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Response to the lies and distortions of christian missionaries about the position of women in islam



Part 3, Written by Kevin el-Karim

"The most perfect of believers are those most perfect of character; and the best of you are the best of you to your spouses." Tirmidhi, Ibn Hibban

"None but a noble man treats women in an honourable manner. And none but an ignoble treats women disgracefully" At-Tirmithy

He wrote:

Women are ‘Awrah

Islam traditionally regards women as ‘awrah, a word which is used in the Quran: Tell the believing men to lower their gaze and be modest. That is purer for them. Lo! Allah is aware of what they do. And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and be modest, and to display of their adornment only that which is apparent, and to draw their veils over their bosoms, and not to reveal their adornment save to their own husbands or fathers or husbands' fathers, or their sons or their husbands' sons, or their brothers or their brothers' sons or sisters' sons, or their women, or their slaves, or male attendants who lack vigour, or children who know naught of women's nakedness. And let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment. And turn unto Allah together, O believers, in order that ye may succeed. S. 24:30-31 Pickthall

O believers, let those your right hands own and those of you who have not reached puberty ask leave of you three times -- before the prayer of dawn, and when you put off your garments at the noon, and after the evening prayer -- three times of nakedness for you. There is no fault in you or them, apart from these, that you go about one to the other. So God makes clear to you the signs; and God is All-knowing, All-wise. S. 24:58 Arberry

From the above we can gather that ‘awrah refers to a person's nakedness which must be covered. In his explanation to Sura 24:58, the late Muslim translator Muhammad Asad defines the word as: [Lit., "three [periods] of nakedness (thalath awrat) for you". This phrase is to be understood both literally and figuratively. Primarily, the term awrah signifies those parts of a mature person's body which cannot in decency be exposed to any but one's wife or husband or, in case of illness, one's physician. In its tropical sense, it is also used to denote spiritual "nakedness", as well as situations and circumstances in which a person is entitled to absolute privacy. The number "three" used twice in this context is not, of course, enumerative or exclusive, but is obviously meant to stress the recurrent nature of the occasions on which even the most familiar members of the household, including husbands, wives and children, must respect that privacy.] (Source; bold emphasis ours)

What this essentially means is that a woman must entirely cover herself with the exception of the face and hands because her entire person is classified as indecent, as nudity, and therefore harmful to men to look at:

Response:

It's her beauty, her honor and private body, not indecency. No strange man has the right to enjoy and look at her privacy, except her husband. Further Sheikh Gibril.Fouad Haddad comments:

Awrah:

The correct definition of `awra, a word applied to both men and women, is “private parts”.

He wrote:

The Prophet said: "A woman should be concealed, for when she goes out the devil looks at her."

Response:

The devil is an euphemism for depraved men. Concealed is a figure way of speech, it refers to covering ones awrah. Sham shamoun obvious has a problem with understanding figure way of speech.

He wrote:

Alî was with the Prophet when the latter asked: What is the best trait in women ? but no-one spoke. Ali said: When I returned I asked Fatima and she replied: that men do not see them .I mentioned this to the Prophet and he said: Truly, Fat.ima comes from me. (Narrated by al-Bazzâr in his Musnad)

Response:

The hadith speaks about the best trait in women. Fatima, the prophet's daughter explained this as: "That men do not see them". She refers with this to the modesty of muslim women and fear that strange men see their private parts and beauty. In other words the muslim women protect their dignity and honor by not letting men see them, which refers to their private body / awrah. She's modest and modesty is one of her beautys and best traita. This is something that some christians with double moral like Sham Shamoun cannot understand.

He wrote:

Renowned Muslim scholar and philosopher Al-Ghazali wrote: If the husband wants to enjoy her body, she should not refuse. The Prophet said: If the wife of a man dies while he is pleased with her, she will enter Paradise. The Prophet said: When a woman prays five times a day, fasts the month of Ramazan, saves her private parts and obeys her husband, she will enter the Paradise of her Lord. The Prophet said about the women: They bear children, give birth to children and show affection to children. Even though they do not come to their husbands, they will enter Paradise if they pray. The Prophet said: I peeped into Hell and found that the majority of its inmates are women. It was asked: Why, O Messenger of God? He said: They take recourse to much curse and deny relatives. There is another Hadis: I peeped into Paradise and found that there are a few women there. I asked: Where are the women? He said: Two things of reddish colour stood as a stumbling block against them- gold and Zafran (ornaments and varied dresses). Once a girl came to the Prophet and asked: I don't want to get married. The Prophet said: Yes, get married and it is better. A woman of Khasham tribe once came to the Prophet and asked him: I want to marry, but what are the rights of the husband? He said: When he wants her, she will not refuse it even though she remains on a camel's back. She will not give anything of his house in charity without his permission. If she does it, she will commit a sin and her husband will get rewards. She will not keep optional fast without his permission. If she does it and becomes hungry and thirsty, it will not be accepted from her. If she goes out of his house without his permission, the angels curse him[sic] till she returns to his house or till she repents. The Prophet said: When a woman stays within her house, she becomes more near to God. Her prayer in the courtyard of her house is more meritorious than her prayer in mosque. Her prayer in a room is better than her prayer in her courtyard. The Prophet said: A woman is like a private part. When she comes out, the devil holds her high. He said: There are ten private parts of a woman. When she gets married, her husband keeps one private part covered; and when she dies, the grave covers other parts. The duties of a wife towards her husband are many, two out of them are essentially necessary. The first one is to preserve chastity and to keep secret the words of her husband and the second thing is not to demand unnecessary things and to refrain from unlawful wealth which her husband earns. (Imam Ghazali's Ihya' 'Ulum-Ud-Din ,Book II, pp. 42-43)

Response:

I will discuss these commonly misquoted hadith step by step. It's also important to know and understand that in islam a particular hadith must be understood in the context of general rulings and other hadith. The last part i mentioned is something which christian missionaries mostly fail to understand.

1:

Misquoted Hadith:

The Prophet said: "I peeped into Hell and found that the majority of its inmates are women."

Comment:

The Ahaadith that indicate the women as the major inhabitants of Jahannam refer to that time when Rasulullah had physically seen Jannah and Jahannam. They do not mention that it will always remain like tha, see Faydhul Baari and Malfoozaat-e-Kashmiri vol.4 page.244

2:

Misquoted Hadith:

The Prophet said: "If the wife of a man dies while he is pleased with her, she will enter Paradise"

Comment:

This is a weak hadith narrated by al-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah with a chain containing two unknowns. Nevertheless the hadith means that after her religious duties, the wife's greatest social duty is to her husband, while the latter's greatest social duty is to his mother as established by the narration: "The one person in the world owed the greatest right by a woman is her husband, and the one person in the world owed the greatest right by the man is his mother"

3:

Misquoted Comment:

Her prayer in the courtyard of her house is more meritorious than her prayer in mosque. Her prayer in a room is better than her prayer in “her courtyard

Comment:

Every prayer of a man in his house is also better than in the mosque except for the obligatory prayer. Secondly the prophet also said: “Do not prevent the maidservants of Allah from going to the mosques “

4:

Strange Hadith:

Ali reported the Prophet saying: "Women have ten ('awrat). When she gets married, the husband covers one, and when she dies the grave covers the ten."

Comment:

Listed among the forgeries by al-Fattani in Tadhkirat al-Mawdu`at. To adduce such a narration in a debate on Women in Islam shows ignorance

5:

Misquoted hadith

A woman of Khasham tribe once came to the Prophet and asked him: I want to marry, but what are the rights of the husband ? He said: When he wants her, she will not refuse it even though she remains on a camel's back.

Comment:

A:

This hadith is hyperbolic and not to be taken literally

B:

Its gist is that the wife should not refuse her husband's advances, and

C:

The opposite is also established from the Qur'an:

Qu'ran 4:129

{turn not away (from a woman) altogether, so as to leave her (as it were) hanging}

D:

The prophet approved Salman's word to Abu al-Darda:

Bukhari, vol 7, nr 127

“and your wife has a right over you.” Shayk G.F. Haddad comments:” this unanimously means cohabitation.”

E:

And al-Qurtubi said:

Tafsir al-Qurtubi for 2:178

“She has over him the same right of sexual cohabitation he has over her”

F:

The prophet explicitly stipulated that a Muslim must seek his wife's permission even for coitus interruptus. Narrated by Umar Ibn Khattab: "The Prophet forbade the practice of 'azl with a free woman except with her permission."

Fataawa al-Shaykh Muhammad ibn ‘Uthaymeen, Fataawa Islamiyyah, vol. 3, p. 190.

the scholars say that one should not engage in ‘azl with a free woman except with her permission, because she has the right to have children. Moreover, withdrawing without her permission diminishes her pleasure, because the woman’s pleasure can only be completed after ejaculation. So not asking her permission causes her to lose out on pleasure and on the possibility of having children. Hence we state the condition that this may only be done with her permission.

We see that a woman's satisfaction is particularly referred to in the interpretation of the hadiths which discuss penile withdrawal as a method of contraception. One stipulation is that the woman must consent because such a practice could interfere with her sexual fulfillment to which she is entitled in islam. Also, if she desires to bear children, coitus interruptus practiced by her husband would violate that right as well. This viewpoint as we have seen is based on a hadith transmitted by Umar ibn-al-Khattab who said that the Prophet forbade the practice of coitus interruptus with a woman except with her permission. The position regarding the woman's right to orgasm was developed over time by several Muslim jurists during the same period. The Prophet even cared so much for women’s pleasure, that he forbade sexual intercourse before foreplay with ones wife. This sort of understanding for women’s need and feelings can’t be found in the bible.

Al-Tibb al-Nabawi, 183, from Jabir ibn Abd Allah:

“the Messenger of Allah forbade from engaging in sexual intercourse before foreplay.”

Here we see that women in islam have the right to romantic foreplay and sexual pleasure. Nothing near such respect for the feelings of one's wife near is found even at the peak of Judeo-Christian civilization.

Zabidi, Ithaf al-Sada al Muttaqin, V 372

Imam al-Ghazali says: "Sex should begin with gentle words and kissing." Imam al-Zabidi adds:"This should include not only the cheeks and lips; and then he should caress the breasts and nipples, and every part of her body"

Moreover the Qu'ran says:

Qur'an 2.187

"They are garments for you and you are garments for them."

A husband and wife must protect each other from harm just like a garment protects the body from any harm and discomfort. A husband and wife who fulfill each others sexual needs will protect each other from fornication and adultery, just like a garment protects the body from harm. Therefore scholars agree that this verse confirms that both husband and wife must fulfill each others sexual needs. It is the nature of garments that they bring comfort, dignity, and keep one from indecency and harm. A husband and wife must exercise their rights within the qur'anic paradigm of love and mercy.

Scholars explain that particular rulings must be understood in the context of general rulings, for affirming one matter does not entail negating another. All rights in marriage must be understood within the clear context of the qur'anic command to "live together in excellence, love and mercy", and the words of the Prophet: "The most perfect of believers are those most perfect of character; and the best of you are the best of you to your spouses." In islam men are obligated to satisfy their wives during sexual intercourse, and to act romantic with them. Marital rape is strict forbidden, see:

http://www.answering-christianity.com/karim/islamic_way_of_making_love_to_wife.htm

http://www.answering-christianity.com/karim/sex_as_sadaqa.htm

http://www.answering-christianity.com/karim/no_marital_rape.htm

http://www.answering-christianity.com/karim/women_rights_for_sex.htm

The bible does not give women any rights to foreplay or sexual demands. The wife must obey her husband in everything. The bible doesn't care for womens feelings and need to foreplay.

Ephesians 5:24

Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything

This biblical verse moreover teaches us that a woman must obey her husband when he wants sexual intercourse, she has to submit to him in everything and therefor cannot refuse his request. The word everything clearly includes sex too. So a wife in christianity must submit to her husbands request for sex. Here again we see how hypocrite christian missionaries are when they attack islam on women issues. The bible clearly puts the wife in an inferior position, where the husband in everything can demand his wifes submission.

How is the church to be subject to Christ ? The answer is obvious: *in everything* ! Christ demands nothing short of total and absolute and unconditional obedience to Himself. In fact, 1 Samuel chapter 15 of the bible moreover teaches us (using the case of King Saul) that partial obedience is actually wicked disobedience in God's sight. So if the wife is to portray the correct picture, she must obey and submit to her husband *in everything*. The christian scholar, Rev. Kerry Ptacek who is a church planter in the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in the Tennessee-Alabama Presbytery located in Birmingham Alabama comments:

Rev. Kerry Ptacek Comments:

Since the fall of Adam, women have been cursed by a reminder of Eve's independence of her husband. God's words to Eve, "your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you," refer to a desire for power over her husband (Gen 3:16b). This would remind Adam's male descendents of the original failure to act as the representative head of the wife.

Although all wives experience Eve's desire to rule over their husbands, Paul's words are a command to Christian wives. The Bible provides no basis for the notion that this submission can be compelled by the husband, aside from appealing to the Word of God. However, like all unrepentant sin, the refusal of a wife to submit to her husband can be a matter of church discipline if brought to the attention of an elder by her husband. Since failure to submit to her husband is "as to the Lord," persistence in such sin is especially incompatible with communicant membership in the church.

In verse 24 the word translated "therefore" in fact is *alla*, which usually is translated "but." As an adversative, it could be translated "on the other hand" or "nevertheless." Paul is saying that even though the husband is not a savior like Christ, wives must still be subject to their husbands as the church is to Christ.

It is possible that a Christian wife might think that because her husband is not very Christlike, she need not be subject to him. I believe that the tendency to interpret the role of the husband as a type of savior played into this error. Peter said Christian wives should submit even to husbands that "do not obey the word" (1 Pet 3:11). Rightly understood Paul is saying the husband's headship alone is the basis for a wife being "subject" -- this is the same Greek word as "submit" in verse 22 -- "to their own husbands in everything."

Others have sought to undermine this command by putting forward situations in which a husband commands his wife to sin. However, "in everything" refers to all matters, it does not envision complying with what the Bible considers to be sin. However, such sin should be clear, not conjectural.

Source:

<http://members.aol.com/kptacek/fscw.html>

Now people perhas may think that this are only men's opinions and interpretations of the bible. Well the biblical text "submit to your husbands in everything" is quite clear. Since the text is so clear without doubt, true christian women like Elizabeth Rice Handford, the wife of Pastor Walter Handford and the daughter of Dr. John R. Rice tell us the true meaning of verses like Ephesians 5:24. She wrote a book called "*me ? obey him ?*" " I shall quote some parts of her book, which show us the true meaning of the biblical verses about a wifes submission to her husband. After quoting Ephesians 5:24 she writes:

Mrs. Handford writes:

"it is impossible to find a single loophole, a single exception, an `if' or `unless.' The Scriptures say, without qualification, to the openminded reader, that a woman ought to obey her husband" .

Source:

"*ME? OBEY HIM?*" by Elizabeth Rice Handford, page 25

Mrs. Handford writes:

"She is to obey her husband as if he were God Himself."

Source:

"*ME? OBEY HIM?*" by Elizabeth Rice Handford, page 28

Notice that this are not the words of men, but the words of a true christian women who follows the true meaning of the bible. It shall be clear now that women in christianity cannot refuse their husbands request for sex.. Her father,the famous christian scholar Dr. John R.Rice. deals with this matter in his book *The Home*, chapter VII:

Dr. John R.Rice makes the next statement in light of Ephesians 5:24

"here the Scripture seems to take for granted that there will never be a case where God will call upon a wife to disobey her husband"

Source:

The Home, p. 106

6:

Misquoted hadith:

“A woman is like a private part / awrah . When she comes out, the devil holds her high”

Comment:

The above mistranslates ‘istashrafaha’ to mean ‘holds her high’ when in fact it means ‘stares up at her,’ and the devil is here an euphemism for depraved men. Secondly this applies to the uncovered woman who might allure such men. Those are the same values as in early Christian society whereas the modern Western world can no longer understand that women are private human beings and not public sexual objects. Similarly the awra here is not literal but figurative, signifying all that should remain private. The medieval philosopher Pierre Abelard said: “If you cannot understand figurative language, avoid intellectual pursuits.”

7:

Misquoted hadith:

If she goes out of his house without his permission, the angels curse him[sic] till she returns to his house or till she repents.

Comment:

A particular ruling must be understood in the context of general rulings. Islam requires that the wife adopt an attitude of adjustment and harmony with the husband and the husband is required to be affectionate and accommodating as far as possible for the needs of his wife. He must not impose any undue restrictions on her for this will ignite the wrath of god upon him and contradicts soerah 30:21. Finally i would like to quote the following fatwa made by scholars in the famous figh book of the maliki mahdab called ‘the guiding helper’.

The Guiding Helper, song 38, marriage, page 307

With regard to a wife seekings her husband’s permission before leaving the house, the proper perspective must be understood. In general circumstances of mutual trust, there is no need for a wife to ask permission from her husband to go out.

Moreover scholars like Ibn Qudama al-Maqdasi, al-Mughni, Kitab al-Walimah, Mas'alah Qasm al-Ibtida' explain that: "We believe that the reasoning of 'illah' behind such a ruling is more concerned with safety of women and the keeping of together the family unit than of restricting the women." Read also:

http://www.answering-christianity.com/karim/permission_for_women.htm

Imam Ghazali , by Dr. Mohammad Omar Farooq

Imam Ghazali is one of the towering figures in Islamic history, whose influence on the Muslim world continues to remain strong and deep. The rich spiritual dimension of his contribution is indisputable. His legacy of sagacity, wisdom, and enlightenment is a veritable treasure for many.

Yet, truth seekers and conscientious people who believe in Islam don't revere any individual scholar, however great and towering he is, with an absolutist mindframe. Hence, reading the following chapter from one of his notable works one would find remarks and views about women that are utterly degrading, verging on misogyny. Several years ago when an Islam basher cited some of these aspects from Imam Ghazali's writings I could not believe it.

After reading his views about women, it seems reasonable to say that, despite his all other contributions to the Islamic history, his views at least in this area are more his own than based on Islam, i.e., the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

Even though the entire presentation of thoughts by Imam Ghazali here projects an Islamic veneer, yet the hadiths that he reports are often without any source, or only selective hadiths that are more restrictive of women are mentioned without taking into consideration other ones that directly contradict these.

His weakness in the science of Hadith is well-known. Taj-ud-Din Subki has collected such traditions in *Tabaqat-Shafeiyya* that have been cited by the Imam in his *Ihya-ul-Uloom* but which cannot be traced to any source. (See *Tabaqat*, vol. IV, pp. 145-182).

[Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi, *A Short History of the Revivalist Movement in Islam*, Lahore, Islamic Publications, 5th edition, 1981; footnote on p. 66] Also, for specific example, see Appendix note #6 in Dr. Suhaib Hasan, *An Introduction to the Science of Hadith*, London, Al-Qur'an Society, 1994.]

Note:

Keep in mind dear reader that the christian missionary sham shamoun all the time quoted from the book 'Ihya-ul-Uloom' of Imam Ghazali, which as we now know from the scholar Taj-ud-Din Subki contains stories / hadith which cannot be traced to any source, which explains why these stories contradict the authentic hadith and qu'ran. Therefor these stories that contradict the authentic hadith and qu'ran are clear forgeries.

Predictably, Islam bashers have a field day with such works and thoughts. But conscientious Muslims should be less worried about the Islam bashers than the negative influence such Imams' views and opinions have on the Muslims minds and societies.

Muslims need to be proactive in self-critical reexamination of many such classical works. Such reexamination is not for wholesale repudiation and discrediting of the past contributions of many noble Islamic personalities. Rather, we must accept the fact that they were human beings and not without their personal biases or various influences and experiences that had shaped their positions. Conscientious Muslims would engage in critical reexamination like divers seeking pearls. In the deep ocean of knowledge and understanding, those who seek pearls must sift through more than just piles, separating pearls from empty shells and also watch out for shells that can be harmful.

As we cherish and utilize the pearls of wisdom from the works of scholars, such as Imam Ghazali, we also ignore the empty shells as well as anything potentially harmful. Noble souls, such as Imam Ghazali, never taught us to blindly follow and revere anyone, including himself, and he never would have endorsed and encouraged an uncritical acceptance of his views, especially when some views are simply unfounded from Islamic viewpoint or stand contradicted by the Qur'an, the Sunnah and the Seerah.

Source:

Counsel for Kings [Nasihat al-Muluk] , London, Oxford University Press, pp. 158-173

He wrote:

Others argue that even her hands and face should be covered. The following Salafi Muslims state:

The correct view is that a woman is obliged to cover her entire body, even the face and hands. Imam Ahmad said that even the nails of a woman are 'awrah, and this is also the view of Maalik. Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah said: " It seems that the view of Ahmad is that every part of her is 'awrah, even her nails, and this is also the view of Maalik." (Majmoo' al-Fataawa, 22/110).

Response:

I will quote from shayk al-bani's excellent book 'Jilbaab al-Mar'ah al-Muslimah' , which replies to those who say that it is obligatory for women to cover the face. In his book the shayk refutes the claims quoted by the christians missionary. The shayk writes:

“Shaykh at-Tuwaijree claimed that scholars unanimously held that the woman's face was awrah and many who have no knowledge, including some Ph.D. holders, have blindly followed him. In fact, it is a false claim, which no one before him has claimed. The books of Hambalite scholars which he learned from, not to mention those of others, contain sufficient proof of its falsehood. I have mentioned many of their statements in Ar-Radd. For example, Ibn Hubayrah al-Hambalee stated in his book, al-Ifsaah, that the face is not considered 'awrah in the three main schools of Islaamic law and he added, “It is also a narrated position of Imaam Ahmad.” Many Hambalite scholars preferred this narration in their books, like Ibn Qudaamah and others. Ibn Qudaamah in al-Mughnee explained the reason for his preference saying, “Because necessity demands that the face be uncovered for buying and selling, and the hands be uncovered for taking and giving.”

Among the Hambalite scholars, is the great Ibn Muflih al-Hambalee about whom Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyahi said: “There is no one under the dome of the sky more knowledgeable about the school of Imaam Ahmad than Ibn.Muflih.” And his teacher, Ibn Taymiyyah, once told him, “You aren't Ibn Muflih, you are Muflih!”

It is incumbent on me to convey Ibn Muflih's statements for the readers because of the knowledge and many benefits contained in them. Included in them is further confirmation of the falsehood of Shaykh at-Tuwaijree's claim and support for the correctness of my position on the issue of uncovering the face. Ibn Muflih stated the following in his valuable work al-Aadaab ash-Shar'iyah – which is among the references cited by Shaykh at-Tuwaijree (something which indicates that he is aware of it, but has deliberately hidden these crucial facts from his readers while claiming the contrary):

“Is it correct to chastise marriageable women if they uncover their faces in the street ? “

The answer depends on whether it is compulsory for women to cover their faces or whether it is compulsory for men to lower their gaze from her. There are two positions on this issue.

1:

Regarding the hadeeth of Jareer in which he said, "I asked Allaah's Messenger about the sudden inadvertent glance and he instructed me to look away." Al-Qaadee 'Iyaad commented, "The scholars, May Allaah Most High have mercy on them, have said that there is proof in this hadeeth that it is not compulsory for a woman to cover her face in the street. Instead, it is a recommended sunnah for her to do so and it is compulsory for the man to lower his gaze from her at all times, except for a legislated purpose. Shaykh Muhyud-deen an-Nawawee mentioned that without further explanation."

2:

Then al-Muflih mentioned Ibn Taymiyyah's statement which at-Tuwaijree relies on in his book, while feigning ignorance of the statements of the majority of scholars. Statements like those of al-Qaadee 'Iyaad and an-Nawawee's agreement with it.

Then al-Muflih said, "On the basis of that, is chastisement legal ? Chastisement is not allowed in issues in where there is a difference of opinion, and the difference has already been mentioned. As regards our opinion and that of a group of Shaafi'ite scholars and others, looking at a marriageable woman without desire or in a secluded circumstance is permissible. Therefore, chastisement is not proper." This answer is in complete agreement with Imaam Ahmad's statement, "It is not proper that a jurist oblige people to follow his opinion (math-hab)." And this is if the truth were on his side. What of the case where the jurist proudly, dishonestly misleads people and declares other Muslims to be disbelievers as at-Tuwaijree did on page 249 of his book saying,

"... Whoever permits women to expose their faces and uses the proofs of al-Albaanee has flung open the door for women to publicly flaunt their beauty and emboldened them to commit the reprehensible acts done by women who uncover their faces today." And on page 233 he said, "... and to disbelief in the verses of Allaah."

Those are his words – May Allaah reform him and guide him. What would he say about Ibn Muflih, an-Nawawee, al-Qaadee 'Iyaad and other Palestinian scholars, as well as the majority of scholars who preceded them and who are my salaf regarding my opinion on this matter ? ¹

He wrote:

In contrast to those who say that this is not obligatory, if we examine the views of those who say that it is not obligatory for women to cover the face, we will see that it is as Shaykh Bakr Abu Zayd said:

One of the following three scenarios must apply:

1 There is clear, sound evidence, but it has been abrogated by the verses that enjoin hijab...

2 There is sound evidence but it is not clear, and it does not constitute strong evidence when taken in conjunction with the definitive evidence from the Qur'aan and Sunnah that the face and hands must be covered...

3 There is clear evidence, but it is not sound (Hiraasat al-Fadeelah, p. 68-69)

Response:

This statement is not quite true, there is no definitive evidence for this, since many scholars have debated about this issue. If there was a clear definitive evidence, no one would debate about it. Moreover the the quotations from shayk al-bani's excellent book 'Jilbaab al-Mar'ah al-Muslimah', clearly show us that the majority of scholars held the view that the face and hands are not 'awrah', and that this is the correct view. In my next booklet i will give proof and evidences for this statement. But of course i respect the opinion of others. I would like to stress out that i pray for Allah swt to bless all our sisters, wether they wear niqab/ face-veil or hijab. Both groups have a lot of courage. My opinion is just that niqab is religiously voluntary, although commendable and a great sunnah of the wives of the prophet, may allah swt bless them all.

Sources:

1: http://www.islamicweb.com/beliefs/women/albani_niqab.htm