

Ruling on a woman wearing the abayah that comes from the shoulders

What is the ruling on wearing the kind of abayah that comes from the shoulders?.

Praise be to Allaah.

The abayah that comes from the shoulders is not the kind of dress prescribed in sharee'ah that the Muslim woman should wear, because the

' abayah that is prescribed in sharee'ah should cover the entire body from head to toe; this is more like the jilbab that Allaah enjoined in the verse (interpretation of the meaning):

“ O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks [Jalaabeeb pl. of jilbaab] (veils) all over their bodies (i.e. screen themselves completely except the eyes or one eye to see the way). That will be better, that they should be known (as free respectable women) so as not to be annoyed. And Allaah is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful ”

[al-Ahzaab 33:59]

The jilbaab is a cloak that is worn over the head cover (khimaar), like an abayah.

It was narrated that Umm Salamah said: “ When the verse ‘ to draw their cloaks [Jalaabeeb pl. of jilbaab] (veils) all over their bodies ’ was revealed, the women of the Ansaar came out looking as if there were crows on their heads, because of their outer garments. ”

(Narrated by Abu Dawood, 4101; classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh Abi Dawood, 3456)

‘ Aa ’ ishah also described the woman ’ s jilbaab as coming from her head, as she said: “ The riders would pass us when we were with the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) in ihraam. When they came close, each of us would lower her jilbaab from her head over her face, and when they went away we would uncover (our faces). ”

(Narrated by Abu Dawood, 1833; Ibn Maajah, 2935. al-Albaani said: its isnaad is jayyid, in Mishkaat al-Masaabeeh, 2690)

In addition to that, wearing the abayah coming from the shoulders involves imitating men, because this is what men do, not what women do.

The following question was submitted to the Standing Committee:

In recent times a kind of ‘ abayah which shows the shape of the body and is tight has become popular; it is composed of two light layers of thin material, and it has wide sleeves and embroidery and designs, and it is worn coming from the shoulders. What is the Islamic ruling on this kind of abayah? Please advise us, may Allaah reward you.

After studying the matter, the Committee answered that the ‘ abayah which is Islamically acceptable for women is the “ jilbaab ” , which is what fulfils the aims of sharee ’ ah, namely complete covering and avoiding fitnah (temptation). Based on this, the woman ’ s abayah must meet the following conditions:

- 1 – It must be made of thick material that does not show what is underneath, and it should not cling to the body.
- 2 – It should cover the entire body, and be loose enough so that it does not show the shape.
- 3 – It should be open from the front only, and the sleeve

openings should be narrow.

4 – It should not have any adornment that attracts attention, so it must be free of designs, decorations, writing and symbols.

5 – It should not resemble the dress of kaafir women, or men.

6 – The ‘ abayah should come down from the top of the head.

Based on the above, the kind of abayah mentioned in the question is not the kind of abayah that is prescribed for women in sharee’ ah, so it is not permissible to wear it, because it does not meet the necessary conditions. It is also not permissible to wear any other kind of ‘ abayah that does not meet the necessary conditions, or to import them, manufacture them, sell them or distribute them among the Muslims, because this is a kind of cooperating in sin and transgression, and Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“ but do not help one another in sin and transgression. And fear Allaah. Verily, Allaah is Severe in punishment ”

[al-Maa’ idah 5:3]

The Committee has stated that and has advised the believing women to fear Allaah and to cover their entire bodies with the jilbaab and khimaar from non-mahram men, in obedience to Allaah and His Messenger

(peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), and so as to avoid the causes of fitnah and temptation.

And Allaah is the Source of strength. May Allaah send blessings and peace upon our Prophet Muhammad and his family and companions.

Al-Lajnah al-Daa’ imah li’ I-Buhooth wa’ I-Fataawa.