

Any woman who takes off her clothes in a house ...

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

About the meaning of the hadeeth: "Any woman who takes off her clothes in a house other than that of one of her mothers..."

Question: What is meant by the hadeeth that says: "No woman takes off her garments in a house other than that of one of her mothers, but she tears the cover between her and Ar-Rahmaan (the Most Merciful)"¹. Is putting off her Jilbaab (veil) when being among her Mahaarim² in a hotel while travelling included in the meaning of this hadeeth? May Allaah reward you.

Answer: All praise is due to Allaah, the Lord of the Worlds. Peace and blessing be upon whom Allaah sent as a mercy to the Worlds, upon his Family, his Companions and his Brothers till the Day of Resurrection.

What is meant by this hadeeth is when a woman shows her body or a part from it to strangers (men that are not Mahram) and she does not cover her body before them with the veil ordained by Allaah – that is to say the veil of righteousness as Allaah عزَّ وجلَّ said:

يٰۤاٰدَمَ۟ قَدْ اَنْزَلْنَا عَلٰیكَمۡ لِبَاسًا يُۤوَرِيۤ سَوۡءَتِكُمۡ وَرِيشًا وَلِبَاسُ التَّقْوٰی ذٰلِكَ خَیۡرٌۢ ذٰلِكَ مِّنۡ اٰیٰتِ اللّٰهِ لَعَلَّهُمۡ یَذَّكَّرُوۡنَ

[O children of Aadam, We have bestowed upon you clothing to conceal your private parts and as adornment. But the clothing of righteousness, that is best. That is from the signs of Allaah that perhaps they will remember]³

Her retribution will be a scandal, as she tears the veil between her and Allaah, He will tear her veil, and tearing her veil means [here] a scandal⁴, because she does not keep well what she was ordered to do by sustaining her veil before the strangers, so she was given her retribution because: "**As you treat you will be treated**".

It is included in the prohibition: to put off her clothes in public bath, because usually the woman does not cover her 'Awra⁵ before women. However, she is not concerned with the

¹ Reported by Aboo Dawood (4010), by At-Tirmidhee (2803), by Ibn Maajah (3750), by Al-Haakim in "Al-Mustadrak" (7781) and by Ahmad in his "Musnad" (25772) on the authority of 'A'ishah رضي الله عنها. This hadeeth is judged authentic by Al-Albaanee in "Saheeh Al-Jaami" (2710) and in "Saheeh At-Targheeb Wat-Tarheeb" (165).

² Mahram (plural: Mahaarim): a male whom a woman can never marry because of close relationship (e.g. a brother, a father, an uncle etc.); or her own husband. Translator's note.

³ Soorah al-A'raaf [7:26]

⁴ See: "An-Nihaaya" of Ibn Al-Atheer (5/553).

⁵ Here, it means the parts of the woman's body that she is not allowed to reveal before other women. Translator's note.

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punishment if she puts off her Hijaab before her Mahaarim or when she is among Muslim women by keeping her 'Awra covered, i.e. just to reveal parts of adornment of her body as Allaah says:

وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَائِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَاءِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَائِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَاءِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِي إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ نِسَائِهِنَّ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُنَّ أَوْ التَّبِيعِينَ غَيْرِ أُولِي الْإِرْبَةِ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ أَوْ الطِّفْلِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يَظْهَرُوا عَلَى عَوْرَتِ النِّسَاءِ

[and not expose their adornment (i.e. beauty) except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers' sons, their sisters' sons, their women, that which their right hands possess (i.e. slaves), or those male attendants having no physical desire, or children who are not yet aware of the private aspects of women]⁶

The same thing when she travels with her husband or with one of her Mahaarim, be it at the hotel or somewhere else, because the apparent meaning of the hadeeth is about showing her body to a stranger who gets from her what he wants even with a sight full of desire or with what comes just before the sexual intercourse.⁷

The perfect knowledge belongs to Allaah عزَّ وجلَّ; and our last prayer is all the praises and thanks are to Allaah, the Lord of the Worlds, and prayers of Allaah are to Muhammad and his Family, Companions and Brothers until the Day of Resurrection.

Algiers on: Sha'baan the 26th, 1426 H. Corresponding to September the 30th, 2005 G.

⁶ Soorah an-Noor [24:31]

⁷ See: "Fayd Al-Qadeer" of Al-Munaawee (3/136).