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Health and Hygiene

Islam is a religion that takes all aspects of mankind into consideration. For this reason, the Noble Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) gave great importance to personal hygiene and he encouraged others to do so as well. There are numerous instances concerning the emphasis the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) placed on health and here reference will be made to a few of these:

- 1. He (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) would not breathe in his cup while drinking. If he wanted to take a breath, he would remove the cup from his mouth. "1
- 2. When asked why Muslims do not become ill as often as others he replied, "We are a people who do not eat until we become hungry and when we eat, we do not fill ourselves."2
- 3. The Commander of the Faithful, 'Ali, peace be upon him, said, "We would soak raisins or dates in water for the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him and his family). The first and second days he would eat from it, but when they started to putrefy, he would say to throw it out."
- 4. "The Messenger of God (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) was never seen to have used the restroom without performing the ritual ablution (wudhu') afterwards, and this he would begin with brushing his teeth."4

By cutting his nails, applying oil to his body, using collyrium, removing body hair and clipping his moustache which were all part of his weekly routine of personal grooming, the Messenger of God (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) made Muslims aware of the importance of personal hygiene. His sayings concerning cutting one's nails and clipping one's moustache clarify the physical and psychological benefits as well as the benefits in this world and the Hereafter. Amongst his sayings is the following: "If one cuts his nails on Friday, God will remove sickness from his fingers and put a remedy in its place." 5

Elsewhere he (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) said, "None of you should grow your moustache long, for Satan (perhaps a reference to bacteria) takes it as a refuge in which he hides." 6

- 1. Makarim al-Akhlaq, vol. 1, p. 32.
- 2. Sunan an-Nabi, p. 181.
- 3. Da'a'im al-Islam, vol. 2, p. 128.
- 4. Muhajjah al-Baydha', vol. 1, p. 296.
- 5. Makarim al-Akhlaq, vol. 1, p. 123.
- 6. Makarim al-Akhlaq, vol. 1, p. 125.

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