

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Children of Adam! We have sent down on you a garment to cover your shameful parts. (Qur'an, 7:26)



ATTIRE OF THE HOLY PROPHET

English Version of the Urdu Treatise

“Libas-i-Huzoor (لباسِ نبویؐ)”

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Mas'ud Ahmed
M. A., Ph. D., Gold Medalist

Translated by
Major (Rtd) Daud Humayun Beg

International Series

19

IDARA-I-MAS'UDIA

6/2, 5-E NAZIMABAD, Karachi (Sindh)
(Islamic Republic of Pakistan)
1427/2006

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*Children of Adam! We have sent down on you a garment to cover your shameful parts.
(Qur'an, 7:26)*

ATTIRE OF THE HOLY PROPHET (صلى الله عليه وسلم)

19

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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ
نَحْمَدُهٗ وَنُصَلِّیْ عَلٰی رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِیْمِ



Dress is a natural need of mankind. Thus when Prophet Adam's (May Allah's Blessings be on him) dress was removed, he covered his body with the leaves, which the Holy Quran describes:

“Then Satan made him aware that the hidden parts of his body had been exposed.”¹

In another place Quran declares: -

“He was instigated to the extent that when his heavenly dress was removed, the private parts of his body were exposed and he hid his body with the leaves.”²

It is therefore discernable that wearing a dress has been a tradition. In the Holy Quran three exquisite clothes³ and a silken dress is mentioned.⁴

When Prophet Adam (May Allah's Blessings be on him) came to this world Allah showered his blessings on His people and descended a dress for them. Accordingly it is mentioned in the Holy Quran at one place: -

“O you children of Adam without doubt we have prescribed upon you a dress so that you can conceal your body; it is for your adornment and it is best for abstinence.”⁵

The last sentence in the verse “*Wa libas al-Taqwa zalika khayr*” has within it a worldly connotation. “*Libas-i-Taqwa*,” is dress for the righteous. The dress decides the fate of nations. Allah in His infinite grace has described a dress and for the warriors he taught Hazrat Daud (*May Allah be pleased with him*) how to make a special dress of armour. It is mentioned in the Holy Quran:

“And we have taught him to make a dress so that it could protect you from your fire.”⁶

The Holy Prophet (*May Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him*) also used this dress in the battlefield. Besides, he made a dress for the day and at night made a nocturnal shroud and is thus mentioned in the Holy Quran:

“And concealed you at night.”⁷

At one place the Quran says:

“And rendered you with a cover at night.”

At another place the Quran says:

“It is He who has provided you with cover at night.”⁸



Anything that covers the body is a dress. The fundamental thing about a dress is that it should be made out of legitimate earnings. Dress has natural significance and an impact on human life. If a person wearing it is a Prophet, it has strong bearing on him. There are four other purposes for wearing a dress:

1. Physical (bodily)
2. Moral
3. National and religious
4. Spiritual

The purpose of the dress from the physical aspect is to protect the body from the sweltering heat in summers and from the rigours of winter. The moral purpose is to conceal those parts that are forbidden. The national and religious purposes are that the national identity should be preserved and that a Muslim should be identified in the society as such. The spiritual reason is that the eyes should be prevented from an invidious search. Amongst the Arabs, except the Kuresh, some tribes did not consider nudity a form of vice. During the Pilgrimage (Hajj), they would remove

their clothes while performing the circuit. Some non-Muslim Hindus from India used to pray at the body privities. In Islam, covering the body privities were defined and laid down for men and women, which had astonishing effects on the society. In Islam even in solitude exposure of one's body privities is disliked. On insistence from one of his companions, The Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) replied:

“Allah is watching. We should exercise utmost modesty before Him.”⁹

On nudity, Prophet Mohammad (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) said,

“Do not remain in the nude as angels dwell with you and withdraw from you if you are in that state. You should maintain your modesty.”¹⁰

Under the Shariah laws in Islam, it is mandatory for men to keep the area from the navel to the knees covered; for the independent women to cover the area from the hair on the forehead till the ankles; for the slave girls to remain covered from the stomach and back. Such a dress that transcends these limits is against the dignity of a Muslim. Every Muslim men and women should be an example of Islamic self-respect. Iqbal has aptly said:

'Self-respect is a great thing in this world of struggle

Where even a mendicant can be blessed with marvelous success.'



House, dress and food are the important elements of our lives but these did not feature in the same priority in Hazrat Mohammad's (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) life. They formed only a part of his needs. Houses of mud or concrete, simple dress, light meals are the essentials of our lives – all else are greed!

The Holy Prophet, (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*), prescribed prayers as the *raison de etre* of life. The Creator said the same and very aptly said but whenever the word prayer is used, our minds visualize a mosque. That pervades a person, especially one who does not pray, with concentration and causes him to detract from the righteous path. Without doubt prayers, fasts, Pilgrimage (Hajj), alms giving are a Commandment while the implications of prayers are vast and comprehensive. Every facet of our life is included in it but unfortunately, in the *raison de etre* of our lives, the concept of prayers is not adhered to. Every legitimate task should be performed for Allah's pleasure. This is

the crux of morality. This is where our intentions matter. The state of selfishness is evident everywhere. The concept of prayer gives an orderly direction to a society where everyone runs to the rescue of another; no one is envious of the other nor pulls another's leg. This is a society of human beings.

The Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) stressed on wearing dresses that were covered and modest rather than those that were revealing. Unfortunately, revealing dresses are widely accepted and are in vogue. Very few generally know about the essence of wearing modest dresses. If this were told to the advocates who **professed** revealing dresses, they **would be astounded**.

Our eyes are **always focussed** on the outwardly manifested. The Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) always saw things in complete modesty. His slaves also followed their master. Many people today have an obsession for wearing elegant clothes. Clothes are a status symbol today while yesterday it was vice versa.

The Second Caliph of Islam, Hazrat Umar (*May Allah be Pleased with him*), called "*Farooq-i-'Azam*," i.e. renown for his perception as one who could distinguish between the right from the wrong, was seen walking with patched

clothes. The Hindus returning from Lanka to Madina Munawwara saw this astonishing spectacle and on their return to Lanka, narrated what they had witnessed. Since then people have started wearing patched clothes as a tribute to him. God is Great! (Mas'ud 'Alam: Hindustan 'Arbun ki Nazar Main, Azamgarh, 1920, p.205)

The patched clothes adorning the body of Hazrat Umar Farooq got such acclaim that overseas Hindus also became his admirers. Where are we heading? If people saw us in clothes that are tattered and torn, our image would be degraded. Character is that which leaves its indelible marks on the world. We have increased our needs in excess of requirements, which is the worst form of extravagance. We remain engrossed renovating our homes, making elegant clothes and preparing rich meals; careless about our life and unaware of its consequences. We are haunted by this fear. How can we find solace? It is absolute madness. For this mental state the Holy Quran has indicated:

“You have gone mad in your craving for more, eventually saw your graves.”¹¹

The Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) taught the people the

way of living rationally; he not only encouraged them, but also taught them the etiquettes of dressing correctly. He declared that human beings were superior to animals but added that some human beings prefer to remain like animals.

The Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings Be upon him*) stressed on wearing a modest dress; gave modesty, confidence, and reassurance and showed the people the path for the righteous.



The discourse of The Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) had its own sweetness – the sweetness of which only his lovers can fathom; people who consider themselves intelligent are virtually bereft of its sweetness; these sweet talks lead us to terminal bounties; these are the harbingers of love. Let us delve on these and understand the beauty of his message. The Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) would wear his national dress and declare:

من تشبه بقوم فهو منهم

“Who resembles himself to any Nation he is from that Nation.”¹²

This Tradition signifies the importance of the national dress, customs and habits. The dress must be such that it is within the means of both the rich and the poor. The Muslim nations no longer prize the importance of their national dress. Their national identity has been lost, too. We should follow the Commandments of The Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) whole-heartedly.

The Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) used the 'Amama,' a turban. He wore the black turban on Eid days. But according to Shaikh Abdul Haq Dehlawi (*May Allah's Blessings be on him*) He (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) generally used the white turban; one of his turbans was called 'Sihab.' Regarding the turban, the Gracious Prophet's (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) advice is worthy of attention:

"Turban for a believer is a matter of prestige and for the people of Arabia, symbolic of respect. When the people of Arabia will part with their turbans, they will virtually dispense with their respect."¹³

In the Arab countries, especially Saudi Arabia the turban has virtually disappeared, being replaced by a rope and a tri-angular chequered

cloth covering their heads, colloquially called “*Iqal*” that has become a national custom. There is no doubt that this is an innovation in religion but most ignore it. True innovation in religion is that by which the tradition is obliterated. We are witnessing the Gracious Prophet’s (*May Allah’s Peace and Blessings be upon him*) prophesy for the people of Arabia and such dereliction of a ancient Tradition can only be modernrestored through its compliance. Thank God, the turban exists in the sub-continent but is gradually diminishing. Amongst the scholars and patriarchs the tradition of the rope and cap is common. Cap is a ancient tradition but replacing the turban with the rope appears to be modern innovation. The Holy Prophet (*May Allah’s Peace and Blessings be upon him*) used a white cap, caps of Yemen origin, Syrian caps, Egyptian caps, caps that covered the ears, caps that stuck to the head and barb caps; he also used the steel helmet. Hazrat Salma (*May Allah Be Pleased with her*), wife of the Holy Prophet (*May Allah’s Peace and Blessings be upon him*) said that:

amongst his clothes, he liked the shirt,¹⁴

i.e. the shirt with a pocket worn under the “*Aba*”, a fitted gown closed from the front. The Holy Prophet (*May Allah’s Peace and Blessings*

be upon him) sometimes had his collars up to the shoulders; he sometimes wore closed collars and sometimes open collars. He also wore dresses made of mixed cotton and wool, and coarse cloth. According to the tradition of Usama bin Zayd during his sickness The Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) led the Friday and Eid prayers wearing the Yemenite sheets. He then had them rolled up and kept for use at the next congregational prayers. He also used a deep red stripe sheet, sometimes a pair, which were colloquially called '*Hulla-i-hamra*' or '*Jabra*' (two Yemeni coloured sheets). The Gracious Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) liked them tremendously. These are called '*Ajrak*' in Sindh (Pakistan) and are two combined sheets in deep red and black dyed colour. In the olden times, these sheets were exported from Sindh to Yemen. Some researchers think that this '*Ajrak*' was called '*Bard-i-Yemani*'; The Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*), also used two green sheets. He wore these green sheets and under garments during the visit of delegations. These garments remained safely in the custody of the Caliphs for some time. When these were worn out, they were hemmed along the borders. The Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) also used two light saffron coloured sheets. According to the traditions of Hazrat 'Ay'isha (*May Allah Be*

Pleased with her), the Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) also used two black sheets. He also used rectangular sheets in green, white and black colour, colloquially called "*Taylisan*"; he also wore big deltoid and square head dress, sheets from Bokhara called 'Bukhrani sheets' with thick borders and he also used black sheets of mixed cotton and woolen cloth. Once he used a sheet with a floral design but as he did not like it, he immediately dispensed with it; he also used 'Bard-i-Sahari, Khamisa (black square blanket), *Qatifa* (white sheet) and *Sahuli* (white clothes).' The headdress had the sign of '*Tarawat*', (dampness) on the forehead, which are oil marks. Hazrat Umar bin Abdul Aziz (*May Allah Be Pleased with him*) put the its droplets of water in the nose of a person who was suffering from an incurable disease. He was cured. This historical event has a warning and advice for those who do not believe in sacredness of the parchment of the Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*). This sacred parchment is also mentioned in the Holy Quran.



The Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) liked green colour but white colour was his favourite. Thus he said:

'it is desirable that you wear the white dress. People should wear the white cloth; give your corpse a white burial shroud because this is better than most of your clothes.' ¹⁵

Although he did not use the pajama and trousers, yet he bought them and also recommended them. Shirts and trousers should be our national dress and thank God they are but some amongst us do not approve wearing this dress at ceremonies. They are seen dressed like strangers. To consider our own things abject and to eulogize sub-standard things of others are not the signs of vibrant nations. These are the signs of sick nations. We have given up our ways and adopted the practices of others. Despite this great sacrifice, we have not won their hearts.

The Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) preferred simple and clean clothes. He also wore extremely exquisite dress; he also wore clothes with patches but never liked ostentatious dresses. (i.e. such a dress that would elevate a particular individual or a society to be more distinguished than the others). The Holy Prophet also wore gowns of different material called '*Jubbas.*' According to the tradition of Hazrat Mughira bin Shaba (*May Allah Be Pleased with her*), The Holy Prophet

(*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) wore the Roman 'Jubba', which is a gown with narrow sleeves; one 'Jubba' was of fine green 'Sundus' (silk brocade) and the other 'Jubba' was of 'Atlas' (satin). All these three 'Jubbas' were used in his battles. One 'Jubba' of the Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) was with Hazrat 'Ay'isha (*May Allah Be Pleased with her*), which was taken by her sister Isma, daughter of Abu Bakar (*May Allah Be Pleased with him*). She said that she washed the garments and from its droplets, she treated the sick. (Madarij vol. 2, p.148) Some of the sacred parchments of The Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) were also in the possession of Hazrat Umar Bin Abdul Aziz (*May Allah's Blessings be on him*) who had placed them in a special house to show them to the nobles. (Madarij vol. 2, p.149) This is a conspiracy of the enemies of Islam that we should be disassociated with everything attributed to our Gracious Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*). This way (God forbid) we are doomed. May Allah save us from the conspiracies of the enemies of Islam (Amin) so that by following the companions (*May Allah be pleased with them*) of the Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) and complying with its traditions, we are the blessed recipients of respect and honour of these things!



The Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) was simple by nature and generally wore simple dress. Although he lived in the town, he liked the village for its social intercourse and its economics so that the poor residents of the villages did not feel estranged to talk to him. The economy should also be strengthened as spending carelessly could destroy the suburban economy. We keep condoning one mistake after the other. Barriers are being erected through fickle protocol between the rich and the poor, between the officers and the subordinates. If there were no protocol, these bigwigs would disappear within no time. May Allah grant us Divine Guidance to follow the simplicity of The Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) Amin! The Holy Prophet lived the life of a simple person. He never had more than a pair of any of his belongings-neither a pair of shirts, or under garments, or two sheets, or two pairs of shoes; at the time of his death, he had on his person one sheet with patches on it and one under garment. Hazrat 'Ay'isha (*May Allah Be Pleased with her*) swore that except those two pieces of cloth, he (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) had nothing on his body at the time of his demise.

“By appearance, he is amongst the poor and even then

He wields more authority as the Sovereign of Madina”

If we take a cursory look at our own situation, some people would be having so many pairs of their belongings that they would tire counting them. Imagine The Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) having only a pair of his dress and that too, with its marked simplicity. His spouse (*May Allah Be Pleased with her*) had the same pristine qualities. In my opinion, adoption of such humility by him (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) and his family is one great miracle amongst his many miracles towards which no one pays any heed. Living in this world despite the natural urges, and to remain so detached with the worldly needs, is really astonishing. There is no such precedence in history. We look for evidence of things contrary to natural phenomenon. Isn't The Holy Prophet's (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) simplicity something similar? The state of our extravagance is in such a state that according to a journalist (Editor 'Sahil' May 1998), the daily expenditure of the President House and the Prime Minister's house are ten million Rupees! You can now surmise the

expenses of the subordinate staff! Unless this disease is cured, the patient will never be cured. Until there is a change at the top, conditions cannot change at the subordinate level. Rhetoric can achieve nothing – revolutions are brought by effective implementation. Whenever The Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) wore a new shirt, turban or sheet, he would suggest a name for all items in the House and address them by the same names. He taught respect for everything thing that existed. The manner in which his slaves were taught to venerate is without precedence even today.



Whenever the Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) wore new clothes, he would invoke Allah's Blessings. These prayers can be traced in the traditions e.g.

- (1) "I thank The Almighty, and Eminent is His Glory, who provided me this beyond my means.
- (2) I entreat You for its Blessings and ask for its goodness and protection from evil; and also the purpose for which this was made for me, I seek your protection.

- (3) I Thank You Allah for providing me with those clothes by which I can cover my privities and receive elegance in this world during my life."

As dress affects both the body and the soul, The Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) by seeking protection from its evil, signaled towards a great psychological and moral secret- you are the confidant of the Creator. How much favour have you bestowed on sinners like us. The Holy Prophet used "Na'layn" (shoes/sandals with wooden soles). He called the person who used these shoes/sandals as the rider. He used the yellow coloured shoes/sandals and stopped from wearing black shoes/ sandals-instead he wore black socks, which is a Tradition. Sometimes in simplicity and humility he also walked bare feet, which is also a tradition.



The Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) taught the art of wearing the under garments and the trouser (*Shalwar*) that should remain above the ankles. Hazayfa bin Yaman (*May Allah Be Pleased with him*) narrates in the tradition:

“The Holy Prophet (*May Allah’s Peace and Blessings be upon him*) caught hold of his ankles or mine and said, this is the place for the under garments (i.e. this is the limit of the under garments). If you do not have the patience, tie it below this. Even then if you have exhausted your patience, then the under garments have no right on the ankles.”¹⁶

The last part of the sentence of the Tradition is meaningful and has a lesson to be learnt i.e. “The under garment has no right on the ankles.” The Holy Prophet (*May Allah’s Peace and Blessings be upon him*) has pointed out the rights of not only the human beings but also the rights of the organs. On the other side, he has saved the Muslims from extravagance, whose perpetrators the Holy Quran has called ‘the brother of the devil.’

“Indeed those who are spendthrifts are the brothers of Satan.” (i.e. those who spend wantonly).¹⁷

That is why, according to Shaikh Abdul Haq (*May Allah keep him in his protection*) ---- the eminent theologian ---- maintains that the trouser should not be suspended below the ankles, as it is forbidden and considered an innovation. There is a majority of such people in our uncivilised society who revel in this.

There is no doubt that a strong economy depends on austerity. On the one hand The Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) has saved us from extravagance while on the other he has not recommended it to those who tie the under garments or their trousers below the ankles and want to show their false dignity or do not want to mend their habits that are contrary to the Traditions. If it were not so, the reason for not being compliant is questionable. Why the insistence to keep the trousers or the under garments below the ankles? It was a custom amongst the Arabs to keep the end of the skirt long and the under garments tied low so as to sweep the floor. This was considered a sign of prestigious indulgence. The princes and the affluent amongst the Arabs revelled in this. It also happens here. For such people The Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) Commanded:

“Anyone who walks by dragging his under garments or the trousers (*Shalwar*) whether in pride or in vanity, Allah will not look up at him on the day of Resurrection.” ¹⁸

(i.e. if anyone does like this, he will be bereft of the Blessings of The Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*)). There is a tradition of Hazrat Salma' (*May Allah Be Pleased*

with her) that Hazrat 'Usman bin 'Affan's (*May Allah Be Pleased with him*) under garments were up to the ankles and he said that his Master and Lord's under garments were also worn likewise. When this became known that this was the habit of The Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) any further discussion by the servant of The Holy Prophet dissipated. The under garments and the trousers should not exceed these limits as were consented to by The Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*). As far as tying it (by dragging the long trousers up side) above the ankles, it will only appear uncomfortable and uncivilised; the real reason for the aversion is that the dress is bereft of beauty and adornment. The Holy Prophet (*May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him*) did not like such a dress that would attract attention and did not like a dress for the ladies that would reveal their body. He did not like bright colours nor liked women dressing like men and vice versa. He declared his imprecation of such category. On matters pertaining to the dress, men and women appear to have become rebellious. Men have started wearing shorts above the knees, these lead to obscenity. The purpose for wearing a dress is not that it is being made to look like a pillow casing for the body but the real purpose is to conceal the body as is commanded. The most painful part of it is

that if the person wearing a trouser (Pantaloon) does not have a cap on his head and is without a beard, he does not appear to be a Muslim unless he is introduced as one. What sort of a Muslim is he who needs to be introduced thus? Women are also on the trail of a rebellion. I wish somebody would convey to them through love and affection the values of the Quran and Islam! Women have great love and a craving for religion but who will tell them? We should make our dress and styles compatible with the Commandments for our homes, for offices and at non-official levels. For our burdened economy, simplicity is very important and this is only possible when we desist from pursuing lust and start worshipping Allah. I wish we could follow the truth and end the double standards! With the body, the soul must be cleansed so that we enjoy the real purpose of life. *Amin!*

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