

Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ clothing

Introduction

The attire and clothing of all prophets are considered blessed and important. In fact, in the Holy Qur'an, we learn that the clothing of prophets are miraculous. Sayyiduna Ya'qub (peace be upon him) suffered temporary blindness as a result of his constant weeping upon the disappearance of his son Sayyiduna Yusuf (peace be upon him). When the brothers finally met Yusuf and he told them all who he was, Sayyiduna Yusuf (peace be upon him) was informed of this condition. He said:

اذهبوا بقميصي هذا فألقوه علي وجه ابي يأت بصيرا

Go with this shirt of mine and cast it over my father's face, and he shall recover his sight (12: 93)

When his instructions were fulfilled, then his sight was miraculously restored:

فلما ان جاء البشير القاه علي وجهه فارتد بصيرا

Then, when the bearer of good news came, he cast the shirt over his face and his sight came back to him (12: 96).

A shirt is a shirt. But a shirt of a prophet can cure blindness.

What were the clothes of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ like?

a. They were **clean**. One party of visitors met the Prophet (peace & blessings of Allah be upon him). When they left, they marvelled at the perfection of the Prophet. One of them commented (*Zia al-Nabi*, 456):

يا بني ما راينا مثل هذا الرجل اي خلقا وخلقاً لا احسنَ وجهها و لا انقي ثوبا و لا البنَ كلاما و راينا كالنور يخرج من فيه

We have not seen anyone like this man, in outer or inner qualities. Nor have we seen anyone more beautiful in terms of face, or cleaner in clothes, or softer in words. We have seen that light almost emits from his blessed mouth.

He encouraged us to do the same. In a hadith reported by al-Tabarani (*al-Insan al-Kamil*, Alawi, 23) he (peace & blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

ان من كرامة المؤمن نقاء ثوبه و رضاه باليسير

Certainly it is the nobility of a believer to have clean clothes and to be content with a small [amount].

b. He wore **white** often and encouraged his followers to do so too. He said that such clothing is اطيب and اطهر.

c. They expressed **humility**. Any type of clothing that expressed pride and arrogance were not part of his attire. This is why he was strict on trousers hanging below the ankles - at the time, this was a means of showing arrogance.

d. He would wear **nice clothes**. Allah is beautiful and He loves beauty. There is nothing wrong with nice clothes, so long as it is done as an expression of Allah's favour. It should not be done for the sake of showing off.

e. He would **praise Allah** when he wore new clothes. As youngsters we learned Du'as that should be recited when one wears new clothes for the first time. One of them is:

الحمد لله الذي كساني هذا الثوب ورتقنيه من غير حول مني ولا قوة

e. He would make use of **old clothes**. In a hadith reported by Abu Dawud in his *Sunan*, the Prophet (peace & blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

الا تسمعون الا تسمعون ان البذاذة من الايمان ان البذاذة من الايمان

Do you not hear? Do you not hear? Indeed wearing old clothes is a sign of faith, indeed wearing old clothes is a sign of faith.

We should give our clothes to the poor, when we stop wearing them ourselves. Old clothes should be repaired and sewed, as this is his Sunna.

f. He would start with the **right**, wherever possible, when putting on clothes (the right shirt sleeve first, for example).

The significance of his ﷺ clothing

*Sayyiduna Mu'awiya (may Allah be pleased with him) possessed the shirt, nails and hairs of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He asked to be buried with these relics. When he made this bequest he remarked, 'If anything will benefit me [in the grave], then these relics will'.

*One of the major problems in al-Madina were the hypocrites. They caused unrest for the Prophet (peace & blessings of Allah be upon him) at every opportunity. They would pretend to be Muslims and then help the enemies of Islam. The main culprit was Ibn Ubayy. When he was on his death bed, he sent someone to request that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) give him his blessed shirt, so he could be buried in it. The Prophet (peace & blessings of Allah be upon him) sent his outer shirt. Ibn Ubayy said, 'Please I want the inner shirt, the one that touches your blessed body. So the Prophet (peace & blessings of Allah be upon him) sent that so he could be buried in it. Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) was sitting with the Prophet (peace & blessings of Allah be upon him) and asked, 'O Messenger of Allah! Why are you giving your blessed shirt to a vile, unclean and evil individual? The Prophet (peace & blessings of Allah be upon him) replied:

ان قميصي لا يغني عنه من الله شيئاً فلعل الله ان يدخل به الفا في الاسلام

My shirt will not benefit this person at all. But with the *baraka* of this shirt, I hope that a thousand hypocrites will accept Islam.

When the hypocrites around Ibn Ubayy heard that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had accepted his request to be buried in the shirt of his, they realised how compassionate, forgiving and merciful he really was. They came to their senses. They hung their heads in shame and decided to repent sincerely to Allah. The same day the Prophet (peace & blessings of Allah be upon him) gave him his shirt and said that a thousand hypocrites will accept Islam, that *same* day, one thousand plus hypocrites accepted Islam.

Conclusion

In a famous hadith, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) reiterated that 'Allah is beautiful and loves beauty.' Therefore Islam does encourage the believers to make an effort in their outward appearance. At the same time, the clothing should be within the parameters of modesty. For the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, 'modesty is part of faith.' In another saying he warned that when people lose all sense of modesty, then they lose all sense of dignity and faith too. In other words:

و لباس التقوي ذلك خير

And the clothing of *Taqwa*, that is best (7: 26) .

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