

Looking at Women and Issue of Jilbaab

Salamu alaykum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh

Innal Hamda Lillah - Was salatu wa salam ala rasuulillah.

To proceed:

Shaykh Muhammad Salih Al-Munajjid said:

"Muslim (338) narrated from Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "No man should look at the 'awrah of another man, and no woman should look at the 'awrah of another woman."

Al-Nawawi (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

This shows that it is haraam for a man to look at the 'awrah of another man and for a woman to look at the 'awrah of another woman. There is no scholarly dispute on this point. Similarly it is haraam for a man to look at the 'awrah of a woman and for a woman to look at the 'awrah of a man, according to scholarly consensus."

The prohibition on looking at a woman when she is in this state does not apply to the husband, because each spouse may look at the 'awrah of the other, because Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"And those who guard their chastity (i.e. private parts, from illegal sexual acts) Except from their wives or (the slaves) that their right hands possess, * for them, they are free from blame" [al-Mu'minoon 23:5-6]

And Allaah knows best."

{Islam Q&A - www.islam-qa.com - Question #23329 - <http://63.175.194.25/index.php?ln=eng&ds=qa&lv=browse&QR=23329&dgn=4>}

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Allah subhana wa Ta'ala said:

"Tell the believing men to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts). That is purer for them. Verily, Allah is All-Aware of what they do." [al-Noor 24:30]

Narrated Abu Saeed that the Prophet (sallallahu alayhe wa sallam) said: "Beware of gathering upon

the streets.” They said: It is a necessity and we just gather and speak there. He said: “So if you come to those gatherings then give the road its right” They said: And what is its right? He said: “Lowering the gaze, keeping back harm, returning salaams, enjoining the good and forbidding the evil.” [Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud]

Abu Hurairah narrated that the Prophet (sallallahu alayhe wa sallam) said: “Indeed Allah has decreed for the descendants of Adam his portion of Zina (fornication or adultery). He will attain it inevitably, the zina of the eyes is looking, the zina of the tongue is speech, and the soul craves and desires, and the private parts consent or disprove it.” [Bukhari, Muslim and Abu Dawud]

The Messenger of Allah (sallallahu alayhe wa sallam) also said: "O Ali, do not follow a glance with another, for you will be forgiven for the first, but not for the second." [Reported by al-Tirmidhi, 2701; see Saheeh al-Jaami', 7953]

And know that Allah subhana wa Ta'ala said:

“It is not for a believer, man or woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decreed a matter that they should have any option in their decision. And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger, he has indeed strayed into a plain error” [Al- Ahzab 33:36]

Question #45869: Ruling on covering the hands in the presence of non-mahram men

The evil consequences of mixing include men and women looking at one another, which is haraam. Allaah has commanded the believing men and women to lower their gaze and avoid looking at that which is not permissible for them.

It is not permissible for non-mahrams to see anything of her, or for her to be careless about how she dresses so that anything appears of her that it is not permissible for her to show.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah said:

The truth of the matter is that Allaah has made two types of adornment: visible and invisible. It is permissible for a woman to show her visible, outward adornment to people other than her husband and mahrams. Before the verse of hijab was revealed the women used to go out without a jilbaab and the men could see their faces and hands. When it was permissible for a woman to show her face and hands, it was permissible to look at them because it was permissible for a woman to show them. Then when Allaah revealed the verse of hijab and said (interpretation of the meaning):

“O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks (veils) all over their bodies (i.e. screen themselves completely except the eyes or one eye to see the way). That will be better, that they should be known (as free respectable women) so as not to be annoyed. And Allaah is Ever Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful” [al-Ahzaab 33:59]

then the women began to observe hijab in front of men.

The jilaab is a wrapper, which Ibn Mas'ood and others called the rida' (cloak), and which the common folk [i.e. at the time of Ibn Taymiyah] call the izaar. It is a large izaar with which a woman covers her head and the rest of her body. Moreover it may be said that when they were commanded to wear the jilbaab lest they be recognized, this refers to covering the face, or covering the face with a niqaab (face veil), hence it may be understood that the face and hands are part of the beautify which women are commanded not to show to non-mahrams. So there is nothing left that it is permissible for non-mahrams to see except the outer garments.

So the face, hands and feet are not to be shown to non-mahrams according to the more sound of the two scholarly opinions, unlike what used to happen before the abrogation, indeed nothing is to be seen but the garment.

Majmoo' al-Fataawa, 22/110-114.

{Extract from Islam-qa.com - Question #45869: Ruling on covering the hands in the presence of non-mahram men - <http://63.175.194.25/index.php?ln=eng&ds=qa&lv=browse&QR=45869&dgn=4>}

JILBAB – COVERING THE BODY, HEAD TO TOE INCLUDING THE FACE

PROOF IN THE QURAN

Allah subhana wa Ta'ala said:

"O Prophet! Enjoin your wives, daughters and the believing women that they should draw their outer garments over their person. That is more proper, so that they may be recognized and not bothered. Allah is Forgiving, Merciful." {Surah Al-Ahzab 33:59}

Allah Ta'ala also said:

"Enjoin the believing women to lower their gaze and guard their modesty; not to display their beauty and ornaments except what normally appears thereof; let them draw their veils over their bosoms (Juyubihinna)" {Surah An-Nur 24:30-31}

PROOF IN THE SUNNAH

It was narrated from ‘Abd-Allaah that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: **“The woman is ‘awrah** and when she goes out the Shaytaan gets his hopes up.” {Narrated by al-Tirmidhi, 1173 - Al-Albaani said in Saheeh al-Tirmidhi (936): It is saheeh }

Narrated Safiya bint Shaiba (radhi Allahu anha) "Aisha (radhi Allahu anhu) used to say: "When (the Verse): "They should draw their veils over their necks and bosoms," was revealed, (the ladies) cut their waist sheets at the edges and covered their faces with the cut pieces. { Sahih Al-Bukhari Volume 6, Book 60, Hadith No. 282 }

Narrated 'Aisha (radhi Allahu anha) Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhe wa sallam) used to offer the Fajr prayer and some believing women covered with their veiling sheets used to attend the Fajr prayer with him and then they would return to their homes unrecognized . { Sahih Al-Bukhari Volume 1, Book 8, Hadith No. 368 }

Shaikh Ibn Uthaimin in tafseer of this hadith explains "This hadith makes it clear that the Islamic dress is concealing of the entire body as explained in this hadith. Only with the complete cover including the face and hands can a woman not be recognized. This was the understanding and practice of the Sahaba and they were the best of group, the noblest in the sight of Allah (swt) with the most complete Imaan and noblest of characters. so if the practice of the women of the sahaba was to wear the complete veil then how can we deviate from their path? (Ibn Uthaimin in the book "Hijaab" page No. 12 and 13)

PROOF IN THE OPINION OF THE COMPANIONS

Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud (radhi Allahu anhu) explained, the word Jilbaab (as mentioned in the Quran Surah Ahzaab ayah No. 59) means a cloak which covering the entire body including the head, face and hands. (Quoted from Ibn Taymiyyah (Rahimahullah) in his book on fatwaas Page No. 110 Vol No. 2 and By Shaikh Ibn Uthamin in the book Hijaab Page No. 15)

Abu Ubaidah Salmani (radhi Allahu anhu), an other well known Sahabi is quoted saying "Jilbaab should fully cover the women's body, so that nothing appears but one eye with which she can see." (Tafseer Al-Qurtubi)

Ibn Jarir (Rahimahullah) Quotes the opinion of Ibn Abbas (radhi Allahu anhu) "Allah has enjoined upon all Muslim Women that when they go out of their homes under necessity, they should cover their faces by drawing a part of their outer garments over their heads." (Tafseer Ibn Jarir, VOL 22, pg.29)

PROOF IN THE OPINION OF THE TABI'EEEN (THOSE WHO CAME AFTER THE COMPANIONS)

The Tabi'ee Ali bin Abu Talha (Rahimahullah) Quotes from Ibn Abbaas (Radhiallaahu Ánhu) that he used to say it was allowed to show the hands and face when Surah Nur ayah No. 31 was revealed but after Surah Al-Ahzaab, Verse No. 59 with the word "Jalabib" was revealed then after this Ibn Abbaas (radhi Allahu anhu) said that That the Muslim women are ordered to cover their head and faces with outer garments except for one eye." And this was also the opinion of Ibn Mas'ud (radhi Allahu anhu). (This is quoted by Ibn Taymiyyah (Rahimahullah) in his book of fatwaa and by Shaikh AbdulAziz Bin Bazz (Rahimahullah) in the book "Hijaab wa Safur" Page No. 60)

PROOF IN THE OPINION OF THE MUFASIREEN OF THE QURAN (TAFSEER COMMENTATORS)

The Mufassir, Imaam Al-Qurtubi (Rahimahullah), Cites in his Tafseer of the Ayah on Jilbaab (Al-Ahzaab 33:59), that the Jilbaab is: "a cloth which covers the entire body... Ibn 'Abbaas (radhi Allahu anhu) and 'Ubaidah As-Salmaani (radhi Allahu anhu) said that it is to be fully wrapped around the women's body, so that nothing appears but one eye with which she can see." (Tafseer Al-Qurtubi Surah Al-Ahzaab ayah No. 59)

At-Tabari and Ibn Al-Mundhir described the method of wearing the jalbaab according to Ibn Abbas (radhi Allahu anhu) and Qatadah (Radhiallaahu Ánhu). The sheet should be wrapped around from the top, covering the forehead, then bringing one side of the sheet to cover the face below the eyes so that most of the face and the upper body is covered. This will leave both eyes uncovered (which is allowed in necessity).(Rul-ul-Ma'ani, Vol 22, p.89)

PROOF IN THE OPINION OF THE MADHABS

Shaikh AbdulAziz Bin Bazz (One of the greatest scholars of our times. He passed away 26th of Muharram 1420 Hijrah. (12th of May 1999) Rahimahullah. He belonged to the Hanbali School of jurisprudence.)"It is compulsory for a woman to cover her face in front of nonmahram men"(This has been quoted in Shaikh Bin Bazz's pamphlet on Hijab and in the book 'Islamic Fatwas regarding Women' and in the Arabic version of the book "hijaab Wa Safur" page No. 51)

Shaikh-ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (Rahimahullah) Relates that the correct opinion for the Hanbali and Malki madhaib is that it is wajib to cover everything except one or two eyes to see the way. (from the Arabic book "Hijaab wa Safur" under the fatwaa of Ibn Taymiyyah on hijaab, page No. 10)

PROOF IN THE OPINION OF THE RESPECTED AND WELL-KNOWN SCHOLARS

Ibn Al-Hazam (Rahimahullah) said "In arabic language, the language of the Prophet (saw), the word jilbaab (as mentioned in the Quran Surah Ahzaab ayah # 59) means the outer sheet which covers the entire body. A sheet smaller than that which would cover the entire body, cannot be catagrized as jilbaab. (Al-Muhallah, Vol 3. Pg 217)

Ibn Al-Mandhur (Rahimahullah) said "Jalabib is plural for Jilbaab. Jalbaab is actually the outer sheet/coverlet which a woman wraps around, on top of her garments to cover herself from head to toe. This covers the body entirely." (Lisan ul-Arab, VOL 1. Pg.273)

Shaikh-ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (Rahimahullah) relates: "Women used to room about without Cloaks (Jilbaabs) and men used to see their faces and hands, but when the verse stating 'O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks over themselves.' (Surah Al-Ahzaab, Verse No. 59) was reveled, then this was prohibited and women were ordered to wear the Jilbaab. Then Ibn Tayimiyyah goes on to say "The word Jilbaab means a sheet which Ibn Mas'ud (Radhiallaahu Ánhu) explained as a cloak covering the entire body including the head, face and hands. Therefore, it is not permissible for the women to reveal the face and hands in public. (Ibn Taymiyyah's book on fatwaas Page No. 110 Vol. 2 also in the book Hijaab Page No. 15)

Shaikh Abdul Aziz Bin Baz (Rahimahullah) said "According to the understanding of the best generations (the "Salaf") after the ayah of hijab was revealed than Muslims women must cover everything including the face and hands. they can show one eye or two eyes to see the way. this was the opnion held by many of the sahaba like Ibn Abbaas, Ibn Masud, Aisha (Radhiallaahu Ánhuma) and others and this opinion was upheald by the Tab'ieen who followed than as Ali bin Abi Talha and Muhammad bin Sirin (Rahimahullah) and by the righteous ullima who followed them as Ibn Taymiyyah and Imaam Ahmed bin Hanbal (Rahimahullah)" (Quoted from the book "hijaab wa Sufor")

Shaikh Muhammed Salih Al-Munajjid (One of the great scholars of our time.) said: "The most correct opinion, which is supported by evidence, is that it is obligatory to cover the face, therefore young women are forbidden to uncover their faces in front of non-mahram men in order to avoid any mischief" {Question No. 2198 – islam-qa.com}

In another fatwaa when he was asked whether it was preferred for sisters to wear the niqab, he said...

"The fact is that it is obligatory for women to cover their faces" as far as how wearing it goes, the Shaikh said "A woman may uncover her left eye in order to see where she is going, and if necessary she may uncover both eyes. The opening should only be wide enough for the eyes." {Question No. 1496 – islam-qa.com}

Yet in another Fatwaa he explained what was the Awrah of a woman with..."Rasulullah (Sallallaahu Álayhi Wasallam) said "All of a woman is 'awrah." (Narrated by al-Tirmidhi with a saheeh isnaad). This is the correct view according to the madhhab of the Hanbalis, one of the two views of the Maalikis and one of the two views of the Shaafa'is.

Shaikh ibn Uthaimin was asked:

Question: What is the Islamic hijab?

Response: The Islamic hijab is for the women to cover everything that is forbidden for her to expose. That is, she covers everything that she must cover. The first of those bodily parts that she must cover is her face. It is the source of temptation and the source of people desiring her. Therefore, the woman must cover her face in front of those men that are not mahram. As for those of who claim that the Islamic hijab is to cover the head, shoulders, back, feet, shin and forearms while allowing her to uncover her face and hands, this is a very amazing claim. This is because it is well known that the source of temptation and looking is the face. How can one say that the Shariah does not allow the exposure of the foot of the woman while it allows her to uncover her face? It is not possible that there could be in the Esteemed, Wise and Noble Shariah a contradiction. ('Islamic Fatwas regarding Women' Page # 289)

Shaikh Ibn Jibreen was asked:

Question: I am married to a woman who wears, praise to Allah, hijab. However, as is the custom in my country, she does not wear hijab in front of her sister's husband and her sister does not wear hijab in my presence. This is the custom. Furthermore, my wife does not wear hijab in the presence of my brother or her cousins. Does this go against the Shariah and religion? What can I do while it has become the custom in my country not to wear hijab in the presence of those people that I mentioned. If I tell my wife to wear hijab in front of those people, she will accuse me of not trusting her and being suspicious about her and so forth.

Response: All of those groups of men that you mentioned in the question are not mahram for her. It is not allowed for her to uncover her face and beauty in front of them. Allah has only allowed her to uncover in front of the mahram men mentioned in the verse in surah al-Nur,

"[Tell the believing women] not to reveal their adornments except to their husbands, their fathers" (al-Nur 31).

First, you should convince your wife that it is forbidden to uncover her face in front of non-mahram men. Make her abide by that even if it goes against the customs of your people and even if she makes accusations against you. You should also make this point clear to your close relatives that you mentioned, that is, the brethren of the husband, the husband of the sister, the cousins and so forth. All of them are non-mahram and they all may marry her if she gets divorced. ("Islamic Fatwas regarding Women")

Shaikh Ibn Uthaimin regarding the hadeeth qouted in favour of uncovering the face and the hands

This is taken from the book "Hijaab" by Shaikh Ibn Uthaimin from Saudi Arabia. Printed by Madrasah Arabia Islamia Azaadville-South Africa.

Translated by Hafedh Zaheer Essack, Rajab 1416 (December 1995)

The Ullama who are of the opinion that it is permissible to look at the face and hands of a strange woman (who is not mahrrum) say so mainly for the following reasons.

The hadith of Aisha (radhi Allahu anha) when Asmaa (Radhiallaahu Ánha) the daughter of Abu Bakr

came to the Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhe wa sallam) while wearing thin clothing. He approached her and said: 'O Asmaa! When a girl reaches the menstrual age, it is not proper that anything should remain exposed except this and this. He pointed to the face and hands. But this hadith is WEAK because of 2 main weaknesses.

1. There is no link between Aisha (radhi Allahu anhu) and Khalid bin Dareek, who narrated the hadith from her. And in every chain of narrators Khalid bin Dareek is mentioned.

2. In the chain of narrators Sa'eed bin Basheer appears, who is known by most of the Muhaditheen as being a weak narrator. This has been mentioned by Imaam Ahmad bin Hanbal (Rahimahullah), An-Nasai (Rahimahullah), Ibn Madeeni (Rahimahullah) and Ibn Ma'een (Rahimahullah). This is also why Imaam Bukhari (Rahimahullah) and Muslim (Rahimahullah) did not except this hadith to be in their books.

(From Shaikh Ibn Uthaimin in the book "Hijaab" pages # 17 and 18.)

We also have to see that the Muhadith Abu Dawood when he quoted this hadith put with it that it is Musal (with a broken chain that does not lead up to the Sahaba).

(From The Book "Hijaab wa Safur" under the fatwaa of Shaikh AbdulAziz Bin Bazz on Page No. 61. Also stated as being weak by Shaikh Nasiruddin Al-Albaani in his Daeef Sunan Abu Dawud in Kitab-ul-Libas under hadeeth number 4092 (which is the original hadeeth number.) It has also been mentioned in the magazine called "Al Hijrah" that Ullima agree this hadith is weak.)

An other thing that shows the weakness of this hadith is that after the ayah for hijab (Surah Al-Ahzaab – Verse No. 59) was revealed then the women of Sahaba wore a complete veil and covered the faces and hands. This includes Asmaa (Radhiallaahu Ánha) the daughter of Abu Bakr, who is supposed to have narrated this hadith. Asmaa (Radhiallaahu Ánha) covered herself completely including the face, this has been narrated in authentic hadith in Imaam maliks "MUWATTA Book 20 Hadith No. 20.5.16."

Question #11774: Ruling on covering the face, with detailed evidence

Question :

I would like to know those verses in quran which talk about the covering of face by women as i need to show it few persons who want to know whether covering of face by women is compulsory or optional.

Answer :

Praise be to Allaah.

You should note that women's observing hijab in front of non-mahram men and covering their faces

is something that is obligatory as is indicated by the Book of your Lord and the Sunnah of your Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), and by rational examination and analogy.

1 – Evidence from the Qur’aan

(i)

Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And tell the believing women to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts) and not to show off their adornment except only that which is apparent (like both eyes for necessity to see the way, or outer palms of hands or one eye or dress like veil, gloves, headcover, apron), and to draw their veils all over Juyoobihinna (i.e. their bodies, faces, necks and bosoms) and not to reveal their adornment except to their husbands, or their fathers, or their husband’s fathers, or their sons, or their husband’s sons, or their brothers or their brother’s sons, or their sister’s sons, or their (Muslim) women (i.e. their sisters in Islam), or the (female) slaves whom their right hands possess, or old male servants who lack vigour, or small children who have no sense of feminine sex. And let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment. And all of you beg Allaah to forgive you all, O believers, that you may be successful”

[al-Noor 24:31]

The evidence from this verse that hijab is obligatory for women is as follows:

(a) Allaah commands the believing women to guard their chastity, and the command to guard their chastity also a command to follow all the means of doing that. No rational person would doubt that one of the means of doing so is covering the face, because uncovering it causes people to look at it and enjoy its beauty, and thence to initiate contact. The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “The eyes commit zina and their zina is by looking...” then he said, “... and the private part confirms that or denies it.” Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 6612; Muslim, 2657.

If covering the face is one of the means of guarding one’s chastity, then it is enjoined, because the means come under the same ruling as the ends.

(b) Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): “...and to draw their veils all over Juyoobihinna (i.e. their bodies, faces, necks and bosoms) ...”. The jayb (pl. juyoob) is the neck opening of a garment and the khimaar (veil) is that with which a woman covers her head. If a woman is commanded to draw her veil over the neck opening of her garment then she is commanded to cover her face, either because that is implied or by analogy. If it is obligatory to cover the throat and chest, then it is more appropriate to cover the face because it is the site of beauty and attraction.

© Allaah has forbidden showing all adornment except that which is apparent, which is that which one cannot help showing, such as the outside of one’s garment. Hence Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): “...except only that which is apparent ...” and He did not say, except that which they show of it. Some of the salaf, such as Ibn Mas’ood, al-Hasan, Ibn Sireen and others interpreted the phrase “except only that which is apparent” as meaning the outer garment and clothes, and what shows from beneath the outer garment (i.e., the hem of one’s dress etc.). Then He again forbids

showing one's adornment except to those for whom He makes an exception. This indicates that the second adornment mentioned is something other than the first adornment. The first adornment is the external adornment which appears to everyone and cannot be hidden. The second adornment is the inward adornment (including the face). If it were permissible for this adornment to be seen by everyone, there would be no point to the general wording in the first instance and this exception made in the second.

(d) Allaah grants a concession allowing a woman to show her inward adornments to "old male servants who lack vigour", i.e. servants who are men who have no desire, and to small children who have not reached the age of desire and have not seen the 'awrahs of women. This indicates two things:

1 – That showing inward adornments to non-mahrams is not permissible except to these two types of people.

2 – That the reason for this ruling is the fear that men may be tempted by the woman and fall in love with her. Undoubtedly the face is the site of beauty and attraction, so concealing it is obligatory lest men who do feel desire be attracted and tempted by her.

(e) The words (interpretation of the meaning): "And let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment" mean that a woman should not stamp her feet so as to make known hidden adornments such as anklets and the like. If a woman is forbidden to stamp her feet lest men be tempted by what they hear of the sound of her anklets etc., then what about uncovering the face?

Which is the greater source of temptation – a man hearing the anklets of a woman whom he does not know who she is or whether she is beautiful, or whether she is young or old, or ugly or pretty? Or his looking at a beautiful youthful face that attracts him and invites him to look at it?

Every man who has any desire for women will know which of the two temptations is greater and which deserves to be hidden and concealed.

(ii)

Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"And as for women past childbearing who do not expect wedlock, it is no sin on them if they discard their (outer) clothing in such a way as not to show their adornment. But to refrain (i.e. not to discard their outer clothing) is better for them. And Allaah is All Hearer, All Knower"

[al-Noor 24:60]

The evidence from this verse is that Allaah states that there is no sin on old women who have no hope of marriage because men have no desire for them, due to their old age (if they discard their outer clothing), subject to the condition that their intention in doing so is not to make a wanton display of themselves. The fact that this ruling applies only to old women indicates that the ruling is different for young women who still hope to get married. If the ruling on discarding the outer clothing applied to all, there would be no point in singling out old women here.

The phrase “in such a way as not to show their adornment” offers further proof that hijab is obligatory for young women who hope to marry, because usually when they uncover their faces the intention is to make a wanton display (tabarruj) and to show off their beauty and make men look at them and admire them etc. Those who do otherwise are rare, and the ruling does not apply to rare cases.

(iii)

Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks (veils) all over their bodies (i.e. screen themselves completely except the eyes or one eye to see the way). That will be better, that they should be known (as free respectable women) so as not to be annoyed. And Allaah is Ever Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful”
[al-Ahzaab 33:59]

Ibn ‘Abbaas (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: “Allaah commanded the believing women, if they go out of their houses for some need, to cover their faces from the top of their heads with their jilbaabs, and to leave one eye showing.”

The tafseer of the Sahaabah is evidence, indeed some of the scholars said that it comes under the same ruling as marfoo’ reports that go back to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him).

The comment “and leave one eye showing” is a concession because of the need to see the way; if there is no need for that then the eye should not be uncovered.

The jilbaab is the upper garment that comes above the khimaar; it is like the abaya.

(iv) Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“It is no sin on them (the Prophet’s wives, if they appear unveiled) before their fathers, or their sons, or their brothers, or their brother’s sons, or the sons of their sisters, or their own (believing) women, or their (female) slaves. And (O ladies), fear (keep your duty to)Allaah. Verily, Allaah is Ever All Witness over everything”

[al-Ahzaab 33:55]

Ibn Katheer (may Allaah have mercy on him) said: When Allaah commanded the women to observe hijab in front of non-mahram men, he explained that they did not have to observe hijab in front of these relatives, as He explained that they are exempted in Soorat al-Noor where He said (interpretation of the meaning): “and not to reveal their adornment except to their husbands...”

2 – Evidence from the Sunnah that it is obligatory to cover the face

(i)

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “When any one of you proposes marriage to a woman, there is no sin on him if he looks at her, rather he should look at her for the

purpose of proposing marriage even if she is unaware.” Narrated by Ahmad. The author of Majma’ al-Zawaa’id said: its men are the men of saheeh.

The evidence here is the fact that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said there is no sin on the man who is proposing marriage, subject to the condition that his looking be for the purpose of proposing marriage. This indicates that the one who is not proposing marriage is sinning if he looks at a non-mahram woman in ordinary circumstances, as is the one who is proposing marriage if he looks for any purpose other than proposing marriage, such as for the purpose of enjoyment etc.

If it is said that the hadeeth does not clearly state what is being looked at, and it may mean looking at the chest etc, the response is that the man who is proposing marriage looks at the face because it is the focus for the one who is seeking beauty, without a doubt.

(ii)

When the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) commanded that women should be brought out to the Eid prayer place, they said, “O Messenger of Allaah, some of us do not have jilbaabs.” The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, “Let her sister give her one of her jilbaabs to wear.” Narrated by al-Bukhaari and Muslim.

This hadeeth indicates that the usual practice among the women of the Sahaabah was that a woman would not go out without a jilbaab, and that if she did not have a jilbaab she would not go out. The command to wear a jilbaab indicates that it is essential to cover. And Allaah knows best.

(iii)

It was narrated in al-Saheehayn that ‘Aa’ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) said: The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) used to pray Fajr and the believing women would attend the prayer with him, wrapped in their veils, then they would go back to their homes and no one would recognize them because of the darkness. She said: If the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) saw from the women what we have seen, he would have prevented them from coming to the mosques as the Children of Israel prevented their women.

A similar report was also narrated by ‘Abd-Allaah ibn Mas’ood (may Allaah be pleased with him).

The evidence from this hadeeth covers two issues:

1 – Hijaab and covering were the practice of the women of the Sahaabah who were the best of generations and the most honourable before Allaah.

2 – ‘Aa’ishah the Mother of the Believers and ‘Abd-Allaah ibn Mas’ood (may Allaah be pleased with them both), who were both known as scholars with deep insight, said that if the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) had seen from women what they had seen, he would have prevented them from coming to the mosques. This was during the best generations, so what about nowadays?!

(iv)

It was narrated that Ibn ‘Umar said: The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Whoever lets his garment drag out of pride, Allaah will not look at him on the Day of Resurrection.” Umm Salamah said, “What should women do with their hems?” He said, “Let it hang down a handspan.” She said, “What if that shows her feet?” He said, “Let it hang down a cubit, but no more than that.” Narrated by al-Tirmidhi; classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Tirmidhi.

This hadeeth indicates that it is obligatory for women to cover their feet, and that this was something that was well known among the women of the Sahaabah (may Allaah be pleased with them). The feet are undoubtedly a lesser source of temptation than the face and hands, so a warning concerning something that is less serious is a warning about something that is more serious and to which the ruling applies more. The wisdom of sharee’ah means that it would not enjoin covering something that is a lesser source of temptation and allow uncovering something that is a greater source of temptation. This is an impossible contradiction that cannot be attributed to the wisdom and laws of Allaah.

(v)

It was narrated that ‘Aa’ishah said: The riders used to pass by us when we were with the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) in ihraam. When they came near us we would lower our jilbaabs from our heads over our faces, and when they had passed by we would uncover our faces. Narrated by Abu Dawood, 1562.

The words “When they came near us we would lower our jilbaabs from our heads over our faces” indicate that it is obligatory to cover the face, because what is prescribed in ihraam is to uncover it. If there was no strong reason to prevent uncovering it, it would be obligatory to leave it uncovered even when the riders were passing by. In other words, women are obliged to uncover their faces during ihraam according to the majority of scholars, and nothing can override something that is obligatory except something else that is also obligatory. If it were not obligatory to observe hijab and cover the face in the presence of non-mahram men, there would be no reason not to uncover it in ihraam. It was proven in al-Saheehayn and elsewhere that a woman in ihraam is forbidden to wear the niqaab (face veil) and gloves.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah said: This is one of the things which indicate that the niqaab and gloves were known among women who were not in ihraam, which implies that they covered their faces and hands.

These are nine points of evidence from the Qur’aan and Sunnah.

The tenth is:

Rational examination and analogy which form the basis of this perfect sharee’ah, which aims to help people achieve what is in their best interests and encourages the means that lead to that, and to denounce evil and block the means that lead to it.

If we think about unveiling and women showing their faces to non-mahram men, we will see that it involves many bad consequences. Even if we assume that there are some benefits in it, they are very few in comparison with its negative consequences. Those negative consequences include:

1 – Fitnah (temptation). By unveiling her face, a woman may be tempted to do things to make her

face look more beautiful. This is one of the greatest causes of evil and corruption.

2 – Taking away haya' (modesty, shyness) from women, which is part of faith and of a woman's nature (fitrah). Women are examples of modesty, as it was said, "more shy than a virgin in her seclusion." Taking away a woman's modesty detracts from her faith and the natural inclination with which she was created.

3 – Men may be tempted by her, especially if she is beautiful and she flirts, laughs and jokes, as happens in the case of many of those who are unveiled. The Shaytaan flows through the son of Adam like blood.

4 – Mixing of men and women. If a woman thinks that she is equal with men in uncovering her face and going around unveiled, she will not be modest and will not feel too shy to mix with men. This leads to a great deal of fitnah (temptation) and widespread corruption. Al-Tirmidhi narrated (5272) from Hamzah ibn Abi Usayd from his father that he heard the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) say, when he was coming out of the mosque and he saw men mingling with women in the street; the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said to the women, "Draw back, and do not walk in the middle of the road; keep to the sides of the road." Then the women used to keep so close to the walls that their garments would catch on the walls because they kept so close to them.

Classed as hasan by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Jaami', 929

Adapted from the words of Shaykh Muhammad ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) in Risaalat al-Hijaab.

And Allaah knows best.

Islam Q&A (www.islam-qa.com - Question #11774: Ruling on covering the face, with detailed evidence)

Question #21134: Do women have to wear niqaab?

Question :

Is wearing niqaab one of the conditions of Islamic dress for women?

Answer :

Praise be to Allaah.

Hijaab in Arabic means covering or concealing. Hijaab is the name of something that is used to cover. Everything that comes between two things is *hijaab*.

Hijaab means everything that is used to cover something and prevent anyone from reaching it, such as curtains, door keepers and garments, etc.

Khimaar comes from the word *khamr*, the root meaning of which is to cover. For example, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “*Khammiru aaniyatakum* (cover your vessels).” Everything that covers something else is called its *khimaar*.

But in common usage *khimaar* has come to be used as a name for the garment with which a woman covers her head; in some cases this does not go against the linguistic meaning of *khimaar*.

Some of the *fuqahaa'* have defined it as that which covers the head, the temples and the neck.

The difference between the *hijaab* and the *khimaar* is that the *hijaab* is something which covers all of a woman's body, whilst the *khimaar* in general is something with which a woman covers her head.

Niqaab is that with which a woman veils her face (*tantaqib*)...

The difference between *hijaab* and *niqaab* is that the *hijaab* is that which covers all the body, whilst *niqaab* is that which covers a woman's face only.

The woman's dress as prescribed in *sharee'ah* (“Islamic dress”) is that which covers her head, face and all of her body.

But the *niqaab* or *burqa'* – which shows the eyes of the woman – has become widespread among women, and some of them do not wear it properly. Some scholars have forbidden wearing it on the grounds that it is not Islamic in origin, and because it is used improperly and people treat it as something insignificant, demonstrating negligent attitudes towards it and using new forms of *niqaab* which are not prescribed in Islam, widening the opening for the eyes so that the cheeks, nose and part of the forehead are also visible.

Therefore, if the woman's *niqaab* or *burqa'* does not show anything but the eyes, and the opening is only as big as the left eye, as was narrated from some of the *salaf*, then that is permissible, otherwise she should wear something which covers her face entirely.

Shaykh Muhammad al-Saalih al-'Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

The *hijaab* prescribed in *sharee'ah* means that a woman should cover everything that it is *haraam* for her to show, i.e., she should cover that which it is obligatory for her to cover, first and foremost of which is the face, because it is the focus of temptation and desire.

A woman is obliged to cover her face in front of anyone who is not her *mahram* (blood relative to whom marriage is forbidden). From this we learn that the face is the most essential thing to be covered. There is evidence from the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of His Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and the views of the *Sahaabah* and the imams and scholars of Islam, which indicates that women are obliged to cover all of their bodies in front of those who are not their

mahrms.

Fataawa al-Mar'ah al-Muslimah, 1/ 391, 392)

Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan (may Allaah preserve him) said:

The correct view as indicated by the evidence is that the woman's face is 'awrah which must be covered. It is the most tempting part of her body, because what people look at most is the face, so the face is the greatest 'awrah of a woman. This is in addition to the shar'i evidence which states that it is obligatory to cover the face.

For example, Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And tell the believing women to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts) and not to show off their adornment except only that which is apparent (like both eyes for necessity to see the way, or outer palms of hands or one eye or dress like veil, gloves, headcover, apron), and to draw their veils all over Juyoobihinna (i.e. their bodies, faces, necks and bosoms)...”

[al-Noor 24:31]

Drawing the veil all over the juyooob implies covering the face.

When Ibn 'Abbaas (may Allaah be pleased with him) was asked about the aayah (interpretation of the meaning):

“O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks (veils) all over their bodies”

[al-Ahzaab 33:59] –

he covered his face, leaving only one eye showing. This indicates that what was meant by the aayah was covering the face. This was the interpretation of Ibn 'Abbaas (may Allaah be pleased with him) of this aayah, as narrated from him by 'Ubaydah al-Salmaani when he asked him about it.

In the Sunnah there are many ahaadeeth, such as: the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “The woman in ihraam is forbidden to veil her face (wear niqaab) or to wear the burqa'.” This indicates that when women were not in ihraam, women used to cover their faces.

This does not mean that if a woman takes off her niqaab or burqa' in the state of ihraam that she should leave her face uncovered in the presence of non-mahram men. Rather she is obliged to cover it with something other than the niqaab or burqa', on the evidence of the hadeeth of 'Aa'ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) who said: “We were with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) in ihraam, and when men passed by us, we would lower the khimaar on our heads over our faces, and when they moved on we would lift it again.”

Women in ihraam and otherwise are obliged to cover their faces in front of non-mahram men, because the face is the center of beauty and it is the place that men look at... and Allaah knows best.

Fataawa al-Mar'ah al-Muslimah, 1/396, 397

He also said:

It is OK to cover the face with the niqaab or burqa' which has two openings for the eyes only, because this was known at the time of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), and because of necessity. If nothing but the eyes show, this is fine, especially if this is customarily worn by women in her society.

Fataawa al-Mar'ah al-Muslimah, 1/399

And Allaah knows best.

Islam Q&A

Sheikh Muhammed Salih Al-Munajjid (www.islam-qa.com) - Question #21134: Do women have to wear niqaab?)

Question #21536: Correct view on the ruling on covering the face

Question :

With regard to the niqaab, what are the ahaadeeth and aayaat that refer specifically to it?.

Answer :

Praise be to Allaah.

The correct view is that a woman is obliged to cover her entire body, even the face and hands. Imam Ahmad said that even the nails of a woman are 'awrah, and this is also the view of Maalik (may Allaah have mercy on them both). Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

"... It seems that the view of Ahmad is that every part of her is 'awrah, even her nails, and this is also the view of Maalik."

(Majmoo' al-Fataawa, 22/110).

In contrast to those who say that this is not obligatory, if we examine the views of those who say that it is not obligatory for women to cover the face, we will see that it is as Shaykh Bakr Abu Zayd (may Allaah preserve him) said:

“One of the following three scenarios must apply:

1 – There is clear, sound evidence, but it has been abrogated by the verses that enjoin *hijaab*...

2 – There is sound evidence but it is not clear, and it does not constitute strong evidence when taken in conjunction with the definitive evidence from the Qur’aan and Sunnah that the face and hands must be covered...

3 – There is clear evidence, but it is not sound...”

(Hiraasat al-Fadeelah, p. 68-69)

With regard to the evidence that it is obligatory to cover the face and hands:

1 – Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks (veils) all over their bodies (i.e. screen themselves completely except the eyes or one eye to see the way). That will be better, that they should be known (as free respectable women) so as not to be annoyed. And Allaah is Ever Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful”

[al-Ahzaab 33:59]

Ibn Taymiyah (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

“Allaah commands women to let the *jilbaab* come down (over their faces) so that they will be known (as respectable women) and not be annoyed or disturbed. This evidence supports the first opinion. ‘Ubaydah al-Salmaani and others stated that the women used to wear the *jilbaab* coming down from the top of their heads in such a manner that nothing could be seen except their eyes, so that they could see where they were going. It was proven in al-Saheeh that the woman in *ihraam* is forbidden to wear the *niqaab* and gloves. This is what proves that the *niqaab* and gloves were known among women who were not in *ihraam*. This implies that they covered their faces and hands.”

(Majmoo’ al-Fataawa, 15/371-372)

2 – Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And tell the believing women to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts) and not to show off their adornment except only that which is apparent (like both eyes for necessity to see the way, or outer palms of hands or one eye or dress like veil, gloves, headcover, apron), and to draw their veils all over *Juyoobihinna* (i.e. their bodies, faces, necks and bosoms)...”

[al-Noor 24:31]

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah said:

“With regard to the phrase ‘and not to show off their adornment except only that which is apparent’,

‘Abd-Allaah ibn Mas’ood said: the adornment which is apparent is the garment, because the word *zeenah* (adornment) was originally a name for the clothes and jewellery, as we see in the verses in which Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

‘Take your adornment (by wearing your clean clothes)’

[al-A’raaf 7:31]

‘Say (O Muhammad): Who has forbidden the adornment with clothes given by Allaah, which He has produced for His slaves’

[al-A’raaf 7:32]

‘And let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment’

[al-Noor 24:31]

Stamping the feet makes known the *khulkhaal* (anklets) and other kinds of jewellery and clothing. Allaah forbade women to show any kind of adornment except that which is apparent, but He allowed showing the hidden adornment to mahrams. It is known that the kind of adornment that usually appears, without any choice on the part of the women, is the clothing, as for the body, it is possible to either show it or to cover it. All of this indicates that what appears of the adornment is the clothing.

Ahmad said: the adornment which is apparent is the clothing. And he said: every part of a woman is ‘awrah, even her nails. It was narrated in the hadeeth, ‘The woman is ‘awrah,’ This includes all of the woman. It is not makrooh to cover the hands during prayer, so they are part of the ‘awrah, just like the feet. Analogy implies that the face would be ‘awrah were it not for the fact that necessity dictates that it should be uncovered during prayer, unlike the hands.’

Sharh al-‘Umdah, 4/267-268.

3 – It was narrated that ‘Aa’ishah said: “The riders used to pass by us when we were with the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) in ihraam. When they came near, each of us would lower her *jilbaab* from her head over her face, and when they passed by we would uncover (our faces).”

Narrated by Abu Dawood, 1833; Ahmad, 24067

Shaykh al-Albaani said in *Jilbaab al-Mar’ah al-Muslimah* (107): its isnaad is hasan because of the existence of corroborating reports.

It is well known that a woman should not put anything over her face when she is in ihraam, but ‘Aa’ishah and the Sahaabiyaat (women of the Sahaabah) who were with her used to lower part of their garments over their faces because the obligation to cover the face when non-mahrams pass by is stronger than the obligation to uncover the face when in ihraam.

4 – It was narrated that ‘Aa’ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) said: “May Allaah have mercy on the women of the Muhaajireen. When Allaah revealed the words (interpretation of the meaning)

‘and to draw their veils all over Juyoobihinna (i.e. their bodies, faces, necks and bosoms)..’

[al-Noor 24:31], they tore their aprons and covered their faces with them.”

(Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 4480)

5 – It was narrated from ‘Aa’ishah... that Safwaan ibn al-Mu’attal al-Sulami al-Dhakwaani was lagging behind the army. He came to where I had stopped and saw the black shape of a person sleeping. He recognized me when he saw me, because he had seen me before hijaab was enjoined. I woke up when I heard him saying ‘Inna Lillaahi wa inna ilayhi raaji’oon (verily to Allaah we belong and unto Him is our return),’ when he saw me, and I covered my face with my jilbaab.”

(Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 3910; Muslim, 2770)

6 – It was narrated from ‘Abd-Allaah that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “The woman is ‘awrah and when she goes out the Shaytaan gets his hopes up.”

(Narrated by al-Tirmidhi, 1173).

Al-Albaani said in Saheeh al-Tirmidhi (936): It is saheeh.

Please see Question no. 21134 for more information about the niqaab.

And Allaah knows best.

Islam Q&A (www.islam-qa.com - Question #21536: Correct view on the ruling on covering the face)