

The topic of the *Khutbah* before last was about one of the *akhlaq* (moral qualities) of Islam regarding which Rasulullah (*Salla Allahu alaihi wasallam*) said: “every religion has a moral quality and the moral quality of Islam is *al-Haya*” (translated as bashfulness, timidity, reserve, self-consciousness.)

al-Haya is considered to be the number one moral quality of Islam because if present it makes one give up all inappropriate and repulsive qualities, actions and sayings and it prevents one from failing to do what is right and to give what is due to others. It is (*al-Haya*) as the Prophet (*Salla Allahu alaihi wasallam*) said: “*al-Haya* is all good and *al-Haya* does not bring about anything but good.”

The *‘Ulama* (scholars) said there are different types of *al-Haya*. The first type is *Haya* of reverence. This type itself could be of different degrees; reverence, honour or respect. It results from the knowledge of the majesty, greatness or nobility of the object of *al-Haya*. This could apply to Allah (*Subhanahu wa ta’ala*), Rasulullah (*Salla Allahu alaihi wasallam*) or to a righteous person. The Prophet (*Salla Allahu alaihi wasallam*) was the most self-conscious because he was the most knowledgeable about Allah (*Subhanahu wa ta’ala*).

A second type of *Haya* is *Haya* of generosity of the *Nafs* (character.) An example of this is the shyness of the Prophet (*Salla Allahu alaihi wasallam*) when some *Sahaba* took a meal in his house. After the meal they sat for a long chat. That annoyed the Prophet (*Salla Allahu alaihi wasallam*) but he was shy and did not say anything to them. A Qur’anic verse was revealed regarding this to teach Muslims good manners. Allah (*Subhanahu wa ta’ala*), says in *Surah al-Ahzab*: “O you who believe! Do not enter the Prophet’s houses, unless permission is given to you for a meal, not (so early as) to wait for its preparation. But when you are invited, enter, and when you have taken your meal, disperse, without sitting for a long talk. Verily, such (behaviour) annoys the Prophet, and he is shy of you ((asking you to go), but Allah is not shy of the truth.....” (53)

A third type of *Haya* is *Haya* of modesty. It is to avoid uncovering that which is ought to be covered –such as keeping out of sight certain parts of the body that ought to be veiled. This applies for both males and females. The most worthy of this type of *Haya* are women who by nature have been endowed with this type of *Haya* – unless their pure nature has been corrupted by the environment in which they live.

The most important type of *Haya* is *Haya* from Allah (*Subhanahu wa ta’ala*.) He is the One who deserves to be ashamed of most as the Prophet (*Salla Allahu alaihi wasallam*) said: “Allah is more worthy to be shy of.”

This *Haya* from Allah comes about by exalting Allah (*Subhanahu wa ta’ala*) and realizing that He is aware of all that you do and that which you do not do. This certainty would lead one to do what He has commanded you to do and avoid what He has prohibited.

One of the signs of lack of *Haya* from Allah as far as some people are concerned is that you would find one of them controlling one’s actions and sayings in front of those whom he respects, but when he is alone – and none could see him other than Allah (*Subhanahu wa ta’ala*) he would act without control.

In the story of that man who sought the advice of Rasulullah (*Salla Allahu alaihi wasallam*), the Prophet advised him with a most comprehensive advice: He said: “I advise you to be ashamed of Allah, *azza wajall*, as you would be ashamed of a righteous man from your people.”

This is a most significant advice— for there is none, even a transgressor, but he is ashamed of doing evil acts in front of righteous people. Allah is all-aware of the acts of His slave and if a slave is ashamed of his Lord as he is ashamed of a righteous person - then he would avoid all evil acts and carry out all that is required of him.

It is not *Haya* that a person should keep silent when something wrong is said or done. It is not *Haya* that a Muslim should give up or overlook enjoining what is right and forbidding what is evil. It is rather cowardice and weakness. It has nothing to do with *al-Haya*.

Imam An-Nawawi, may Allah have mercy upon him, said: “The fact that *Haya* is all good and that *Haya* does not bring about anything but good – these prophetic statements could be mistakenly misunderstood by some people who might be led into thinking that they are excused – under the pretext of *al-Haya*- for not facing or opposing a person whom they respect when he does or says something wrong. The answer to this is what a group of Imams said: “This in reality is not *Haya*. It is incapability, cowardice and humiliation of oneself.”

It is not part of *Haya* that a person; man or woman, should be shy to ask about religious issues of his/her *Deen*. It is for this reason that Ayesha (*radhiya Allahu anha*) said: “May Allah have mercy upon the women of the *Ansar*. *Haya* (shyness) did not stop them from having *Fiqh* (having understanding of) in the *Deen*.”

Abu Musa Al-Ash’ari came to her (*Sayyidah Ayesha - radhiya Allahu anha*) and said: “O mother! I want to ask you something but I am shy of you! She said: Do not be shy to ask me something which you would ask your mother, who gave birth to you for I am your mother. I said: What necessitates *Ghusl* (makes it *wajib*)? She said: You have asked an expert! Rasulullah (*Salla Allahu alaihi wasallam*) said: If he sits between her legs and thighs and the circumcised part disappears in the circumcised (private) part then *Ghusl* becomes *wajib*.

The background of the *Hadith* was that: a group of *Muhajreen* and *Ansar* disagreed over the issue. The *Ansaris* said: *Ghusl* becomes *wajib* only when there is ejaculation (release of semen.) The *Muhajreen* said: when there is mingling (of the two sexual organs) then *Ghusl* becomes *wajib*. Abu Musa (the narrator of the *Hadith*) said: I will sort out this for you and so he went, sought permission to talk to Ayesha *radhiya Allahu anha* and asked her about the issue.

According to the *Hadith* it is only when the male sexual part is inserted in the female part that *Ghusl* becomes *wajib*. The scholars are in consensus that if there is touching without insertion then *Ghusl* is not *wajib* on both the husband and wife.

Of course if the ejaculation of semen occurs in any circumstance, then *Ghusl* becomes *wajib*.

Umm Soulaym (*radhiya Allahu anha*) came to Rasulullah (*Salla Allahu alaihi wasallam*) and said: O Rasulullah! Allah is not shy of the truth. Does *Ghusl* become *wajib* upon a woman if she sees a dream?” He said, yes, if she finds the watery liquid (the vaginal secretion.) This applies equally to men and women if they find the sexual secretion after sleep – whether one felt the sexual pleasure or not.

You may say that what I am talking about is very basic and common knowledge. But you would be surprised to learn that many Muslims do not know even these basic issues. I know of a born Muslim woman from an Arabic Muslim country who married an Irish revert. The man was new to Islam and didn't know much about the *Deen*. His wife used to tell him

If one for some good reason is shy to ask, then he/she should send someone to ask for him/her or he should phone. Ali Ibn Abi Talib (*radhiya Allahu 'anhu*) said I used to have plenty of *madhdhi* secretion and I was shy to ask Rasulullah because of the position of his daughter (Fatima who was Ali's wife) so I sent Al-Miqdad Ibn Al-Aswad to ask him. He asked him and he said: "He should wash his private part and make *Wudu*." (*Madhdhi* is secreted as a result of sexual excitement. It is *Najis* to be washed and breaks *Wudu*.)

So, one should be careful not to let *Shaytan* prevent one from seeking the knowledge which ones needs under the excuse *al-Haya*.

How can one realise the quality of *Al-Haya*:

- 1) Renewing and strengthening Iman in Allah in one's heart. *Haya* is a fruit of Iman and a branch of it. Renewing and strengthening Iman in the heart strengthens *Haya* from Allah. Iman increases with acts of obedience and decreases with acts of disobedience and *Haya* increases and decreases accordingly.
- 2) Establishing prayer and observing it regularly on time with the *Jama'ah* in the *Masjid*, whenever possible. Allah *Subhanahu wa ta'ala* says: "...and establish *Salah*. Surely *Salah* prevents from shameful and evil acts..." (*Surah al-Ankabout* 45.) Restraint from shameful and evil acts is a sign of the strength of *Haya*.
- 3) Reflection on the *Seera* (biography), sayings and actions of the role model and best example in *al-Haya*; Al-Mustafa, (*Salla Allahu alaihi wasallam*).
- 4) Keeping company with righteous people, listening to them and drawing on their example. One of *Aa-Salaf* said: "Revive your *Haya* by sitting with those who induces *Haya*" (from them.) Everyone, even a transgressor, is ashamed of the righteous people to behave improperly in front of them – as mentioned earlier. Qatadah said: "If a Muslim does not benefit from a righteous person except that his company with him prevents him from falling into acts of disobedience – then there is much good in that.
- 5) Avoiding the morally corrupt environment which weakens *al-Haya* and keeping away from the company of people who lack *al-Haya* (those who are shameless) and changing to a righteous company.

I ask Allah to grant us this quality of *al-Haya* and to gather us among the righteous. He is most capable.