

The Fatwa of Mufti Wali Hasan Concerning an Imaam whose Beard is not the Sunnah Length

Q: Salaah-717: What do the Ulema of Deen and the Muftis have to say about the following:

(1) Performing salaah, even the Taraaweeh salaah, behind a Haafidh who trims his beard?
Some people maintain that there is no real significance to wearing the beard.

(2) The administrators of some Masaajid permit such Huffaadh to lead the Taraaweeh salaah.
Will these administrators be liable for the act?

Answer: (1) Wearing the beard is Waajib (compulsory) for men and shaving it or trimming it to a length shorter than that of a fist is Haraam. The Haafidh who trims his beard is certainly a Faasiq as long as he does not repent from his sin because intentionally perpetrating a Makrooh Tahreemi act is Haraam. All four Madhaa'hib are unanimous about wearing the beard a fist's length. Shaami, Fataawaa Aalamgeeri and the other various books of Islaamic jurisprudence discuss this issue.

(2) The administrators of the Masjid are all equally guilty of the sin. The books of history record that after the Emperor of Persia tore up Rasulullaah SAW.'s letter to him, he sent an instruction to his governor Baadhaan to dispatch two men to arrest Rasulullaah SAW.. The men Baadhaan sent were both clean-shaven, with long moustaches, as was the custom amongst the Persians. Rasulullaah SAW. detested their appearance and asked, "Woe to you two! Who has instructed you to do this?" "Our lord (the Emperor) has instructed us," they replied. Rasulullaah SAW. then said, "My Rabb has instructed me to lengthen the beard and to trim the moustache."

Now if we consider that the two men were not even Muslims and only visitors, yet Rasulullaah SAW. disliked their appearance, turned his face away from them and even cursed them on account of their appearance that was in stark contrast to the natural appearance of men. The length of the beard that Allaah has instructed Muslims to keep is that which Rasulullaah SAW. himself wore, which is said to have covered his chest.

People who proclaim to love Rasulullaah SAW. need to contemplate about the fact that if they choose to follow the ways of these Persians for whose appearance Rasulullaah SAW. showed dislike, how displeased would Rasulullaah SAW. be when their actions are presented to him every week? How will they then feel on the Day of Qiyaamah when Rasulullaah SAW. has to turn his face away from them when they appear before him?

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ENDORSEMENT

The reply given above is correct. It is imperative for the Huffaadh to practice with reverence this great Sunnah that has been so highly emphasised by the Ahadeeth. Failure to keep the beard according to the Sunnah length is ingratitude for a great boon and an act that hurts the heart of our beloved Rasulullaah SAW. A person should therefore repent from such an act. The following narrative is worth thinking over:

There was a famous Persian poet in India called Mirza Baydal. He was highly acclaimed for his eloquence and proficiency in the Persian language. Deeply affected by his poetry, a man from Iran travelled to India to meet him. It so happened that Mirza Baydal was busy shaving his beard when the Iranian met him. The Iranian was surprised to see someone who proclaimed such great love for Rasulullaah SAW. doing this. "Sir!" the Iranian exclaimed. "You are shaving your beard?!" "Yes," Mirza Baydal replied, "But I am not cutting through anyone's heart (which is a greater sin)." "But you are cutting through the heart of Rasulullaah SAW. the Iranian retorted. This statement has such an effect on Mirza Baydal that he repented from the sin and said a couplet which meant:

"May Allaah reward you greatly for opening the eyes of my heart and for allowing me to meet my beloved"

May Allaah grant all Huffaadh and ail Muslims the ability to practise on this very important Sunnah of Rasulullaah SAW. And Allaah knows best what is most correct.

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