

CHAPTER NINETEEN

SUNNAH OF CLEANLINESS

O Allah (The Exalted) bless our master Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) and the family of our master Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) and the People of his House.

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) would always keep his body and clothing clean, he would bathe on a regular basis and instruct the companions to stay clean too. The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) would clean his blessed nose with his blessed left hand and wash it with water and with the left hand he would carry his blessed slippers/shoes too. If anything, unclean was on the clothing, it was also washed with the left hand and the rest of the activities were done with the right hand. When giving something or taking something, he would use his right hand.

The Muslim, whom Islam wants to stand out amongst people, is very clean. He has high standards of personal hygiene, bathes frequently in accordance with the Sunnah and wearing 'Itr-fragrance (for men only).

The true Muslim keeps his clothes and socks clean, checking them from time to time, to be sure that they have no unpleasant smell. One also wears perfume to help keep clean. Also taking care of the mouth, for no one should ever have to smell an unpleasant odour coming from it. One does this by cleaning the teeth every day with preferably a *Miswak* or toothbrush and toothpaste.

Regrettably, some Muslims neglect these teachings that are at the heart of Islam, and do not pay heed to the cleanliness of their mouths, bodies and clothes. So, you may see them going to the mosque or to other religious meetings and study circles, annoying their brothers with their unpleasant smell and offending the angles who surround these blessed gatherings.

Dirty Clothing

Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him) states that, *"The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) came to visit us and saw a man who was wearing dirty clothes. He said, 'Could this person not find anything with which to wash his clothes?'"*ⁱ

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) did not like a Muslim to appear before people wearing dirty clothes, if he had the means to clean them. He encouraged Muslims always to dress in clean clothes and to present a neat and attractive appearance.

Prophet's (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) scent

Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him) reported the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) never passed through a place but a person who followed him would know that he had been there, from his lingering scent.ⁱⁱ

Cleanliness Is Half of Iman

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said that, *"Purification is half of faith."*ⁱⁱⁱ

'Aisha (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) saying that, *"The religion is based on cleanliness."*^{iv}

Duty of a Muslim

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates from the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said that, *"It is the duty of every Muslim to take a bath (at least) once every seven days, and to wash his head and body."*^v

How urgent is the Muslims' need to follow the guidance of this great Messenger (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) in his command to take care of one's hair and keep it neat in accordance with the teachings of Islam. Looking after one's hair, according to Islamic teaching, involves keeping it clean, combing it, perfuming it and styling it nicely.

Keeping The House Clean

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) is reported to have exhorted the Muslims to keep the courtyards of their houses clean, for those who ordinarily keep the courtyard of their houses unclean resemble the Jews. ^{vi}

We should always make sure that we make our beds, put clothing away and not leave them lying around. Also, not making a mess in the house or your work area be it in your home or at work. We should be ambassadors of Islam at all times.

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) has reported that *“Allah (The Exalted) has laid the foundation of Islam on cleanliness and neatness; and only he will enter Paradise who keeps himself clean and has the habit of remaining clean and neat.”*

Those brothers who are asked to come and pray *Salaah* make the excuse that I am unclean, I have to have a bath and unfortunately use the same excuse day in day out to miss *Salaah*, understand the above *hadith!* By perspiring or if you feel unclean is not enough, evidence of impurity has to be there.

Birth of The Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace)

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) was born circumcised and his umbilical cord was already cut. It is related that his mother Amina (may Allah be pleased with her) said that, *“He was born clean and there was no impurity on him.”* ^{vii} *Subhanallah!*

Abu Saeed Khudri narrates that, *“Malik Ibn Sinan (may Allah be pleased with him) drank the blood of the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) on the day of ‘Uhud and licked it up. The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) allowed him to do that and then said, ‘The fire will not touch you.’”* ^{viii}

Of course, the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) is a human being, however, not like you and I but Allah (The Exalted) has made him unique.

ⁱ Ahmad and Nisa'i.

ⁱⁱ Al-Tarikh al-Kabir by Imam Bukhari.

ⁱⁱⁱ Muslim, Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah.

^{iv} Ibn Hibban, a weak hadith.

^v Bukhari & Muslim

^{vi} Tabrani

^{vii} Baihaqi

^{viii} Tabrani