

demolition of the house, then one can enter without taking permission, rather it is desirable to go in immediately.

### Ruling

If a person has sent someone to call another person, and he comes along with the person who had gone to fetch him, then he need not take permission to go in. The messenger who had gone to fetch him is permission by itself. But if he does not turn up along with the messenger, but goes later, then seeking of permission will be required. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said 'اذا دعى أحدكم فجاء مع الرسول فان ذلك له اذن' 'If someone is called and he comes along with the messenger, then this by itself is permission for going in'. (Abū Dāwūd – Maḏhari)

### Verses 30 - 31

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ۗ ذَلِكَ  
 أَرَكِي لَهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ وَقُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ  
 يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا  
 مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَىٰ جُيُوبِهِنَّ ۗ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ  
 زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَائِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَاءِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَائِهِنَّ أَوْ  
 أَبْنَاءِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِي إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِي أَخَوَاتِهِنَّ أَوْ نِسَاءِهِنَّ  
 أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُنَّ أَوِ التَّبِيعِينَ غَيْرِ أُولَى الْأَرْبَةِ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ  
 أَوِ الطِّفْلِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يَظْهَرُوا عَلَىٰ عَوْرَتِ النِّسَاءِ ۗ وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ  
 بِأَرْجُلِهِنَّ لِيُعْلَمَ مَا يُخْفِينَ ۗ مِنْ زِينَتِهِنَّ ۗ وَتُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَ  
 الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

Say to the believing men that they must lower their gazes and guard their private parts; it is more decent for them. Surely Allah is All-Aware of what they do. [30] And say to the believing women that they must lower their gazes and guard their private parts, and must not expose their adornment, except that which

appears thereof, and must wrap their bosoms with their shawls, and must not expose their adornment except to their husbands or their fathers or the fathers of their husbands, or to their sons or the sons of their husbands, or to their brothers or the sons of their brothers or the sons of their sisters, or to their women, or to those owned by their right hands, or male attendants having no (sexual) urge, or to the children who are not yet conscious of the shames of women. And let them not stamp their feet in a way that the adornment they conceal is known. And repent to Allah O believers, all of you, so that you may achieve success.

[31]

### Commentary

**An important chapter for the prevention of obscenity and security of chastity: *Ḥijāb* for women**

The very first verses on the subject of *ḥijāb* for women are the ones which were revealed in Sūrah Aḥzāb at the time of marriage of the mother of the believers Sayyidah Zainab bint Jaḥash رضى الله عنها with the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Some have given the date of revelation of these verses as 3rd Hijra while others say it was 5th Hijra. Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr and Nail Al-Auṭār have given preference to the latter date, while Rūḥ ul-M'āni has reported on the authority of Sayyidnā Anas ؓ that this marriage was solemnized in Dhulqā'dah 5th Hijra. But it is an agreed position that the first verse on *Ḥijāb* was revealed on this occasion. As for the above referred verses of Sūrah an-Nūr, they were revealed at the time of incident of *Ifk*, which had happened on return from the battle of Banī Mustaliq or Muraisī'. This battle had taken place in the 6<sup>th</sup> Hijra. Hence, it is clear from the revelation point of view that Sūrah An-Nūr's verses on *ḥijāb* were revealed later, and Sūrah Aḥzāb's four verses were revealed earlier, and that the practice on the injunction of *ḥijāb* had started when the verses of Sūrah Aḥzāb were revealed. The subject of *ḥijāb* will be discussed Inshallah in detail under Sūrah Aḥzāb. Here the explanation will be restricted to only those verses which appear in Sūrah an-Nūr.

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ أَزْكَىٰ لَهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌۢ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ

Say to the believing men that they must lower their gazes and

guard their private parts; it is more decent for them. Surely Allah is All-Aware of what they do. (24:30)

The word *يُغْضُ* (*yaghudḍu*) is derived from *غَضَّ* (*ghaḍḍ*), which means to bring down or to lower, (Rāghib) lowering of eyes or to keep eyes down as enjoined in the verse, means to turn the eyes from something which is prohibited to be seen by Shari'ah (Ibn Kathīr). Ibn Ḥibbān has given the explanation that to look at a non-Maḥram woman with intent to have (sexual) pleasure is totally prohibited, and to look without any such motive is *makrūh* (undesirable). To look at any woman's or man's private parts of the body is included in this explanation (except in case of dire necessity, such as medical examination). Peeping into anyone's house with the intent of finding out his secrets, and all such acts where looking is prohibited by Shari'ah are all included in the injunction.

*وَيَحْفَظُوا أَرْوَاجَهُمْ* (24:30) Protection of private parts is purported to express that all possible situations of satisfying unlawful sexual desires be guarded against. In this, adultery, sodomy, lesbian act, masturbation and all such acts that fulfill unlawful lust and passions are prohibited. The purpose of the verse is to prohibit all illicit acts for fulfilling unlawful passions. For this purpose the initial and the ultimate acts have been mentioned rather clearly, and all those actions which fall in between them are also included in the prohibition. For unlawful sexual passion the very first act is casting eye with bad motive and its ultimate result is adultery. Both these acts have been mentioned clearly and are prohibited. All other acts falling in between, such as touching hands or having conversation, are included by implication.

Ibn Kathīr has related Sayyidnā 'Ubaidah رضي الله عنه having said *كل ما عصى الله* كل ما عصى الله that is 'Any act done in disobedience to Allah is a major sin, but the initial and ultimate acts are mentioned at the two ends of the verse'. The initial act is to cast eye, and the ultimate is adultery. Ṭabarānī has quoted Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once said :

النظر سهم من سهام ابليس مسموم من تركها مخافتى ابدلته ايماننا يجد حلاوته  
في قلبه. (از ابن كثير)

'Casting eye is a poisonous arrow among the arrows of Satan. Whoever turns away his eye fearing from Me (despite demand of the heart), I will give him such strong faith, the delight of

which he will feel in his heart'. (Ibn Kathīr)

It is reported in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim on the authority of Sayyidnā Jarīr Ibn 'Abdullāh al-Bajali ؓ that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has advised what should one do if by chance one's eye is cast on a non-Maḥram woman. He has quoted the Holy Prophet ﷺ as saying 'Turn away your eyes from there'. (Ibn Kathīr). Sayyidnā 'Alī ؓ has said that first sight is forgivable, but casting eye a second time is sin. Both versions are alike, that is, if one casts his eye by chance without intention, it is forgiven being not intentional, otherwise it is prohibited to cast the eye intentionally, even the first time.

### **To stare intentionally at boys having no beard also falls within this ruling**

Ibn Kathīr has reported that many elders of the Ummah used to forbid forcefully staring at young boys (having no beard), and many scholars have declared it as forbidden (Perhaps it is in a situation when one looks with bad intention and passionate desire. God knows best)

### **Looking at non-Maḥram is forbidden**

وَقُلْ لِّلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ

And say to the believing women that they must lower their gazes - 24:31.

In the initial part of this long verse the injunction is the same which has been enjoined on men-folk in the preceding verse, that is, keep the eyes down or turn away the eyes. Women-folk are also included in the injunction along with men, but in the next verse there is a separate injunction for them for laying more emphasis. Hence, it is clear that for women it is forbidden to look at any man except their *maḥrams*. Many scholars have declared that it is absolutely forbidden for women to see non-Maḥram men, irrespective of looking with bad intent and passion or without any intent and passion; in either case it is forbidden. For this ruling the argument put forward in support is the *ḥadīth* of Sayyidah 'Umm Salamah رضى الله عنها, which relates that once 'Umm Salamah and Maimūnah رضى الله عنهما both were with the Holy Prophet ﷺ when suddenly 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umm Maktūm, the companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ who was blind, came in, and the Holy Prophet ﷺ asked them to go inside. This incident had happened after the injunction of *ḥijāb* for

women was revealed. On this 'Umm Salamah رضى الله عنها - pleaded 'O Holy Prophet! But he is only blind, he can't see us'. Then the Holy Prophet ﷺ replied 'Is it that you are blind too?' (Abū Dāwūd and Tirmidhī – Tirmidhī declared this *ḥadīth* as *hasan Ṣaḥīḥ*). Other jurists have ruled that there is no harm if women look at strange males without any passion. They base their argument on the *ḥadīth* of Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah رضى الله عنها, in which it is related that on an Eid day some African youths were showing their military exercises in the courtyard of the Mosque of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the Holy Prophet ﷺ was watching this game, and so was Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah رضى الله عنها, under the cover of the back of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. She kept on watching the game until she herself got tired of it, but the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not object to her watching. Scholars are all unanimous on the point that looking with lust is prohibited, but looking without lust is also not a preferred act.

To look at a woman's *satr* (concealable) parts by another woman without any lawful reason is also prohibited in line with the wordings of this verse. It is for the reason that concealing of *satr* (concealable) from all, both by men and women, is obligatory by Shariah. Man's *satr* (concealable) comprises all parts of the body from navel to knees, and that of women, the whole body, except face and palms. Neither can a man see another man's *satr* nor can a woman see another woman's *satr*. Looking by a man at a woman's *satr* or of a woman at a man's *satr* is highly prohibited, and amounts to contradiction of the injunction of the Qur'ānic verse which enjoins for 'turning away the eyes'. As has been explained above in detail, it is enjoined in the verse to lower the eyes or to turn the eyes away from everything which is prohibited to be seen under Islamic injunctions. To look at a woman's *satr* by another woman is included in that.

وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَىٰ جُيُوبِهِنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ  
زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ

And must not expose their adornment, except that which appears thereof, and must wrap their bosoms with their shawls, and must not expose their adornment except to their husbands - 24:31.

The literal meaning of *zīnah* (زينة) is that with which a woman adorns herself to appear attractive. It may be nice clothes or ornaments. There is

an agreement of the scholars on the point that when the clothes and ornaments are not worn by women, and are only displayed in the market place, then they are allowed to be seen by men-folk. For this reason majority of scholars have taken the meaning of *zīnah* as those parts of the body where the objects of *zīnah* are worn. Hence, the meaning of the verse is that it is obligatory for women not to show the parts of the body where the objects of adornments are worn. (Rūḥ ul-Ma‘ānī). Whereas it is prohibited for women in this verse to show their *zīnah*, two exceptions have, however, been made. One is for that to be seen, and the other for those who see.

### Exception from the injunction of *ḥijāb*

First exception is that of *مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا* (except that which appears thereof). It means that ‘Women are not permitted to show their *zīnah* to men, except that which is revealed on its own’. The indication is that while women are working, some parts of the body get uncovered automatically, and their covering is difficult, hence, exception of such parts is permitted. There is no sin in their uncovering. (Ibn Kathīr). Which parts do really fall under this exception? On this subject Sayyidnā ‘Abdullāh Ibn Mas‘ūd ؓ and ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Abbās ؓ have given different explanations. Sayyidnā ‘Abdullāh Ibn Mas‘ūd ؓ has explained that what has been excepted in *مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا* is the outer covering, such as veil or the sheet used for *ḥijāb*. These over-clothings are used to cover up the normal garments of *zīnah*. Hence, the meaning of the verse would be that it is not permitted to show anything from the *zīnah* (garments), except the over-clothings like veil, whose hiding is not possible when going out for some work. On the other hand Sayyidnā ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Abbās ؓ has interpreted that it is purported for face and palms, because when a woman is forced to go out because of necessity, it is difficult to hide face and palms while engaged in her work. Therefore, according to the explanation of Sayyidnā ‘Abdullāh Ibn Mas‘ūd ؓ it is not permitted for women even to uncover – their faces and palms before non-Maḥram men. Only the over-clothings, like veil etc. are excepted under necessity. But in accordance with the explanation of Sayyidnā ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Abbās ؓ it is permitted to uncover the face and palms before the non-Maḥrams. Thus, there is a difference of opinion among the religious scholars on the issue whether it is permissible to uncover the face and palms before non-Maḥrams or not. But all agree on

that if there is a risk of *fitnah* (i.e. stimulation of illicit desires) by looking at feminine face and palms, then its uncovering is not allowed, and women are not permitted to uncover their faces and palms in that situation. All scholars also agree on that in prayers women can uncover their faces and palms and in the uncovered position their prayers will be considered valid.

Qāḍī Baiḍāwī and Khāzīn have said in the explanation of this verse that the object of the verse appears to be that women should not let anything of their *zīnah* be seen, except that which gets uncovered during the process of working. In this definition the veil and sheet, as well as face and palms are all included, because when a woman goes out for some necessary work, veil and sheet are open to be seen in any case, but sometimes face and palms also get uncovered during the movements of work. Hence, their uncovering is allowed and is not regarded a sin. But it does not mean that men are allowed to see faces and palms of women unnecessarily. Instead, it is enjoined upon men to keep their eyes lower, and if a woman is constrained to uncover her face or palms, the men should turn their eyes away, unless required to see in the performance of some lawful act. In this explanation both the traditions and interpretations are reconciled. Imām Mālik رحمه الله تعالى has also ruled that it is not allowed to see the face and palms of a non-Maḥram woman without a lawful need. Ibn Ḥajar Makki Shafi'ī has quoted in his *zawājir* that Imām Shafi'ī's view is also the same that although women's face and palms are not part of their *satr*, and they are allowed to pray while these parts are uncovered, yet non-Maḥrams are not allowed to see them without a lawful need. However, this has already been stated above that even those scholars who have ruled it permissible to see women's face and palms, also agree that if there is a risk of mischief, then looking at their faces is not permissible. It is well known that the center of beauty and attraction is the face of a person, and the present age is full of temptation, mischief and lasciviousness, and people are lost in remissness. Therefore, in the present circumstances it is impermissible to uncover the face before the non-Maḥram men, except for medical treatment or in emergency. Similarly, it is not allowed for the men-folk as well to look at women intentionally, unless it is required by a genuine need.

After granting exception to the opened Zinah, it is enjoined in the

verse under reference *وَلْيَضُرَّيْنِ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَىٰ جُيُوبِهِنَّ*, (24:31) that is, 'must wrap their bosoms with their shawls'. (*خُمُر*) Khomor is the plural of (*خِمَار*) Khimār. It is the piece of cloth which women use to cover their head, and it also covers up the neck and bosom. *جُيُوب* (*juyūb*) is the plural of *جَيْب*, (*jayb*) which means upper part of the shirt just below the neck. Since the time immemorial this part of the garment is placed over the chest of a person, hence the covering of *juyūb* means covering of the chest or bosom. In the beginning of the verse showing of *zīnah* was prohibited, while in this sentence hiding of *zīnah* is emphasized and a specific situation is also described, the purpose of which is to eliminate an old custom of pre-Islamic days. In the pre-Islamic time women used to place the sheet on their head and let its two sides hang on their back, with the result that their neck, ears and bosom were left uncovered. Therefore, Muslim women were enjoined not to follow this, and instead were advised to place the two sides of the sheet one over the other, so that all these parts are covered. (Ibn Abī Ḥātīm from Ibn Jubair – Rūh)

The second exception in the verse relates to the men before whom no *hijab* is to be observed by women. There are two reasons for this exception. First, those men who are exempt from this injunction are the *maḥrams*, hence, no risk of any trouble is expected from them. Allah Ta'ālā has put in their hearts deep respect and honour of their close female relatives, hence, there is no possibility of any mischief from them. Secondly, since the close relatives normally live all together, for the sake of convenience it is required that they do not hide from each other. But this should also be kept in mind that this exception from hiding from *maḥrams* is exclusive to *ḥijāb*, and not from the *satr* of women, where the exception is allowed only to husbands. Those parts of the body of women which are included in *satr*, and which are not allowed to be uncovered in the prayers, are not permitted to be seen by any *maḥram*.

Eight types of *maḥram* men and four other types with whom no *ḥijāb* is necessary are listed in this verse. In another verse of Sūrah Aḥzāb, which was revealed before this verse, only seven types of *maḥram* are mentioned. Hence, five more types were added in the above referred verse of Sūrah an-Nūr, which is a later revelation.

### Warning

It should be noted that the word *maḥram* is used here in its general

sense, which includes husband also. In the connotation used by the scholars for this word it means the person with whom marriage is not allowed. That meaning of the word is not intended here. Let us now take up the details of the twelve exceptions mentioned in the verse under consideration: The first exception is that of husband with whom hiding of any part of the wife's body is not required. But, looking at the private parts of wife without need is not a preferable act. Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah رضى الله عنها has said ما رأى منى ولا رأيت منه 'Neither he saw my private parts nor did I see his'.

Second, exception is of fathers, in which category apart from father, grandfather, great grandfather are all included. Third, is the father-in-law, and husband's grandfather and great grandfather. Fourth, are the sons. Fifth, are the husband's sons, who may be from his other wives. Sixth, are the brothers, in which category all step-brothers whether from real-mother or from real-father are included. But cousin brothers are not part of this category. They are all non-Maḥrams. Seventh, are the sons of brothers. Here also sons of step-brothers are included, but sons of cousins are not included. Eighth, are the sons of sisters, and here again sons of step-sisters are included but not those of the cousins. These are the eight categories of *maḥrams*.

### Ninth category

أَوْ نِسَائِهِمْ (31) (or to their women). These words are used for Muslim women, before whom all such parts can be uncovered which are allowed to be uncovered before father or sons. It has already been clarified earlier that this exception relates to *ḥijāb* alone and not the *satr*. It is for the simple reason that, what is not allowed to be uncovered before *maḥram* men is also not permitted to be uncovered before any Muslim woman, except for medical treatment or under dire need.

By the exception made only for Muslim women it becomes obvious that it is necessary for Muslim women to cover themselves before non-Muslim women as well. Non-Muslim women are thus in the same category as that of non-Maḥram men. Ibn Kathīr has quoted the explanation given by Mujāhid رحمه الله تعالى for this verse that it is not permissible for a Muslim woman to uncover herself before non-Muslim women. But there are Ṣaḥīḥ *aḥadīth* available which prove that non-Muslim women used to visit wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, hence,

there is a difference of opinion among the jurists on the subject. Some have declared non-Muslim women like men for the application of this injunction, while others have placed both Muslim and non-Muslim women under one category - that is covering before them is not necessary. Imām Rāzi رحمه الله تعالى has opined that the word نِسَائِهِنَّ (their women) encompasses both Muslim and non-Muslim women, and the practice of virtuous elders of making Muslim women covered before non-Muslim women was because it was desirable (but not obligatory). Mufti of Baghdad, 'Allāmah 'Ālūsī رحمه الله تعالى has adopted this explanation in the Rūḥ ul-Ma'ānī, and has remarked هذا القول اوفق بالناس اليوم فإنه لا يكاد يمكن احتجاب This explanation is more suited to present time because it has become almost impossible for Muslim women to cover themselves before non-Muslim women. (Rūḥ ul-Ma'ānī)

### Tenth category

أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُنَّ (24:31). (or to those owned by their right hands). The general sense of the wording includes both male and female slaves and servants, but many a scholars and jurists consider that it applies only to female slaves, and not to the male slaves. Therefore, it is obligatory to be in cover before them, like other non-Maḥrams. Sa'īd Ibn al-Mussayab رحمه الله تعالى has said expressing his final view 'Do not be under the misconception that the wordings أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُنَّ are general, and include male slaves as well. It is not so. This verse refers to only female slaves, male slaves are not included in it'. Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه, Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and Ibn Sīrīn رحمه الله تعالى have said that it is not permissible for a male slave to see his female owner's hair (Rūḥ ul-Ma'ānī). Now the question is that if by the wordings أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُنَّ only female slaves were meant, then they were already included in the word نِسَائِهِنَّ (or to their women). What was the point in describing them separately? Jaṣṣāṣ رحمه الله تعالى has answered this question by explaining that the word نِسَائِهِنَّ in its apparent sense is meant for Muslim women only, and in case there are non-Muslims also among the female slaves, they need to be separated from the rest, hence the use of this word.

### Eleventh category

أَوِ التَّبَعِينَ غَيْرِ أُولَى الْأَرْبَةِ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ (or male attendants having no {sexual} urge). Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه has explained that, here those confused and deranged type of persons are meant who have no liking and inclination

toward women (Ibn Kathīr). The same explanation has been put forward by Ibn Jarīr quoting Abu ‘Abdullāh, Ibn Jubair, Ibn ‘Aṭīyyah رَحْمَهُمُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى etc. Therefore, those men are referred to here who do not have any lust or inclination towards women, nor are they interested in the beauty and charm of women, which they could describe before others. As against this, eunuchs do take interest in women’s special attributes; hence women should keep covered before them. There is a *ḥadīth* of Sayyidah ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا on the subject, that an eunuch used to visit the wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and they regarded him to be included in the category of *غَيْرِ أَوْلَى الْأَرْبَةِ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ*, (31) hence they allowed him to come in their homes. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ saw him and listened his conversation, he stopped him from coming inside the homes. (Rūḥ ul-Ma‘ānī).

For this very reason Ibn Ḥajar Makkī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى has commented in *Sharaḥ al-Minhāj* that no matter a man be impotent or devoid of genital organs or be very old, he is not included in the expression *غَيْرِ أَوْلَى الْأَرْبَةِ*, and women are required to cover themselves before all of them. However, addition of the word *التَّابِعِينَ* with the expression *غَيْرِ أَوْلَى الْأَرْبَةِ* is meant to indicate those who are confused and deranged, and enter the houses with the purpose of eating and drinking as an attendant of some guests. Such men are excluded and it is not necessary to observe *ḥijāb* before them. They have been mentioned here because in fact there were some such men at that time, and they used to go inside the homes, only with the intention of eating and drinking, but the real cause of their being excepted from the rules of *ḥijāb* is their being of unsound mind and having no sexual urge and not being attendants of someone

### Twelfth category

*أَوَالِ الطِّفْلِ الَّذِينَ* (or to the children who are not yet conscious of the shames of women - 31). This refers to those young children who have not yet attained puberty, and are totally ignorant of ladies special attributes, gestures and postures. Any boy who takes interest in ladies company for their special attributes is nearing his puberty, and covering before him becomes obligatory. (Ibn Kathīr). Imām Jaṣṣāṣ رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى has explained that the word *Tifl* (children) refers here to those children who do not differentiate between men and women in special attributes. (Jaṣṣāṣ has narrated this from Mujāhid).

وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ بِأَرْجُلِهِنَّ لِيُعْلَمَ مَا يُخْفِينَ مِنْ زِينَتِهِنَّ

And let them not stamp their feet in a way that the adornment they conceal is known - 24:31.

It is incumbent upon women to step so gently that no sound is made of their ornaments and none of their *zīnah* is exposed to men.

### **To cause hearing of jewellery's sound to non-Maḥrams is prohibited**

In the beginning of the verse it was prohibited for women to show their *zīnah* (ornaments or garments) to non-Maḥram men. At the end of it, it is reemphasized that covering of head and bosom etc. was in any way obligatory as part of hiding of *zīnah*, rather any exposure of hidden *zīnah* by any means is also prohibited. Putting in something in the ornaments so that they produce sound, or making of sound by the touch of ornaments with each other, or putting the feet on the ground in such a manner that ornaments make sound, and the non-Maḥrams listen to these sounds; they are all prohibited under the provision of this verse. In the light of this explanation many jurists have drawn the conclusion that when causing to hear the ornament's sound is prohibited, then to cause hearing of women's own voice would be prohibited even more strongly. Therefore, they have ruled that the voice of women is also included in their *satr*. For this reason it is declared in *Nawāzil* that women should learn Qur'ān from women only, as far as possible. Learning of Qur'ān from men should be as a last resort only.

Ṣaḥīḥs of Bukhārī and Muslim have quoted a *ḥadīth* which says that while offering prayers if someone passes in front, he should be warned with a loud voice by saying *Subḥān Allāh* by men, but the women should not make any sound, and instead hit the back of the palm with the other for warning.

### **The issue of women's voice**

Is women's voice included in their *satr* per se, and it's causing to hear by non-Maḥrams is prohibited? The jurists differ on this issue. In the books of Imām Shafī'ī رحمه الله تعالى the voice of women is not included in their *satr*. In the case of Ḥanafī there are different views. Ibn Humām رحمه الله تعالى has included the voice in *satr* on the basis of statements in *Nawāzil*. Because of this the call for prayer اذان by women is regarded

*makrūh* by Ḥanafī School. However, it is established by *ḥadīth* that the wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to talk to non-Maḥrams from behind the curtain even after the revelation of injunction of *ḥijāb*. Keeping in view all the material on this point, what seems to be the correct position is that hearing the voice of a woman is impermissible only when and where it may create a *fitnah*, but where there is no such apprehension, it is allowed. (Jaṣṣāṣ). However, the prudent way for women is to take care and avoid talking to non-Maḥrams, even from behind the curtains, unless necessary. (Only Allah knows best)

### To go out wearing perfume

It is also included in this injunction that when women go out of the house for some need, they should not wear any perfume, because that is also their hidden *zīnah*, and it is impermissible to cause it to reach non-Maḥrams. In a *ḥadīth* reported by Tirmidhī from Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī ؓ those women are declared bad who go out wearing perfume.

### Going out wearing decorated veil is also prohibited

Imām Jaṣṣāṣ رحمه الله تعالى has commented that when Qur'an has included even the sound of ornaments as the exposure of *zīnah* and declared it unlawful, then going out wearing decorated veil would be unlawful more strongly. By inference it is also clear that although the face of women is not included in her *satr*, but it is the pivotal point of *zīnah*, hence, its hiding from the non-Maḥrams is essential, except in cases of need. (Jaṣṣāṣ)

وَتُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ

And repent to Allah O believers, all of you - 24:31.

In this verse first the men have been enjoined to keep their eyes low, then the women are enjoined the same. After that women are directed to cover themselves before non-Maḥrams. After enjoining these injunctions separately to men and women, now a combined instruction is given that the sexual desire is a delicate thing, and it remains concealed from others. But everything, concealed or open, is completely known to Allah. Therefore, if someone has erred in following the foregoing injunctions, he should beg Allah's pardon, feel repentant on his past deeds and make a firm resolve not to indulge in them again.