

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

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Female Dress Code and Common Errors in Translation

Analysis of the Quranic Verses

[This is a condensed version of the article submitted for SP. The original article can be accessed at the web site www.masjidtucson.org]

The following is an attempt to shed light on the misconceptions regarding the dress code of women in Islam, many of which find root in the vocabulary used in the verses themselves. The meaning of the words put to use in the Quran has been effectively manipulated in order to contort the true meaning of God's words and justify the practices of Islamic tradition.

God has given us three basic rules regarding the dress code of women:

- (1) the *best* garment is the garment of righteousness,

- (2) whenever we dress, we should cover our chest (bosoms), and
- (3) to lengthen our garment.

Though it is within God's full power to provide mankind with more rules regarding dress code (even to the point of graphs, designs or defining color limitations), He instead lends humanity simple terms for guidance and leaves the rest for us to decide. And ingeniously enough, these three guidelines are perfectly sufficient in giving every woman an awareness of proper decorum while protecting her right to choose her dress freely. Any addition to these basic Quranic rules may be viewed as a

blatant attempt to correct God or improve on His merciful design.

Despite this, translators have deliberately added their own corrupted opinions in the verse that are based on the man-made books of *Hadith and Sunna*. In all likelihood, elements of their conclusions have also been derived from the traditional dress of Arab women in the days of Muhammad.

As a result, these interpretations of the Quran totally differ from God's commandments.

Yet, the greatest degree of controversy surrounds a select number of misinterpreted words and terms that we will address, God willing.

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Female Dress Code

Cont'd from page 1

Misinterpreted Arabic words dealing with women dress code

"And tell the believing women to subdue their eyes, and maintain their chastity. They shall not reveal any parts of their bodies, except that which is necessary. They shall cover their chests, and shall not relax this code in the presence of other than their husbands, their fathers,... They shall not strike their feet when they walk in order to shake and reveal certain details of their bodies. All of you shall repent to God, O you believers, that you may succeed." 24:31

Verses 24:31 and 33:59 teach us what we need to know: If you look at the Arabic word *Yudnina* (which means lengthening), *Alaihinna* (which means on their / over their), *Min-jaloabiibhinna* (which means dress or garment), **these are the only terms used in that verse to specify the teachings of our dress code.** And even more notably, Arabic words describing head, hair, eyes or veil are nowhere to be found.

Khimar / khomoorehenna

The traditional meaning has always been a *cover*, NOT a *head* cover; however, the latest innovation in translation defines it as head cover. Khimar was intentionally MADE to mean "head cover" by scholars who wished to enforce their personal understandings which, ironically, contradict God in the Quran. They passed this corrupted meaning to one another, including the scholars who re-wrote the Arabic dictionaries.

The word "khimar" comes from the root word *khamara* which means "to cover," so anything that covers

anything is a *khimar*. Wine in Arabic is called "khamra", because it covers the brain and makes one lose his or her ability to think correctly. A curtain is a *khimar* because it covers a window, a table cloth is a *khimar* because it covers a table, a dress is a *khimar* because it covers the body. So *khimar* is not limited to a head cover. Most of the translators, influenced by Hadith translate the word as *VEIL* and thus mislead most people to believe that this verse is advocating the covering of the head.

In 24:31 God is asking the women to use their cover '*khimar*' (being a dress, a coat, a shawl, a shirt, a blouse, a scarf etc.) to cover their chest / bosoms, not their heads or their hair. If God so willed to order the women to cover their heads or their hair, nothing would have prevented Him from doing so, but God *did not* order the women to cover their heads or their hair.

The Arabic word for chest, "jaib" is in the verse (24:31), but the Arabic words for head, "raas" or hair, "shaar" are NOT in the verse.

The last part of the verse (24:31) translates as, "They shall not strike their feet when they walk in order to shake and reveal certain details of their bodies." The details of the body can be revealed or not revealed by the dress you wear, not by your head cover.

Notice also the expression in 24:31, "They shall not reveal any parts of their bodies, except that which is necessary."

This expression may sound confusing to many, simply because they have yet to understand the mercy of God. Again, God uses an extremely general term to give people the freedom to decide upon proper definitions of "what is necessary" in accordance with their own circumstances, respectively.

Conclusions

"O prophet, tell your wives, your daughters, and the wives of the believers that they shall LENGTHEN their garments. Thus, they will be recognized and avoid being insulted. God is Forgiver, Most Merciful." (33:59)

In this verse, God said to the prophet to tell the women to lengthen their garments, and never said how long is the length. God could have said tell them to lengthen their garments to their ankles or to their mid-calf or to their knees, but GOD DID NOT. God knows that we will be living in different communities and have different cultures and insists that the minor details of this dress code will be left for the people of every community.

For any person drawing a line and making conclusions for God about the definition of modesty is merely to admit that he or she presumes to know better than God. God left it open for us (providing that they follow the three basic rules) and none have the authority to restrict it. Additionally, the right mind can tell which attire is fitting enough to avoid insult. Only men harboring unclean perceptions of women will maintain their crude thoughts. God commands "the believing men and women to subdue their eyes and maintain their chastity."

Thus, the traditional *Hijab* is added by *Sunnah*, and it's not detailed in the Quran. This make Sunnah a scripture ranked with the Quran. During the Prophet's time, he followed only the Quran. By putting together the commands for women to dress as God intends them to, in addition to the instruction to look upon women with modesty and respect, there will be no problems afoot – God willing.



The creation of the heavens and the earth is even more awesome than the creation of the human being, but most people do not know. [40:57]

SEQUOIA CATHEDRAL

The sequoia tree is a relative of the redwood and it grows only on the western slopes of the Sierra Nevada Mountains in California. It's the most massive of all living things. In fact, the General Sherman tree in Sequoia National Park is the largest life form on earth today. It's 275 feet tall with a base circumference of 103 feet.

The sign in front of General Sherman states: "Other types of trees are taller, or thicker at the base, but no other living thing on this planet exceeds the volume of this giant sequoia." The volume of the trunk is 52,500 cu.ft. Sequoias survive because they are fast growing and because they have thick bark and wood that's resistant to insects and fire. They may live 3000 years or more.

I had the privilege of visiting Sequoia National Park. As I stood under these giants and looked up, I could only say, "Mashallah." What a gift that God would place such a thing on earth and then allow me to enjoy it. I was so appreciative of this blessing.

But the most remarkable thing happened—not at the popular, well-known spots, like the Sherman Tree or the General Grant tree. There was a small turnout for "Lost Grove." Up a small hill stood a beautiful giant. How it's still alive, I don't know. Only God is keeping it going. Through time and fire it

has completely hollowed out at the base. The path goes right up to it and you can walk inside. Not just peek inside, actually walk inside. I found myself standing in the heart of a living, breathing tree.

In awe I touched its sides and listened. What a story it told. This solid, gnarled tree that surrounded me may have sprouted during the life of Solomon or Jonah. It was a seedling when Jesus was born. As it struggled to survive its first couple of hundred years, only God saw it grow—few humans walked these woods. It was tall but still young when Mohammed brought the Quran to the world. It was stately and majestic by the time Columbus landed in America. When I was born—only a second ago in the overall life of this beautiful tree—it had already survived numerous fires and climatic changes. It had witnessed and survived the upheaval wrought by the arrival of man in great numbers. It may still be standing when the world ends.

Only one in thousands of seedlings lives to maturity. So many things can affect their chances of survival. God chose to make this one grow and thrive. And somewhere along the way, its gigantic base began to hollow out. Fire is an important factor in keeping sequoias healthy so it probably survived many small and large forest fires and other disasters that eventually took a toll on its solid base. Amazingly, these trees can survive with large hollow cavities, as long as the outer wood stays healthy to carry nutrients and water from the roots to the top. This cavity was huge—it would have held six or seven people standing upright. Still, this massive tree had a thick outer coat and huge roots fanning out for support. Here it stood and continues to stand majestically, simply submitting to God.

I thank God that He caused this tree to open its heart to me. Thousands will see it and walk around it; kids will climb all over it as they laugh and play. But probably no one will feel the same connection I felt. It felt like being with God. It was humbling. I know that God is always near, but I also know that some places feel more special. This was so awesome. I spoke in a whisper and just marveled at the gift. How this mighty tree, this grand creation, has submitted willingly, happily to God—day after day, year after year. I hope I'm worthy to meet this splendid submitter in the Hereafter and remember the brief moments in its long life when we connected. Mashallah.

He sends down from the sky water for your drink, and to grow trees for your benefit. With it, He grows for you crops, olives, date palms, grapes, and all kinds of fruits. This is (sufficient) proof for people who think. [16:10-1]

Do you not see that GOD has cited the example of the good word as a good tree whose root is firmly fixed, and its branches are high in the sky? It produces its crop every season, as designed by its Lord. GOD thus cites the examples for the people, that they may take heed. [14:24-5]

Who is the One who created the heavens and the earth? Who is the One who sends down to you from the sky water, whereby we produce gardens full of beauty - you could not possibly manufacture its trees? Is it another god with GOD? Indeed, they are people who have deviated. [27:60]

The stars and the trees prostrate. [55:6]

Lydia

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Happiness is Submission to God Alone

Come to the garden alone, while the dew is still on the roses....

For the garden of your daily living,
PLANT THREE ROWS OF PEAS:

1. Peace of mind
2. Peace of heart
3. Peace of soul

PLANT FOUR ROWS OF SQUASH:

1. Squash gossip
2. Squash indifference
3. Squash grumbling
4. Squash selfishness

PLANT FOUR ROWS OF LETTUCE:

1. Lettuce be faithful
2. Lettuce be kind
3. Lettuce be patient
4. Lettuce really love one another

NO GARDEN IS WITHOUT TURNIPS:

1. Turnip for meetings
2. Turnip for prayer
3. Turnip to help one another

**TO CONCLUDE OUR GARDEN
WE MUST HAVE THYME:**

1. Thyme for each other
2. Thyme for family
3. Thyme for friends

WATER FREELY WITH PATIENCE AND CULTIVATE WITH LOVE. THERE IS MUCH FRUIT IN YOUR GARDEN BECAUSE YOU REAP WHAT YOU SOW.

Submitted by Alim S C

The Bible Verses

Jesus proclaimed aloud: "Whoever puts faith in me believes not so much in me as in him who sent me;... For I have not spoken on my own; no, the Father who sent me has commanded me what to say and how to speak. Since I know that his commandment means eternal life, whatever I say is spoken just as he instructed me." [John 12:44-50]

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God willing please mark your calendar and start making your plans to attend the conference. Remember that this is a great opportunity to be with Submitters from all around the world.

How to Register?

The conference is open to all people of the scripture, who are striving to submit to the will and commandments of God, do not associate any partners with Him, and follow the religion of Abraham, the monotheist. If you'd like to attend the conference, please fill out the enclosed registration form.

If you do not have a registration form, you can request it by writing to us, or contacting us by e-mail at info@masjidtucson.org.

We also set up a registration page on the internet for your convenience at www.masjidtucson.org/conference/

God willing, we are looking forward to meeting our family of submitters.

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