Synopsis of Friday Sermon

Ameer Mustapha Elturk

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

Etiquettes of Jumu’ah (Part-2)

The topic of Friday’s sermon delivered by Ameer Mustapha Elturk on January 28, 2011 at the IONA Center in Warren, Michigan was a continuation of the topic of last week’s Friday sermon entitled “Etiquettes of Jumu’ah.”

Ameer Mustapha began by recapitulating what he had talked about in his last Friday sermon—the significance, virtues, and benefits of Jumu’ah (see part-1).

Ameer Mustapha then drew the attention of the audience to the dress code of Muslims, particularly the Muslim ladies especially the young ones who generally did not pay heed to the Islamic dress code. The ‘Awrah (part of the body to be covered) of a woman with respect to a man who is not her mahram (relationship of such degree that marriage is prohibited) is her entire body excepting only her face and hands. (1) A Muslim woman has to make sure that her dress covers her ‘Awrah and should avoid tight and transparent clothing that reveal her figure and what is underneath. A Muslim woman is chaste, dignified, self-respecting, and modest. She should not be showy and anxious to display her attractions and should not walk or talk in a seductive manner.

Some of our sisters influenced by the misstatements of some contemporary scholars have started to think and believe that putting on the hijab (head covering) is a matter of personal choice and not mandatory. The word hijab itself means to have a barrier between yourself and somebody else. Hijab in the early days of Islam would have been called niqab (veil covering the face), but hijab today by ‘urf (customary practice) is known to mean covering the head and this injunction is established by the Qur’an and the Sunnah.

Shedding light on the issue of hijab and in order to dispel the doubts that may be lingering in the minds of some sisters, Ameer Mustapha explained that these so-called scholars claimed that the hijab was a tradition of the Jahiliyyah (days of ignorance) and not necessarily a Qur’anic injunction. He differed with these scholars and argued that although the pagan Arab women of the Jahiliyyah covered their heads, they did not do so in the way the Qur’an later prescribed. Their hijab did not cover the ears, part of the hair, the neck, the bosom and the chest. It was merely a semblance or remnant of the practice of the days of Prophets Ibrahim and Ismail with whom the pagan Arabs associated their lineage. The Bible also alludes to the significance of the hijab as follows: For if a woman does not cover her head, she might as well have her hair cut off; but if it is a disgrace for a woman to have her hair cut off or her head shaved, then she should cover her head {Corinthians 11:6-10 (New International Version, ©2011)}.

The Qur’an, which confirms in essence all the earlier Prophetic traditions, also mandated Muslim women to cover their heads. And tell believing women that they should lower their glances, guard their private parts, and not display their charms beyond what it is acceptable to reveal; they should let their headscarves fall to cover their necklines and not reveal their charms except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands’ fathers, their sons, their husbands’ sons, their brothers, their brothers’ sons, their sisters’ sons, their womenfolk, their slaves, such men as attend them who have no sexual desire, or children who are not yet aware of women’s nakedness: they should not stamp their feet so as to draw attention to any hidden charms. Believers, all of you, turn to God so that you may prosper (an-Nur, 24:31). This Qur’anic ayah clearly goes to explicate the key to hijab. The women should draw their head-coverings (hijab) over their necklines and bosoms. There is no question of the cleavage being exposed as is often done by non-believing women. Charms in this ayah may include as the ulama’ (Islamic scholars) have explained bracelets, anklets, makeup, perfume etc. Imam al-Tabari explaining this ayah says that khumur (singular: khimar) refers to the head covering that covers the hair, the neck and the bosom. Moreover, Allah (SWT) has commanded Muslim women to cover themselves with a loose over-garment whenever they go out.

O prophet, tell your wives, your daughters, and the wives of the believers that they should lengthen upon themselves their outer garments. That is better so that they would be recognized and not harmed. God is Forgiver, Merciful (al-Ahzab, 33:59). This means that on top of the veil, Muslim women should also clad themselves with an outer garment in public. This also means that the dress should be loose and not tight-fitting so as to define the parts of the body. Jeans and other types of trousers worn with sweaters, sweatshirts or T-shirts do not meet this condition. All this makes it crystal clear that the wearing of veil is an unambiguous Qur’anic
injunction. It has been explained by the Prophet (SAW) and practiced by his wives and the sahabiyyat (women companion). Moreover, there is always wisdom in any injunction ordained by Allah (SWT).

Ameer Mustapha next spoke about the benefits of reciting surah al-Kahf on the night or day of Jumu’ah. According to a hadith, one who recites Surah al-Kahf on Jumu’ah will have illumination from that Jumu’ah to the next. This means that such a person will be blessed with the light of guidance. According to another hadith, whoever recites Surah al-Kahf on Jumu’ah will be blessed with a light that will rise from underneath his feet to the peak of the sky. There will be a light for him on the day of resurrection and he will be forgiven for his minor sins between that Jumu’ah and the next one.

Another thing we should do on the day of Jumu’ah is to go early to Salat ul-Jumu’ah and be at the masjid before the Imam arrives to deliver his sermon. According to a hadith, the people will be seated on the day of resurrection according to the order they came to Salat ul-Jumu’ah—the first, then the second, then the third, and then the fourth, and the fourth of the four is not far from Allah (SWT). We are informed through another hadith that whoever makes ghusl on Jumu’ah like the ghusl one makes after sexual intimacy and goes to the masjid, it is as if he has sacrificed a camel. If he goes during the second hour, it will be as if he has sacrificed a cow; if he goes during the third hour, it will be as if he has sacrificed a horned lamb. If he goes during the fourth hour, it will be as if he has sacrificed a hen, if he goes during the fifth hour, it will be as if he has sacrificed something like an egg. These ahadith emphasize the importance of going early to Salat ul-Jumu’ah. Coming early and listening to the khutba is an integral part of the Salat ul-Jumu’ah.

Those who come early are to be congratulated. Those who come late and get only one rak'a due to whatever reason, be it laziness, trade or business, unless it is an emergency, then these individuals are similar to those whom Allah (SWT) reprimanded in the Qur’an regarding the call to Jumu’ah. “And if they come across any trade, or some entertainment, they rush to it and leave you standing! Say: What God possesses is far better than entertainment or trade. And God is the best Provider” (al-Jumu’ah, 62:11). This was the attitude of some of the believers at the time of the Prophet (SAW). Now what we have is the same phenomenon, except that it is in the reverse order. Some of our brothers wait until the Imam is about to finish his khutbah; then they come in to catch the two rak'as of Salat ul-Jumu’ah. Such people also come into the fold of those whom Allah (SWT) rebuked in the Qur’an in Surah al-Jumu’ah.

Ameer Mustapha then reminded the congregation that there is no Zuhr on the day of Jumu’ah. Only those who miss their Jumu’ah prayers have to pray the regular Zuhr prayer instead. As for the Sunnah prayers on Jumu’ah, these are offered after the Jumu’ah prayers; four rak'as, if offered in the Masjid and two rak'as if offered at home. Also there are no four rak'as of Sunnah before Jumu’ah prayers as we are accustomed to offer before Zuhr prayers if we follow Imam Abu Hanifa and two rak’as if we follow other Imams. The Sunnah before Salat ul-Jumu’ah is to offer as many rak'as of nawafil (supererogatory prayers) as one desires or to recite the Qur’an until the Imam comes. There is, however, a Sunnah which is the Tahiyyatul Masjid (praying two rak’as on entering the masjid). We have a hadith that says that Tahiyyatul Masjid is permissible and one is to pray two rak’as on entering the masjid even if the Imam has begun the sermon.

Next, Ameer Mustapha explained the necessity of keeping quiet while the khutbah is being delivered. The khutba is to be listened to attentively. It is impermissible to engage in talking, socializing, attending to phone, playing with the prayer rug or any such activities once the khutbah has started. If we are not mindful of these things, our Salat ul-Jumu’ah may well be nullified. To engage in conversation before the khutba starts is permissible but laghw (useless talk) is to be avoided. What is the position of those who come late for Salat ul-Jumu’ah and catch only one rakah? Catching one rak’a is permissible and does not invalidate Salat ul-Jumu’ah. However, in case one does not even catch one rak’a, then the opinion of the ulama’ is that Salat ul-Jumu’ah gets nullified and Zuhr has to be prayed instead with the exception of Imam Abu Hanifah.

Towards the end of the sermon, Ameer Mustapha once again exhorted the congregation to be mindful about the etiquettes of Jumu’ah. He made supplications to Allah (SWT) to help our Muslim brothers and sisters all over the world, especially in the troubled areas of the Arab world where a new phenomenon was unfolding to bring about an end to the despotic rule of tyrants and oppressors.

End

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(1) The ‘Awrah of a woman with respect to a man who is her mahram does not include her hair, ears, neck, upper part of the chest, arms and legs. Other parts from the knees to the beginning of the upper part of the chest are ‘awrah and should not be exposed before anyone, man or woman except her husband.