

MODULE 5

Class Title: Hijab - Part 2 (2nd part of a 6 lesson series)

Category: Scripture/Popular Culture

Aim of Lesson: To understand the ruling on head covering - Khimar - according to Surah Noor, verse 31

Class format: 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]

Slides 1 – 6:

We began talking about *hijab* last week and we looked at two verses of the Quran.

Does anyone remember which ones? Surah Noor verse 31 and Surah Al-Ahzaab verse 59, and we discussed the first question; is *hijab* the commandment of Allah (swt)? What was the conclusion we came to? Yes it is.

And we looked at the grammatical evidence last week and we looked at the evidence from the *ahadith* and I told you that I've just taken a few *ahadith* and there are many more.

Slides 7 – 9:

Lets look at some other historical evidence.

Look at these pictures. There's only one illustration and the rest are pictures. Please remember photography was not invented back then, we talked about it when we talked about clothes. This is an illustration, this is not a photograph. These are all photographs. This is Iran. This is Afghanistan. This is my favorite; it's Europe. And what date is this? 1926. Look at this woman. This is Malaysia. This is an old picture, early 1900's she's a princess. And of course this is our part of the world; pre-partition Pakistan.

Were all these women all over the world, throughout the centuries, completely daft? In those days it wasn't like today. There wasn't Fox TV or any news channel which would broadcast that this is the fashion because a lot of times we hear today that these women are only following Arab culture. Was there any way of communicating that you should cover your head like this or cover your face? No! There was no mass communication.

How did they communicate? They had the Quran and *Sunnah*. They always interpreted these verses in a certain way and then all of a sudden in the 20th century people said that the interpretation of the Quran was done wrong for all these years and now they were going to interpret it correctly!

Think about it! It's not even difficult to come to a certain conclusion when you look at this evidence. Just think about it!

We also hear nowadays that all their husbands and sons and fathers were like savages and beat them, and asked them to go wear the *hijab*! She's supposed to wear it otherwise she's dead! People also assume that Muslim women have no noodles up here! So we have evidence from the traces of historical evidence. Even today we see Hindu women covering their heads because they lived under Muslim rule for a very long period of time. Actually the *hijab* was not an issue back then. This is a very new phenomenon. Muslim women were covered, end of story.

These days people are trying to sell us these rationales; "*Hijab* is a recommendation of Allah (swt), a personal choice of a Muslim woman or a religious identity."

Not true; wearing or not wearing a *hijab* is not my choice. Sure, I'm a Muslim out of choice; this is my freewill and at the end of the day, being a Muslim is a choice. You can either be one or not. But once you declare you are a Muslim woman – then commandments of Allah (swt) apply on you and that is that.

Slides 10 – 16:

Rasool Allah (pbuh)'s Prophet hood dates to about 610 CE. When we go further back in history, we see that even before that, women – believing women were covered. You will not find any image of Maryam (as) in the Christian tradition without being covered – in *hijab*.

St. Paul's saying in the Bible: "Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonors his head. But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, for that is one and the same as if her head were shaved" (1 Cor. 11:4,5)

If you see 'biblical' women in illustrations, you'll always see something like this.

Clement of Alexandria, an elder writing from Egypt around the year 190, counseled:

"Let the woman observe this, further. Let her be entirely covered, unless she happens to be at home. For that style of dress is grave, and protects from being gazed at. And she will never fall, who puts before her eyes modesty, and her shawl; nor will she invite another to fall into sin by uncovering her face. For this is the wish of the Word, since it is becoming for her to pray veiled." [Clement, *The Instructor* 3.12]

This is in from Clement in the Old Testament; the Jewish testament. The New Testament is the Bible. It is beautiful and it looks like it's right out of the Quran, like it could be from Surah Noor!

Hippolytus, a leader in the church at Rome around the year 200, compiled a record of the various customs and practices in that church from the generations that preceded him. His *Apostolic Tradition* contains this statement:

And let all the women have their heads covered with an opaque cloth, not with a veil of thin linen, for this is not a true covering.

These images are from the catacombs of Rome dating back to the year 200. Do you see hijabs on the ladies heads? Yup – absolutely there.

The Prophet (pbuh) got his prophet hood in 610 CE. Allah (swt) sent the last Prophet to renew His old traditions, not to demolish them; to take out the *shirk* and keep the things that were upright and straight and good and pious. Islam is not a religion of demolishing things. Islam came to reconstruct, to renovate. Please remember the *deen* of Ibrahim (as), the *deen* of Adam (as), the *deen* of Isa (as), of Musa (as) and the *deen* of Muhammad (as) is the same *deen*. They were perfected on Prophet (pbuh) and that is the end. So the commandments have been there. But the People of the Book have hidden them away, they have forgotten them. And that is the reason why the Prophet (pbuh) came; so he could revitalize and inject a new life into that. Islam re-constructs; it upholds the same commandments. The prophets of Allah were all on the same *deen*.

Slide 17:

Let us go back to the 3 questions we are going to answer about hijab.

What is Allah (swt) asking of us

How this commandment is applied

And finally why has this commandment been given.

Slides 18 – 20:

Now we will look at what commandments are derived from these two verses.

Allah (swt) gives a commandment in the Quran and then the Prophet (pbuh) translates it into action for us; and of course there are religious scholars. What is the source of the knowledge? It is the Quran and *Sunnah* and the interpretation comes from different scholars.

Seven commandments have been derived from these two verses and it is important to break them down so that we can implement them; because commandments are there in the Quran to be implemented and we can only apply them in our daily lives if we break them down into pieces.

How do we eat food? Do we stuff a whole pizza in our mouths? No, we cut it into pieces so that we can have one piece at a time; simple logic.

So we get seven commandments from these verses. What are they? The believing women have been asked:

1. To lower their gaze
2. To guard their modesty
3. Not to display their beauty except what is apparent of it
4. To extend their head coverings to cover their bosoms
5. Not to display their beauty except to their husbands or fathers or the list of the *mehrams*
6. Not to strike their feet so as to make known what they hide
7. To draw their outer garments close around themselves.

These are the seven commandments. *Alhamdulillah*, for our ease and better understanding, they have been broken down into two:

Three commandments relate to our attitude or behavior;

1. lowering the gaze,
2. guarding the modesty
3. and not striking the feet on the ground so as to give knowledge of what is hidden

We will cover the behavior aspect after we are finished with the dress.

And the other four commandments can be expressed as three rules of dressing.

Remember we started off with *haya* and how it is translated into what we wear. And then we came to *hijab*. What is *hijab*? Is it a piece of cloth? No, it's an attitude, right? So these commandments are split into two; some dealing with your dress and some dealing with your attitude. And that's what makes the real *hijab*; dress plus attitude. So first we'll do the dress then we'll come to the attitude.

From the last four commandments these three rules can be derived:

1. Not displaying beauty beyond what is apparent of it except to the people listed in Surah Noor; verse 31
2. Extending the head covering to cover the bosoms
3. Drawing the outer garment close around

Slide 21:

Let's analyze verse 31 of Surah Noor; It is important to look at the translation in a way that we come as close as possible to the original language; because the closer you get to the source, the better you understand and better the chance of your not deviating. That's the reason why in any Quran course you hear of, they do some basic Arabic grammar; so that you understand the translation. E.g. we say a lot of things in the English language because we're familiar with it; it's a second language. There are certain words that have certain connotations which only a person

who knows the language can understand; and learning grammar is a difficult thing. It's a great idea to read the word to word translation of the Quran and learn it by heart; it really opens up your mind because you understand what Allah (swt) is saying. Then when you listen to the Arabic, you'll understand some of it even though you don't know the Arabic language but because you will have memorized the translation of the Quran with a little bit of grammar, you will know what the nuances are, you will be able to read between the lines. E.g. the word to word translation of *bismillah* is: 'be' - with, 'ism' - name, 'Allah' – Allah; "with name (of) Allah". 'In the name of Allah' is the running translation so that you understand the gist of the meaning. But if people simplify *ehkamaat* (commandments) too much and you don't know their exact meaning, then you'll say that they're not commandments. It's important to know first hand what's written.

Slide 22:

Remember '*Lee*' means 'should'? The 'should' that I talked about; which actually means 'must' pull or extend. Some translations HAVE actually used the word 'must'. 'Be' means 'with' or 'from'. That is the same 'be' in '*bismillah*'. '*Yadhrib*' means to pull or extend, 'be' with or from, '*khumar*' is the plural of '*khimaar*', which means head covering. '*Hunna*' means theirs; it is a female pronoun. '*Alaa*' means upon, '*joyoob*' means chests or bosoms, '*hunna*' again, their (feminine). [*The Arabic is read*]

See this whole verse? 'And extend/pull their head coverings to cover their bosoms.

Slide 23:

khumar is the plural of *khimaar*. If you travel a little and interact with people, you'll find that even Muslims who aren't Arabs but who learn Arabic use this word *khimaar* and use the word *jilbab*. They don't use *abaya*! They use the exact word that is used in the Quran. So when they say a head covering they say *khimaar*. They don't say, "Why aren't you wearing a *hijab*?" They'll say, "Why aren't you wearing a *khimaar*?" Or they'll say, "I need to wear a *jilbab*." It is like a *chaadar*.

Slide 24:

In the old days; the Days of Ignorance or *jaahilyah* that is, before the light of the Quran and the *noor* of the Prophet (pbuh) came; by the way, *Jaahilyah* means ignorance about *maarifah* (recognition) of Allah (swt).

So in those days, this is somewhat the kind of outfit women used to wear. They would have something on their head somewhat like this. You can see the illustration but they were open like this. They had a *khimar* or head covering on their heads.

Slide 25:

If I ask Fatima to **pull up** her socks, what does that mean? What is the first thing we will know? That's she's wearing socks!

I'm not asking Amina to pull her socks because she isn't wearing them. I'd say Amina **put on** your socks but to Fatima I'm saying **pull up** your socks because she's wearing them.

So when Allah (swt) says, "Extend your head coverings, it's obvious that the head covering is already there!

Slide 26:

Who's got a head covering in front of them? Look at this picture; let's put it on this way because that's how they used to put it on in those days.

[**Note:** do a practical demonstration of wearing a *khimar* on the head and extending it over your bosom in 2 ways:

1. Pull the front down – like in slide 26 – with face covered
2. Bring it around to cover your bosom with face left open]

So I will tell you how because there are two interpretations of it. If it's worn like this, and Allah (swt) is saying extend you head coverings to cover your bosoms, how are you going to do that? There you go. It's already there, now extend it.

That's where the difference of opinion lies; some people say that extending would be like this woman has got on, but a lot of people believe that extending means like a *ghoonghat*.

I will show how you do that. Your hair is already covered! It covers your forehead, your eyebrows, your nose, your mouth, your chin, your neck and the back of your neck.

It is essential to understand the two interpretations of the command to "draw their headcovers over" among the women of the Companions and the generation that immediately succeeded them, on which are based the two views of the Four Schools, namely, cover everything or expose only the face and hands:

Some women drew from the top down, some from the sides and over. The result for the first category was to cover the face, while the second category left the face uncovered according to one's own discretion.

So the other understanding of extending it means like this. Have you heard of Ibn-Abaas (ra)? He was one of the important *sahabas*. He was the son of Abbaas bin Abdul Mutalib (ra). He was one of the greatest *tafseer* scholars because the Prophet (pbuh) had prayed for him that Allah (swt) give him knowledge of the Quran. His interpretation is the way the Irani women cover. When they cover - and this what we learn from the *sahabyat* - they used to have their faces covered like this. This is how they extended it and we see a lot of women doing it today.

Even if we assume there are two schools of thought about covering your face, the fact is that the rest of you is completely covered; there is no difference of opinion on that. Your entire body is covered, your entire head is covered and just this thing is open; that is the difference in opinion. Other than that there is no difference of opinion.

Slides 27 - 30:

Can you think of any other way of pulling your head covering and miraculously stay uncovered? Try it!

Some of you were saying – it doesn't say to cover hair. So, when I tell you to pull up your socks, wouldn't your toes be covered? Duh huh!

Your toes will show if you have holes in your socks! And that means two things: You are either a messy lazy slob, who cannot be bothered about her clothes or a poor little street urchin who cannot afford to cover her feet properly!

Slides 31 – 33:

A leg garment that does not cover toes is NOT a SOCK could be leg warmers.

Just like a head covering that does NOT cover all the parts mentioned above ... can be a cap, or a helmet, or a beret, or a hat, or a graduation cap, or a swimming cap or even a party hat ... But certainly NOT A KHIMAR.

Because a *khimar* looks something like this. Even a company like Ikea has these head coverings for their female employees.

The only kind of head covering that doesn't cover the hair in some way is a halo And you need to be an angel to have one!

Unfortunately a lot of the times we take the commandments of Allah (swt) out of context. Allah (swt) has kept Surah Fatihah in the beginning for a reason. Surah Noor is much later; first you have to get to know who Allah (swt) is, and then comes the *hijab*. We don't even touch this topic in the lower classes, not until you come all the way up here. Allah (swt) has made learning progressive as well. It's like not knowing your ABC's and being asked to write an essay.

Allah (swt) is telling us a system of *haya*; He isn't just getting us covered up. Our understanding about it should be very clear. Ask women why they cover and a lot of times they have no clue; lack of knowledge is a serious issue with us. We have just put the Quran all beautifully wrapped up, on our top shelves.

However, if your parents ask you to do something and you do it even if you don't understand it 100%, you get double rewards for it; you're listening to your parents and fulfilling Allah's commandments.

An important thing to understand is that if you understand that this is a commandment, then *Alhamdulillah*. But even if you don't understand why, just do it. *Insha Allah* the understanding will come. Keep praying and ask for Allah's (swt) help. E.g. if someone doesn't get up at *fajr* for some reason but he begs Allah to make him get up for *fajr*, he's making an effort and Allah will see that he's trying his best. But just refusing to offer prayers is problematic because you are negating a commandment of Allah (swt).

This is unfortunately what is happening with Muslims today; we are distorting our *deen* completely for our own convenience and in order to be progressive Muslims, whatever that means!

Slides 34 – 37:

The confusion in your heads is understandable. One confusing factor in our part of the world is our own "*khimar*" like the *dupatta* going the way of the dinosaurs understandable. From traditional head covering – which was the purpose of *duppata* in the first place, it has now become a fashionable scarf cum accessory. Covering the head is for the urdu medium types and you know maids.

In our part of the world, in the subcontinent particularly Pakistan, one thing that causes us a lot of confusion is this. What? The *dupatta*. Because we say '*dupatta mera mal mal ka*' '*laal dupatta mal mal ka*', it is supposed to be a garment which has got some dodgy innuendos.

Other thing is that we don't really feel the majority of the people we move around with, wear the *dupatta* like this. Do we? No. how do we wear a *dupatta*? Like *this*. So we say that pull your *khimaar*, because to be honest if you're wearing your *dupatta* like *that* then this won't be your *khimaar*. It doesn't have to be a particular type of scarf. So when we are wearing it like *this* on our neck then if we pull it down our bosoms, then what do we say? *Chalo ji ho gaya, Allah shukar* (I am done with covering my bosom).

This causes a lot of confusion and you do hear a lot of women saying that. I've heard people say that, I'm not making it up. '*Ke nahin nahin sirf seena sahi se cover hona chahye*' (only your bosom should be covered properly). Because this is how you wear your *dupatta*. This is a cultural thing. This is not how everybody dresses in the world. Since we have to deal with situations in our own contexts, in our context this is 'confusion'.

Dupatta for us is more like an accessory rather than something to cover ourselves with. And again like it is said if the *dupatta* is like *this* then pulling it down is going to be like.... So if we look at how a lot of women and I can safely say that the majority of women do cover their heads. Perhaps we don't rub shoulders with them that much, but majority does. So if we look at the commandments from that perspective, then it makes complete sense.

Slide 38:

You know when we look at pictures from the *jaahilya*. Look at this one, looks exactly like the one we saw of the *jaahilya*. Women working in the field that's what they do with their *khimaar*. This is her *khimaar*. So how you put it on makes it your *hijab*! Like I said, we think that if we pull our *dupattas* down to cover our chests, then we are done. This is the closest way.

Slides 39 - 40:

Remember what I told you about Ibn-e-Abbaas (ra)? The way he showed how the *sahabyat* used to cover, the Iranian women, the way they wear their *chaadars*. They wear *chaadars*, they don't wear scarves like the way I wear it. They wear it like this and they cover half their faces like this. Can you see that? More than half of their faces are covered. But sometimes they have the whole thing covered with just a little bit showing. This is the nearest to the thing.

But remember when we were talking about the dress code, that Allah (swt) knows that people from different cultures wear different types of clothes. So there is no one definition of exactly what a *hijab* should look like. As long as it's covering, that's the important thing.

Some people wear 'western' clothes. As long as you are meeting the dress requirements and your body is covered properly and you've got a *hjiab* on, no problem.

It's very important to understand that. *Shalwar qameez* is a cultural dress. It's not an Islamic dress. Islamic dress can be anything provided its covering you. Islamic *hijab* can be any type of cloth. Like she's wearing it in that way some people wear it in another way. As long as the job is done and it's covering you properly, *Alhamdulillah*.

Slide 41:

Just to recap what we learnt today:

The phrase "wa-lyadhribna bikhumurihinna ala juyubihinna," is a command for women to draw their veils over their bosoms. Allah (swt) 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 Quran says nothing

about veiling are completely misreading this verse. Not only does the Quranic 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 and according to another interpretation face as well.

This point is elucidated by reports from Aisha (ra) and other women of the Sahaba, who immediately implemented this verse by tearing up pieces of cloth and covering their hair and bodies. Bukhari recorded that Aisha (ra) said: "May Allah have mercy on the women of the early emigrants. When Allah revealed the verse: [وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَىٰ جُيُوبِهِنَّ]

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

InshaAllah next time we will look at the other commandment related to dress – drawing te outer garment close around.

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*