hazrat Saudah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا never left their homes for even nafl hajj thereafter (though the other Azwaaj-e-Mutahharaat performed nafl hajj and understood that this statement did not refer to hajj).

⁴⁶ سنن الترمذي، الرقم: ١١٧٣، وقال: هذا حديث حسن صحيح غريب

Hazrat Zainab and Hazrat Saudah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا would say, “After hearing this from Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, we never mounted a conveyance thereafter.”⁴⁷

Third Injunction – Dressing in an Unattractive Manner when Leaving the Home

The third injunction is that if she has some need to leave the home, then when coming out, she must be clad in a certain way which is not attractive to the opposite gender.

The Hadith mentions that when a woman leaves her home, she should dress in clothing that is shabby and completely unattractive.⁴⁸

Furthermore, she should ensure that she has a veil so that her entire body is concealed from males.

Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى says:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِّأَزْوَاجِكَ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَاءِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلَابِيبِهِنَّ^ط

*O Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers that they should draw down their ‘jalaabeeb’ over them.*⁴⁹

⁴⁷ مسند أحمد، الرقم: ٢٦٧٥١ ، وهو حديث صحيح كما في مجمع الزوائد، الرقم: ٥٣٠٤

⁴⁸ سنن أبي داود، الرقم: ٥٦٥ ، وسكت عليه هو والمنذري في مختصره

The command in the verse above is extremely clear in instructing the women of this Ummah to adopt purdah and hijaab in their lives.

In this verse, the word ‘jalaabeeb’ is used which is the plural of the word ‘jilbaab’. The word ‘jilbaab’ refers to a cloth/sheet which a woman draws over her body in such a way that it covers and conceals her entire body.

Furthermore, this verse does not only command a woman to conceal her body with the jilbaab. Rather, by using the word ‘yudneena’, which means to ‘draw down’, the verse indicates that the jilbaab should be drawn over the face from above the head so that it also screens and conceals the face.

In regard to the abovementioned verse, Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbaas رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ mentioned:

Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى commanded the believing women that when they come out from their homes for some valid need, then they should cover their faces with the jalaabeeb (long sheets, hanging down) from above their heads, leaving only one eye open (to see the way).⁴⁹

Similarly, Hazrat Muhammad bin Seereen رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ mentions, “When I asked Hazrat Abeedah Salmaani رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ regarding the explanation of this verse (and the correct manner of donning

⁴⁹ سورة الأحزاب: ٥٩

⁵⁰ تفسير ابن كثير: ٤٨٢/٦

hijaab), he demonstrated it to me by covering his face and head, leaving his left eye open.”⁵¹

Our Ulama mention that apart from a woman exposing her eyes, she should cover the rest of her face.

The Hadith says when a woman leaves her home and she exposes herself, then she is cursed, and the one who looks at her is also cursed.

Rasulullah ﷺ said, “May the curse of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى be upon the man who casts lustful glances at the beauty of a woman, as well as the woman who is viewed (the woman who reveals her beauty, allowing strange men to view her).”^{See 38}

Fourth Injunction – Segregation between Males and Females in a Gathering, whether in the Home or out of the Home

The fourth injunction is that she should not go into a gathering where non-mahram males are found, rather there should be segregation. Intermingling with non-mahram males is an action that will bring about darkness for a woman on the Day of Qiyaamah.

Rasulullah ﷺ said, “The example of the woman who proudly displays her beauty before non-mahram males is that of

⁵¹ تفسير ابن كثير: ٤٨٢/٦

a woman who will be in darkness on the Day of Qiyaamah and will have no light.”^{See 39}

Similarly, while in the home, a woman should not be secluded with a non-mahram, even if he is a relative (e.g. cousin) or some other family member (e.g. brother-in-law).

Hazrat Uqbah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ reports that Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “Guard yourselves from entering upon women (who are unlawful for you)”.

An Ansaari Sahaabi رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ enquired, “O Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ! What about the brother-in-law (i.e. does a woman need to observe purdah with her brother-in-law)?” Nabi صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ replied, “The brother-in-law is (like) death (i.e. much more precaution should be exercised from him).”⁵²

Fifth Injunction – Communicating with Males via a Mahram or from Behind the Screen

The fifth injunction is that she should not speak to males except via her mahrams. However, in the case where there is no mahram and a woman has to converse with males, then she should converse from behind a screen. Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى says:

⁵² صحيح البخاري، الرقم: ٥٢٣٢

وَإِذَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُنَّ مَتَاعًا فَسْأَلُوهُنَّ مِنْ وَرَاءِ حِجَابٍ ذَلِكُمْ أَطْهَرُ لِقُلُوبِكُمْ وَقُلُوبِهِنَّ^{٥٣}

And when you ask anything from them (the blessed wives of the Prophet ﷺ and all women of the Ummah), ask them from behind a curtain. That is better for the purity of your hearts and their hearts⁵³.

Sixth Injunction - Not Being in Seclusion with a Non-Mahram

Hazrat Rasulallah ﷺ had emphasized that a non-mahram male and female should never be secluded at any time as this gives shaitaan the opportunity to incite them towards sin.

Hazrat Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ reports in a Hadith that Rasulallah ﷺ said, “Remember! A man is never in seclusion with a (non-mahram) woman except that the third one with them is shaitaan (who incites and encourages them to evil and sin).”⁵⁴

Seventh Injunction – Not Traveling without a Mahram

When a woman has a need to leave her home and travel, then in the case where she is traveling the distance of three days journey, shari’ah commands that she must be accompanied by a mahram.

⁵³ سورة الأحزاب: ٥٣

⁵⁴ سنن الترمذي، الرقم: ٢١٦٥، وقال: هذا حديث حسن صحيح غريب من هذا الوجه

Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا reports that Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “It is not permissible for a woman, who believes in Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and the Last Day, to travel the distance of three nights, unless her mahram is with her.”⁵⁵

In another Hadith, Hazrat Abu Sa’eed رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ reports that Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “It is not permissible for a woman who believes in Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and the Day of Qiyaamah to travel the safar distance or more unless she is accompanied by her father, brother, husband, son or any other mahram.”⁵⁶

If a woman has to travel without a mahram, then apart from this sin she is committing, this action will cause great harm to her deen.

Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا reports that Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “A woman travelling with her slave (or any other non-mahram) is bringing destruction to her deen.”⁵⁷

In some Ahaadith, Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ also said that a woman should not travel the distance of one or two days’ journey without a mahram.

In regard to these Ahaadith, the Ulama explain that they refer to the situation where there is a fear of fitnah.

⁵⁵ صحيح مسلم، الرقم: ١٣٣٨

⁵⁶ سنن أبي داود، الرقم: ١٧٢٨، سنن الترمذي، الرقم: ١١٦٩، وقال: هذا حديث حسن صحيح

⁵⁷ مسند البزار، الرقم: ٥٩٩٣، وقال العلامة الهيثمي رحمه الله في مجمع الزوائد، الرقم: ٥٣٠٢: رواه البزار والطبراني في الأوسط وفيه بزيع بن عبد الرحمن ضعفه أبو حاتم وفيه رجاله ثقات

In today's times, since there is overwhelming fitnah prevalent in all places, a woman is discouraged from traveling to any place without being accompanied by a mahram, even if it is less than three days' journey.

Eighth Injunction – Purdah when Performing Tawaaf

When the women of the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُنَّ left their homes for a valid need, they ensured that they observed a very high level of purdah from strange men.

Even at the time of performing tawaaf, the women would ensure that they did not mix with the men.

It is reported that during the time when Ibnu Hishaam was the governor of Makkah Mukarramah, he passed a law preventing the women from performing tawaaf at the same time as the men.

Since this law was such that it was restricting the women from making tawaaf, the great Muhaddith, Imaam Ataa رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, objected to it saying, “How can Ibnu Hishaam prevent the women from performing tawaaf at the same time as the men, whereas the respected wives of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ would perform tawaaf at the same time as the men!”

Hazrat Ataa رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ thereafter explained the manner in which the respected wives of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and other women of the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُنَّ would perform tawaaf. He said, “They ensured

that they would not mix or intermingle with the men (but rather they would perform tawaaf separately, on the side).”

The Caution of Hazrat Aaishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا when Performing Tawaaf

Hazrat Ataa رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ thereafter mentioned that on one occasion, a woman who was performing tawaaf with Hazrat Aaishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا said to her, “Come, O Mother of the Believers! Let us go and make istilaam of the Hajr-e-Aswad!”

However, Hazrat Aaishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا immediately replied, “Leave this!” and she refused to go and make the istilaam at the Hajr-e-Aswad, as this would entail mixing with the men.

When would the Respected Wives of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ Perform Tawaaf?

Hazrat Ataa رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ further mentioned, “The respected wives of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ would come out to perform tawaaf at night, concealed in hijaab. However, when they would wish to enter the Ka’bah Shareef, then they would stand outside and wait for all the men to come out from the Ka’bah before entering (so that they would not mix with the men).”⁵⁸

⁵⁸ صحيح البخاري، الرقم: ١٦١٨

Ninth Injunction – Purdah when Walking on the Road

At the time when a woman has a valid need to leave her home, shari'ah instructs that she should not draw attention to herself. Rather, she should make an effort to remain concealed.

Thus, together with wearing the purdah and dressing in a shabby and unattractive manner, shari'ah also commands that the women should not walk on the center of the road. Instead, women should walk on the side of the road.

It is reported that on one occasion, Rasulullah ﷺ observed that at the time when the people were leaving the masjid after salaah, the women were leaving at the same time as the men and were thus mixing with them.

Rasulullah ﷺ immediately addressed the women and said, “Walk behind the men, and it is not correct for you to walk in the center of the path. Rather, you should walk on the sides of the path.”

It is mentioned that the women of the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُنَّ took the instruction of Rasulullah ﷺ so seriously that when they would thereafter walk on the path, they would stick to the sides,

to the extent that at times, their clothing would even get caught on the walls of the houses along the path.⁵⁹

At the time of traveling as well, the women of the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُنَّ would not generally mount the animals and ride openly, as Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had prohibited the women from mounting the animals and riding them while sitting in the saddles.⁶⁰ Hence, the preferred method for a woman to travel was for her to be inside a hawdaj (a carriage or litter).

The hawdaj was a wooden carriage that would be tied to the back of the camel. The woman would sit inside the hawdaj and would be concealed due to the curtains that are over the hawdaj. The men would then lift the hawdaj, with the woman inside, and secure it to the camel's back.

In the case where any Sahaabiyyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا sat astride an animal and traveled in this manner, it would have either been before the law of hijab was revealed, or it would have been out of necessity (e.g. there was no hawdaj available, etc.).

Tenth Injunction – Purdah in the Masjid

During the blessed era of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, concession was granted for the women to come to the masjid and attend the

⁵⁹ سنن أبي داود، الرقم: ٥٢٧٢، وسكت عليه هو والمنذري في مختصره

⁶⁰ الكامل في ضعفاء الرجال ٣١٣/٦، وإسناده ضعيف كما في الدراية في تخريج أحاديث الهداية: ٣٦١/٢

fardh salaah. This concession was subject to the following conditions being upheld:

Complete Hijaab (Purdah) – Hazrat Aaishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا reports that women used to come to the masjid completely covered in their long shawls (i.e. above their clothing, abaayas, etc).⁶¹

Not Applying Perfume – Hazrat Zainab رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا, the wife of Hazrat Abdullah bin Mas'ood رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, reports that Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “If any woman comes to the masjid, she should not use any perfume”.⁶²

Dressing Shabbily – Hazrat Abu Hurairah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ reports that Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ commanded that if women attend the masjid, it should be in a manner that they are “tafilaat” (dressed in clothing that is shabby and completely unattractive).^{See 48}

Not Dressing Attractively – It is reported that Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ addressed the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ saying, “O People! Prevent your women from wearing attractive garments and walking proudly in the masjid, since the people of Banu Israa'eel were cursed because of this very action of their women.”⁶³

No Intermingling of Males and Females – Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ prohibited the women from walking with the men. Instead, they were instructed to walk behind the men and to remain on the

⁶¹ صحيح البخاري، الرقم: ٣٧٢

⁶² صحيح مسلم، الرقم: ٤٤٣

⁶³ سنن ابن ماجه، الرقم: ٤٠٠١، وإسناده ضعيف كما في مصباح الزجاجة ١٨١/٤

sides of the road when going to and returning from the masjid.^{See}

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The Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ Discouraging Women from Coming to the Masjid

After the demise of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, when Hazrat Aaishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا and the other Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ had seen the fitnahs that had commenced, then they discouraged the women from coming to the masjid.

Nevertheless, even during the blessed era of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, when women would come to the masjid, they were allocated a separate place from the men. The place for the men was the front of the masjid, while the women would perform their salaah at the rear of the masjid.⁶⁴ Hence, even at the time of performing salaah in the masjid, purdah and hijaab was upheld.

⁶⁴ السنن الكبرى للبيهقي، الرقم: ٥١٦٦، وقال: هذا الإسناد ضعيف

CHAPTER TEN

HIJAAB REGARDING TEN ASPECTS OF A WOMAN'S CLOTHING AND BEAUTY

The deen of Islam is a practical deen which has been divinely revealed and endorsed by Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

Hence, Islam is the only way of life that is accepted by Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, and if any person adheres to any other way, besides the way of Islam, he will not gain acceptance in the court of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى says:

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ

*Indeed, the only (accepted) deen in the sight of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى is Islam.*⁶⁵

In another verse, Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى mentions:

⁶⁵ سورة آل عمران: ١٩

وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ ۚ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَسِرِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

And whoever seeks a religion besides Islam as his deen, then it will never be accepted from him, and in the Hereafter, he will from among the losers.”⁶⁶

Hence, when this deen has been created and revealed by Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, then Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has taken into account the condition, natural feelings, inclinations and emotions of both men and women.

Every injunction is in total conformity and harmony with the natural disposition and temperament of both men and women, and practicing upon the injunction will bring about success for both, in this world and the next.

Since women have been blessed with beauty by Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, and this beauty is naturally appealing and attractive to men, shari'ah has commanded women to conceal their beauty from strange men and only expose their beauty before their husbands.

Concealing their beauty from strangers will take place through them adopting hayaa in their dressing (clothing) as well as in their beauty.

⁶⁶ سورة آل عمران: ٨٥

Hayaa in Dressing and Beauty

Every human being is born with several basic needs. Among the basic needs is the need for clothing.

Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى declares:

يَبْنَىۤ اَدَمَ قَدْ اَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا يُورِىۤ سَوَاتِكُمْ وَرِيۤشًا ۚ وَلِبَاسٌ مِّنۡ تَقْوٰى ۚ ذٰلِكَ خَيْرٌۭ

“O children of Aadam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام! We have sent down to you clothing to cover your nudity as well as to be an adornment for you, and the garment of piety is the best.”⁶⁷

By mentioning the aspect of covering the body before the aspect of adorning the body, the Qur’aan Majeed impresses upon us that the primary object of clothing (i.e. to cover one’s satr) is more important than its secondary benefits (i.e. adornment).

Hence, if the clothing does not adequately cover one’s body, thus leaving part of the satr (area that is waajib to conceal) visible, then such a person, though clothed, will be regarded as naked in the eyes of shari’ah.

Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ has prophesized the coming of such crucial and critical times in the Ummah where women will be clothed yet naked.

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ mentioned that Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “There will be women in my Ummah who although clothed,

⁶⁷ سورة الأعراف: ٢٦

will still be naked (i.e. they will wear tight fitting or transparent clothing, or clothing that does not conceal the entire body), they will attract men to themselves, and they themselves will be attracted to men. They will neither enter Jannah, nor will they perceive its fragrance, even though its fragrance is perceivable from a distance of five hundred years.”⁶⁸

Rasulullah ﷺ - An Embodiment of Hayaa

The mubaarak lifestyle of Rasulullah ﷺ was an embodiment of Hayaa.

From his ibaadah to his eating, sleeping, interacting and even attending the call of nature, every action portrayed the highest levels of shame and modesty.

In every dimension of his mubaarak life, he ensured that the desired degree of hayaa was never compromised. Special importance was always shown to adopting the highest level of hayaa in dress and attire.

Apart from this, Rasulullah ﷺ also made an effort on his family and the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ to ensure that they upheld hayaa in their dressing.

⁶⁸ صحيح مسلم، الرقم: ٢١٢٨ ، الموطأ للإمام مالك، الرقم: ٣٣٨٤

Commanding His Daughter to Cover Herself

In the initial stages of Islam, when Rasulullah ﷺ and the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ were in Makkah Mukarramah, the disbelievers would make every effort to relentlessly persecute and harass the Muslims.

During this period of difficulty, an incident transpired that clearly highlights the concern for upholding the pillar of hayaa that burned within the blessed heart of Rasulullah ﷺ.

On one occasion, Rasulullah ﷺ was inviting the disbelievers of Makkah Mukarramah to Islam, however they did not accept his message and began to oppress him. Haarith bin Haarith was present and witnessed what had transpired to Rasulullah ﷺ. Later on, he reports this incident which occurred on that occasion. He reports:

I asked my father, “Who are these people?” (referring to the disbelievers oppressing Rasulullah ﷺ). My father replied, “They are a group of people who have gathered around a person who they consider to have opposed their ancestral religion.”

When we dismounted, we saw that the person who was surrounded by people was Rasulullah ﷺ. Rasulullah ﷺ was inviting them to bring Imaan in the oneness of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. The people, however, continued to reject his

message and harm him. This continued until it was eventually midday and the people dispersed.

At that point, a young girl came to Rasulullah ﷺ bearing a bowl of water and a cloth. The area below her neck was slightly exposed. Rasulullah ﷺ took the bowl of water from her, drank some of the water and then made wudhu.

He then raised his head towards her, and seeing that a portion of the area below her neck was exposed, he said to her, “O my beloved daughter! Cover your neck and do not fear for your father!”

We enquired as to who the girl was and were told, “This is Zainab رضي الله عنها, the beloved daughter of Rasulullah ﷺ.”⁶⁹

The concern for hayaa in the heart of Rasulullah ﷺ was so great that even though it was just moments after being harmed and harassed by the disbelievers, when he saw that the area below the neck of his respected daughter had become exposed, he immediately instructed her to cover it.

Apart from a woman covering her entire body, there are other important aspects that shari'ah commands her to adopt in order for her to observe purdah from strange men.

⁶⁹ المعجم الكبير للطبراني، الرقم: ٣٣٧٣، ورجاله ثقات كما في مجمع الزوائد، الرقم: ٩٨٢٧

Below are ten aspects that shari'ah commands a woman to adhere to in observing purdah, and these aspects relate to the clothing and beauty of a woman.

The First Aspect - Not Revealing the Shape of her Body

The purpose of clothing is to cover one's shame. Hence, the first aspect is that the clothing should conceal the body as well as conceal the shape of the body.

If the clothing covers the entire body but is tight fitting, then on account of it revealing the shape of the body, it will not be worthy of being called clothing. The woman who wears such clothing will be included among those referred to by the Hadith as 'clothed yet naked'.

Incident of Hazrat Asmaa رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا

On one occasion, Hazrat Asmaa رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, the respected sister of Hazrat Aaishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, entered the home wearing a thin garment. Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ disapproved of this type of clothing for the women of his Ummah and immediately corrected her. He explained to her that the entire body of a woman should be covered in a manner that together with the

cloth being non-transparent, even the shape of the body should not be discernible.⁷⁰

This lesson of hayaa, taught in a very respectful manner by the Master صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, was so deeply entrenched in the heart of Hazrat Asmaa رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا that it remained with her till the end of her life. Hence, it is reported that when she reached old age, her beloved son Hazrat Munzir bin Zubair رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, after returning from Iraq, sent her a cloth as a gift which was of very fine and superior quality. She had lost her sight, and so held the fabric in her hand feeling it carefully. Then with disappointment she said: “Return the gift to him.”

When the cloth was returned to Munzir رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, he was hurt at this. He came to Hazrat Asmaa رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا and said to her: “O my beloved mother, the cloth is not transparent! (Hence, it is fine for you to wear).” Hazrat Asmaa رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا replied: “Even though it is not transparent, however due to it being tight, it will still reveal the shape of the body.”

He thereafter bought for her common garments made in Marw and Quhistaan. She accepted them saying, “It is these types of garments that you should give me to wear.”⁷¹

⁷⁰ سنن أبي داود، الرقم: ٤١٠٤، وقال المنذري في مختصر سنن أبي داود: قال أبو داود: هذا مرسل خالد بن دريك: لم يدرك عائشة -رضي الله عنها-. وفي إسناده: سعيد بن بشير أبو عبد الرحمن البصري نزيل دمشق مولى بني نصر وقد تكلم فيه غير واحد وذكر الحافظ أبو أحمد الجرجاني هذا الحديث وقال: لا أعلم من رواه عن قتادة غير سعيد بن بشير وقال مرة فيه: عن خالد بن دريك عن أم سلمة بدل عائشة

⁷¹ الطبقات الكبرى لابن سعد: ٢٥٢/٨

One can well imagine what will be the response of our beloved Rasulallah ﷺ and the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ if they were to witness the tight fitting and body revealing clothing worn by the Muslim women of today!

The Second Aspect - The Clothing being Non-Transparent

The second aspect is that women should wear non-transparent clothing. Rasulallah ﷺ has greatly stressed and emphasized that the clothing should not be transparent, thereby revealing the body of the woman beneath it.

Hazrat Dihyah Kalbi رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ reports that Rasulallah ﷺ once received some Egyptian cloths as a gift. Rasulallah ﷺ then took one of the cloths and gave it to me saying, “Cut it in half, and make a kurta with one half, and give the other half to your wife so that she can wear it as a scarf.”

Then, as Rasulallah ﷺ turned to leave, he said, “And remember to instruct your wife to place a cloth beneath the scarf so that her hair is not revealed (due to the thinness of the cloth).”⁷²

⁷² سنن أبي داود، الرقم: ٤١١٦، وقال المنذري في مختصره: في إسناده عبد الله بن هبة ولا يحتج بحديثه وقد تابع ابن هبة على روايته هذه أبو العباس يحيى بن أيوب المصري وفيه مقال وقد احتج به مسلم واستشهد به البخاري

The Third Aspect - Adopting Niqaab

The third aspect is that a woman should don the niqaab (the veil). Donning the niqaab for women is compulsory in Islam. The purpose of the niqaab is in order for a woman to protect herself from the gazes of strange men.

Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى says in the Qur'aan Majeed:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِّأَزْوَاجِكَ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَاءِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلَابِيبِهِنَّ^ط

*O Nabi ﷺ! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers that they should draw down their shawls over them.*⁷³

In another verse, while commanding the wives of Rasulullah ﷺ in particular (and the believing women of this Ummah in general to observe purdah), Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى says:

ذِكُمْ أَطْهَرُ لِقُلُوبِكُمْ وَقُلُوبِهِنَّ^ط

*That is better for the purity of your hearts and their hearts*⁷⁴.

From these verses, we understand that observing purdah between non-mahram males and females is a command of the Qur'aan Majeed and from the dictates of hayaa.

⁷³ سورة الأحزاب: ٥٩

⁷⁴ سورة الأحزاب: ٥٣

The Purdah of Hazrat Ummu Khallaad

رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا

When the Battle of the Khandaq (the Trench) broke out, the Banu Quraizah, a clan of Jews near Madinah Munawwarah, broke their peace treaty with the Muslims.

At this crucial juncture, they decided to oppose the Muslims and side with their enemy, the Quraish. After the Quraish returned to Makkah Mukarramah without victory, Rasulullah ﷺ was commanded by Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى to go to the Banu Quraizah and wage war against them due to their betrayal and treachery in breaking the peace treaty.

It was during this expedition against the Banu Quraizah that a Jewess named Bunaanah flung a rock from a hilltop, striking Hazrat Khallaad bin Suwaid رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and causing his martyrdom.

On their return to Madinah Munawwarah, the mother of this Sahaabi, Hazrat Ummu Khallaad رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, came to Rasulullah ﷺ to enquire regarding her son. However, despite the tragedy of just losing her beloved son, she was not unmindful of her modesty and thus ensured that she kept her niqaab on, concealing her face.

Noticing her commitment to niqaab, even in these moments, a person said to her, “You have come to enquire about your son while you are wearing your niqaab (i.e. even on this occasion, you ensured that you first covered your face before leaving your

home)?” She replied, “If the tragedy of losing my son has afflicted me, then the tragedy of losing my hayaa has not afflicted me (in other words alhamdulillah my deen and hayaa is still secure, hence I will not lose my modesty and shame on this juncture).”⁷⁵

The Fourth Aspect – Concealing her Voice and Speaking in an Unattractive Tone

The fourth aspect is that she should conceal her voice from males. Since the voice of a woman contains beauty and attraction for men, shari’ah has instituted certain laws pertaining to the voice of women.

Among these laws is that a woman should not call out the azaan and iqamah. Similarly, when performing hajj or umrah, a woman should not call out the talbiyah audibly, as done by the men.

Likewise, if a woman is performing salaah with jamaat and the imaam misses a posture, then instead of calling out ‘Subhaanallah’, she should tap her hand on her wrist in order to alert the imaam of his error.

Hence, if there is any need for a woman to convey a message to a non-mahram man, then she should address it via her mahram.

⁷⁵ سنن أبي داود، الرقم: ٢٤٨٨، بذل المجهود: ١٩٧/٤، الطبقات الكبرى لابن سعد: ٥٣٠/٣

In the case where it is not possible for a woman to converse via her mahram, and there is a need to speak to a non-mahram, then she should not speak in a sweet, alluring tone so that males are incited.

Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى says:

فَلَا تَخْضَعْنَ بِالْقَوْلِ فَيَطْمَعَ الَّذِي فِي قَلْبِهِ مَرَضٌ وَقُلْنَ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا ﴿٣٢﴾

*So, do not be too soft in your speech, lest someone having disease in his heart should develop a desire (for you); and speak appropriate words.*⁷⁶

Likewise, she should be brief and to the point, and avoid speaking anything additional and unnecessary, as this will open the door to further conversation which may eventually lead to flirting.

In one Hadith, Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “The one who guarantees me (that he will safeguard) that which is between his jaws and that which is between his legs, I will guarantee Jannah for him.”⁷⁷

⁷⁶ سورة الأحزاب: ٣٢

⁷⁷ صحيح البخاري، الرقم: ٦٤٧٤

The Fifth Aspect – Walking in a Manner that Does Not Attract the Attention of Males

The fifth aspect is that when a woman walks, she should walk in such a manner that she does not draw attention to herself.

If she has any bangles, anklets or other jewellery that makes a sound, she should not use it in the presence of non-mahram males, as this will incite lustful feelings in their hearts towards her.

Similarly, a woman should not wear high heel shoes when walking, as this will invariably attract attention towards her.

Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى says:

وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ بِأَرْجُلِهِنَّ لِيُعْلَمَ مَا يُخْفِينَ مِنْ زِينَتِهِنَّ^ط

*And let them not stamp their feet to make known what they conceal of their adornment.*⁷⁸

⁷⁸ سورة النور: ٣١

The Sixth Aspect – Not Making an Expression of her Beauty before Non-Mahrams

The sixth aspect is that a woman should not make an expression of her beauty before non-mahram males at any time. Hence, at the time when she leaves her home, she should dress in an unattractive manner.

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ reports that Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ commanded that if women attend the masjid, it should be in a manner that they are “tafilaat” (dressed in clothing that is shabby and completely unattractive).^{See 48}

In another Hadith, it is reported that Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ addressed the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ and said, “O People! Prevent your women from wearing attractive garments and walking proudly in the masjid, since the people of Banu Israa’eel were cursed because of this very action of their women.”^{See 63}

Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “The example of the woman who proudly displays her beauty before non-mahram males is that of a woman who will be in darkness on the Day of Qiyaamah and will have no light.”^{See 39}

The Seventh Aspect – Not Applying Perfume

The seventh aspect is that a woman should not apply perfume when leaving the home. Just as a woman's dressing, voice and walking are means of drawing attention to herself and inciting lust in men, similarly applying perfume when leaving the home is a means of creating fitnah.

Hazrat Abu Moosa رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ reports that Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "The woman who applies perfume when leaving the home and passes by a group of strange men (allowing them to get the fragrance of her body) is like an adulteress."⁷⁹

In another Hadith, it is reported that on one occasion, a woman proceeding to the masjid passed by Hazrat Abu Hurairah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. Hazrat Abu Hurairah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ perceived the fragrance of perfume emitting from her clothing and thus asked her, "O servant of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, the Almighty! Where are you going?"

The woman replied, "I am proceeding to the masjid to perform salaah." Hazrat Abu Hurairah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ then asked her, "Have you applied perfume?" The woman replied in the affirmative.

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ then said, "Indeed I heard Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ saying, 'Whichever woman applies perfume and thereafter leaves her home to come to the masjid, her salaah will

⁷⁹ سنن الترمذي، الرقم: ٢٧٨٦، وقال: هذا حديث حسن صحيح

not be accepted until she has a bath in the manner she washes herself when purifying herself from janaabat.”⁸⁰

The Eighth Aspect – Not Emulating the Ways and Styles of the Kuffaar

The eight aspect is that a woman should not emulate the ways, styles and fashions of the kuffaar. Rasulullah ﷺ commanded the Ummah to refrain from emulating the ways and culture of the kuffaar.

While emulating the kuffaar can occur in many aspects of life, the most obvious and apparent is in the aspect of appearance and dressing. The appearance and dressing which one adopts makes it apparent as to whom he or she identifies with.

Furthermore, it is generally witnessed that the clothing which one wears influences and has an impact on one's behaviour and conduct. Similarly, one's principles and values are gradually moulded and fashioned in accordance to one's attire and dressing.

The influence of appearance and dressing is so significant that even the kuffaar perceive its far-reaching effects. The banning of Muslim women from wearing scarves and hijaab in some countries is clear testament to this and speaks volumes of the

⁸⁰ سنن ابن ماجه، الرقم: ٤٠٠٢، سنن أبي داود، الرقم: ٤١٧٤، وقال المنذري في مختصره: وأخرجه ابن ماجه وفي إسناده: عاصم بن عبيد الله العمري ولا يثبت بحديثه، وله شواهد كذا قال الشيخ محمد عوامة في حاشيته على المصنف، الرقم: ٢٦٨٦٤

fact that Islamic dressing and appearance has a tremendous impact on others.

The kuffaar thus wish to ban the visible identity of Muslims and force them to follow their ways and culture. Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى says:

وَلَنْ تَرْضَى عَنْكَ الْيَهُودُ وَلَا النَّصَارَى حَتَّى تَتَّبِعَ مِلَّتَهُمْ

*The Jews and Christians will never be satisfied with you until you follow their religion.*⁸¹

Thus, when the dressing and appearance taught by Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is not adhered to and the kuffaar are imitated, it often becomes difficult or even impossible to distinguish a Muslim from a Jew, Christian or an Atheist.

Ninth Aspect – Not Emulating the Dressing of Men

The ninth aspect is that a woman should not emulate the dressing of men.

It should be borne in mind that the deen of Islam has prescribed certain laws and injunctions that are specific to men, and other laws and injunctions that are specific to women. If one has to examine these laws and injunctions, one will realize that Islam has clearly defined a separate role for men and a separate role for women.

⁸¹ سورة البقرة: ١٢٠

When Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has assigned separate roles to men and women and made them completely distinct from one another, then by emulating one another, they oppose the divine command and system of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. It is for this reason, we find that Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ expressed great disapproval over women emulating men in their ways.

It is reported that on one occasion a woman passed by Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ carrying a bow around her neck (in the spirit to emulate the soldiers of deen). Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ observing this scene, said, “May Allah’s curse fall on those women that emulate men in their ways and men that emulate women.”⁸²

Women Wearing Men’s Footwear

Apart from the general Ahaadith in which Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ has prohibited and cursed men and women who emulate each other in aspects that are exclusive to both genders respectively, there are many Ahaadith in which Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ specifically prohibited and cursed those men and women who emulate each other in the aspect of clothing and dress.

Hence, Hazrat Ibnu Abi Mulaikah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ reports that Hazrat Aaishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا was once asked regarding whether it was permissible for a woman to wear men’s sandals. Hazrat Aaishah

⁸² المعجم الأوسط، الرقم: ٤٠٠٣، وقال الهيثمي في مجمع الزوائد، الرقم: ١٣١٩٧: رواه الطبراني في الأوسط عن شيخه علي بن سعيد الرازي وهو لين وبقيته رجاله ثقات

ﷺ disapproved of this and replied, “Rasulullah ﷺ cursed those women who imitate men.”⁸³

Women Wearing the Garments of Men

Imaam Abu Dawood رحمه الله narrates that Imaam Ahmad bin Hambal رحمه الله was once asked whether a man could dress his slave girl in a kurta.

Imaam Ahmad رحمه الله replied, “He should not dress her in men’s clothing. He should refrain from making her resemble men in their attire.”

Imaam Abu Dawood رحمه الله asked his ustaad, Imaam Ahmad رحمه الله, “Can a man make his slave girl wear a man’s sandal?” Imaam Ahmad رحمه الله answered, “No, except if it is to make wudhu.”

Imaam Abu Dawood رحمه الله then asked, “Can she wear it for beauty?” Imaam Ahmad رحمه الله replied, “No.”⁸⁴

Tenth Aspect – Not Cutting the Hair

The tenth aspect is that a woman should not cut her hair. The hair of a woman is the beauty that Allah تبارك وتعالى has blessed her with, and hence she is commanded not to cut her hair.

⁸³ سنن أبي داود، الرقم: ٤٠٩٩، وسكت عليه هو والمنذري في مختصره

⁸⁴ مسائل الإمام أحمد: ص ٣٥١

Among the great occasions where a person can acquire abundant reward are the occasions of hajj and umrah. On these occasions, a man is commanded to shave or trim his hair. However, shaving gains one greater reward compared to trimming. Rasulullah ﷺ made dua thrice for Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى to shower His special mercy on the one who shaves, and for those who trim their hair, Rasulullah ﷺ only made dua once.

However, even on this occasion of hajj and umrah, a woman is only permitted to cut the amount of hair that can be wrapped around the tip of her finger. Hence, from this, one can understand that a woman is not allowed to cut her hair.

Imaam Abu Haatim رَحِمَهُ اللهُ mentions that in the time of the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ, if the hair of the women became long then they would plait it (in other words, they did not cut their hair, but plaited it).⁸⁵

On one occasion, Imaam Abu Dawood رَحِمَهُ اللهُ asked his ustaad, Imaam Ahmad bin Hambal رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, the following question:

“Can a master cut the hair of his slave girl?” Imaam Ahmad رَحِمَهُ اللهُ answered, “No, it is not permissible for him to cut her hair.”⁸⁶

Generally, in shari’ah, there are certain laws that are more relaxed in the case of slave women compared to free women.

⁸⁵ المفهم: ٥٧/٤

⁸⁶ مسائل الإمام أحمد: ص ٣٥١

However, we notice that in regard to cutting her hair, it is not permissible for the master to cut the hair of his slave girl. Hence, to a higher degree, one will understand that it is impermissible for a free woman to cut her hair.

The Fuqahaa clearly state that even if a woman's husband commands her to cut her hair, it will not be permissible for her to obey him. If she obeys him and cuts her hair, both will be sinful.⁸⁷

⁸⁷ الدر المختار: ٤٠٧/٦

CHAPTER ELEVEN

DETERMINATION TO DEFY THE COMMAND OF ALLAH

تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى

After examining and discussing the ten injunctions of the shari'ah with regard to observing purdah with all non-mahram males, and the ten aspects of hijab pertaining to a woman's clothing and beauty, we can see that shari'ah has closed and sealed off all the avenues and pathways that lead to zina.

This is the complete and comprehensive defense system of the shari'ah which protects people from falling into sin by preserving purity in society and promoting a righteous and pious environment.

After shari'ah pointing out all these measures of protection and safety from sin, if one is defiant and completely determined to commit the sin, and thus breaks through all the security measures of the shari'ah, thereby falling into sin, then such a person will have no one to blame but himself for bringing the wrath of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى upon himself.

Hence, in the case where people fall into zina and illicit relationships, despite them claiming to observe purdah, we understand that in reality, they did not uphold the injunctions of purdah completely and entirely, due to which they fell into sin.

Undoubtedly, if one has to introspect in one's life, one will find that the seed of sin was planted at some point, which eventually led to the end result of sin being committed.

At times, the seed could be planted through an unguarded gaze, a casual message sent on the cell phone, or a moment spent with a non-mahram in seclusion.

Trespassing in the Royal Territory

Thus, when one was negligent and ignored the security measures, due to which he thereafter fell into haraam and sin, then the shari'ah cannot be blamed in any way.

Rather, the blame falls squarely onto the individual's shoulders as he/her was the one who was determined to commit sin and thus chose to be lax in purdah.

This situation can be resembled to the king who forbade people from entering the royal palace. He placed a high wall around the palace, placed barricades on the path to the palace, and also appointed guards to patrol and protect the palace. This was over and above the doors of the palace being locked.

After putting all these security measures into place, if a person still breaks into the palace, we can imagine how determined he must have been to defy the law and commit the crime of trespassing. Hence, his crime will be treated very seriously and he will be deserving of severe punishment.

Furthermore, when one bypasses the security measures and breaks into the palace, then the safety of all the people in the palace is compromised and they are all at risk and in danger.

In the same way, when one ignores the security measures of purdah and hijab, then he places all the people in the environment at risk. Hence, he becomes the catalyst for others falling into sin.

Refraining from Doubtful Areas

Together with the shari'ah commanding that all these preventative measures be adopted in safeguarding oneself and the society from being enticed towards sin, shari'ah also commands one to refrain from all doubtful areas and avenues, as this has the potential to tempt one towards sin.

Hence, many a time, a person wishes to scroll through a website, whereas he knows in the back of his mind that in all probability, he will see something that is haraam. Thereafter, he commences with a good intention, looking for some permissible material, but is then lured towards sin.

Therefore, Rasulullah ﷺ had taught us to refrain from all doubtful areas so that we do not risk our imaan and endanger our deen.

In one Hadith, Rasulullah ﷺ mentioned, “The servant (of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى) will not acquire the rank of the pious until he leaves out those things that are permissible out of the fear of them leading him to things that are impermissible.”⁸⁸

The Path of Halaal and Haraam is Clear

On one occasion, Rasulullah ﷺ mentioned, “Indeed, the path of halaal is clear and the path of haraam is clear, and between halaal and haraam is a path which is doubtful, and many people are not aware of it.

“The one who abstains from the path of doubt protects his deen and his honour, whereas the one who gets involved in doubtful areas eventually falls into haraam.

“This can be compared to a shepherd who allows his flock to graze close to the royal pasture (which is exclusively reserved for the king. On account of him coming close to the forbidden territory,) it is very likely that he will (cross the boundary and) graze in it.

“Know well that every king has a royal territory, and the royal territory of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى is that which He has made haraam upon

⁸⁸ سنن الترمذي، الرقم: ٢٤٥١، وقال: هذا حديث حسن غريب لا نعرفه إلا من هذا الوجه

His servants. (Hence, if one falls into doubtful areas then one will eventually cross into haraam).

“There lies within the body a piece of flesh. If it is sound, the entire body will be sound; and if it is corrupt, the entire body will be corrupt. Certainly, this piece of flesh is the heart. (In other words, one will only have the concern to refrain from doubtful areas when his spiritual heart is sound.)”⁸⁹

Incident of a Person Losing His Imaan

The greatest disaster for any person is for him to lose his most priceless and valuable asset – his Imaan. There are many incidents of people, who were even seemingly pious and righteous, who lost their Imaan, or could not recite the kalimah at their last moment, due to committing certain sins.

Abdah bin Abdir Raheem رَحِمَهُ اللهُ was a pious person and a mujaahid who engaged in many campaigns against the Christians. He narrates the following incident which highlights the lethal and fatal effect of not adhering to purdah.⁹⁰ He says:

On one occasion, we embarked on an expedition to the land of the Romans. Accompanying us on this expedition was a certain youngster.

⁸⁹ صحيح مسلم، الرقم: ١٥٩٩

⁹⁰ المنتظم: ٣٠٢/١٢

From all of us, no one could excel him in his recitation of the Qur'aan Majeed, nor could any of us compare to him in his understanding of deen and his commitment to fulfilling all deeni obligations. He would fast during the day and stand in salaah during the night.

During the expedition, we came to a certain fortress which was occupied by Christians. Our army thus diverted its course away from the fortress and the youngster went near the fortress to relieve himself.

While there, his gaze fell on a Christian woman who was peering out from the fort. As his gaze fell on her, her love entered his heart and he became infatuated with her.

He called out to her and asked, "What can I do to be with you?" She replied, "If you become a Christian, we will allow you into the fortress, and I am happy to give myself to you." Accordingly, the youngster renounced Islam, embraced Christianity and entered the fortress.

For the remainder of the expedition, the fate of this youngster continued to cause us immense distress and anguish, as we were all fond of him and each of us had considered him to be like our own son.

Sometime later, we returned to that area on another expedition. As we passed by the fortress, we caught sight of him, standing with the Christians, looking out from the top of the fortress. We

called out to him and asked, “What has happened to your recitation of the Qur’aan Majeed? What has become of your knowledge of deen? What has become of your salaah and fasting?”

The youngster replied, “I have forgotten the entire Qur’aan Majeed, with the exception of one verse. The only verse that I remember is:

رُبَّاَيُّوْذِ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا لَوْ كَانُوْا مُسْلِمِيْنَ ﴿٢﴾ ذَرْهُمْ يَأْكُلُوْا وَيَسْتَبْغُوْا وَيُلْهِمِ الْاَمَلُ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُوْنَ

Repeatedly, those who disbelieve will wish that they were Muslims. Let them eat and enjoy, and let (their) false hopes distract them, for they shall soon come to know (their ultimate end).⁹¹

Sins Cause the Death of the Heart

Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubaarak رَحِمَهُ اللهُ once recited the following couplets:

رَأَيْتِ الذَّنْبَ تَمِيْتُ الْقُلُوبَ وَتَبِعَهَا الذِّلُّ إِدْمَانَهَا

وَتَرَكَ الذَّنْبَ حَيَاةَ الْقُلُوبِ وَخَيْرَ لِنَفْسِكَ عَصِيَانَهَا

I have seen that sins cause the hearts to die, and the addiction to sinning brings disgrace in the wake of the sin.

Abandoning sins brings life to the heart, and the best thing for your nafs (base desires) is for you to oppose them.

⁹¹ سورة الحجر: ٢-٣

CHAPTER TWELVE

WOMEN ATTENDING THE EID SALAAH OR CONGREGATIONAL SALAAH IN THE MUSJID

Q: Why do the Ulama prevent women from attending the congregational salaah in the masjid or from attending the Eid Salaah, whereas it is recorded in the Ahaadith that in the era of Rasulullah ﷺ, the Sahaabiyyaat رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُنَّ would attend the congregational salaah in the masjid?

A: Firstly, we must understand that deen is not that which conforms to our personal understanding. Rather, deen is to carry out every command of shari'ah in accordance with the Mubaarak Sunnah of Rasulullah ﷺ.

To acquire anything in the world, Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has created procedures. Similarly, to acquire the correct understanding of deen, Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has created a procedure. If one does not adopt the correct procedure, then one is bound to fall into confusion.

Referring to the Qur'aan and Hadith directly or viewing the translations of certain Ahaadith and trying to reach one's own conclusion is not the correct procedure to understand deen. In doing so, one often tries to practise on one Hadith, but opposes many other Ahaadith on account of lacking sufficient knowledge and sound understanding regarding the correct context of the Hadith, or the related sciences that are required to understand the Hadith.

At times, the laws mentioned in certain Ahaadith are subject to specific conditions being found in order for the laws to be practised. Not understanding these conditions leads one to incorrectly practising on the Hadith.

Below we will explain the correct procedure which has to be adopted in order to gain the correct understanding of deen.

The Correct Procedure to Understand Deen

In order to correctly understand the Qur'aan and Sunnah, we are commanded to follow the Khulafaa-e-Raashideen and the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ.

The Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ are regarded as the criteria of guidance and success due to them being blessed with the mubaarak companionship of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Hence, we are commanded to follow the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ.

However, in this belated era, it is practically impossible for one to succeed in gathering the knowledge of the Qur'aan, the

Ahaadith of Rasulullah ﷺ and the statements and practices of all the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ and reach a conclusion.

Hence, Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, out of His infinite grace and mercy, has blessed the Ummah with great personalities, such as the eminent Imaams of Fiqh and the great Fuqahaa, who sufficed us of undertaking this mammoth task of gathering all the information from the Qur'aan, the Ahaadith of Rasulullah ﷺ and the statements and practices of the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, and thereafter, in the light of this deep knowledge, explaining the sunnah of Rasulullah ﷺ.

Therefore, in the issue under discussion, as well as all other deeni issues, we will have to refer to the Fuqahaa and follow their rulings in order to correctly understand and follow deen.

Below, we will briefly explain the condition that was prevalent during the mubaarak era of Rasulullah ﷺ, and the change in condition that occurred during the era of the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, after the demise of Rasulullah ﷺ, which warranted women being discouraged from coming to the masjid.

All the Fuqahaa of the four mazaahib, after examining the Ahaadith, have reached the consensus that a woman should remain within the confines of her home. Without any valid need, she should not leave her home.

Shari'ah Commanding Women to Remain within the Confines of their Homes

Addressing the Azwaaj-e-Mutahharaat (the pure wives of Rasulullah ﷺ) and the women of this Ummah, Allah تبارك وتعالى says:

وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَى

“Remain within your homes and do not leave your homes displaying your beauty and attraction in the manner in which it was displayed by the women in the former times of ignorance.”⁹²

It is reported in the Mubaarak Hadith that Rasulullah ﷺ addressed the women and said:

قد أذن لكن أن تخرجن لحاجتكن

Permission has been granted for you to leave your homes (only) at the time of need.⁹³

When the Azwaaj-e-Mutahharaat, who were the purest and most pious of women, have been commanded to remain within their homes, concealed from the gazes of strange men, then this law will apply to the mothers and sisters of the Ummah to an even greater extent.

⁹² سورة الأحزاب: ٣٣

⁹³ صحيح مسلم، الرقم: ٢١٢٠

Rasulullah's ﷺ Ardent Desire for the Women of his Ummah to Remain within the Confines of their Homes

عن أنس قال جئن النساء إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقلن يارسول الله ذهب الرجال بالفضل والجهاد في سبيل الله فما لنا عمل ندرك به عمل المجاهدين في سبيل الله فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من قعد أو كلمة نحوها منكن في بيتها فإنها تدرك عمل المجاهد في سبيل الله

*It is reported from Hazrat Anas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that a group of women once came to Rasulullah ﷺ and complained, "O Messenger of Allah, the men have excelled the women through the abundant virtues that they acquire (in your company) and through striving in the path of Allah in jihaad. Is there any action by means of which we can receive the same rewards of those fighting in the path of Allah?" Nabi ﷺ responded saying, "Those among you who remain within the confines of their home (worshipping Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and remaining obedient to their husbands) will acquire the reward of the one striving in the path of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى."*⁹⁴

عن عبد الله رضي الله عنه عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال إن المرأة عورة فإذا خرجت استشرفها الشيطان وأقرب ما تكون من وجه ربها وهي في قعر بيتها

It is reported from Hazrat Abdullah bin Mas'ood رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that Rasulullah ﷺ said, "A woman should be concealed (from the eyes of

⁹⁴ مسند البزار، الرقم: ٦٩٦٢، وقال العلامة الهيثمي في مجمع الزوائد، الرقم: ٧٦٢٨: رواه أبو يعلى، والبزار وفيه روح بن المسيب وثقه ابن معين والبزار وضعفه ابن حبان وابن عدي

strange men). When she exits her home, shaitaan stares at her (i.e. he causes men to cast lustful glances towards her and he strives to mislead her by encouraging her to commit sin).⁹⁵ The time that she is closest to her Rabb is when she is concealed within her home.”⁹⁶

Below, we will briefly explain the condition that was prevalent during the mubaarak era of Rasulullah ﷺ, and the change in condition that occurred during the era of the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, after the demise of Rasulullah ﷺ, which warranted women being discouraged from coming to the masjid.

The Best of Eras

The era of Rasulullah ﷺ was a mubaarak era. It was an era in which wahi (revelation of the Qur'aan Majeed) was being received from Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

New shar'ee laws and injunctions regarding various issues were constantly being revealed by Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and there was a need for the men and women of the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ to learn the laws of deen relating to salaah, fasting and other injunctions directly from Rasulullah ﷺ.

Generally, Rasulullah ﷺ would educate the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ in the masjid; during the khutbah or after the congregational salaah.

⁹⁵ سنن الترمذي، الرقم: ١١٧٣، وقال: هذا حديث حسن صحيح غريب

⁹⁶ المعجم الأوسط للطبراني، الرقم: ٢٨٩٠، ورجاله رجال الصحيح كما في مجمع الزوائد، الرقم: ٧٦٧١

However, it should be borne in mind that the era of Rasulullah ﷺ was the 'khairul quroon' (the best of eras). Being the best of eras, people were protected and safeguarded from fitnahs.

The levels of Imaan, taqwa and piety were so high that all the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, whether men or women, were prepared to make any type of sacrifice for the cause of deen. The ardent love within the hearts of the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ for Rasulullah ﷺ was unimaginable and unconceivable.

Similarly, there can be no match or comparison for the unflinching commitment and submission they displayed before every command of Rasulullah ﷺ.

In essence, when the period was one that was free of fitnah and all the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ fulfilled every command of Rasulullah ﷺ in the exact manner that he commanded, concession was granted for women to come to the masjid for the congregational salaah, with adopting all the measures of purdah and adhering to the prescribed code of dressing and conduct.

Conditions for Women Attending the Salaah

Even in the time of Rasulullah ﷺ, the permission granted to women for attending the congregational salaah in the masjid was subject to several conditions being adhered to. Some of these were:

Complete Hijaab (Purdah) – Hazrat Aaishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا reports that women used to come to the masjid completely covered in their long shawls (i.e. above their clothing, abaayas, etc).⁹⁷

Not Applying Perfume – Hazrat Zainab رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا, the wife of Hazrat Abdullah bin Mas'ood رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, reports that Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “If any woman comes to the masjid, she should not use any perfume”.⁹⁸

Dressing Shabbily – Hazrat Abu Hurairah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ reports that Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ commanded that if women attend the masjid, it should be in a manner that they are “tafilaat” (dressed in clothing that is shabby and completely unattractive).^{See 48}

Not Dressing Attractively – It is reported that Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ addressed the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ saying, “O People! Prevent your women from wearing attractive garments and walking proudly in the masjid, since the people of Banu Israa’eel were cursed because of this very action of their women.”^{See 63}

No Intermingling of Males and Females – Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ prohibited the women from walking with the men. Instead, they were instructed to walk behind the men and to remain on the sides of the road when going to and returning from the masjid.^{See}

⁹⁷ صحيح البخاري، الرقم: ٣٧٢

⁹⁸ صحيح مسلم، الرقم: ٤٤٣

Women Applying Perfume When Leaving the Home for Salaah

Once, a woman proceeding to the masjid passed by Hazrat Abu Hurairah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ perceived the fragrance of perfume emitting from her clothing and thus asked her, “O servant of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, the Almighty! Where are you going?” The woman replied, “I am proceeding to the masjid to perform salaah.”

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ then asked her, “Have you applied perfume?” The woman replied in the affirmative.

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ then said, “Indeed I heard Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ saying, ‘Whichever woman applies perfume and thereafter leaves her home to come to the masjid, her salaah will not be accepted until she has a bath in the manner she washes herself when purifying herself from janaabat.’”^{See 80}

Women No Longer Adhering to the Conditions

When Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ commanded the Sahaabiyyaat رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُنَّ to adopt complete purdah, segregate themselves from men, dress in a shabby and unattractive manner, refrain from applying any perfume when leaving their homes for salaah and not to walk on the streets with the men, they immediately surrendered and wholeheartedly obeyed.

Subsequently, during the era of the khilaafat of Hazrat Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ when Islam spread far and wide and many new people entered the fold of Islam, the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ had witnessed a decline in the levels of hayaa as the women were no longer upholding the conditions as they would during the blessed era of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

Accordingly, the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ understood that allowing women to be present for the congregational and Eid Salaah would lead to fitnah.

Furthermore, they understood that Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ permitting women to come to the masjid was not a command and an obligation upon them in the manner that men had been commanded to do so. Instead it was merely a concession granted subject to certain conditions being upheld.

Therefore, when the women were no longer upholding these conditions, and the desire of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was for the levels of hayaa to always be preserved (and thus, in many Ahaadith, he encouraged women to remain at home), the concession no longer remained.

Rasulullah ﷺ Encouraging Women to Perform Salaah within the Confines of the Home

Though Rasulullah ﷺ permitted women to attend the congregational salaah and the Eid Salaah in his mubaarak era, it was the burning desire of Rasulullah ﷺ that women perform their salaah within the confines of their homes, thereby remaining completely concealed from the eyes of strange men.

Hence, we find that Rasulullah ﷺ expressed this desire in many Ahaadith. Some of these Ahaadith are:

Hadith of Hazrat Ummu Humaid رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا

Hazrat Ummu Humaid رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, the wife of Hazrat Abu Humaid As-Saa'idi رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, once came to Rasulullah ﷺ and said, "O Rasulullah ﷺ, I long to perform salaah behind you."

Rasulullah ﷺ replied, "I am aware that you long and desire to perform salaah behind me. However, your salaah in the inner portion of your bedroom is more rewarding than your salaah in your bedroom. Your salaah in your bedroom is more rewarding than your salaah in any other part of your home. Your salaah in your home is more rewarding than your salaah in the musjid of your locality. Your salaah in the musjid of your locality

is more rewarding than your salaah in my masjid (i.e. Masjidun Nabawi).”

Hazrat Ummu Humaid رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا (in compliance and obedience with the mubaarak desire of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) instructed that a small area be reserved for her salaah in the innermost and darkest portion of her bedroom, and she would devotedly perform all her salaah in that area until the end of her life.⁹⁹

Hadith of Hazrat Abdullah bin Mas'ood رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ

Hazrat Abdullah bin Mas'ood رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ reports a similar narration in which Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “The salaah of a woman in her bedroom is more rewarding than her salaah in the communal room of her house, and her salaah in the innermost portion of the bedroom (a small room within the bedroom – walk-in closet – or corner of her bedroom) is greater and more rewarding than her salaah in her bedroom.”¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ صحيح ابن حبان، الرقم: ٢٢١٧، مسند أحمد، الرقم: ٢٧٠٩٠، وقال العلامة الهيثمي رحمه الله في مجمع الزوائد، الرقم:

٢١٠٦: رواه أحمد وأحمد ورجال الصحيح غير عبد الله بن سويد الأنصاري ووثقه ابن حبان

¹⁰⁰ سنن أبي داود، الرقم: ٥٧٠، وسكت عليه هو والمنذري في مختصره

Hadith of Hazrat Asmaa bint Yazeed

رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا

Hazrat Asmaa bint Yazeed Al-Ansaariyyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, a Sahaabiyyah from the Banu Abdil Ash-hal clan, once approached Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ while he was seated among the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ and addressed him in the following words:

“May my father and mother be sacrificed for you! I have come to you as a representative of the women. May my life be sacrificed for you! Every single woman, in the east and west, whether she has heard that I have come to you or not, will have exactly the same question as myself. Verily Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has sent you with the truth to men and women. We brought Imaan in you and in Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى who deputed you.

“We, the women, live within the confines of our homes and are restricted from exposing ourselves and doing many things that the men are able to fulfill. We remain confined to our homes. We allow you to fulfill your needs and desires with us, and we bear your children.

“You, the men, have been favoured by Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى by being able to attend the Jumu’ah Salaah and other salaahs in congregation (whereas we women perform our salaah within our homes). You are able to visit the sick and be present at funerals. You perform hajj after hajj and even more virtuous than that is your participating in jihaad in the path of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

“When any of you men leave your home to perform hajj or umrah or to guard the borders of the Islamic territories, it is none other than us women who protect your wealth for you. We sew your clothes for you. We raise and care for your children. Do we not have a share in your reward, O Rasul of Allah ﷺ?”

On hearing the question of this woman, Nabi ﷺ turned his face towards the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ and asked, “Have you ever heard a woman ask a question regarding her deen more excellent than the question of this woman?” The Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ replied, “O Rasul of Allah ﷺ! We never imagined that a woman could be inspired to ask a question of this nature!”

Nabi ﷺ turned to her and said, “Return, O woman, and inform all the women you represent that for you to display excellent conduct with your husband, seek to keep him happy and try your utmost to comply and cooperate with him will enable you to be equal with him in all the good deeds which you have mentioned that men carry out.”

Hazrat Asmaa رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا was so delighted with the answer of Rasulallah ﷺ, that as she walked away, she continued to exclaim “Allahu Akbar!” and “La ilaaha illallah!” out of joy and excitement.¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ شعب الإيمان، الرقم: ٨٣٦٩، قال العلامة السيوطي رحمه الله في تدريب الراوي ٣٣١/١: أو في مؤلف معتبر كتصانيف البيهقي، فقد التزم أن لا يخرج فيها حديثا يعلمه موضوعا

Rasulullah ﷺ was pleased with the deen of Hazrat Asmaa bint Yazeed رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, as this conformed to what he wanted for the women of his Ummah, and among the things which she highlighted was that women perform salaah within the confines of their homes and do not attend the congregational salaah in the masjid.

The Practice of the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ during the Khilaafat of Hazrat Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ

During the khilaafat of Hazrat Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, when the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ noticed the decline in the levels of hayaa and saw that the conditions for women coming to the masjid were no longer being adhered to, many of them prevented women from attending the congregational salaah in the masjid, as they understood that the concession granted to women was subject to their upholding the conditions.

Since the women were no longer upholding the conditions and the era was no longer like the era of Rasulullah ﷺ where hayaa and modesty was at its peak, they prevented women from attending the congregational salaah in the masjid.

Furthermore, they understood that women performing salaah in their homes was what Rasulullah ﷺ desired most for the women of the Ummah. Therefore, they did not oppose Rasulullah ﷺ in any way, but rather fulfilled his mubaarak desire.

Among the many Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ who prevented women from coming to the masjid were the following very prominent Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ:

1. Hazrat Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ
2. Hazrat Aaishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا
3. Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا
4. Hazrat Abdullah bin Mas'ood رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ
5. Hazrat Zubair رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ

Generally, in support of women coming to the masjid, the Hadith of Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا is quoted wherein he said, "Do not prevent women from coming to the masjid."¹⁰²

However, it is also reported regarding Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا that he would not allow his womenfolk to attend the two Eid Salaahs, and he would throw small pebbles at the women on the Day of Jumu'ah in order to remove them from the masjid.¹⁰³

It is thus clear that when Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا later on realized that women coming to the masjid was a cause of fitnah, he also prevented them from coming to the masjid.

It is similarly recorded regarding Hazrat Abdullah bin Mas'ood رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that he would throw small pebbles at the women, preventing them from attending the Jumu'ah Salaah in the masjid.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² صحيح البخاري، الرقم: ٩٠٠

¹⁰³ المصنف لابن أبي شيبة، الرقم: ٥٨٤٥ ، عمدة القاري: ١٥٧/٦

¹⁰⁴ المصنف لابن أبي شيبة، الرقم: ٧٦٩٩

The Practice of the Taabi'een and Great Luminaries of the Ummah

Apart from the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ who prevented women from attending the congregational, Jumu'ah and Eid Salaahs, there were many illustrious Taabi'een رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ and other great luminaries of the Ummah who also did not allow women to go to the masjid or attend the Eid Salaahs in their eras.

These luminaries understood the Hadith of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ better than anyone present today.

1. It is reported that Hazrat Urwah bin Zubair رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ would not allow his womenfolk to attend the Eid Salaahs.¹⁰⁵
2. Hazrat Ebrahim An-Nakha'ee رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said that it is makrooh for women to attend the salaahs of Eidul Adh-haa and Eidul Fitr. Furthermore, he did not allow his womenfolk to attend the Jumu'ah or daily congregational salaah.¹⁰⁶
3. Imaam Tirmizi رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ quotes the statement of the great Muhaddith, Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubaarak رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, who said, "I believe that in these times, it is makrooh for women to go for the Eid Salaah to the Eid Gah..."¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ المصنف لابن أبي شيبة، الرقم: ٥٨٤٦

¹⁰⁶ المصنف لابن أبي شيبة، الرقم: ٧٧٠٣

¹⁰⁷ سنن الترمذي، الرقم: ٥٤٠

4. It is also reported from Hazrat Sufyaan Thowri رَحِمَهُ اللهُ that he regarded it as makrooh for women to go to the Eid Salaah in his era.¹⁰⁸
5. All the four Imaams of Fiqh are unanimous that at the time of fitnah, women should not be allowed to come to the masjid to perform salaah.¹⁰⁹

The Statement of Hazrat Aaishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا

The following Hadith of Hazrat Aaishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا sufficiently highlights the decline in hayaa and explains the necessity of the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ preventing women from attending the congregational and Eid Salaah. This was in total conformity with the desire of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

It is reported by Amrah رَحِمَهَا اللهُ that Hazrat Aaishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا said, “Had Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ been alive today and witnessed the fitnah being caused through the women leaving their homes and attending the congregational salaah, Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ would have surely prohibited them from coming to the masjid, just as the women of the Banu Israa’eel had been prohibited from attending the congregational salaah.”¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ سنن الترمذي، الرقم: ٥٤٠

¹⁰⁹ رد المحتار ٥٦٦/١، المجموع ٦٨/٤، حاشية الدسوقي ٥٣٤/١، الإنصاف ١٥١/٢

¹¹⁰ صحيح البخاري، الرقم: ٨٦٩، سنن أبي داود، الرقم: ٥٦٩

The author of the famous commentary of Saheeh Bukhaari, Allaamah Ainee رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, comments that this was the condition in the time of Hazrat Aaishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا.

He then says regarding his own time, “As for today, Naoozubillah! (We seek Allah’s تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى refuge from the fitnah that is prevalent and hence are forced to prevent women from attending the congregational salaahs in the masjid).”

When this was the condition in the era of the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, that due to the level of hayaa decreasing, women were prohibited from attending the congregational salaah in the masaajid, then one can well imagine the need for not allowing women to participate in the congregational salaah in this day and age, where fitnah is rampant, overwhelming and widespread to such an extent that controlling the fitnah has become practically impossible.

Final Advice of Rasulallah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ to his Wives

It is reported from Hazrat Abu Hurairah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that Rasulallah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, while addressing his pure wives on the occasion of Hajjatul Wadaa, said, “After this (completing the rites of hajj,) remain in your homes (i.e. do not leave your homes without a valid need).”

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ mentions that it was on account of this statement of Rasulallah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ that Hazrat Zainab bint

Jahsh and Hazrat Saudah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا never left their homes for even nafl hajj thereafter (though the other Azwaaj-e-Mutahharaat performed nafl hajj and umrah and understood that this statement did not refer to hajj and umrah).

Hazrat Zainab and Hazrat Saudah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا would say, “After hearing this from Rasulallah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, we never mounted a conveyance thereafter.”¹¹¹

Statement of Hazrat Imaam Shaafi'ee

رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ

Hazrat Imaam Shaafi'ee رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ has written in Ikhtilaaful Hadith:

We do not know of any of the respected wives of Rasulallah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ leaving their homes to attend the Jumu'ah Salaah or any other salaah in the masjid, even though the respected wives of Rasulallah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, on account of their special position and relationship with Rasulallah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, would have been more rightful and worthy than any woman to fulfil the faraa'idh in the masjid, yet they did not do this.

There were many women who were close to Rasulallah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, from the women of his household, his respected wives, his daughters, his slave women and the slave women that belonged to his household, yet I do not have knowledge of even a single woman from them who left the home to attend the

¹¹¹ مسند أحمد، الرقم: ٢٦٧٥١، وهو حديث صحيح كما في مجمع الزوائد، الرقم: ٥٣٠٤

Jumu'ah Salaah behind Rasulullah ﷺ, despite Jumu'ah Salaah being compulsory on the men to a greater degree than all the other salaah.

Similarly, we do not have knowledge of any of them leaving the home to attend the congregational salaah, neither during the night nor during the day, nor did they even go to the masjid in Qubaa, although Rasulullah ﷺ would go to Qubaa, sometimes riding his conveyance and sometimes on foot, nor did they go to any of the other masaajid.

I have no doubt that on account of their special relationship with Rasulullah ﷺ, they were eager to acquire virtue and reward and they knew the avenues of earning reward better than other women, yet they did not go to the masjid for salaah.

I do not have knowledge of any of our pious predecessors instructing any one of their womenfolk to attend the Jumu'ah Salaah nor the congregational salaah, neither during the night nor during the day.

If they knew that there was any virtue in the women leaving their homes and attending the congregational salaah, they would have definitely instructed them and permitted them to do so.

Rather, it is related that Rasulullah ﷺ said, "The salaah of a woman in her bedroom is better than her salaah in the

communal room of her home, and her salaah in the communal room of her home is better than her salaah in the masjid.”¹¹²

¹¹² اختلاف الحديث: ٦٢٤/٨

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

WOMEN ATTENDING UNIVERSITY

Q: Is it permissible for Muslim women to attend university to acquire a degree? Some people argue that it is necessary for a woman to acquire a degree so that she may become self-sufficient in life and in the case of divorce or becoming widowed, she will be able to earn a halaal living and thereby fend for herself and her dependants.

A: Before discussing the issue in question, it is important for us to refresh some fundamental beliefs and facts, which will also serve as an introduction to the actual answer.

The following are among our fundamental beliefs:

- Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى is our Creator and Sustainer. We belong to Him alone and to Him we will return.
- Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى is our Absolute Creator and Master and we are His creation and slaves. As the Creator and absolute sovereign Master, it is His prerogative to command us as He wills. As His creation and utter slaves, we are obligated

to follow His commands and have no right to question Him.

- Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى is Most Just. He NEVER commits any injustice. Every command of His is also filled with infinite wisdom.
- A believer accepts every word of the Qur'aan Majeed as the Divine word of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and wholeheartedly submits to every command of the Qur'aan Majeed, whether his puny logic can fathom the wisdom of the command or not.

Now in the light of the above, understand the following aayah, wherein Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى specifically addresses the women:

“And (O you women), remain within your homes and do not display (your) beauty like the former times of ignorance”¹¹³

This verse emphatically commands women to remain at home. They are the queens of the home and they guard the fortresses of their families. While they may leave the home for what shari'ah has permitted, earning a living for the family is not their responsibility.

Who is Responsible to Earn?

Islam is second to none in advocating fairness and justice. In every dimension of a person's life, one will find Islam advocating

¹¹³ سورة الأحزاب: ٣٣

the highest degree of justice. As a result of Islam's unparalleled justice, we see that each spouse is allocated their own responsibilities and duties in their marital life.

It is recorded in the Mubaarak Hadith that when Hazrat Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ married Hazrat Faatimah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ advised them regarding the manner in which they should conduct themselves in the nikaah. Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ outlined the duties and responsibilities of each spouse, instructing Hazrat Faatimah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا to attend to the duties within the home and Hazrat Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ to fulfil the responsibilities out of the home.

From this Hadith, we understand that each spouse has been allocated their specific duties and responsibilities. The husband's duty and responsibility is to fulfil the needs and requirements of his wife and family, such as providing them with food, clothing, shelter, etc. He is thus required to leave the home in order to generate an income through which he will be able to fulfil his responsibilities.

On the other hand, the wife has been commanded to remain within the confines of the home and not to leave the home except at the time of need, as she has been allocated the duty of tending to the internal affairs of the home. Hence, she should serve her husband, take care of the children and manage the affairs of the home such as cooking, keeping the home tidy, etc.

If each spouse acts responsibly and fulfils their respective duties and responsibilities, the home will run smoothly and they will

prosper as a happy family. Each spouse will be able to fulfil the rights they owe to Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and the rights they owe to each other. Furthermore, both parents will be able to focus on instilling Islamic values into the children and giving them the correct upbringing which they require.

The Concept of Gender Equality

Islam does not recognize the modern day concept dubbed “gender equality”. In this alien and unnatural system, undue advantage is taken of the wife in the guise of gender equality.

The wife, despite being from the weaker sex, is shamelessly exploited and expected to shoulder both her own responsibilities and the responsibilities of her husband by supplementing his income and contributing to the running expenses of the home. Hence, apart from her own duties, she is burdened with the added responsibility of earning an income to assist the husband in fulfilling his duties.

It is generally witnessed that when the spouses do not fulfil their respective roles which have been stipulated for them by the shari’ah, then problems, complications, misunderstandings, quarrels and disputes arise in the nikaah.

The Example of a Woman Attending University

The condition and plight of a Muslim woman leaving her home to attend university can be aptly likened and compared to the following example:

A poor family, living in a remote village, struggle to fulfil their daily needs. They are nonetheless content and happily continue with their lives. Subsequently, the family is informed of a valuable treasure located at a distant place. If the treasure is obtained, it will improve their standard of living and will make life more comfortable.

The route to the treasure is however extremely dangerous. It crosses through thorny bushes and dangerous jungles filled with wild beasts and serpents. Furthermore, it is well known that people traversing this path often encounter thieves, bandits and even murderers.

Under these circumstances, would any sensible person even consider sending his daughter out into the wild in order to pursue such a treasure, no matter how lucrative it may appear? Obviously, no one will risk the life and honour of his daughter for the mere sake of wealth. Similarly, one should understand that the environment of the university is an anti-Islamic environment which exposes a woman to danger in her deen as well as her self-respect and chastity.

The Harm outweighing the Benefit

Some may argue that there are benefits in women attending university, such as becoming independent and self-sufficient. However, one should understand that there are many things in this world which are such that though they may have some worldly benefit, their deeni harms far exceed and outweigh their benefits. Hence, the Qur'aan Majeed declares that such things are impermissible. Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى states in the Qur'aan Majeed:

“They ask you regarding wine and gambling. Say: ‘In them both is great sin, and some benefit for man; but the sin outweighs the benefit.’”¹¹⁴

It is an established fact that there is some benefit and enjoyment in alcohol and gambling. However, the grave consequences and the long term evil outcomes that affect the person as well as his family and others cannot be denied. Hence, Islam has declared all such things as forbidden which are against the greater welfare and benefit of man.

The Deen of Islam

The deen of Islam is a universal religion that has been divinely chosen by Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى as the perfect religion till the Day of Qiyaamah. Our Merciful Creator, Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى wants the best for us in this world and the Hereafter. Hence, He sent Rasulullah

¹¹⁴ سورة البقرة: ٢١٩

صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ with Islam, the complete code of life that will stand the test of all times. Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ has said:

“O people, there is no good act which leads you to Jannah and will save you from the fire of Jahannum, except that I have commanded you to carry it out, and there is no evil that will lead you to Jahannum and distance you from Jannah, except that I have prohibited you from it.”¹¹⁵

In other words, for men to fulfil every command of shari’ah that is directed to them, and for women to fulfil every command of shari’ah that is directed to them, is the only means of acquiring success in this world and the Hereafter. Contravening these commands of shari’ah is undoubtedly a recipe for bringing ruin and disaster to themselves.

Education for Women

Islam encourages one to acquire beneficial education, especially when it aids one in earning a halaal livelihood and is the means of serving humanity. Such beneficial education is in fact commendable and praiseworthy. Rendering service to humanity, assisting the poor and the underprivileged and even sacrificing one’s comfort to fulfil the needs of mankind are all part of the deen of Islam, on condition that one does not violate the commands of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى in the process.

¹¹⁵ شرح السنة، الرقم: ٤١١١، وفيه انقطاع كما في هداية الرواة ٥٥/٥

In Islam, women are not discouraged from acquiring beneficial education. However, due to the abundant and serious harms that accompany the contemporary secular system of seeking education, Islam does not allow women to leave their homes for this purpose.

What are the Harms Associated with the Contemporary Secular Education System?

The contemporary secular system of education opposes the very core values of Islam. By and large, women who pass through this system gradually lose their hayaa and compromise their deeni obligations. This is due to the fact that most educational institutes are Western orientated. The course offered is thus designed and shaped to promote the mindset and values of the West.

As a result of the West showing ultimate importance to education, the importance that Islam lays upon hayaa (modesty), segregation of the sexes, women covering their hair and entire body and remaining concealed from the gazes of strange men, performing salaah on its prescribed time and many other deeni obligations are not only overlooked but are actually regarded as a small price to pay just in order to acquire a worldly degree which they regard to be more important.

Hence, the mindset, values and lifestyle of a woman attending college or university are clearly corrupted by the Western education of the university.

The Command of Shari’ah

In Islam, women are commanded to remain within the confines of their homes. They should not leave their homes unless there is a valid need. If they have to leave their homes, they should ensure that they leave their homes in the state that they do not make a display of their beauty nor apply perfume. They should be accompanied by their mahrams at the time of leaving their homes, and should not be left alone in the company of non-mahrams. However, in the environment of the university, all these laws of shari’ah are commonly and openly violated.

Though men are allowed to leave the home to acquire knowledge whereby they will be able to earn a living, however they are also bound by the laws of shari’ah. Hence, in the process of them acquiring knowledge, if they are violating the laws of shari’ah then it is also not permissible. Hence, the anti-Islamic environment of the university is an environment from which men should also abstain.

Heart-breaking Reports

Recently, a female matriculant boldly and boastfully rejected Islam, claiming that her tutors had presented so-called ‘very

convincing' arguments to prove the non-existence of God (May Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى protect and save us all).

Some Muslim students admitted being influenced by and believing in Darwin's theory of evolution, etc. whereas this theory opposes many clear verses of the Qur'aan Majeed (May Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى protect us all).

In an entire grade of a certain school, almost every female pupil confessed to having had some degree of intimate contact with the opposite gender.

In another girls' school, there were even incidents of girls being intimate with each other.

Many pupils leave high school plagued by serious doubts and uncertainty regarding the basic and fundamental beliefs of Islam, thereby jeopardising and risking their Imaan.

Many students have explained that on account of peer pressure, it was virtually impossible for them to remain free from many vices and evil influences.

University and Beyond

The university lifestyle poses a significantly greater risk and danger to the deen of a woman. Imagine, what would be the end result of a woman regularly remaining in the midst of many non-mahram males in an anti-Islamic environment? Free

intermingling and casual interaction with each other in such an environment are the norm.

Apart from this, since she is aiming to acquire a degree in a certain field e.g. medicine, dentistry, law, etc. she is bound to interact with her tutors and seniors, many of whom are males. She is then expected to fit in the circle and conduct like one of the rest.

After qualifying, she is expected to render community service in order to be recognized by the government as someone qualified in that field. In doing so, she is sometimes required to relocate in order to serve the needs of a specific community. Hence, a young woman will often be found living alone in some apartment while working in a government hospital.

In certain instances, she will be required to examine male patients and attend to their needs, even if this entails viewing the satar areas of the males.

In essence, during this time, she is exposed to every danger which could cause her to lose her deeni values, respect and hayaa. On account of this type of lifestyle that she has chosen for herself (both in the university and during the course of her career afterwards), she can easily become a victim of abuse, zina, etc. by men who wish to take advantage of her.

However, she is prepared to risk all these dangers and in the interim, even sacrifice her deeni values, just in order to secure some material benefits and financial interests.

Financial Independence

Many parents feel that they should send their daughters to university in order to make them self-sufficient and financially independent. They argue that in the case where the girl is divorced or her husband passes away, if she has a degree or is qualified in some field, she will be in a better position to fend for herself and her family.

We should understand that while Islam does not prohibit a woman from earning a halaal living, Islam commands that she should first be loyal to her Creator by fulfilling the obligations He has placed upon her and by not doing anything that will be a means of earning His displeasure.

She should understand that her aim and goal in acquiring a degree is in order to get sustenance, and sustenance lies in the hands of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. Hence, if the means adopted to acquire her livelihood causes her to become disobedient to Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, then how can she ever expect to become successful in this world and the next?

Western Mindset

Since the mindset that is created in these Western universities and colleges as well as the environment totally oppose the laws

of shari'ah, her presence in such an anti-Islamic environment will be the cause of Allah's تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى displeasure.

Furthermore, the argument of hoping to earn some money to become self-sufficient despite losing one's deeni values, shame and modesty, does not hold any weight in the sight of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

The reason is that Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has placed the responsibility of those around her to take care of her and treat her with compassion. Under all circumstances, Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has made provisions for her needs to be fulfilled.

Prior to nikaah she is the responsibility of her father, and after nikaah, she is the responsibility of her husband. In the event of her husband's demise, shari'ah commands that she be taken care of by her close family members e.g. father, brothers, uncles, etc. Hence, Islam has made provisions for her welfare at all times and has not abandoned her, left her helpless or forced her to fend for herself at any point.

Technology – The Web of Shaitaan

The arrival of technology and its advancements has led to the degeneration of hayaa (modesty and shame) in the Ummah.

By the press of a button, one is able to view the worst of sins being committed. Many cases of broken homes and broken marriages are the direct result of the misuse of these modern day devices such as the cell phone and internet. The sheer number of

females on Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp and other social media platforms is staggering.

While this may not be confined to those seeking education, it is far more prevalent amongst them on account of the environment they are exposed to. Generally, the mindset of a person and his outlook are shaped by the environment he is in and the company he keeps.

For an innocent, modest girl, striking an illicit relationship with a boy becomes easy when she finds herself in an anti-Islamic environment where everybody around her is involved in some illicit activity.

Many young girls from respectable homes have been lured and duped into haraam activities, such as drugs, partying, alcohol, zina, etc. on account of the overwhelming influence of the evil environment.

Breakdown in Marriages

The damage and evil effects of such a lifestyle are gradually revealed later on in a woman's life. Due to the demands of her profession, she neglects her children, household duties and other primary obligations.

Often, it is observed that professional women are willing to serve complete strangers in the corporate environment for material gain, but are unwilling to serve their husbands and families at home for the pleasure of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. At times, they are disloyal

to their spouses on account of the illicit relationships they were previously involved in.

As a result of their financial independence and “high level” of education, they find it difficult to be obedient to their spouses. Hence, the breakdown in many marriages is a direct result of the incorrect upbringing and the wrong environment the children were exposed to.

Just as children are blameworthy for their actions, likewise their parents are also accountable for allowing their children such freedom and placing them in such an immoral environment.

Conclusion

It is thus clear as daylight that the harms of educating women in institutes of Western education far outweigh the benefits. Hence, if the basic community needs can be fulfilled through other avenues, such as non-Muslim female doctors, then there is no need for us to open the doors of Western education to our sisters and daughters, as this is a proven means of ruining their deen and Akhirah.

The need of the time is for us to strengthen our belief that our sustenance has been pre-ordained by Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. We should understand that our Sustainer, Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, has taken care of centuries of females before us who did not venture into the open workplace. Similarly, if we trust in Him, He will surely take care of us.

True respect, honour, dignity and happiness in our marital and social lives can only be attained by following the pure and pristine teachings of Islam and the Mubaarak Sunnah of Rasulullah ﷺ. If we seek honour and respect elsewhere, we will bring nothing but disgrace and humiliation to ourselves. Hazrat Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ has emphasized:

We were the most disgraced of people. Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى then gave us honour through Islam. If we ever seek honour in something besides that through which Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has honoured us (Islam), Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will disgrace us.”¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ المستدرك على الصحيحين للحاكم، الرقم: ٢٠٧

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

GIRLS MADRASAHs

Q: What is the status of girls attending girls' madrasahs?

A: As far as educating women is concerned, the ideal approach, free from any fitnah, is that women's deeni education should be arranged within their homes so that they will not have to leave their homes for acquiring deeni education.

This was the method of education adopted for the women in the mubaarak era of Nabi ﷺ and the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُم.

However, if educating women within the home is difficult, on account of there not being anyone within the home who possesses the knowledge of deen and will be able to pass it on to them, then in such a situation, the Ulama have allowed women to go to a girls' madrasah to acquire the necessary deeni knowledge so that they will be able to save themselves from wrongs and practice deen correctly.

Below we will quote the fataawa of our various Ulama in regard to this topic:

Fatwa of Hazrat Mufti Abdur Raheem Laajpooori Saheb رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ regarding the Deeni Education of Women:

Women leaving their homes to attend deeni gatherings is an extremely sensitive issue. Therefore, the ideal would be that their deeni education be arranged within their homes. However, if educating them at home is not possible, then under the circumstances it will be permissible for them to leave their homes to acquire deeni education.

In doing so, special caution should be exercised to ensure that strict purdah be observed (at every step of the process) and that they be transported to and from the destination by their mahrams. They should remain in the company of pious people through whom their respect will not be lost and they will be protected from fitnah.

Thus, with the intention of acquiring deeni benefit and saving themselves from falling into sin and getting involved in innovations and various wrongs, concession has been granted for them to leave their homes on the condition that they do not regard (this coming out to acquire deen) as a shar'ee injunction and a sunnah of deen (i.e. it is purely based on need).

If at any time there is fear of fitnah (may Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى protect) in the place where the deeni education is being acquired, then it will be necessary to refrain from such places.¹¹⁷

Fatwa of Hazrat Mufti Shafee' Saheb رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ regarding the Deeni Education of Women

Hazrat Mufti Shafee' Saheb رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ writes in Ma'aariful Qur'aan under the verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا

O you who believe! Save yourselves and your families from the fire of Jahannum.

In this verse the address is directed towards the Muslim Ummah in general. They are commanded to save themselves and their families from the burning fire of Jahannum.

The word أَهْلِيكُمْ encompasses the wife, children and those in one's ownership from his male and female slaves. Similarly, it is not farfetched to include those staff who are in one's employment under the purview of this verse.

It is reported in one narration that at the time of the revelation of this verse, Hazrat Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ enquired, "O Rasul of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, we know how to save ourselves from the fire of Jahannum (i.e. by refraining from sins and fulfilling the orders of

¹¹⁷ فتاوى رحيميه: ٢/٢٤٤

Allah (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى), but how do we safeguard our families from the fire of Jahannum?”

Rasulullah ﷺ replied, “Forbid them from carrying out such deeds which are displeasing to Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and enjoin upon them to carry out the commandments of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. This will save them from the fire of Jahannum”.

From this verse of the Qur'aan Majeed, the Fuqahaa (jurists) deduce that it is fardh upon every individual to educate his family (wife and children) regarding the faraa'idh of deen.

Similarly, he should equip them with the knowledge of halaal and haraam and ensure that they practice deen correctly.

Some Ulama have stated that on the Day of Qiyaamah, the one who neglected his deeni responsibility and did not educate his family in matters of deen will be punished most severely.¹¹⁸

This mubaarak verse of the Qur'aan Majeed clearly establishes that it is necessary upon every person to provide his family with the correct upbringing and Islamic education.

The word ‘family’ in this verse is general. It includes both sons and daughters. Thus, as it is necessary for one to provide deeni education and Islamic tarbiyah (upbringing) to his sons, it is equally important that he provides deeni education and Islamic tarbiyah (upbringing) to his daughters as well.

¹¹⁸ معارف القرآن: ٥٠٢/٨-٥٠٣

Fatwa of Hakeemul Ummah, Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thaanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، regarding the Deeni Education of Women

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thaanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ mentions:

In essence, it is logically accepted and practically proven that without deeni knowledge, it is not possible for one to reform his actions. Reforming one's actions is waajib and fardh in deen. Hence, we understand that acquiring deeni knowledge (whereby one will be able to rectify his aa'maal and fulfill the Faraa'idh) is also fardh in shari'ah.

Therefore, the claim made by some people that 'Since women are not tasked with the responsibility of working, what is the need for educating them?' is incorrect. Similarly, it has been proven through experience that the mere presence of Ulama among the masses is insufficient in fulfilling the deeni needs and requirements of women, and the reason for this is that it is compulsory that purdah be observed between men and women.

Hence, it is not possible for women to go to the Ulama to acquire deeni education. If we say that the mahram menfolk present at home should seek deeni guidance from the Ulama on behalf of the women and thereafter pass it on to them, then it should be borne in mind that some homes do not have any menfolk through which this need can be fulfilled.

Over and above, in some situations (though mahram menfolk are found), when the menfolk are totally disconcerned and negligent in regard to their own deeni obligations, then what hope do we have that they will show importance to the deeni needs and obligations of their womenfolk and refer them to the Ulama?

It is therefore extremely difficult for such women to find out the masaa'il regarding their deen. If per chance, through some medium she is able to contact an Aalim or within her home there is an Aalim e.g. father, brother, son etc. then too there are certain personal and sensitive deeni masaa'il which she might not be able to easily refer to them.

Generally, a woman feels most easy and comfortable in discussing her personal deeni issues with her husband due to there being a degree of informality between them. However, finding this type of husband (who is educated Islamically and thus able to fulfill her deeni requirements) is not normally possible in all cases.

Therefore, the only practical solution to fulfill the deeni needs and requirements of women is for the women of the locality to gather at some venue and learn from those women who possess the knowledge of deen (e.g. girls' madrasahs) thereby educating themselves in regard to the necessary deeni masaa'il and related issues.

Hence, if there is no other alternative (i.e. to acquiring deeni education within the confines of the home), then it is

compulsory for women to acquire the education of deen through this means of ta'leem (women learning from other women of the locality)".¹¹⁹

Fatwa of Hazrat Mufti Abdur Rasheed

Ludhyaanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ regarding Girls'

Madrasahs:

For women to attend girls' madrasahs is permissible with the intention of acquiring the knowledge of shari'ah as well as the spirit of deen. However, it is vital that the following conditions be adhered to:

1. The teachers should all be females. It is not permissible for women to study under non-mahram male teachers.
2. The teachers should be conversant with the laws of shari'ah and acquainted with aspects of social and domestic living.
3. They should be committed to deen and show a great amount of concern in creating the true morals and values within the students. They should not be involved in the innovations, wrongs and immorality prevalent and they should stop others from getting involved in these

¹¹⁹ إصلاحی انقلاب: ص ۱۹۴ ، بمبئی زیور: ۸۶/۱-۸۷

shameful and sinful acts e.g. not observing purdah, taking pictures, watching television, backbiting, etc.

4. The main function and purpose for a girl studying deen in girls' madrasahs is as explained above i.e. acquiring the knowledge and spirit of shari'ah as well as equipping herself with the knowledge a woman will require throughout her life. In other words, the primary object is creating the concern for the Akhirah in the heart of the students. It is necessary to do away with the current system in vogue in many girls' madrasahs and Islamic institutes where efforts are aimed towards producing Aalimahs, thus affording them big titles and worldly positions. Certainly, this incorrect practice has to be rectified and reformed. It is necessary to correct the mindset of those who pursue such titles.
5. They should be accompanied by their mahrams when transported to and from the girls' madrasahs.¹²⁰

¹²⁰ أحسن الفتاوى: ٥٩/٨

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

MASTOORAAT JAMAAT

Q: What is the status of women going out in mastooraat jamaat?

A: It is fardh for every Muslim to learn the correct Aqaa'id (correct beliefs), ibaadaat (righteous and correct actions), mu'aasharaat (social etiquettes), mu'aamalaat (mutual dealings and transactions) and akhlaaq (good character and mannerisms).

In the event where it is quite difficult or impractical for a woman to acquire this within the confines of her home, then it is necessary for her to leave her home to acquire this knowledge in order for her to practice upon her deen correctly.

Hence, in the interest of her deen, leaving her home to fulfill this deeni need will be permissible and akin to leaving her home to fulfill a valid worldly need.

The elders of the Tabligh Jamaat explain that mastooraat jamaat is in actual fact a mobile madrasah and khaanqah which has been designed and structured to facilitate for those women who do not have the means or time to study at a girls' madrasah nor can they acquire deeni knowledge within their homes.

The only viable alternative for this class of women to acquire deen and the spirit of deen is for them to associate themselves with the Tabligh Jamaat.

Just as permission is granted for women to attend girls' madrasahs (with the above-mentioned conditions) to acquire deen, they will similarly be allowed to attend mastooraat jamaats (a mobile madrasah) to acquire deen if those very conditions are adhered to.

The Sad Plight of the Ummah

The sad and unfortunate plight of the Ummah, witnessed across the globe, is that there is a drastic decline and degeneration of deeni morals and values seen in women.

This degeneration and decline is to the extent that they openly frequent shopping centres and bazaars, halls and malls, occupy positions in shops and offices, drive about freely, go for morning walks and jogs in groups, take part in national and international sports and even the Olympics, attend schools and universities, get involved with or marry non-Muslims, become influenced by anti-Islamic beliefs and ideologies e.g. Darwin's theory, LGBTQ, etc. and also intermingle and interact with the opposite sex without any sense of shame and modesty.

In view of this serious degeneration and decline, the Ulama have thought of ways to reform and rectify the epidemic of

unimaginable maladies and uncontrollable ailments which has spread in the Ummah.

This way is to allow women who are far from deen to come out in mastooraat jamaat in order to learn deen and understand that the true place of women is to remain within her home and not leave her home without any valid need.

Since achieving the goal in one step is extremely difficult, as it is witnessed that most people are not prepared to make an immediate drastic change to their lifestyles, the Tabligh Jamaat have formulated a solution to gradually draw women who have been confused or lost closer to deen and to bring them towards the real goal i.e. finding their true place in their homes and observing complete purdah.

Furthermore, the Tabligh Jamaat has understood that the Imaani levels of the people have reached such a low ebb that if they are not taken through a remedial and reformative process, the coming generation will be totally lost.

Hence, the Tabligh Jamaat's aim and goal is to revive the whole of deen in the lives of the Muslims and to create within women a deep concern for their deen which will compel them to understand that they should remain within their homes and fulfill their deeni responsibilities and duties.

The Analogy of the Tabligh Jamaat

The Ulama of the Tabligh Jamaat have analysed that when shari'ah has granted women permission to leave their homes for a physical need, such as acquiring medical treatment or hospitalization, then why would they not be allowed to leave their homes to attend to their Imaani need (through joining the mastooraat jamaat)?

This Imaani need is extremely vital as it is a means of securing their deen and the deen of their families, and once again acquiring the values of Islam (modesty, respect, shame, hayaa, etc.).

Generally, it has been noticed that through the medium of coming out in this form, a deeni realization and awareness is created within the women. Thousands of women's lives have improved and those who were far from deen have begun to observe the essentials of deen and adopt purdah as well.

Currently, the Imaani spirit and deeni enthusiasm in the Ummah is extremely low on account of the Western culture prevalent everywhere. Hence, they find it difficult to grasp basic deeni concepts and Islamic values. Therefore, they have to be introduced to these values slowly and gradually.

If we do not adopt the present method of inviting and introducing them to deen, the chances are that let alone not

being able to reach out to them; we will lose them completely through them leaving the fold of Islam.

Gradually Bringing People to the Ultimate Goal

Another analogy found in the Tabligh Jamaat of gradually bringing people to the ultimate goal, is that of creating the motivation and enthusiasm within people to perform their five daily salaah.

At the onset, they begin inviting a person (who has no salaah in his life) towards performing the Jumu'ah Salaah for a start. Thereafter, they gradually ask him to join them for one or two salaah daily.

If one has to view this from a negative angle, he will raise objections against the jamaat saying that they have reduced the number of salaah to only one or two salaah a day.

However, the one who has a more comprehensive understanding will regard this action of the Tabligh Jamaat as a gradual but positive step towards the ultimate goal.

One common example of the method adopted by our senior Ulama of the past as well as present (of gradually bringing people onto the path of deen in a way that is manageable to them) is that if they had come across a person involved in some haraam occupation (e.g. working for an insurance company or

conventional bank, etc. and he does not have any other source of income and he does not have a strong level of imaan), they would not instruct him to immediately abandon the occupation he is involved in.

Instead, they would ask him to continuously make taubah for the sin that he is involved in and to look for some other (halaal) occupation.

The obvious reason is that if they are going to instruct him to immediately abandon his current source of income, the chances are that he might not find any other source of income, and due to his Imaan being extremely weak, this could lead him to bidding farewell to Islam.

Thus, viewing the extremely low level of this person's Imaan, the Ulama realized that he would not manage the original method of correction and rectification. Hence, if we command him to adopt the original method of correction and rectification, then instead of proving beneficial, we will cause him to go from the frying pan to the fire.

We thus understand that the Ulama advising him to continue with his haraam occupation cannot be construed as them sanctioning and endorsing it as halaal or shar'iah compliant. Instead, it is solely on account of the person's personal condition and based on what is manageable to him.

Similar is the case of a person involved in drugs. On account of his addiction and dependency on the drug, it is difficult and not manageable for him to kick the habit all at once. Hence, those treating him use the approach of gradually weaning him off the drug.

The Crux of the Matter

The crux of the matter is that the Tabligh Jamaat are gradually introducing deen to the women in phases and in a way that is manageable to them, and are thus leading them to the ultimate goal i.e. creating the enthusiasm through which a woman can once again come onto the path of the Sunnah and find her true place in her home and observe complete purdah.

A woman remaining within the home is certainly what Rasulullah ﷺ desired for the women of his Ummah, as is clearly seen and understood from many Ahaadith.

Therefore, it is incumbent that those overseeing the jamaat periodically explain to the womenfolk that the mastoorat jamaat itself is not the real goal. Instead, it is merely a means to acquire the ideal.

Similarly, they should strive towards creating the spirit of the Sunnah within the womenfolk, whereby they will understand the importance of observing purdah as well as remaining within the confines of their homes and not leaving their homes except at the time of need.

Fatwa of Hazrat Mufti Mahmood Hasan Gangohi Saheb رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ

First Fatwa

Hazrat Mufti Mahmood Hasan Gangohi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ mentioned:

There is a great need for tabligh to take place amongst the women (i.e. to educate them in regard to their deeni matters). In doing so, it is best that women be educated at home.

Alternatively, a weekly gathering could be arranged in the locality so that the women of the locality could gather in hijab to learn deen.

If the need arises for women to travel to learn deen, then they are permitted to do so in the company of their husbands or mahrams so that they do not suffer loss in regard to their deen together with them being saved from any type of fitnah.

In this way, the purpose for travelling (i.e. women's self-reformation and correction) will also be achieved."¹²¹

¹²¹ فتاویٰ محمودیہ: ۲۶۵/۴

Second Fatwa

Hazrat Mufti Mahmood Hasan Gangohi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ mentioned:

It is the responsibility of every person to learn deen and teach deen to others according to his capability.

If the menfolk of the home i.e. the father, grandfather, uncles, and brothers educate the womenfolk, then this need will be fulfilled.

However, if the men do not teach their womenfolk nor are they (the womenfolk) knowledgeable in regard to the laws and injunctions of deen, then it will be necessary for them to learn the masaa'il regarding Aqeedah (beliefs) and other relevant masaa'il from the women of the locality who will acquire it from their menfolk and explain it to these women.

However, in acquiring deeni education in this manner, strict purdah will have to be observed.

Women used to come to Hazrat Aaishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا to learn deen. Similarly, it is reported that Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ would arrange a gathering (in Madinah Munawwarah) wherein he would address the womenfolk and teach them the relevant masaa'il of deen.

If the women accompany their mahrams or husbands during safar and they come into contact with other women with whom they discuss matters of deen, then it will be permissible provided

it is done in such a way that no ghair mahram hears their voice, there is no fear of any fitnah and strict purdah is observed.

It will be impermissible for them to travel without a mahram or husband. Similarly, if they travel without observing purdah, or if their voices reach ghair mahrams, or if there exists the fear of any other fitnah, travelling will be impermissible.

Generally, some type of fitnah takes place when there is a gathering of women. Hence, if there is fear of any fitnah, it will be necessary to avoid attending such gatherings.”¹²²

Conclusion

As we have seen above, many of our senior Ulama and Buzrugaaan-e-Deen (pious predecessors), the likes of Hazrat Mufti Mahmood Saheb رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، Hazrat Moulana Thaanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، Hazrat Mufti Laajpuri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، Hazrat Mufti Shafee' Saheb رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ and Hazrat Mufti Rasheed Ahmad Ludhyaanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ have permitted women to leave their homes to acquire deen in the situations where there was no other alternative.

These Ulama certainly understood the need of the time as well as the temperament of deen.

Regarding Hazrat Moulana Thaanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، it is mentioned that he would allow women who were accompanied by their

¹²² فتاویٰ محمودیہ: ۲۶۸/۴

mahrms and observing purdah to come to Thana Bowan for bay'at.

Hazratji Moulana Maseehullah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ used to hold a weekly programme conducted after the Jumu'ah Salaah which women, accompanied by their husbands, used to attend (for which separate ladies' facilities would be arranged).

There are witnesses present till today who will bear testimony that certain women went out in mastooraat jamaat with the permission of Hazrat Moulana Yusuf رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ.

We do understand that many senior Ulama have prohibited women from coming out in Jamaat. This prohibition is however with reference to women who go for gusht, arrange programmes and ijtimaas, deliver public lectures, gather at public venues or conduct in a manner that is improper for women. This is obviously incorrect.

However, when it comes to arranging a programme for women in a private residence where all precautionary measures of purdah are adopted and upheld, and there is no fear of fitnah, then this is a separate issue altogether, and hence this is permissible.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

GENDER EQUALITY

Q: Muslim women are told that they should not leave their homes in order to work and that they are not allowed to interact freely with the opposite gender. Likewise, they are told that they should be obedient to their husbands. Does Islam not afford men and women equal rights, or are men superior to women in Islam?

A: Before discussing the issue in question, it is necessary to refresh some fundamental beliefs and facts which are extremely important to understand the Islamic perspective. The following are among our fundamental beliefs:

- Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى is our Creator and Sustainer. We belong to Him alone and to Him we shall return.
- Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, being our Creator and Master, has the right to command us as He wills, and we, being His creation and slaves, have the duty to obey His command. A slave does not have the right to question the authority of his Master. Rather, he will have to obey the Master's command at all times and under all circumstances.

- Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى is most loving and compassionate towards His servants. Every command of His is full of justice and wisdom, and is for the betterment of humanity at large.
- A believer accepts every word of the Qur'aan Majeed as the Divine word of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and wholeheartedly submits to every command of the Qur'aan Majeed, whether his puny logic can fathom the wisdom of the command or not.

After having understood these fundamental beliefs of Islam, the question then is, “What is the position of women in Islam, and what are the commands of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and His Rasul صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ which are directed towards women?” In order to understand the position which Islam has afforded to women, it is imperative to first reflect over the position of women before the advent of Islam.

The Position of Women before the Advent of Islam

The advent of Islam occurred at a time when the world was engulfed in sin and was steeped in the lowest ebb of darkness. This era was regarded as the darkest age in the history of mankind. Cheating, robbing, killing, gambling, usurping the rights of orphans and widows and even burying female infants alive was the order of the day.

Women were degraded to such an extent that the European countries did not even accept women to be human beings! Women had no place in religion and were considered unfit for engaging in worship. In some councils of Rome, it was decided, after much discussion, that a woman is a dirty animal.

Among the Arabs, it was considered permissible for a father to kill or even bury his daughter alive. In fact, this heinous crime was deemed to be a mark of honour and a standard of nobility. There were some who held the opinion that a woman's life had no value. Hence, if a person killed a woman, he did not have to pay blood-money or be charged with retaliatory action.

As far as the Hindus were concerned, when the husband died, his wife too was burnt alive with his dead body. In the year 586 AC, France showed its 'compassion' for women by passing a resolution – after great deliberation and controversy – that a woman is actually a human being, but she has been created for the sole purpose of serving man!

In essence, immorality and indecency had reached its pinnacle, where women had no social recognition and were openly ill-treated and physically abused.

It was in this age of ignorance and oppression that Rasulullah ﷺ – may our lives be sacrificed for him – was sent to rescue mankind from the darkness of kufr and usher them into the light of Imaan.

The Position of Women after the Advent of Islam

Rasulullah ﷺ strove to rescue the Arabs from the wrong practices they were immersed in and instill within them the true values of Islam. The light of Islam began to spread until the golden era eventually dawned upon the world, where the nation that was once accustomed to physically and emotionally ill-treating their women became the greatest benefactors of mankind and the greatest protectors of women's rights the world had ever seen!

The men of such a nation, who at one time would deprive their women of all rights and degrade them to being inherited among the belongings of the deceased, were now upholding the honour of their women and fulfilling their rights. They now treated their women with the greatest compassion and mercy and safeguarded them against every type of worldly and deeni harm.

All this was purely on account of them upholding the Mubaarak Sunnah of Rasulullah ﷺ and the teachings of Islam in their lives.

What are the Teachings of Islam in regard to Upholding the Rights of Women?

Islam has conferred the greatest respect and honour to women. In the Qur'aan Majeed, Allah تبارك وتعالى has commanded that the

rights of women be upheld, and at no point should any form of abuse and ill-treatment be shown to them. Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى declares

وَعَاشِرُهُنَّ بِالْغُرُوفِ

*Deal with them (your wives) in a good manner (with respect and dignity).*¹²³

Similarly, in the Hadith, Rasulullah ﷺ has mentioned, “The best among you are those who treat their wives kindly, and I am the best of you in treating my wives with kindness.”¹²⁴

While addressing the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ on the occasion of the Farewell Hajj, Rasulullah ﷺ emphasized the importance of fulfilling the rights of women in the following words, “Fear Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى regarding women, for you have taken them (into your nikaah) with the trust of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى (i.e. they are an amaanah from Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى).” Rasulullah ﷺ also said, “As for the rights that you owe to your wives, then it is that you treat them well in providing clothing and sustenance for them.”^{See 4}

Islam has advocated kindness and compassion towards women at every juncture. Hence, Rasulullah ﷺ taught the Ummah that to spend on one’s wife and to keep her happy is actually an act of ibaadah (worship). Even at the time of divorce, when the couple find themselves incompatible or cannot reconcile their differences and wish to separate, Islam commands the husband

¹²³ سورة النساء: ١٩

¹²⁴ سنن الترمذي، الرقم: ٣٨٩٥، وقال: هذا حديث حسن صحيح

to separate with dignity and respect, and not to oppress her in any way.

On one occasion, a group of women came to the home of Rasulullah ﷺ and complained of their husbands ill-treating them. Rasulullah ﷺ was greatly disturbed and strongly condemned the ill-conduct of those husbands. Rasulullah ﷺ said, “Such people are not the good among you.”¹²⁵

From this Hadith, we understand that Rasulullah ﷺ prohibited showing ill-conduct and abuse towards women and explained to the Ummah that such people are not good and obedient servants of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. In essence, there is no religion that had bestowed such kindness, compassion and honour to women like the kindness, compassion and honour afforded to them by Islam.

The Islamic Position of Men and Women in regard to Worldly Administration

For any administration to function smoothly and efficiently, there are two requirements: The first is to identify the different positions in the administration, and the second is for each person to fulfill his/her role in the administration.

¹²⁵ سنن أبي داود، الرقم: ٢١٤٦، وإسناده صحيح كما في رياض الصالحين ص ١٢١

Consider the example of a government, business, company, hospital or school. In all these organizations, there will be a head and those who will be under the head. If all work together, with respect, cooperation and fulfilling their appointed roles, then each organization will function harmoniously and will be productive and progressive.

Similar is the case of the family unit. Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has set roles for husbands and wives, and Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has commanded that the husbands will be the head of the family unit in guiding them, protecting them, providing for them and fulfilling their needs.

Hence, Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ instructed Hazrat Faatimah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا (at the time of her nikaah with Hazrat Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) to fulfil the responsibilities within the home, while instructing Hazrat Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ to fulfil the responsibilities out of the home.¹²⁶

If one understands deen correctly, without bias and prejudice, one will realize that Islam has not degraded women, but has given them a role which allows them to live a life of honour within the comfort of their homes, concealed from the gazes of strange men, like a priceless pearl concealed in an oyster.

The honour which Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has afforded women can be gauged from the fact that Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has burdened the husband with the additional responsibility of venturing out of the home to earn a halaal livelihood in order to fulfil the needs of

¹²⁶ المصنف لابن أبي شيبه، الرقم: ٢٩٦٧٧، وهو مرسل ضعيف كما في حاشية الشيخ محمد عوامة على المصنف

his wife and children. Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى says, “Men have been appointed as protectors over their women on account of the fact that Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has granted some of them (men) superiority over others (women).”¹²⁷

In another verse of the Qur'aan Majeed, Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى says, “Men have been granted a level of superiority over them (women).”¹²⁸

From these two verses of the Qur'aan Majeed, one clearly understands that the superiority and position which men have been granted over women was in actual fact a grace and blessing for women from the side of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, as they are provided for and protected by their menfolk. These verses in no way indicate towards women being underprivileged or degraded in the world.

Islam has made Provisions for Women under All Circumstances

Islam has made provisions for the needs of women to be fulfilled under all circumstances. Prior to nikaah, it is the responsibility of the father to take care of his daughter. After nikaah, it is the responsibility of the husband to take care of his wife. In the event of the husband's demise or separation, shari'ah commands that the needs of the women be taken care of by their close

¹²⁷ سورة النساء: ٣٤

¹²⁸ سورة البقرة: ٢٢٨

family members (e.g. the father, brother, uncle, etc. according to the various situations).

In essence, the verses of the Qur'aan Majeed which explain that men have been granted a level of superiority over women refer to the responsibility men have been assigned with in regard to protecting women, fending for them and fulfilling the obligation which they owe towards them.

However, one should bear in mind that these differences in rank among men and women are only decreed by Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى for the purpose of fulfilling their divinely appointed roles in the world. It does not mean that all men are superior to all women in the sight of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and in the Hereafter.

The Basis of Superiority between Men and Women in the Sight of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى

As far as the true position of men and women in the sight of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى is concerned, then the basis of superiority is piety, righteousness and taqwa. In the Qur'aan Majeed, Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى declares, “Indeed the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى is the one who has the most taqwa (righteousness in his life).”¹²⁹

The purpose of coming into this world is to strive for the Hereafter. Thus, when striving for the Hereafter is the common

¹²⁹ سورة الحجرات: ١٣

goal, then women are in no way at a disadvantage, but have been given an equal opportunity to excel and progress, on condition that they fulfil the role which Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has chosen for them.

Furthermore, when the basis of superiority in the sight of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى is piety and righteousness, it is clear that women can make great strides and even surpass men in rank and in acquiring the proximity of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى – provided they adhere to the commands of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

The Great Opportunities Offered to Women in Islam

Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has blessed the women of this Ummah with great opportunities to reach Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and acquire the lofty ranks of the Hereafter. However, this is on condition that they fulfil the command of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and His Rasul صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى commands women in the Qur'aan Majeed, “O women! Remain within your homes and do not come out of your homes making a display of your beauty like the former days of ignorance.”¹³⁰

The Best for Women

On one occasion, Hazrat Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was seated by Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ when Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ asked, “What is best for a woman?” All the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ remained silent and nobody answered.

¹³⁰ سورة الأحزاب: ٣٣

Hazrat Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, “When I returned home, I informed Faatimah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا regarding the question which Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ posed before the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, and asked her the same question, ‘What is best for a woman?’ In answer, she replied, ‘The best thing is that they do not see men and nor do men see them.’”

Hazrat Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ then said, “When I mentioned her answer to Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, he became pleased and said, ‘Faatimah is part of me.’”^{See 8}

Being Concealed from the Gazes of Strange Men & Performing Salaah in Her Home

Once Hazrat Ummu Humaid رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, the wife of Hazrat Abu Humaid As-Saa’idi رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, came to Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and said, “O Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, I long to perform salaah behind you.”

Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ replied, “I am aware that you long and desire to perform salaah behind me. However, your salaah in your bedroom is more rewarding than your salaah in any other part of your home. The salaah in any other part of your home is more rewarding than the salaah in your enclosed courtyard. The salaah in your enclosed courtyard is more rewarding than the salaah in the masjid of your locality. The salaah in the masjid of your locality is more rewarding than your salaah in my masjid (Musjidun Nabawi).”

Hazrat Ummu Humaid رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا (in obedience and compliance with the mubaarak desire of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) instructed that a small place be reserved for her salaah in the innermost portion of her bedroom, and she would devotedly perform all her salaah at that place until the end of her life.¹³¹

Being Obedient to the Husband and Cooperating in Good

Hazrat Asmaa bint Yazeed Al-Ansaariyyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, a Sahaabiyyah from the Banu Abdil Ash-hal clan, once came to Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ while he was seated among the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ and addressed him in the following words:

“May my father and mother be sacrificed for you! I have come to you as a representative of the women. May my life be sacrificed for you! Every single woman, in the east and west, whether she has heard that I have come to you or not, will have exactly the same question as myself.

“Verily Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has sent you with the truth to men and women. We brought Imaan in you and in Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى who deputed you. We, the women, live within the confines of our homes and are restricted from exposing ourselves and doing many things that the men are able to fulfill. We remain confined

¹³¹ صحيح ابن حبان، الرقم: ٢٢١٧

to our homes. We allow you men to fulfil your needs and desires with us, and we bear your children.

“You, the men, have been favoured by Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى by being able to attend the Jumu’ah Salaah and other salaahs in congregation (whereas we women perform our salaah within our homes). You are able to visit the sick and be present at funerals. You perform hajj after hajj and even more virtuous than that is your participating in jihaad in the path of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

“When any of you men leave your home to perform hajj or umrah or to guard the borders of the Islamic territories, it is none other than us women who protect your wealth for you. We sew your clothes for you. We raise and care for your children. Do we not have a share in your reward, O Rasul of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ?”

On hearing the question of this woman, Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ turned his face towards the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ and asked, “Have you ever heard a woman ask a question regarding her deen more excellent than the question of this woman?” The Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ replied, “O Rasul of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ! We never imagined that a woman could be inspired to ask a question of this nature!”

Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ turned to her and said, “Return, O woman, and inform all the women you represent that for you to display excellent conduct with your husband, seek to keep him happy and try your utmost to comply and cooperate with him will enable you to be equal with him in all the good deeds which you have mentioned that men carry out.”

Hazrat Asmaa رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا was so delighted with the answer of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, that as she walked away, she continued to exclaim “Allahu Akbar!” and “La ilaaha illallah!” out of joy and excitement. ^{See 101}

From the abovementioned incidents, we understand that there are many great opportunities which Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ explained for the women of his Ummah. However, they will only acquire progress and acceptance if they fulfil the role which Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has chosen for them and they are pleased with the decree of Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

The Plot of the West

When one studies and understands Islam correctly, then the falsehood of kufr becomes absolutely clear. One realizes that the concept of gender equality promoted by the West is nothing but a fallacy. In the name of women’s liberation and gender equality, they have in actual fact enslaved women and robbed them entirely of all happiness.

They have used many stratagems to create a mindset of liberalism and freedom among the masses. Through the media, TV shows, movies, magazines, newspapers, social networks, billboards, the secular curriculums in schools and universities, etc., they have succeeded in shaping the mind of the common person and making the concept of gender equality appeal to his rationale.

The idealized picture which they create in the minds of the common person is that in order for a woman to be progressive, she has to stand up for her rights and show that she is equal to a man. If she leads an Islamic lifestyle, she will be tantamount to a slave living in bondage. Through her treading on the path of Islam and its teachings of purdah and motherhood, her personal progress will be totally limited and hindered. If she is concealed in her home, she will be deprived of making a meaningful contribution to her community and society. Therefore, the only way to 'liberate' her is to offer her the 'gift' of 'freedom'-freedom from all restrictions and shackles.

Let us now look at the other side of the coin in order to discover the rot within the alien culture of the West and the reality behind gender equality.

The Reality of Women's Liberation and Gender Equality

The West has dragged women out of their homes to earn a living in the name of liberation. In this way, they have deprived women of their shar'ee right to remain in the home and be supported by their husbands. While a woman is working, she still has to bear her children and attend to them as a mother. As a result, she is shouldered with the double responsibility of generating an income as well as mothering her children and attending to the needs of her household. The husband becomes relaxed and

expects the wife to also contribute towards the running expenses of the home – all in the name of gender equality. The poor woman is enslaved to the corporate environment and its demands, while she is forced to fulfil the role of a wife and a mother within the home.

In the workplace, she has to conduct herself as a professional, and even after hours, she has to see to her clientele and deal with work related issues, thereby making it difficult for her to give her children the attention that they need from their mother. As a result, the children grow up without motherly love, causing them to become delinquents in society.

While in the workplace, she is generally forced to compromise her Islamic dress and code of conduct to conform to the environment and appease her superiors. The environment of the workplace is an anti-Islamic environment where intermingling of men and women freely takes place and the laws of shari'ah (in regard to purdah, etc.) are violated.

Many women have to bow down to the dictates and orders of their employers in order to secure their material gain and interests. Reports of rape, sexual harassment and marital infidelity are on the increase on account of exposing women and taking them out to the workplace. The outcome of this is nothing but a recipe for the breakdown of the family unit.

The Unparalleled & Beautiful Culture of Islam

On the other hand, when one views the honour, respect and protection which Islam affords a woman within the confines of her home, then one realizes that the beautiful culture of Islam is unparalleled.

After many Western women had studied Islam and personally witnessed the rot within the Western culture, and realized the humiliation and disgrace they were immersed in, they abandoned their life of humiliation and embraced the beauty of Islam.

In regard to the beautiful deen of Islam, Hazrat Umar رضي الله عنه said:

“We were the most disgraced of people. Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى then gave us honour through Islam. If we ever seek honour in something besides that through which Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has honoured us (Islam), Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will disgrace us.”¹³²

¹³² المستدرك على الصحيحين للحاكم، الرقم: ٢٠٧