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Brushing One's Teeth

Brushing One's Teeth السِّواك

Enjoinment of Brushing One's Teeth

الحَثُّ عَلَى السِّواكِ

1- رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): لَولا أن أشُقَّ على أُمَّتي لأَمَرتُهُم بِالسِّواكِ مَع كُلِّ صلاةٍ

1– The Prophet (S) said, 'If it were not for the fact that it would inconvenience my community, I would have commanded them to brush their teeth before every prayer.'[al-Kafi, v. 3, p. 22, no. 1]

2- رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ) ـ في وصيَّتِهِ لعليٍّ (عَلَيهِ السَّلامُ) ـ: عليكَ بالسِّواكِ عِندَ كُلِّ وُضوءٍ

2– The Prophet (S) said in his advice to Imam Ali (a.s.), 'You must brush your teeth at every ablution.'[Bihar al-Anwar, v. 77, p. 69, no. 8]

3- رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ) ـ أيضا ـ: يا عليُّ ، عليكَ بالسِّواكِ ، وإن استَطَعتَ أن لا تُقِلَّ مِنهُ فافعَلْ ، فإنَّ كُلَّ صلاةٍ تُصَلِّيها بالسِّواكِ تَفضُلُ على التي تُصَلِّيها بغَيرِ سِواكٍ أربَعينَ يَوماً.

3– The Prophet (S) also said in his advice to Imam Ali (a.s.), 'O Ali, you must brush your teeth as frequently as possible, for verily a single prayer that you perform after having brushed your teeth is better than forty days worth of prayers performed without doing so.'[Bihar al-Anwar, v. 76, p. 137, no. 48]

4- رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): الوُضوءُ شَطرُ الإيمانِ ، والسِّواكُ شَطرُ الوُضوءِ

4– The Prophet (S) said, 'Ablution is a main part of faith, and brushing one's teeth is a main part of ablution.'[Kanz al–'Ummal, no. 26200]

5ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): طَيِّبُوا أفواهَكُم بِالسِّواكِ؛ فإنّها طُرُقُ القُرآنِ. .

5– The Prophet (S) said, 'Freshen your mouths by brushing, for verily they are the means to the Qur'an.'[Kanz al–'Ummal, 2753]

6ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): مازالَ جَبرئيلُ يُوصِيني بالسِّواكِ حتّى ظَنَنتُ أ نّهُ سَيَجعَلُهُ فَريضَةً. .

6– The Prophet (S) said, 'Gabriel continuously advises me about brushing teeth, that I really thought he would lay it down as an obligation.'[Bihar al–Anwar, v. 76, p. 126, no. 2]

7ـ الإمامُ الصّادقُ (عَلَيهِ السّلامُ) ـ لَمّا سُئِلَ: أتَرى هذا الخَلقَ كُلَّهُ مِنَ الناسِ ؟ ـ: فقالَ: ألْقِ مِنهُمُ التارِكَ للسِّواكِ. .

7– Imam al–Sadiq (a.s.) was once asked, 'Do you consider all of these people as being real human beings [true to their nature]?' to which he replied, 'Exclude from them the one who does not brush his teeth, ...'[Bihar al–Anwar, p. 128, no. 11]1

The Benefits of Brushing One's Teeth

مَنافِعُ السِّواكِ

8ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): السِّواكُ يَزِيدُ الرَّجُلَ فَصاحَةً.

8– The Prophet (S) said, 'Brushing one's teeth increases one's articulacy.'[Bihar al–Anwar, p. 135, no. 48]

9ـ الإمامُ الصّادقُ (عَلَيهِ السّلامُ): في السِّواكِ اثنَتا عَشرَةَ خَصلَةً: هُو مِنَ السُّنَّةِ ، و مَطهَرَةٌ لِلفَمِ ، ومَجلاةٌ لِلبَصَرِ ، ويُرضِي الرحمنَ ، ويُبَيِّضُ الأسنانَ ، ويَذهَبُ بِالحَفرِ ، ويَشُدُّ اللِّثَةَ ، ويُشَهِّي الطَّعامَ ، ويَذهَبُ بِالبَلغَمِ ، ويَزيدُ فيالحِفظِ ، ويُضاعَفُ بِهِ الحَسَناتُ ، وتَفرَحُ بِهِ المَلائكةُ.

9– Imam al–Sadiq (a.s.) said, 'There are twelve distinctive features to brushing one's teeth: it is a recommended prophetic practice, it purifies one's mouth, brightens one's eyesight, pleases the Beneficent Lord, whitens the teeth, does away with wretchedness, strengthens one's gums, whets one's

appetite for food, takes away phlegm, improves one's memory, multiplies one's rewards for good deeds, and gives pleasure to the angels.’[al-Khisal, p. 481, no. 53]

10ـ الإمامُ الصّادقُ (عَلَيهِ السّلامُ): علَيكُم بالسِّواكِ ؛ فإنّهُ يُذهِبُ وَسوَسَةَ الصَّدرِ

10– Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, 'You must brush your teeth for it removes whisperings of the heart.’[Bihar al-Anwar, v. 76, p. 139, no. 52]

11ـ الإمامُ الرِّضا (عَلَيهِ السّلامُ): السِّواكُ يَجلُو البَصَرَ ، ويُنبِتُ الشَّعرَ ، ويَذهَبُ بِالدَّمعَةِ

11– Imam Ar-Ridha’ (a.s.) said, 'Brushing one's teeth brightens the eyesight, increases hair growth, and removes the tendency for frequent weeping.’[Bihar al-Anwar, p. 137, no. 48]

Etiquette of Brushing Teeth

أدَبُ السِّواكِ

12ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): اِستاكُوا عَرضاً ولا تَستاكُوا طُولاً

12– The Prophet (S) said, 'Brush your teeth in a horizontal manner and not in a vertical manner.’[al-Da’aawat, p. 161, no. 445]

13ـ كان النبيُّ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ) إذا استاكَ استاكَ عَرضاً، وكانَ يَستاكُ كُلَّ لَيلَةٍ ثلاثَ مَرّات: مَرَّةً قَبلَ نَومِهِ، ومَرَّةً إذا قامَ مِن نَومِهِ إلى وِردِهِ ، ومَرَّةً قَبلَ خُروجِهِ إلى صلاةِ الصُّبحِ ، وكانَ يَستاكُ بالأراكِ أمَرَهُ بذلك جَبرَئيلُ.

13– It is narrated in Bihar al-Anwar that the Prophet (S) used to brush in a horizontal manner whenever he brushed his teeth, and that he would brush his teeth thrice every night: once before going to bed, once when he would wake up for his night worship, and once before going out to perform the dawn prayer. He used to brush with twigs of Arak (a thorny kind of tree) which the archangel Gabriel had told him to do.’[Bihar al-Anwar, v. 76, p. 135, no. 47]

14ـ الإمامُ الباقرُ (عَلَيهِ السّلامُ): إنّ السِّواكَ في السَّحَرِ قَبلَ الوُضُوءِ مِنَ السُّنَّةِ. .

14– Imam al-Baqir (a.s.) said, 'Verily brushing one's teeth at dawn before performing the ablution is part of recommended prophetic practice.’[al-Faqih, v. 1, p. 480, no. 1390]

1. This is part of a longer tradition where the Imam cites several other categories of people whom he excludes from the banner of humanity for their various faults, in accordance with the verse of the [(25:44): "Do you suppose that most of them listen or apply reason? They are just like cattle; rather they are further astray from the way." (ed.)

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