

MODULE 5

Class Title: Dress Code – part 4, *Zeenat & Tabarruj*

(4th part of a 4 lesson series, should be done after *Haya* series)

Aim of Lesson: To understand the concepts of *Zeenat* (beautifying) & *Tabarruj* (showing-off) in our attire

Category: Scripture/popular culture

Lesson Format: Power point presentation & narration. Discussion

(Greeting to students) *Assalamu 'alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*

(*Ta'awwudh*) *A'oodhu billahi min Ash Shaytaanir Rajeem*

(*Tasmiyah*) *Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem*

(*Du'a*) *Rabbish rahli sadri wa yassirli amri wahlul 'uqdatum millisani yafqahu qawli* [Surah Ta-Ha 20: Verses 25-28]

We started off by talking about *haya* (modesty), right? The concept of *haya* in Islam. Then we came to dress code and how *haya* is expressed externally by what we wear. After that we talked about the Islamic dress code.

We looked at various different aspects of it, starting from what is *awrah*, or the must-cover body parts. Do all of you recall that? Yes.

Next we went over *libaas* or the clothes that we wear. What is society's attitude towards clothes, how that attitude was formed and how it has changed over the years. Finally, we talked about *hijab* (covering). We discussed in great detail the commandments of *hijab* (covering) in the Quran which are in *Surah An Nur* and *Surah Al Ahzab*. Everyone very clear about what we talked about so far? Yes Good.

Today we want to wrap up because this is the last class of the entire term. The year just began and it's finishing before you know it. It seems just like yesterday. Who is taking 'O' levels and who is taking 'A' levels among you guys? Your school year started in August and so did Perceptions. Now your school year is about to end and you guys will also be graduating from Perceptions this year, *InshAAllah Ta'Allah*.

Slides 1 & 2:

Today we want to wrap up things with the 'wow' factor.

Last week I asked you what topic you would like to discuss today. All of you voted to talk about *zeenat* (adornment). What is the 'wow' factor? We see 'wow' uttered everywhere around us. Don't we see it all around us?

You all are wearing the “wow” factor in some degree or other. There isn't any need for it. She's wearing a gorgeous *chunri ka dupatta* (Large scarf decorated with dip-dyeing techniques). I just asked her, “Gosh, what a pretty scarf!” Was there any need for that? She could have covered

herself with anything. Look at her pink socks. Wow! So you see, the wow factor is everywhere. We see it all around us; even in the littlest things.

In our homes, we like to decorate things. When we go out to a restaurant and the ambiance is really cool, then we enjoy ourselves little bit more, don't we? Even if the food is same. Even the way the food is served makes a difference. It just looks pretty and you are like, "Ah hah!" The presentation adds to your enjoyment, doesn't it? That is basically what the 'wow' factor is.

Slides 3 - 5:

Look at what Allah (swt) says in the Quran and how He says it. I tell you these verses are incredible. Remember the verses dealing with dress and *zeenat* (adornment)? Allah (swt) says, (this is the same verse we quoted when we talked about covering yourself.)

يَا بَنِي آدَمَ قَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا يُؤَارِي سَوْآتِكُمْ وَرِيشًا وَلِبَاسُ التَّقْوَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ
آيَاتِ اللَّهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَكَّرُونَ

“O Children of Adam! We have bestowed raiment upon you to cover yourselves and as an adornment; and the raiment of righteousness, that is better. Such are among the signs of Allah that they may remember.” (Surah A’raf 7: verse 26)

Does anyone remember? What is the purpose of *libaas* (clothing)?

[A] To cover ourselves and

[B] to beautify.

Allah (swt) is saying for what reason? The word used over here is *zeenat*, as in adornment. For us, *zeenat* is a name for girls as well, right? Somebody who is adorned. It is a beautiful name. It is a beautiful word: *Zeenat*. The word explains a lot.

We keep talking about how other languages just don't do justice to Arabic words but you do get an idea about what they mean. *Zeenat* is to beautify oneself. And why is that? Because Allah (swt) is *Al Musawwir*. That is one of the names of Allah (swt) and it means the Shaper of Beauty. *Al Musawwir* doesn't necessarily mean one who draws things. The real meaning of *musawwir* is the Shaper of Beauty. Allah (swt) is *Al Musawwir*.

Slides 6 – 7:

Rasool Allah (pbuh) said, “.....Allah is beautiful and He loves beauty.....” [Muslim]. This is one portion of a long *hadith*.

You must have heard this *hadith*: “Allah is beautiful and He loves beauty.”

Look at Allah (swt)'s wow factor. Was there any need for this? Have you guys seen the sky looking like that? Or like that? Just the sky. We are not looking at anything else. Just the sky. Look at the moon.

Last weekend, I went with some friends and family to Hingol which is in Balochistan. the full moon at night was beyond words beautiful. It was prettier than this picture. I wish I had a picture on my laptop, I would have shown it to you.

That is Allah (swt)'s wow factor. There is no need for it.

I mean Allah (swt) could just have said, "OK, this is the sky." Chrunng! He could have made something totally dull and boring. Was there any need for these beautiful colours? When you get up in the morning, do you ever notice the sky? Do you notice what is going on around you? Unfortunately, we live in such a concrete jungle. Nevertheless, people like us are blessed to have a view of the sky, many people don't. So many are too tied up in the mundane business of the world to bother looking up. Go home and look at the night sky tonight. It is incredible. Even in Karachi, if you go to the beach or to Clifton, you can sometimes see how beautiful it is and how it changes.

Was there any need for that? No, absolutely, not. Yet Allah (swt) gave us all that natural beauty. That is Allah (swt)'s wow factor.

Slides 8 – 9:

You see, Allah (swt) takes care of our needs and also our wants. We need milk but do we need ice cream? Do we need chocolate? I do, actually. I'll be honest with you. I am in desperate need of chocolate!

So why is it that we feel so good when we look at something gorgeous? Because Allah (swt) has given us an aesthetic sense. That is the reason we take pleasure in looking at something pretty. This sense, where do we get it from? Is it something that has to do with us?

No. Also, if our *fitrah*, our nature the way Allah (swt) created it – is intact, we appreciate nature better. Otherwise we are like, how boring, a full moon, so who cares? Doesn't it happen frequently that you can't be bothered? If we are close to our *fitrah* and we see a full moon, we say, *Subhan Allah* and feel a deep pleasure.

Slide 10:

So Allah (swt) has kept this aesthetic sense in us. That is the reason that wearing ugly clothes is not natural to human beings. It isn't. One has to suppress one's nature to wear something that is 'ugh'. Can you imagine a poor woman wearing a "habit" all her life and that is it? You know what I mean? Or a monk who used to wear coarse clothes and that was that. Never allowing themselves the luxury of wearing something nicer. This is an unnatural state. One has to really

fight with one self and one's *nafs* and suppress one's desires completely. Allah (swt) doesn't want that.

Slides 11 – 12:

Rasool Allah (pbuh) said: "Allah loves to see the traces of His blessings on His servants." [Tirmidhi]

If Allah (swt) has given you something nice, wear it.

Ibn Abi al-Ahwas said: I came in shabby clothes to see the Prophet and he said: "Do you have money?" I said yes. He said: "From where does your money come?" I said: "Allah has given me camels and sheep and horses and slaves." He said: "Then **if Allah gave you money and possessions, he likes for you to show it.**" [Abu Dawud, al-Nasa'I, Ahmad]

Rasool Allah (pbuh) never liked people to be in a shabby, scruffy and unkempt state. He didn't like that. When he traveled, he used to keep a kit bag with him with a little comb and mirror. He was a very well groomed man. In those days, they didn't have irons. So, maybe it is not the way we consider well-groomed i.e. all starched and ironed but aside from that, he (pbuh) was well-groomed completely.

Islamic sources also report some personal belongings that Prophet Muhammad would always carry with him. These were a comb, a mirror, *miswak*, (a small twig for cleaning teeth), a toothpick, scissors and kohl.

The Prophet would take great care of the cleanliness of his clothing and took care that his garments were neat and tidy.

The Prophet stated that garments should be neat and care should be given to this matter; yet he did not approve of spending excessive time getting dressed up. He made a distinction between over-dressing and being chic and smart. [Kitabu'l-Shamail, Tirmidhi]

Slides 13 – 20:

Allah (swt) does not want us to look like a sack of potatoes all the time. So go ahead, get dressed. Glam up. Particularly for women, Allah (swt) has made silk. That is something which is forbidden for men. This little worm works day and night for me and you. Not for the guys. We were talking about gender differences last week. This is one huge gender difference. This is just for us. Exclusively for women. That is why you can wear all kinds of funky fabrics, raw silk and whatever silk. They are only for girls. That's it. Not for guys.

Gold is another thing exclusively for women. Exclusively for women. It is not allowed for men.

Sunan of Abu-Dawood Hadith 4046 Narrated by Ali ibn AbuTalib: The Prophet of Allah (pbuh) took silk and held it in his right hand, and took gold and held it in his left hand, and said: “both of these are prohibited to the males of my community.”

If you prefer cotton, no issues. The variety that is available for women is far greater than that for men. We can choose from whatever kind of fabric or whatever kind of adornment we want for ourselves, *alhamdulillah*, no problem. You want to put up all kinds of laces and tussles and *karhai* (embroidery), add in any kinds of accessories, no issue at all. Make up, go for it. No problem, isn't that cool? That eye makeup over here. Oh, I'd love to do that. I think it is looking really fabulous.

Student: When we do it at home, we don't get it like this.

Teacher: Ahhh. Yes it is professional and photo shopped as well, you are absolutely right.

You want streaks, go for it. No problem. I would love to get purple ones actually. Actually I wanted to get a really nice colour-thingy done but when I went to the lady who does my hair, she said that because my hair is dark in colour, I would have to bleach it first. She said that the process involves excessive use of chemicals. My daughter also wanted to get it done but she ended up getting something which is less damaging. If you have to bleach it first, it wasn't worth it. Somebody was telling me that you can get colour sprays these days.

Student: You do but the purple spray didn't make my hair purple.

Teacher: It didn't become purple? I think the colour of our hair is too strong and too dark. Probably, that's the reason.

Slide 21:

Anyway, so you want to streak your hair, no problem at all. Go for it. Any kind of *zeenat*, any kind of adornment that you want to do, it is not an issue at all. It is absolutely fine. The only thing is, don't forget Allah (swt)'s limit. That's it.

Slides 22 - 23:

Allah (swt) says:

... وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَى ...

...and do not display yourselves like that of the times of ignorance...

(Surah Al Ahzab 33: Verse 33)

This is the word that we are going to focus on today: *tabarruj*.

Tabarrajul Jahiliyat is a kind of ignorance. Do all of you understand *jahiliyat*? It means ignorance. *Tabarruj* is to display yourself. Showing off.

Slides 24 - 25:

Burj is a tower because of its prominence. In Arabic, a sail boat is called *barijah*. Why? Because you can see the sail from far away. Also like that tower in Dubai, that *Burj ul* whatever. All these words have the same root word; to make prominent, to show off.

Slides 26 – 27:

When we talk in terms of clothes and what we look like, *Tabarruj* basically means, to get decked out for the sole purpose of being prominent. The “look at me, look at me” attitude. Wanting to stand out in a crowd. Always wanting to stand out in a crowd.

Have you ever seen two women walk into a room and both of them wearing the same outfit? Ahhh! Death, that’s what it is. “Oh my God, why am I alive?” is the reaction. That is a problem. It happens a lot - especially, if a guest and the maid are wearing the same print. Ahhh! I mean that is like death times two. You know that happens. “Oh don't get this pattern. All the maids will be wearing it within a month”, you hear women saying that. The counterfeit copy of the big brand. What’s the point of buying a *designer* outfit if others can buy a copy off the footpath? Wanting to stand out in a crowd. That is what *Tabarruj* is all about.

Slides 28 – 29:

One of the greatest vehicles of *tabarruj* is the red carpet. What is the purpose of the red carpet? To show off. There is no other reason. The only reason for a red carpet is to show off. That’s it. That is all there is to it. Anybody here who would love to walk on the red carpet? Let’s talk about that. Another thing whose sole purpose is *tabarruj* is the catwalk. Right? Showing off. There is no other purpose.

Weddings in our culture and not just in our culture, other places also, are often all about showing off. Flaunt how much money you have. Whose stage was better than the others?

Student: Some weddings are simple and don't show off.

Teacher: Some weddings are not about showing off but most are. Weddings really go way over the top. A theme is a must and everything, from the parent's clothes to the napkins to clean your hands with, must be colour coordinated. We have 'wedding planners' to organize the whole thing.

What we are focusing on right now is the fact that there is a lot of *tabarruj* in our weddings. There is a lot of showing off.

Slide 30:

Why? Because we live in a culture where we are told that there is nothing wrong with showing off. If you have it, flaunt it. Any woman who covers herself up is supposed to be a dud. If she had it, she would be flaunting it. Otherwise why would she cover up? That is the general trend. Like I said, there are exceptions.

Alhamdulillah, there are people who don't believe in it but they are few. Generally, *tabarruj* is what you see, all around you. Look at any billboard. You have it, you flaunt it. Right now is such a great time to have this class because of this lawn (cotton finer than voile) craziness going on. Oh my Goodness. I was going to put my facebook status as "My name is not Khan and I do not design lawn". I think I'm going to do that tonight, *inshaAllah*. I mean, seriously, crazy, isn't it? It is madness. I have never been to any lawn exhibition, *alhamdulillah* and I don't intend to. However, I have heard crazy stories about the stuff that goes on. Have you guys ever been to any?

Student: I got trampled on.

Student 2: Some ladies got into a fight over a suit and were pulling each other's hair.

Teacher: You got trampled on? They pulled each other's hair? To get *lawn* suits? I've heard crazy stories. This year I heard that one exhibition shut down because a lady slapped a salesman. She got what? She got 650 outfits. You know that lady? *Alhamdulillah*.

Slides 31:

The thing about *tabarruj* is that it has a domino effect. You show off and the other two things that follow are arrogance and extravagance. After all, what is the point of showing off? Automatically, your neck becomes a little like that. Yes? Oh, so I'm wearing The Designer outfit, for example. Although wearing a designer outfit in itself is not an issue. You can wear any outfit if you can afford it. You can wear an outfit that costs five or even ten hundred thousand.

The only condition is to avoid *tabarruj* and *israaf* (over spending, waste) and extravagance. Everybody's *israaf* is different. My *israaf* is not your *israaf*. If I can afford an outfit for 5000, *alhamdulillah*. That is not *israaf* for me. That is perfectly fine. It may be *israaf* for you. For another person, it could be *israaf* spending 500 on an outfit. Because that is what her financial status is. So *israaf* is different for different people.

When we get into this rat race of *tabarruj*, showing off, then that happens? You see people borrowing humungous amounts of money for a wedding. For that one day! Just to show off.

Or we see women borrowing money or doing this or doing that just to buy a diamond ring or to buy a branded outfit or to go on a holiday. It could be anything: a big screen TV or a Gucci purse. Why do they do it? Because so and so has it. Since she is wearing this designer, I will

wear that one. Or she is wearing X brand, so I am wearing brand Y. Just for that reason. Not because you love it, not because you want to.

It is not *tabarruj* if you can afford it and you genuinely just like it. If five other women wore it to the same party, you would still love the outfit. I love wearing jewelry. I adore wearing jewelry. However, if my intention in wearing it is because I'm going to show off in front of so & so and she is going to be envious of or impressed by my beautiful diamond earrings, that is *tabarruj*. There is a very fine line. It is a very, very fine line.

Slide 32:

Arrogance and extravagance follows directly behind *tabarruj*. Allah (swt) says in the Quran, ".....and waste not by extravagance. Verily He (Allah) likes not those who waste by extravagance." (Surah Al An'am 6: Verse 141)

Slide 33:

"Eat what you feel like and wear what you feel like. But avoid two things: extravagance and arrogance." [Bukhari]

When we look at the clothing style of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), we see that he paid the utmost attention to these three issues:

- Avoidance of ostentation
- Avoidance of making the style of clothing a means for showing off, arrogance or ostentation
- To dress in accordance with the opportunities and conditions of the society in which he lived.

Slides 34 – 35:

A lot of times they go hand in hand, you see. Why else do we stand in front of our mirrors, cupboards or closets and say we have nothing to wear? That is the reason. We have nothing to wear. Oh, the new lawn season has come and I've got nothing to wear. When you have 20 or 30 good outfits hanging in your closet. This just says it all. This is the perfect season to talk about it. So you walk down a red carpet and everybody says, "Who are you wearing?" You hear this on television as well, these days. Who are you wearing? People no longer say, "I'm wearing cotton/voile/silk". They don't say, "What a lovely print." They say, "Whose is it?" So like you just said, you have to be wearing a cool, 'in' designer. That is how it has become.

I just love this silly cartoon. Did you read what it says? I'm totally stressed. Everything has become so horrendously emblematic. You know what an emblem is? Like a logo. So everything

is like a designer label now. Everything is. You are going to be very sad people if you admit that you purchase your lawn (extra-fine cotton) from Gulf Center. You will immediately be categorized as an extremely-out-of-it, loser auntie. Totally, totally loser!

The shoes have to be Nike, the jeans has to be, I don't know, whatever, Calvin Klein, or Levi's. OK, so I am more classy than you are. I was saying Calvin Klein and whatever you see. Everything has to have a brand name. Even the undergarments have to be a certain brand. This branding frenzy is like ridiculous.

Slide 36:

On the day of Resurrection, Allah will clothe the one who wears garments of fame with garments of humiliation. [Ahmad, Abu Dawud, Nisai, Ibn Majah]

So if you are wearing clothes just to show off or just to make another person a little envious then you are done for. Not a good idea at all.

This is actually a disease which is spreading like wild fire. Don't you guys notice that? It is spreading around us. Everybody is worried about it. For example, you come to Perceptions, particularly, those of you who cover up. Right? You come to Perceptions. Don't think that those who cover are saints. If you dress up because you really enjoy it and this is the only opportunity you get to dress up, *Alhamdulillah*. No problem. But, if you are competing with somebody else. That oh, I'm going to be wearing such and such thing because so-and-so and so-and-so don't have it. It is very problematic. Get it? Or I wear a designer outfit just to be prominent, just to stand out.

Slides 37 – 38:

You can be completely covered up and yet do *tabarruj*. The way you walk. You may be completely covered up and still be showing off.

It is all in the attitude. At the end of the day, even if you win the rat race, you are still a rat. Getting into it is a mistake. It is a classic lose-lose situation. You must have heard the phrase: competing with the Joneses. In America, Jones is a very common name, so competing with the Joneses basically means that your neighbour is Mr Jones or whatever. If Mr Jones gets a four wheeler, you get a four wheeler. They get a big screen TV and suddenly, you have to get one. There is no end to it. There is no end to the rat race.

This is particularly a problem among women, much more so than men. Boys generally don't do that, they don't care. Yes, absolutely. My son, who is 11 years old, can't be bothered. He comes home from football and he says, "Mom, do I need to take a shower?" Most guys are like that. Of course, there are exceptions. There are men also who have caught the designer bug and the show-off virus but predominantly this is more a woman problem. It is.

Slide 38:

So what do you do?

Haya is something that stops us from showing off ourselves. We have talked about that before, remember? *Haya* stops us. If you have *haya*, you feel like, oh my God, that is so uncool. Telling people how much my outfit costs, no way. Or where I got it from, it is like ugh! It is so cheap. *Haya* is something that stops us from showing off. Keep your level of *haya* high and you should be OK.

All this stuff that we have talked about throughout the year, it is all interconnected. Keep your *haya* level high and you will save yourself from a lot of nonsense. You will save yourself from extravagance, you will save yourself from *tabarruj* and so on. Just by keeping your *haya* level high!

Slide 40:

Follow the clothing requirements laid down by Allah (swt). Must not be to show off, i.e. no *tabarruj*.

Who remembers all the clothing requirements by the way? Yes?

[1] Must cover *satar* (must-cover body parts).

[2] Loose not tight.

[3] Thick not transparent.

[4] Boy girl clothing must not be similar.

[5] Must not be showing-off

[6] Must not mimic/copy other religions.

Please remember these requirements. These requirements are for your garments as well as for those of you who wear a *jilbaab* (outer covering). We discussed this before that if your *jilbaab* (outer garment) becomes your *zeenat* (adornment), then what are you hiding? If the *jilbaab* is so embellished and attractive, even if you are doing *niqaab* (face veil), and you've got those Cleopatra made-up eyes showing then, hello? Where is that coming from?

So you see, we need to analyze where we are today and then we need to work on our *haya*. *Haya* or *tabarruj* is not something tangible and it can be hard to spot. It also differs for different people. Nevertheless, *haya* is something for which we can raise the bar for ourselves.

Slides 41 – 43:

Zeenat and adornment, as long as it is within the parameters of *shariah* is OK. When it spills out, it becomes extremism. It becomes destructive.

The Islamic dress code is flexible. It gives you a lot of choice. It does. And the Islamic dress code is the dress for success. Dress for success is a phrase we hear all the time. We've talked about the fact that dress codes are everywhere. It is just that we do not acknowledge them.

May Allah (swt) help and guide us all on His straight path and help us have *haya* and increase our *eeman* and be pleased with us – ameen.

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

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

Reference for Teachers:

Libaas ka Maqsad (The Purpose of Dress) – Urdu audio by Huma Najmul Hassan – www.al-ilm.com