

Criticising the Beard

Q: Imaan-47: It is by the grace of Allaah that I have managed to grow a beard. However, my colleagues and some family members ridicule me and call me derogatory names. Some say that I look ugly and that I should shave it off. Will I be sinful if I shave it off under all this pressure?

Answer: How pitiable has our times become! How rightfully has our beloved Nabi SAW. predicted when he once addressed the Sahabah RADI. saying, "What will your condition be when your youngsters will become sinners and transgressors?" "Will that happen?" the Sahabah RADI. Asked in surprise. "Most definitely," Rasulullaah SAW. responded, "In fact, it will be even worse. What will be your condition when you will become obstacles in the path of good and will enjoin evil?" Will that ever happen?" the Sahabah RADI. again asked in astonishment. "Most definitely," Rasulullaah SAW. responded,

"In fact, it will be even worse. What will be your condition when you will regard good to be evil and evil to be good?"

Has this time not come? Not only do people shave off their beards and propagate this act, but they actually regard it better to shave off the beard than to grow one. Let alone youngsters, even elderly men act in violation of this Sunnah of Rasulullaah SAW, thus earning themselves the title of Faasiq.

Rasulullaah SAW. said, "Do not pluck white hairs because when a person grows old as a Muslim, Allaah grants him the reward of a good deed for every white hair and forgives a sin for each one. These white hairs will then be a source of light for him on the Day of Qiyaamah." Another Hadith states Hadhrat Allaah feels too embarrassed to punish an old man. Allaahu Akbar! Imagine Allaah feeling too embarrassed to punish the man and he feels no embarrassment to shave off his beard and hide his age. Rasulullaah SAW. said, "The best youngsters are those who behave like elders and the worst elders are those who behave like youngsters.?"

The beard is a hallmark of a Muslim and a form of beautification for men. Rasulullaah SAW. said, "Glorified is the Being Who has beautified men with Beards and women with long tresses." Rasulullaah SAW. himself grew a beard and stressed its importance to the Ummah. Adopting

the practices of Rasulullaah SAW. and wholeheartedly accepting the instructions he issued is a precondition of Imaan because in the terminology of the Shari'ah. Islaam refers to fulfilling the commands of Allaah as directed by Rasulullaah SAW. following Allaah's commands according to the directives of one's desires and intellect is not Islaam, but Kufr.

Allaah says in the Qur'aan, "Never! By the oath of your Rabb, they cannot have Imaan until they make you (O Muhamrnad SAW.) judge their disputes and (until) they do not find any dissatisfaction in that which you decide and (until) they accept (your decision) with complete submission (with happiness)?

Explaining this verse, Hadhrat Ja'far Saadiq RAH. says that even though a person may be performing salaah, fasting, paying Zakaah and performing Hajj he will be regarded as a Kaafir if he objects to anything Rasulullaah SAW. did or if his heart does not accept any instruction from Rasulullaah SAW.

A Muslim and a Jew once took their dispute to Rasulullaah SAW. When Rasulullaah SAW. ruled in favour of the Jew, the Muslim went to Hadhrat Umar 'RADI. to seek a ruling from him. Rather than rule on the case, Hadhrat Umar RADI. immediately executed the man because by rejecting the decision of Rasulullaah SAW. he was a Murtad (renegade). It is an accepted fact that rejecting the judgement of Rasulullaah SAW. and appointing an arbiter in the case is an act of Kufr and if the perpetrator claims to be a Muslim, he really is a Munaat'iq (hypocrite).

The fact is that Allaah has made Rasulullaah SAW. a model of perfection and has also announced in the Qur'aan, "There is indeed an excellent example for you in the Rasool of Allaah". Good is therefore the good found in Rasulullaah SAW. and perfection is the perfection found in Rasulullaah SAW. The Sahabah RADI. understood this well and not only adopted his practices, but even regarded his gestures to be commands and felt honoured to fulfil them.

Rasulullaah SAW. was once on the pulpit when he said to the people, "Be seated! Be seated!" Now look at how this command was fulfilled. Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. was still at the door of the Masjid when he heard this command and immediately sat where he was without entering. He only moved from the spot when Rasulullaah SAW. asked him to.

When Rasulullaah SAW. passed away, news reached Madinah of many tribes that had forsaken Islaam and were starting to revolt. The Sahabah RADI. then advised the Khalifah Hadhrat Abu Bakr RADI. not to dispatch the army of Hadhrat Usaama bin Zaid RADI. to Shaam since the enemies may attack Madinah in the absence of the army. Hadhrat Abu Bakr RADI.'s

reply was, "I swear by the Being Who controls my life that I shall dispatch the army of Usaama that Rasulullaah SAW. dispatched even if I have to be the only man left in Madinah and wild dogs come and tear me apart."

Such was the fervour of the first Khalifah Hadhrat Abu Bakr RADI. As for the fervour of the other Sahabah RADI. it once occurred that Rasulullaah SAW. removed a gold ring from the finger of a Sahabi RADI. and threw it aside saying, "O people! Do you intentionally place an ember from Jahannam on your hands?" After Rasulullaah SAW. had left, some people told the Sahabi RADI. to take the ring and use the gold for something else. To this, he replied, "Never! Never! I swear by Allaah that I shall never take up something that Rasulullaah SAW. threw aside."

Hadhrat Abu Dharr RADI. was once watering a field from a pond when some people arrived there. As they trod by the water, they kicked over a bucket and spilt all the water. Watching the water go to waste, Hadhrat Abu Dharr RADI. immediately sat down in the mud. A short while later, he went further to lay down in the mud. Some people standing by him noticed this strange behaviour and asked what the matter was. Hadhrat Abu Dharr RADI. replied, "The carelessness of those people made me very angry, I then recalled the words of Rasulullaah SAW. when he said that a person should sit down when angry and then lay down if the anger still does not subside. I therefore practised on the words of Rasulullaah SAW. Just imagine! Without the least concern for people jeering at him or for his clothing getting soiled, Hadhrat Abu Dharr RADI. acted immediately upon the teachings of Rasulullaah SAW. The Sahabah RADI. placed the instructions of Rasulullaah SAW. in front of everything.

Hadhrat Umar RADI. was once proceeding for the Jumu'ah salaah when some water contaminated with the blood of a slaughtered chicken dropped on his clothes from a downpipe on the house of Hadhrat Abbaas RADI. Hadhrat Umar RADI. returned home, changed his clothing and then left again for the Jumu'ah salaah. Hadhrat Umar RADI. then gave the instruction that the downpipe be shifted from the roadside. When the pipe was shifted, Hadhrat Abbaas RADI. made mention of the fact that Rasulullaah SAW. had positioned the downpipe where it was. As soon as he heard this, Hadhrat Umar RADI. immediately went to the house to replace the pipe to the position it had been. Because there was no stepladder available just then, Hadhrat Umar RADI. went down on his knees and told Hadhrat Abbaas RADI. to stand on his back and move the pipe back to the position in which Rasulullaah SAW. had placed it.

Such was the respect that the Sahabah RADI. had for anything that Rasulullaah SAW. said or did. Because there was no other way to make amends for what he did, Hadhrat Umar RADI. had Hadhrat Abbaas RADI. stand on his back to replace the pipe. It is regrettable that the both the youth and the elders of today have no respect for the beard that Rasulullaah SAW. always

grew and stressed upon. Whereas Rasulullaah SAW. instructed the Ummah to grow their beards and to trim their moustaches, there is no sign of either on the faces of these men. Furthermore, the beard was a hallmark of all the Amblyaa ALY. a hallmark of Islaam and a sign of honour and respect for a man. It draws a distinction between the young and the old, it completes the image of a man and shaving it off distorts the creation of Allaah and rebels against the Sunnah of Rasulullaah SAW.

The canonical work of Fiqh Hidaayah (Vol.4 Pg.571) states that when the beard starts to grow, it is a form of beatification and shaving it off eliminates this beauty. The same is emphasised in Bahrur Raa'iq (Vol.8 Pg.331), which quotes the Hadith stating that the angels make du'aa saying, "Glorified is the Being Who beautified men with beards and women with long tresses." Another Hadith states that when the angels take oaths, they say, "By the Being Who beautified men with beards!"

If a person has true love for Rasutullaah SAW. he will love every act and practice of Rasulullaah SAW. Disliking anything he did indicates dislike for Rasulullaah SAW. himself. When a person discarding the beard is trampling upon the Sunnah of Rasulullaah SAW. how can he claim to love Rasulullaah SAW.

An Arabic poem says:

"You profess to love Rasulullaah SAW. yet you disobey him?
I swear that this is strange indeed!
Had your love been true, you would have certainly followed him
Because the lover obeys the beloved"
The famous lover Majnoon says about his love for Layla:
"When I pass through Layla's city
I kiss this wall and that wall
It is not the love of the walls that has captivated me
It is rather the love of the one who resides there"
A Persian poem reads:
"My eyes are proud to have gazed at your beauty
My feet are falling over each other to embrace you
I have kissed my hands a thousand times over
Just because they have taken hold of your hem and brought you to me"

The Mathnawi of Sheikh Saadi RAH. asks a lover which place he regards to be the best of all places after his extensive travels. He replies, "It is the city where my beloved resides."

How sad that someone can claim to love Rasulullaah SAW. yet hate the beard that Rasulullaah SAW. grew! A Hadith states, "None of you can ever have Imaan until his desires are subservient to that (teachings and Sunnah) which I have brought." Rasulullaah SAW. also made it clear that those who follow him are from his Ummah and those who follow others are from amongst them. He also stated that those who turn away from his Sunnah will be deprived of his intercession on the Day of Qiyaamah.

Hadhrat Imaam Abu Yusuf RAH. was once narrating the Hadith stating that Rasulullaah SAW. loved to eat pumpkin. To this, someone in the audience remarked, "Well, I do not like it." The Imaam immediately drew his sword saying, "Repent immediately or have yourself executed." When a saint who was in Madinah once commented that the sour milk of India or Shaam was better than the sour milk of Madinah, he saw Rasulullaah SAW. in a dream telling him, "Do leave us and go live in the place that has better sour milk."

Imaam Rabbaani RAH. said, "Allaah loves everything that conforms with the Sunnah and Shaytaan loves everything that conflicts with it.

You then ask whether you should bow before the taunts of your fellow men and avoid the truth, which was exactly what Abu Taalib did. When Rasulullaah SAW. asked his uncle Abu Taalib to recite the Kalimah as he lay on his deathbed, his reply was: "You have presented to me a religion that I know is the best in the entire world. Had I not feared the taunts of others, you would have found me most willing to obey you."

It was rather the practice of the great Sahabah RADI. like Hadhrat Hudhayfah bin"Yamaan RADI. who Ignored the taunts of all of the world to practice upon the Sunnah of Rasulullaah SAW. He was once eating with some foreign people when a morsel of food fell from his hand. When he deftly picked it up to eat it, someone advised him that this would seem uncultured to the people around. He, however, replied by saying, "Should I forsake the Sunnah of my beloved for the sake of these fools?" This is true Imaan and firm conviction in the fact that Rasulullaah SAW. was indeed the best of Allaah's Ambiyaa ALY. and the fact that the Deen of Islaam is complete and perfect.. Rather than being overawed by the presence of the foreigners, Hadhrat Hudhayfah RADI. was proud about the Sunnah of Rasululla ah SAW. and referred to them as fools for looking down upon the Sunnah of Rasulullaah SAW.

You should never shave off your beard to please such fools, otherwise you will certainly be guilty of sin. Allaah addresses Rasulullaah SAW. saying, "Then (after all these notions had passed on) We placed you (O Rasulullaah SAW. on s special way (the Shari'ah of Islaam), so follow it by practicing and propagating it) and do not follow the whims of those who hatve no knowledge".

Fatawa Rahimiyyah (Vol.1)

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