

Garments and Adornment

Reminder (9th November 2007) delivered by Shaykh Muhammad Taher

DISCLAIMER: This reminder was originally delivered in Arabic. Any meanings lost in translation are not to be attributed to the speaker as reminders are translated by volunteers. The mosque has no official translator and volunteers often have no formal qualifications to translate on the day. Please forgive any errors as they are from our human weakness and any right guidance is from God.

Iblis (Satan) was expelled from the heavens (Janna), however, God The Most High granted him a respite until the Day of Judgement. Satan then began to insinuate evil ideas in Adam and his wife's minds, as this is the way of Satan; he insinuates evil into people's minds and tempts them to carry out evil, unless they have guarded themselves with true faith (iman).

Satan has taken upon himself (the objective) of tempting people and to make them fall into his trap, and he has succeeded in straying many people by tempting them with revealing from their bodies what should be covered.

Satan tempted Adam and his wife to eat from the forbidden tree, and when they did, God The Most High caused their clothes to fall off and to reveal their nakedness (which are called in Arabic 'sawa'a which means what is disliked to be revealed).

This is the way of Satan, tempts people to commit evil and tries to beautify it to them so as to make them think that they will be doing good. However, when God ordered Adam and his partner's clothes to fall off and to reveal their nakedness, God wanted us to learn that whatever Satan beautifies will lead to loss.

When their nakedness was revealed, Adam and his wife began to collect leaves in an attempt to cover what was revealed, and this is an innate characteristic of human beings to cover their bodies and observe modesty.

Oh Muslims:

There are two purposes behind the modest dress code in Islam: covering the nakedness and for adorning oneself.

Thus there is no Islamic dress as such; whatever covers what is Islamically defined as *awra* – the private parts - is regarded Islamic and if this is not achieved in any type of dress only then it is un-Islamic (but not because clothes are traditional).

(God says: "And it is thus that We appointed you to be the community of the middle way, so that you might be witnesses before all mankind and the Messenger might be witness before you." (Holy Qurán 2:143)

From this, the Shaykh advised us to be in balance with our society and our families and not to advise others that if their dress is not 'traditional' that it is therefore not Islamic).

"Oh children of Adam, We have granted you garments to cover your nakedness, and as means of adornment for you. The best attire is that of piety. This (in itself) is one of the signs of God. Perhaps, they would bear (that) in mind. Oh children of Adam, let not Satan seduce you in the same manner as he got your parents out of the Garden them stripping them of their garments to expose their nakedness (shame) for he and his tribe to see you from a position where you cannot see them We made the Satan's friends only to those without faith"

In these two verses God has addressed all mankind, in saying that He has graced them by revealing to them that which covers all their bodies (modestly), and then He mentioned that the best of all clothing and that which covers ones body is piety. In summary God has created physical clothing, that which covers the bodies and protects them from heat and cold and moral clothing which He defines as piety.

This is one of the numerous blessings of God, upon which we need to reflect and ponder: a poet once said:

“If one does not cover oneself with piety, it is as if one is naked, the best of clothing for one is the obedience of his Lord, and no good is in one who disobeys his Lord.”

Second Reminder:

All Muslims must have a distinctive personality in their dress, their character and all that they do such that they reflect the beauty within Islam to the rest of the world.

The youth and specifically adolescents always like to stand out and look different, and sometimes they fall into what is unlawful. They like to follow and keep up with fashion, for example the boys lower their trouser waists, loosen their belts in a way that their backs or part of it shows. And some girls wear short tops and show their stomachs or low tops which show their chests. These are all unlawful acts and one needs to avoid them.

“Oh children of Adam We have bestowed garments upon you to cover you nakedness (shame)”

“Oh children of Adam, let not Satan seduce you in the same manner as he got your parents out of the Garden them stripping them of their garments to expose their nakedness (shame) for he and his tribe you see you from a position where you cannot see them We made the Satan’s friends only to those without faith”

The way we dress in following the Islamic and the social norms reflects our identity and personalities, it is also a sign of our education and mindset and thus we need to reflect the beauty and the essence of our religion.

(In summary:

1. we have limits upon dress to ensure that what must be covered (the private parts/awra or tight clothing) is covered and less than this is unlawful.
2. beyond this there are no restrictions making dress unislamic if you remain within those limits but Islam encourages adorning yourself in a good way [*insert link to previous week's khutba - Cleanliness out of consideration for the sensitivities of others*] and in balance with the rest of your society.

Let us avoid falling into the traps of Satan and let us stay on the path that God The Most High has drawn for us.