

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*And stay at homes and don't be immodest like the
immodesty of the preliterate era (Ahzāb, 33 : 33)*



**Woman and
The Veil**
English Version of the Urdu treatise
'Awrat Aur Pardah'

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International Series

6

Idara-e-Mas'udia, Karachi
(Islamic Republic of Pakistan)

Allah's Name To Begin, Most Merciful, Most Gracious

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Allah's Name To Begin, Most Merciful, Most Gracious.

The history of womankind is very painful and awful. It is the worst scar on the face of humanity. Alas! man has wounded the very lap in which he grew up; woman upraised the humanity but she was herself degraded. One could estimate the worthiness of women folk in the eyes of preliterate 'Arabian society by the following ideas of the 'Arab poet:

1. The highest "good" is to bury the girls.¹
2. Mortality is the most favourite guest for a woman.²

The study of Qur'ān bears it out that birth of a female child was anguish for man in that age. Whenever a man heard this sort of news he went in to black despair & remained in that state of anxiety.³ People used to bury their daughters alive. It is said in Qur'ān that buried would be inquired on doomsday that who slayed them & in what offense.⁴ Thus such a brutal father would not be left unpunished. Once a Companion of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) told a dreadful event of depositing her daughter into earth alive. While hearing so, the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) wept along with the narrator.

¹ Niyāz Fatehpuri, *Ṣaḥābiyyāt*. Karachi: 1962, p.13

² *ibid* ., p.31

³ *Qur'ān*, al-Zukhruf, 43 : 17

⁴ *Qur'ān* al-Takwīr 81 :8-9

The situation of India was quite worst than 'Arab; here alive wives were burnt along with the dead bodies of their husbands. This practice was called as "sati." One of the eminent historian of France Dr. Gustao Li Bon wrote:

*"This custom had gone to be common in India because the Greek historians had mentioned it."*⁵

Ibn-i-Batuta on his visit to India witnessed these horrible views & subsequently mentioned them in his Travels.⁶ He got faint on seeing such a terrible scene & was going to fall from the horse but people supported him.⁷ In 1839, Lord Bentinck declared it a heinous crime to be "sati" or to assist the practice of "sati". Even then a dreadful event took place in India in which alive widow was inflamed along with the funeral pile of her husband. This news was heard so surprisingly around the world

Europe is also not 'backward' in this regard. In 1494 & 1521-22 (C.E) many women & children had been slaughtered in the accusation of enchantment or magic.⁸ According to Dr. Springer about ninety thousand women were inflamed in different non-sense charges by

⁵ Dr. Gustao Li Bon , *Tamaddun-i-Hind*, (Urdu Translation by Sayyid 'Ali Bilgrāmi) Karachi : 1962, p.238

⁶ Abū 'Abd Allah bin Batuta, *Safar Namaḥ Ibn-i- Batuta*, (Urdu Translation by Ra'īs Aḥmad Jafarī) Karachi: 1986, p.5.

⁷ *ibid.*, p.36-37.

⁸ Niayz Fatehpuri, *Ṣaḥābiyyāt*, p.11.

Christians.⁹ Human conscience trembles to hear the tyrannical oppressions of Jews on Bosnian women. Today, America is said to be the most developed continent but the situation is not contrary here: the inhuman behaviour is at alarming rate which is really hard to find in any period of history. A woman is being raped after every fifth minute. Thus 288 cases of forcible rapes occur in twenty four hours. Ask to your conscience is it heaven or hell? While the sum of miscellaneous offenses is much more than this. About eighteen hundred crimes are committed around the clock.¹⁰

Islam is very kind towards the fair sex. Allah sent the Most Merciful & Compassionate Prophet (ﷺ) who chose perfume and the woman among the worldly things. The Russian philosopher Tolstoy (d. 1910 C.E.) presented the following tradition referring to the conduct of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ):

“Worldly things are only wealth & riches; the good riches of the world is the chaste woman.”¹¹

The generous attitude of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) toward female species would be recorded in golden words. Regarding his kind behaviour the following speeches & events may be noted:-

⁹ ibid.

¹⁰ *Daily Jung*, May 5th, 1993 Karachi.

¹¹ Tolstoy, *Paighambar-i-Islam*, (Urdu Translation by Muhammad Fayz al-Hasan), Lahore: 1920, p.45.

1. A Holy Companion (*رضي الله تعالى عنه*) asked, “O The Allah’s Prophet! To whom I owe the most?” The Prophet (ﷺ) replied, “Your mother.” This query was asked thrice & the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) replied the same, i.e, your mother. When it was inquired fourth time, “To whom I owe the most?” The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) answered, “Your father.”¹²

You must have noted that how Islam pays regard to “mother.”

2. When the mother of Ḥaḍrat ‘Alī, Ḥaḍrat Fatimah bint Asad (*رضي الله تعالى عنها*) expired (d. 11 A.H./632 C.E); The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) presented His auspicious cover let for the coffin. Further more, when the grave was dug, the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) Himself alighted & made an auxiliary grave with His hands; He took out the sand & laid down to examine it ----- Allaho Akbar! (Allah is Great). What to say about the greatness of that grave!

Now this grave is surrounded by concrete walls. Might be to disappoint the visitors from the pilgrimage of the shrine.

3. When Ḥaḍrat Umm-i-Salmah (*رضي الله تعالى عنها*) became widow, she also had orphan children. It was the time of worry that she had no protector. Meanwhile the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) sent His marriage proposal to her Ḥaḍrat Umm-i-Salmah (*رضي الله تعالى عنها*) had a family, so she thought that Holy Prophet (ﷺ) might feel burden of her children. Thus she said by presenting her excuse, “*I have a family*

¹² *Bukhārī & Muslim Sharif*. Agreed Upon. (Muttaliq ‘Alayh)

& orphan children are along-with me.” But the answer gave by the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is a warning & advice for those men who avoid to bear the burden of widows having children. The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) said, *“Your family is the family of Allah & His Rasūl.”*¹³ Allaho Akbar!

4. Once a foster sister of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) was caught in jihad or crusade. Her name was Shima bint Harith & she was not a believer. When Shima was presented before the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ), He recognized her & she was honoured to sit on the sacred sheet of the Prophet. The Most Sympathetic Brother asked, *“If you want to stay with me; you may stay. If you want to go back to your tribe; you may go.”* Shima replied, *“I want to go back to my tribe.”* The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) sent her with great honour & respect along with the traditional gifts of camels & sheep.

These events reveal how our Holy Prophet (ﷺ) was kind towards women. When Ḥaḍrat Muḥammad (ﷺ), entered Madīnah Sharīf first time, ladies & young girls came out to receive their beloved Prophet (ﷺ) & sang anthems of marry & gay. They were excited on the arrival of the Allah’s Most beloved Prophet in al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah & that he would stay in their neighbour hood. Their happiness could be estimated from the following loving couplet:

¹³ ibid. Ref: *Zurqānī*, Vol: 2, p. 282 & *Madāriḡ al-Nabūwwa*, Vol:2, p.815.

We are; the daughters of Banu Najjār. How luckiest we are that Muḥammad (ﷺ) would be the neighbour of ours.

Ah! When the time of union of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) with Allah came; the Holy wives were present around him to serve their Holy spouse. Those were the moments of agony & anguish. Ḥaḍrat Safiyah (رضى الله تعالى عنها) was saying, “O Allah! please endow me all the anguish of the Prophet.” The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) was listening that lovable prayer; He said, “Safiyah told the truth.” Thus He announced the will, “When men have offered Salat-o-Salām then ask women to come in queues & present Salat-o-Salām.”¹⁴ Subhān Allah! (Good God!). What a greatness that He also remembered the woman folk at the time of departure. All these facts are glorious for womankind. They should be proud of it as much as they could.

No religious scriptures gave importance to fair sex as presented by Qur’ān-i-Ḥakīm. Surah Maryam was dedicated by the name of Ḥaḍrat Maryam (‘Alayh al-Salām). Surah Baqara, Surah Tehrīm, Surah Nūr, etc., posses many injunctions & propositions for women. Moreover, names of the most auspicious women are

¹⁴ Shaykh ‘Abd al Haq Mūhaddith Dehlawī, *Madārig al-Nabūwwa*, Vol: 2, p.440.

mentioned in Qur'ān. For instance, Ḥaḍrat *Eve* (Ḥawwa), Ḥaḍrat *'A'isha*, wives of Ḥaḍrat *Zakariyya* & Ḥaḍrat *Ibrahim* ('*Alayh-al-Salām*); daughters of Ḥaḍrat *Shu'ayb*, mother & sister of Ḥaḍrat *Moses*; wife of Ḥaḍrat *Joseph*, the queen of *Pharaoh*, the queen *Saba*, Ḥaḍrat *Maryam* (Mary), & *Shahabiyyat* (شہابیات).

Allah made the marital relationship of man & woman as sacred that He called it One among His signs.¹⁵ The aim and object of marriage in Islam is to attain rest and consolation. This relationship is titled by love & care without the pollution of lust. This pure concept of Islam would not be found in any other religion. The German philosopher Nietzsche says about feminine class:

“The sole object of woman’s life is to serve man & remain in his custody.”¹⁶

Tolstoy was also pessimist about women. While he gave his opinion, he said:

“Man is obliged to be Good with woman. But he should not loose her rein & confine her in the house. The house is quite enough for woman’s liberty.”¹⁷

Tolstoy did not keep good opinion about the sacred relationship of Nikah or Matrimony. It might be because he had been unsuccessful in this experience. He writes:

¹⁵ Qur'ān, Al-Rūm 30:21.

¹⁶ Niyāz Fatehpuri, *Shāhābiyyāt*, p.14.

¹⁷ Tolstoy, *Paghambar-i-Islam*, (Urdu Translation by Muḥammad Fayz al-Ḥasan, Lahore : 1920, p.54.

“Matrimony is a mere deceit & fraud in our age. We take it as a mean to sensualism.”¹⁸

Allah al-Mighty gave many facilities and privileges to women. He the Lord has mercy for a woman in misery & adversity. For instance, a divorcee woman could stay in the home of her husband till the time of *'iddat*. The husband has to provide her full comfort & rest. If the divorced woman is pregnant; the husband has to bear all the expenses of her pregnancy & is obliged to take care of her. After the birth of a child if the divorced wife feeds the baby for two years; husband has to pay for those years.¹⁹

All these facts might seem to be strange but these propositions are deduced from Qur'ān. Usually we do not tell these facts to women but we are quite aware of our rights. Women are allowed to do business according to the Islamic Law, i.e., Shari'a. It is written in Qur'ān that man has share in his earning & woman has share in her earning.²⁰ The pious wife of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), Ḥaḍrat Zaynab bint Jahash (رضة بنت جحش) tans the leather & sell it. While she distributed the earnings as *alms* amongst poor & needy persons.²¹

¹⁸ ibid.

¹⁹ *Qur'ān*, al-Talāq, 65:6.

²⁰ *Qur'ān*, al-Nisā, 4:32.

²¹ Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalāqī, *Al-Aṣabah Fi Ma'rifa al-Ṣuḥāba*, Vol: 2, p.602.

Islam respects the ego of the women who live in homes & so bounds men to not enter inside the house without permission.²² If it is required to talk to a lady then man has to speak behind the veil in a mannerful & respectful way.²³ When a man is invited at a home where ladies are also present then he should be back after meal instead of chattering and staying in vain.²⁴ By the kind personality of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) we have been given all these manners & morals. Now it is our misfortune that we do not act upon them.

Allah created us. Who other than Him could be knower of our nature? Who knows “right” & “wrong” other than Him? For what we are ordered & from what we are abstained to are solely for our own sake. Allah is Carefree. He is Sufficient in His Self. Just think what He could demand from people? Almighty orders for our comfort. Injunctions about veil are for the betterment of women; if they think & reflect! The declaration about veil in Surah *Nūr* & Surah *Aḥzāb* are worthy to be considered. Let us read them:

1. Stay at your home & don't ramble openly like preliterate era.²⁵
2. Cover your chests with (thick) sheets & do not expose your beauty on strangers.²⁶

²² *Qur'ān*, al-Aḥzāb, 53 & al Nūr, 24:27.

²³ *ibid.*

²⁴ *Qur'ān*, al-Aḥzāb, 33:53.

²⁵ *Qur'ān*, al-Aḥzāb, 33:33.

3. But the exposition of gracefulness is allowed before these relatives, i.e., husbands, fathers (grandfathers), father-in-law, nephews, very old men, immature servants & young boys.²⁷

4. If ladies have to come out from the homes, they should cover their faces with a part of their sheet; so that they could be recognized as noble & teasers cannot hurt them.²⁸

5. Muslim men are ordered to keep their eyes below.²⁹

6. Muslim women are also ordered to keep their eyes below.³⁰

You must have noted that Qur'ān requires modesty & sense of honour from us. Tolstoy also presented a tradition regarding an exposed & perfumed woman:

“When a woman scented her-self came out of home aiming in mind that people smell her perfume when she passed; she is an adulterer & the eye of every person is adulterer who sees her.”³¹

²⁶ *Qur'ān*, al-Nūr 24:31.

²⁷ *ibid.*

²⁸ *Qur'ān*, al-Aḥzāb, 33:59

²⁹ *Qur'ān*, al-Nūr, 24:30

³⁰ *Qur'ān*, al-Nūr, 24:31

³¹ Tolstoy *Paḡambar-i-Islam*, Lahore: 1920, p.44.

Present situation is really critical for sensitive persons. “Woman” who should be inside home according to the Islamic law, is roaming openly. “Man” who is asked to let the door open for poor & needy ones, is behind the curtain. Every officer & the bureaucrat of the Islamic society is advised not to set security. But today, an oppressed person cannot even approach the officers. Female manners have adopted by the males. O God! might we use the common sense!

Qur’ān mentions some disciplines about “veil”. Ḥaḍrat ‘A’isha (رضي الله تعالى عنها) acted upon them & presented the best model. There was no equal to Ḥaḍrat ‘A’isha (رضي الله تعالى عنها) in wisdom & knowledge among the Holy Wives of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ). Traditions and History bear out this fact.

1. Once Ḥaḍrat Ḥafṣah bint-i-’Abd al-Raḥmān (رضي الله تعالى عنها) went to see Ḥaḍrat ‘A’isha, wearing thin coverlet. Ḥaḍrat ‘A’isha slit her coverlet & said, “What did Allah said in Surah Nūr?” After this admonition she brought a thick sheet & gave to Ḥaḍrat Ḥafṣah (رضي الله تعالى عنها).³²
2. Once Ḥaḍrat ‘A’isha (رضي الله تعالى عنها) visited a home. There she saw the two young daughters of the host who were offering prayer with a thin wrapper. Ḥaḍrat ‘A’isha (رضي الله تعالى عنها) advised them not to offer prayer with a thin coverlet.³³

³² Abū ‘Abd Allah Muḥammad bin Sa’ad Zalri, *Tabaqāt Ibn Sa’ad*, Vol: 8, p.50

³³ Aḥmad bin Hambal-shaybani, *al-Musnad*, Vol:6, p.796.

3. Ibn Ishāq was a blind man. Once he went to the house of Ḥaḍrat ‘A’isha (رضي الله تعالى عنها). The modest wife of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) put the veil. Ibn Ishāq said, “I cannot see then why did you go behind the curtain?” She replied, “But I have eyes & seeing you.”³⁴
4. In the *sacred* age of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) women were allowed to enter the Mosque Nabawī. But in the caliphate of Ḥaḍrat ‘Umar Fārūq (رضي الله تعالى عنه), (d.23 A.H/643 C.E), women were prohibited to come to the Holy Mosque due to non favourable circumstances. Ḥaḍrat ‘A’isha (رضي الله تعالى عنها) admired and seconded that step & said, *“If the Allah’s Prophet (ﷺ) knew that womens behaviour are like this then He must have stopped them to enter the mosque as the women of Banī Isrā’il were stopped.”*

Afore-said events prescribe that what Ḥaḍrat ‘A’isha demands from women. Where ever the message of Islam went, i.e., in Africa, Asia & Europe, the concept of veil also spread. It has always been counted One among the greatest Islamic disciplines. At the time of peak when the Islamic State was consisted of three continents “veil” was the mark of distinction among Muslim & non Muslim females. Even in non Muslim States “veil” or “pardah” had been the sign of discrimination.

³⁴ *Tabaqāt Ibn Sa’ad*, Vol: 8, p.49.

Before 1914 (C.E) the Muslim ladies of Russia were used to put veil & learnt Qur'ān by heart. In Russia, the practice of learning Qur'ān by heart was common in men & women (Akhbār al-Mo'ayyid: August 15, 1906. Egypt.) Russian Muslim ladies also set up the Madāris or Islamic Institutes. One Muslim lady of Russia, Madam Safiyah 'Aliya Khānam Built a glorious Madrasah from her personal expenses. In abort all the developments in Islamic society were made possible by modest-veiled women. Muslim women were very active even behind the curtain ----- they took part in holy wars and dress the wounded soldiers. But the job was done with great modesty & honour, remaining in veil. One thing which is quite note-worthy is that whenever & wherever Islamic revolution came, or the revolution in the name of Islam was raised, there, non-veiled women, put veil & the enemies of Islam got frightened by their looks. So-called modernism of women did not give anything to Islamic society neither induced new chapter in Islamic history. This is really a considerable propositions for sensitive women, i.e., if exposition would be the essence of development then we could never be so disgraced in the world. A famous historian Arnold Toynbee wrote:

“Womens unveiling and liberal-mindedness had been the very cause of the distruction of human societies.”

Arnold gave this opinion after profound study of the world history so he should not be taken as prejudiced. We have to accept the historical facts. The truth is: The very

base of Islamic society is “*Purity*.” European conspirators show every rational course of Islam as irrational. And made their non-sense arguments as sensible. While to Project their non-sensibilities they perform negative propaganda to afflict the reason. Whereas Islam obliged the woman. The injunction of pardah which is for her own sake & also to protect the feminine beauty & honour is not liked by few modernist women. The adversaries of Islam hide the merits of veil & propagates the so-called demerits. Thus women mind was polluted & she was taken away from Islam. Just think about: unveiling open the way of make up, make up smoothes the path of immodesty, & immodesty paves the way of nudity & adultery. Today, Europe & America do not look to be the societies of human beings but seem to be the jungles of brutal animals.

Immodesty caused the following consequents:

1. Women are insecure.
2. Attempts of kidnapping & forcible rapes with women have gone common.
3. Maternal love has extinguished in woman.
4. Men’s infliction in venereal diseases.
5. The destruction of woman’s honour.

A few days ago woman with veil was respected. Even today she attains honour. In local vehicles people use to offer her place to sit but no body bothers about unveiled woman. The woman of today has become a means of profit through advertisement & magazines etc. Women

are appointed in offices not because of honour but to earn more & more profit.

Islam looks towards woman benevolently while the so-called modern society considers her financially. The absolute truth is that the sole basis of our individual & collective elevation is to follow the Sunnah of the Last Prophet Ḥaḍrat Muḥammad (ﷺ). The very base of our disgrace on International level is the removal of the Love of Allah's Most Beloved Prophet (ﷺ) from our hearts & to go away from Sunnah. Ḥaḍrat Ummar Fārūq (رضي الله تعالى عنه) rightly said:

“We are the nation honoured by Allah because of Islam.”³⁵



³⁵ Muḥammad Mālik Kandhalwī, *Pardah Aur Musalmān Khatūn*, p.15. Karachi



اور سچوں کے ساتھ ہونا