

THEME 32 - BEING MODEST

فَضْلُ الْحَيَاءِ

Learning objectives:

- To learn the meaning of modesty.
- To understand the benefits of modesty.
- To learn how the Prophet ﷺ was modest.

In this theme, you will learn:

Modesty is being shy, it is reflected in decent behaviour, speech and dress for both men and women. Shyness is an uneasy feeling that makes you aware of the wrong, shyness is being polite and respectful. A shy person thinks before talking and doing an action and is a good listener, conscious of their actions and responsibilities. Dress is a good way of expressing one's modesty. That is why Islam encourages people to dress in a modest manner, like wearing a headscarf and loose clothes.

قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: ﴿وَقُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَعْضُوا مِنْ أْبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ذَلِكَ أَزْكَى لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ﴾ [النور: 30]. وَقَالَ تَعَالَى: ﴿وَيَأْتِيهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلٌّ لَأَزُوجِكَ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَاءِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلْبِيبِهِنَّ ۚ ذَلِكَ آدْنَىٰ أَنْ يُعْرَفْنَ فَلَا يُؤْذَيْنَ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا﴾ [الاحزاب: 59]

Allah ﷻ says: “Tell believing men to lower their gaze and be modest; that is the best for them. Allah is aware of what they do” (24:30). “Prophet, tell your wives, daughters, and the believers’ wives to draw their over coats close around; that will ensure they are recognised and will not be harmed. Allah is Forgiving, Caring” (33:59).

[1] عن ابن عمر أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مَرَّ عَلَى رَجُلٍ مِنَ الْأَنْصَارِ وَهُوَ يَعْظُ أَخَاهُ فِي الْحَيَاءِ، فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ: «دَعَهُ، فَإِنَّ الْحَيَاءَ مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ»
متفقٌ عَلَيْهِ.

1. Ibn ‘Umar ﷺ reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ walked past a man who was telling his brother not to be modest. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Leave him alone, for modesty is part of Iman.”

COMMENTARY: This hadith provides a valuable insight into the concept of modesty and its significance in Islam. The incident centres around a man from the Ansar (the early Muslim inhabitants of Madina) who was encouraging his brother to be less shy or reserved in a particular situation. However, upon witnessing this interaction, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) intervenes and advises them to let the man be, highlighting the importance of modesty as an integral part of faith (Iman).

[2] عن عمران بن حصينٍ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ: «الْحَيَاءُ لَا يَأْتِي إِلَّا بِخَيْرٍ» متفقٌ عَلَيْهِ.

2. ‘Imran bin Haseen ﷺ reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Modesty leads to nothing but goodness.”

COMMENTARY: This concise hadith, uttered by the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), encapsulates a profound lesson on the virtue of modesty and its positive impact on one's character and actions. In just a few words, the Prophet highlights the direct relationship between modesty and goodness, emphasising that embracing modesty can only lead to positive outcomes in a person's life.

[3] عن أبي هريرة أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ قَالَ: «الْإِيمَانُ بِضْعٌ وَسَبْعُونَ أَوْ بِضْعٌ وَسِتُّونَ شُعْبَةً: فَأَفْضَلُهَا قَوْلُ: لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَأَدْنَاهَا إِمَاطَةُ الْأَذَى عَنِ الطَّرِيقِ، وَالْحَيَاءُ شُعْبَةٌ مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ» متفقٌ عَلَيْهِ.

3. Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Faith has sixty plus or seventy plus branches. The best is the testimony of Faith: ‘there is no god except Allah’ and the least is the removal of a harmful object from the path and modesty is a branch of Iman.”

[4] عن أبي سعيد الخدري قال: كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ أَشَدَّ حَيَاءً مِنَ الْعَذْرَاءِ فِي خِدْرِهَا، فَإِذَا رَأَى شَيْئًا يَكْرَهُهُ عَرَفْنَاهُ فِي وَجْهِهِ. متفقٌ عَلَيْهِ.

4. Abu Saeed Al-Khudri رضي الله عنه reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was more shy than a virgin in her house, so if he saw something that he did not like, we recognised it by his facial expression”.

Activities:

- Discuss the meaning of modesty and shyness in relation to Islam and other cultures.
- Explore why in Islam modesty and shyness are considered to be a good character to have.
- Write a list of the things the Prophet ﷺ use to do that are regarded modest.
- Write a short article about ‘why Muslims believe it is important to be modest’. Explain your reasons by using the Quran and Hadith to support your ideas.

In this theme you have learnt:

- Modesty is part of faith.
- Modesty leads to nothing but goodness.
- The Prophet ﷺ was modest and shy.
- We don't show off as that is Shaytan's habit.
- We talk and act sensibly so no one is offended.