
Trailing the hem of a garment for a woman

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Hadeeth No. 460 from Silsilah Ahadeeth as-Saheehah

On the authority of Umm Salaamah (رضى الله عنها)¹: that when the Messenger of Allaah (صلى الله عليه وسلم)² said what he said about trailing the hem of a garment for the woman.

Umm Salamah (رضى الله عنها) mentions: then I asked: O Messenger of Allaah! How should we trail the hem of a garment?

He (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said: **Trail it by a hand span.**

Umm Salamah (رضى الله عنها) said: But the feet become uncovered!

Then he (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said: **Then trail it a forearms length.**

I (al-Albaanee) say: In this hadeeth there is a proof showing that the feet of a woman are 'awrah (i.e. those parts of the body that must be covered) and this was a matter that was well known amongst the women at the time of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم).

Since, when the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said: **'Trail it by a hand span,'** Umm Salaamah (رضى الله عنها) said: "Then the feet become uncovered" and from this, one feels that she knew that the feet are from the 'awrah. It is not permissible to uncover them and the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) reaffirmed that for her and that is why he (صلى الله عليه وسلم) commanded her to trail her garment a forearm's length.

In the Noble Qur'aan there is a reference to this fact and that is the saying of Allaah Ta'aala³: **And let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment⁴**

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Shaykh al-Albaanee (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ)⁵ was asked a question⁶ regarding trailing the hem of the hijab for the woman: "Is it a condition that it should trail by a hand span or a forearm's length?"

The Shaykh (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) answered by saying: "This condition is if the clothing of a woman was like the clothing of the women in the past, i.e. because the women before used to only wear a Kamees (long dress) i.e. like a thobe. This means they did not wear a sirwaal (like pyjamas) or socks, or anything that would cover her shins nor her feet, except this long kamees which used to be dragged along the

¹ (رضى الله عنها) (rad iyallaahu `anhaa) May Allaah be pleased with her

² (صلى الله عليه وسلم) May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him

³ Ta'aala (He, The Most High)

⁴ Soorah Noor[24: 31]

⁵ (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) (rahimahullaah) May Allaah have mercy on him

⁶ Taken from 'Silsilah Huda wa noor' – tape no. 565 at 21.49 mins.

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floor, which is generally known as the abayyah. Nowadays if a woman wears socks or perhaps a long sirwaal, even though this is not common, then it is sufficient for the jilbaab to cover the top of her feet. It is not necessary for the hem of the garment to be dragging along the floor except in the situation when she cannot find, from her clothing, the likes of a sirwaal or socks etc. because, verily the Messenger (عليه السلام)⁷ ordered her to lengthen her garment fearing that anything of the 'awrah of her feet or shins be uncovered. So, if they are covered with clothing or socks and over the top of them is the long Jilbaab then it is not necessary, in this situation, for the hem of the garment to be dragging along the floor.

Questioner: May Allaah reward you

The Shaykh (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ): May Allaah preserve you.

Questioner: So it is understood from your speech, that there is no problem if the shoes become uncovered or some of the socks are shown?

The Shaykh (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ): No, I said to you that the Jilbaab should cover the top of the feet. Then you also mentioned shoes, the condition for the shoes is that they shouldn't be decorated, because nowadays most women's shoes are decorated.

Questioner: May Allaah reward you

The Shaykh (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ): May Allaah preserve you.

All Praise belongs to Allaah, may His peace and blessings be upon our final Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم), his family, his companions and all those who follow his guidance.

⁷ (عليه السلام) (alaih-salaam) Peace be upon him