

47569 - Is hijab obligatory for beautiful women only or for all women?

the question

Is hijab obligatory or something extra? If it is obligatory, is it obligatory for attractive and beautiful women only or for all Muslim women?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Hijab is obligatory for all Muslim women who have reached the age of puberty. In the answer to question no. [12525](#) you will find an explanation that the face is 'awrah. We have already quoted the evidence that it is obligatory to cover it in the answer to question no. [21134](#) and [21536](#). In the answer to question no. [11774](#) you will find detailed evidence stating that hijab is obligatory for all women. This general obligation is indicated by the verse in which Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks (veils) all over their bodies (i.e. screen themselves completely except the eyes or one eye to see the way). That will be better, that they should be known (as free respectable women) so as not to be annoyed. And Allaah is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful”

[al-Ahzaab 33:59]

The women of the Muhaajireen and Ansaar obeyed that command.

‘Aa’ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) said: “May Allaah have mercy on the first Muhaajir women. When Allaah revealed the words ‘and to draw their veils all over Juyoobihinna (i.e. their bodies, faces, necks and bosoms)’ [al-Noor 24:31] they tore their aprons and covered their faces

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(akhtamarna) with them.”

Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 4480; Abu Dawood, 4102

What is meant by akhtamarna is covering the face, as al-Haafiz Ibn Hajar stated in al-Fath, 8/490.

It was narrated that Umm Salamah said: When the words ‘draw their cloaks (veils) all over their bodies’ were revealed, the women of the Ansaar went out as if there were crows on their heads because of the way they covered themselves.

Narrated by Abu Dawood, 4101; classed as saheeh by Shaykh al-Albaani in Saheeh Abu Dawood.

Undoubtedly many of the women of the Muhaajireen and Ansaar were known to be blessed with beauty, but no one thought that this ruling applied only to them and not to others.

These ahaadeeth show that the women of the Muhaajireen and Ansaar obeyed the command to cover their faces and they did not understand the command as applying only to those who were beautiful.

The scholars have explained that this ruling is general in meaning and applies to all women.

In his commentary on the verse ‘draw their cloaks (veils) all over their bodies’, al-Jassaas al-Hanafi (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

This verse indicates that young women are commanded to cover their faces in front of strangers (non-mahram men) and to be modest when they go out lest people with suspicious minds raise their hopes when they see them.

Ahkaam al-Qur’aan, 5/245.

Ibn Jazi’ al-Kalbi al-Maaliki (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

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The Arab women used to uncover their faces as slave women do, which was an invitation to men to look at them. So Allaah commanded them to cover themselves with their jilbaabs and cover their faces with them.

Al-Tas-heel li 'Uloom al-Tanzeel, 3/144

Shaykh al-Islam ibn Taymiyah (may Allaah have mercy on him) said: It is not permissible for women to uncover their faces where non-mahrams can see them. The people in authority have to enjoin what is good and forbid this evil and others. Whoever does not obey should be punished for that in a way that will deter him (from doing it again).

Majmoo' al-Fataawa, 24/382

Al-Suyooti (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

This is the verse of hijab which applies to all women and shows that they are obliged to cover their heads and faces.

'Awn al-Ma'bood, 11/106

See also the answer to question no. [13646](#)

And Allaah knows best.