

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Hijab

(The Veil)

Issues Related to the Veil and their Resolutions Proposed by
Syedna Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalīfatul-Masīh V
(May Allah be his Helper)

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(The Veil)

Issues Related to the Veil and its Resolution Proposed by
Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (May Allah be his Helper)

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يٰۤاَيُّهَا اٰدَمَ قَدْ اَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ لِبَاسًا يُّوَارِي سَوْآتِكُمْ وَرِيشًا ۗ وَ لِبَاسُ
التَّقْوٰى ۗ ذٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ ۗ ذٰلِكَ مِنْ اٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٢٧﴾

“O children of Adam, We have indeed sent down to you raiment to cover your nakedness and to be a means of adornment; but the raiment of righteousness – that is the best. That is of the commandments of Allah, that they may remember.”

(Surah Al-A’rāf, 7:27)

FOREWORD

At various occasions, I have spoken extensively on the topic of Purda (the veil) with reference to the Holy Qurān and the discourses of the Promised Messiah (peace be on him). Lajna and Nasirāt should always keep in view the directives concerning Purda as described in this book and should always present their noble examples in this regard.

May Allah enable you all to practice this! Amīn!

Mirza Masroor Ahmad
Khalīfatul-Masīh V



Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad Khalīfatul-Masīh V (may Allah be his helper)

INTRODUCTION

By the Grace of Allah, Lajna Section Central has been blessed with the opportunity to publish a book on the topic of Purda (the veil) in compliance with the instructions of His Holiness Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V (may Allah be his Helper!). Al-Hamdo lillāh! This book includes extracts of Friday sermons, addresses, and messages of Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V (may Allah be his Helper), as well as invaluable guidance and insightful instructions he has given in various classes and Majalis 'Amila from the inception of his Khilāfat to 2017.

This book is particularly beneficial for Ahmadi women as it imparts insightful knowledge on the sheer importance and blessings of the Islamic commandment of Purda. Furthermore, this book is not only beneficial for women but also helpful in explaining to men the sagacious Qurānic teaching of chastity and lowering of the gaze (ghadd-e-basar). By following these teachings, both men and women can be shielded from the moral vices prevalent in the present age. May Allah enable us to adopt these precious guidelines and instructions as our guiding light so that we are able to act upon them! Amīn!

In preparation of the book, Rizwana Nisar Sahiba (Mu'avina, Lajna Section Central) has worked hard to prepare the extracts and references in this manuscript and fulfilled this responsibility in a commendable manner. Furthermore, we had the guidance and cooperation of Mahmood Ahmad Malik Sahib (Waqf-e-Zindagi & Helper at Al-Fazl International London) throughout the entire process of preparing this book. May Allah grant them the best of rewards! Amīn!

Humbly,
Rehana Ahmad
In-charge, Lajna Section Central

يٰۤبَنِيَّ اٰدَمَ لَا يَفْتِنَنَّكَ الشَّيْطٰنُ كَمَا اَخْرَجَ اٰبَوَيْكَ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ يَنْزِعُ
عَنْهُمَا لِبَاسَهُمَا لِيُرِيَهُمَا ۗ سَوَاتِرُهَا ۗ اِنَّهُ يَرُوكُمْ هُوَ وَقَبِيْلُهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا
تَرَوْنَهُمْ ۗ اِنَّا جَعَلْنَا الشَّيْطٰنَ اَوْلِيَّاءَ لِلَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿٢٨﴾

“O children of Adam, let not Satan seduce you, even as he turned your parents out of the Garden, stripping them of their raiment that he might show them their nakedness. Truly, he sees you, he and his tribe, from where you see them not. Surely, We have made Satan friends of those who believe not.”

(Surah Al-A'raf, 7:28)

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“First, it is the men who are commanded to practice restraining their gaze; they should restrain their eyes from gawking at anything prohibited and they should not unnecessarily stare at women who are non-Mahram (forbidden) for them. Whenever one walks about with eyes wide open and unrestrained, the eyes will necessarily follow [others] out of curiosity. This is why the Holy Qurān commands that one should walk with a lowered gaze.”

(Friday Sermon, January 30, 2004, Baitul Futuh, London)

THE RELIGIOUS COMMANDMENT OF PURDA

Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V (may Allah be his Helper) explained the broad context of Purda in a Friday Sermon by doing a commentary of this Qurānic injunction in light of Ahadith [sayings of the Holy Prophet^{sa}] and the instructions of the Promised Messiah^{as}. After reciting Tashahhud, Ta'awwudh and Surah Al-Fatihah, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{atba} recited the following verses from Surah An-Nur with their translation and then presented a commentary of these verses:

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ۗ ذٰلِكَ اَزْكٰى لَهُمْ ۗ
اِنَّ اللّٰهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُوْنَ ﴿٣١﴾ قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنٰتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ اَبْصَارِهِنَّ
وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِيْنَ زِينَتَهُنَّ اِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَلَا لِيُضْرِبْنَ
بِخُرِهِنَّ عَلٰى جُيُوْبِهِنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِيْنَ زِينَتَهُنَّ اِلَّا لِبُعُوْلَتِهِنَّ اَوْ اَبَائِهِنَّ
اَوْ اَباءِ بُعُوْلَتِهِنَّ اَوْ اَبْنَائِهِنَّ اَوْ اَبْناءِ بُعُوْلَتِهِنَّ اَوْ اِخْوَانِهِنَّ اَوْ بَنِي
اِخْوَانِهِنَّ اَوْ بَنِي اَخْوَتِهِنَّ اَوْ نِسَائِهِنَّ اَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ اَيْمَانُهُنَّ اَوْ التَّابِعِيْنَ
غَيْرِ اُولٰٓئِى الْاَرْبَةِ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ اَوْ الطِّفْلِ الَّذِيْنَ لَمْ يَظْهَرُوْا عَلٰى عَوْرَتِ
النِّسَاءِ وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ بِاَرْجُلِهِنَّ لِيُعْلَمَ مَا يُخْفِيْنَ مِنْ زِينَتِهِنَّ ۗ وَتَوْبُوْا
اِلٰى اللّٰهِ جَمِيْعًا اِنَّهُ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ ﴿٣٢﴾

The translation of these verses is as follows:

“Say to the believing men that they restrain their looks and guard their private parts. That is purer for them. Surely, Allah is well-aware of what they do. And say to the believing women that they restrain their looks and guard their private parts, and that they display not their beauty or their embellishment except that which is apparent

thereof, and that they draw their head-coverings over their bosoms, and that they display not their beauty or their embellishment save to their husbands, or to their fathers, or the fathers of their husbands, or their sons, or the sons of their husbands, or their brothers, or the sons of their brothers, or the sons of their sisters, or women who are their companions, or those that their right hands possess, or such of male attendants as have no desire for women, or young children who have not yet attained knowledge of the hidden parts of women. And that they strike not their feet so that what they hide of their ornaments may become known. And turn ye to Allah all together, O believers, so that you may prosper" (Surah Al-Nur, 24:31-32).

From the verses I have recited today, everyone must have understood the subject I want to address. I have briefly discussed this subject previously on two or three different occasions, but I feel that it needs further elucidation. From many of the letters I receive, I have gathered that there are still a considerable number of people who do not understand the importance of the commandment of Purda. Some people question: is Purda the only important commandment for the progress of Islam Ahmadiyyat? Is the advancement of Islam merely dependent on the observance of Purda? Others start asserting that these are backward and outdated teachings which should not be practiced; we should be modernized according to this age. Although the number of such people in our Jamā'at is very negligible, the fear that such people will drift away with the tides of the present age, nonetheless, produces anxiety in the heart. However small the number of such people is, it cannot be considered insignificant.

One response I have for such people is that when Allah has indeed given us commandments on what to do and what not to do by including them in the most perfect and complete Book, and through the Holy Prophet^{sa} verifying that they are true Islamic

teachings, then it follows that the progress of Islam Ahmadiyyat is inextricably linked with these teachings, even if you consider them insignificant. Secondly, the teachings of the last law-bearing Book which were revealed upon the Holy Prophet^{sa} can never become obsolete. People who have such thoughts should try to reform themselves and do Istighfar (seek forgiveness of Allah).” (Friday Sermon, January 30, 2004, Baitul Futuh, London, Al-Fazl International, April 9, 2004)

The Commandment of Ghadd-e-Basar (Lowering the Gaze) for Both Men and Women

The commandment of lowering the gaze (ghadd-e-basar) is equally applicable to men and women. Thus, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} says:

“First, it is the men who are commanded to practice restraining their gaze; they should restrain their eyes from gawking at anything prohibited and they should not unnecessarily stare at women who are non-Mahram (forbidden) for them. Whenever one walks about with eyes wide open and unrestrained, the eyes will necessarily follow [others] out of curiosity. This is why the Holy Qurān commands that one should walk with a lowered gaze.

To save oneself from such ills, the Promised Messiah^{as} has instructed that one should walk with partially open eyes, neither widely open nor so closed as to stumble. They should be open only to an extent that they do not show any curiosity [to others] and if you happen to catch someone’s eye, do not go on staring. I will explain this a little later with a Hadith as to how one should look, but before that, I present a quote of Allama Tabari who has stated: ‘the meaning of Ghadd-e-Basar is to restrain your eyes from seeing anything prohibited by Allah the Almighty’(Tafsirul Tabari, Vol, 18, pp. 116-117).

This instruction— to lower the gaze— is, therefore, already in place for men, and if men fulfill this injunction, many of the ills are eliminated at this point.

The Promised Messiah^{as} states: 'Every righteous person who wants to keep his heart pure should not let his eyes wander unrestrained like animals; rather, it is imperative for him to develop the habit of Ghadd-e-Basar in his social life. It is this blessed habit that would convert his natural impulses into a high moral quality' (Report Jalsa Azam Mazahib, pp. 102-103, qtd. in Tafsir Hazrat Masīh Mau'ūd^{as} Vol. 3, p. 444).

Then there is the injunction for believing women to observe Ghadd-e-Basar and keep their eyes lowered. If women walk with their eyes wide open and unrestrained, then such men whose hearts are under the influence of Satan will continue creating problems for them.

It is necessary for all women to obey the instruction of Allah the Almighty regarding Ghadd-e-Basar in order to save themselves and their families from any dishonour; so that they do not become a source of dishonour. Men who are crooked and mischievous will sometimes take a minor matter and blow it out of proportion, which unnecessarily starts comments and criticisms [by people]. This is why the Holy Prophet^{sa} instructed his wives to observe Purda even from a eunuch to avoid the possibility that he may talk to other men about them and spread indecency.

Look at how strictly the Holy Prophet^{sa} has imposed this commandment. Far from staring directly into a young man's eye whose inner state is unknown, it is even instructed that if it does become unavoidable to speak to a man, a woman should use a stern tone so that he may not entertain any evil thoughts. Thus, there are instructions to be so strict in observance of the Purda.

Continuing with the Friday sermon, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} also referred to some blessed Ahadith: It is narrated by Abu Raihana^{ra} that he was with the Holy Prophet^{sa} in a battle. One night he heard the Holy Prophet^{sa} saying: 'Fire is forbidden to touch the eye that remains awake for the sake of Allah and fire is forbidden on the eye that sheds tears for the fear of Allah.' The same narration states that fire is forbidden on the eye that lowers its gaze instead of looking at that which is restricted by Allah. And fire is also forbidden to touch the eye that has been damaged in the way of Allah Almighty. (Sunan ad-Darimi, Kitabul Jihad)

Thus, consider how high is the status of doing Ghadd-e-Basar (lowering of the eyes); they are being included among those who worship Allah, strive in His path and are martyred. In other words, such people acquire this status because they keep their eyes lowered. People who follow this commandment will always be engaged in the worship of Allah and the ones to attain His nearness.

Hazrat Abu Saeed Khudri^{ra} relates that the Holy Prophet^{sa} said, 'Refrain from assembling on the streets.' The companions of the Holy Prophet^{sa} said, 'O Messenger of Allah, we do not have any alternative.' The Holy Prophet^{sa} told them, 'In that case, fulfill the rights of the streets.' They asked, 'what are the rights of the streets?' The Holy Prophet^{sa} said, 'Respond to the greetings of peace of every passerby, keep your eyes lowered, guide those who ask for directions, enjoin goodness and forbid evil.' (Masnad Ahmad bin Hanbal, vol. 3, p. 61, published in Beirut)

Look at how much emphasis has been laid that first, one should not loiter in a street. However, if one has to be in the street for a legitimate reason, then the rights of the street must be fulfilled. That is, do not look around unnecessarily; observe Ghadd-e-Basar and keep your gaze lowered. It should not be that if one happens

to make eye contact with another, you go on staring at them.

Hazrat Umme Salma^{ra} relates that she was with the Holy Prophet^{sa} along with Hazrat Maimunah^{ra} when Ibn Umm Maktum^{ra} came. This was after the commandment of Purda had been revealed. The Holy Prophet^{sa} said: 'Veil yourselves from him.' We said, 'Messenger of Allah, he is blind. He cannot see us or recognize us,' whereupon the Holy Prophet^{sa} said, 'Are you both also blind and not seeing him?' (Tirmidhi, Kitabal Adab)

Look at the sheer extent to which Purda is to be observed; not only are men commanded to lower their gaze, women too are commanded not to look at men unnecessarily.

Hazrat Jarair^{ra} relates that he enquired from the Holy Prophet^{sa} about a 'sudden involuntary glance.' The Holy Prophet^{sa} said, 'Avert your eyes.' (Abu Da'ud, Kitabun Nikah)

Such is the beauty of Islamic Purda. Sometimes, an occasional involuntary glance may occur. This is natural. However, in order to establish a righteous society, Islam—on the one hand—permits women to go out [of the home] on the condition that they observe Purda, not displaying their outer beauties or embellishments, except that which is apparent; and on the other hand, it instructs men to keep their eyes lowered. If they have to remain in a public space, they must lower their eyes. If there is an involuntary glance, they should immediately avert their eyes.

Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbas^{ra} narrates that Fazl (bin Abbas) was mounted [on an animal] behind the Holy Prophet^{sa} when a woman from the tribe of Khas'am came. Fazl and the woman both started staring at each other. Seeing this, the Holy Prophet^{sa} turned Fazl's face the other way (Bukhari, Kitabal Hajj).

Hazrat Abu Umamah^{ra} relates that the Holy Prophet^{sa} said, 'When a believer's glance[involuntarily falls upon the beauty of a woman and he does Ghadd-e-Basar (lowers his eyes), Allah blesses him with the ability to enjoy such worship that is extremely sweet and blissful' (Masnad Ahmad).

Allah grants the ability to engage in good deeds and in worship to those people who lower their eyes to avoid the influence of Satan.

The Promised Messiah^{as} says: 'The Islamic injunction that men and women should observe Purda from each other is to save them from slipping and stumbling. This is because man is inclined towards vice in the early stages and the slightest provocation will cause him to fall upon it as a starving person falls on delicious food. It is incumbent upon man to reform himself. This is the core of Islamic Purda and I have explained it especially for those Muslims who are not aware of the commandments of Islam and their essence.' (Al-Badr Vol 3, No. 33 , Sep 8, 1904, pp 6-7 qtd. In Tafsir Hazrat Masih Mau'ud^{ra} Vol. 3, p. 443)

The Promised Messiah^{as} says, "Tell the believing women that they should restrict their eyes from seeing non-Mahram (forbidden) men and restrict their ears from listening to their lustful voices. They ought to keep their private parts hidden and should not show their beauty to forbidden men. They must wear their veil in a way that it covers them from their head to their chest, which means that the chest, both ears, side of the face, forehead, all should remain covered. They should not strike their feet on the ground like dancers do. These measures can save one from transgression, if they are followed." (Report Jalsa Azam Mazahib, p 100-101, with reference from Tafsir Hazrat Masih Mau'ud^{as} Vol. 3, p 444)

He further said, "The believers should not opt to be open-mouthed or let their eyes wander unrestrained. In fact, they should abide by

the command of 'restraining the eyes' (Al-Nur, 24: 31) by keeping their gaze lowered and avoiding the causes of evil" (Malfuzāt Vol 1, p 533, Published from Rabwah) (Friday Sermon, delivered January 30, 2004 at Baitul Futuh, London, Al-Fazl International April 9, 2004)

While speaking about the Conditions of Baī'at in one of his Friday sermons, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} mentioned about abstaining from moral vices with reference to the second Condition of Baī'at . In light of pure divine guidance of the Promised Messiah^{as}, he said, "Many points are included in the second Condition of Baī'at. (The Promised Messiah^{as} has said) 'do not go near adultery, avoid all such occasions that can even arouse such a thought in the heart. Do not tread the paths that harbour the risk of committing this sin. An adulterer takes evil to its limits.'" (The television programs being broadcast on some channels or streamed over the Internet these days are nudging towards these vices. Adultery can be of the eyes and It should also be avoided. Any such thing or activity that leads to evil is advised to be avoided). **"The way of adultery is an evil way as it obstructs one's progress towards the goal and is extremely harmful to the achievement of the purpose of life."** (The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam, p. 45)

What should be your ultimate aim? Seeking the pleasure of Allah is the ultimate destination and adultery is a hurdle in the path of achieving it.

One of the points mentioned in the second Condition of Baī'at is the trespasses of the eye about which the Promised Messiah^{as} stated, "The Holy Qurān guides appropriately keeping in view the natural desires and weaknesses of man and it has adopted an excellent course in this regard. It states that you direct the believing men to restrain their gaze and to guard their Furūj. That is the practice through which they will attain purification (Surah Al-Nur, 24:31).

Furūj does not refer merely to the private parts. It refers to all openings and holes in the body, including the ears. It has been prohibited to hear a song sung by an unrelated woman. Remember, it is proven by thousands of experiments, that if God prohibits something, man has to leave it sooner or later.” (Malfuzāt, Vol. 4, p. 105, Edition 2003, from Rabwah)

The Promised Messiah^{as} further says, “Islam has equally enjoined men and women on observing these conditions. Women are prescribed to wear the veil and men are commanded to keep their eyes down. Salāt (obligatory Prayer), fasting, Zakāt (obligatory alms), Hajj (Pilgrimage to the House of God in Mecca), the distinction between Halal (lawful) and Haram (unlawful), shunning one’s customs and traditions to honour God’s commandments are all injunctions that make the gate of Islam very narrow and that is why everyone cannot enter this gate. (Malfuzāt, Vol. 5. p. 614, Edition 2003 ,Rabwah) (Friday Sermon, delivered March 23, 2012 at Baitul Futuh, London, Al-Fazl International April 13, 2012)

Men Must Keep Their Gazes Pure

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} gave important advice to Majlis Khuddāmul Ahmadiyya U.K. on adopting the attribute of chastity with reference to the Holy Qurān during the Ijtimā’. He said, “In Surah Al-Mu’minun verse 6, Allah has mentioned another characteristic of the believers. Allah says:

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَفْئُوتِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ

“And who guard their chastity.” (Al-Mu’minun, 23:6)

Guarding their chastity and modesty is not only incumbent upon women, it is also obligatory upon men. Guarding of chastity does not mean only to abstain from extra marital sexual relations. Rather,

the Promised Messiah^{as} has taught us that a believer keeps his eyes and his ears pure of anything that is inappropriate and morally indecent. As I have mentioned earlier, pornography is something extremely obscene and watching it is equivalent to losing the chastity and purity of one's eyes and ears. It is also contrary to the Islamic teachings of piety and modesty for boys and girls to mix freely, form relationships and inappropriate friendships.

We instruct Ahmadi women that they should observe Purda. I also advise the Ahmadi women to observe Purda and guard their chastity and purity. However, it should be remembered that in the **Holy Qurān, before giving women the commandment of observing Purda, Allah ordered the believing men to practice Ghadd-e-Basar (restrict their gazes) by keeping their eyes down** and keep their hearts and minds clean of impure thoughts and bad intentions. This is why Allah has clearly stated in Surah An-Nur Verse 31, "Say to the believing men that they restrain their eyes and guard their private parts. That is purer for them. Surely, Allah is well-aware of what they do." Although men have not been ordered as women have to observe Purda in their physical appearance, they have been explicitly commanded by the Holy Qurān to keep their gazes pure. It means that they should not look at women with lustful eyes and should keep their minds pure and free from all sorts of potential temptations.

This is the Purda required of men, which is the mean of protecting society from immodesty, indecency and related dangers. No teaching of Islam is superficial and without wisdom; rather, every principle of Islam is based on absolute wisdom and solid foundation. Thus, the command for men to restrict their gazes teaches self-control because generally it is through a man's gaze that his emotions and desires are aroused. To protect the society from impropriety and misconduct, Islam has instructed both men and women to keep their gazes down when facing the opposite

sex or to guard their eyes from looking at anything that may lead to lustful thoughts and illicit behaviour. Remember! Modesty is an essential character trait of a Khādim and so you must avoid all that violates the Islamic injunction of chastity. If you are successful in this, then you can claim true spiritual advancement.”(Address National Ijtimā’ Khuddāmul Ahmadiyya 26 September 26, 2016, Published Badr Qadiān September 7, 2017)

Chastity for Men and Women

In one of his Friday sermons, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} gave detailed advice to members of the Jamā’at on the pristine teaching of chastity in Islam. He said:

“The command of doing Ghadd-e-Basar (lowering the gaze), observing Purda and doing Taubah (seeking forgiveness from Allah) are all for our own benefit. Allah will reward us with His love and nearness for following His commandments. At the same time, Allah also states that because of these virtuous deeds your chastity will be established in the society and world you live in; neither will any fingers be pointing towards you that you are a person of immoral character and should be shunned nor will people be warning others to shun themselves and their children from you. On the contrary, everywhere we will have an honourable status because of this virtue. When Emperor Heraclius asked Abu Sufiyan about the teachings and practices of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, despite his enmity, Abu Sufiyan, along with saying other things, could only say that the Prophet^{sa} teaches chastity. Heraclius replied that this is the very characteristic of a Prophet.

Muhammad bin Sirin^{ra} narrated a long Hadith of the Holy Prophet^{sa} in which the Holy Prophet^{sa} advised about different things. One such advice is that chastity and truthfulness are better and everlasting in contrast to adultery and falsehood. (Sunan Dar Qutni, Kitabal Wasaya)

Thus, chastity is everlasting and whoever possesses this characteristic will always be recognized for this character trait. And any finger raised towards him will be to point out his piety.

The Promised Messiah^{as} says: **“Say to the believing men to guard their eyes from looking at unlawful women and avoid gazing at women who can incite lustful thoughts”** (this includes women who are not in Purda (veil). It does not mean that it is permissible to look at unveiled women; one should avoid looking at them as well). “ On such occasions, assume the practice of keeping eyes half-closed and safeguard your private parts in whatever way you can. Similarly, safeguard the ears from listening to the songs and melodious voices of unfamiliar and unlawful women, and refrain from listening to the stories of their beauty. This is an excellent technique for the chastity of the eyes and heart.”(Report Jalsa Azam Mazahib, p 100 – reference from Tafsir Hazrat Masīh Mau’ūd^{as} Vol 3, p 440)

Nowadays, the situation has deteriorated from songs to obscene movies. Both men and women need to be equally vigilant in this regard, both must be careful. Video cassettes, or CDs containing obscene and indecent movies or dramas are freely available in shops. The Jamā’at and the auxiliary organizations should keep an eye on this trend and advise adults and children of their disastrous consequences because eventually these activities lead to evil ways.

The Promised Messiah^{as} says: “In these verses God Almighty has not only set forth excellent teaching for acquiring the quality of chastity but has furnished man with five remedies against unchastity. These are: to restrain one’s eyes from gazing on those who are outside the prohibited degrees; to restrain one’s ears from listening to their voices and to descriptions of their good looks; to avoid occasions which might furnish incitement towards this vice; and to control oneself during the period of celibacy through fasting, dieting etc.

We can confidently claim that this excellent teaching with all its devices that is set forth in the Holy Quran is peculiar to Islam. It should be kept in mind that as the natural condition of man, which is the source of his passions, is such that he cannot depart from it without a complete change in himself, his passions are bound to be roused, or in other words put in peril, when they are confronted with the occasion and opportunity for indulging in this vice. **Therefore, God Almighty has not instructed us that we might freely gaze at women outside the prohibited degrees and might contemplate their beauty** and observe all their movements in dancing etc. but that we should do so with pure looks. Nor have we been instructed to listen to the singing of these women and to lend ear to tales of their beauty, but that we should do so with a pure intent.

We have been positively commanded not to look at their beauty, whether with pure intent or otherwise, nor to listen to their musical voices or to descriptions of their good looks, whether with pure intent or otherwise. We have been directed to eschew all this as we eschew carrion, so that we should not stumble. It is almost certain that our free glances would cause us to stumble sometime or the other. As God Almighty desires that our eyes and our hearts and all our limbs and organs should continue in a state of purity, He has furnished us with this excellent teaching. There can be no doubt that unrestrained looks become a source of danger.”(The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam, pp. 46-48)

Then the Promised Messiah^{as} says: “He, whose life is involved in impurity and sinfulness, will always remain fearful and cannot compete. He cannot express his truthfulness and cannot furnish the proof of his chastity like an honest person can do with courage and valour. Take an example from worldly affairs. If one has ample means of subsistence, one will have many envious people around him. Every prosperous person has enviers who surround him. The same is true of religious matters. Satan is the enemy of reformation.

Hence, a person should keep his matters with God in order and strengthen his relationship with Him. If he keeps God pleased, then he does not need to be afraid of anyone or care for anyone besides God. He should avoid actions that are punishable, but this cannot happen without divine help and guidance. Mere human effort cannot yield results until backed by the Grace of Allah.

خُلِقَ الْإِنْسَانُ ضَعِيفًا

“Man has been created weak.” (Surah Al-Nisa’, 4:29)

Man is weak, full of faults and surrounded in difficulties. Hence, one should pray that Allah grants him the capacity to do good deeds and make him the recipient of divine support and abundant blessings.” (Malfuzāt, Vol. 5. p. 543, Edition 2003, published from Rabwah)

May Allah enable us to practice this! (Friday Sermon, delivered January 30, 2004 at Baitul Futuh, London, Al-Fazl International April 9, 2004)

Meaning of Furūj and its Safeguarding

The Holy Qurān offers specific instructions to the believers to safeguard their Furūj. In the light of the sayings of the Promised Messiah^{as}, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} delivered an insightful explanation of this Islamic injunction and gave advice to Ahmadi ladies in particular. Huzoor Anwar^{atba} mentioned that the Promised Messiah^{as} has said:

“The Holy Qurān—which offers the most relevant teachings based on the natural demands and weaknesses of human beings—has adopted a brilliant principle:

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ذَلِكَ أَزْكَى لَهُمْ

That is, direct the believing men to restrain their looks and to guard their private parts [Furūj]. This is the act through which they will attain purification” (Surah Al-Nur, 24:31).

The Promised Messiah^{as} further stated:

“Furūj does not refer merely to the private parts. It refers to all points of entry into the body, including ears. This also opposes the idea of listening to songs by non-Mahram women. Remember, thousands of experiences have demonstrated that ultimately man has no choice but to refrain from those things which God has prohibited in the first place...Thus, when it comes to the interaction between men and women, it is essential not to allow excessive freedom.” (Malfuzāt, Vol. 4, p. 104-106, New edition) (Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana Canada, June 25, 2005, Al-Fazl International March 2, 2007)

At another Ijtimā’ for Ahmadi ladies, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{atba} explained the same subject and gave valuable advice with reference to the sayings of the Promised Messiah^{as}. The Promised Messiah^{as} says: “The Holy Qurān states,

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ

Meaning, “say to the believers, do not lustfully look at the private parts of others and safeguard your other Furūj or openings” (Surah An-Nur, 24:31). It is necessary for men to keep their gazes low (in other words, do not have wide open eyes), lest they succumb to temptation at the sight of a woman who is a non-Mahram. Even the ears are implied by the word Furūj, which may lead one to temptation by listening to ill-natured stories.” This means that ears

are also Furūj from where evil can enter, such as when people hear stories or gossip and start quarreling in response without even confirming it. This too comes under this category.

This is why the Promised Messiah^{as} stated that “you ought to safeguard all your Furūj or ‘openings’ and keep them closed because:

ذِكِّكَ أَزْكِي لَهُمْ

In other words, this is best for them and such practice bears the hallmarks of the highest level of purity, which if possessed shall keep you away from evildoers” (Malfuzat, Vol. 1, pp. 84-85, English translation, 2018). (Address to Ladies, National Ijtimā’ UK, October 19, 2003, Al-Fazl International, April 17, 2015)

On another occasion, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said:

“For the injunction of safeguarding the Furūj, it is necessary to observe Purda, so do not consider this command of Allah to be an ordinary command.

The Promised Messiah^{as} has said that the people who speak against the observance of Purda should first improve and rectify the moral condition of men and then debate whether the veil is necessary or not.” (Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana Germany August 21, 2004, Al-Fazl International, May 1, 2015)

One of the numerous commandments of the Holy Qurān is the modesty of women and observance of Purda. Allah the Almighty has enjoined women not to display their beauty to those males who are outside the prohibited degrees of marriage, meaning refrain from going without a Hijab in front of people who are not your close relatives. When you go out, your head and face should be covered, your dress should be modest and should not be such as to attract strangers.

(Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana Mauritius, December 3, 2005)

WHY IS PURDA OF THE FACE NECESSARY?

Different opinions are prevalent in our society regarding Purda and particularly Purda of the face. Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh responded to this important question about “why Purda of the face is necessary” by stating in one of his Friday sermons: **‘Do not display your beauty.’** This implies that as commanded, women should refrain from going out (unveiled) when wearing makeup. One’s height, physique, hands, feet and gait will of course be obvious when outdoors. But these features do not come under the category of ‘beauty’, because Islam does not restrict women along these lines. He said that except for the features that are apparent, veiling of the face should be observed, as that is the Islamic commandment.

One of the explanations given by Hazrat Musleh Mau’ūd^{ra} is that the Purda should cover the forehead as well as the bottom of the face, up to the nose. The covering should be draped down the neck, and likewise, the hair should be covered. The scarf or any covering worn by a woman should be long enough to cover her hair from the back. **إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا**, ‘Except that which is apparent thereof,’ which means something that is self-evident. Hazrat Musleh Mau’ūd^{ra} explains that these words advocate that Sharī’ah deems lawful only that which is self-evident and cannot be hidden. It does not make it permissible for a woman to display the parts she wants to, of her own will.

I believe there are two remarkably apparent elements (of beauty), i.e. the height and gait, as well as physical mannerism. Anyhow, it is common sense that depending on her work or because of a necessity, whatever is apparently visible is not included in Purda. Therefore, it is due to this permission that a doctor checks the pulse of a woman because illness compels exposure of this part. Then he said that if the routine of a household is such that women have to work outside in the fields or grounds, it would be permissible

for them to keep their eyes and nose uncovered and their Purda would still be considered intact. This is because they cannot work without uncovering these parts and that which has to be exposed for the sake of attaining necessities of life and livelihood comes within the scope of Purda. However, a woman whose chores do not compel her to go out to work in open fields does not qualify for this permission. Hence, the permission to uncover certain parts of the body because of a handicap is granted under except that which is apparent thereof. (Tafsir Kabir Vol. 6, p 298-299)

This detail has clarified the limits of Purda to a great extent. The instruction to cover the face is absolute and it should be veiled to the extent that the eyes and the nose are exposed to ensure seeing and breathing.”

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} further explained, with reference to the Sunnah and Ahadith of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, “In this context, Hazrat Musleh Mau’ud^{fa} presented evidence from Ahadith that once the Holy Prophet^{sa} sent one of his companions to look at a girl’s face whose marriage proposal was under consideration. He was sent to look at her countenance because if Purda of the face had not been in effect, then everyone would have already seen her.

The second incident narrated in the Hadith is that the Holy Prophet^{sa} asked a boy who wished to marry a particular girl, if he had seen her. He told him to go and look at her if he had not already seen her. As the command of Purda was in effect, he would not have seen her. He therefore went to her house and requested to meet the girl, but her father refused to accede. The father said that Islam enjoins the observance of Purda, therefore he could not allow him to see the girl. The boy then gave the reference of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, but still the father refused. Anyways, everyone has one’s own state of belief. He was more adamant regarding this instruction of Islam rather than listening to the word of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and

obeying it. The girl, who had heard the conversation from inside, came out saying that if it is the instruction of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, then by all means the boy may see her face. Hazrat Musleh Mau'ūd^{ra} says that if there was no instruction of covering the face, then why did the Holy Prophet^{sa} say as he did. Everyone would have known how this girl looked.

Once the Holy Prophet^{sa} was observing I'tikaf and was going to drop Hazrat Safiyyah^{ra} back home at night. Two men happened to come from the opposite direction. On seeing them, the Holy Prophet^{sa} asked Hazrat Safiyyah^{ra} to lift her veil and said to the men, "Have a look at her. It is none other than my wife Safiyyah^{ra}. This is to save you from Satan's onslaught and from starting to make false accusations." This also proves that covering the face is part of Purda.

Then Hazrat Musleh Mau'ūd^{ra} says, 'Those people who say that there is no instruction of covering the face in Islam, we ask them that the **Holy Qurān says to hide beauty, and the most beautiful thing is the face, and if there is no command to cover it, then what is the beauty that we are commanded to cover.** We agree to the extent that the face should be covered in such a way that it does not have a detrimental effect on health. The veil, for instance, should be of a thin material or it can be made like the Niqab used by the Arab women, in which the eyes and nostrils are exposed, but the face cannot be left uncovered.' (Tafsir Kabir Vol 6, p 301)

Older women, who grow weak with age and have no desire or need of marriage, are permitted to relax the rules of Purda, but they need not go about decked up and wearing makeup unnecessarily. Purda is to be observed until a specific age and after that, the injunctions are relaxed. In our country, Purda has been misused to the extent that young women are discarding it and older women are being kept at home forcibly. A woman's face is

included in Purda. If not, then the meaning of **أَنْ يُضَعْنَ ثِيَابَهُنَّ** ("lay aside their outer clothing", Surah An-Nur, 24:61) would mean that the face and hands were already uncovered and now with old age, uncovering of the bosom, arms and even the whole body, has become permissible; however, this meaning is not acceptable to anyone. (Tafsir Kabir, Vol. 6, pp. 396-397)

So if people, themselves, start making interpretations of Purda and each individual starts to interpret it to their own liking, the sanctity of Purda can never be upheld. Therefore, both mother and father should pay attention towards the Purda of their children as this is the responsibility of both of them. (Friday Sermon, January 30, 2004, Al-Fazl International, April 9, 2004)

Haya (Modesty) is a Part of Faith

Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{atba}, while addressing the Ahmadi ladies at Jalsa Salana Mauritius, explained the various aspects of the responsibilities of an Ahmadi woman. Within that context, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} spoke on the importance of Islamic Purda. He said:

"One of the numerous commandments of the Holy Qurān is Haya (modesty) of women and the observance of Purda. Allah the Almighty has urged you not to display your beauty to those males who are non-Mahram (forbidden) for you. This means that you must not go without a veil in front of those people who are not your close relatives. When you go out, your head and face must be covered, and your dress must be modest and it should not attract strangers. Some girls use their jobs as an excuse that they are required to wear unIslamic clothing. If this is the case, then do not pursue jobs which compel you to wear clothing that exposes you. Rather, it has been decreed that you ought not to tread in a manner which would draw people to you.

Thus, Ahmadi women, in following this injunction of the Holy Qurān, should safeguard their attire and their Purda. As I have mentioned, the influx of people from abroad has increased from the past. Then certain vices, disgraceful behaviour and immodesty have penetrated the households through television. An Ahmadi mother and an Ahmadi daughter have an increased responsibility to save themselves from these evils.

Do not advance so much in fashion that you become oblivious of your status. Do not make your appearance such as would incite others to cast lustful eyes on you. People from different religions and cultures are settled here in a small place and some matters are overlooked because of their intermingling. However, Ahmadi women in general and Ahmadi girls in particular who are studying in colleges and universities have to maintain their individuality. There should be a distinction between them and others. Their dresses and presence should be such that unacquainted men and boys do not find courage to cast evil eyes upon them. In the name of broadmindedness, an Ahmadi girl's demeanour should not be such that it becomes hard to differentiate between an Ahmadi and a non-Ahmadi girl." (Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana Mauritius, December 3, 2005, Al-Fazl International, May 29, 2015)

In the context of Islamic teachings of Haya (modesty) being a part of faith, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{atba} has clearly advised Ahmadi ladies that if they are compelled to wear inappropriate clothing for a job, they should give preference to religion over worldly gains and turn down such a job. Therefore, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said at an occasion:

"Purda is an Islamic commandment that has been explained in detail in the Holy Qurān. The hallmark of pious ladies as stated is that they observe Haya (are modest), remain steadfast on Haya and establish Haya. If due to some job, you do not wear modest

clothing, you are disobeying the command of the Holy Qurān. If at a workplace you are compelled to dress in jeans, blouse and hat without a scarf, then an Ahmadi woman should not take this job. If a job demands wearing attire that affects your faith, you should turn down the job out of contempt because Haya (modesty) is also a part of faith.

If for the sake of earning money, you dress in clothing which brings a bad name to your Purda, then this job is hindering Allah from being your Provider. It stops Him from being your Friend and from fulfilling your needs because Allah satisfies the needs of the believers and of those who tread on the path of righteousness. No virtuous woman can tolerate being exposed, or those parts of her body being revealed that Allah has ordered her to cover.” (Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana Canada, June 25, 2005, Al-Fazl International, March 2, 2007)

Similarly, His Holiness Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{atba} said, while explaining modesty as a part of faith, “Then one has to embrace Haya (modesty) because it is a part of faith. **Haya (modesty) is also a part of faith.** The way Allah the Exalted has instructed a woman to cover herself is the way she should carefully keep herself covered. Beauty should not be revealed. The concept of Haya (modesty) is found in all nations and religions. An Ahmadi girl should never be influenced by the immodesty that is wide-spread in the West nowadays. This immodesty supposedly exists as an expression of freedom and fashion.

Islam does not restrict a woman from going out or doing a job. She is allowed to, but with certain conditions, that her beauty is not displayed and she is not unveiled. There must be a barrier between men and women.

In the Holy Qurān, Allah has described an incident of Hazrat Moses^{as} that when he reached a place where several shepherds were tending their flocks at a well on the side of a pond, he saw two women who were sitting with their animals off to one side. He asked them as to what their business was there. To this the girls replied that they were waiting for the men to be done and then they would water their animals. Take note, as this was because of their Hijab (veil) and Haya (modesty) that these girls did not want to go amongst the men. Thus, it is wrong to say that there is no harm in rubbing shoulders with men or holding mixed gatherings and even segregation is pointless. This notion of men and women has always been there. Allah the Exalted has ingrained Haya (modesty) in a woman's nature. An Ahmadi woman should cultivate and enhance it and excel in the concept of modesty more than ever before. We have been given very clear instructions by Allah the Exalted so every Ahmadi woman, Ahmadi youth and Ahmadi girl should focus on her Haya (modesty) and Hijab (veil), without feeling embarrassed or ashamed."(Address to Ladies, Annual Ijtimā' Lajna Ima'illah UK, November 20, 2005, Al-Fazl International, May 22, 2015)

Considering Haya (modesty) and one's dignity, and to practice the Qurānic commandment of Purda befits the stature of an Ahmadi woman. His Holiness Huzoor Anwar^{atba} has reminded the members of the Jamā'at repeatedly about this important responsibility. In one of the Friday Sermons, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated, "The Promised Messiah^{as} has said that there are seven hundred commandments. Thus, after embracing Ahmadiyyat, an Ahmadi should lead his life cautiously to avoid disobeying any of these. For example, there is the command of Haya (modesty). Women are specifically directed to observe Purda (veil). Men have also been instructed to observe Ghadd-e-Basar (lower their eyes) and demonstrate Haya (modesty). The directive of Purda for women is also meant to protect them from the immodest society and to uphold their Haya.

The Holy Prophet^{sa} has said that Haya (modesty) is a part of faith. In today's world, every society, place and country has become very liberal. Men and women have lost sense of their limits. Mixed gatherings are held and bodies are not fully covered in conforming with the Western ways. All these are obscenities of this era, which are pervading every country and society. This lack of restraint gradually leads to a total loss of the sense of Haya (modesty) from a person's heart, even a devout Muslim's heart. When a person abandons a minor commandment of Allah, self-restraint diminishes, bit by bit, and then the greater commandments are also set aside, eventually leading to disregard of worship of Allah. Finally, an individual ceases to remember the purpose of his life. Therefore, in this era, specifically the youth should be very careful (in this regard). They should always be mindful that we belong to the community of that person who came according to the prophecy of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, to bring man closer to God.

Therefore, if we want to be associated with him, we will have to follow his teaching which is to act upon even the minutest instructions of the Holy Qurān. May Allah enable every Ahmadi to practice this." (Friday Sermon delivered April 7, 2006 Mosque Taha, Singapore, Al-Fazl April 28, 2006)

A Woman's Honour is in Covering Her Beauty

His Holiness Hazrat Khalifatul-Masīh V^{atba}, while drawing the attention of Ahmadi Muslim women towards the important responsibility of upholding their honour, said, "Then there is a very important commandment of Allah for the believing women that they have to conceal their beauty and observe Purda. In this Western society, some educated girls and women are not following Purda properly due to the influence of society or fear of an active campaign against Purda. Their attire is greatly influenced by fashion. If they go to the mosque or centre, they come in Purda or

in a decent dress, but there are complaints that they do not pay attention to their dressing in malls. One of the things to be remembered is that Haya (modesty) is a part of faith and a woman's asset, therefore she should always dress modestly. Always keep in mind that there is an honour associated with an Ahmadi woman and an Ahmadi girl, and you have to uphold it. You must always bear in mind that if Allah has given the commandment of Purda in the Holy Qurān, then it definitely has some importance. Do not be like those westernized people who say that the command of Purda has become outdated or was applicable for certain circumstances only. No commandment of the Holy Qurān ever becomes outdated or is altered. Allah the Almighty knew that such ideas will prevail in an era, therefore, He revealed the eternal command that mere words will not make you the believing women. Instead, you will be considered true believers when you follow the guidance and the commandments of the Holy Qurān." (Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana Germany September 1, 2007, Mannheim, Al-Fazl International, December 2, 2016)

In one of His addresses, His Holiness Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{atba}, brought the attention of Ahmadi women and girls towards the importance of safeguarding their Haya (modesty) and honour in the truest sense, in a very remarkable manner, "Some girls say that they have covered their head and that is enough, but they do not cover their heads the way Allah and His Prophet^{sa} have commanded. Their hair is visible, half of the head is covered and half is uncovered. Even their bosom is visible. If they are wearing a coat, their arms are bare from the elbows, and the coats are above the knees. This is neither the modesty of an Ahmadi girl or woman, nor the limit of freedom for an Ahmadi woman. By acting in this manner, they are bringing their Haya (modesty) into question and are crossing the limits of their freedom.

Every Ahmadi woman has an honour to uphold and therefore should always remember that she has certain boundaries, stepping out of which would compromise her honour....Thus, every Ahmadi girl and woman should remember that she has an honour, she has a status, the preservation of which must be more important than any other desire. Most importantly, the task for an Ahmadi girl and an Ahmadi woman is and should be to safeguard her and her family's honour. **The honour of an Ahmadi woman and an Ahmadi girl is more valuable than thousands of jewels.**

Thus, protecting it, and knowing the ways to protect it, is very important or rather, obligatory for an Ahmadi woman and a girl. So, always remember that every Ahmadi woman and girl must protect her Haya (modesty), protect her honour and uphold her dignity; and this is not Pakistani culture, it is the Islamic teaching. Therefore, whether she is an Ahmadi woman from the German nation or from any other European country, or belongs to Pakistan or Asia or Africa, a common attribute of every woman should be that she has to lead her life righteously and safeguard her modesty and honour, only then can she be termed a true Ahmadi Muslim. Women and girls from Pakistan should particularly make themselves exemplary role models."

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} further said, "Then Allah the Almighty says that a woman who wants closeness to Allah and wants to perfect her faith should also be mindful of protecting her honour. And an Ahmadi woman who, after accepting the Imam of the Age has pledged that she will safeguard herself from all vices has to be extremely careful about her respect, dignity and honour. Her attire, her gait and demeanour, and her speech mannerism should be different from others. It should not be that in the name of freedom she takes part in mixed-gender parties and her dress is contrary to the honour of an Ahmadi woman and she is not to be bothered about Purda or Hijab (veil)."

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} added:

“As I have mentioned earlier also, when girls cross the threshold of youth, their coats must be below knee-level. Such coats must be worn that fully cover their bodies, rather than being fashion items, and should have long sleeves. The identity of an Ahmadi woman and girl should be the modesty of her dress. Therefore, take special care of your dress because this is also essential for an Ahmadi woman’s dignity. It will be a sorry state of affairs if the new additions to Jamā’at, understanding the importance of this matter, tend to the aspect of modesty in their dresses, whereas the old Ahmadi women drift away and become neglectful of their modest dress because of the detrimental effects of this society. Thus, always attend to these points and keep an eye on yourself, otherwise as I said, the attacks of Satan, which are ongoing through social media, are so intense that it is hard to evade them...” (Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana Germany August 23, 2008, Mannheim, Al-Fazl International, November 4, 2011)

Advising young Ahmadi girls in context of observing Purda in everyday life, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated in one of his addresses, “If the girls who go to schools and colleges are not permitted to wear a scarf or veil in the classroom, they must cover their heads immediately after coming out. This is neither a double standard nor hypocrisy. It will maintain the belief in your mind that you have to observe Purda and you will develop this habit in your future life. However, if you abandon it, you will progressively adopt more freedom and eventually you will no longer have any restrictions. This will result in complete loss of Haya (modesty).

When you attend a function or a wedding ceremony and the like, even if it is amongst the relatives, do not wear clothes that attract attention towards your body, enhance your looks or are see-through or sheer. Your honour is in adhering to the Islamic traditions and

staying safe from the immodest eyes of the world.

According to a narration, Hazrat Aishah^{ra} conveys that Hazrat Asma bint Abu Bakr^{ra} came to see the Holy Prophet^{sa} and she was wearing sheer clothes at that time. Huzoor^{sa} disliked it and tried to avoid her. He said, 'O Asma! When a woman reaches the age of puberty, it is inappropriate that anything except her face and hands are visible.' Huzoor^{sa} pointed towards his face and hands to explain it." (Abu Dau'ud) (Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana Canada July 3, 2004, Al-Fazl International, September 23, 2005)

The importance of the Qurānic command for women to hide their beauty is evident on every Ahmadi woman. To fulfill this responsibility in the best manner, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} drew the attention of Ahmadi women to embrace appropriate attitudes in respect to their attire and said, "Then along with the injunction of worship, Allah the Almighty has commanded you to hide your beauty and cover your heads and faces. Maintain your honour. Every woman has honour, and the respect and honour of an Ahmadi woman is very great...At times, there are complaints of some ladies that they come to the mosque in inappropriate clothes, wearing jeans and short shirts. There is no harm in wearing jeans and I have allowed them, but with a long shirt. When such girls were stopped, their mothers started arguing with the office bearers, questioning their authority on restricting the girls. In the first place, you are damaging the sanctity of the mosque by coming over there in improper clothes and secondly, despite being part of a system, you are committing a breach by arguing with the office bearers. You need to abstain from such acts." (Address to Ladies, National Ijtimā' Lajna Ima'illah U.K., November 2, 2008, Al-Fazl International, July 10, 2015)

His Holiness Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{atba} advised women to inculcate the habits of Haya (modesty) and Ghadd-e-Basar (lowering one's gaze), along with emphasis on not revealing their beauty, in

these words, "As I have explained, Allah the Almighty's commandments enjoin lowering the gaze and women and men should not openly glance at each other. They should be modest. Secondly, you must hide your beauty. The clothes should be such that it does not display your figure. And thirdly, keep your head, neck, and bosom covered to hide your beauty. The outer covering (Burqa) which you wear, should be loose. Those who wear makeup and keep their faces uncovered fall under the category of those who reveal their beauty. Similarly, those who display their hair are also in the same category, because they are showing their hair by choice and they are fully aware that this is their beauty. Therefore, covering the head, veiling the face to an extent that it is not fully showing, and wearing appropriate clothes is minimum Purda. The Promised Messiah^{as} has emphasized that such should be the minimum standard." (Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana U.K., July 30, 2010, Al-Fazl International, March 11, 2011)

“Relaxation of Purda in front of family members or relatives mentioned here (in the verse) include all those people who are in very close relations. For example, husband, father or father of husband, brother, sons of brothers or sons of sisters, etc. Besides them, one has to observe Purda from all those who are not close relatives.”

(Friday Sermon, delivered January 30, 2004 at Baitul Futuh, London)

BOUNDARIES OF PURDA

Every command of religion is full of wisdom. Speaking about the wisdom behind the command of Purda, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} addressed the members of the Jamā'at in one of his Friday sermons, saying:

“Some people think that religion and faith restrict their freedom and impose constraints on them. In this regard, Allah the Almighty says in the Holy Qurān:

وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ

Meaning, “...and has laid no hardship upon you in religion” (Surah Al-Hajj, 22:79). That is, in the matter of religion, no hardship has been laid upon you. Rather, the objective of Sharī'a is to reduce the burdens of mankind. In fact, not only does it reduce burdens, but it also protects mankind from all kinds of misfortunes and dangers. Thus, in this verse Allah the Almighty has clarified that this religion (i.e. Islam) which has been revealed for you does not contain any commandment that will place you in difficulty. Instead, every commandment, smallest to the greatest, is a source of mercy and blessings. As such, it is our own thinking that is flawed, for the Word of God can never be wrong. Being a creation of Allah, if we do not follow His commandments, we will harm ourselves. If man does not pay heed, Satan who has vowed to misguide humans from the start of creation will lead him into a pit of destruction. Thus, it is imperative to accept the commandments of Allah if we want to be shielded against the attacks of Satan. Some things apparently seem minor, but with the passage of time they produce devastating results because they were considered insignificant. So a believer must never take any Divine injunction lightly.” (Friday Sermon, January 13, 2017, Baitul Futuh, London, Al-Fazl International, February 3, 2017)

An appealing wisdom behind the Islamic commandment of Purda is to uphold and maintain the honour of a woman. In reference to this, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} gave advice to Ahmadi women and said, "Now I want to draw your attention, as I have done before, towards Allah's commandment that has been given to women, to raise their status and honour. Some discourses and letters suggest that I draw attention towards this matter with severity, or I am more inclined to harshness, even though I am just saying what Allah, His Prophet^{sa} and the Promised Messiah^{as} have commanded.

The Promised Messiah^{as} has said that Purda certainly does not aim to put a woman in captivity, but the conditions of Purda must be kept in consideration. The way the society is going astray gradually, and as in certain matters the distinction between right and wrong has diminished completely, Ahmadi women are called upon to establish their examples. And they should tell society that Allah's command of Purda is for elevating their status and not for putting them into any hardship. The commandment of Purda, although given to women, stands for men too. They have been directed to be mindful and avoid staring at women unnecessarily."

In the same address, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{atba} advised men and women and further said, "Believing men have been commanded to lower their eyes and not to stare at women with a fixed gaze. Furthermore, there is no excuse to look at strangers without reason. But generally, in society, a woman should also try not to allow such situations to arise which attract attention towards her in a manner that can later result in (illicit) friendships. Observance of Purda will be very helpful in this regard."(Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana U.K., July 31, 2004, Al-Fazl International, April 24, 2015)

The Holy Qurān very clearly explains how to practice Purda and from whom it should be observed. In this context, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said in one of his addresses:

“Purda is a fundamental Islamic commandment and has been clearly explained in the Holy Qurān. People who do not read the Holy Book attentively are of the opinion that Allah has not laid much stress on it. It is such an explicit instruction and I have mentioned it two or three times earlier as well. Some people feel as if I am rigidly laying undue emphasis on it, whereas I am only saying that which is in accordance with the Holy Qurān. I am telling you what the Holy Qurān says. What does the Holy Qurān say about Purda? It is a long verse and contains the command

وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُرُجِهِنَّ عَلَىٰ جُيُوبِهِنَّ

“...and that they disclose not their natural and artificial beauty except that which is apparent thereof, and that they draw their head-coverings over their bosoms.”

وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَائِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَائِهِنَّ أَوْ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ
 أَبْنَائِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَاءِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ

(Surah Al-Nur, 24:32)

And then there is a long list; that “they should not disclose their beauty except to their fathers, their husbands and their sons.”

Now, because it is written therein that ‘the outer coverings be drawn over the bosoms’, some people proclaim that as the commandment is to cover the bosom, wearing a Dupatta or a scarf around the neck is enough. The command is ‘not to display your beauty’, which means that when you go out, the covering should be wide enough to cover the physical beauty of the whole body as well. At another place, covering of the head is also commanded. That is why throughout the Islamic world, wherever there is some concept of observing Purda, the perception of covering the head

is manifest. Everywhere, Hijab (head covering) or Niqab (face covering) or something of the like is used, a scarf may be worn or a wide wrap is worn. Thus, Allah has said,

وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُرُجِهِنَّ عَلَىٰ جُيُوبِهِنَّ

“...draw their head-coverings over their bosom” (Surah Al-Nur, 24:32), which means that the covering should be big enough to cover the head and the body. It is permissible to come in front of fathers, brothers and sons without this covering. Surely, when a woman comes in front of her father, brothers and sons, she is in a decent dress, but the face is uncovered. He added that the face can be uncovered in presence of fathers, brothers, sons and other Mahram relatives, but it should not be so when you go out. These days, wraps or shawls are not used, instead Niqab, Burqa or coats are worn. This restriction is not rigid to the extent of causing suffocation by covering the nose tightly. Besides, the nose can remain uncovered to breathe easily, but lips and chin should be covered. Otherwise, use a big Chador (shawl) and wrap it as Allah has said to cover your head. Purda happens easily on its own – a large Chador (shawl) easily veils a face. If a Burqa is worn for its ease, it should be such that complies with this command. Wearing a tight-fitted coat, which is clinging to the body or keeping the whole face uncovered, is not Purda, it becomes fashion. Therefore, I tell everyone to assess themselves and see if they are observing Purda according to the commandment of the Holy Qurān. (Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana Sweden, September 17, 2005, Al-Fazl International, May 15, 2015)

Lesser Degree of Purda Around Mahram Relatives

Allah has given us permission not to observe Purda from certain people and they have been mentioned in the excerpt cited above. In this context, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{atba} stated in a Friday Sermon:

“Those family members or close relations mentioned here [in 24:32] around whom a lesser degree of Purda is allowed, includes all people who are in extremely close relations. For example, husband, father or father of husband, brother, sons of brothers or sons of sisters, etc. Besides them, one has to observe Purda from all those who are not close relations.” (Friday Sermon, delivered January 30, 2004 at Baitul Futuh, London, Al-Fazl International, April 9, 2004)

On another occasion, while speaking on the same topic, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} addressed the Ahmadi ladies:

“Husband, father, father-in-law, sons of the husband from a previous marriage, brothers, sons of brothers and sisters, or female acquaintances who are modest and chaste - because it is not allowed to let such women who are known for their vices to enter homes or to develop relationships with them. Apart from the few relatives mentioned above, Purda must be observed from everyone. Then it is said that your gait should also be dignified. It should not be such that it would attract an immoral person towards you and give him an opportunity. If you act like this and focus on repentance to keep your thoughts pious as well, it will bring you success, honour and high status.” (Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana U.K. July 31, 2004, Tilford, Al-Fazl International, April 24, 2015)

Conditional Permission Required by Those Entering Homes

In a Friday sermon, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} explained to Jamā'at members the commandments given in the Holy Qurān related to upholding the sanctity of their homes and the moral training and reformation of their children. Speaking in light of the advice of Hazrat Musleh Mau'ūd^{ra}, he also gave guidance regarding various individuals who may visit their homes. He said:

“Hazrat Musleh Mau’ūd^{ra} says displaying your beauty to your own women means that there are other women in whose presence you should not come casually or without modesty. Every pious woman tries to stay away from prostitutes. Their habits and their character are as clear as day, but there are some other women who work for bad people. At first, they go into homes and befriend the elders. After becoming good friends with the mother, these women try to develop a relationship with the young girls and sometimes they slowly and gradually lure them to evil ways. Thus, the command regarding these types of women is: **‘do not let every outsider, every woman, enter your homes.’** First get some information about them and then act further. Hazrat Musleh Mau’ūd^{ra} has written that it used to be a norm back in the days but has diminished now (it was sporadic in the past, but nowadays we get news from some places that such groups who commit these wrongdoings are being formed again). Especially Ahmadi children in Pakistan should be extremely cautious and parents should be extra vigilant. This is because at times a woman enters the household as a domestic servant but in reality she is someone’s agent, and she gradually lures the girls, at first, by befriending them and then by engaging them in petty offenses. **Thus, one should be careful in hiring such servants or maids and must do so after a thorough investigation.** In the same fashion, the work of these bad women is being done over the Internet as well. Complaints have been received from Germany and some other countries that there are organized groups of people who hook people by first engaging them in intellectual conversations or other types of discourse, and after developing a friendship they make an effort to get them on the wrong track.”(Friday Sermon, delivered January 30, 2004 at Baitul Futuh, London, Al-Fazl International, April 9, 2004)

Similarly, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} gave this instruction about Purda in a meeting with the National Majlis ‘Amila of Norway: “Different families visit each other’s homes. They say that we have connections

and we are old acquaintances. But this is not correct. When you visit each other, men and women should sit in Purda.”(Meeting National Majlis ‘Amila Jamā’at Ahmadiyya Norway October 3, 2011, Al-Fazl International, December 30, 2011)

Relating the same topic from a different aspect, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said at another occasion, “Sometimes in the name of virtue or on humanitarian grounds or on the pretext of helping others, men and women get acquainted, which later has adverse consequences. Therefore, the Holy Prophet^{sa} forbade going to the homes of women whose husbands are away or not at home, and the reason he gave was that Satan is running through a human’s veins like blood (Sunnan al-Tirmidhi...Hadith 1172).

In the same directive, the Holy Prophet^{sa} laid down the principle that unrelated men and women should not have unrestricted get-togethers because this might provide Satan the opportunity to do his work.

Thus, Ahmadis need to stay absolutely cautious in this society where, in the name of freedom, unrestricted mingling of boys and girls and meeting in isolation is not considered objectionable.

Moreover, immoralities are not only being brought forth by foolish boys and girls. It has also been noticed that in the name of freedom and friendship, frequent and unrestricted house visits create problems and households break up even in the lives of married people. Therefore, we who have been blessed by Allah the Almighty with the ability of accepting the Promised Messiah^{as} and have been taught about the wisdom behind every commandment of Islam, should follow every injunction of Allah and His Prophet^{sa} without any type of question or hesitation.” (Friday Sermon delivered May 20, 2016 Mosque Gothenburg, Sweden, Al-Fazl International, June 10, 2016)

Gatherings of Women and Men Should be Separate

The Islamic teaching is that there should not be free and unrestricted meetings of men and women and mixed gatherings should not be held. In this context, while guiding Ahmadi women, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} explained with deep wisdom:

“If you start sitting in men’s gatherings while wearing Burqa and start shaking hands with them, the purpose of Purda is destroyed. It has no advantage. The purpose of Purda is that unrelated men and women do not intermingle freely or meet each other. Both should have separate places. If you visit a friend’s house and sit with her husband, brothers or other relatives in a liberal environment, even if you are sitting with your face covered or are shaking a man’s hand with a veiled face, it is not Purda. The objective of Purda is that unrelated men should not come in women’s gatherings and neither should women go in front of unrelated men. Their gatherings should be separate. Moreover, this is also an injunction of the Holy Qurān that one should observe Purda from women who are like prostitutes or who can have a negative effect on one’s thinking. The command enjoins to avoid them, so be careful and avoid such gatherings. (Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana Canada July 3, 2004, Al-Fazl International, September 23, 2005)

Handshaking Between Men and Women

Shaking hands between men and women comes under the category of negating the teachings of Purda. While replying to a question regarding this, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said, “Talking unnecessarily to men and excessive frankness gives them the opportunity to shake hands. Ahmadi women must realize their stature and should not give such an opportunity to anyone. They should tell the men that in our religion women do not greet men, which means they do not shake hands with men.”(Meeting National ‘Amila Lajna Ireland,

September 18, 2010, Al-Fazl International, October 22, 2010)

During Hazrat Khalifatul-Masīh V's^{atba} tour to the United States, a meeting was held in Bait-ul-Rehman Mosque in Washington with female Ahmadi students. The students asked Huzoor Anwar^{atba} some questions with his permission.

In response to one of the questions, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} advised the students and the whole Lajna at large about observing Purda at home, in schools, colleges and universities and reminded them of their responsibility as Ahmadi women.

In response to a question about shaking hands with male colleagues at the workplace, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} responded: "The same logic applies to not shaking hands with men as the logic related to the Hijab (veil). It means that if you protect yourselves from the eyes of unrelated men, then why not from their hands!" (Meeting with students, June 26, 2010, Washington, U.S.A, Al-Fazl International, August 17, 2012)

In a question and answer session held with the Waqfaate Nau Germany, a girl related that she visited an organization where a man at the reception extended his hand for a handshake. She wanted to know what should be done in such a situation?

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} replied, "I have also had similar experiences a few times, and I respond by slightly bending forward which makes the other person understand. You have to be your own saviour. If you fear the society, it will not work. If you do this a couple of times and also inform the other person that your religion forbids you from shaking hands with men, he will correct himself."

Further explaining the issue, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said, "If you have to propagate your religious teachings, and have to tell people about

them and also remain steadfast on them, then sometimes a little bit of anxiety might occur in their hearts, but these things have to be borne. This is nothing new. It has always been like this. Hazrat Musleh Mau'ūd^{ra} has written about an incident from the era when Indo-Pak was one continent under the rule of the British Empire, and they had their viceroys, lords and governors, etc. Some of them had personal ties with Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh II^{ra}. Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh II^{ra} writes that once he visited Dehli, a lord invited him over. He told the lord not to invite him because there would be many other people, including women, and Khalīfatul-Masīh II^{ra} would not shake hands with the ladies, which may agitate people. At this, the lord said that it did not matter and insisted on him coming. At this, Khalīfatul-Masīh II^{ra} told the lord that he would come, but then he will sit in a corner. Hence, he took a seat in a corner, but even there, an old English acquaintance came to greet him, and his wife extended her hand for a handshake. Upon this, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh II^{ra} excused himself by saying that he did not shake hands with ladies. That woman became upset and the English man was also very embarrassed. Later on, the English man wrote a letter to Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh II^{ra}, which stated that he was restless the entire night about what Huzoor^{ra} would be thinking about him. He expressed that even though he had old ties with Huzoor^{ra} and knew about the Islamic teachings, he had not asked his wife to refrain from extending her hand in greeting and he was also concerned about his wife. Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh II^{ra} says that he later wrote him a letter and invited him and his wife to a dinner. It was a nice party and they were satisfied."

Another Waqfe Nau girl said that a Lajna member from their area told her that she visited a doctor who offered a handshake and she shook hands with him. The girl said that she mentioned to the lady that shaking hands with men is forbidden. The lady replied that since there was no ill intention in either of their hearts, it makes no difference if they shook hands.

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} replied, "She is wrong. Where is it written that one is allowed to shake hands if there are no ill intentions in the heart? I have explained this earlier as well that the Islamic commandments cover all possibilities. Eighty to ninety percent of men and women who shake hands with each other do not have ill intentions, but still Allah has forbidden it. Did the Holy Prophet^{sa}, God forbid, have ill intentions with women? Or did women have ill intentions with the Holy Prophet^{sa}? There are several narrations which describe that women extended their hands towards the Holy Prophet^{sa} for Baī'at , the Holy Prophet^{sa} said that he does not join hands with women in taking the Baī'at. Several such narratives of the Holy Prophet^{sa} are thus authenticated by the Ahadith. The Baī'at is a highly sanctified procedure and then imagine the sheer status of the Holy Prophet^{sa}; but despite this, the Holy Prophet^{sa} said that he will not shake hands with women. After this, what possible evil remained? These are just lame excuses. In reality, people just become afraid in this society. In any case, it is cowardly to merge into their society instead of explaining our own teachings and strengthening our faith. Therefore, the woman who did this was a big coward."

The same Waqf-e-Nau girl asked a second question, which was related to Purda. She asked that when some women are asked to observe Purda, they say that there is no Ahmadi around, so there is no need to observe Purda.

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} replied:

"Is Purda to be observed only from Ahmadis? Tell them that there is no such instruction that Purda is only expected to be observed from Ahmadis. In fact, before the command for Purda was revealed, a Jew had committed a very indecent action by trying to snatch a Muslim woman's shawl. Allah the Almighty would have given the commandment of Purda in any case, but this incident also became a reason. Thus, there is no instruction that you have to observe

Purda from Ahmadis only. Are only Ahmadis a source of danger? Is there no danger from non-Ahmadis? There is no instruction in the Holy Book stating that you have to observe Purda only from the Muslims. The Holy Qurān commands to cover the head and draw the head-covering over the bosom. Therefore, the lady who said that there is no need to observe Purda from non-Ahmadis is wrong. She is spreading her own new Sharī'ah. You, the Waqfaate-Nau, are meant to tell such women not to make innovations and proclaim their own interpretations of the Sharī'ah. You have to reform such people. If the 230 Waqfaat who are sitting here in front of me undertake the responsibility of this reformation, people will automatically come to their right senses." (Waqfaate Nau Class, April 23, 2017 Germany, Al-Fazl International, June 9, 2017)

Some Ahmadi girls residing in Europe have the habit of shaking hands with men. While explaining this habit, Huzoor Anwaratba gave advice in the National Majlis 'Amila meeting of Lajna Norway in these words: "...then there is socializing with men, greeting and shaking hands with men is very common here. This habit is widely prevalent everywhere in Europe. I have observed that some girls subconsciously extend their hands towards me. This shows that they have the habit of shaking hands with men. A girl should realize the importance of Haya (modesty) from an early age. I have also told the Waqfaate Nau that at the age of ten, Salāt becomes obligatory and all restrictions should be obligatory. All obligations should be fulfilled at this age. Thus, habits should be inculcated in them before this time." (Meeting National 'Amila Lajna Ima'illah Norway October 2, 2011, Al-Fazl International, December 23, 2011)

Purda from Servants

In many households, Purda is not observed from male servants, even though the teaching of the Holy Qurān about Purda should also be followed in this regard. Therefore, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} drew

attention towards the practice of employing male servants in the households in one of his Friday sermons and said:

“In some places it is customary to appear freely in front of all types of servants. Purda should be observed from all ranks of people including servants, except from those servants or young children who have grown up with the children of the house, or those servants who are old and have passed the age where they can have bad intentions or would think of gossiping about the household with outsiders. In some places it has been observed that new servants who have been employed for a few months, freely enter into the bedrooms where sometimes women and girls are sitting without scarves and all of this is termed open-mindedness. This is not open-mindedness. People later regret it when faced with consequences. Moreover, the relaxation of Purda mentioned in this verse is from small children.”

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said that your gait should also be dignified and decent and you should not strike your feet on the ground and your pace should be so composed that no one would dare to cast evil eyes upon you. When you are covered in a veil and present a model of decorum, no one will have the courage to glance twice in your direction. (Friday Sermon, January 30, 2004, Baitul Futuh London, Al-Fazl International, April 9, 2004)

Males Serving Food at Events

Nowadays, at weddings and other events, men serve food on the women’s side too, which is clearly a violation of Purda. Drawing attention towards avoiding this disgraceful habit, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said: “In some places in our society, boys are called in to serve food at weddings and functions, etc. On one hand, there is so much

emphasis on strict observance of Purda and on the other hand, boys are called in and it is said that they are young. Even those who are termed 'young' are at least seventeen to eighteen years old. In any case, they have definitely attained maturity. At weddings, young girls are also walking around; however, nothing is known about the character of the caterers. So, as I have said, they have reached the age of adolescence and Purda must be observed from them. Even if they are younger in age, the environment in which they work and spend time in corrupts their minds, and apart from a few exceptions, their language is indecent, and their intentions are not good. I have noticed in Pakistan particularly that these boys are not trustworthy. Mothers should also keep their eyes open, even if they have aged and become exempt from Purda; they should at least take care of their daughters. You cannot restrict the eyes of the male servers; and they can go out in public and make comments, which can cause defamation of the girls and their families.

Once Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh IVth expressed that a team of Ahmadi boys including Atfal and Khuddam, should be prepared who can serve at weddings etc. It would serve the dual purpose of Khidmat-e-Khalq (serving people) and reduce expenses. There are many families who cannot afford to hire serving staff but do so for keeping up appearances. This would put an end to the practice of hiring servers from outside of the Ahmadi society. Khuddam and Ansar teams, or if it is a girls' function, then girls from Lajna Ima'illah, should work. If someone really wants to make the expense and engage serving staff for the events, then male servers should serve in the men's area. Here I have seen that female staff is also there to serve in the women's area. Thus, female servers should be arranged to serve in the ladies' area and there should be no inferiority complex about it. As I said before, some people spend just to imitate others, and this is a form of inferiority complex. There should be no inferiority complex. If you make up your mind to follow the commandments of the Holy Qurān and maintain purity,

then not only will the work be done, but you will also get a reward for it.” (Friday Sermon, January 30, 2004, Baitul Futuh London, Al-Fazl International, April 9, 2004)

Dance: Immodesty and Obscenity

In light of the beautiful explanation by Hazrat Musleh Mau'ūd^{ra} of the verse explaining the Qurānic commandment of Purda, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} advised women against dancing. He said, “From the words ‘striking their feet’, Hazrat Musleh Mau'ūd^{ra} has concluded that Sharī'a has completely forbidden dancing because it causes the spread of obscenity. Some women question that if women dance among other women, then what is the harm in that? There is harm in women dancing even among women. When the Holy Qurān has said that dancing leads to the spread of immodesty, an Ahmadi woman should obey this instruction.

If a report is received about dancing at any Ahmadi wedding, the Jamā'at authorities should take notice and take appropriate action against such people.

Some women—lacking in basic Tarbiyat—say that if you go to Rabwah there is barely any difference between a wedding and a funeral; there is no dancing, singing or anything [in the weddings]. Now, the first thing in this regard is that respectable people do not associate themselves with any form of dancing; if someone has an objection to it, they should not attend such weddings. As far as singing is concerned, girls indeed sing decent wedding songs and there is no harm in it. Also, poems that include prayers are also recited. Thus, how can they assert that there is no difference between a wedding and death. In reality, this is just a lack of perception. Such people need to reform their own conditions. Surely, it is our custom to send off newly married couples into their new life with prayers so that they have a blessed start to

their marriage. Along with the celebration, couples stand in need of prayers that Allah the Exalted may bless their home and grant them pious and virtuous children, and that both of them and their progeny become servants of Islam.

Then, prayers should be said for the married couple that they fulfill the obligations due to their parents and relatives. Ahmadiis celebrate their weddings like this and if anyone has an objection, so be it. We have been commanded by Allah the Exalted to celebrate with simplicity and to always give precedence to Allah's approval because our success depends on gaining the pleasure of Allah the Exalted and in bowing to Him. Therefore, this is the way we celebrate our weddings and the outsiders who attend, leave with a good impression." (Friday Sermon, January 30, 2004, Baitul Futuh London, Al-Fazl International, April 9, 2004)

Comparing dancing at weddings to extreme obscenity, Huzoor Anwar^{ratba} directly addressed the Ahmadi ladies and strictly forbade them from participating in this disgraceful act. Huzoor Anwar^{ratba} said:

"In this context, I would like to add that some reports of dancing on weddings are being received. Exceedingly immodest display of the body is the highlight of dances. This is extreme impropriety. Remember that girls are not even allowed to dance in front of other girls. They make excuses that different body parts are moved during exercise as well. The first thing is that mostly women or girls exercise in privacy or in the presence of one or two others. To exercise while wearing revealing clothing, even if it is in front of girls or in gym clubs, is nothing but obscenity. Such exercises cannot be permitted either.

Secondly, emotions are completely different while dancing. When exercising, full attention is towards working out and no lewd or

indecent thoughts come to mind, but the same is not true with dancing. If those who indulge in dancing do justice in reviewing themselves, they will realize what sensation overcomes them at that time. Moreover, exercise is not done on music or to the beat of a drum, whereas music is a must for dances and very vulgar songs are also played at weddings. There are many decent songs for the occasion of weddings and our Jamā'at has beautiful prayerful poems which should be recited at the time of the Rukhsati (bidding farewell) of the girl.”(Address to Ladies Jalsa Salana Germany September 1, 2007, Al-Fazl International, December 2, 2016)

The Bride and Female Participants at a Wedding Should Also Observe Purda

During a Waqfaate Nau class, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stressed upon the need of observance of Purda by the bride and the female participants at a wedding. He said:

“The fact is that Allah the Exalted has not mentioned anywhere that all those who are not the bride should observe Purda and the bride herself does not have to observe Purda – or the bride should adorn herself excessively. Fourteen hundred years ago, in the time of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, brides were bedecked and they wore nice clothes. A bride can sit in whatever way she wishes when she is seated among women. Look at the Christian brides in these countries. They also wear a type of white veil when going to the church for their marriage, and thus cover themselves. The point is that if even those for whom Purda is not a norm cover themselves at their weddings, then our brides should observe modesty all the more. Wearing a Dupatta and the face being uncovered while sitting in the ladies’ section is fine. However, if it [wearing only a Dupatta and leaving the face uncovered] is because they have

returned from the beauty parlour after having their makeup done and have to go into the marriage hall, but do not want to cover themselves properly because it might smudge the makeup or disturb the setting of the jewellery, then it is wrong.

Therefore, cover up properly with the shawl and observe Purda while crossing the men to enter the marriage hall. When the bride comes back from the parlour after having her makeup done, dressed in a Gharara or whatever dress it may be, she should cover herself up with a shawl, for the distance from the car to the hall or crossing the men or perhaps on an elongated path. Once inside the hall and in the women's section, she can take the covering off. Similarly, when departing with her groom, she should wear the shawl and then be seated in the car. It should not be that there are men present and everyone is watching her, and she is walking through them as people compliment her, and say she makes a beautiful bride. The beauty of an Ahmadi bride is that she is veiled as well." (Waqfaate Nau Class July 11, 2012, Baitul Islam mosque Canada, Al-Fazl International, September 28, 2012)

Women make different excuses to avoid Purda during various festivities. Huzoor Anwar^{atba} rejected such excuses during a Friday sermon in light of the sayings of the Promised Messiah^{as}. He said:

"Here, I would like to explain that some women raise the question that we apply makeup and if we wear a Niqab (face covering), our makeup gets ruined. So, how should we do Purda? Now firstly, do not wear makeup, and if you do, then this is the minimum level of Purda as explained by the Promised Messiah^{as} that the face and lips can be uncovered but the remaining face should be covered. (Excerpt from Review of Religions, Vol 4, No. 1, p 17, January 1905)

And if you want to wear makeup, then you will have to cover (the face). They should decide whether, they will hide their beauty,

in accordance with the teachings of Allah the Exalted, or if they will show their beauty and makeup to the world.”(Friday Sermon, January 13, 2017 Baitul Futuh London, Al-Fazl International, February 3, 2017)

As it can be noted, by not observing Purda, women’s jewellery is also on display. And this is also an inappropriate act. Therefore, in one of his Friday sermons, Huzoor Anwar^{ratba} advised the members of the Jamā’at in this regard. He said:

“In our society, people like to display jewellery and the like. Although due to the fear of thieves and robbers, it is not worn as much as it was in the past, but sometimes at weddings women have to go past men who are standing around. Thus, the display of jewellery happens at every step. This should also be avoided.” (Friday Sermon, January 30, 2004, Baitul Futuh London, Al-Fazl International, April 9, 2004)

“Those objecting to the Islamic teachings themselves have started acknowledging now that at some venues segregation of men and women is a better option. In some places, separate organizations for women and men are being talked about. Secular society is realizing as well that women and men have separate identities and it is better if they are separate. Those who laid the blame of segregation on us and made objections have now started admitting that segregation is needed in some circumstances.”

(Address Ladies Jalsa Salana U.K. July 29, 2017, Hadiqatul Mahdi)

OBJECTIONS ON ISLAMIC PURDA AND THEIR REFUTATIONS

Huzoor Anwar^{atba}, while discussing the objections raised against the Islamic teaching of Purda, quoted some excerpts of the Promised Messiah^{as} in one of his addresses. He also gave the necessary explanation signifying that not understanding the spirit of Purda and not complying with the Islamic commandment results in the achievement of so-called liberty, but because of it, numerous personal and societal problems increase. Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said:

“The Promised Messiah^{as} says: ‘In the current day, objections are raised against the veil. However, people do not realize that the Islamic veil is no prison.’ –meaning, it is not a prison – ‘It is only a barrier which prevents the free mixing of unrelated men and women. The veil saves them from stumbling. A just-minded individual would appreciate that if non-Mahram men and women were to mix without any hesitation and concern, and if they were to go about together, they would surely succumb to the flare of their inner-passions. It has often been heard and observed that such societies see no ill in a non-Mahram man and woman remaining alone behind closed doors; they call this civilisation. It is to counter these very adverse effects that the Founder of Islam has forbidden an individual altogether from approaching anything that may lead them to stumble. In this relation, the Holy Prophet^{sa} has stated that where a non-Mahram man and woman sit in seclusion, the third with them is Satan. Just reflect on the harrowing outcomes that Europe is having to bear as a result of this non-restrictive and unbridled teaching.’ – This means that their suffering is on account of the teaching of unrestricted freedom. Nothing is left behind of chastity and Haya (modesty) and – ‘In certain places, an utterly shameless life of promiscuity is led. This is due to teachings of the sort just mentioned. If you wish to protect a thing from misuse, it must be safeguarded. However, if one does not watch over a possession—

and considers the world to be innocent — then keep in mind that it will surely be ruined.’ Do not live under the misconception that society is principled and no one is looking at us and there is no need to observe Purda in this environment because people do not have the habit of looking at others. For this reason, it is said that if you keep thinking that people are upright, then remember that what you have will surely be violated. ‘The Islamic veil is a truly holy teaching indeed, which, through segregation, saves man and woman from stumbling. It has delivered mankind from an illicit, grievous and bitter life, on account of which Europe has seen domestic disputes and suicides every other day. The fact that noble women drift into lives of promiscuity is the practical outcome of the permission to gaze freely at non-Mahram women.’” (Malfuzāt Vol 1, p 29-30, new edition)

As you can see even today, the point being explained by the Promised Messiah^{as}— and as I have also said earlier – that it has given rise to the lack of trust. Then because of this mistrust, families are destroyed and divorces take place. The percentage of seventy to eighty percent divorce rate in the Western countries is because of this unrestricted freedom in society. These things steer towards wrongdoings and then families start breaking apart.”(Address to Ladies Jalsa Salana U.K. July 31, 2004, Al-Fazl International, April 24, 2015)

Honourable People Have A Dignified Attire

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} associated the wearing of modest and dignified attire with super cultural and moral values and gave examples of the respected families of Europe in this regard. Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said:

“Once you have purified the environment of your households you will try to make efforts that the absurd and useless trends of society

and innovations in religion do not affect your families. These are the things that destroy the efforts of pious changes just like the wood-lice destroys wood. Here in this society (it is considered to be a civilized society, although everything is not civil here), the people who are indulged in ludicrous and foolish activities are considered civilized and distinguished. Vulgarities are being carried out in streets and marketplaces in the name of freedom of conscience. Clothing is such that it is barely there. Revealing attire is being termed as civilized today whereas a few years earlier and in some countries even today, when the natives and those living in the jungles, or the poor people of the third world countries do not wear proper clothes, they are called uncivilized, savage and lacking in moral values. On the other hand, when they themselves act in the same way, these activities become civilized behaviour. Therefore, you people need not be so impressed by this society. Even in their own countries, a few decades or a few years ago, and also today, the royal families and the aristocracy dress appropriately. The sleeves are full length and long frocks, maxi dresses and gowns are worn by the royal families even now. Noble families and respectable people, whichever country they belong to, consider getting drunk, behaving rowdily and wearing revealing dresses, as something awful. They are not influenced by any religion. It is either because of their family traditions that they have kept their attire respectable or their innate nature tells them that wearing revealing dresses is wrong, as they have a distinct status to uphold. Hence, wearing decent clothing justifies their respectability." (Address National Ijtimā' Lajna Ima'illah Germany June 11, 2006, Al-Fazl International, June 19, 2015)

Qurānic Teachings of Purda Versus Commandments of the Gospels and A Comparative Review of Eastern and Western Societies

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} has compared the commandments of the Holy Qurān and Bible about Purda on some occasions. He explained the importance of Islamic Purda through references to the writings of the Promised Messiah^{as}. Subsequently, in his address to the ladies in Sweden, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said: “Hazrat Masih Mau’ūd^{as} says: When has Islam told you to keep (women) in chains? Islam nips the root of lustful behaviour. Look at what is happening in Europe. A hue and cry is being raised about Purda. So, observe what happens. You can see that due to unnecessary freedom, marriages end up in divorces within a short time and households are ruined; and the percentage is much higher in the West as compared to the East. The divorces here and breaking up of homes is not as common in the Eastern society or in those societies where the true picture of Islam is depicted.” (Address to Ladies Jalsa Salana Sweden, September 17, 2005, Al-Fazl International, May 15, 2015)

Similarly, on another occasion, while addressing the Ahmadi ladies, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} explained this topic in detail by quoting from the excerpts of the Promised Messiah’s^{as} writings: “The Promised Messiah^{as} says, ‘This era is such that even if the ritual of Purda had not been in effect before, it must be in force now.’ He said, ‘Even if Purda was not needed in earlier times, it is essential now because this is ‘kal jug’,’ meaning the last era of mankind. ‘Vice and debauchery and drinking are rampant on earth. Atheistic thoughts are creeping into the hearts and they have no respect for the magnificence of the Divine commandments. Tongues are loquacious and lectures are loaded with logic and philosophy, but the hearts are void of spirituality. At such a time, it would be a folly

to expose your helpless sheep to the mercy of wolves.’”

After reading this aforementioned extract, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said: “Here women have been compared to sheep and wolves to the evil society. Imagine that now when we are another hundred years ahead of the times when the Promised Messiah^{as} was alive, how much greater is the need for Purda. Neither the West is safe and nor the East. Step out of your homes and observe society around you. Surely, you will see what the Promised Messiah^{as} has talked about. Is there room for carelessness or negligence? Ponder, contemplate and take care of yourself. But some men get overly strict. They should keep in mind that the objective is observance of Purda and not confinement.

In this context, Hazrat Masih Mau'ūd^{as} says, **‘The Qurān instructs Muslim men and women to lower their gaze. When both men and women do not cast glances at one another, both will remain protected. The Qurān is not like the Gospel, which commands a person to not look with lust.** It is regretful that the writer of the Gospel was unable to realize that a ‘lustful glance’ means nothing. It is the glance itself which arouses lustful thoughts in a person. The outcome of this teaching is not hidden to those who read the newspapers. They are probably aware of the utterly shameful displays that are reported to take place in the parks of London and Parisian hotels.

The Islamic veil does not at all mean that women be imprisoned as though they were locked in jail. The purport of the Holy Qurān is that women cover themselves and refrain from gazing at men that are beyond the permissible bounds. Women are not barred from leaving the house to tend to their societal needs. They are welcome to go out and about but must control their gaze.

Islam has made no distinction between men and women in acts

of virtue, nor have they been prohibited from being like men in goodness. Where does Islam state that women should be bound in chains? Islam cuts at the root of lust. Just look at what is happening in Europe. We are told that people fornicate like they were dogs and alcohol is so widespread that if liquor stores were put in a line they would extend for three miles. What teaching has led to this result? Is this on account of observing the veil or due to removing the veil?' (Malfuzāt Vol. 1 p 297-298)." (Address to Ladies Jalsa Salana Germany August 23, 2003, Al-Fazl International, November 18, 2005)

Defending the Islamic commandment of Purda and emphasizing upon maintaining its basic spirit, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said at an occasion:

"Today the purpose of slandering Islam by using the issue of Purda is prevalent in Europe. Our girls and ladies should organize a campaign to write articles and letters to newspapers on this topic. Our girls have done a good job in the UK and Germany regarding this. Purda is for upholding the honour of women, and our religion presents this concept. Every religion has the concept of establishing the honour of women. Some distorted the form of Purda later on. Not far back in the past, Christianity did not give even basic rights to women and they were constrained in certain restrictions. Purda is to uphold a woman's honour. It is in the nature of women that they desire to be respected; everyone wants respect. Women have a certain honour which they want to maintain and they should do so. Islam champions the honour, respect and rights of women. Thus, it is not because of coercion that women observe Purda or wear the Hijab. This effort is to establish their individuality and respect." (Friday Sermon April 23, 2010 Switzerland, Al-Fazl International, May 14, 2010)

On another occasion, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} explained the importance of Purda with reference to safeguarding the commandments of the Holy Qurān. Giving instructions in this context to Lajna Ima'illah Norway in their National Majlis 'Amila meeting, he said:

“The concept of Haya (modesty) and Purda (the veil) is not only presented by Islam. It is a very old concept. Christian nuns cover their heads with veils like the Hijab and wear full-length sleeves. They used to wear this attire in the past and do so even now because it is the requirement of Purda. Thus, it is an excuse to say that society has become modern. Other religions have deteriorated and changed. People have started meddling with their religious books and this has always happened whereas Allah the Almighty has proclaimed that He will protect the Holy Qurān. Therefore, we also need to protect the commandments given in it. Inculcate this awareness in the girls that we have to protect the commandments given by Allah the Exalted.” (Meeting National 'Amila Lajna Ima'illah Norway October 2, 2011, Al-Fazl International, December 23, 2011)

Addressing the Ahmadi ladies, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} declared the teachings of the Holy Qurān superior to that of the Bible while giving a reference from a treatise of the Promised Messiah^{as}. He said:

“Hazrat Masih Mau'ūd^{as} says: 'To raise allegations against the Islamic concept of the veil is foolish on the part of these people (ignorance of the Europeans or those people who are against the concept of Purda). Allah the Exalted has not given any such instructions in relation to the veil that are objectionable. The Qurān instructs Muslim men and women to lower their gaze. When both men and women do not cast glances at one another, both will remain protected. The Qurān is not like the Gospel, which commands a person to not look with lust.'” (Malfuzāt Vol 1 p 405)

new edition) (Address to Ladies Jalsa Salana UK July 31, 2004, Al-Fazl International, April 24, 2015)

Efforts to Restrict the Islamic Traditions

In one of his Friday sermons, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} mentioned the various tactics of those forces that oppose Islam and stressed upon Ahmadis to keep following the Islamic teachings according to the true essence of Islam and to courageously face the difficulties in the path of righteousness for the sake of Allah the Exalted. Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said:

“Anti-Islamic forces are making tremendous efforts to eradicate religious teachings and traditions from within the Muslims. These people are trying to eliminate religion in the name of freedom of expression and freedom of conscience in such a manner that they would not be blamed for forcefully destroying a religion. Instead, they would be considered to be well-wishers. Attacks on religion would be carried out in Satan’s way, with deceit. But we should remember that the task of the revival of Islam has been given to the Jamā’at of the Promised Messiah^{as}, and to fulfil that we will have to make utmost efforts and also bear hardships. We do not have to fight, but we do have to deal with them prudently. Even if we agree to one of their demands today, which is related to our religious teachings, then gradually we will see restrictions being imposed on many of our beliefs and teachings. We should supplicate ardently that Allah the Exalted give us the courage and capability to counter these satanic schemes, and may He also help us. If we are firm on truthfulness, which we definitely are, then our success is also inevitable. It is the Islamic teachings that will prevail in the world.

The Promised Messiah^{as} says: "Truth takes courage and bravery. A liar is a coward. He whose life is involved in impurity and sinfulness will always remain fearful and cannot face anyone. He cannot express his truthfulness or furnish the proof of his chastity like an honest person can with courage and fearlessness. Deliberate over worldly affairs and see if there is anyone who has been blessed by God with some prominence and has no green-eyed people around him. Every prominent person eventually does have enviers. The same is true of religious matters. Satan is also the opponent of reformation. Hence, a person should put his matters in order and keep his affairs with God sorted out. He should please God and then neither be afraid of anyone, nor care for anyone besides Him. He should abstain from matters that could inflict punishment upon him, but all this is not possible without Divine help and endowment of Divine strength. Mere human efforts cannot yield results until it has the Grace of Allah, "Man has been created weak" (4:29). Man is weak, full of faults and surrounded by difficulties. Hence, we should pray that Allah grant us the ability to do good deeds and make us the recipients of Divine support and abundant blessings (Malfuzat, Vol. 10. p. 252, Edition 1985, published England)

Thus, we have to convince the world with prayers and for that we need to develop a strong relationship with God.

We have to remember that other religions are not everlasting. They came at a certain time, fulfilled the moral training needed in their time and were over and done with. That is why there have been lots of deductions and modifications in their religious books. Islam is the only religion that is still secure and it is here to stay forever. The teachings of the Holy Qurān will hold good till Doomsday. Therefore, we should try to act upon our teachings without any inferiority complex, stay firm on them and also make known to others that their discourses are against the will of God and can lead them to their downfall.

Islam is not such a religion that confines people with inappropriate restrictions, instead, its teachings are flexible depending on one's needs. As I have said earlier, there are some female patients who need the services of male doctors, so, there is no restriction of Purda for the doctors as well as the patients. Saving a human life and relieving it from pain is the real and foremost aim. That is why eating carrion and even pork is permissible, in order to save lives, in times of extreme distress and helplessness. But again, only in case life is at risk. Similarly, alcohol is also put to use in medicines. But in short, the system that the satanic forces want us to follow aims at gradually putting an end to the limitations of faith and destroying religion. Now we, the Ahmadis, have to do Jihad against this scheme, and this will be possible only when we give preference to Islamic teachings over everything else and prostrate before Allah the Exalted, so that we have success through Divine help.

In the time of the Promised Messiah^{as}, there is no Jihad (holy war) of the sword, instead it is the Jihad of self-reformation. Muslims living in these developed countries, particularly the Ahmadi Muslims living all over the world are my addressees for this. They must strive to be loyal to the country, make sacrifices for it and try to attain an elevated status in any form for the sake of the development of the country. When this is accomplished, the satanic forces will be rendered speechless. They will realize that Muslims are those who are leading their countries and the nation towards high standards of betterment, rather than working against the country. We have to make these people and governments comprehend that if we abide by certain norms or refrain from certain activities or things because of our religious teachings, it is not the government's task or the judiciary to interfere. This will create unrest and distance between the locals and the immigrants, although some of those who are called migrants have been living in these countries for two or three generations. Yes, if someone is harming the country, being unfaithful or spreading rumours and hatred, the government has

the right to detain and punish them. But it does not have the right to stop someone from following a religious teaching and assert that this practise on your part means that you are not assimilating into the society of the country.

As Ahmadis we should always remember that these are dangerous times and Satan is aggressively attacking from all directions. If Muslims, and particularly Ahmadi Muslims, including men, women and youth, do not try to keep religious values intact, then there is no guarantee of our survival. As compared to the others, we will be more liable for the wrath of Allah because we understood the truth. Even though the Promised Messiah^{as} explained this to us, we do not act upon it. Thus, if we want to save ourselves from annihilation it is imperative to live confidently in this world while embracing every Islamic teaching. Do not think that the progress of these advanced countries is a guarantee of our progress and our life, and our prominence depends on aligning ourselves with them. The progress of these advanced countries has reached its peak and now their immoral values and practices are bringing about their downfall, and the signs are evident. They are inviting the wrath of God and asking for trouble, in such a situation, we have to try to save them on humanitarian grounds by showing them the right path instead of being influenced by them. If these people are not reformed, which seems difficult due to their arrogance and distance from religion, then those nations will play their part in the future development of the world who will uphold moral and religious values.

Thus, as I said before, we, and especially the youth, have to pay attention to Allah the Exalted's teachings. Instead of being influenced by the world and following its lead, you should make the world follow you. As I started the conversation with Purda and clothing, I want to say another thing in this regard with regret that some people ask if Purda is the only thing needed for the progress

of Islam and Ahmadiyyat. Some say that the teaching is outdated now and we have to abandon this practice (God forbid) if we want to keep up with the world. It should be made clear to such people that if they continue following in the footsteps of the worldly people, lead their lives like them, then instead of confronting the world they themselves will be lost in it. Their obligatory prayers will gradually become a superficial practice and other good deeds or religious practices, if any, will become artificial and then will slowly cease.” (Friday sermon January 13, 2017, Baitul Futuh London, Al-Fazl International, February 3, 2017)

Answer to an Objection Raised About Separate Seating Arrangements for Men and Women

To promote chastity in a society, Islamic teaching has prohibited the arrangement of mixed gatherings for men and women. But in the western society, many objections are raised against segregation of women’s seating from men. In this regard, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} addressed the Ahmadi women during the occasion of Jalsa Salana UK and advised them by saying:

“Yesterday at the time of Friday prayers, several press members had arrived here. It was the first day of Jalsa. After the Friday prayers, our Press Secretary said to me that the press is already here, but we are very concerned in regard to Channel 4. Perhaps it was a lady.

She is saying that everything else is fine, but the segregation of men and women, by making them sit separately, portrays you as extremists. You are infringing on women’s rights by doing this.

I said to him, ‘There is no need to worry.’ Firstly, tell them that we (men) will not answer this. You should ask the women. And I

was very delighted that a representative of Lajna, who often gives interviews to the press, gave a courteous reply. This is a separate issue whether they agree to it or not, but they have no logic or justification to negate it.

Secondly, I told them that if they wished to broadcast any negative news or comments related to us regarding this subject, they may do so. **We do not have to oblige any worldly people, press or any channel. We simply have to please God Almighty and have to strive for it.** We need to follow His commandments. I usually answer that religion originates to make us tread on its heels and thus, unites us with God, our Creator. Religion is not meant to follow people or please them.

These worldly people who have drifted away from religion are creating trouble by criticizing and objecting to faith.

This very habit will one day reveal its consequences to them. Similarly, those who are creating turmoil in the name of Faith, will be brought to account for this, even if they are Muslims.

These worldly people, under the influence of their ego, object to the separate seating arrangements of men and women. **This is the major objection they hold against us. Until a few decades ago, these very people had kept their women deprived of every right. With the passage of time, women raised their voices for their rights and as it was only a human effort, it soon reached the opposite extreme.** In the name of giving rights to a woman, with the attitude of sympathizing, she was excessively presented in such a manner in front of the world that she lost her dignity. Under the guise of sympathy and in the name of freedom, the dignity of a woman was thus trampled. European women have not experienced the fact that a woman's own identity is able to fully emerge and her sense of security is enhanced when she is among

other women, working with women's organizations, and moving around freely. We had a European guest about two years ago. She was a good writer. She spent the whole day with women and in the evening remarked: "Initially I felt quite odd that I am only among ladies, but after spending the entire day here, I realized that I am at greater liberty and feel more secure."

Thus, if a woman—while maintaining her dignity—is told of her rights, it will not matter if she is a non-Muslim brought up in the west. She will acknowledge that Islam preserves the rights of women; she will acknowledge that segregated seating does not take away their freedom. The representative of this Channel 4 who came here yesterday tweeted about our exhibition or another event and remarked that such and such event is happening but ladies are not permitted to go there. Then, the same women gave a response to those tweets. But I am also pleased that a number of Ahmadi girls also replied to her expressing that she was wrong.

In any case, this is a reaction against a man-made law which is being voiced in the name of female liberty in the so-called developed countries of the west. Women are conscious that they require the assistance of men to acquire this liberty and subconsciously, reveal their natural fragility using this assistance. Where men have supported women in this cause, they have also taken advantage of their fragile nature. In the name of female liberty, they have stripped women of their dignity in order to satisfy their own desires. That is the reason why a British female writer wrote in an article that men are very active in struggling for this campaign—launched in the name of female liberty—of stripping women of their Hijab and dressing women scantily. They are enduring these struggles for the satisfaction of their own desires of seeing woman naked [as it were] than for the liberty of women. Thus, sensible women of the west, themselves, acknowledge this fact.

These so-called developed people have only witnessed one aspect of the female oppression carried out in the name of religion and traditions. Women have also perceived a single feature of their slavery under the aegis of Christianity, religion and traditions. This is not merely about the third world countries. Even in these countries, a few decades ago, the same situation prevailed. Then to eradicate it and achieve their freedom, they left no stone unturned.

A similar dilemma occurred with the Muslims. They portrayed the traditions of diverse nations and non-Islamic traditions as their own in the garb of religion. Thus making women an icon of disrespect. Explaining this point, The Promised Messiah^{as} stated at an occasion: 'These people persecute women in the name of religion and consider her very inferior, degraded and worthless like a shoe, However, Islam upholds the rights of women.'" (Malfuzat, Volume 5 pages 417-418 Edition 1985 published England) (Address at Ladies session Jalsa Salana UK August 13, 2016, Al-Fazl International, December 16, 2016)

The above address was delivered by beloved Huzoor Anwar^{atba} in 2016. The following year he further explained the matter while addressing the ladies' session at Jalsa Salana UK:

"Man-made rules and laws can never be free of mistakes and shortcomings. Recently, it was reported that a Swedish lady who organizes major music concerts has announced that this year only women will attend her massive yearly concert and men will not be invited. The reason given was that the experience from earlier years has proven that men misbehave with the women to the extent of committing rape. Now this is the result that has come to light of keeping men and women together. Therefore, the Islamic teaching states that even if there is the slightest chance of committing a wrongdoing, refrain from that wrongdoing and also refrain from even allowing the possibility of doing it to exist.

Those who raised objections on Islamic teachings now agree that at some places it is better to have segregation between women and men.

There is even talk about separate organizations for men and women. Society has also become cognizant of the fact that men and women are better off with their distinct identity and place. Those who accused us of segregation and objected to it are now accepting that at certain places there should be segregation.”

“Therefore, an Ahmadi Muslim lady should have firm faith that ultimately it is our teaching, which will prevail and their efforts in the name of women’s freedom will surely be unfruitful and unsuccessful.

Guiding us in this matter, the Promised Messiah^{as} has stated that state of men should be analyzed. He also advised men and related their present condition that they are completely out of control. They neither fear God nor have faith in the day of judgement. Worldly pleasures are their sole aim. (Malfuzāt Vol 7 page 134-135 – edition 1985 published England)

...The woman who was organising concerts also repeated what the Promised Messiah^{as} said. Huzoor Anwar^{atba} mentioned earlier, the event organizer stated that she cannot keep men and women together unless men understand and they assure that women will be treated respectfully and men will learn to control their temptations. Today this has been voiced, even though it is from a song and dance gathering. At least they gave a thought to how much harm can be and is being caused by unsegregated gatherings.

This was the guidance given by our faith hundreds of years ago and elaborated by the Promised Messiah^{as} a hundred and twenty-five years ago. They are now coming to terms with it after experiencing the vulgarity that is being spread in the name of freedom. Ultimately,

they will have to admit that the Islamic teaching is the teaching that will prevail. This is that complete teaching which guides people on how to successfully restrain themselves.”

(Address at Ladies session Jalsa Salana UK July 29, 2017, Al-Fazl International, October 20, 2017)

A Prudent Response to the Allegation Raised Against Men and Women Offering Salāt in Segregation

According to Islamic injunctions there are several regulations related to offering Salāt. These have to be kept in mind in an attempt to fulfill this significant component of Islam. But a few prejudiced westerners and some reckless Muslims have raised objections against the conditions regarding this important Islamic worship and have tried to bring about changes in it depending on their will. While mentioning some of these hazardous misdeeds, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said: “Recently the news of a woman building a Mosque in Germany has been given much attention. She will lead the prayers and men and women will offer Salāt together. Furthermore, there is no obligation to cover your head, wear a scarf or observe Purda.

This woman now states that she is heading to the UK and will build a similar mosque over there, like the one built in Germany. All this is due to the lack of understanding of religion and having an inferiority complex. Whatever is contradictory to the commandments of Allah the Almighty and His Messenger^{sa}, is Bid’at (innovation) that people are trying to add to religion. Or perhaps it is being introduced in religion due to ignorance or maybe it is a planned scheme of anti-Islamic forces who are introducing these things according to a conspiracy to corrupt Islam. Other religions have already been

corrupted. It pains them to witness Islam in its original form and they wish it to be debased as well. The Holy Qurān claims that it has always been safeguarded and its injunctions are for all times to come and Allah will always keep it in His protection. This is not tolerable to anti-Islamic elements. Therefore, they try to damage it and will continue doing so. When the Holy Qurān has clearly directed women to dress modestly and has given the commandment to observe Purda (the veil), then those actions which are contrary to these commandments – such as wearing a scarf is not required, long and loose clothing is not required, and covering beauty is not required – such talk gives rise to corruption of religion. It is also incorrect for men and women to stand together while offering Salāt.

Allah's directive of segregation leaves no room for disobedience under the influence of the objections raised by anti-Islamic forces.

A worldly person, whose religious eye is blind can never know the significance of religious commandments.

Once a political leader came here to visit me. He asked, 'will a time come when men and women will offer Salāt together at the same place in the mosque?' I told him that this has already happened, a long time ago. In the time of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, Salāt was organized at the same place, in such a manner that men stood in the front rows and women stood in the rows behind. Even now, the same can be done when needed. Now women have created separate areas for themselves for convenience, so that they can freely offer Salāt. This also gives them the freedom to take off their head coverings and remove their Chadors (outer covering), if they wish to; although not during Salāt, but for the rest of the event or other functions. I explained to him that all men are different from each other in their thinking. If women are standing in the front rows or in mixed rows, there may be some men who might only be glancing at the

women, instead of concentrating on their prayers. They will not be focusing on worship. He laughed and said, 'You are absolutely correct.' In fact, later I learned from some other sources that the same politician has disclosed in his gatherings the answer which he got to his question. He declared that the reply was very logical and based on facts. Thus, these miscreants who are making way for innovations in faith are in the wrong. They are fooling around with religion. In the name of Islam and being Muslims themselves, such endeavours are no less than making fun of religion and all this is due to lack of religious knowledge and ignorance. Muslims were bound to tread this path since the Holy Prophet^{sa}, had predicted that such ignorance will overtake Muslims when they will start behaving in this way." (Address at Ladies Session Jalsa Salana UK July 29, 2017, Al-Fazl International, October 20, 2017)

Criticism About Purda in the Name of Women's Rights

When anti-Islamic forces wish to raise objections against the Islamic traditions and religious commandments of Purda, they play the women's liberation card to achieve this detestable motive. They object by blaming Islam for usurping the rights of women.

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} referred to this subject on an occasion and said,

"Nowadays, in the name of women's rights, there is a great commotion around the issue of Purda (veil) in Western countries. The pretext is women's rights or elimination of terrorism or even baseless criticism of Islam. In the Holy Qurān, Allah the Exalted has explained various aspects of how and when to adopt Purda. Furthermore, referring to the display of women's beauty it says **إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا**... 'except that which is apparent thereof...' (Surah Al Nur, 24:32)

Hazrat Musleh Mau'ūd^{ra} explained this and also presented the Promised Messiah's^{as} instructions in this regard, explaining that: **إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا** refers to features of the body which are obvious and cannot be hidden due to some hindrance, even if they might be physical (it does not mean the enhanced appearance, but one's natural physique.) For example, a person's height is a part of beauty but it is not possible to conceal it. Hence, Islamic law does not prohibit its display. Or for example, if one has to undergo medical examination of any part of the body because of an ailment (the Holy Qurān permits revealing it).

In fact, the Promised Messiah^{as} went to the extent of saying that there is a possibility that a doctor prescribes uncovering of the face for a woman. Covering it will be detrimental for her health and she should move around without it – meaning that if the doctor stops a woman from covering her face and tells her to move about in the open like that, otherwise it will be injurious for her health – in such a situation, it is permissible for the woman to leave her face uncovered and go out. In fact, according to some scholars of jurisprudence, it is legitimate for a pregnant woman to seek assistance of a male doctor for her childbirth, in a s where a good female nurse is not available, and the doctor has declared that the delivery might be life threatening if not handled by a specialist. Instead, if a woman does not let a male doctor deliver her child and dies due to it, she will be considered as sinful in the eyes of Allah as if she had committed suicide. Then, there can be constraints due to work as I explained earlier, such as the women in the household of landowners whose example I gave. (Hazrat Musleh Mau'ūd^{ra} has explained this earlier) that they cannot survive, (if they do not work) and unless they do not assist their men in business. All such matters are encompassed in **إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا**. (Tafseer-e Kabeer Vol 6 page 299)

Thus, Islam has provided freedom and prescribed boundaries as well. It has not granted unrestricted freedom. Due to specific circumstances, it is permissible to observe less Purda (veiling). It can be observed at a lower standard. Simultaneously, it is prohibited to abandon Islamic Commandments without reason and an unjust cause. Islam does not permit immodesty in the name of freedom.”(Friday Sermon March 18, 2016 Baitul Futuh Mosque, London, Al-Fazl International, April 8, 2016)

Many times, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} has provided enlightened guidance with reference to the sayings of the Promised Messiah^{as} in order to draw the attention of Muslim women in western society toward safeguarding themselves and their future generations. On one occasion, while addressing Ahmadi ladies residing in Western societies, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said:

“While living in this western culture you have to face various struggles to safeguard yourself and your future generations. At the same time, you should also strive to observe Purda. Today, if you free yourself from observing Purda, the coming generations will take a step even further.

The Promised Messiah^{as} says: ‘People are promoting promiscuity as in Europe, but this is certainly not appropriate. Such freedom of women is the root cause of obscenity and immorality. One can imagine the state of morality where such pattern of freedom is prevalent.’ You reside in these countries so you can assess if this freedom has helped them establish high moral standards.

The Promised Messiah^{as} resumed: ‘If freedom of sexes and want of proper covering has helped increase their chastity and virtue, we will readily confess that we were mistaken.’

You are residing here. The Promised Messiah^{as} is saying we will accept that we are mistaken if according to you, these women of western countries have become increasingly pure and devout by this freedom and lack of Purda (veiling).

He said, 'But it is crystal clear that when men and women are young and have the licence to mix freely, their relationship will be most dangerous. It is but human to exchange glances and be overwhelmed by lustful desires. As there is intemperance and vice, despite the observance of the veil, it may be imagined what the situation will be like in case of unrestricted freedom.'

He also said, "Sometimes even when there is Purda, incidents happen, however, if there is unrestricted freedom, then one is free to do whatever they want."

And then the Promised Messiah^{as} said, 'Look at men, how unbridled their behaviour is! They have neither fear of God nor faith in the hereafter. They only worship mundane pleasures. It is necessary therefore, that before granting such freedom as is being advocated, the moral condition of men should be improved and rectified.'

If you believe that you are chaste yourself, what guarantee can you provide of the men and of their virtuous moral state. Before removing your veils, rectify the morals of men and if it is guaranteed that their standards have been raised, then remove your Purda.

The Promised Messiah^{as} continued: 'After men have developed enough self-temperance to control their passions, you may consider whether the veil is necessary or not. To insist upon unrestricted freedom in the present circumstances would be like putting sheep at the mercy of lions.'

In one place the Promised Messiah^{as} said that going unveiled before men is similar to placing soft bread before a hungry dog. It is to this extent that he has used such strong terms.

The Promised Messiah^{as} said, 'Let them at least take counsel with their consciences whether the condition of men is so much improved that women may go about among them unveiled.'" (Malfuzāt Vol 4 page 104-106 – new edition) (Address Ladies session Jalsa Salana Canada June 25, 2005, Al-Fazl International, March 2, 2007)

With reference to the allegations raised on Islamic injunctions, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} addressed Ahmadis in a Friday sermon, saying, "Those who object to Islamic teachings allege that women's rights have been usurped by covering her up in a Hijab and asking her to observe Purda, and sometimes immature girls are affected by this. Islam neither depicts Purda as putting women behind bars, nor does it specify restraining them in the four walls of the house. In fact, it wants to preserve chastity." (Friday Sermon January 13, 2017 Baitul Futuh Mosque, London, Al-Fazl International, February 3, 2017)

Purda by Force is Not Permissible

In Islam, the commandment of Purda (veiling) carries great significance. But in fulfilling this Islamic injunction and in leading others to its implementation, no violence of any sort is acceptable. This is because the concept behind the veiling of a woman is not her slavery; rather it is to establish her dignity. On many occasions Huzoor Anwar^{atba} has mentioned the Promised Messiah's^{as} teaching pertaining to non-violence regarding the observance of Purda.

On one occasion he said, "the Promised Messiah^{as} says, 'Implementation to the extent of violence is not allowed. It has been narrated in a Hadith that a baby in the mother's womb can be delivered by a man if required. Our religion is not one of regulating difficulty, and anyone who creates inconveniences is guilty of making their own religious law, as it were. The government also has not violated any injunctions relating to the veil and their rules are softened as required. When the people put forth their recommendations for reform, the government listens to them carefully and works upon them in a suitable and appropriate time.

Someone ought to tell me where checking a pulse for medical purposes is prohibited in the injunctions of the veil.'" (Malfuzāt vol 1 page 171 old edition, page 239 new edition)

Firstly, the Promised Messiah^{as} advised that it is not prohibited under certain circumstances for women to receive treatment from male doctors during childbirth. On such occasions, some men do not consult male doctors on the plea of being very honourable - this is also forbidden. It is not a big deal to get checked by a male doctor if needed. (Address Ladies session Jalsa Salana UK July 31, 2004, Al-Fazl International, 24 April 24, 2015)

Fundamentally, Islam rejects extremes, both extravagance and frugality, in all matters. Therefore, on one occasion Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said: "Two types of groups have formed. One suggests such severity in veiling that women may not even be allowed to go outside of their houses and the other offers such leniencies that everything may tumble down in ruins." (Address ladies' session Jalsa Salana Canada July 3, 2004, published Al-Fazl International, September 23, 2005)

At another occasion, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} referred to the same topic and said: "In any case, Allah the Almighty's decree neither instructs extravagance nor frugality. Do not incline one way or the other. And this is the point to understand." (Address Ladies session Jalsa Salana UK July 30, 2010, Al-Fazl International, March 11, 2011)

In this regard, after relating an incident of Ummul Momineen, Hazrat Syeda Nusrat Jahan Begum Sahiba^{ra}, Huzoor^{atba} shed light on the true essence of Purda: "Regarding the extent to which the Promised Messiah^{as} would urge Hazrat Syeda Ummul Momineen^{ra} for Purda and about his way of doing so, there is a narration: Hazrat Ummul Momineen^{ra} used to be a little unwell. He (the Promised Messiah^{as}) consulted the doctor if it was okay for her to stroll in the garden for some time. He replied in the affirmative.

At this the Promised Messiah^{as} said: "In fact, to avoid being sinful, I have been taking my family to the garden with some concession in Purda considering that it is allowed by Sharī'a and it is not objectionable, and I do not care about anyone who criticizes this. It is narrated in Hadith that enjoy the spring breeze. Being confined to the four walls of one's home all the time can cause various ailments. The Holy Prophet^{sa} used to take Hazrat Aishah^{ra} for outings. Hazrat Aishah^{ra} accompanied him^{sa} in battles. People have adopted extreme attitudes in regard to Purda. Europe has gone to one extreme in abolishing it altogether, and following in their footsteps some naturalists also wish to do the same. Even though such immodesty has flung open the gates of obscenity and immorality in Europe. On the contrary, some Muslims go to the other extreme and a woman never steps outside of her house, even though it sometimes becomes necessary for her to travel by train. Hence, I believe that both extremes, conservatives and

liberals, are in error. (Malfuzāt Vol 3 page 557-558) (Address Ladies session Jalsa Salana Germany August 23, 2003, Al-Fazl International, November 18, 2005)

“Thus, I say to every Ahmadi man and woman as Allah the Almighty has said, that the finest of the raiment is the raiment of Taqwa, try putting it on so that God’s attribute of Sattar (the One Who veils sin) keeps us covered forever.”

(Friday Sermon delivered April 3, 2009 at Baitul Futuh Mosque,
London)

لِبَاسِ التَّقْوَى

THE GARMENT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Elaborating on Allah's commandment of لِبَاسِ التَّقْوَى Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said in one of his Friday Sermons:

"Allah the Almighty, at one point in the Holy Qurān has drawn attention towards the term لِبَاسِ التَّقْوَى (garment of righteousness):

يَبْنِيْ اٰدَمَ قَدْ اَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا يُوَارِيْ سَوْآتِكُمْ وَرِيشًا ۗ وَ لِبَاسِ
التَّقْوَى ۗ ذٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ ۗ ذٰلِكَ مِنْ اٰيَاتِ اللّٰهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُوْنَ

'O children of Adam! We have indeed sent down to you raiment to cover your shame, and to be an elegant dress; but the raiment of righteousness — that is the best. That is one of the Signs of Allah that they may remember.' (Surah Al A'raf, 7:27)

Again, it has been mentioned here what I have said before that Allah has blessed you with garments. Its purpose is to cover your nudity and to serve as an embellishment. This is the apparent purpose which Allah has mentioned. Allah has provided human beings with clothing to differentiate them from other creatures, and thus to beautify them and to conceal their nakedness. However, along with that (He) declared at the same time that the true attire is the attire of the righteousness.

Here I wish to clarify another thing that **there is a difference in the embellishment standard of the attire of a believer and that of a non-believer.** Indeed, decent people have a distinctive standard when it comes to the beauty of their garments. These days, in the fashionable and materialistic classes of the West and the East,

rather every level of western society, attire which is revealing and exposes one's body is considered beautiful. For men, the measure of being well dressed is being fully clothed. However, the same men want a woman to not be fully covered. Mostly, women also want the same. The women who have no fear of God are devoid of the Garment of Righteousness and their men support them. A class of men wishes that women should be dressed up in the latest trends. In fact, they like the same for their own wives so that they may be considered stylish and fashionable in society, whether their clothes cover-up or not. **However, a believing man or woman, who are God fearing, will always wish to wear the garment which will provide them the means of seeking the pleasure of God and that is possible only when they seek for the garment of righteousness** by minutely paying attention to their physical appearance as well."

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} further stated:

"Thus, it is the garment of righteousness which sets the standard for the physical garment and for covering up each other's weaknesses. And that is not possible to achieve unless we bow down to Allah the Almighty. Since Satan is always on the lookout for an opportunity to strip people of their raiment of righteousness (Taqwa).

Allah the Almighty, in the verse next to the verse that I have recited earlier says:

يَبْنِيْ اٰدَمَ لَا يَفْتِنَنَّكُمُ الشَّيْطٰنُ كَمَا اَخْرَجَ اٰبَوَيْكُمْ مِّنَ الْجَنَّةِ يَنْزِعُ
عَنْهَا لِبَاسَهَا لِيُرِيَهُمَا سَوَاتِيْهَا ۗ اِنَّهٗ يَرٰكُمْ هُوَ وَقَبِيْلُهٗ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا
تَرَوْنَهُمْ ۗ اِنَّا جَعَلْنَا الشَّيْطٰنَ اَوْلِيَاءَ لِلَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ

'O children of Adam! let not Satan seduce you, even as he turned your parents out of the garden, stripping them of their raiment that he might show them their shame. Truly he sees you, he and his tribe, from where you see them not. Surely, We have made Satan's friends for those who believe not' (7:28).

Thus, I have spoken about clothing that is physically revealing. A believer can never wear clothes which, rather than being an embellishment, reveal one's body. Sometimes, reports are received from here as well as from Pakistan that some Ahmadi girls also follow others blindly, and not only do they abandon Purda, but also wear inappropriate clothes. And this behaviour can solely be of those who are unequipped with the garment of righteousness.

Thus, I say to every Ahmadi man and woman, as Allah the Almighty has said, **that the finest raiment is the raiment of Taqwa, try putting it on** so that God's attribute of Sattar (the One Who veils sin) keeps us covered forever and [save us] from Satan who is attempting to remove our Purda and make humans naked. [Allah has said] that one who is not a Mo'min, does not have faith, Satan is his friend.

If we have faith and we have accepted the Imam of the age, then we will have to make a special effort to protect ourselves from Satan and we will have to cover ourselves always with the covering of Taqwa. May Allah enable us to do so.

As I mentioned earlier, after taking the Ba'at of the Promised Messiah^{as}, a great responsibility falls on our shoulders in that we try our utmost to bring about a change in ourselves and not be drifted with the tide of the time. Rather, our bond with Allah the Almighty should get stronger day by day. May we always comprehend the true essence of the garment of righteousness. At one point, the Promised Messiah^{as} says:

'It is possible that a man may have committed minor or major sins in his past (meaning any person may commit big or small sins). However, when he establishes a true bond with Allah the Almighty, Allah forgives all his shortcomings completely and never makes him feel ashamed in this world, nor in the hereafter. This is a great graciousness of Allah the Almighty that once He ignores and forgives someone, He never mentions it again and covers ones shortcomings. Despite such graciousness and blessings, if one chooses to live a life of hypocrisy, then one is very unfortunate and punishable'" (Malfuzāt vol 3 page 596 -New edition published Rabwah).

He further said: "Pertaining to this, Allah the Almighty states in Surah Al-Nisa:

إِنْ تَجْتَنِبُوا كَبَائِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نَكْفِرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَنُدْخِلْكُمْ
مُدْخَلَ كَرِيمٍ

'If you keep away from the grievous sins which are forbidden to you, We will remove from you your minor evils and admit you to a place of great honour' (4:32).

It is mentioned here, to keep away from major sins. That does not mean that one should search and try to find out the list of those major sins which may be avoided. Rather, a true believer is the one who avoids all kinds of sin, since Allah covers up all types of sins. Therefore, one must not presume that one should avoid major sins and there is no harm in committing minor sins.

When Allah commands to safeguard oneself from grievous wrongs, this refers to avoiding all sorts of sin, because the Holy Qurān does not have a list of grievous and trivial sins; there is no specification there. According to Allah the Almighty, everything which He has

forbidden, and has required a believer strictly not to do, is a sin if committed. Therefore, it is a major sin for a person, who is finding it difficult to abandon a minor or major wrong action which Allah the Almighty has forbidden. When you manage to overcome a difficult task and gain control over it, the minor evils which are easier to eschew will automatically be shunned.

Some commentators of the Holy Qurān have opined that the extreme of any sin is termed as Kabeera or a 'grievous sin'. Thus, if you shun a sin before it reaches its extreme, God, Who until now has concealed your flaws, will cover your faults. You will be rewarded by Allah the Almighty if you, being grateful to Him, turn towards virtuosity. Then those faults will not be exposed. As the Promised Messiah^{as} has said, He does not even mention those former sins, whether major or minor.

At another site in the Holy Qurān, Allah the Almighty expounded that by associating some major sins with some other sins, any sin can escalate to a major sin, as it is stated in Surah Al Shura:

وَالَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبِيرَ الْإِثْمِ وَالْفَوَاحِشَ وَإِذَا مَا غَضِبُوا هُمْ يَغْفِرُونَ

'And who eschew the more grievous sins and indecencies, and, when they are wrathful, they forgive' (42:38).

Meaning, in regard to believers, their sign is that they shun major sins and indecent ways and anger as well. Here, two, rather, three vices have been mentioned together.

It is noteworthy here that the Holy Prophet^{sa} has said: Haya (modesty) is also a part of faith. This should be something to reflect upon and also of great concern for those people who chase after fashion and materialism, and have adopted such immodest clothing that they are nude and they have eschewed Haya altogether. Whereas, Allah

the Almighty wishes to cover up and forgive; as I have read an excerpt of the Promised Messiah^{as} that He runs towards His servant if the servant walks to Him. If the man still fails to derive benefit from Him, then it is really unfortunate.” (Friday Sermon April 3, 2009, at Baitul Futuh, London, Al-Fazl International, April 24, 2009)

Similarly, at the occasion of the ladies address at Jalsa Salana UK, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} explained in relation to **لباسُ التَّقْوَى** “the garment of righteousness (Taqwa)” that the real beauty does not emerge from clothes and jewelry; rather, it is **لباسُ التَّقْوَى** ‘the garment of righteousness’ which can provide real beauty for both men and women. Pertaining to this Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said:

“Clothes and apparent beauty mean nothing. The real beauty is the one which is bestowed upon by Allah the Almighty. Women are very particular about their beauty and adornment, but there are many [women] who are unaware of their real adornment. Adornment cannot be attained by applying makeup or by wearing clothes and ornaments. The real adornment is what Allah the Almighty has told us about. They remain unaware of the adornment which can enhance their beauty and embellishment manifold. That cannot be achieved by being free or by being lost in the absurdities of society or by discarding the Hijab or by keeping the scarves off the heads. Neither is it achievable by presenting material desires to their husbands. For men too, there is an adornment. Men cannot achieve that adornment by marrying a fashionable woman. Rather, it is achieved by adopting the righteousness or Taqwa of Allah the Almighty. Some of our women too, being influenced by Western society, express such feelings as perhaps this is real beauty.

It should always be remembered that beauty lies in wearing the garment of righteousness. And the garment of righteousness is available for those men and women who make the utmost efforts to fulfil the pledges and trusts of their faith with all their

abilities and capabilities.” (Address at Ladies session Jalsa Salana Uk July 23, 2011, published Al-Fazl International, May 4, 2012)

Two Purposes of Clothing

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} explained the commandment of the Holy Qurān pertaining to **لباس التقوى** (garment of the righteousness) by beginning his Friday Sermon with the recitation of verse 27 of Surah Al Al-A'raf and referencing it to described the purpose of clothing. He said: In this (Surah Al-A'raf, 7:27), Allah the Almighty has given the guidance to give precedence to Taqwa over everything else. Allah has given the example of clothing here **that clothing has two qualities. Firstly, it covers up your weaknesses and secondly, it is like an adornment.**

Covering up weaknesses includes physical defects and weaknesses. Some people wear a dress which conceals some of their defects. It also protects humans from the effects of extreme weather. Moreover, beautiful and nice-looking clothes enhance the personality of a person.

However, nowadays in these countries, especially here and in general all over Europe, they have made fashion so absurd and useless, especially women's clothing, that revealing one's body through this fashion is considered a source of beauty. Especially in the summer, it becomes a nude dress almost entirely. Therefore, Allah the Almighty has stated two purposes of clothing and instructed to fulfill them. By declaring the garment of righteousness as the best, [He] drew our attention to a physical dress which serves only two purposes. However, by abandoning the garment of righteousness you have failed to fulfill even those purposes. Thus, the worldly clothes must be conditional to this garment [of

righteousness] which is pleasing to Allah the Almighty, and the best of garments near Allah is the garment of righteousness.” (Friday Sermon October 10, 2008 at Mubarak Mosque Paris, France, Al-Fazl International, October 31, 2008)

Meaning of the Word “Reesh”

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} recited verse 27 of Surah Al-A'raf at the beginning of one of his sermons and then presented its commentary, shedding light on the beauty of a garment:v

“Here the word ريش “reesh” has been used. It means the feathers of birds which make them look beautiful by covering them up. The same bird which looks so beautiful covered up with feathers appears extremely ugly if its feathers are plucked off or the feathers fall off due to some disease.

It (Reesh) also means clothing and beautiful clothing. Unfortunately, these days beautiful clothing is being defined as the clothes which are revealing or nude, and men are more at fault in this since they have let them [women] free in the matter, and women too have forgotten their Haya and honour. Some of our Muslim ladies, and occasionally Ahmadi women too, get influenced by this [notion]. When Purda and Hijab are taken off, the next step is to wear revealing clothing. Thus, every woman must uphold her honour.

Only yesterday a newly converted Ahmadi asked me that the society we live in has many vices including nude clothing. So how can we save our daughters from the negative impact of society?

I responded that children should be made aware of their personal honour from an early age; make them realise who they are and

what God expects from them. Furthermore, from the age of five or six years, and not at a later age, they should be made aware of clothing. [Tell them] that society may have any type of clothing, but your clothes must be distinct, since you are an Ahmadi, and secondly, because Allah the Almighty is pleased with the clothes which covers up nudity. Strengthen their inner pious nature so that they have to do everything for the sake of Allah the Almighty. In this way, gradually, until they grow older, this notion will solidify and take root in their minds.

Likewise, another meaning of Reesh is “wealth” and the resources to lead our lives. One must remember that Taqwa is essential for this too. Wrong means should not be adopted to get the facilities of life, and money should not be earned by fraudulent ways; unlawful business should be abstained from and one must stay clear of defrauding the government of their taxes. If you steal money in these ways, perhaps you may construct beautiful homes temporarily, but you will be distanced from the path of righteousness (Taqwa). Therefore, Allah the Almighty says to cover up your weaknesses, and for your adornment, it is essential to utilize the permissible means which have been provided for you. And always remember that the garment of Taqwa is the real thing. If you remain focused on it, then your physical clothing, mannerism and adornment will also be practiced according to the commandments of Allah the Almighty. The way your father Adam^{as} tried to cover him up when Satan seduced him must be remembered by the children of Adam^{as}. They will be saved from the extreme absurdities of the world if they persistently have the fear of Allah and Taqwa and continue to make efforts to safeguard it with Astaghfar, prayers and repentance.

The Promised Messiah^{as} says:

“Allah the Almighty has termed Taqwa as a raiment in the Holy Qurān. Therefore, لباس التَّقْوَى is a word from the Holy Qurān. It

points out that spiritual beauty and spiritual adornment spring from Taqwa. And Taqwa means that as far as it is possible, a person should take care of the minutest aspects of his duties and pledges towards Allah and His creation.”(Addendum Baraheen-e- Ahmadiyya part 5-Ruhani Khazain Vol 21 page 210)

It means, to find out the deepest and finest meanings and then make an effort to act upon them. (Friday Sermon October 10, 2008 at Mubarak Mosque Paris, France, Al-Fazl International, October 31, 2008)

Similarly, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{atba} drew the attention of Ahmadi women to **لباس التقوى** (the garment of righteousness) and said:

“The subject of discussion is the beauty of a woman and **لباس التقوى** (the garment of righteousness). The real beauty actually lies in the garment of Taqwa. It means that all your practices are due to having the fear of Allah the Almighty and due to acting upon His commandments and not prioritizing your own temptations. Thus, if every Ahmadi woman lives her life with such mindset and she strives more for the garment of Taqwa instead of physical clothing, then this attire of righteousness will conceal your trivial spiritual and moral weaknesses and surely Allah will glance at you with an eye of forgiveness.

Due to fear of Allah the Almighty and the efforts to adopt an attire of Taqwa, Allah the Almighty enables them to shun their weaknesses and [He] will continue to do so and also enables them to progress in their faith. The attention you pay to cover yourself up in **لباس التقوى** (the garment of righteousness) will also help provide you opportunities to bow down before Allah the Almighty. And Allah the Almighty accepts the prayers of those who bow down before Him with good intentions and He does not waste their prayers. This enables us to do further pious actions. He extends

wings of forgiveness towards those who bow down before Him. And when a person is under the wings of forgiveness of Allah the Almighty, then he only treads the paths which Allah the Almighty wills.” (Address Ladies session Jalsa Salana UK July 30, 2005, Al-Fazl International, May 11, 2007)

Modest Dress

At the occasion of Majlis-e-Shura, Lajna Imā’illah Pakistan, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{atba}, advised Ahmadi girls in a special message by saying:

“The purpose of the advent of the Promised Messiah^{as} is to establish his Jamā’at on Islamic teachings and set up an ideal society. Our girls should stand out among others. Their conversation should be wise and clean.

The way they walk, their dress, actions and poise should reflect the Islamic injunctions. Develop in them a habit of covering their heads and wearing full and appropriate clothes from the age of 10-11 years. Those who have reached the age of Purda should take care of their Purda. At home give frequent pious guidance and present your own exemplary model before girls younger than yourself, as this will ensure that the future generations continue to observe Islamic teachings. **Many times, through my speeches at Lajna Ijtimā’āt and Jalsas, I have drawn attention towards pious training of girls and the importance of Purda. Listen to that advice of mine repeatedly and direct your girls as well to listen, so that worldly adulterations cannot drift you away from the Islamic teachings.**”(Message for Majlis-e-Shura Lajna Imā’illah Pakistan 2009, Al-Fazl International, January 22, 2010)

Inferiority complex augments the trend of unveiling and there is a risk of losing faith if one is not acting upon the teachings of Islam. In this regard, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} cautioned Ahmadi members in one of his Friday Sermons and said:

“Apparently, an evil seems quite trivial in the beginning or a person may contemplate that such a minor evil can cause no harm to him or to society. But when it escalates on a larger scale, or numerous people get involved in it, or they ignore it or do not consider it evil anymore due to societal pressure, or because of an inferiority complex keep quiet against it, lest it spoils their image in society and do not take any action in this regard; so many such things occur in this society in the name of freedom. And the governments also accept such things; nonetheless, they are evils.

For instance, in this society Purda is viewed as a social ill because it is considered as an infringement upon a women’s rights. There is a lot which is said against Purda and in their view there is nothing wrong with saying so. They proclaim that Sharī’a law was not required in this regard. [Under these circumstances] some girls slacken in observing Purda because of an inferiority complex about what others will say, or because their friends will disapprove, or because students or teachers in their schools or colleges might mock them. Satan tells them that it is a trivial matter and it is not like you will lose your honour simply because you abandon this Islamic injunction; remove your Dupattas, scarves and Niqabs to save yourself from the comments of society; nothing will happen; you are still doing everything else according to the teachings of Islam.

But at that moment, the girl or woman who abandons Purda does not realize that this is a commandment mentioned in the Holy Qurān. Haya of a woman is reflected in her modest dress. The honour of a woman is maintained by avoiding unnecessary

interactions with men. By the grace of Allah the Almighty, there are such Ahmadi girls in this society who give convincing responses to men who raise objections on Purda; they respond by saying that it is our business and we are doing what we like; why are you infringing upon our freedom by forcing us to discard our Purda? We have an absolute right to adopt our clothing according to our own choice. But there are also some girls who—despite being Ahmadi—claim that it is very difficult to observe Purda or to wear a scarf in this society; we feel ashamed. Parents should actually instill such values in their girls from early childhood that they should only be ashamed when the teachings of Islam are not observed, not when they obey the commandments of Allah the Almighty.”(Friday Sermon May 20, 2016, at Nasir Mosque, Gutenberg, Sweden, Al-Fazl International, June 10, 2016)

Later, in another Friday Sermon, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} spoke on the same subject, saying:

“Modest clothing and Purda are significant in safeguarding our faith. If the developed countries are annihilating modesty in the name of advancement and freedom, they are doing so because they have drifted away from religion, whereas an Ahmadi girl who has accepted the Promised Messiah^{as} has pledged to keep her faith above all worldly affairs. An Ahmadi child who has accepted the Promised Messiah^{as}, as well as an Ahmadi person, man or woman, who have accepted him, have pledged to hold their faith above all materialistic things; and this can only come about by acting in accordance to Islamic teachings.” (Friday Sermon, delivered January 13, 2017 at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London, Al-Fazl International, February 3, 2017)

Addressing Ahmadi women in particular, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} advised them to follow the commandments of Allah the Exalted in order to preserve their own faith and that of their progeny. Offering his

earnest guidance, he said:

“An Ahmadi lady who has pledged allegiance to the Promised Messiah^{as} so that she can safeguard herself from the indecencies of the world and leave the world while Allah is pleased with her, will have to be extremely cautious. She will have to be mindful of her attire, her Purda, her actions, and her conversation as well. A girl wrote to me, from Pakistan, asking what is wrong if I wear a long shirt with jeans. The effect on people is evident, is it not? So, I say that there is no harm in wearing a long shirt with jeans. There is nothing wrong about it, provided all conditions of Purda are fulfilled.

But I am afraid, after a while, this long shirt might become a short shirt and then a blouse. This is what I said to that girl as well. So, whatever is done for fashion’s sake, or for following others, it encourages the pursuit of following the latest trends. And then more issues arise and are felt when the time comes. Therefore, one should always try to avoid paths where there is a danger of Satan’s enticements. You and your children have to excel in faith; therefore, choose the paths that lead you ever more towards God Almighty. Try to become devotees and worshippers of Allah and mould yourself according to His injunctions.” (Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana Switzerland, September 4, 2004, Al-Fazl International, January 7, 2005)

Similarly, in a Friday Sermon, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} advised Ahmadi ladies about recognizing real piety, saying:

“Sometimes, we notice that there is a lady who does not adhere to modesty in her clothing. She does not observe Purda when heading out. In spite of being an Ahmadi Muslim, she goes out and about bare headed, without a Hijab, scarf or shawl (Chador). Her dress is tight fitting and reveals her figure, but if called for financial sacrifice

or asked to donate to charity, she is very generous. She detests lying and does not tolerate falsification in her presence. So, for such a woman, great virtue will not be increasing in financial sacrifice or despising falsehood. Instead, for her, greater piety would be to act upon this injunction of the Holy Qurān which commands you to keep your dress modest and to observe Purda.

She is ignoring this directive considering it to be of little value, but later on this approach can shove her towards grave misdeeds. However, the standard of every vice and virtue is based on the state of each individual. Actions of different people, in diverse situations, define their piety or impiety for them.” (Friday Sermon, delivered December 13, 2013 at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London, Al-Fazl International, January 3, 2014)

The Custom of Burqa in Arabs and Turks

At the occasion of Jalsa Salana UK, while addressing Ahmadi women and girls in particular, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} focused their attention on fulfilling all aspects of observing veiling (Purda) and said:

“Hazrat Musleh Mau’ūd^{ra}, after explaining various circumstances, remarked that the current custom of wearing Burqa (outer coat) in Arabs and Turks is quite nice. But like I have said, such a coat should have loose-fitting. With the grace of Almighty Allah, the majority of women in Jamā’at Ahmadiyya dislike certain coats and if they see others wearing them, they write to me, and many of them have mended their ways after being counselled only once. But I worry when some girls in schools and colleges remove their coats because they feel shy and awkward. They should always remember that there is no need to suffer from any type of complex. The

implementation of Allah's commandments only brings blessings. Even in Third world countries of Africa that are extremely underdeveloped, as people are becoming educated and trained and entering into the fold of Ahmadiyyat, they are also adopting modest clothing and moving towards observing Purda.

And in families where there was a custom of wearing a Burqa, if their girls discard it and start wearing jeans and a blouse, then it would be extremely worrisome. We claim that we are here to morally train the world. So, it is quite upsetting to witness some of our own people not conforming to the Islamic traditions and directives...May Allah the Almighty always enable us to tread the path of righteousness, in its very essence. And may we never be the ones who exploit religion for the sake of fulfilling personal desires. Always remember that **an Ahmadi woman and an Ahmadi girl hold a high status.** Allah and His Prophets have taught you ways to hold firm to righteousness. In this day and age, the Promised Messiah^{as} has elaborated on these ways for us. Tread on these paths and adhere to these commandments without having a complex of any type. Tell the world openly that none other than Islam has protected women's rights and established women's honour in the society. O those who are indulged in the extravagance of the world! If you wish to create a peace-loving society, then embrace the teachings of Islam. You (Ahmadi members) should be imparting this lesson to them rather than being taken in by their remarks and developing complexes. Tell them that now if they wish to establish their dignity, they should accept Islam. If they want to make their homes like paradise, then they should follow us." (Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana United Kingdom, July 31, 2004, Al-Fazl International, April 24, 2015)

Burqas Should be Modest

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} spoke about various trends in coats (Burqas) of Muslim women in the east and west, in light of the remarks of Hazrat Musleh Mau'ūd^{ra}. He said:

“Nowadays many odd styles have emerged in Burqas. Some people only close the buttons up to their waist and let the rest stay open in a strange manner that reveals the beauty of the clothes they are wearing underneath. Angled style of Burqas reveals clothes worn underneath the coat. Objections were raised on Burqas in Hazrat Musleh Mau'ūd's^{ra} time as well. He commented then that some Burqas stand out, revealing clothes from the front and people also object that some other Burqas are tight fitted at the back. The issue was the same even then. He said that he was receiving objections from people remarking that some Burqas are open from the front while others are inappropriate from the back. He guided Lajna to design their own Burqas which are modest, as they themselves know in which style there is Purda and also for their own comfort and ease.” (Extract from Address to Ladies, Anwar-ul-Uloom Volume 12 page 560-561)

“Similarly, even today, the requirement is that such Burqas be worn which serve the purpose of Purda and do not create any hindrance in working with ease. If you will be exposing the trimmings of your clothes from underneath open coats, then do not expect that men will not stare. Men's eyes will definitely make a complete appraisal from top to bottom, creating issues for some couples, in some households, among married people and between husbands and wives. Therefore, I wish to guide you to assess yourself and instead of racing toward the world, join the race towards religion.

Work toward the betterment of your future and that of your progeny. Create a heaven in this world as well as in the hereafter.

This can only be achieved when Allah Almighty is placed above all." (Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana United Kingdom, July 29, 2017 at Alton, Al-Fazl International, October 20, 2017)

At the occasion of Jalsa Salana Germany, addressing the Ahmadi women, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} referred to modest attire in the light of a Hadith, saying: "Always keep this saying of the Holy Prophet^{sa} in your mind that Haya (modesty) is a part of faith." (Bukhari, Kitabul Iman Chapter Umoorul Iman Hadith no. 9)

"The attire of an Ahmadi woman must be modest. She must always uphold her honour. I have noticed this over here, in other countries and even in Pakistan, that in the name of Burqa, above-knee or, at the most, knee-high coats are being worn. If this is not addressed at this time, they will be shortened further, eventually ending Purda altogether. I instructed on Jalsa UK as well that veiling from Burqas should be such that it does not expose a woman's physique from the front and back and does not even reveal the embellishments of her clothing. Both sides should be covered and to achieve this end, women can ponder over a design of their choice. The Department of Trade and Handicraft can also play their part in designing. Purda (veiling) and Haya (modesty) are what is most important and this must be upheld. It should not be that there is fashion starting. Odd styles of Burqas have begun to appear as I mentioned. One wonders whether these are Burqas or a fashion show. Ahmadi women should abstain from this.

I have come to hear that in Pakistan non-Ahmadi women have started doing better veiling than our Ahmadi women and girls. This is shameful for us. In fact, it has come to a point that some do not uphold Haya (modesty) even in their dress. Purda aside, they must at least be mindful of Haya in their attire. Every Ahmadi woman should pay attention to it. When you make a pledge of keeping your faith above all worldly objects, then you will have to strive

to fulfill this pledge, without caring for the society.” (Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana, August 26, 2017 at Colsurway, Germany, Al-Fazl International, November 17, 2017)

Modest Swimming Attire

In one of his Friday Sermons, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} advised in regard to modest clothing and included guidance relating to swimming attire. Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said:

In Switzerland, a girl filed a lawsuit and claimed that she feels embarrassed swimming alongside boys, as her school strictly enforces mixed swimming; she ought to be given permission to swim separately with only girls. The human rights organization, who claims to be the flag bearers of human rights, remarked that it is fine if you wish to swim separately. It is your personal right, but it is not such a big issue that the decision be made in your favour. Even human rights organizations start making excuses when it comes to the teachings of Islam and the modesty of women.

Hence, in such circumstances, Ahmadis should be more cautious than ever before. If swimming is mandatory for young boys and girls in schools in some countries, then they can swim in a full swimming dress, i.e they should swim wearing proper swimming attire which is called Burkini nowadays. This will make them realize that they need to put on modest clothing. Parents should also make their children understand that swimming ought to be separate for boys and girls and must also make efforts in this regard.”

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} further stated:

“So, this is the teaching of Islam for men that they have been restricted in every way. Then, women have been instructed that in spite of these precautions, you have to be mindful of your veiling. In these countries where there is no modesty, how can it be implied that there is no need for Purda. Lack of Purda or Hijab and friendships are creating many complications. We must try our level best to avoid them. This also clarifies that if women are not permitted to swim alongside men, then even men are not allowed to swim where women are swimming.

However, these restrictions are not meant for women only; these are for men as well. Men have been instructed to lower their gaze when facing women so as to uphold a woman’s honour. Hence, every injunction of Islam is full of wisdom and eliminates all possibilities of evil.” (Friday Sermon, delivered January 13, 2017 at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London, Al-Fazl International, February 3, 2017)

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} offered guidance while responding to a question about girls swimming in a meeting with the National Majlis ‘Amila Lajna. He said:

“There is no harm in women swimming at specific times, allocated for women exclusively, while wearing such swimming suits which completely cover the body.” (Meeting Majlis ‘Amila Lajna Ireland September 18, 2010, Al-Fazl International, October 22, 2010)

An Ahmadi Woman’s Apparel in a Western Society

In one of his detailed addresses, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} brought the attention of Ahmadi women living in all cultures, especially in

western societies, to pay attention to fundamental aspects of modesty in clothing. He said:

“There are those whose objective is to impress the world and be fashionable, so they pay less attention to this fundamental purpose. Thus, in overlooking the fundamental objective of covering one’s nakedness, you will find all kinds of awkward and revealing apparels in Europe. And then, advertisements and videos of these exposing apparels can be viewed on television and seen in newspapers, etc. However, those who have some dignity left in them, wear clothes for the purpose of covering their nakedness and then a little bit of fashion [for them] is just fine. But as I said, covering of nudity is and must be the sole aim of clothes for an Ahmadi woman. This is a woman’s nature that she wishes to stand out from others, in her surroundings, no matter what class or mindset she belongs to.

In an Ahmadi society, this expression of standing out is done in a unique manner. With the exception of one or two instances where modesty is not considered to be beauty, generally an Ahmadi woman and an Ahmadi girl do give consideration to the modesty of their attire. Whereas in the west as I mentioned, society is totally void of the concept of modesty. Therefore, the dresses of these nations are either for protection from severe weather or for the sake of fashion. May Allah Almighty grant them wisdom and that the fear of God is instilled in their hearts.

Anyhow, when talking about women, we mean women in an Ahmadi society. But living in this society, there is danger of an Ahmadi girl or two being affected by it. I was saying that there is a risk of Ahmadis being influenced by this society. In general, Allah the Almighty has safeguarded Ahmadis so far. There might be one or two examples otherwise. My concern is growing because I can see the first steps being taken in this direction. The significance of Purda has diminished immediately after becoming a part of this society.

Purda is not given the due importance that Islam has decreed. **I have mentioned it earlier as well that an Ahmadi woman must herself be mindful of veiling. She should inevitably have this sense within herself that she ought to observe Purda rather than having to be reminded of it.** An Ahmadi woman should be so determined regarding the standard of her veiling that she becomes a symbol in herself and the standards of Purda should be identical everywhere. It should not be that veiling is observed and Hijab is worn only when attending Jalsas and Jamā'at meetings or when coming to the mosques while they appear entirely different when roaming in the market. An Ahmadi woman has to observe Purda only because it is a commandment of Almighty Allah and at the same time, she has to safeguard herself from the ill intentions of the society.

Therefore, stay firm on your values and do not have double standards. **Well-educated girls who have been raised here certainly have the virtue of truthfulness and honesty in them. They ought to maintain their standard of honesty, in any case. Youth over here have this quality that they disapprove of double standards. Thus, they must sustain this value in themselves and should not have double standards in regard to this (Purda) either. They should adopt an attire which is the attire of Haya (modesty).** Secondly, those girls who have reached the age of Purda should especially be careful about their dress and try to wear a coat and Hijab and observe veiling. Everywhere Allah the Almighty has given the instruction of Purda from strangers. Nowhere has it been written that the relaxation of Purda is permissible in the event of friends of husbands or friends of brothers visiting your homes, or that disregarding Purda is permissible when going to the market or for an outing. The attire must be modest in any case and those who have attained the age of Purda should wear an attire which does not allow anyone to point a finger at an Ahmadi woman, saying so and so does not adhere to Purda. If there is compulsion at the

workplace, even then, completely modest clothes should be put on and Hijab must be worn. **Just as it is important to observe Purda at a Jamā'at function, similarly it is as significant in everyday life.**" (Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana United Kingdom, July 30, 2005, Al-Fazl International, May 11, 2007)

At an occasion, addressing Ahmadi women in light of modest and Purda-observing Muslim women from Islamic history, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} presented prudent guidance to Ahmadi women in living their lives with the veil. He advised them saying:

"Purda most certainly does not mean oppressing a woman. Besides, at the time of the Holy Prophet^{sa} women used to participate in battles by giving water to the thirsty and were involved in other activities as well. Furthermore, clarification and elaboration on the character of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and several injunctions of Islam were made known to us through Hazrat Aishah^{ra}. It is said that half of the faith has been taught by Hazrat Aishah^{ra}. Therefore, open mindedness, being educated and seeking knowledge is also important for girls. In fact, it is a must. It is essential, not only for yourselves, but also later on for these children and for the future generations who will be raised and brought up by you and who will be serving the Jamā'at in the future.

Even if one has to work, under obligation or do a job somewhere, there is no harm in it. But work, jobs, professions or seeking education should not be used as an excuse to forsake Purda. As I said earlier, there are hardly any locals like Danish, Swedish or Norwegians here. I have not met any yet. Even if there are any, they are few. There are Pakistani ladies who study as well as work and observe Purda. So, those who present Purda as a hindrance in work or study are making lame excuses. If there is a hindrance because of it, try to get rid of it with honest efforts. If you let them know at your workplace, no one compels you to remove your Hijab, your

scarf or your Burqa. And then honest efforts are also blessed by Allah.” (Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana Sweden, September 17, 2005, Al-Fazl International, May 15, 2015)

Be Mindful of Observing Purda at Jalsa Salana (Annual Convention)

On the occasion of Jalsa Salana at Hadiqatul Mahdi, UK, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} advised women to give special attention to Purda and said:

“Furthermore, women tend to be more enthusiastic about going around and seeing things. Therefore, they must take more precaution. They should neither roam in their own area [i.e. Jalsa Gah area] nor outside it. But, if they wish to see the area and go around, as it is very large and new for them, sure, they are permitted to do so, but only after the Jalsa proceeding has finished, not while it is still on. Remember, however, that even when you do go around to see the area, you must be mindful of your Purda. Non-Ahmadi women who have come with Ahmadi woman do not observe Purda, but Ahmadi women should nonetheless observe it.

I have observed guests. If the hosts inform the guests of our traditions, they certainly show regard. I have often noticed that female guests come to our events having covered themselves with a shawl, scarf or Dupatta. So this is also a very great quality in them. They only need to be explained about it. In any case, as I have stated, Ahmadi women must be in Purda when they go about. And if for some reason they are not able to observe it, then such ladies should also not apply any makeup. Nonetheless, their heads must be covered, since this is purely a religious environment and we must try, as far as possible, to abide by all those commandments which our faith demands from us.” (Friday Sermon, delivered July 28, 2006 at Hadiqatul Mahdi, Al-Fazl International, August 18, 2006)

“The boys and girls who have Facebook accounts may come to a point where vices tend to propagate. The boys make contacts and sometime girls get trapped and upload their immodest pictures on Facebook. You may have sent a casual picture to your friend and she may upload that on Facebook and from there it may reach Hamburg and then New York and Australia and so on. And then contacts develop from those countries.”

(Waqfaat-e-Nau Class held on October 8, 2011 at Baitul Rashid Germany, Al-Fazl International, January 6, 2012)

SOCIAL MEDIA AND PURDA

Role of Social Media in Immodesty

Nowadays, messages are exchanged so quickly on mobile phones and with various other devices that one may not even realize that some of our messages and pictures may be contrary to our Islamic and moral values. Referencing this in a message to Lajna Ima'illah, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said:

“Many evils are originating from social media. Young boys and girls chat silently in presence of their parents, exchanging messages and pictures, creating accounts on various sites, wasting time all day long on phones, iPads and computers, etc. This leads to deterioration of morals, irritable moods and in no time, kids become out of control. There is a need to monitor and limit such activities. You have to come up with alternative activities for them. Involve them in household chores. Engage them in services for the Jamā'at and create activities which may be positive and beneficial for them and the society. This is a very important responsibility which has to be fulfilled by Ahmadi women.” (Message at the National Ijtimā' Lajna Imā'illah Germany, 10 July 2016)

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} has prohibited Ahmadis from posting pictures on social media and to openly post their comments and remarks on it. Therefore, he said:

“Nowadays a new system of being introduced to each other has emerged which is known as Facebook. It is a relatively new trend developed in the last few years. I have previously once asked [Ahmadis] not to use it. I spoke in my sermon too that it insinuates towards indecencies. It shreds the veil of modesty between people, exposes their secrets and invites toward indecencies. Its developer himself commented that its purpose is to expose everyone inside

out to the world. To him, exposing means even to upload nude pictures, and if someone invites others to comment on these, it is justified. Similarly, anyone may write anything about anyone. Is this not the limit of moral downfall and degradation? In this state of moral decline and degradation, it is an Ahmadi who has to tell the world about higher standards of morals and virtues.” (Concluding Address, Jalsa Salana Germany, June 26, 2011, Al-Fazl International, July 3, 2015)

In a Question & Answer session, a girl asked Huzoor Anwar^{atba} about his saying that Facebook is not good and his having prohibited its use. On this Huzoor Anwar^{atba} replied:

“I did not say that if you do not leave it, you will be the sinner. Instead, I said that the harms of Facebook are greater and the benefit is little. The boys and girls who have Facebook accounts may come to a point where the vices tend to propagate. The boys make contacts and sometime girls get trapped and upload their immodest pictures on Facebook. You may have sent a casual picture to your friend and she may upload that on Facebook and from there it may reach Hamburg and then New York and Australia and so on. And then contacts develop from those countries. Then groups of men and women are formed who distort the pictures inappropriately and blackmail further and vice propagates on. Therefore, it is better not to indulge in such vices.” (Waqfaat-e-Nau Class, October 8, 2011, Germany, Al-Fazl International, January 6, 2012)

Similarly, on one occasion Huzoor Anwar^{atba} warned girls and boys of the adverse consequences of unrestrained contacts and unlimited freedom on social media. He said: “Allah the Almighty says not even to go near such obscenities, meaning that restrain yourself from everything which tends to lead to obscenity. In the current era, there are a variety of ways that lead to it. There is the

Internet with absurd films on TV and websites. There are absurd and useless magazines. Now, the voice is being raised even here against these absurd magazines known as pornography and that these should be taken off the shelves of stalls and shops as they are impacting the morals of young children negatively. They are realizing it now, but the Holy Qurān instructed 1400 years ago that these are all indecencies, do not even go near them. They will make you shameless, will take you away from God, away from faith and may even make you an offender.

Islam prohibits the manifest as well as hidden evils. Purda is for the same reason. Purda and modest dress act as a barrier to stop open and free relationships between a girl and a boy. Like the Bible, Islam does not say not to glance at a woman with an evil eye. Instead it says that if you look at women, it will give rise to a desire for intimacy which will lead to immodesty. You will not be able to differentiate between good and evil, and then, with unrestrained relations between boys and girls, between men and women, the third presence among those two, according to the injunction of Allah the Almighty and His Messenger^{sa}, will be Satan.” (Sunan Tirmidhi, Kitabar Raza baab ma ja’a fi karaheyatad dakhool ala-Imaghibaat, Hadith #117)

“The example of the Internet which I have given also includes chatting on Facebook and Skype, etc. I have seen many families falling apart from it. I feel sorry to say that such incidents happen even in our Ahmadi families. Thus, we must always keep the commandment of Allah the Almighty before us which states not to go even close to indecencies, otherwise Satan will over power you.

Thus, it is the beauty of the commandments of the Holy Qurān that it does not state not to look up or not to have eye contact. Instead, it commands to always lower your gaze, and this instruction of keeping your gaze lowered is for both men and women. Lowered

gazes will automatically hinder unrestricted get togethers. The command 'not to look at indecencies' also includes not watching obscene and useless (Laghu'v) films. Those who do will also be stopped.

It is also required that one should not sit with those who in the name of freedom will take interest in indecent conversation. They share their own stories and invite others to do the same. **Men and women should not talk to each other through Skype or Facebook, etc., look at each other's face, nor make these things a means of developing relationships with each other.** This is because Allah the Almighty says that all manifest and hidden indecencies will lead you to be overwhelmed by irrepressible desires and temptations, thus diminishing your ability to reason and contemplate, and ultimately you will breach the injunction of Allah the Almighty and become the recipient of His displeasure." (Friday Sermon, delivered August 2, 2013 at Baitul Futuh, London, Al-Fazl International, August 23, 2013)

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} has in many of his sermons declared the mounting obscenity in society as extremely dangerous for human morality and thus advised to adopt the Islamic injunction of Ghadd-e-Basar or "lowering one's gaze". In one of his addresses, he remarked:

"As I have mentioned earlier, dress is becoming increasingly immodest. Furthermore, such advertisements are given on large billboards, TV, Internet and even in newspapers that compel decent people to lower their eyes when they see them. This all happens in the name of modernity. In any case, as I have said, Zeenat (beauty and elegance) now has taken the form of obscenity. In other words, this is nothing but proliferation of obscenity and shamelessness in the name of [celebrating] beauty and elegance." (Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana Germany, June 29, 2013, at Calsurvoy, Al-Fazl International, October 18, 2013)

Positive Use of Social Media

In a meeting with National Majlis 'Amila Lajna Ima'illah, Ireland, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} answered a question regarding responsibilities of parents in training of children and said:

“There is no harm in receiving education at co-education institutions provided boys do not build friendships with girls and that they only communicate with each other when required. They should refrain from chatting, Facebook, SMS or phone calls. Advise parents to keep an eye on their children. It is not appropriate to keep mobile phones and computers constantly in use. **Those mothers who are not familiar with computers ought to learn it in order to keep an eye on their children.**” (Meeting National Majlis 'Amila Lajna Ima'illah Ireland, September 18, 2010, Al-Fazl International, October 22, 2010)

While addressing ladies, regarding the high standard of moral training of their children and protecting them from the indecencies of social media, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} advised Ahmadi mothers and Ahmadi girls and said:

“Then, there are useless pursuits. I particularly wish to tell children that useless pursuits are not limited only to older women. They certainly engage in them and it needs to be stopped. However, these days, TV and the Internet have also become a useless pursuit for girls from 10-12 years to adolescents. If you are watching a program all day which has no moral aspect, then it is a useless pursuit.

On the Internet, sometimes girls go to sites from where there is no turning back and then obscenity propagates. Sometimes such matters are encountered where boys in wrong kinds of groups entrap girls in such a manner that eventually they flee from their

homes and thus bring defamation to their family and the Jamā'at.

Therefore, one must be extremely cautious while using the Internet and the like. Besides this, there are many programs on the Internet that are poisonous for the mind. On television there are many obscene programs. Parents should block such channels which can impact their children's minds negatively. These should be permanently locked. Children may watch pure and clean dramas or cartoons on TV for 1-2 hours or any other duration.

If the wrong kinds of programs are being watched, then it is the responsibility of parents and of girls, 10-12 years old, who by this age are well aware and should restrain themselves. You are Ahmadis and the character of an Ahmadi should be so unique and exceptional that it speaks itself for an Ahmadi girl." (Address at Annual Ijtimā' Lajna Ima'illah Germany, September 17, 2011, Al-Fazl International, November 16, 2012)

The guidance that Huzoor Anwar^{atba} provided to Lajna members regarding Tablīgh also included instructions to maintain the spirit of Purda. Thus, at one occasion, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said:

"The Lajna Tablīgh department should form teams of such ladies and girls and ought to utilize them for Tablīgh purposes. **But it must be clearly remembered that girls must make Tablīgh contacts with only girls** or with ladies.

Some people develop Tablīgh contacts on the Internet. Even on the Internet, girls should connect with girls or women. The areas where men are expected to do Tablīgh must be left to them, otherwise at times, some problems occur. Apparently, they claim that Tablīgh is being done, however, it has generally been observed and experienced that some serious consequences of the Internet appear which in no way are worthy of an Ahmadi girl or woman.

Those girls who are studying in colleges and universities should converse with their fellow students about themselves and about Islam without any hesitation, shame or inferiority complex. They can tell them about who they are and introduce Islam in this way.” (Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana Australia, April 15, 2006, Al-Fazl International, June 12, 2015)

Ahmadi parents and children, instead of giving in to the negative influences of the media, should take advantage of its positive and devotional influences in order to gain nearness to Allah the Almighty. Advising in this regard, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said:

“Therefore, in the current era the whole world has been brought closer to one another by media. But unfortunately, instead of being closer to each other in piety, this has brought us closer in following the footsteps of Satan. In such circumstances an Ahmadi must be watchful of his condition more than ever before. Allah the Almighty has blessed us with MTA (Muslim Television Ahmadiyya) and with spiritual and knowledgeable programs on our website. If we pay attention to these programs, we will stay focused, gain nearness of Allah Almighty and safeguard ourselves from Satan.” (Friday Sermon, delivered May 20, 2016 at Nasir Mosque, Gutenberg, Sweden, Al-Fazl International, June 10, 2016)

Similarly, at the concluding address of Majlis-e-Shūrā Jamā’at UK, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} advised Shūrā members to utilize MTA ever more for their benefit, saying:

“Another point towards which I wish to draw the attention of office bearers and representatives of Majlis-e-Shūrā is that they and their families should take advantage of MTA as much as possible. In fact, advise other people as well to derive benefit from MTA. At the beginning you can allocate some time for watching programs of your interest on MTA. For example, for viewers who prefer

listening to English programs, they should watch some of the excellent English language programs that are broadcast on MTA on a regular basis. Most importantly, you should listen to the Friday Sermon broadcast every Friday. Also, watch programs in which I participate, i.e. addresses to non-Muslims, my speeches at Jalsas and other events and so on. InshaAllah, watching such programs will be beneficial for you, and surely you should watch these programs with such an objective." (Concluding Address, Majlis-e-Shūrā, London, UK, 2013, Al-Fazl International, October 25, 2013)

“Hence, in this society where every nude and shameless thing is taught at school, Ahmadi mothers need to educate their children more than ever before, in light of Islamic teachings and the Holy Qurān. They should inculcate importance of modesty (Haya) in them from the very beginning. It should be inculcated starting from ages around five, six or seven.”

(Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana Canada, October 8, 2016)

RESPONSIBILITIES OF AN AHMADI WOMAN

Ahmadi Mothers Should Inculcate Awareness of Purda in Their Daughters

Pertaining to the importance of the role of mothers in the moral training of Ahmadi girls, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} brought the attention of mothers towards inculcating Haya (modesty) in girls from a young age, so that consequently, they are encouraged to adopt modest attire. Therefore, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} remarked:

“Living in this society, we should try to instill the concept of Hijab, Purda and Haya in our women and girls. If there is a hesitancy in any girl to wear a modest Hijab, mothers should reassure her or she should try to remove the hesitancy herself if she is of such age. If mothers do not inculcate the awareness of Haya in girls aged eleven or twelve, then they will not have this awareness when they grow older.

Hence, in this society where each nude and shameless thing is taught at school, more than ever before, Ahmadi mothers need to educate their children in light of Islamic teachings and the Holy Qurān. **They should inculcate the importance of modesty (Haya) in them from the very beginning. It should be inculcated starting from the ages around five, six, and seven.** In these countries in grade four and five, children are taught things which disturb them, as I have mentioned earlier.

It is at this age, at which the element of Haya needs to be instilled in their minds. Some women or girls might think that there are other commandments of Islam as well to act upon. Will Islam be victorious by only following this one command? Remember, that no commandment of Islam is petty.” (Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana Canada, October 8, 2016, Al-Fazl International, March 17, 2017)

In his Germany tour, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} presented essential guidelines in his meeting with National Majlis 'Amila Lajna Imā'illah Germany, pertaining to moral training and Purda. Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said: "I mentioned in America how to encourage 12-year-old girls towards wearing a Hijab. I told them that a child's moral training begins at birth. Adhan is recited in the child's ears after birth. So, dress your child from three years of age in a manner that she feels her clothes cover her up. Then this type of attire will go along with her as she grows older and she will continue to use clothes that conceal the whole body as you had instilled this habit in her from her childhood. If you have dressed them in clothes that do not cover up their body, then the girl will continue to wear such clothes that do not completely conceal her body and at age 11-12, she will say that this is how I want to dress."

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said: "I am asked about jeans. I always reply that it is not forbidden to wear jeans, provided the shirts are long enough to conceal your nakedness. Wearing a short shirt with jeans is not permitted."

He further said: "One should have a sense of shame and Haya (modesty) to wear a dress which is complete and is not revealing."

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} spoke of the incident of Hazrat Moses^{as} which has been mentioned in Surah Al-Qasas of the Holy Qurān and related that when he^{as} reached the Midian's water-well, he watered the flock of two women and later one of them "تَشَى عَلَى اسْتِحْيَاءٍ" approached Hazrat Moses^{as} with Haya and hesitancy.

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said **this is true modesty**. It is the duty of mothers to train their girls and ingrain this in their minds, explaining to them the pros and cons." (Meeting National Majlis 'Amila Lajna Imā'illah Germany, December 18, 2009, Al-Fazl International, January 29, 2010)

While guiding Ahmadi mothers towards their important responsibility of the good upbringing of their children, Syedna Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V (may Allāh be his Helper) said that they need to train their daughters to observe Purda.

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated: “Mothers who are not mindful of their children’s dress from early childhood will not be able to control them when they have grown up. Some girls have such a physique that even at ten or eleven years of age, they appear to be fourteen or fifteen years old. If mothers do not teach such girls about Haya and dignity of dress, it will never develop after they have grown up. As a matter of fact, even if a girl does not appear physically mature, if you instill the seed of Haya in them from an early age, teach them that they are Ahmadi and cannot emulate the skimpy dress of people in this society—that they have to guide the world, act upon Divine teachings bestowed upon us—and that it is against the dignity of an Ahmadi girl to wear tight jeans with a short blouse, then slowly but surely this teaching instilled in their minds from an early age will start to take effect. Therefore, by the time they reach the age of maturity, they will automatically be drawn towards wearing the Hijab or scarf and a long coat. Otherwise, they will end up in the same condition as some girls regarding whom I receive complaints, both from here and other parts of the world, that they cover their heads and dress very appropriately when they come to the mosque and attend Jamā’at events; but, when they go out elsewhere, they do not even have a Dupatta on their heads, much less a scarf. Hence, if mothers persistently draw attention of their girls—both through their own example and advice—and create awareness that our dress must be modest and that we possess a certain dignity, they and their girls will be saved from many difficulties. If we are not willing to make these minor sacrifices of our emotions, how can we offer major sacrifices?” (Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana Canada, June 28, 2008, Al-Fazl International, July 15, 2011)

As mentioned in a blessed Hadith, there is a glad tiding that a reward of paradise lies under the feet of mothers; however, in relation to this, mothers have been assigned the duty of the proper upbringing of their children. Hence, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} says:

“It is also the duty of Ahmadi mothers to raise their children in such a manner that they have firm conviction in God Almighty and to make every effort to gain His pleasure, as their first priority. And this cannot be achieved unless mothers also try their utmost to attain high standards of faith.

The heaven which has been laid under the feet of mothers is to heighten them in fear of Allah the Almighty and in faith on one hand, and on the other hand, to let their children progress in faith through their pious training. Otherwise, every mother cannot be given glad tidings of paradise. Thus, always remember the phrase of the Promised Messiah^{as} that ‘I have come to strengthen faith’.” (Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana UK, July 25, 2009, Al-Fazl International, June 21, 2013)

In one of his addresses, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{atba} elaborated on the close connection between fashion and immodesty and their negative impact and advised parents to instill Haya in their children and teach them to observe Purda. He^{atba} said:

“Wearing revealing dress desensitizes a person towards a sense of absurdity and nudity. Parents say it is alright, they are only little girls. They are fond of fashion, let them do it, there is no harm. Fashion is fine, but fashion in clothing must be checked when it extends to nudity. If in fashion, the coat which is worn as a Burqa is so tight that it is inappropriate to go in front of men, then such fashion is not allowed. It will not be fashion anymore. It will actually be immodesty, which will gradually discard the Hijab. To observe Haya is a commandment of Islam. Thus, be mindful of

your Haya and Hijab and adopt the kind of fashion that falls under these limits. Fashion is not prohibited but it has limits associated with it, so be careful. Display your fashion only at home and at women's gatherings. Fashion must not be exhibited at markets and outdoors where one faces men, which can possibly lead to immorality without realization." (Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana Germany, June 11, 2006, Al-Fazl International, June 19, 2015)

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated that following the injunctions of Allah the Almighty and His Messenger^{sa} is the only way to guarantee that future generations will be saved from useless pursuits and said:

"So, it is also the responsibility of Ahmadi mothers to monitor their children, educate them lovingly, and inculcate a sense in them from a young age that you are an Ahmadi girl or boy whose goal is to do jihad against all evil, in this day and age. And Ahmadi girls who have reached the age of awareness need to realize that they belong to the Jamā'at of the Promised Messiah^{as} and their mission is to restore the pristine teachings of Islam in this world. If you are abiding by the commandments of Allah the Almighty and His Prophet^{sa}, then it is good. Otherwise, there is no use in belonging to the Jamā'at of the Promised Messiah^{as}. The girls of today are mothers of tomorrow. If these girls realize their responsibility, future generations of Ahmadiyyat will continue to be safe." (Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana Mauritius, December 3, 2005, Al-Fazl International, May 29, 2015)

A variety of evils happen as a result of free interactions between girls and boys. In this regard, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} advised mothers to undertake their responsibilities and stated, "After a certain age, girls ought to be reserved with their male class and school mates. Whenever needed, they should talk to them while staying within limits. Girls themselves should pay attention to this and their parents, especially mothers, should watch that after a certain age,

their girl is accompanied by a Mahram while going to anyone's house, especially to a friend's house who has a brother at home. Visiting a friend's house when her brothers are at home should be avoided.

And at times, if not pointed out, male classmates keep visiting their homes even when they are grown up. By the grace of God, such evils are rarely seen in Ahmadi society. Majority are being safeguarded, but if left unattended, there is a possibility of escalation in evil. There is a possibility of relationships being ruined. If girls are interested in recreation, then it is the responsibility of Lajna to arrange such recreational activities everywhere. Arrangements ought to be made with a mosque or a Namaz center where Ahmadi girls can gather and organize their programs. It should be inculcated in the minds of girls from a younger age that you have honour, and society is full of sexual misconduct and you have now reached an age of awareness; therefore, you need to inculcate modesty within yourself, which will give you, your family, and the Jamā'at a good name. Then with the blessings of Allah the Exalted and seeking His pleasure, all girls will understand this and will march on the path of piety." (Address to Ladies, Annual Ijtimā' Lajna Ima'illah Germany, June 11, 2006, Al-Fazl International, June 19, 2015)

Similarly, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} guided Ahmadi boys and girls and encouraged them to improve the level of the declining state of modesty in today's world and said:

"The immoralities that we witness in the current society are a testament of truth to each and every word of the Promised Messiah^{as}. Thus, every Ahmadi boy, girl, man and woman must raise their standard of Haya in an attempt to safeguard themselves from the filth of this society rather than questioning or suffering from an inferiority complex about why is the observance of Purda necessary? And why can't we wear tight jeans and blouses?

It is the duty of parents, particularly mothers to tell their children about Islamic teachings and the evils of society from a young age. Only then, our generations can keep their faith and be saved from the venom of this so-called progressive society. Residing in these countries, there is a dire need of Jihad by parents to keep their children close to faith and preserve their Haya. They need to be role models in this regard.” (Friday Sermon, delivered January 13, 2017 at Baitul Futuh, London, Al-Fazl International, February 3, 2017)

Limits of Freedom and Standard of Purda of an Ahmadi Girl

In order to make women successful spiritually and practically in the world, Islam has provided equal opportunities for women depending on their physical and mental faculties.

Therefore, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} elucidated upon the freedom of an Ahmadi girl along with Purda and modest attire. He said:

“Similarly, I would like to talk to young girls as well since some of them may think, why are we not free in certain matters? You must always remember, you are free, but you must contain your freedom within the boundaries that Allah Almighty has specified for you. If freedom refers to unrestrained conduct of this society, then undoubtedly an Ahmadi girl is not free, nor should she chase after such freedom.

As it appears from the word of God, every action of yours is accepted by Allah the Almighty if it is within the bounds set by Him. It is narrated in a Hadith that modesty (Haya) is a part of faith. (Sahih Bukhari, Kitabul Iman- baab AlHayau minal iman Hadith #24)

And Allah the Almighty says that each and every virtuous deed of yours is recompensed by Allah the Almighty provided you are a believer and you have faith.

Thus, every Ahmadi girl who professes love for Allah the Almighty and wishes a good recompense for her deeds **must preserve her chastity**. The attire of an Ahmadi girl should be modest and not such that it draws the attention of others. Your fashion must not attract strangers and other men towards you. I have come to know that some women have started wearing Burqas which have beautiful embroidery on them and some words are written on the back. Now tell me, what kind of Purda is this? Purda is to repel other's attention from you and send a message that we have Haya. However, if Burqas are embellished with braids and fringes and words are written to draw the attention of others, then this is not Purda and such Burqas are useless.

As far as makeup is concerned, if you wish to apply makeup, you should completely conceal your face while going outside. In such a case, covering the forehead and chin is not sufficient. Full Niqab (face covering) should be worn. The coat ought to be below knee length. This is also an aspect of modesty. If you are wearing trousers or jeans, you should wear a long shirt. Some girls have misconceptions that there is no harm in wearing jeans with a t-shirt or a short blouse while at home and putting on a long coat while going outside their home. Even at home, one should wear modest and appropriate clothes in the presence of fathers and brothers.

Although Allah the Almighty has not prescribed Purda from them, He has declared that Haya is a part of faith. At times relatives drop by without prior notice. Sometimes they visit in the presence of your fathers and brothers and you may have to meet them. Thus, such attire is not appropriate for meeting them. Therefore, your clothes at home too should be modest. Although Hijab is not

required and you can stay bareheaded, still your apparel must be modest. Thus, always remember that you have to safeguard your chastity so that you can safeguard the faith and you can prove the truthfulness of your claim of love for Allah the Almighty. Allah the Almighty has said that the sign of a believer is that they love Allah the most. **Love of Allah demands that His commandments are obeyed and modest clothing is worn inside as well as outside of the house. This is the commandment of Allah the Almighty. After you fulfill the requirement of Haya, no one will stop you from becoming a doctor or an engineer or a teacher or any other profession which serves humanity. By fulfilling this, you are absolutely free.**

Thus, every Ahmadi girl has an honour which must be taken care of. Taking care of your honour and demonstrating Haya will enable you to enjoin what is right and forbid what is reprehensible. Your own exemplary model will draw the attention of your friends towards you, thus the doors of Tabligh will open.” (Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana Germany, June 2, 2012, Al-Fazl International, October 26, 2012)

In this regard, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} elaborated to Ahmadi women that one is deprived of the reward and bounties of Allah the Almighty if one gives in to societal pressures and consequently slacks in faith and does not abide by the Qurānic commandments. He said:

“No Ahmadi girl should be fearful of what people (this society) say. Nor should you be shy. The Holy Qurān is the perfect Book and each of its injunctions are in accordance with human nature. It still being in its original state is a proof that it is from Allah the Almighty...But if you are not abiding by its commandments, fearing that people will laugh at you, or you do not observe Purda thinking that people will stare or tease you, then this is neither fear of God nor love for Allah the Almighty. If you have adopted some fashion

because these are liked in society, such as tight and above knee length coats, then it is useless.

They promote immodesty and reveal your bodies. Thus, this is slackness of faith and deficiency in love of Allah the Almighty. Allah wants to reward His people tenfold or even greater for every virtue one does. And we are depriving ourselves of this reward by not complying with His commandments due to fear or love of the world. If this is the situation, then it is a lost bargain.

If we analyze, we come to conclude that it is certainly man himself who defies the injunctions of Allah the Almighty and thus deprives himself from the rewards which God Almighty desires to bless him with. All of this is happening under the influence of the western mindset." (Address to Ladies, Jalsa Salana Germany, August 15, 2009, Al-Fazl International, May 2, 2014)

Women Should Act with Courage Rather Than Have An Inferiority Complex

While addressing Ahmadi women, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} advised them to shun their inferiority complex and act upon the Islamic commandments with courage.

He stated: "Now here, the excuses are being fabricated that it is very difficult to observe Purda in Europe. This is absolutely wrong. I think this is a sort of complex which men also have, along with women. You are trying to look for excuses to abandon your own teachings and please society instead of Allah the Exalted. Even in this society there are hundreds and thousands of those who observe Purda and they are looked upon with greater dignity and respect as compared to those who do not observe Purda. The societal evils

are also on an increase among the non-Purda observing and their children. May Allah save us from this (predicament). Sometimes, as a result, a really deplorable situation is encountered.” (Address at Annual Ijtimā’ Lajna Ima’illah UK , October 19, 2003, Al-Fazl International, April 17, 2015)

In the same context, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} addressed and advised those Ahmadi women who have recently migrated to Western countries, specifically from Pakistan and India that they should shun any types of an inferiority complex and safeguard their Purda. He said:

“I have observed that these days some asylum-seeking women from Pakistan, some of whom are coming for Jalsa, take off their Hijab soon after they exit the airport, perhaps due to some unknown complex. And the Dupatta and scarf worn by them does not, in anyway, qualify for proper Purda. It keeps coming off the head over and over. Then they have applied make up too. If, for example, a woman is a doctor or is in another profession where the traditional Niqab is impractical because of professional hindrances, she may use a scarf that covers her face as much as possible to an extent that it does not hinder her work. But In such cases, the face should not be heavily made up. Whereas when a woman, who is a housewife, and has been observing Purda in Pakistan, takes off her Niqab after coming here and applies make up too, her action cannot be called a righteous action. Such a woman may be considered to have prioritized the world over her faith instead of prioritizing her faith over the world. She is getting influenced by her environment. At times, it is shameful to see that girls and women raised in Europe observe better Purda than those who have come here from Pakistan. Most of them have more appropriate clothing than those who have come from Pakistan or India. Those who used to wear a Burqa are doing wrong if they are shunning it now under pressure from their men, as there is no need to give in to any demand of men that is contrary to the explicit commandments

of Allah the Almighty. If these women are doing it of their own accord, even then it is shameful for their men who should have advised them that as an Ahmadi woman, they have dignity which should be safeguarded rather than taking her Purda off.

Thus, both men and women, having purged all sorts of complexes, should adopt this practice in purity and must safeguard their Purda. Such women and men should learn from the precedents of the women of other religions who are adopting modest clothing after embracing Ahmadiyyat. Those who were nearly bare are now in modest clothing and are trying to comply with the commandments, whereas you are taking off your modest dress and reverting to short dresses, which gradually will lead to total unveiling. With the understanding of faith, to retreat rather than to make spiritual advancement and excel in the practice of Allah's commandments, will only mire us again into the pit of ignorance. Then one commandment after another will be ignored and generations will drift away from faith. And thus, as I have already said, generations gradually abandon religion and then are doomed to destruction. (Address to Ladies at Jalsa Salana UK held on July 29, 2006, Al-Fazl International, June 26, 2015)

At another occasion, while advising Ahmadi women in the same context, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated:

“Those who cast off Purda are in some sort of an inferiority complex. An Ahmadi woman should be devoid of all forms of inferiority complex. Rather, she should not have a complex at all. Be open if someone questions and let them know that expression of Purda and Haya is a fundamental divine commandment for us. I have witnessed that even in this Western environment, Purda observing women who do not have any complex are impacting the society positively due to their Purda. They are being considered as dignified. Therefore, cleanse your heart of the inferiority complex

that someone is pointing a finger at you because of Purda. Maintain your identity. I have observed in Africa where clothing was not customary, they donned clothes and wore fully covered clothes, and some of them also observe Purda. A few have even started wearing the Niqab (face covering).

Here too, we have African-American sisters who are mostly visiting from the USA and some of them have such a high standard of Purda that it is worth being followed. It is exemplary. In fact, yesterday I told them in a meeting that 'It seems that you are the ones who will establish examples of Purda for the Pakistanis or for those who are coming from India. The way they laughed and said 'Yes, it will be so' had me even more concerned that the examples of the lack of Purda being set by the older Ahmadis are indeed being witnessed by the new Ahmadis; this is why they responded in this manner... Let me also tell you that younger girls will not observe Purda until you set your own examples before them; until the mothers set their own examples before them. Thus, if you want to become the best assets for the Jamā'at—and bring yourself and your children under the protection of Allah the Almighty by following His commandments; make Him your Guardian and Friend; want to see the blessings of Allah the Almighty being showered upon you; want to save your sons and daughters from the filth of this society— then you will also have to observe this commandment of Allah the Almighty. May Allah enable you all to do so and may you establish (exemplary) models in everything Allah the Almighty has commanded us." (Address to Ladies at Jalsa Salana Canada held on June 25, 2005, Al-Fazl International, March 2, 2007)

Highlighting the important aspect of maintaining a sense of Haya, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said:

"I will give an example for the women too. Purda and Haya is a state which once discarded will go beyond limits. I have come to know

that when some elderly women who had newly come from Pakistan to join their children in Australia, so that their girls are not observing Purda, they advised them to at least wear modest clothing and a scarf. To this these girls replied that it is illegal to observe Purda here, and you also have to take it off. So, being scared of the law, these elderly women who had observed Purda all their lives had to remove it, as they were scared that it is a crime. While in fact there is no such law over there, nor is it a crime. There is no restriction and neither does anyone pay attention to it. Only for the sake of fashion, some young girls and women have abandoned Purda.

A young woman from Pakistan who came to Australia after getting married wrote to me that she was also forcibly made to give up Purda or perhaps she was also influenced by the surroundings and gave it up. When I was there on a visit, she wrote that when she listened to my address to the ladies, she had her Burqa (outerwear coat) on and since then she is continuing to wear it and is firm on it and is making efforts and praying that she remains steadfast. She also requested prayers. So, Purda is being abandoned because repeated reminders are not given about this Qurānic injunction, nor is it talked about in the homes. For practical reformation, it is essential to talk about vice and virtue repeatedly.” (Friday Sermon, December 20, 2013 at Baitul Futuh mosque London, Al-Fazl International, January 10, 2014)

Through his addresses and sermons, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} has drawn the attention of women to his guidance about attaining the pleasure of Allah the Almighty by maintaining the spirit of Purda. At one occasion, he wrote:

“If a woman does not care about Purda and in the footsteps of Europe wears dresses similar to their attire and adopts an identical fashion, and in doing so portrays herself as enlightened and progressive, then it is a misconception. Remember that Islam is

the real guarantor of your welfare and safety. It has not prescribed Purda for women to get them into any difficulty or to give them an inferiority complex. It aims to establish a woman's dignity and respect through it. Thus, do not consider it a burden nor think that people will take you to be illiterate because of it. You have to please Allah the Almighty. Do not focus on worldly fashions and take care of Purda in accordance with all its preconditions." (Message at Annual Ijtimā' Lajna Imā'illah Germany 2017, Annual Report 2016-2017 Lajna Imā'illah Germany)

Advice to Pray for Continuous Guidance

Prayer is very important to stay safe from satanic influences of all sorts and to spend our lives treading steadfastly on the path of piety. Therefore, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} described the topic while addressing Ahmadi women, 'to follow the commandments of Allah the Almighty with the help of prayers' and said:

"Allah the Almighty listens to prayers and is aware of the state of hearts. Therefore, with honest intentions of achieving this objective, every Ahmadi man and woman is directed to pray to Allah the Almighty to safeguard the guidance which He bestowed upon us and to prevent satanic thoughts from overpowering us. If this (protection) is in place, then the worldly enjoyments, worldly fashions, or the inferiority complex that what will people say if we do not conform to the norms of the world, will become insignificant. Faith and Jamā'at will be of significance. The Ahmadi girl will be mindful of her Haya. She will not think casually about posting her picture on social media. Instead, the injunction of Purda from Allah the Almighty will prevent her from doing so. It will cross her mind that there is some kind of wisdom in every commandment of Allah the Almighty and the

command of Purda and Haya is also one of the commandments of the Holy Qurān. Therefore, I must protect my Purda and Haya by all means. I have to act upon all those commandments or make an effort to do so, which Allah the Almighty has ordained. I have to pray to Allah the Almighty to make me tread the paths which He likes. I have to obey all the orders from the Khalīfa of the time to accomplish my pledge to abide by all his justified decisions as given in the Holy Qurān. When every woman and every man makes an effort to lead his or her life with this mindset then the handle which he or she has grasped will be the guarantee to save him or her from all satanic and material thoughts. This has been explained by Allah the Almighty in the following verses, after the one I have recited: **اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا** (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:258) meaning that Allah is the Friend of those who accepted Faith. Therefore, it is out of the question that Satan invades the one whose Friend is Allah the Almighty.” (Address to Ladies at Jalsa Salana, UK held on September 8, 2012 at Hadiqatul Mahdi, Al-Fazl International, November 30, 2012)

Newly Converted Ahmadi Women as Role Models

Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{atba} specifically addressed the women who have newly embraced Jamā’at Ahmadiyya, and while advising them to be role models for others, he stated:

“I say to the Ahmadi sisters who are new converts that you have accepted the teaching of Ahmadiyyat and Islam with understanding. You need not look to your husbands or other women as to what sort of Ahmadis they are. Instead, you should establish your own exemplary model based on the pristine teachings of Islam. Make your husbands live by their faith as well. Train your children according to Islamic teachings, and also those who are Ahmadis of

long standing or were born Ahmadis. Lead and train them by your example. Sometimes those who join later surpass the earlier ones in piety and righteousness. I have witnessed in Africa too, that there are many women who can be taken as an example for observing Purda and practicing the teachings of Islam. There are a number of women native to the USA and Germany too who established exemplary characters after Baī'at. Such women can be found here in your countries too. There are many good examples of Purda in these countries and examples of those who act upon other teachings of Islam. Therefore, the new converts must remember not to be pushed away by seeing any vice in any Pakistani woman. For a few bad ones there is a large majority of those who, by the grace of Allah Almighty, are the good ones. Besides, you have not taken Baī'at of any man or woman but of the Promised Messiah^{as}. So, as I have said before, establish your examples which can be the source of training for the older Ahmadis. By doing so, you will be earning a double reward.”(Address to Ladies at Jalsa Salana Sweden, held on September 17, 2005, Al-Fazl International, May 15, 2015)

Maintain the Standard of Purda in Educational Institutions

During the visit to Germany, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} held a meeting with female students and answered their questions. In the meeting, a student mentioned that at times there are recreational school trips to the UK. If the parents do not send their girls, they are asked to switch schools. She asked Huzoor Anwar^{atba}, what should be done in such a situation?

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} replied: “If it is a dire situation, then seek permission for parents to accompany their daughters. If they do

not agree, then change the school." He stated: "Actually, you must train your daughters in a way that they themselves tell the school that they opt not to go, not because of parents, but of their own personal choice as they do not think it is appropriate. When a girl is grown up, people around are responsible to be watchful of her. Even for Hajj, Islam commands a woman to be accompanied by a Mahram man...Private schools usually do not enforce such trips, however they are expensive. In any case, you need to make your girls realize what is wrong and must be avoided." (Student class Germany, Held on June 10, 2006, Al-Fazl International, July 7, 2006)

Similarly, regarding permission to study in out-of-town educational institutions, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated, "If parents give permission, then you may think about it. Over there, who will you live with? There should be a separate hostel for girls. If there is one, then it is fine, but you must take care of your honour and purity while studying over there."

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} further stated: "When girls from Rabwah used to go out of town for education, every one of them would first seek my permission through Nazarat Talim (Department of Education). The same applies to studying in co-education. Then they also give in writing that they will observe Purda during their studies."

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said to the girls, "If parents are not satisfied, then it is better to live and study closer to home." (Waqfaat Nau class Germany, held on October 8, 2011, Al-Fazl International, January 6, 2012)

In another meeting, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} was asked if one can go to a foreign country for post-secondary education. Answering this question, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated:

“If you wish to proceed for higher education and the resources are not available in your own country, then you may go with the permission of your parents. However, you must take care of your honour and dignity. You must also take care of your purity and follow the teachings of Islam while over there. You should avoid having friendships and stay focused on your education.” (Students Class Germany held on June 10, 2006, Al-Fazl International, July 7, 2006)

In a meeting held during Huzoor Anwar’s^{atba} visit to Canada, students asked questions with his permission. A student asked, **“how should we make our non-Muslim friends understand why Purda is essential?”**

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said: “Firstly, let them know that you have taken a pledge to act upon the faith which Allah the Almighty has chosen for us. Allah the Almighty has commanded in the Holy Qurān to observe Purda so that your honour is maintained and you realize that in society you are not to mix up too much with boys, and must keep a barrier between yourself and the boys.”

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} further stated: **“In universities, there is coeducation and boys and girls sometimes do have interactions, but that should be limited for academics only.** Other than that, there should be no free relationships or friendships. Girls should only be friends with girls.”

Referencing the Purda commandments, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated: “There is a background to the commandments of Purda and the related Ahadith of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. In olden times when Purda was not yet common, a Muslim woman went to a Jew’s shop for an errand. In those days it was not common to wear clothes with undergarments. That Jew mischievously tied her clothes so that when the woman stood up, her clothes came off, and as a result,

a fight broke out and even a murder took place. Hence, Purda was commanded for Muslim women to safeguard their honour and chastity. So, it is best to maintain a distance between you and other boys.

Secondly, the Holy Qurān commands men to lower their gazes in the first place and not to stare at women, and then commands women to lower their gazes and not to stare. Even then men are not trustworthy, therefore, cover yourself up.

The Promised Messiah^{as} has written that if you provide a guarantee to me that men have cleansed their brains and minds, then I would say not to be very strict in Purda. But this has not happened. Even though all men are not alike, many are like that. Thus, if the majority or a significant number of people can cause harm in society, then it is best to take preventative measures; therefore, Purda is essential to avoid unrestricted relationships.

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} further stated:

“All religions have the commandments about Purda. In ancient times, noble Christian families used to observe Purda. The old dresses were like a long maxi with sleeves up to the wrists and a scarf to cover the head. The Bible says that if a woman is seen bareheaded, chop off all her hair. Islam has not applied such strictness, but it requires women to safeguard their Haya, and the concept of Haya (moral restraint) is ubiquitous in every nation.”

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated: “In the Holy Qurān there is the incident of Hazrat Moses^{as} where two girls in Midian wanted to water their flocks. They stayed back since men were watering their flocks first, as they did not want to have direct interaction with men. So Hazrat Moses^{as} asked them, what is the matter? They related their story to him. Once they narrated the incident, Hazrat Moses^{as} watered

their flock for them. After this, the Holy Qurān mentions that once they had left, one of them returned and with Haya (modesty) and great care, not openly, said that my father has called you. The whole story is written in the Holy Qurān and you should read it. So, Hazrat Moses^{as} went to see the father who acted wisely. He did not say that he would keep a stranger in his house while both of his daughters were living with him. Again, here is the question of the honour of a woman. Instead, the father told Hazrat Moses^{as} that he will provide him a place to live if Hazrat Moses^{as} married one of his two daughters. Marrying one of his daughters became the reason for Hazrat Moses^{as} to live there.

So, in fact, Purda is a protection for women, and men have also been sanctioned in this regard. However, in view of men being untrustworthy, you need to take care of yourselves." (Students Class, Canada held on July 14, 2012, Published Al-Fazl International, October 12, 2012)

Purda is Not a Barrier in Employment

During his visit to Holland, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh^{atba} V held a meeting with students in which girls asked him questions. One student asked **how far a woman is allowed to build her career?**

At this Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated: **"All those careers in which a woman does not have to compromise her Haya are permitted.** 'Haya is a part of faith' should always be kept in mind."

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said that if you wish to be an air hostess with KLM, who wear a skirt and a tiny cap on their head, then it is not permitted by Islam and neither any Ahmadi girl can be allowed to do so. You can become a doctor, teacher, engineer, scientist,

professor or lawyer, etc., provided your attire is appropriate and your Hijab does not come off. The appropriate attire is the modest one. With reference to law, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated that you should not take up criminal cases. (Student Class Holland held on May 16, 2012 at Baitun Nur, Nunspeet, Published Al-Fazl International, June 15, 2012)

In one Friday sermon, while guiding in detail regarding girls doing jobs and Purda, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated:

“A girl has recently written a letter to me that she has achieved higher education and is expected to get a good position in a bank. She asked that if they have a restriction on Hijab, Purda and wearing a coat, can she still work over there? After leaving the workplace, I will wear the Hijab. She said, ‘I have heard that you have allowed working women to take off their Burqa and Hijab at their workplace.’ This girl has at least the decency to add that she will not work if I do not allow it. I am relating this because this is a question not from one, but many girls. So, the first thing is that I said so with reference to doctors in specific situations, such as working in an operation theater where they cannot work in a traditional Burqa or Hijab. Their dress over there consists of a head cap, a mask and a loose gown. Outside this, doctors too can work in Purda. In Rabwah we had such doctors. We have always witnessed Dr. Fehmeeda in Purda. Dr. Nusrat Jahan was also very strict in Purda. She received an education from the UK and used to visit here every year to upgrade her skills according to the latest research. She always observed Purda. She was strict in observance of Purda even when it was not required. But no one raised any objection on her or her work. Nor were her professional duties affected by her Purda. She performed major surgeries. So, if intentions are good, one is able to find ways to practice the teachings of one’s faith.

Similarly, I told researchers that if a girl is so capable that she is

doing research and has to wear a special laboratory dress, they are allowed to wear the dress as required by their environment and do not need to wear a Hijab since they do wear a cap over there. However, as they exit their work place, their Purda must be according to what Islam has prescribed.

Bank employment is not aimed to serve humanity. So, taking off the Hijab for common jobs cannot be permitted, especially the job where a girl is in regular clothes and makeup and a specific dress is not the requirement.

Hence, it should always be remembered that Haya requires a modest dress, and the Purda attire which is currently followed is part of modest clothing. If leniency is adopted in Purda, they will alter the modest dress too by making many excuses. And then they will be camouflaged in society where immodesty is already on an increase. The world already is chasing after those who practice their faith and especially Muslims, so that they can pull them away from religion.” (Friday Sermon, January 13, 2017 at Baitul Futuh mosque London, Published Al-Fazl International, February 3, 2017)

Answering a question from a Lajna member—**can women work in the police force?**— Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated:

In my view, some professions are such that a religious woman who observes Purda and wears the Hijab should not opt for them. There, you have to wear a police uniform and the Hijab is not a part of the police uniform. Instead, you will have to wear trousers, a t-shirt and a jacket. Sometimes they also wear only a peaked cap. Therefore, Ahmadi women should not join the police service; leave that alone for men. In my view, there are many other professions which an Ahmadi woman can opt for.”

Replying to a question from the same Lajna member, Huzoor

Anwar^{atba} stated:

“You can become a social worker. For in this, you serve deprived and needy people. You can join Humanity First. We need girls who can help the poor living in some areas of Africa.”

(Students Class, Germany held on June 2, 2012, Published Al-Fazl International, August 24, 2012)

One girl asked that if a law is implemented here that women can only work without Purda, then what is the opinion of Huzoor Anwar^{atba} in this regard? Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated:

“Firstly, pray. InshaAllah such a law will not be implemented. However, if it does, give priority to your faith over the world.”

(Students Class Germany held on June 10, 2006, Published Al-Fazl International, July 7, 2006)

On one hand, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} made efforts to promote Purda among Ahmadi women and on the other hand, he commendably defended the allegations of non-Muslims against Purda. While advising in this regard in one of his Friday sermons, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated:

“I also speak to those Ahmadi girls who are in some kind of complex that if you take off your Hijab and Niqab because of the comments from society or to follow the fashion trends, then there is no guarantee of your honour. **Your honour lies in honouring your faith.**

I have previously also mentioned an incident, and there are many similar incidents, where an Ahmadi girl was served a notice of a month from her boss to take off her Hijab at work or else she would be fired from her job. That girl prayed, ‘O Allah, I only follow Your commandment and observe Purda to follow Your faith, so help me.

And if this employment is not good for me, give me a better one.' Anyway, for one month that officer kept reminding her about the number of days left before she would be fired and the girl kept on praying. After one month, the girl stayed at her work, but the officer was fired or transferred to another place by his boss for some mistake he made and so she was relieved. If the intentions are good, Allah the Almighty creates means. If there is a link with Allah the Almighty, He helps in ways that astonish a man and the words of praise flow spontaneously from the heart." (Friday Sermon, April 23, 2010 in Switzerland, Published Al-Fazl International, May 14, 2010)

Purda: A Practical Model for Tabligh

Answering a question related to Tabligh, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} advised Ahmadi girls about presenting their practical examples and said: "You will have to find ways to create your own opportunities for Tabligh. Other girls will be inclined to you if you are good at studies, have proper appearance, attitude and character. Proper scarf and Purda, and disinclination to developing relationships with boys will make them question as to who you are (your identity). Then you tell them that you are an Ahmadi and believe in the Messiah of the time. This will facilitate further conversation and open the pathway for Tabligh." (Waqfaat-e-Nau Class held on October 8, 2011 at Baitul Rashid, Germany, Al-Fazl International, January 6, 2012)

During his tour in Germany, Huzoor Anwar^{atba}, advised National Majlis 'Amila in a meeting about Tabligh activities. Some of these advices were related to Purda. As quoted in the report:

"In regard to holding Tabligh events, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated that you must do so. It would be better to hold Tabligh events

for women by women and for men by men. If a Lajna member is accompanied by a guest who prefers to sit in the men's section, then only the member accompanying the guest can sit on the men's side with her and no other lady. Even the members accompanying the guests will not dine with men. Women must observe Purda. In this regard, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} mentioned the tour of Mubarak mosque in The Hague by the Queen of Holland, who observed Islamic traditions while touring the mosque. Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated that you should stay firm on your traditions and not make any compromise on Purda. At this occasion, a presentation was to be made to the queen and I gave special permission to Lajna to present it. But I clearly instructed them that this permission was only for this particular ceremony and not for every event." (Meeting National Majlis 'Amila Germany held on June 7, 2006 , in Al-Fazl International, July 7, 2006)

Similarly, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} advised Ahmadi students to follow the commandment of Purda during their Tabligh activities. He stated: "Let university students know that if they are not fluent in the languages of their contacts, they should acquire relevant literature. **If Tabligh connections are developed on the Internet, then women should only connect with female contacts.**"

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} also explained the importance of Purda and stated that if you happen to come across men (in online forums), give them contact information of male members (of the Jamā'at) and only invite females in your forum. If on an occasion, women are not capable of giving satisfactory answers, move to a secluded side of the mixed gathering, along with your accompanying guest, and be mindful of your Purda. Do not join in with the mixed gathering when food is served; instead, proceed to the women's area. Obtain contact information of the women you meet in mixed gatherings and invite them to your female-only events. In such situations, they might deliberate and question you as to why you do not attend

mixed gatherings. This will give you the opportunity to clarify their misconceptions regarding Islamic Purda (at this point Huzoor Anwar^{atba} inquired if these mixed gatherings and open days are synonymous. The reply was in the affirmative). Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said "University students may have separate gathering with their contacts." (Meeting National Majlis 'Amila Lajna Ima'illah Germany held on June 9, 2006, Al-Fazl International, July 7, 2006)

Once, in a meeting with National Majlis 'Amila Lajna Ima'illah Germany, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} gave many important instructions, out of which some are also related to Purda. Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated: "**Prepare an MTA talk show on the subject of Purda by involving educated girls and explain the purpose of this Islamic commandment.** Have a discussion with reference to the Bible and explain that Christianity has given the commandment for Purda because it considers women to be of a lesser status, whereas Islam prescribes Purda for women to elevate their dignity and status. Tell those who oppose Purda that you have discarded your religion because you consider it to be impractical. You thought that it is unworkable in the prevalent conditions, but Islam is a practical religion and we can carry out all of our activities with the Hijab and Purda. Work on such programs and send them to MTA. Lajna programs aired on MTA are produced under my instructions and supervision. Although they are meant for the entire world, but keeping in view the local environment, they are especially produced for the European countries."

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} further stated that as I mentioned at the Lajna UK Ijtimā', it should be explained to Ahmadi girls who raise objections to Purda that every club they join has some sort of rules and regulations. If these rules and regulations are not followed, the membership of the club is cancelled. Thus, Islam also has a code of conduct which includes obligatory prayer, recitation of the Holy Qurān and to act upon all its commandments. By taking Baī'at

of the Promised Messiah^{as} of the time, you have taken allegiance to abide by everything he says. Keeping these aspects in view, you can assess your own position. Then ask, do you consider yourself an Ahmadi? And if so, do you believe in the fundamental commandments of Islam? If you do believe, do you make an effort to abide by them? Then, keep in mind that the commandment of Purda is also one of them. Following this strategy, ask them what they wish to do now? Do they wish to stay with the Jamā'at in hypocrisy and pretence, or have good intentions to reform themselves by bringing about a change from within?" (Meeting National Majlis 'Amila Lajna Ima'illah Germany held on December 25, 2006, Al-Fazl International, January 19, 2007)

The instructions on Purda which Huzoor Anwar^{atba} gave in a meeting with National Majlis 'Amila Germany are as follows:

"German and African women have made (good) progress in the observance of Purda whereas you are on the decline. Only a few days ago, a German girl came for a meeting and she had a very good level of Purda. An English girl, who is a PhD student at the University of Oxford in the UK, observes excellent Purda and is not embarrassed to do so."

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated: "Ahmadi girls in the universities should take care not to talk with boys in seclusion. This promotes friendships, which then lead to going out together here and there in the malls. At university, there is no restriction on taking help for one's studies from a fellow student. As far as individual Tabligh is concerned, it has already been instructed that girls should address girls and vice versa." (Meeting National Majlis 'Amila Lajna Germany held on December 18, 2009, Al-Fazl International, January 29, 2010)

In an address, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said while reminding Ahmadi women about improving their Purda and being a role model for Tabligh:

“Purda is the fundamental commandment of the Holy Qurān. Diverse nations belonging to Muslim countries have devised different ways to comply with it, according to their suitability. Hazrat Musleh Mau’ūd^{ra} used to say that Purda of the Turkish woman is of the highest degree. She wears the Niqab and Hijab, which protects her and allows her to perform her tasks as well, as she can move about freely without compromising her modesty.

A Missionary told me that he does Tablīgh to the Turkish community. He says that when I propagate, the Turks question me, ‘which Islam should we accept, the proper Islam to which you invite or the Islam your women exhibit? Islam enjoins observing of Purda and they (Ahmadi women) disregard it. Many women among our acquaintances do not observe Purda.’

Once, I stated that for Tablīgh one needs to present one’s own model as well. Personal model is a great means of doing Tablīgh. Take note that your example has given other people a chance to raise objections. So, these women are not just defying a command of Allah, but are also becoming the cause of stumbling of others. Thus, they are committing a two-fold sin, as Allah the Almighty has stated in the next verse, ‘whoso disobeys Allah and His Messenger surely strays away in manifest error’ (Surah Al Ahzab, 33:37).” (Address to ladies at Jalsa Salana Switzerland held on September 4, 2004, Published Al-Fazl International, January 7, 2005)

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} advised Ahmadi women: “Some Arab women have told me that they have observed in the mosque in the UK, and at other places too, that Ahmadi women do not observe proper Purda. Arab women are very particular about Purda of their hair. Their heads are fully covered and therefore, they find it strange that Ahmadi women do not observe Purda (of hair). Instead, they cover their heads with a small scarf. This matter needs to be attended to earnestly, lest you become the cause of the faltering

of others.” (Address at Annual Ijtimā’, Lajna Ima’illah Germany held on September 17, 2011, Al-Fazl International, November, 16, 2012)

In a meeting with National Majlis ‘Amila Germany, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} referenced their magazine Khadija and said:

“A picture was published in your magazine where men and women were seated together, which is not appropriate. Huzoor Anwar^{atba} advised creating an editorial board which would make a policy to raise the standards of the magazine. Emphasizing once again on the need of Purda, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated, instill in the minds of the girls the notion that you have to observe Purda because it is Allah’s command. They will not have complexes if they hold firm to the traditions of the Jamā’at and this will open the way for Tablīgh.

Some girls come here after getting married in Pakistan. They wear Burqa over there but discard it upon arriving here. This is immodesty. This could be due to personal complexes or even on the demand of the husband. If a German woman can adopt decent attire on converting to Ahmadiyyat, then why are they hesitant to observe proper Purda? Then he said that text messages are the latest trend now. These should only be exchanged with acquaintances. Sometimes friends pass on telephone numbers and there is a need to draw attention to this matter”. (Meeting National Majlis ‘Amila, Germany, held on June 9, 2006, in Al-Fazl International, July 7, 2006)

“Your model will be useful for others. You are the cream of the girls in the Jamā’at, therefore, remember your station. Also, keep in mind your unique status and always safeguard it. Every Ahmadi girl has her own dignity, an honour which must be taken care of.”

(Waqfaat-e-Nau class, Germany, held on August 20, 2008)

DIRECTIONS FOR WAQFAAT-E-NAU

Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{atba} in a class with Waqfaat-e-Nau held at Baitul Islam Mosque in Canada, advised on various matters. It included very important words of advice regarding Purda. Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said:

“Allah Almighty has clearly commanded that the honour and chastity of women should be preserved at two or three occasions in the Holy Qurān. It requires covering of the head and wearing the Hijab and scarf. You, the Waqfaat-e-Nau, must set an example without any hesitation. There is no need to be scared of being bullied at school or being embarrassed on the streets. Set an example so that others can follow it. Regarding the manner in which you have covered your heads today, does anyone have a complex as to why our heads are covered? Those behind camera and those on security duty are also veiled very properly. I hope they also do not have any complex. This is God’s commandment and you will be safeguarded if you abide by it. You are under the pledge of Waqf (life-devotion) which means that you will excel others in fulfilling the commandments of Allah. Therefore, your Niqab and scarf should not come off. This is very important so that others can follow your example.

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said “You are under your parents till the age of 12 or 13. (At this age) you come to the class, very well wrapped in your scarves and look beautiful. Later on, as you grow older you gradually become apprehensive. Lajna president or secretary Tarbiyat should send me the list of older girls who regularly wear a scarf while those who do not should be asked to do so. Counsel them and if they do not bring about a change in themselves within a period of two months, send their names to me so that they may be expelled from Waqf-e-Nau.”

Later on, girls asked questions with the permission of Huzoor Anwar^{atba}.

One Waqf-e-Nau enquired that there are girls in the Jamā'at who remove their veils when they go out, for example to shopping centres etc. They do not wear the Hijab correctly, but when they come to the mosque, they cover themselves properly. Is this an appropriate practice?

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated: I think they do not (cover themselves properly) even when they come here. In my speech at the Jalsa, I urged women to cover their heads with a veil or Hijab. Later, when I stepped from the podium and took my seat, I saw at least four women who were leaving. Their hair was floating freely at the back and their heads were uncovered. This is the responsibility of Lajna's Tarbiyat department, the president and the Tarbiyat office bearers should not resort to delivering speeches alone. Rather, they must be aware of what is being accomplished. Hence, I have asked you, the Waqfaat-e-Nau, who have presented yourself to reform the world, to establish such precedents as may leave others (non-Purda observing girls) ashamed of themselves. Let us see how many of you will succeed in doing so."

Huzoor Anwar said: "There should be no hypocrisy. Therefore, I have already asked Lajna presidents to not to give any opportunity of serving Lajna, in any capacity, to those members whose Purda or Hijab is not proper, not even if they are highly educated, hardworking and have been serving the Jamā'at well. I feel I may have to constitute an exclusive team to make checks. I think I should select girls from Waqfaat-e-Nau and make my own team who will report to me about everyone's behaviour. Your real mission is to become the helping hands of the Khalifa of the time. This is your greatest responsibility, and if you stand up to it, then I will assume that at least we have won over Canada.

I do not ask you to be confined and get so frustrated that you have no outlet to express your emotions, but there has to be a limit to it. Stay within bounds and do as you wish. Guard your modesty as it always enhances a woman's dignity.

In earlier days even the Christian women used to be modest and wore long dresses. Those belonging to noble families had even more modesty, with sleeved outfits. They also wore scarves. Gradually women have gained liberty. A Christian woman in the UK has written an article that men who call for women's freedom and assert that those who wish to unveil and expose themselves should be allowed to do so, are not actually longing for women's liberation. Instead, they wish to fulfill their own desires. The same lady writes that women are fooled by men. Women have their own honour and so, be mindful that an Ahmadi woman must be highly chaste." (Waqfaat-e-Nau Class Canada held on July 11, 2012, in Al-Fazl International, September 28, 2012)

During a tour of Germany, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} answered questions from girls in a Waqfaat-e-Nau class. One girl asked a question about Facebook in that Huzoor Anwar^{atba} has stated that it is not good and prohibited its use. On this, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said:

"I did not say that if you do not leave it, you will be the sinner. Instead, I said that the harms of Facebook are greater and the benefit is little. The boys and girls who have Facebook accounts may come to a point where the vices tend to propagate. The boys make contacts and sometime girls get trapped and upload their immodest pictures on Facebook. You may have sent a casual picture to your friend and she may upload it on Facebook and from there it may reach Hamburg and then New York and Australia and so on. And then contacts develop from those countries. Then groups of men and women are formed who distort the pictures and blackmail further. Thus, vice propagates on. Therefore, it is

better not to indulge in such vices. I have to advise. The Holy Qurān has instructed to go on advising. Those who do not follow are accountable for their own deeds. Facebook may be used for Tablīgh. It is available on the Al Islam website where it is used for Tablīgh. Girls are easily trapped. Anyone who admires you, makes you think that he is your well wisher. If parents give advice, you will argue that you are educated in Germany, whereas they have come from a village.

الْكَلِمَةُ الْحَكِيمَةُ ضَالَّةُ الْمُؤْمِنِ فَحَيْثُ وَجَدَهَا فَهُوَ أَحَقُّ بِهَا

“The word of wisdom is the lost property of a Muslim, so that wherever he finds it, he should take it, as he is the most entitled to it” (Tirmidhi).

This means that one should accept a good piece of advice, whomsoever it may have come from. All inventions by these people are not safe. Those (girls) who do not obey, later on cry out and write letters to me that they made a mistake and were trapped at a certain place. Even the founder of Facebook claimed that his mission was to present everyone naked in front of the world. Would an Ahmadi girl wish to be nude in front of the world? Those who do not listen, it is up to them.” (Waqfaat-e-Nau Class held on October 8, 2011 at Baitul Rashid Mosque Germany, Published Al-Fazl International, January 6, 2012)

A Waqfaat-e-Nau class was held in Baitun Noor Mosque Nunspeet, during Huzoor Anwar^{atba} tour of Norway. A girl read out an article in this class on the topic of “Modesty and Chastity is the Honour and Identity of an Ahmadi girl.” After this, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said:

“You have presented a very good article on Purda. However, good Purda is not established by reading a good article. Purda is a worldwide issue especially in Europe. There was a time when many

Purda complaints were reported from Norway. Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh IIIth delivered a very strict sermon in Norway and I referred to that sermon in my address. I had no personal experience (of Norway), however, in view of what was being said in those days, I had concluded that Purda was not being observed properly.

A Waqf-e-Nau girl came to meet me in London. Her coat had half sleeves and such Purda is of no use. Purda and dress of Waqfaat-e-Nau, especially when they grow up, should be exactly what has been described in this article. One should practice Haya (modesty) and when there is Haya, there will be an awareness of Purda.”

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said: “I enquired from the girl who came to meet me if she covered her head with a scarf or shawl. She only wore a thin Chunni or scarf on her head. However, she promised that she will observe Purda in future and I have gathered that she does observe Purda. Thus, until a sense of Purda is not developed in Waqfaat-e-Nau, loud words and poems with empty claims will yield nothing.”

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said: “(Women) in Norway are visiting me now. It seems that some women who came to meet me have worn their Niqab after a long time. I had meetings here six years ago, in 2005. Niqab is not something to be used after six years, only for meeting. It should be worn on a daily basis and Waqfaat-e-Nau should set examples of it.”

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated: “As I said that Waqfaat-e-Nau have to set examples, so you should not think that you are still young. Recently, I delivered the same message in Germany at the Majlis Khuddāmul Ahmadiyya Ijtimā’ that youth should step forward if they feel that elders are not discharging their duties and responsibilities and are not following the Islamic teachings and are not serving the Jamā’at duly.”

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated: The auxiliaries of Lajna and Nasirat were established for the same purpose and for the same reason Waqfaat-e-Nau are being accepted. Waqfaat-e-Nau cannot play an active role like the missionaries who are properly trained and are employed as Mubaligh; and where women cannot go alone, men can.”

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said: “Thus, Waqfaat-e-Nau girls have to be role models for women, girls and children. Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said: I think all the girls here except one or two are older than 10 years.”

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} further said: “According to Islam, ten years is the age of maturity at which it becomes obligatory to offer prayers. Prayer is a worship of Allah that has to be offered five times a day and this worship has been made compulsory at the age of ten by Allah and His Messenger^{sa}, implying that all your actions are to change at this age.”

Huzoor Anwar said: “Girls say that they are still young; only eleven or twelve years old. So, we will wear a scarf or coat when we grow older. If the sense (of Purda) has not developed by ten years of age, then it will never develop after that age. Thus, always remember that Waqfaat-e-Nau have to be the role models for their people and nation.”

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said, “it has also been proclaimed (in a speech) that we will do Tabligh to our own people and to Norwegians, reaching up to the point in the North where the flag was hoisted in 2008. Revolutions are not brought about by hoisting a single flag or setting an exhibition or by giving a copy of the Holy Qurān to someone. There should be a follow-up of these (efforts). (We) must regularly review how fruitful the steps are we have taken. Thus, a lecture or a speech can never and will never inculcate Purda until everyone develops a sense in their heart that they will practice what they hear.”

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said: "Instead of watching a TV drama before going to bed (if there is a good TV drama which is not obscene you may watch it), or spending long hours on the Internet, develop a habit of sleeping on time so that you can wake up for prayer. And before sleeping, think about all that you have done during the day and ask yourself how many of the tasks essential for a Waqf-e-Nau have we accomplished today? Have we offered the obligatory prayers? Recitation of the Holy Qurān has been enjoined, but have we recited it? Furthermore, have we pondered over any injunction of the Holy Qurān and studied the message and the meaning narrated therein?"

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said: **"In the future you are going to teach and train others. It is not enough that a Waqif-e-Nau will be a doctor or a teacher, or at least, after some basic education, she will get married and settle in her home. On the contrary, you people have to set your example everywhere. So, there is a need to look for these examples, and that is not possible until you examine yourself, every night, before sleeping."**

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said: "If someone else gives an account of you, he may tell a lie. But when you do it yourself, you cannot speak falsely. When you review your own self, keeping in mind that Allah is watching you, then staying steadfast in righteousness, you will do it truthfully, because we can neither cheat ourselves nor can Allah the Almighty be cheated." (Waqfaat-e- Nau class, Norway held on September 28, 2011, Al-Fazl International, December 2, 2011)

During the Germany tour, a class of Waqfaat-e-Nau for older than fifteen years was held with Huzoor Anwar^{atba} in which he gave them precious guidance and said:

"Allah the Almighty has particularly elaborated the importance

of Purda in the Holy Qurān. Sometimes, a misunderstanding arises among women, girls and children and they question 'why is the command of Purda only meant for us; men should also be commanded to observe Purda.' Whereas in fact, the instruction for men to keep their gazes down, in a way that Haya exudes from them, was given before Purda was prescribed for women. The verse prior to this instructs men to keep their eyes down and not to gaze here and there without reason and also avoid glancing at women. So, in the first place, the directive is for men and then later for women, to lower their gazes and not to reveal their beauty. Then it has been further explained that you cover your heads and keep all those body parts hidden which are in need of Purda. Do not reveal to outsiders what you may reveal to your parents, brothers or close relatives. And as you know, only the face is uncovered in front of them and not the private parts, hands are revealed, and at times the head may be without a Dupatta, but that is not a big issue. Of course, the face can be seen, but no one exposes the body to fathers and brothers. Every wise person follows this, but it has been commanded that the level of your Purda should be increased when you go out of your homes."

Advising Waqfaat-e-Nau, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said: "**Waqfaat-e-Nau must keep in mind that they should be the role model in every situation.** They have to be an example for others. Therefore, in this society where there is vocal objection to Purda, you have to maintain it along with Haya, as Purda is not accomplished merely by wearing a Hijab. In the absence of Haya (self restraint), males and females will not segregate their mutual interactions. There ought to be a barrier so that none dares to cast an evil eye on a girl. The precedents of the Waqfaat-e-Nau will be the cause of reformation of others in the future. Therefore, always remember that your Purda should be in accordance with the Qurānic injunction that a woman's or a girl's adornment and beauty should not be revealed to others when she goes out. The head should be covered and

the hair and face are also ordained to be in Purda. Covering of the nose is not essential. If makeup has not been applied, then Purda of the chin, forehead and hair will suffice. However, if makeup has been applied, then the face has to be covered. This is how standards improve for everyone, as some girls come from Pakistan wearing a Niqab (face-covering) and Burqa and switch to a scarf after coming here. This is an incorrect practice. If you have adopted a good standard of Purda, then you must maintain it. It should improve instead of deteriorating from good to bad. Just now an African program for boys was being telecast. When pagan, atheist or Christian girls accept Islam, their level of Purda is very low. However, for them to even cover themselves and to dress up properly is equivalent to good Purda. When some of them advance further in spirituality, they even start wearing the Burqa. Thus, the level of a good believing woman should always rise. The Waqfaat should always bear in mind that they are role models for others. You are watched by other girls and women. If your exemplary model is not established, then all is in vain.

Now some people complain that some office bearers or their daughters wear jeans and so on and so forth. What if any one of you wears skinny jeans? The issue is that there is no harm in wearing jeans. But any tight fitted dress which enhances body contours is prohibited. In India, tight pyjamas are customary, however while going out, a Burqa or a long coat is worn or a shawl which covers at-least down to the knees must be worn. Jeans that are worn with long shirts are appropriate. However, if a girl goes out wearing jeans with a small blouse and only a Hijab over the head, it serves no purpose. No doubt you have covered your head, but not your body; and observing Haya is the real objective. The true purpose is to elevate the standard of Haya which maintains the honour of a woman.

Similarly, a few days earlier, a program of non-Ahmadi Muslims was

being telecast on the TV. Some women who were new converts to Islam said that they feel safer in covering themselves up. In fact, a Christian English woman who was a journalist also spoke. She said that men have been protesting against segregation and claim to be the emancipators of women. Although she was a non-Muslim, she declared, 'Having seen Purda and hearing all this, I understand that Purda is being stripped away in the West and men have done so, not for freedom of women, but for their own lust and visual gratification.' **Thus, always remember that women have a sanctity that must be upheld. Waqfaat-e-Nau have to set up examples for upholding chastity in every way and regarding every situation.**

I have touched upon this since Purda is an issue these days. The standard of everything you do, of your worship and practice of other commandments should be high. As I said, the Promised Messiah^{as} has even gone to the extent that anyone who does not abide by the 700 commandments [of the Holy Qurān] is not from my community. It is your duty to make efforts to locate those commandments in whatever circumstances you live and where ever you live and then set up examples for other Ahmadi girls and Ahmadi women. Ponder over it and if it is materialized, you will then champion the revolution, InshaAllah." (Class Waqfaat-e-Nau held on June 19, 2011, Al-Fazl International, August 12, 2011)

A class of Waqfaat-e-Nau was held with Huzoor Anwar^{atba} in Bait-ul-Rashid Mosque, Hamburg, Germany. Giving valuable guidance to Waqfaat-e-Nau girls in this class, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said: "Every Ahmadi Waqifa has a special dignity. Keeping this dignity in view, she should adopt only those fashions which fulfill the conditions of Purda. These days it is trendy to wear a Shalwar [Pants worn in South Asia] which is above the ankle and that is also inappropriate."

Giving guidance about male classmates, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said: "If at times you need to ask something related to your studies, you can ask. You may participate in class discussions etc. Besides this, you should not have any type of interaction with them. This should not happen that you first speak to them about studies and then start going out with them on various occasions like picnics etc., this is not allowed at all." (Class Waqfaat-e-Nau Germany held on August 14, 2008 at Baitul Rashid Mosque, Hamburg, Al-Fazl International, September 12, 2008)

The class of Waqfaat-e-Nau girls in Germany was held in Baitus Subuh Mosque, Frankfurt. In this class, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} gave important guidance to girls. He said:

"As compared to other girls, a Waqf-e-Nau girl has a distinct and special place. She should always remember that she has to keep herself safe from all vices and vain pastimes and has to follow what Allah has commanded. The way you are sitting here today with your heads covered should not be insincere, it should not involve hypocrisy. When you go out, go to stores, shopping, for an excursion, older girls should also then have on their heads a scarf, Hijab, or Dupatta; your example will be beneficial for others. You are the cream of the girls of the Jamā'at, therefore, remember that position too. Keep in mind that you have a special status and always safeguard it. Every Ahmadi girl has her own honour which she should safeguard, but a Waqf-e-Nau girl should excel in taking care of herself, being punctual in prayers, in the recitation of the Holy Qurān, in acting upon its teachings and in avoiding all vain pastimes, which include inappropriate fashions as well. I mentioned this in Hamburg and here too, that the girls who have reached maturity, wear coats for the sake of Purda. The coat should not be clinging to the body, instead it should be a little loose with sleeves up to the wrists. This will reflect that you are different from others. Always pay attention to all these points and focus on your studies."

(Class Waqfaat-e-Nau Germany held on August 20, 2008, Al-Fazl International, October 10, 2008)

During his tour of France, while giving valuable guidance in a Waqfaat-e-Nau class, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} spoke about observing Purda in educational institutions: **“Girls who are studying in colleges and universities should **always remember that every Ahmadi girl has to maintain her honour and should come to the realization that being Ahmadi, they are different from others. Furthermore, the Waqfaat-e-Nau girls should outrank them in maintaining their honour and taking care of themselves, since in the future they have to serve and also morally train the Jamā’at.**** So, always be careful when you go to the marketplace, cover your head with a scarf or wear a Hijab, regardless of the others liking or disliking it.” Then he stated, “There are private schools where there are no such prohibitions and those who can afford the cost can study there. If there is difficulty in schools, then the scarf may be taken off during school time, but not after. As you come out of school, wear your Hijab or scarf.” (Class Waqfaat-e-Nau France held on October 10, 2008, Al-Fazl International, November 14, 2008)

Similarly, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said to the Waqfaat-e-Nau on another occasion: “To be a role model, it is important that you are well-versed in your faith, pay attention to prayers, recite the Holy Qurān daily, and are regular in wearing the Hijab or scarf and observe proper Purda. If you are wearing a Hijab and the face is uncovered, then makeup should not be worn; but if makeup is worn, then you will have to cover the face. Thus, always remember all these points.” (Class Waqfaat-e-Nau , October 8, 2011 held at Bait-ul-Rashid, Germany, Al-Fazl International, January 6, 2012)

Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{atba}, referring to his successful tour of European countries, gave important guidance to members of the

Jamā'at in matters regrading to Tarbiyat (moral training). Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated: "Norway is also one of those European countries where generally attention needs to be drawn towards Tarbiyat (moral training). Although they tend to be drawn towards materialism, this time, after advising them, I noticed a sense of guilt and Haya (modesty), and even regret, in the eyes of men, women and children. There was an indication of a promise and a determination to get rid of their weaknesses. Especially the Waqifeen-e-Nau and the Waqfaat-e-Nau expressed these views after I made them aware of their responsibilities during their class. The Waqfaat-e-Nau have particularly expressed firm determination and have promised to change their state, as well as the state of their environment. They also proclaimed their guilt about their shortcomings and mistakes in matters concerning the display of Purda, the attire and the dignity of an Ahmadi girl, and assured that not only will they remove these mistakes, but will also set examples in their own environment, in the environment of the Jamā'at and even outside the Jamā'at. May Allah enable them and grant every Ahmadi boy and girl the ability to become an ideal model of Ahmadiyyat, since reformation of our girls and women guarantees reformation of the future generations, with the blessings of the Almighty. Anyway, I have noticed great improvement in Norway's Jamā'at in many ways, in the last five years." (Friday Sermon, October 21, 2011 at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London, Al-Fazl International, November 11, 2011)

Mothers of Waqfaat-e-Nau Should be Role Models

In his numerous addresses on the occasions of Waqfaat-e-Nau Ijtimā'at, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} has drawn the attention of the girls and their mothers towards their responsibilities regarding their Tarbiyat (moral training). Thus, while giving precious guidance on one occasion, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said:

“Some very young girls are also sitting here in front of me and probably they are less than twelve years in age. They should also remember that it is essential for every Ahmadi girl to safeguard her Haya. Even an eight, nine or ten-year-old girl must take special care of the modesty of her attire. Their mothers have pledged that they are a part of the Waqf-e-Nau scheme. They need to instill in the minds of these girls that they will always dress according to the demand of modesty and humility. Although it is essential to maintain modesty in the clothing of all the Ahmadi girls, it is even more important for the Waqfaat-e-Nau to have total awareness in this regard. If they are made aware of it at an early age, they will have no hesitation or inferiority complex in observing Purda when they grow up...even eight, nine or ten-year-old girls should adopt reasonable fashions. By the grace of Allah, even the younger Ahmadi girls are very intelligent. Thus, they should acquire religious knowledge and adopt positive and worthwhile trends. It is important for a young girl to listen carefully to the pious guidance of her parents and try to act upon it.”

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} specifically addressed the mothers and said: “Some mothers are also present here. I want to remind them of their responsibilities. Your children will learn good things only if you establish your own good model in front of them. Therefore, it is essential that you embrace virtues and adorn your homes with good morals and integrity.

“...It is my prayer that all members of the Waqf-e-Nau scheme fulfill those expectations which their parents associated with them when they pledged their lives for the service of Islam and the Jamā’at. I pray that you are able to achieve the noble values which the Jamā’at and the Khalifa of the time expect from you. May God enable all the members of this blessed scheme to achieve the high goals for which their parents dedicated their lives. May God enable them to spend their lives in the light of the beautiful teachings of

the Holy Prophet Muhammadsa, and may Allah the Exalted award all the members of the Waqf-e-Nau scheme with blessings and benevolence. Ameen!" (Address at National Ijtimā' Waqfaat-e-Nau U.K. held on February 27, 2016 ,Maryam Magazine Issue April-June 2016)

Guidance on Purda for Missionaries and Their Wives

While advising respected missionaries and their wives to be pious models and outstanding examples for the community members, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said:

"I will say one more thing to the missionaries and their wives as well. They should take special precautions in their clothing and their gazes. Their examples are noticed by the Jamā'at. The wife of a Missionary or Mubaligh is also a Missionary and she should be an excellent example in every aspect. May Allah the Exalted enable our men and women to establish high standards of Haya and may we all abide by the Islamic commandments in every way."

(Friday Sermon, January 13, 2017 delivered at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London, Al-Fazl International, February 3, 2017)

Guidance for Lajna Office Bearers

Lajna office bearers should also have exemplary Purda. Therefore, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said:

"If someone is a Lajna office bearer, they will have to be mindful

of the Qurānic commandment of Purda, otherwise they will not be fulfilling the responsibility they have been entrusted with. There are other commandments, but women have been given an additional command of Purda as compared to men. Now and then there are complaints from Norway regarding Purda. At one time, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh IIIth also warned them firmly. Likewise, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh IVth also kept on advising them. But you who are the office bearers, your Purda is substandard even now, and men and women mix freely, visit each other's homes unrestrained and unrestricted, and party together while not being related, call so and so 'brother' and so and so 'uncle', and say that there is no need of Hijab, and forge similar relationships. Beware that the Holy Qurān negates this and firmly commands a believing woman that Purda and Hijab are mandatory. Your glory lies in the display of Haya.

If Lajna office bearers at all levels, local, regional or national, adopt proper Purda and their attitudes are in alliance with the Islamic teachings, then a sizable population will become role models for the rest of the members and for their own children and for their surroundings. A Lajna office bearer can pay the dues of her trust only when, along with following other teachings, she is observing proper Purda too. I become aware of the state of Purda of some members during meetings with me when they find it difficult to handle the Niqab (face covering) and the handling of the Niqab is also telling tales that it has been worn after a long time. Anyhow, it is the duty of an office bearer as well as an ordinary Ahmadi woman to pay the dues of their trusts.

Nowadays, those who have a modern line of thought proclaim that Purda and Hijab are not needed any longer, and this is an outdated command. But let me make it clear that no commandment of the Holy Qurān is outdated and neither was it only for any specific era or for specific people. Ahmadi men and women express their

attachment with Khilafat with great enthusiasm. Allah the Almighty has stated in the Holy Qurān that Khilafat will continue, but pious deeds and worship are the prerequisites. In two verses preceding the verse of Surah An- Nur in which this promise has been made, Allah the Exalted has asked not to make tall claims, rather, exhibit طاعةً مُعَزَّزَةً, which means obedience in general. Obey every command which is in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Qurān and the Messenger of Allah^{sa}. Comply with the command and be dutiful. When a commandment of the Holy Qurān or the Prophet of Allah^{sa} is presented to you, act upon it promptly.

I have explicitly explained it many times. Thus, where alongside men, women make efforts to raise the standards of their worship, strive for improvement in their faith, they should also make efforts to act upon the specific commandments which are meant for women. At this point, I would like to clarify that although the commandment to cover themselves is meant for women, the injunction to lower their gazes and avoid free mixing is for both men and women. Rather, the commandment to lower gazes has been prescribed for men first and then later for women, to prevent men from looking around immodestly.” (Friday Sermon, September 30, 2011 delivered at Oslo Mosque, Norway, Al-Fazl International, October 21, 2011)

In light of the Islamic teachings, Haya is actually an adornment for women. In this context, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} addressed Ahmadi women and said:

“Purda is an Islamic commandment which has been detailed in the Holy Qurān. Therefore, do not take off your coats and Hijabs under the influence of society. I have noticed that some women walk around in the streets with only a sheer Dupatta. This is not in keeping with the teachings of Purda. Some wear sleeveless shirts, and many wear coats that are above their knees. They are inclined more towards fashion rather than Purda. Observe Purda keeping in

view that Haya is part of faith and the Holy Prophet^{sa} has said that Haya is one of the specifics of Islam. (Sahih Bukhari, Kitabul Eeman, Babul Haya min aleman, Hadith #24)

The Haya of a woman is her dignity, honour and her mannerisms. Always keep this in mind.

It is a lack of concern and attention to Purda that even now I have seen several women entering the hall with bare heads. They are coming for the Jalsa. They are coming to listen to Jalsa bearing in mind that they are coming to a chaste environment, and yet their hair is loose. They feel that hair styles can be protected by keeping the head uncovered and not wearing a scarf over it. There is no point in coming to Jalsa with uncovered heads. It is better for them to stay at home and not cast a bad influence on the vast majority of the women with covered heads around them.

So, make sure to pay attention to this that you have to safeguard your modesty yourself. **Haya is a woman's ornament and adornment.** More than makeup, Haya is your real ornament and adornment. Do not assume that we cannot integrate in this society if we observe Purda. This is absolutely wrong. I know many women, and several are pursuing very noble professions and they wear long coats and Hijab, even during work hours. However, while wearing a coat, it is essential to cover the head, the hair and the chin with a Hijab, provided you do not apply makeup. If you wish to go out with makeup on, then you must cover your face. Similarly, Islam prohibits interactions without reason and unnecessary conversations with men. If these trivialities are not attended to now, then they will propagate further and may lead to the establishment of a society, similar to the immodest society now prevalent in the West.

Thus, do not look down upon any of the commandments of the Holy Qurān. Do not assume that it is an obsolete command or

that it is meant for Pakistan or the Asian countries only. **This is an Islamic command and is for all times and for all countries and for the Ahmadi Muslim woman of every country.** I repeatedly draw attention towards it, at various places, since this weakness is increasing and if this state continues, then there is no guarantee of Haya in our future generations. They will walk along the streets with their hair down, wearing jeans and blouses or miniskirts, and then they cannot be called Ahmadi, and they will also leave Ahmadiyyat.

So, be sensible and save yourself from sinking into the world of immodesty, greed and lust. Otherwise, sanctity of Haya cannot be guaranteed in the future generations. Thus, if you are desirous of Allah the Almighty's consent and favour, then strictly safeguard Haya. The Holy Prophet^{sa}, once said, "Haya is all good" (Sahih Muslim, Kitabul Eman, Bab Bayan Adad Shoub eman Hadith #157) (Address to Ladies at Jalsa Canada held on July 7, 2012, Al-Fazl International, November 23, 2012)

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} has repeatedly addressed women with great concern and given them guidance on matters related to Tarbiyat (moral training). An excerpt from such an address is presented for our readers. The guidance given herein needs to be kept in view always. Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated: "It should always be remembered that faith in Allah is solidified only when we believe that Allah is watching us all the time. Some evils originate because the wrongdoer assumes that no one is watching them. At such a time, one forgets that Allah the Almighty says: **وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ** "Allah sees what you do" (Surah At-Taghabun, 64:3).

Thus, faith in Allah means that a man does everything bearing fear of Allah in his heart. For example, if Allah has enjoined Purda, then the injunction is not only for coming to Jalsa, or to Jamā'at events in the mosque, or when you come to meet me. Allah the Almighty has clearly stated for the wives of believers in the Holy Qurān that

وَنِسَاءِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْرِنْنَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلَابِيبِهِنَّ (Surah Al-Ahzab, 33:60) that the wives of believers should cover themselves with Jalbab (outer covering) when they go out of their homes.

This is the identity of the wives of the believers. The wives of believers are also believers. In marital affairs too, the command is to marry the believing women and the believing women are commanded to marry the believing men. Therefore, Purda is not for specific occasions. Instead it is mandatory for every woman when she is going out of her house, provided she is a believer, has reached maturity, claims to obey Allah and His Messenger^{sa} and considers herself to be in the Jamā'at of the Promised Messiah^{as}. This command is also for those men who make their wives discard Purda because they feel embarrassed at being called backward by society due to their wives' strict adherence to Purda. Here in Europe, objection to Purda is raised every now and then and France is in the forefront in this regard. The issue usually initiates from there. Then a group of people from amongst the Muslims supporting Purda put up a rebellious protest. They mostly have people with covered faces and in their midst are women who otherwise roam about on the streets with uncovered faces and in embarrassing attire. This is due to a lack of guidance and their reaction is just a temporary excitement in response to restrictions imposed on Purda.

However, an Ahmadi woman and a young Ahmadi girl who has reached the age of maturity must remember that Purda is part of her faith. It is one of the commandments of the Holy Qurān. By the grace of Allah the Almighty, most of the Ahmadi girls understand this reality. Some time ago a tide against Purda arose in France. A Waqif-e-Nau girl who is doing a Masters in journalism wrote a letter to a newspaper that on one hand, Europe raises the slogans of freedom of the individual and freedom of religion and on the other hand, it restricts Purda, which is one of the Islamic commandments and which women who observe Purda willingly

choose and consider as an essential practice according to Divine commandments. It proves that Europe's claim of giving religious freedom is merely a hollow claim and does not carry any weight. Nowadays a majority of Muslim women do not observe Purda and currently even their clothing, as seen in some TV programs, has become so revealing that one feels embarrassed. In spite of this, they are called Muslims. This is what it means to have a foot in both camps; they have neither faith left nor Islam, and yet they are called Muslims."

However, an Ahmadi woman who has accepted the Promised Messiah^{as} must always remember that she has not accepted Ahmadiyyat just to ensure the reputation of her parents, and neither to stamp a label of Ahmadiyyat on herself since she was fortunate to be born in an Ahmadi home, and thus has no alternative except to declare herself an Ahmadi because of her immediate and extended family members who are Ahmadis. Therefore, always take care that an Ahmadi woman must be aware of the teachings of Ahmadiyyat and the strength of her faith. The dignity of an Ahmadi requires that after taking Ba'at of the Promised Messiah^{as}, she should make her faith so strong that no material desire may displace her or disturb her faith." (Address to Ladies at Jalsa Salana U.K held on July 25, 2009 Published Al-Fazl International, June 21, 2013)

During his tour of Germany, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} gave important directions regarding Tarbiyat (moral training) of children, Purda and Facebook in a meeting held with National Majlis 'Amila Lajna Imā'illah. He said:

"Every woman or young girl who goes to the marketplace in everyday life and her coat is not even knee length, does not wear a scarf over her head and the hair is also uncovered, does not have a Dupatta on her shoulders and over the bosom, is actually not observing Purda and cannot be an office bearer."

The [national] president said that one of the [local] presidents has reported that the percentage of Purda observing women in her Majlis is very low. At this, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said:

“If the percentage is low, then the president alone can look after all offices. If there are five or six Purda observing women, they can have all offices, leaving out the rest. Again, if the president is the only one (observing true Purda), she can hold all offices herself. A member may be given an office if she promises to improve herself and bring about a change in herself within a month. In the first place, the change should be overnight; anyhow, review the situation in a month and if there is no change, then remove her from her office.” (Meeting National Majlis ‘Amila, Germany held on June 17, 2011, Al-Fazl International, July 22, 2011)

In Norway, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} reviewed various Tarbiyat (moral training) issues in his meeting with National Majlis ‘Amila and gave valuable guidance for the Tarbiyat of Ahmadi women and girls. Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said:

“Someone asked me in America that girls do not bother to observe Purda and wear jeans with blouses, so what should be done in this regard? I told them that they should be inculcating the habit from their childhood, from the age of five to six years. By seven years, a girl should know that she cannot wear a short length shirt, her shirt has to be long and jeans are not to be worn with a blouse. Sometimes she should wear a scarf as well so that she will not be reluctant to do so at the age of ten. If you do not follow this strategy, then she may say that she is only ten or eleven or twelve years old. The trend of sleeveless dresses also diminishes Haya. And the absence of Haya will ruin everything. Then they will never acquire the habit of Purda. Therefore, inculcating the habit of Purda and Haya should start from an early age. The Tarbiyat of Nasirat is very important. Only then can you save your children

from the influences of the environment. Nasirat are the greatest responsibility.”

On the presentation of the report of Secretary Tablīgh, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said: “For general Tablīgh, women should participate in the scheme of the distribution of leaflets, but not accompanied by men. In the UK, the responsibility of the distribution of leaflets in primary schools and in homes has been given to women, and they go out for it. The families were made responsible for bigger places where men and women could go together, however, these men and women should be relatives. Unrelated men and women should not go together. Women can be assigned primary schools or the women’s section of a church during church events or houses where they have acquaintances or to slot flyers in mailboxes, etc. Anyway, keep in mind that women have to do Tablīgh in segregation and will have to make separate arrangements and not jointly with men. Although the work will be the same, it should be done separately.”

When Secretary Tablīgh talked about writing articles for newspapers and magazines, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said: “Make the female students’ organization active.”

The president said that co-education is so common here that boys always come to any event which students organize at the university. At this, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said: “That is fine. Boys do come, and if need be, girls may deliver a lecture on Islam while wearing their Hijab. The girls will come with their fellow students and they are already classmates. Delivering lectures on Islam while observing Purda will make them aware of their own condition as well. However, this is not an unrestricted permission. Markaz (central office) should have control, because if you give an inch, they will take a mile.”

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} further stated: “University going students between 16-18 years demand some freedom. They should be engaged in

discussions on topics such as: why should our clothing be proper? Why should it be covered? Why is the Hijab essential? And what role can an Ahmadi girl play in the European campaign against the Hijab. The habit of recitation of the Holy Qurān is important and the commandments of the Holy Qurān related to women need to be comprehended. Another question which is raised is why women are commanded to observe Purda; why not for men? Although men have been commanded to observe Ghadd-e-Basar (to keep their gazes lowered) in the first place. Some questions are raised about inheritance, as to why the share of men is more than that of women. You need to compile such questions carefully, and then arrange for the girls to have discussions on them.”

Secretary Tarbiyat said that Hazrat Syeda Apa Jan gave some examples when she visited Lajna. She said that culture is thrust upon new Ahmadi girl converts, which is not appropriate. Try to adopt modest attire. The tight pajamas worn nowadays seem to be a little improper, but it was different in our times. In those days, it was customary to wear a full-length Burqa, so the requirement of ‘at least knee length and covered dress’ was met with ease.

Secretary Tarbiyat said that girls wear tights these days and we are working hard in this regard. At this, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said: “If, while wearing tights they put on shirts which fall below the knees, then there is no harm in wearing them. The real issue is that the shirt should be long. I have said that it is fine if the girls wear jeans and even skinny jeans, provided a long shirt is worn over them. Either wear long shirts or a long coat while going out. Actually, try to assess what the real essence of Purda is. Allah Almighty says that your Purda is to hide such adornment from non-relatives and outsiders which you may reveal to your parents and siblings.”

Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said: “If an immodest dress is being worn at home, then the home attire should also be checked. If a young girl

is walking around in her house wearing jeans or tights with a blouse, but without a Hijab in the presence of her father or a grown-up brother, then she will be lacking in Haya. The real thing is Haya (self-restraint) and efforts should be made to inculcate the essence of Haya. It matters not if tight pajamas are being worn these days since they were worn earlier as well. However, there is a difference between tight Chooridar pajamas of the past and the tights which are worn these days. Chooridar pajama does not reveal the contours of the legs because it has a uniform shape from the ankle to the calf and up to the knee. Such is not the case with tights which reveal the shape of the entire leg, from calf to ankle. Thus, there is a need to tell the difference between the two. Try to bring awareness to girls that Haya is important: **الْحَيَاءُ مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ** which means, "Haya/modesty is a part of faith." Therefore, if you promote Haya then your dress and Purda will automatically become proper.

Answering a question that some mothers support their daughters, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said: "Counsel the mothers who are supporting their girls. The Holy Qurān does not say to give a physical punishment. The Holy Qurān states: **فَذَكِّرْ** meaning that your job is to go on reminding. You are a counselor, and not a custodian. Thus, it is the duty of the office bearers to go on advising about anything wrong which they notice. And in regard to it, look at what the Holy Qurān says, what the Holy Prophet^{sa} has said about it, and what the Promised Messiah^{as} has taught about it.

There are various levels of Purda. I have given this example previously as well. An Egyptian man accepted Ahmadiyyat in London. He asked me to pray for his mother so that she also accepts Ahmadiyyat. I told him to bring his mother to the mosque. His mother went to the mosque and noticed Purda of the women there. She said that as far as the teachings are concerned, they are accurate and she agreed with them. However, Ahmadi women do not observe Purda. Her standard of Purda was the Hijab which

Arab women wear; it covers the forehead and the hair cannot be seen from the front or the back. Purda, to an extent, is also for hair. Thus, it is inappropriate to wear a small Hijab for fashion and leave hair loose for showing off." (Meeting National Majlis 'Amila Norway, held on October 2, 2011, Al-Fazl International, December 23, 2011)

“We are blessed by Allah the Almighty that He enabled us to embrace the Jamā’at of the Messiah of Muhammad^{sa}, so that we pay attention to attaining the ways of Allah. May He enable us to ponder and act upon His commandments always, and may we understand the purpose of our life.”

(Address to Ladies at Jalsa Salana UK held on July 30, 2005)

A FEW EXEMPLARY CHARACTERS

On a number of occasions, Syedna Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{atba} spoke about Purda with Ahmadi women and gave an account of some commendable precedents which were worth mentioning. On certain occasions, he also mentioned the determination of Ahmadi girls and women, settled in various countries, to observe Purda and to accede courageously to this Islamic commandment. Huzoor Anwar^{atba} also narrated comments of non-Ahmadi women who paid tribute to Ahmadi women for carrying out their responsibilities while observing Purda. Some selected narrations of Huzoor Anwar^{atba} are briefly presented here so that by following this highly important command of Allah the Almighty, we may also become the recipients of His love and pleasure. May we deserve the worldly honour as well.

- Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V^{atba} gave a detailed account in his Friday Sermon on the life of his respected mother Hazrat Syeda Nasira Begum Sahiba, daughter of Syedna Hazrat Musleh Mau'ūd^{ra} and respected wife of Hazrat Mirza Mansoor Ahmad Sahib, after her death. Furthermore, he narrated her views pertaining to the importance of Purda and her distinctive attribute of observing Purda. Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated: "A former president who worked with her wrote that she (Begum Sahiba) took a keen interest in the Tarbiyat (moral training) of Lajna. She would devise innovative ways and plans to do so and shared them with us. She made efforts for each girl and each woman from Rabwah to have exemplary standards of Tarbiyat. On several occasions, it so happened that on witnessing a low standard of Purda (veiling), she approached the woman or girl on the road, or if she found some girls walking in a style which is averse to the dignity of an Ahmadi girl, she would go up to them and affectionately try to counsel them. She would tell them about the required standard of the dignity of an Ahmadi girl.

In the context of Purda, I wish to put forth an excerpt from a speech by Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh IVth. On the occasion of the first Jalsa of his Khīlafat in 1982, he spoke about Purda in his address to women in the Ladies section. Referring to the Purda of my mother, he said, 'We have an older sister who has been inclined to strict adherence to Purda from the early days. Since she is from the first generation raised by Hazrat Musleh Mau'ūd^{ra}, she follows whatever she observed of Hazrat Musleh Mau'ūd's^{ra} practice at home and the manner in which the girls were allowed to go out. All this has become her second nature and she cannot break the habit now. Some girls of our family have the view that these are people of olden times so do not say anything to them. They think they are out of their minds; it's given that people who belong to earlier days would talk like this. But which earlier times? The only earlier times that I am aware of are that of Hazrat Muhammad^{sa}. Therefore, if someone wants to say that someone is 'of olden times', then that is what they want to do; the matter is between them and God. However, this sister of mine, while solemnly abiding by Taqwa (righteousness), indeed practices strictness in this matter.'" (Friday Sermon, August 5, 2011 at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London, Al-Fazl International, August 16, 2011)

- At the death of Hazrat Syeda Amtul Qayyum Begum Sahiba, daughter of Hazrat Musleh Mau'ūd^{ra} and wife of Hazrat Mirza Muzaffar Ahmad Sahib, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} gave a detailed account of the deceased in his Friday Sermon. In this context, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} mentioned her virtue of observing Purda and said:

"She held the Jamā'at and Khilafat in great esteem. She was steadfast in Purda to the extent that even if a young relative from whom veiling is not required happened to visit her, she would observe Purda until she recognized him properly." (Friday Sermon, June 26, 2009 at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London, Al-Fazl International, July 17, 2009)

- Respected Dr. Fehmeeda Munir Sahiba was blessed with the opportunity of serving as a life devotee in Fazl-e-Omar Hospital for a long time. On her passing, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} spoke about her virtues in a Friday sermon and mentioned her steadfastness in Purda as well. He stated:

“She settled in Rabwah in 1964 and served as a lady doctor in Fazl-e-Omar Hospital until 1984. Once, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh III^{rh} gave the example of her Purda in Majlis Shūrā, saying that someone who wishes to learn how to work while observing Purda must learn from Dr. Fehmeeda.” (Friday Sermon, October 12, 2012 at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London, Al-Fazl International, November 2, 2012)

- Respected Nasira Salima Raza Sahiba was an African American Ahmadi who died in Zion, USA on February 18, 2013. Talking about her good qualities, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated:

“She was born in St Louis, USA in 1927. Her father was a Baptist priest...In 1949, she had the honour of embracing Ahmadiyyat through the late Dr. Khalil Ahmad Nasir. She got married to late Nasir Ali Raza Sahiba in 1951 (for years, she worked as local president and regional president Lajna). She had immense love for Islam in her heart. She was known to be a good teacher. Ahmadi women regarded her as a mother. She would explain very lovingly and also rectified their shortcomings. She always instructed girls to observe Purda and likewise taught them Islamic morals. Furthermore, she informed them how to face the evil customs of the Western society. She was born and raised here so she knew it all.” (Friday Sermon, March 1, 2013 at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London, Al-Fazl International, March 22, 2013)

- Respected Tanya Khan was a faithful new Ahmadi who died in Canada. Describing her exceptional qualities, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} mentioned her steadfastness in Purda. Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated:

“She was a Canadian woman of Lebanese origin. She accepted Ahmadiyyat in 1998. She was a very active Da’ai Ilallah (caller towards Allah) and very fond of doing Tablīgh. Besides being the National Secretary Tablīgh, Lajna Imā’illah Canada, she had the opportunity to serve the Jamā’at in various capacities at the local and national level...She had a very loving and sincere connection with Khilafat and responded to every call. She was steadfast in Purda and fully committed to humanitarian services. She had even made a will to donate her organs after her death.” (Friday Sermon, August 16, 2013 at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London, Al-Fazl International, August 30, 2013)

- This is also a sign of the truthfulness of Ahmadiyyat that the moral condition of the converts starts undergoing a change for betterment as soon as they perform Baī’at. In this connection, Huzoor Anwar^{atba}, states: “Fahimi Sahiba is a lady from Morocco. She says, ‘I was introduced (to Ahmadiyyat) through Liqa Ma’al Arab¹. I started doing Istikhara² and after witnessing a vision, I decided that come what may, I do not care for any opposition and did Baī’at right away. As soon as I did Baī’at, **I started observing Purda as well.**” (Friday Sermon, March 28, 2014 in Baitul Futuh Mosque, London, Al-Fazl International, April 18, 2014)

- Describing the good qualities of Respected Al-Hajjah Sister Naeema Latif Sahiba (wife of Al-Hajj Jalalud Din Latif Sahib, President Zion Jamā’at, USA) on her passing, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated:

“Sister Naeema Latif was born in a Christian family on May 21, 1939. After studying at West Virginia University, she started volunteer work in the Medical Department of the American Army.

1 An Arabic question and answer program series produced by Muslim Television Ahmadiyya (MTA)

2 Special prayers seeking guidance from Allah for a specific matter

She accepted Ahmadiyyat in 1974 and through her own study and research she rapidly progressed in faith and sincerity. Throughout her life she never skipped a Friday prayer, regularly attended Jamā'at programs and never missed a fast during Ramadan. In addition to this, she was regular in observing the optional weekly fasts, following in the footsteps of the prophetic tradition. She also had opportunities to observe I'tikaf [to confine oneself for a certain number of days to a mosque in order to worship during the last 10 days of Ramadan]. She was always at the forefront in social work. She had the honour of performing Hajj (Pilgrimage) and always excelled in financial sacrifices. Whenever her husband gifted a piece of jewellery to her, she donated it towards the mosque fund.

Her immense love for Khilafat and the Khalifa of the time was a picture of adoration and his obedience was her first priority.

Upon listening to a lecture of Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih IIIth on the topic of 'Significance of Purda' in a university during his visit to the USA, she put on a Hijab right away. In those days, she was the only woman in the area to be seen in the Islamic Purda." (Friday Sermon, October 3, 2014 at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London, Al-Fazl International, October 24, 2014)

- Referring to the way Ahmadi women are adhering to Islamic teachings after embracing Ahmadiyyat and demonstrating obedience to Khilafat, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} states:

"How are changes brought about after acceptance of Ahmadiyyat? Firstly, it is the focus on prayers and coming to the mosque regardless of extreme temperatures. Then, I will give another example. An Ahmadi friend from Macedonia writes that his wife's name is Raza. She did not observe Purda until she attended Jalsa Salana Germany. He writes, 'I am very grateful to you, as after listening to your address to Lajna, she started wearing a Hijab and

now she observes regular Purda and is steadfast in Ahmadiyyat. By the grace of Allah the Almighty, she is progressing in faith as well.' Thus, such new entries who had deviated from the Islamic teachings, also try to adopt the correct teachings of Islam, with the blessings of Allah, after accepting Ahmadiyyat. Therefore, our young girls, as well as women, should also be mindful of being steadfast in Islamic traditions. It is mandatory to act upon Allah's commandments and Purda is also one of the important commandments." (Friday Sermon, April 3, 2015 at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London, Al-Fazl International, April 24, 2015)

- Respected Dr. Nusrat Jahan Sahiba was also an exemplary model of observance of Purda. After graduating from Pakistan with MBBS, she specialized in Gynaecology from England and started her services at Fazl-e-Omar Hospital in 1985. Mentioning her qualities, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} referred to her Purda in these words:

"(Her son-in-law) states that when his daughter turned 12, she started advising her to cover her head and be mindful of Purda. She would relate important narratives from the lives of Hazrat Amma Jan^{ra} and other noble personalities in the form of short stories or tales. She herself observed Purda strictly. So, if parents and the elders keep advising children, their hesitation in wearing Hijab diminishes and they feel courageous...Dr. Noori, In-Charge Tahir Heart Institute, Rabwah states: 'I had the opportunity to work with Dr. Nusrat Jahan for over nine years in Zubaida Bani Wing of Fazl-e-Omar Hospital and Tahir Heart institute. She possessed such unique qualities as are found in very few doctors nowadays. She was very pious, devout, had high morals, was God-fearing, prayed for her patients, extremely careful in observing Purda, very knowledgeable about the Holy Qurān, and a true follower of the life of Prophet Muhammad^{sa} and the Promised Messiah^{as}.'

She was educated here in the UK too and later she used to come to different hospitals here to increase her knowledge, but she always wore a Niqab (face covering) and full Burqa. She never had any complex and accomplished all tasks while maintaining Purda. Thus, she was a role model for the girls who make excuses that they cannot work in Purda.” (Friday Sermon, October 21, 2016 at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London, Al-Fazl International, November 11, 2016)

- On one occasion, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} spoke about the outstanding quality of Purda of both senior doctors of Fazl-e-Omer Hospital:

“Doctors can work while observing Purda. We had our doctors in Rabwah. We have always witnessed Dr. Fehmeeda in Purda. Dr. Nusrat Jahan was there and she also observed Purda very strictly. She received an education in the UK also and used to visit London every year to upgrade her skills in accordance with the latest research, but she always maintained Purda; in fact, she observed Purda even if the occasion did not require it. In spite of this, no one raised any objection against her, nor on her work and neither was her professional expertise affected by it. She performed major surgeries too. So, if the intentions are good, one is able to find ways to practice the teachings of faith.” (Friday Sermon, January 13, 2017 at Baitul Futuh Mosque, Al-Fazl International, February 3, 2017)

- In one of his Friday Sermons, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} called for prayers for new converts of Algiers, and speaking in regard to their sacrifices and their love for Islam, he said:

“In the end, I wish to ask for prayers for Ahmadis from Algiers. This is a new Jamā’at. Most of them are new converts, but they have a very strong faith. These days the government here has become very stern. Baseless cases are being filed. Some have been jailed. At times police have tried to unveil women by forcibly entering

some houses. For example, a few days ago a woman was asked to take off her Dupatta. She replied: You can kill me, but I will not take off my Dupatta and neither will I leave Ahmadiyyat.” (Friday Sermon, January 27, 2017, at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London, Al-Fazl International, February 17, 2017)

- Mentioning the good qualities of respected Salima Mir Sahiba, former President Lajna Ima’illah Karachi, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said: “She would pay close attention to Purda. Wherever she noticed a shortcoming in Purda, she talked it over so amicably that others were also not offended. One of her daughters says that there was a proposal for my younger sister and the boy wanted to see the girl before proceeding further. We suggested to our mother that our sister may go in front of him in a scarf rather than a Niqab. At this, our mother said, ‘come what may as regards to the proposal, but my daughter will wear the Niqab.’

One of her daughters had a driving test in London and the instructor was male. Salima Sahiba sat with her saying I will not allow you to go alone with a man. Others scoffed at this, but she paid no attention to the world. She would always recommend wearing of a scarf on the head or a Niqab. There is a book by Lajna by the name of Orhni Waliyon Kay Liye Phool (“Flowers for the Veiled Ones”) and is based on the instructions and statements of all the Caliphs of the Jamā’at. So, she would say that if you want a flower, then you will also have to buy an ‘orhni’ (veil). Flowers are only for those who observe veiling.” (Friday Sermon, March 30, 2018 at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London, Al-Fazl International, April 20, 2018)

- On one occasion, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} talked about the extraordinary moral change brought about in society as a result of the guidance of the Great Caliphs, and with reference to an Ahmadi girl, stated: “I will give an example for women too. If the state of Purda and Haya (modesty) is lost, then things spiral out

of control. A young girl from Pakistan who came to Australia after getting married wrote to me, 'I was also forced to give up Purda. Or maybe I got trapped because of the environment and gave up my Purda. Now when I went there on a visit, she wrote to me saying I was wearing a Burqa when you delivered the speech regarding Purda in the ladies on the occasion of Jalsa and I am wearing it since then. I am firm in it and making efforts and praying as well that I remain steadfast.' She has also requested for prayers." (Friday Sermon, December 20, 2013 at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London, Al-Fazl International, January 10, 2014)

- The blessed advice delivered by the Khalifa of the time has made extraordinary impact on the moral and spiritual states of Ahmadis around the world. Therefore, in a Friday sermon, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} spoke regarding the spiritual changes brought about in the USA. He said: "By the grace of Allah the Almighty, my visit has produced positive results in the USA and here [Canada] too. Some girls who were born and brought up in the USA and Canada have written to me; and letters are still pouring in that after listening to you, we have come to understand the concept of honour and Haya in a woman and a girl. Now we have become aware of our importance and the importance of Purda. We have become aware of the status of an Ahmadi girl. Similarly, youth have also written that they have learned about the importance of prayer. Some girls wrote that we had assumed that we will never have the courage to wear the Burqa and Hijab while living in this environment. But, after listening to you, we have presented ourselves in Hijab and Burqa and coat, and we make a pledge that we will never take off our Burqas. Thus, this is their thinking. May Allah help them to put their thinking into practice. And may they safeguard their honour in accordance with their pledge of safeguarding it." (Friday Sermon, delivered at Baitul Islam Mosque, Toronto, Canada, Al-Fazl International, August 3, 2012)

- After the first visit to West Africa, Huzoor Anwar^{atba}, in a Friday Sermon, expressed delight on the volunteering of veiled Ahmadi workers of Benin. He said:

“I have observed a very good thing in Benin. Over there, Lajna has organized a special team which performs duties at every event. They observed Purda very well and wore a Niqab and continuously performed their duties that way.” (Friday Sermon, April 16, 2004 at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London, Al-Fazl International, April 30, 2004)

- Later, in his address to ladies at Jalsa Salana Canada, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} also narrated his observations regarding his tour of Africa. Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated:

“I have observed in Africa that where clothing was not customary, they have worn clothes and worn clothes that fully cover, and some of them observe Purda as well. A few have started wearing the Niqab as well. Here too, we have African American sisters who are mostly from USA and some of them observe an exemplary and high level of Purda, which is worth following. In fact, yesterday in our meeting, I told them that it seems that now you people will set precedents of Purda for Pakistanis and Indians.” (Address to Ladies at Jalsa Salana Canada held on June 25, 2005, Al-Fazl International, March 2, 2007)

- On the occasion of Jalsa Salana a large number of female guests come to visit and some of them express their feelings as well. Therefore, non-Ahmadi female guests have paid open tributes to the exemplary Purda of Ahmadi women. In reference to this, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} stated in a Friday sermon: “Damiba Beatrice attended Jalsa from Burkina Faso. She is the president of the Higher Council for Communication in electronic and print media in Burkina Faso. She has been a federal minister of the country twice.

She has also been the ambassador of Burkina Faso in Italy and Australia for 14 years and has represented her country in the UNO as well. She says, attending this Jalsa is a unique event of my life. I did not see a black or white, English or French; instead, every Ahmadi Muslim was seen to be in immense love with their Khalifa, irrespective of colour and race. She goes on to say that what impressed me most is the fact that everyone was attending the Jalsa with a commitment for the sake of Allah. It was astonishing for me to see women seated away from men in a separate section and I assumed that perhaps here also women are mistreated like other Muslims. However, my impression changed after spending some time with these women. I observed that the photographer was a female and so was the camera girl, and women were doing the duty of receiving the guests and distributing food. In fact, every task was being done by women. And the truth is that Purda of a woman does not restrict her freedom. If someone cannot believe this, then they should visit and observe the Ahmadi here.” (Friday Sermon, September 6, 2013 at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London, Al-Fazl International, September 27, 2013)

- A non-Ahmadi female guest attended Jalsa UK for the first time. Huzoor Anwar^{atba}, mentioning about her positive comments regarding Ahmadi women attending Jalsa in Purda, said:

“A non-Ahmadi lady, Ouida Nesbeth from Jamaica, attended Jalsa. She is a highly educated woman and is an accountant. She says she was in contact with the Ahmadiyya Jamā’at for the last 5 years. During this period, she already had a fair connection and introduction of the Jamā’at, but it has been further enhanced by attending this Jalsa and all the doubts which she had about Islam have been mitigated. The lady really liked that men and women were seated in separate sections (some people object to it, but female guests have liked it). With this arrangement, people’s attention is not diverted.

She herself admitted that in mixed gatherings men tend to stare. Since men and women were in separate areas, attention was not distracted and everyone was able to concentrate on Islam and prayers. Therefore, Ahmadi women who are in some sort of complex [regarding Purda and segregation] should ponder upon her comment.” (Friday Sermon, August 10, 2018 at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London, Al-Fazl International, August 31, 2018)

- Another beautiful comment was given by a non-Ahmadi Muslim female journalist who had abandoned Purda due to her rebellious attitude. Narrating her comments, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} said,

“Belize Jamā’at has been established recently. From there, a journalist, Maryam Abdul, was visiting. She is a famous anchor of Krem TV of Belize. She said, ‘I was born in a staunch Sunni family. My father was a rigid Muslim and therefore, I revolted and stopped practicing Islamic teachings as I grew up. Since Purda, scarf and many other things which, rightly or wrongly, are followed by other Muslims were practised very strictly, I drifted away from Islamic teachings. When I grew up, I took off my Hijab and scarf and threw them away. However, I have firm faith in Allah the Almighty. But in coming to Jalsa Salana I have had an unusual experience. Here, I did not see any women bound or hitched. Every girl and every woman was free. I took note of them; women and girls were roaming around freely, singing poems, going to the bazaar, and meeting each other lovingly. This has made me think that if had I been born in an Ahmadi family, I would not have revolted.’

Therefore, Ahmadis are very fortunate. They should be thankful to Allah the Almighty, for being born into Ahmadi homes or that He enabled some to convert to Ahmadiyyat and saved them from all that gives way to rebellious trends. Some Ahmadi girls are also rebellious.

They should also remember that non-Ahmadis are impressed by us, so there is no need to develop any sort of complexes. The beautiful teaching of Islam is uniformly in accordance with human nature and we should try to comply with it." (Friday Sermon, September 5, 2014 at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London, Al-Fazl International, September 26, 2014)

OBEDIENCE TO QURĀNIC COMMANDMENTS GUARANTEES HEAVEN

Addressing Ahmadi ladies at the occasion of Jalsa Salana UK, Huzoor Anwar^{atba} recited the following verses after the recitation of Tashahad, Ta'awwudh and Surah Al-Fatihah:

اَعْلَمُوا أَنَّنَا الْحَيَوَةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَ لَهُوَ وَ زِينَةٌ وَ تَفَاخُرٌ بَيْنَكُمْ وَ تَكَاثُرٌ
 فِي الْأَمْوَالِ وَ الْأَوْلَادِ كَمَثَلِ غَيْثٍ أَعْجَبَ الْكُفَّارَ نَبَاتُهُ ثُمَّ يَهِيجُ فَتَرَاهُ
 مُصْفَرًّا ثُمَّ يَكُونُ حُطَامًا ۗ وَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ ۗ وَ مَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنَ
 اللَّهِ وَ رِضْوَانٌ ۗ وَ مَا الْحَيَوَةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ ﴿٢١﴾ سَابِقُوا إِلَى
 مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّنَ رَبِّكُمْ وَ جَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا كَعَرْضِ السَّمَاءِ وَ الْأَرْضِ ۗ أُعِدَّتْ
 لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَ رُسُلِهِ ۗ ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ ۗ وَ اللَّهُ
 ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٢٢﴾

(Surah Al-Hadid, 57:21-22)

Allah the Almighty has drawn our attention to understand the purpose of our life and to find God through various ways and strategies given in His Holy Book, the Holy Qurān. 195

In current times, the Promised Messiah^{as}, has called upon us to focus on this purpose. So, we are blessed by Allah the Almighty that He enabled us to be part of the Jamā'at of the Messiah of Muhammad^{sa} so that we pay attention to exploring the ways of Allah the Almighty. May Allah enable us to ponder and act upon the commandments of Allah the Almighty and may we understand the purpose of our life.

The translation of the verses just recited is as follows:

“Know that the life of this world is only a sport and a pastime, and an adornment, and a source of boasting among yourselves, and of rivalry in multiplying riches and children. It is like the rain, the vegetation produced whereby rejoices the tillers. Then it dries up and thou seest it turn yellow; then it becomes worthless stubble. And in the Hereafter, there is severe punishment for the wicked and also forgiveness from Allah, and His pleasure for the righteous. And the life of this world is nothing but temporary enjoyment of delusive things.” And the next verse states:

“Vie, then, with one another in seeking forgiveness from your Lord and for a Garden the value whereof is equal to the value of the heaven and the earth; it has been prepared for those who believe in Allah and His Messengers. That is Allah’s grace; He bestows it upon whomsoever He pleases, and Allah is the Lord of immense grace.” (Address to Ladies at Jalsa Salana UK held on July 30, 2005, Al-Fazl International, May 11, 2007)

GLOSSARY

BID'AT Unnecessary innovations in religious practices or customs.

BURQA A long and loose outer garment worn by Muslim women.

CHADOR A large piece of cloth wrapped around the upper body.

CHOODIDAR A style of tight, long, pants worn by South Asian women. The excess fabric from the pants gathers at the bottom, forming ring-like shapes from the calf to the ankle.

CHUNNI A traditional scarf or head covering worn by South Asian women.

DUPATTA A long scarf or head covering that is a part of traditional South Asian clothing for women.

FURŪJ Private parts of the body and all openings into the human body.

GHADD-E-BASAR The Islamic commandment of lowering or restraining one's eyes from gazing at the other gender.

GHARARA A traditional South Asian bridal outfit known for having pleated wide-legged pants.

HAYA Modesty or self-restraint; to not do, say or think anything that will take one away from attaining nearness to Allah.

HIJAB A head covering worn by Muslim women in the presence of unrelated men and some women.

ISTIGHFAR To seek forgiveness from Allah.

ISTIKHARA Special prayers seeking guidance from Allah regarding a specific matter.

I'TIKAF Retiring to seclusion during the last ten days of the month of Ramadan to gain closeness to Allah.

JALBAB A long and loose outer garment worn by Muslim women.

LAGHAV A useless activity which negatively impacts one's virtue.

MAHRAM A man or woman with whom marriage is not permissible. A non-Mahram, therefore, refers to a man or woman who one can marry and between whom the Shariah instructs segregation in light of the Islamic injunction of veiling.

NIQAB A veil that covers a woman's face, often leaving the eyes uncovered.

PURDA The Islamic veil worn by Muslim women to fulfill the commandment of Allah.

REESH Refers to clothing that is elegant and beautiful.

RUKHSATI Bidding farewell to a female as she leaves her parents to live with her husband.

SALĀT Obligatory prayer commanded upon all Muslims to be offered five times daily.

SATTĀR An attribute of Allah which means, "the One Who Veils Sin."

SHALWAR A style of pants traditionally worn by South Asians.

TAQWA Righteousness.

