90193 - Ruling on sewing dresses for women, some of whom make a wanton display of themselves (tabarruj)

the question

My mother works in the manufacture of abayahs and children’s clothing, and when I asked her about the abayahs, fearing that they may go against Islamic rulings, she told me that she works in children’s clothing only, then later on she told me that the abayahs that she works on do not go against Islamic rulings. I advised her and continued to advise her. Then I found out from someone else that the boss does not care if the abayahs go against Islamic rulings. My question is: how should I deal with my mother without being disobedient towards her? Please note that she spends on me from this money.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

There is nothing wrong with manufacturing and sewing clothes, whether they are abayahs or anything else, so long as they are not things that may be used to help do haram things, such as clothes in which women make a wanton display of themselves and show off their beauty in front of non-mahram men, because Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Help you one another in Al-Birr and At-Taqwa (virtue, righteousness and piety); but do not help one another in sin and transgression. And fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Severe in punishment” [al-Maa’idah 5:2]

But if the clothes are those that may be used for good or for bad purposes, and some women may wear them in the house whereas others may wear them outside, if it is known what the purchaser will do, then they may be made for and sold to those who it is known intend to use them for good purposes, not bad. But if it is not known what the purchaser or the one who asks to have them

made will do with them, then the manufacturer or seller should act on the basis of what he thinks most likely to be the case. If he thinks it most likely that the purchaser will use them for haram purposes, then it is haram for him to make them. But if he thinks it most likely that he will use them for permissible purposes, then there is nothing wrong with making them.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said in Sharh al-'Umdah (4/386): All clothing that one thinks it most likely will be used for sinful purposes, it is not permissible to sell it to or sew it for one who will use it for sinful and wrongful purposes. End quote.

It says in Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa'imah (13/109): Everything that will be used in haram ways or it is thought most likely that it will be used in such ways, it is haram to manufacture it, import it, sell it and distribute it among the Muslims. That includes what many women do nowadays – may Allah guide them – wearing see-though, tight and short clothes. All of that may be summed up as showing their charms and beauty and showing the shape of women's limbs before non-mahram men. End quote.

You should advise your mother and explain to her the details mentioned above. Tell her that the money that comes from making something that is haram is impure wealth in which there is no goodness or blessing. She should limit herself to making that which is permissible according to sharee'ah. Hopefully she will respond to that, but if she persists in making haram things, there is no sin on you if you eat from her food and benefit from her wealth, because you are taking the wealth in a permissible way, which is her spending on you. The prohibition on this wealth has no connection to you, rather it has to do with your mother only, because she is the one who is acquiring it in a haram way. But it should be noted that her wealth contains both halaal and haram; it is not all haram. This also supports the fact that it is permissible for you to benefit from this wealth.

And Allah knows best.