

Question:

Assalaamu Alaikum

I need to know whether it is absolutely necessary for a hanafi woman to cover face (according to Imam Abu Hanifa). I read the previous reply on this matter but it was not specified which Fiqh grp needs to do it necessarily. And in my situation my respected father wants me to cover my face when i go out. If it is allowed Islamically to do so otherwise can I convince him also?

Jazakallah Khair

Answer:

Assalamu Aleikum

I post the answer that Sheikh Omar has already given on the subject matter of Niqaab in Islam for your perusal:

'...The Niqaab is not obligatory (Fard) for women to wear nor is it recommended (Mandoub) as far as Islam is concerned. Rather it is permissible for women to cover their face i.e. to wear Niqaab in some situations and it is prohibited to wear Niqaab in other situations e.g. during Hajj or in Court as a witness.

There is a huge amount of evidence regarding the issue of Niqaab not being Fard or Mandoub upon a women. However some women wear Niqaab for one the following reasons:

1. In order to please their husbands or to obey them.
2. Because it's a matter of custom in their country like in Saudi Arabia or in Kuwait
3. Because they are Shee'ah such as in Iran where they follow the Mazhab of Ahl Al-Bait. And Allah (SWT) specifically ordered the wives and the women of the Messenger Muhammad (SWT) to cover their faces.
4. Because their husbands are jealous of other men looking at them.
5. Through force because the local authority imposes it upon them. This is oppression against women such as in Afghanistan and some areas in Pakistan.

The strongest opinion is that women are obliged to cover all their bodies except their faces and hands outside their houses and that the Niqaab was only Fard upon the wives of the Messenger Muhammad (saw).

As far as Imam Shafi is concerned he did not say it is fard for a woman to cover her face if she's not living in an Islamic state as some people suggest rather he too adopted the opinion that it is Mubah.

It is well known that if something is Fard it is Fard wherever we are until the Shari'ah Indicates otherwise.

Regarding the Niqaab then it is not Fard upon Muslim women and there are many evidences from the Quran and Sunnah which prove beyond doubt that the face and hands of Muslim women are not Aworah.

The Imams of the four schools of thought state clearly in many chapters of Fiqh e.g. in the Sections dealing with Witnesses, Nikaah, Hajj, trade and the Judiciary that prove beyond doubt their and this opinion.

As for those who suggest that in the prophet's time when the verse of veiling was revealed the believing women tore parts of their clothing to cover their faces, this is incorrect and I wonder if they really know when the verse of Khimaar (the cover of the head) was revealed and when the Verse of Jilbaab (the cover of the body from the Neck to the ankle) were revealed.

And as for people who state that Maulana Maududi said it is fard for a woman to cover her face bar one eye, we should appreciate that Maulana Maududi was a man of Tahreek i.e. an activist Daa'ie in an Islamic movement, as far as I am aware no qualified scholar ever stated that he was a scholar rather the evidence is very clear in this area.

The verses of Hijaab (i.e. partition, screen or curtain) addressed specifically the houses and the women (i.e. wives and daughters) of the Messenger Muhammad (swt).

Allah (swt) says:" O you who believe! enter not the prophet's houses, until a permission is given to you, but when you are invited, enter; and when you have taken your meal, disperse, without seeking familiar talk or socialising, such behavior annoys the Prophet he is shy to dismiss you, but Allah is not shy (to tell you) the truth, and when you ask his women (i.e. wives or daughters)for anything you want, ask them from before a SCREEN (HIJAAB): that makes for greater purity for your hearts and for theirs. Nor is it right for you that you should annoy Allah's Messenger, or that you should marry his widows after him at any time, turly such a thing is in Allah's sight an enormity" [EMQ Al-Ahzaab 33:53]

This above verse was revealed after the verses which addressed all Mature, Muslim women (including the women of the Messenger) to wear the Khimaar (the cover of the Head without the face) as in verse (24:31) and after the verse which addressed all mature, Muslim women (including the women of the Messenger) to wear the Jilbaab (the cover of the whole body except the hand...) as in verse (33:59).

The Niqaab (Mask) and Quffaaz (gloves) are permissible for Muslim women to wear but there is no request from Quran or Sunnah to wear them.... Rather some Ahadeeth forbid Muslim women to wear them during Hajj, Judiciary and in salaah etc.. The ahadeeth regarding Muslim women to cover all her body except her face and hand is clear... beside many other Ahadeeth in Bukhari and Muslim which that the narrator described signs in the faces of some women Sahabiyaat even after the verse of Hijaab!!.

Moreover, Allah (swt) ordered us to lower our gaze because her face is not cover otherwise there is no need to lower the gaze from somebody behind screen... etc...

Regarding the Four School of the main Sunni Mazaaheb... none of them stated that Muslim women to cover her face is Fard or Wajib or even recommended!!... But all of them they know the women of the Messenger obliged to be behind a screen(hijaab) at all the time...'

As for obeying your father, he only has authority over you in certain issues to do with him but not in the issue of whether you wear a Niqaab or not. Hence there is no obedience for you to him in this matter.

You can telephone the Sheikh on 0956 92 0006 for more details
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