

MODULE 5

Class Title: Hijab - Part 1 (1st part of a 6 lesson series)

Category: Scripture/Popular Culture

Aim of Lesson: To see evidences of hijab being a commandment not recommendation of Allah (swt)

Class format: Role play & Power point Presentation & 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]

Note: the *hijab* series is best done after *haya* and dress code series in this same module

Slides 1 & 2:

We have already talked about the fact that covering of the body includes three things – *awrah* or *satar*, *libaas* and *hijab*.

We have discussed the first two things. Now *insha Allah* we are going to talk about *hijab*, the 'H' word. This is going to take several classes because the topic is very extensive. It is one of the most misunderstood, most misused and most attacked subjects in the world at the moment.

I want to start by having a role play. Two volunteers please. Who likes to act?

[**Note to teacher:** Hand out written dialogues of Girl A to one student and of girl B to another. Give them a few minutes to read through and then change the slides as they do the role play]

Slide 3:

Girl A: I'm so tired

Slide 4:

Girl B: Tired of what?

Slide 5:

Girl A: Tired of all these people judging me all the time.

Slide 6:

Girl B: Who's judging you?

Slides 7 - 10:

Girl A: People like this lady; I'm sick and tired of people like this lady, because every time she catches me, she just talks about why I don't wear the *hijab*. I'm really sick of it. Then of course there is music too. That's their favourite topic. Wear the *hijab* and don't listen to music. I don't wear the *hijab* and I listen to music with bells on, what can you do about that?

Slide 11:

Girl B: Well, have you thought that maybe she's just giving you a little bit of sincere advice?

Slides 12 - 14:

Girl A: I don't want her advice, I don't need it in fact I don't need anybody's advice. I know these *hijabi* types who come across as holier than thou, and I want nothing of that. Don't you think I know about my own religion, my own *deen*? I go to Perceptions, for God's sake! She should seriously just leave me alone.

Slide 15:

Girl B: Uh, have you ever considered that perhaps you have misunderstood her intentions?

Slide 16:

Girl A: All I want is for her to get her big nose out of my business.

Slide 17:

Girl B: Well, maybe she's just trying to nudge you on to do something good; perhaps she feels that it's her responsibility to guide you towards something good.

Slides 18 & 19:

Girl A: Oh please! Don't give me that nonsense. What do you mean by doing something good?

Slide 20:

Girl B: Well, like wearing the *hijab* for instance. That would be a good thing to do.

Slide 21:

Girl A: Uh, says who?

Slide 22:

Girl B: Well doesn't it say in the Quran that you've to wear the *hijab*?

Slides 23 – 26:

Girl A: She did mention that it is in Surah Noor and some other places in the Quran; but you know at the end of the day it isn't such a big sin if you don't put that piece of cloth on your head, is it? Helping people and praying is important and one should do that; what difference does it make what you wear? What matters is that I have a clean and kind heart.

Slides 27 - 29:

Girl B: Really? What you wear doesn't matter? Then why do you stand in front of your closet and say, "I don't have anything to wear!"? And why is it that you spend good hard cash on clothes, shoes and accessories? To look good! And why is that you spend hours prepping yourself up, looking all pretty with all that makeup on; why do you do that? To look pretty. So how can you say that what you wear doesn't matter?

Slide 30:

Girl A: So what's the big deal? What're you trying to say over here?

Slide 31:

Girl B: What I'm trying to say is that you do stand in front of the mirror and say mirror, mirror on the wall, who's the fairest of them all? And what you wear and what you look like does matter!

Slide 32:

Girl A: Ok, I get your point; let's just leave it alone here. All I'm trying to say is that wearing the *hijab* is really not that important in religion, that's what I'm trying to say here."

Slides 33 - 35:

Girl B: Is it in the Quran? If it's not so important, why is it in the Quran?

Girl A: Oh, come on! Are you kidding me! Are you saying that I have to follow everything that's in the Quran? I can't follow EVERYTHING in the Quran! How can anyone do that?"

Girl B: Ok, so let me get this straight now. Allah (swt) gives you commandments in the Quran and you just blatantly break them and that's that! Don't worry, be happy! No issues at all!

Slides 36 - 39:

Girl A: Uh, yeah! That's exactly what I'm trying to say. After all God is kind and merciful, I mean I know some of His names like *Ar-Rahman* and *Ar-Raheem*. He wouldn't go after all these petty things, it's you who think it's so important. And by the way, between you and me, all this *hijab* etc. really ticks me off! I mean it's geeky and personally I just get repulsed by the whole

idea... and it's so very oppressive! You know I want my freedom; I want to be free to be who I want to be. I don't want all these restrictions of how to look and what to wear.

Slides 40:

Girl B: Well, what is your definition of freedom?

Slide 41:

Girl A: Like I said, my definition of freedom is wearing what I want and being allowed to just be myself.

Slides 42 - 43:

Girl B: Oh! So you're telling me that you are not a slave of fashion? Are you seriously telling me that these magazines, models and trends don't dictate to you what to look like and what to wear?

Slide 44:

Girl A: Oh for crying out loud! Will you please leave me alone, I'm not going to wear the *hijab*. I think it's absolutely outdated, it makes no sense and I don't want to become an extremist and I'm only 16 years old. I just want you to leave me alone!

[**Note:** End of role play. Ask students to sit and you continue]

Slides 45 – 46:

And then silence.

She was talking to herself in the mirror like she had done many times before, trying to figure out what this is; trying to figure out, to do or not to do?

Slides 47 – 50:

This is the dilemma that a majority of Muslim women and girls face in their lifetimes. All of us sitting in this room right now, fall under one of the following categories; either we do not wear the *hijab*, wear the *hijab* and hate it, wear the *hijab* and understand why, or wear the *hijab* and don't understand why. Do you agree with me or would you like to add another category?

I'm sure most of you who do the *hijab*, sometimes wonder; why me? And *alhamdulillah* the smart kids that you are, you realize that you have a lot of reasons around you for wearing the *hijab*, like: **Modesty or haya**; which we talked about in great detail, **Protection**; where we discussed that you might feel protected when you're covered, your **Identity as a Muslim**; you sometimes hear that, but because we live in a predominantly Muslim country we might not understand this aspect as well as you would if you lived in a non-Muslim country. Another reason could be that your **Parents** asked you to do so, whether you understood or not. Yet

another reason could be **Defiance to Western Culture**; there are lots of kids these days, all over the world; in France, UK, particularly in the West, who wear the *hijab* as a means of defying the western culture, and as a means of carving an identity for themselves.

Slides 51 – 52:

These could all be reasons for your wearing the *hijab* or not. However, should the *hijab* be worn for these reasons? No, if somebody asks you why you wear the *hijab*, the answer is simple; Muslim women must wear the *hijab* because Allah (swt) has told us to do so; it's as simple as that.

Slides 53 – 54:

Allah (swt) says in the Quran, “And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty, that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what must ordinarily appear thereof, that they should draw their veils all over and not reveal their adornments except to...” (Surah Noor 24: verse 31).

The reason why I've put this dot dot over here is because it's a very long verse, where Allah (swt) has given a whole list people; remember we talked about who your *mehrams* are? So that portion comes over here, “...except to these people (who are your *mehram* relatives) and let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment and beg Allah to forgive you all, O believers, so that you may be successful.”

This is one place in the Quran, which is Surah Noor, verse 31; the other place is Surah Al Ahzaab.

Allah (swt) says, “**O prophet! Tell your wives and daughters and the believing women to draw their outer garments around them (when they go out or are among men)...**” Which men? Your *na-mehrams*. “**...that is better in order that they may be known and not annoyed, and Allah is Ever-Forgiving and All-Merciful.**” (Surah Al Ahzaab 33: Verse 59)

So the commandment to cover ourselves is based on these two verses of the Quran. And *insha Allah* we will go in great detail in these two verses because there are lots of us who wear the *hijab* and we need to keep on reminding ourselves why we wear it.

Slides 55 – 56:

I just talked about the simple answer to the only real reason for wearing the *hijab* (because Allah (swt) told us to), but getting to that simple answer is not simple at all.

We all have to deal with a maze of confusions, a lot of ifs and buts within ourselves; in our heads and thoughts and from outside as well. We have to deal with *burqa* bogeyman, of stereotypes; people scaring us about how oppressive this system of Islam is.

Allah (swt) has given us an opportunity to understand our religion from a different perspective. Perhaps a few generations back, people were a little complacent because it was not being criticized, and especially not so openly. A lot of times when something gets criticized, what happens? The people who are the upholders of that belief themselves look at that belief from a critical point of view. So for those of you who wear the *hijab*, don't think, "Why am I sitting in this class? I mean, been there, done that." The reason you need to keep reinforcing it to yourself is so that you understand where you're coming from. You need to understand what the exact commandment of Allah (swt) is all about.

Slides 57 – 58:

We have something in our hands which is truly blessed; something which guides us and holds our hands and takes us to the right path. This is the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (pbuh). Five times you pray, "*Ihdinas siratal mustaqeem*" what does that mean? Guide us to the correct path. And the great thing about this *dua* is, in Arabic you say *ihdina*; '*na*' is plural, the translation is guide us, not guide me, so Allah (swt) teaches us not to be selfish about guidance. So when you're saying guide us, you're not only praying for those who are already believers; you're praying, increase me and the other believers in their guidance and guide those who are not believers. This is a very comprehensive *dua*; Surah Al-Fatihah. And that's what we're trying to do over here; we're trying to guide ourselves and help those people who are lacking a bit of guidance, or who are not believers yet i.e. non-Muslims.

Do you know that there's no place in the Quran where it says that Allah exists or Allah doesn't exist? Islam is not about proving that He exists; Islam is about recognizing Allah (swt). That's what the Quran tells us constantly. Look at the signs and recognize your Creator. It doesn't say that this is the reason. The rationale of the Quran is that Allah the One God exists. Period.

So the commandment of the *hijab* is a part of the greater system that Allah (swt) has given us. It's not isolated. It's not specific to us or anyone else. Allah (swt) knows that Karachi is a very hot place! Actually the place where this commandment was initially revealed is much hotter than Karachi! So He knew that some of His women servants will perhaps be a little uncomfortable by this commandment.

We need to understand this commandment and how it was applied during the life of the Prophet (pbuh) because that is our greatest guidance. He was not a woman but he had women around him. His wives, daughters and other female companions implemented this commandment of Allah (swt).

This is one of my favourite verses; it's from Surah At-Talaaq, where Allah (swt) says, "Whoever fears Allah and keeps his duty to Him..." (Surah At-Talaaq 65: Verse 2) and actually the word 'fear' isn't correct. It's actually 'Whoever has *taqwa*'. We've talked about *taqwa* several times before. *Taqwa* isn't just fear of Allah; it is a lot more than that. It includes love, awe and fear but

it's something that takes you towards Allah (swt), it makes you realize that you are a servant of Allah and that you need to do what Allah has asked you to do. That is a simple explanation.

So the translation should be, "Whoever has *taqwa* of Allah and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out of every difficulty."

So you have your intention to follow Allah's commandment, He will create a way to make it easy for you to do that.

However, you can only understand that if you are the one who takes the first step; I think we've talked about that *hadith-e-Qudsi* many times, do you know what a *Hadith-e-Qudsi* is? It is a saying of Allah which was directly revealed to the Prophet (pbuh) but isn't a part of the Quran. That's why when you read one it says that the Prophet (pbuh) says that Allah (swt) says... whereas when you read a regular *hadith* it says that the Prophet (pbuh) says or the Prophet (pbuh) did, etc.

In a beautiful *hadith-e-Qudsi* Allah (swt) says that if you go to Him walking, He'll come to you at speed. However, the catch is that you have to make the first move towards Him.

Slides 59 – 60:

Insha Allah we'll do as Sherlock Holmes did; we'll look at **WHAT** Allah's (swt) commandment is asking of us, **WHY** He has given us this commandment and see **HOW** it is applied.

Whenever you are faced with an issue that you are trying to understand, always try to analyze it in this way, it will be very useful in whatever you're doing; look at the what, why and how. This is also told to journalists when they are doing a report. We've already covered the when, but otherwise that's also something you should look at.

Slide 61:

Hijab is an Arabic word. The root word is 'Ha' 'Ja' 'Ba'. You all can read Arabic right? It means to veil, to cover, to screen, to shelter, these are all the different connotations, different meanings of the word.

As we saw earlier, two verses deal with the *hijab*, Surah Noor, verse 31 and Surah Al-Ahzab verse 59. I'm going to keep on repeating them so that you remember well and I hope that when you go home, some of you will actually open the Quran and read the verses yourselves; maybe you can look at their *tafseer* (explanation) too.

[**Note:** refer back to slides 53 and 54]

In Surah Noor, Allah (swt) says, "And say to the believing women, that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty, not display their beauty and ornaments except what must ordinarily appear thereof. They should pull their veils over their bosoms and not reveal their

adornment except to....” this whole list of people, “...and let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment and beg Allah to forgive you all, O believers, that you may be successful.”

And in Surah Al-Ahzab Allah says, “O Prophet, tell your wives and daughters and the believing women to draw their outer garments around them when they go out or are among men; that is better in order that they be known and not annoyed, Allah is All-Knowing and All-Merciful.” *Insha Allah* next time I’ll get a recording of these verses so that you hear them in Arabic, because when you hear the Quran in its original form, it’s much more effective. Everything said and done, a translation is only a translation; it’s never the real Quran.

Slides 62 – 65:

First we’ll look at what Allah’s commandment is asking of us: so the very first question that arises is, is *hijab* the commandment of Allah (swt)?

Because these days particularly, a lot of times you hear, on television etc., Muslims saying that *hijab* isn’t really a commandment of Allah (swt), it is an option! You hear things like, “*Hijab is of the eyes.*” Is is a personal choice of a Muslim woman etc.

However, the simple fact that is that it is a commandment of Allah (swt), Allah (swt) is telling us to do this; He’s not giving us a choice.

Slide 66:

Let’s look at the evidence. How do we know it’s a commandment? Let’s look at the grammatical evidence.

Slides 67 – 68:

The style of language used in this verse is very important because when you see the Quran, is it volumes and volumes like the Encyclopedia? No. it is pretty concise compared to other books, considering that it is a manual for mankind. So each and every word is very heavy. Each and every word used, each and every letter used in the Quran has a meaning. The grammatical style is important in order to understand the commandment or to understand what Allah’s (swt) saying and we are at a great disadvantage because we don’t know Arabic. We should all make an effort to understand the Quran in Arabic so that we understand the real meaning. Otherwise we have to rely on translations and a lot of times people twist around the translation for people who don’t know Arabic.

So what is the grammatical evidence? Allah (swt) says in the verse (*reads Arabic text*), this ‘say’ over here, what does it mean in Arabic? This ‘*Laam*’ in Arabic is called ‘*Laam-e-Amr*’. *Amr* means ‘commandment’.

Allah (swt) says, ‘*yadhribna*’ means to draw or pull over, this ‘*laam*’ means ‘they should’; e.g. “You should eat green vegetables.” According to the language we’re familiar with, you’ll say it’s fine if I eat them; they’ll make me healthy and she’s telling me something good but if I don’t eat them, it’s no big deal too. That is how we use the word ‘should’. We don’t use it as a serious command.

What Allah (swt) means when He uses the ‘*laam*’, is not it’s ok to do it and it’s ok to not do it too. No, this is the ‘*laam*’ of commandment; that’s why we should look at the grammatical evidence here; this is used in other places of the Quran as well.

Allah (swt) says in Surah At-Talaaq, ‘let the man of means spend according to his means.’ So this ‘*laam*’ is translated as ‘let’, but it means he should do it. Sometimes it’s translated as ‘let’, sometimes as ‘should’ but it actually means ‘must’ and even in ‘must’, e.g. if I say to Maha, ”You must eat cucumbers.” Will you take it as a serious command? No, because the English language is such, or in Urdu, “*Tumhain ye karna chahye*”, it doesn’t have that weight. On the other hand, “*Karo warna mein batati hoon tumhain*”, now that is what it means, this is what this ‘*laam*’ is; do it or else. This is how they should translate it!

Maybe I’m not even explaining it with the force that Allah has meant for this ‘*laam*’ because in Arabic grammar this particular ‘*laam*’ is called ‘*laam-e-amr*’ (*laam* of commandment). Believing women are **commanded** here to pull their veils over their bosoms.

وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ الْجُمُرِينَ عَلَىٰ جُيُوبِهِنَّ

This is not a mere recommendation.

So this is the first evidence.

Slides 69 – 73:

Now evidence from the hadith;

Ibn-e-Masood (ra) reported that the Prophet (pbuh) said, “A woman is an object of concealment for when she goes out, the devil presents her in alluring looks before men.” [Tirmidhi]

And we are all females sitting in this room and we know exactly what this *hadith* means. If any of you think that men are not attracted to you, whether it’s the taxi *wala* or rickshaw *wala* or *pan wala* or the guy next door or the boy in school, you’ve got another thing coming. Now please don’t think all men are like that; I don’t mean it like that but what I’m saying is that the element of attraction is 100% there and Allah (swt) has created us and He is the One Who has kept that attraction, so He knows it’s there and it’s real... as simple as that.

There are so many evidences from the *ahadith*; These are just a few.

Narrated Umme Attya (ra) the Prophet (pbuh) said, “We were ordered to bring out our menstruating women and screened women to religious gatherings and invocations for the Muslims on the two Eid festivals. These menstruating women were to keep away from the *mussallah*...” Obviously they weren’t going to pray but they were going to come to the *Eid gah*. A woman asked, “*Ya Rasul Allah* what about the one who does not have a *jilbab*?” *Jilbab* is the outer covering. *Rasul Allah* (saw) said, “Let her borrow the *jilbab* of her companion.” [Sahih Bukhari]

E.g. if a woman doesn’t have a *jilbab*, let her get one from someone before she leaves the house. *Jilbab* is like an *abaya*. We’ll discuss it in detail when we come to it. Right now we are talking about *hijab* being a commandment.

Narrated Safya bint Shaiba, Ayesha (ra) 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.” [Bukhari and Abu Dawud]

Narrated Umme Salmah (ra), “When the verse that they should cast their outer garments over their persons was revealed, the women of the *Ansar* came out as if they had crows over their heads by wearing outer garments.” [Abu Dawud]

The *Ansar* were the people of Madina. *Wallahu ‘Aalam* how they were wearing the outer garments but they wore them as if they had crows over their heads. These verses were revealed at the time when the women didn’t do *hijab* or wear the *jilbab*, that’s what she said, they cut their waist sheets at the edges and covered themselves up. And in those days, they were very poor. It’s not like they had a wardrobe full of clothes. So they worked with what they had.

Narrated Ayesha (ra), “Riders would pass us when we accompanied *Rasulullah* (saw) while we were in the sacred state (state of *ihram*). When they came by us, we would let down our *jilbabs* from our heads over our faces. And when they passed on we would uncover our faces.” [Abu Dawud] So they would be sitting like that and cover themselves when somebody came.

These ahadith clearly show us the practice of the female companions. Does it sound like they were exercising a choice or following a commandment? Definitely following a commandment of wearing a *hijab* to cover themselves.

To return to the verse in question, the phrase “*wa-lyadhribna bikhumurihinna ala juyubihinna*,” is a command for women to draw their veils over their bosoms. Allah Most High did not say, “And tell the believing women to put on their veils,” because implicit in the verse is the understanding that women were already expected to veil. However, unlike the practice at the time of leaving the scarf hanging down the back with the neck and cleavage exposed, Muslim women were to take it one step further and draw the “*khimar*” or veil over the neck and cleavage area. Those who argue that the Qur'an says nothing about veiling are completely misreading this verse. Not only does the Qur'anic text make it clear that women are expected to veil, it also dictates the extent of the veiling, i.e., covering the neck and cleavage.

This point is elucidated by reports from Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, and other women of the Sahaba, who immediately implemented this verse by tearing up pieces of cloth and covering their hair and bodies.

(and to draw their veils over their bosoms), they tore their aprons and veiled themselves [made khimars] with them." [Tafsir Ibn Kathir]

The actions of the Sahaba, may Allah be pleased with them all, did not indicate that hijab was optional. I find it interesting that hijab was not legislated in stages, as opposed to the ban on intoxicants. When the verses in Surat al-Nur were revealed, the female Sahaba immediately covered themselves. Would that we had a fraction of their iman!

We will stop here as we are totally out of time. Today all we have done is open up the issue and taken the fear and apprehension of talking about the H word out of all of us. And we have seen two very important pieces of evidence that clearly prove that hijab is a commandment of Allah (swt), for believing women to cover themselves in front of non-mehram guys.

InshaAllah next time we will continue with understanding this commandment.

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*