

الحياء Haya the modesty

Haya or modesty is a very essential thing to have with our eemaan/faith. Haya means shyness, feeling not right on certain things, feeling incomplete etc.

Haya keeps a person away from all unlawful acts and haram matters.

Feeling shy to halal matters is not promoted in our Deen. But feeling shy to commit a sin is way better than most optional Ibadah/worship.

Because staying away from haram and preventing oneself from committing a sin is a compulsory duty upon every Muslim men and women. There's a story mentioned in the books of hadith where a man from ansar was admonishing his brother for being shy. And Rasulallah sallallahu alaihi wasallam told him to leave his brother alone, because shyness is not bad at all. The hadith is here

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ يُونُسَ، حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الْعَزِيزِ بْنُ أَبِي سَلَمَةَ، حَدَّثَنَا ابْنُ شِهَابٍ، عَنْ سَالِمٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عُمَرَ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا مَرَّ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَلَى رَجُلٍ وَهُوَ يُعَاتَبُ فِي الْحَيَاءِ يَقُولُ إِنَّكَ لَتَسْتَحْيِي. حَتَّى كَأَنَّهُ يَقُولُ قَدْ أَضَرَّ بِكَ. فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " دَعُهُ فَإِنَّ الْحَيَاءَ مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ ".

Narrated by `Abdullah bin `Umar raziyallahu anhum:

The Prophet (ﷺ) passed by a man who was admonishing his brother regarding Haya and was saying, "You are very shy, and I am afraid that might harm you." On that, Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "Leave him, for Haya' is (a part) of Faith." (Sahih al-Bukhari)

So the hadith mentions Haya as part of our Faith. We can never detach it from our character. We shouldn't even try to demonise it. And we should not portray it as an awkward thing in our akhlaq/character for anything, except when someone feels shy in lawful and halal matters. Such as, we should not feel shy to ask questions while learning anything. Because questions clarify every difficult matter.

Our beloved Rasulallah sallallahu alaihi wasallam was always shy. Even more shy than virgin girls. This is what is mentioned in a hadith.

حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ الْجَعْدِ، أَخْبَرَنَا شُعْبَةُ، عَنْ قَتَادَةَ، عَنْ مَوْلَى، أَنَسٍ - قَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ اسْمُهُ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ أَبِي " عُثْبَةَ - سَمِعْتُ أَبَا سَعِيدٍ، يَقُولُ كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَشَدَّ حَيَاءً مِنَ الْعُذْرَاءِ فِي خِذْرِهَا

Narrated by Abu Saeid raziyallahu anhu:

The Prophet (ﷺ) was more shy (from Haya': pious shyness from committing religious indiscretions) than a veiled virgin girl. (Sahih al-Bukhari).

As our beloved prophet ﷺ was always shy, he wouldn't even wear vest like garments in front of people. Imam bukhari rahimahullah mentioned a hadith which mentions a story of Musa alaihissalaam. Where it was clear that Musa alaihissalaam was a shy person too. All ambia (prophets of Allah were shy in Their lives.

حَدَّثَنِي إِسْحَاقُ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، حَدَّثَنَا رَوْحُ بْنُ عُبَادَةَ، حَدَّثَنَا عَوْفٌ، عَنِ الْحَسَنِ، وَمُحَمَّدٍ، وَخَلَّاسٍ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ - قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " إِنَّ مُوسَى كَانَ رَجُلًا حَيَّيًّا سِتِيرًا، لَا يُرَى مِنْ جُلْدِهِ شَيْءٌ، اسْتَحْيَاءً مِنْهُ، فَأَذَاهُ مَنْ أَذَاهُ مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ، فَقَالُوا مَا يَسْتَتِرُ هَذَا التَّسْتُرُ إِلَّا مِنْ عَيْبٍ بِجُلْدِهِ، إِمَّا بَرَصٌ وَإِمَّا أُدْرَةٌ وَإِمَّا آفَةٌ. وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُبَرِّئَهُ مِمَّا قَالُوا لِمُوسَى فَخَلَا يَوْمًا وَحْدَهُ فَوَضَعَ ثِيَابَهُ عَلَى الْحَجَرِ ثُمَّ اغْتَسَلَ، فَلَمَّا فَرَغَ أَقْبَلَ إِلَى ثِيَابِهِ لِيَأْخُذَهَا، وَإِنَّ الْحَجَرَ عَدَا بِثَوْبِهِ، فَأَخَذَ مُوسَى عَصَاهُ وَطَلَبَ الْحَجَرَ، فَجَعَلَ يَقُولُ تَوْبِي حَجَرٌ، تَوْبِي حَجَرٌ، حَتَّى انْتَهَى إِلَى مَلٍ مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ، فَرَأَوْهُ عُرْيَانًا أَحْسَنَ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ، وَأَبْرَأَهُ مِمَّا يَقُولُونَ، وَقَامَ الْحَجَرُ فَأَخَذَ ثَوْبَهُ فَلَبَسَهُ، وَطَفِقَ بِالْحَجَرِ ضَرْبًا بِعَصَاهُ، فَوَاللَّهِ إِنَّ بِالْحَجَرِ لَنَدَبًا مِنْ أَثَرِ ضَرْبِهِ ثَلَاثًا أَوْ أَرْبَعًا أَوْ خَمْسًا، فَذَلِكَ قَوْلُهُ رَبِّمَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ آذَوْا مُوسَى فَبَرَّاهُ اللَّهُ مِمَّا قَالُوا وَكَانَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَجِيهًا. "

Narrated by Abu Huraira raziyallahu anhu:

Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "(The Prophet) Musa alaihissalaam was a shy person and used to cover his body completely because of his extensive shyness. One of the children of Israel hurt him by saying, 'He covers his body in this way only because of some defect in his skin, either leprosy or scrotal hernia, or he has some other defect.' Allah wished to clear Musa alaihissalaam of what they said about him, so one day while Musa alaihissalaam was in seclusion, he took off his clothes and put them on a stone and started taking a bath. When he had finished the bath, he moved towards his clothes so as to take them, but the stone took his clothes and fled; Musa alaihissalaam picked up his stick and ran after the stone saying, 'O stone! Give me my garment!' Till he reached a group of Bani Israel who saw him naked then, and found him the best of what Allah had created, and Allah cleared him of what they had accused him of. The stone stopped there and Musa

alaihissalaam took and put his garment on and started hitting the stone with his stick. By Allah, the stone still has some traces of the hitting, three, four or five marks. This was what Allah refers to in His Saying:-- "O you who believe! Be you not like those Who annoyed Musa, But Allah proved his innocence of that which they alleged, And he was honourable In Allah's Sight." (33:69) (Sahih al-Bukhari)

Although the story has different aspects of informative things, our key point is to see Musa alaihissalaam was a shy person.

When Haya goes away from a person he/she does whatever their mind tells them to do. Rasool ﷺ says in a hadith which is here

حَدَّثَنَا آدَمُ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ، عَنْ مَنْصُورٍ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ رَبِيعَ بْنَ جَرَّاشٍ يُحَدِّثُ، عَنْ أَبِي مَسْعُودٍ قَالَ: "قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: إِنَّ مِمَّا أَدْرَكَ النَّاسَ مِنْ كَلَامِ النَّبُوَّةِ الْأُولَى: إِذَا لَمْ تَسْتَخِيْ فَاصْنَعْ مَا شِئْتَ."

Abu Mas'ud said, "The Prophet, (ﷺ), said, "Part of what people know of the words of first prophethood is that if someone does not possess shyness, then he will do as he pleases." (Sahih)

Haya should be contemplated into all facets of our lives. Such as, modesty must be taken into consideration while wearing clothes. A woman must cover her whole body in front of a non-mahram man (excluding her feet, toes, hands according to some scholars). She must cover those parts from mahram which she covers up in salah. But for non mahram it's more extended, which we can find in the explanation of hijab. In like manner, a man must cover his body including navel to knees in front of all. And he should cover full body to everyone excluding hands, face, feet.

In parallel to garments, one should think of their eating, talking, drinking. Nothing should go to the extent of immoderate.