

MODULE 3

Class title: Covering for Salah (part 12 of Salah series)

Aim of lesson: To learn the proper way of covering ourselves for Salah

Category: Worship

Class Format: Power Point Presentation

(Greeting to students) *Assalam alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*

(*Ta'awwudh*) *Aoodhubillahi min AsShaytanir Rajeem*

(*Tasmiyah*) *Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem*

(*Du'a*) *Rabbish rahli sadri wa yassirli amri wahlul uqdatum millisani yafqahu qawli*

(Surah At Ta-Ha 20: Verse 25-28)

Teacher: Who remembers what topic we discussed last week? Time management? Yes, we discussed 'Time Factor'. What did we learn in that?

Student: We learned that Allah (swt)'s favorite action done by us is *salah* read on time.

Teacher: Yes, that's right. Primarily, we discussed a very important condition of establishing *salah*, and that is the time frame of the five different *salah*, including the various starting times and ending times, which differ according to different schools of thought.

If you remember, we noted a very important feature of our *deen*, that though there may be different rulings, all of them are valid, and that we shouldn't ever say that one is right while another is wrong. If somebody prays *Asr* at three-thirty then that's fine; whereas, if somebody prays at four-thirty then that's also fine. You and I don't have the knowledge or the authority to say who's wrong and who's right. As long as all are following the rulings of one of the four scholars we talked about, each is valid.

We also saw a video. What did we learn from that?

Student: That as soon as we hear the *adhan*, we should reply to it and get up as soon as we can.

Teacher: Good. If you react in this way, then *InshaAllah* you'll actually feel a difference in your *salah*. If you reply to the *adhan* as you hear it, and then promptly do *wudhu* and offer your prayers on time, believe me, you'll all feel the difference in your *salah*. With your mind on fulfilling your primary duty to Allah (SWT) and pleasing Him, naturally your concentration level will be completely different than if you were coaxed into doing it, or dragged yourself to do it right before the time ended.

Slide: 1:

Today, we're going to discuss another very important condition of *salah*, besides offering them at their stated times, another important and essential part of establishing *salah* is the attire required for it, or how we cover ourselves.

You all must have noted how we're always correcting someone or the other before *salah*: *wear a skirt; this shirt is too short; wear a scarf, your hair is showing* etc.

Who can tell me why attire is so important? Why do we have to make sure everyone is dressed properly for *salah*? After today, you should all be able to tell if your clothes are okay to perform *salah* in or not. You should all know by, *inshAllah*. That way, you won't need to ask, "*can I pray in this?*" You'll know the requirements yourself. By the way, we won't be doing the attire for men in *salah*, as there are no men here! Right now, we will see how to cover ourselves.

Slide 2:

Before we go any further, who can tell me what the primary conditions for establishing *salah* are? What I mean by this is, why and when does *salah* become compulsory on a person? Anyone?

Student: When a person becomes old enough?

Teacher: Yes. But what's essential even before the age factor? Anyone?

Well firstly, one has to be a Muslim. Obviously if one isn't a Muslim, then *salah* would not mean anything. Next, a person must be sane, of sound mind. Insane people aren't really aware of what's going on around them or even of themselves, therefore it is not compulsory on them at all. Thus, the primary conditions which make *salah* compulsory are being Muslim, sane, and lastly, having reached puberty. When all these conditions are met, then *salah* becomes compulsory.

Many children are regularly establishing *salah* even before puberty, which is great. Generally, what parents do is they make their kids start early, so that they form the habit of praying regularly, even before puberty. Then, when these kids reach puberty, offering *salah* is a course of habit, and not burdensome on them.

Imagine how difficult it would be to start on the day it becomes obligatory, especially *Fajr*! In fact, *Rasoolullah (SAW)* has recommended that parents should make their children pray at the

age of seven; and by the age of ten, if they're not doing so already, then they should be strict with them about doing so, even though it may not be *fardh* just yet.¹

Why do you suppose he's recommended this? Obviously, so that *salah* becomes a habitual action in their daily routine, even before puberty.

Furthermore, just how important *salah* is in their lives is made obvious early on. By ten, one is mentally able to understand the important role of *salah* in one's life. So when the time comes, one is ready for it; offering five *salah* over the course of the day doesn't seem so tough. This is why parents train their kids early on. The training period is from seven, until one reaches puberty.

Now briefly, another condition of *salah* is the requirement of purity of body, clothes and place. We've done purity of body in our class on *taharah*, already. We are talking about *najasah*. There should be no impure substances on one's clothes or the place we're going to be offering *salah* on.

Along with this condition, we have to be properly covered, which is what we're going to discuss today.

Finally, the last condition is that we have to face the *qiblah*; we all know that we can only say our prayers in the direction of the *qiblah*.

So real quickly then, the six conditions which must be met before one can establish *salah* are: one, *iman*; two, puberty; three, sanity; four, right time; five, purity of body, clothes and place of *salah*; and six, facing the *qiblah*.

Slide 3:

So today, we're going to discuss proper attire or covering for *salah*.

In Surah Al-A'raf, verse 31, Allah (SWT) says,

يَا بَنِي آدَمَ خُذُوا زِينَتَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ

“Oh children of Adam! Take your adornment for every mosque, and eat and drink and waste not by extravagance. Certainly, He likes not those who waste by extravagance.”

¹ The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said, “Order your children to pray when they reach the age of seven and beat them at the age of ten (if they refuse), and separate the beds” (Ahmad, Abu Dawud, and Al Hakim)

Slide 4:

In this verse, what exactly does the word ‘adornment’ mean? And what is the meaning of the word *masjid*? Does it mean ‘mosque’? We’ll just discuss what exactly is meant here.

Who knows what ‘*awrah*’ means?

Awrah or *satar* is an Arabic word. The plural of *Awrah* is *Awraat* and in the Urdu language we use this word *Awrat* for “woman”. There are lots of Arabic words that we use in Urdu.

The literal meaning of *awrah* is a secret and hidden place; everything that Allah (swt) has created precious, Allah (swt) has kept hidden, without exception.

Allah (swt) Himself is the most precious entity ever, and can you see him? He is in *Hijab*.

Where do you find pearls, scattered on the beach? No, inside an oyster on the ocean bed. Oysters don’t even float on the sea level, they are really deep inside; you have to make an effort to get a pearl.

Diamonds! Where do you find them? You cannot find diamonds anywhere other than mines. So anything precious is secret and hidden.

It is not just a coincidence that an *Awrat* is called an *Awrat*. So *awrah* means those body parts that must be kept hidden. It also means anything that causes shame when exposed.

Even little kids are very conscious about their bodies, they realize the concept of *haya*. They do not like to expose themselves. However, this feeling of *haya* (modesty) - which is naturally inside of us - goes away very easily as well. If you see half naked people around you all the time, then that becomes fine and acceptable. You see then that the *haya* level keeps going down more and more. Little children don’t want to use a toilet in front of everybody; they don’t want to expose their private parts in front of everybody, they get embarrassed. So *awrah* also means something which, once exposed, causes you embarrassment.

In a nutshell – *awrah* means – must cover body parts.

The meaning of ‘mosque’ here is not just the physical structure. Rather, what is meant here is *salah* itself. Just think, if it only meant *masajid*, then it would mean we don’t need to be careful of our adornment anywhere else. If that were the case, then it we wouldn’t have to bother at other times when we pray, as women hardly go to the mosques, usually going only for *Eid* or *Jumuah*. So just wearing adornment at mosques doesn’t make any sense. ‘Mosques’ here means at the time of offering *salah*. Therefore, the verse is commanding us to cover our *awrah* for every *salah*. This is what is meant.

Slide 5:

Ayesha (RA) has narrated that Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said, “The *salah* of a woman who has reached puberty is not accepted, unless she is wearing a *khimar*”. (Ahmad, Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah.)

What is a *‘khimar’*? It refers to a head covering we wear to cover the basic requirements of covering our hair, neck, and chest. Do we see any woman praying like this? No, Alhamdulillah. Most women are aware of this requirement and generally adhere to it, at least when offering their *salah*. We all pray with our head covered. So what we use to cover it with is called a *khimar*.

Slide 6:

Moving on, how are we required to cover ourselves for *salah*?

Awrah or *Satar* requirements are not absolute. They depend on who we are with. So the requirement is different when Muslim girls/women are amongst themselves, when they are in front of their *mahram* men and different when in front of all others. There is also a distinction made by some scholars about a Muslim woman’s *satar* being different in front of non-Muslim women.

A *Satar* of a Muslim woman in front of another Muslim woman is from the belly button to the knees.

Okay then, as we’re all Muslim here, can I take off my shirt? I can, but I wouldn’t. Why not? That wouldn’t be decent, would it? If I do take it off, it’s permissible and completely within the Islamic requirements; I wouldn’t be doing anything wrong. My pajama will cover my *awrah*, from my belly button to my knees. However, I won’t take it off, as it’s against the norms of decency; it would be against *‘haya’* to stand here topless. Why do you suppose our *awrah* doesn’t include our breasts?

Student: In case they become exposed while breast-feeding?

Teacher: Exactly, good. Islam allows what it does for a practical reason, you see. As with our thighs though, there is very little reason we would need to expose them; maybe for surgery or during childbirth, I suppose. Thus, we must cover ourselves from the belly button to the knees.

Student: What about wearing skin-tight clothes, like tight jeans or swim wear, can we wear these?

Teacher: We most certainly can wear these, but only in front of other women, and not for *salah*!

The *awrah* of a woman in front of her *Mehram* relatives is relaxed. From belly button to knee as well as her front and back must be covered. However, as our *deen* stresses on *haya* and therefore our attire must never be too revealing or indecent.

And finally, *awrah* in front of all *non mehrams* - Aisha (RA) said, "Asma, (her sister) was wearing thin clothes when she came to see the Prophet (PBUH). He said to her, "O Asma, when a woman comes of age, she should not display parts of her body except this and this," and he pointed to her face and hands. {Sunan Abi Dawud}

So, based on this, scholars tell us that our *awrah* is everything except our face and hands.

Just how are we supposed to be covered for *salah*?

To begin with, our *awrah* must be covered. But is this enough? Of course not. Besides that, we must cover ourselves completely, agreed? All that should be left exposed are the face, hands, and in some schools of thought--the feet. Does this mean that if we're wearing a *burqini*, all we have to do is put on a *khimar* before we pray? No, absolutely not! Why not?

Student: Because a *burqini* is skin tight.

Teacher: Exactly. It's not just enough to cover ourselves completely. It's as important to cover ourselves with clothing which is loose and hides our shape; our adornment cannot be tight.

Next, is it ok to wear loose clothing which is transparent? No, we all know this. Our adornment for *salah* should be made of thick and opaque material, and not see-through². We shouldn't wear clothing made out of light, transparent materials, like some of the lawn and linens available in the market these days. We have this problem a lot, don't we? In comparison to wearing clothes made out of these materials, jeans are a lot better; one can't see through them. However, jeans are usually tight, so we can't pray in these either unless we wear something loose on top of them, like a big *chadar* or an *abayah* which covers our legs.

The next requirement is that men and women's clothing should not be alike³. This doesn't mean that we can't wear pants and jeans. We can. Only, the way we wear our jeans and shirts must be different; we shouldn't wear them like men. There's a certain difference in how men wear it and how women wear it: the styles, the colour, the way they're worn, etc. So there should be a distinction, unlike the way girls and boys wear similar clothes these days.

² The Prophet (PBUH) said: "There are 2 types of the people of Hell whom I have not seen: People with whips like the tails of cattle, with which they beat the people, and women who are clothed YET NAKED. They will not enter paradise or even smell it's fragrance {Muslim}

³ The Prophet (PBUH) cursed those men who assume the manners of women and those women who assume the manners of men. {Muslim}

Next, our dress shouldn't be like those of other religions⁴. We're not talking about something that is cultural-like jeans, pants and skirts. What I mean here is that we don't imitate any other religion in their dressing. Look at the following pictures to see what I mean.

Student: Can you give me an example?

Teacher: For example, Buddhist monks who wear a particular orange outfit. Or wearing a sari with a *tilak* on your forehead so you look like a Hindu woman – although sari in itself is a cultural dress of the subcontinent, and has nothing to do with a particular religion – however, if worn with Hindu symbols like *tilak* for e.g then it would be imitating another religion. Or wearing a cross like Christians.

Ok. Now we'll look at some pictures and try to identify some common problems we have with our clothing for *salah*. Just look at these pictures. Let's try and see what's wrong and what's right in them.

Slide 7-8:

Look at this one; what can you spot? Notice how her arms aren't covered.

During *salah*, our arms should be covered, so that only her hands from the wrists are visible. Moreover, can you notice how her shirt is too short? What's wrong with this? The problem is that the shape of her hips is quite obvious; the jeans are so tight. You can see it more clearly in the next picture. Look here. Remember, the shape our bodies cannot be obvious when we're offering *salah*. Now she's wearing a full sleeve shirt, so that her arms are at least covered. Still, what's the problem? The shape of her buttocks is still visible. The reason is that jeans are skin tight from there. I already mentioned that tight jeans are fine, as long as you cover up with something, either a longer shirt, or a bigger *khimar* or chador, or even an *abayah* worn specifically for *salah*.

Slide 9-10:

Now look at this picture. Do you notice her hip is covered? Still, what's wrong with her dress? Lots, actually. The scarf is so short and narrow that the neck is showing. Her sleeves are too short. Right? We know the arms have to completely covered; only the hands can be left exposed. Now what's wrong here? Quite obviously, her ankle and even a part of her legs are exposed. Even though her shirt is long enough to cover her buttocks, her legs are visible. By the way, whenever you see people reading *salah* inappropriately dressed, maybe with some hair or part of the neck or chest showing, then as a sincere believer, you can nicely point it out to them. It's ok to do so, so that their *salah* isn't in vain.

⁴ "Whosoever imitates a nation is amongst them." {Sunan Abu Dawud}

Slide 11-14:

What about this picture? Her shirt is fine; the shape of her legs isn't visible since she's wearing a loose skirt; even her sleeves are long, covering the arms completely; and finally, her neck and chest are fully covered. What's showing? Only her face, hands and feet are showing, and that's all that we're allowed to show. Everything is covered, *Alhumdulillah*. What do you think of this? Looks okay? Arms are covered; the shirt right length; the jeans aren't even tight, but loose. Now look closely. What's the problem? Do you notice how long the slit is? A part of her abdomen is clearly visible. Long slits are a problem for *salah*. Most girls don't even realize it. You either pull up your pants or jeans, or pin the slit together. We shouldn't be walking around like this, even without your *salah*.

Slide 15-16:

Now, in this picture, this girl is offering her *salah* in crop pants. This is clearly a no, no. The legs have to be covered, including the ankles. Now, this is fine. She's pulled down her jeans so that her ankles are covered. The length of her shirt is fine. The jeans are also not tight. A little later though, she looks like this. Sometimes we may begin our *salah* all covered properly, but as we move during *salah*, our covering shifts, as has happened to the girl in this picture. It has happened with us all, at some time or another. Why do you think the scarf starts slipping back? Usually, scarves which are made of silky and slippery materials, such as silk and georgette, will slip off gradually. Thus the best ones for *salah* are scarves made of cotton, linen and such.

I'm going to give you some pointers on how to keep your *khimar* from shifting. This is important for us to do. You all know what happens when we start fidgeting with our *dupattas*, in order to keep it in its place; we lose concentration in our *salah*. For instance, you want that your hair doesn't get messed up, so what do you do? You drape the *dupatta* ever so slightly and start praying. Then as you carry out the different postures of *salah*, it's slipping and sliding all over the place and you're constantly setting it right, pulling it here and there. At this point, do you think you'll be able to concentrate on your *salah*?

I wouldn't be able to remember which rakah I was at? Throughout my *salah*, I'd just be concerned that my *dupatta* is slipping all over!

All we have to do is take a few precautions: firstly, wear a *dupatta* which isn't going to slip; and secondly just pin it up properly, so that it won't move about. Sometimes, hair isn't visible from the front at all; instead, it shows from the back, usually when the *khimar* is too narrow. Have you ever seen that? I've seen it often enough. If you have really long hair, then you should tie it up so that it's hidden beneath the *dupatta*, or wear a wider one. We're all aware that hair cannot be visible at all, during *salah*. If you've got bangs in your hair that you know will stick out from underneath, you should wear a hair band or clips to keep it back. Or, you could wear a fitted

scarf, similar to the ones you wear here—the ones that go over the head, to keep them in place. We must be careful about our hair being fully covered, however that may be done.

Slide 17-18:

Now what's wrong here? The scarf is totally see-through, sheer.

She should not offer her prayers in this. It is absolutely transparent, and it even has holes in it! We should always make sure our *dupattas*, along with the rest of our clothes, aren't made from see-through materials. You should always be careful about the materials your clothes are made from.

By the way, Allah (SWT) has commanded us to wear only our good clothes-‘adornment’, during *salah*. Thus, we shouldn't be wearing clothes which have holes in them, anyway, nor should they be dirty and smelly.

Again in this picture we see that even though she's wearing a big *dupatta*, she might as well have not worn one at all. Just being long and wide isn't enough, if it's so sheer.

Slide 19-21:

Now look at this. Her dress seems fine: her arms and legs are covered, the length of her shirt is right, and, her duppata is long, wide and opaque. Everything is fine.

Now we see her in *ruku*'? Her ankles are showing. All's well as long as she's standing straight, but as soon as she bends for *ruku*' or goes down for *sujood*, her ankles show.

What should she have done before starting? She should have pulled down her jeans or pants.

By the way, in *churidars*, *tang pajamas*, skinny jeans, or tights your ankles may be covered, but because the shape of the legs is obvious, you should put on an *abaya*, a skirt or a big *khimar* on top, so that it hides their shape.

Now you may have to offer your prayers and not have any of these on you, maybe when you're at a mall. That's why it's better to wear loose clothes in which you can do your *salah* anywhere, anytime, without any difficulty.

Let's say you go to the mall in skinny jeans and a half sleeve t-shirt. Your arms are bare, your shape is obvious, and you don't even have a scarf. So what will she do? Offer salah like that? No. You knew that *asr* time will come while you are shopping, so you should have thought about your clothing before leaving. Now, your *salah* will become *qadha*, and that would be a real shame.

We need to train ourselves to think consciously about our salah all the time and be prepared to offer it regardless of where we may be – that means if we are not going to be home, then we must have proper covering with us or should be wearing it.

Slide 22-48:

Look at this outfit; it's ABSOLUTELY see-through.

This is a big problem in 'chicken' material as it has got holes in it. We can't say our prayers in clothes with cutwork and holes through which skin is visible.

In this picture, there are lots of problems: her arms are bare, and her t-shirt is too fitting and too short so that her hip is visible.

Now what will she do when she has to pray?

There's a very simple solution: she just need to don an *abaya* and a scarf, and she's ready for *salah*. Then, after *salah* she can take it off.

I suggest you should all keep an *abaya* or a big chador to just throw over yourselves before *salah*. This way, you don't have to worry about changing for *salah*.

Do you see how the girl in this picture is wearing a big *chadar*, maybe to cover her inappropriate clothing?

Slide 49:

Next, do you think that we have to cover our feet in *salah*?

There's a difference of opinion on this, and we're not going to say who's right and who's wrong. Both views are valid.

Some scholars say that we have to cover the feet during *salah*. If you agree with this school of thought, then all that should be visible in *salah* are your hands and face.

On the other hand, some scholars say that we can show our feet. In this case, the face, hands and feet will be showing. However, please note that no group allows the ankles to show. So we can choose to cover our feet or not, but we have to cover our ankles.

Slide 50:

How many of you think we can pray while wearing shoes? Yes? No? Well, we can actually offer *salah* while wearing shoes. We should make sure they're clean, though. According to the

Sunnah, we just need to rub them on soft ground, like sand or dirt, to cleanse them of all impurities.⁵

Remember sand is not *najasah*. In fact it's pure and purifies; that's why we've been permitted to do *tayamum* with it. This allowance is a mercy for Muslims. You see, at the advent of Islam, there were no marbled and air conditioned mosques, as we have today. Companions (*RA*) had to pray in hot and harsh conditions on the burning sand, upon which they just couldn't put their feet. So it was allowed for them to wear shoes in *salah*.

You may need to offer *Zuhr* in school or college, or at tuitions or there could be other situations in which we can't take off our shoes; thus this lenient and merciful allowance. Mosques today are tiled, carpeted, and even air conditioned. Therefore, we have no need to wear our shoes in them.

(Du'a for end of a gathering) *Subhana Rabbika Rabbul Izzati 'amma yasifun wa salamun 'alal mursaleen, walhamdulillahi Rabbil 'alameen*

(Parting salutation to students) *Assalam alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*

⁵ Abu Sa'eed said: The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) lead us in prayer whilst he was wearing his shoes, then he took them off [whilst still praying], and the people took their shoes off too. When the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said the Tasleem [at the end of the prayer], they said: "O Messenger of Allaah, you took off your shoes, so we took off our shoes too." He said: "Jibreel came to me and told me that there was some dirt on them, so I took them off. When any one of you comes to the mosque, let him look at his shoes, and if he sees any dirt on them, let him wipe them. And they can be purified with dust."