

THE CHOICE AND STRUGGLE TO WEAR HIJAB

By Sister Amatullah-
(Reverted Muslimah)

One of the most difficult decisions many Muslim sisters face is the decision to start wearing Hijab. This is certainly true for reverts, but may also be true for sisters whose families or even whose cultures are not particularly observant. As a revert myself I have been through the whole thing. I would like to offer some advice that I hope, *Insha-Allah* will be helpful to sisters who are considering wearing Hijab but find that something is holding them back. The first step is to learn about Hijab. There is so much information out there. Muslim sisters will assist you in this regard.

This is where the difficulties usually come in. For many sisters, it truly is a struggle. I remember very vividly how scared I was the first day I wore Hijab and went out in public. As long as you are just wearing the modest clothes, nobody has to know that you are a Muslim. Once you complete your Hijab, you are suddenly announcing to everyone who sees you that "I am a Muslim." Here is some advice based on own experiences:

Wear it for the sake of Allah ﷻ

Various statements are made about why you should wear Hijab, such as for modesty or for protection. But the real reason that we wear Hijab is that Allah ﷻ has commanded it. Whenever anyone asks you why you dress this way, that's the only answer you need to give him. Allah ﷻ is the source of everything we have — our existence, our life, our capability, even our goodness. If Allah ﷻ stopped sustaining us, we would vanish in that instant. If He ﷻ took away what He gives us, we would never have even a

speck of it. If we worked for millions of years, we could never repay Him for all that He has given us. And yet He does give it to us, and all He asks in return is that we do our best to obey what He has commanded us to do. Surely, wearing Hijab is a very small thing that you can do for Him compared to what He does for you!

Wear it for the hope of attaining paradise

Allah ﷻ makes tests for us in this world. He makes things difficult for us. He wants to see if we will remember Him, if we will have faith in Him, and if we will trust in Him. These qualities are what is meant by *sabr* (patience). Allah ﷻ does not lose the work of anyone, ever

فَاسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّي لَا أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَمَلٍ
مِّنْكُمْ مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ ۖ بَعْضُكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْضٍ
فَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَأُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأُودُوا فِي
سَبِيلِي وَقَاتَلُوا وَقُتِلُوا لَأُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ
وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ
ثَوَابًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الثَّوَابِ

So, their Lord answered their prayer: "I do not allow the labor of any worker from among you, male or female, to go to waste. You are similar to one another. So, those who emigrated, and were expelled from their homes, and were tortured in My way, and

fought, and were killed, I shall certainly write off their evil deeds, and shall certainly admit them into gardens beneath which rivers flow, as a reward from Allah. It is Allah with Whom lies the beauty of the reward. (3:195)

Even if it seems like nobody is paying attention to you or notices or appreciates the good things that you do, Allah ﷻ has seen them and He will not forget them. Even when it seems like the whole world is against you, Allah ﷻ is always there for you when you turn to Him. Remember this. Allah ﷻ always wants the best for us and in His wisdom He knows why each thing that happens to us is in fact best for us. When it seems like everything is going wrong and life is just one disaster after another, it is easy to forget this and to become bitter and skeptical. Yet we must remember always to have faith that Allah ﷻ knows best why He has willed this for us, and we must always ask Him only "Make me pleased with what You have willed for me."

This world we live in, although it seems at times to be the only real thing, is actually fleeting compared to the Hereafter, which is better and more abiding. The trials of this world will seem as fleeting as a nightmare when seen from the Hereafter, and the pleasures of this world will also seem as fleeting as a dream when seen from the Hereafter. It's our happiness in the Hereafter that we should be most worried about attaining, because it is what will last forever. And it's our suffering in the Hereafter that we should be most worried about avoiding, because it also will last forever.

Allah ﷻ has promised Paradise to those who remain steadfast in their faith in Him and who trust in Him. The more difficult it is for you to be patient, the greater the reward for it. So what will it be? Ease in this world and perhaps the eternal sufferings in Hell? Or difficulty in this world and *Insha-Allah* the eternal bliss of Paradise? Let's face it, the old clichés are true. There's no such thing as a free lunch and you can almost never have your cake and eat it too. We've all got to face difficulties some time. Better by far that

they be in this world than in the Hereafter. So that's what you should set your mind to.

Yes, it's difficult to wear Hijab. You may be rejected by your family or your friends, and you may face harassment and persecution or be fired from your job. These are very scary thoughts, but if you have *sabr* and keep trusting in Allah ﷻ, I swear to you sisters, this is the path to Paradise. And when you look back on the Day of Judgment, you will know that it was worth it and you will have no regrets.

Wear it today and trust in Allah ﷻ for tomorrow.

What do I mean by that? What I mean is that you should take it one day at a time, or even one outing at a time. Sometimes the future seems to stretch on forever and ever and you don't think you can make it that long. You want to give up before you even begin. So sometimes the best thing to do is keep your mind focused on what is immediately at hand. Allah ﷻ will take care of the future. If you have to go out to the market, then concentrate on being able to wear Hijab just for this activity and on getting through it. If you do get through it and nothing bad happens, then give thanks to Allah ﷻ for making it easy for you, and turn your mind to your next outing. Or if you have to go out to school or work, then concentrate on being able to wear Hijab just for this one day and on getting through it. And give thanks to Allah ﷻ when you have made it, and turn your mind to the next day. Eventually the outings will turn into days and the days into weeks, and the weeks into months. One day you will realize that you have been wearing Hijab for quite a long time and it isn't really as bad as you feared, and Allah ﷻ helped you get through it. Don't be ashamed. The most important thing is to be patient and keep your trust in Allah ﷻ always.

Wear it and spite Satan.

My dear sisters, the worries and fears in your mind are the whisperings of the Satan. He wants to take you out of obeying Allah ﷻ. It is very easy to keep going around in circles in your mind and to dwell on all the things that could go wrong. I know that I myself have a tendency to do this. I put it off and I dither and wait for "the perfect time." If I let myself be, I would never do anything at all!

Just remember that you do not need to be perfect in faith to wear Hijab. If perfection were a qualification, where is the sister who could wear it? You must also not fall into the trap of thinking that you should wait until all your worries and fears have disappeared. They never will. Trust me on this, sisters. True courage is going ahead to do what's right even though you are still nervous and scared. So don't listen to Satan. Ignore the worries and fears he whispers into your mind. Tell him that you will not let him keep you from obeying Allah ﷻ and you will not let him rule your life.

Make the decision to wear it.

Once you have come to know in your heart that you must wear Hijab, then all you have to do is set a day and JUST DO IT! This is the only way. Set a day and when that day comes, you have to do it. Don't back down. Don't give up. Do it. Offer *salat-ul-haajah*. Make *du'aa*. Make lots of *du'aa*. Do not stop making *du'aa*. Ask Allah ﷻ to give you strength. Ask Him to make it easy for you. Ask Him to help you. He will, I swear it to you. He is always there for you when you turn to Him. Remember how much He has given you, how everything that you have, even your very existence, is due to Him. Remember that He deserves this from you. Remember the promise of Paradise. Remember that remaining patient and faithful through difficulty now may lead to Paradise, *Insha-Allah*. Even if bad things happen, keep these thoughts in your mind. Don't worry

about tomorrow. Just concentrate on getting through today and leave tomorrow to Allah ﷻ until it gets here. That's how you do it.

Here are some final words of encouragement. I have been wearing Hijab for many years. I do not regret it. I have never for one instance regretted it. *Insha-Allah*, you will discover that you will feel the same. Within a few months I came to feel that I would not be properly dressed if I went out not wearing Hijab. This is when you know that you have made it! Never feel that you are alone, or that you are the only one who is scared and worried and nervous. Just about every other sister who has traveled down this road has gone through the same things. I know I have.

[Courtesy of *Al-Farooq International*]

FAITH & MODESTY

IBN UMAR HAS RELATED THAT RASULULLAH ﷺ SAID, "MODESTY AND IMAAN (FAITH) ARE BOUND TO EACH OTHER. WHEN OF THEM IS WITHDRAWN, THE OTHER ALSO LEAVES."
(MA'ARIFUL HADITH)

ABU UMAMA ﷺ HAS RELATED THAT A MAN ASKED THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ, "WHAT IS TRUE FAITH?" RASULULLAH ﷺ RESPONDED, "WHEN YOUR GOOD DEED PLEASURES YOU AND EVIL DEED GRIEVES YOU, (KNOW THEN) THAT YOU ARE A BELIEVER."
(MUSNAD AHMAD)