



Question:

I have a question about the niqab (women covering their face). I always heard that the Prophet (saw)'s wives did it. Actually I don't know if that is correct, but I heard it. But there are hadith when Prophet (saw) said that women should cover their whole body except this and this (pointing to the hands and the face). However, did he say this before the ayah about the women covering was revealed or after words. If it was revealed after words then women don't HAVE to cover their face. But if it was revealed before then in the ayah it says that women shouldn't reveal their beauty and that would include the face. If the hadith was mentioned after the ayah, it makes sense because why would Prophet tell women to cover themselves unless Allah had said so first. And someone told me that three of the four mujtahids have said that it is fard to cover the face.

So can you please answer my question: is it fard to cover the face??? and then hands too???

Answer:

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 behaviour 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, truly such a thing is in Allah's sight an enormity" [EMQ Al-Ahzaab 33:53]

This above verse 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 Mazahaab... 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.

Sheikh Omar