

Chapter on the modesty of Sayyidina Rasulullah Sallallahu 'Alayhi Wasallam

Although this chapter includes the habits, and could have been incorporated in the previous chapter, but because of the extreme importance given to it, it has been mentioned separately. Modesty plays a special part between the affairs of the creator and the created. It is mentioned in the hadith that when modesty vanishes, do as you please. Every excellence of Sayyidina Rasulullah Sallallahu 'Alayhi Wasallam reached its apex. Whatever chapter is begun, there are no words that can truly describe his qualities. Not a few incidents, but thousands bear testimony to this. Ibn 'Umar Radiyallahu 'Anhu reports, that Sayyidina Rasulullah Sallallahu 'Alayhi Wasallam did not fix his eyesight on anyone due to his exceeding modesty. He did not look at a person in the eye while meeting him face to face. Imaam Tirmidhi has mentioned two hadith as an example. The 'ulama have written that there are many types of modesty. One is the modesty of graciousness and kindness. For instance when Sayyidina Rasulullah Sallallahu 'Alayhi Wasallam made the walimah of Zaynab Radiyallahu 'Anha, after eating some people remained there and became busy in discussions. Their sitting made Sayyidina Rasulullah Sallallahu 'Alayhi Wasallam feel uneasy. He sometimes went out and sometimes came inside, because of his modesty he did not ask them to get up. In the Qur-aan Karim before the end of Surah Ahzaab this incident is mentioned. The second type of modesty is that the lover feels bashful for the beloved, even speaking becomes difficult.

The third type is the modesty of devotion, that in worship one feels humbled, and continues to go forward due to the modesty for the creator. The fourth type is to have Modesty of ones own soul. That is, one begins something with zeal, and when it remains incomplete one begins to feel ashamed of one's self, that this small deed could not be completed. It is said that this is the highest form of modesty. The one that feels modest from one's self, will surely be modest before others.

(341) Hadith Number 1.

Abu Sa'eed Khudari Radiyallahu 'Anhu says that Rasulullah Sallallahu 'Alayhi Wasallam was more bashful than a virgin girl in her veil (purdah). When Rasulullah Sallallahu 'Alayhi Wasallam did not like something, it could be seen on his face. (Because of his excessive Modesty he did not mention it).

Commentary

The 'ulama have given two meanings for the words 'a virgin in her veil (Purdah)'.

One group among the 'ulama say it means a virgin girl in her veil, that she is more shameful than that virgin girl who roams about. However every virgin is bashful, therefore the shari'ah has recognised the silence of a virgin girl as her consent for her-nikaah, as bashfulness is natural for a virgin girl, and especially the girl who is in purdah. Some 'ulama have said that by the girl in purdah, that girl is meant, who is brought up in purdah and also makes purdah from other women. It is a custom in many families, where purdah is observed from those women who go about. It is clear from this, how modest such a girl will be? The second meaning that some of the 'ulama have given is that 'in purdah' is taken metaphorically, that the modesty shown by a virgin girl (bride) on her first night is evident. (It is sad that this does not exist in many modern circles today).

(342) Hadith Number 2.

'Aayeshah Radiyallahu 'Anha reports: (because of the excessive modesty of Sayyidina Rasulallah Sallallahu 'Alayhi Wasallam) "I did not have the courage to see the private parts of Rasulallah Sallallahu'Alayhi Wasallam, or that I never saw the private parts of Rasulallah Sallallahu 'Alayhi Wasallam".

Commentary

Due to the shamefastness of Sayyidina Rasulallah Sallallahu 'Alayhi Wasallam this was not possible, then how could Sayyidina Rasulallah Sallallahu 'Alayhi Wasallam himself have done so? It is natural that in the presence of a modest person, one is compelled to act modestly. In another narration it is clearly denied that never did Sayyidina Rasulallah Sallallahu 'Alayhi Wasallam see my private parts, nor did I see the private parts of Sayyidina Rasulallah Sallallahu 'Alayhi Wasallam. Although 'Aayeshah Radiyallahu 'Anha was the most informal among all the wives, she was also the most beloved. If this was his manner with her, what can be said of the others? Sayyiditina Umme Salamah Radiyallahu 'Anha says that when Sayyidina Rasulallah Sallallahu 'Alayhi Wasallam slept with his wife, he closed his eyes and bowed down his head, and also stressed to his wife to be calm and dignified. Ibn 'Abbaas Radiyallahu 'Anhu narrates that Sayyidina Rasulallah Sallallahu 'Alayhi Wasallam went behind the rooms to perform ghusl. Nobody saw the private parts of Sayyidina Rasulallah Sallallahu'Alayhi Wasallam. Before the advent of nubuwwah, when the Ka'bah was rebuilt Sayyidina Rasulallah Sallallahu 'Alayhi Wasallam also carried stones and brought them. According to 'Arab custom, no importance was given to concealing the private parts. Sayyidina Rasulallah Sallallahu 'Alayhi Wasallam (happen to) put his lungi under the stone, and immediately became unconscious (due to modesty) and fell down, whereas, at that time the shar'ee injunctions were not even revealed.