

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The Blessed Hairs of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

Introduction.

Muslims show utmost respect and love to the figure of the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). This love and admiration extends to anything and everything that is associated with him. Our history testifies that the blessed hairs of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) were devoutly respected by the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them all) and the pious ancestors after them.

Did the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) vouch for the practice of preserving his blessed hairs?

From the authentic Ahadith, it is clear that preserving and respecting the hairs is a practice which the Prophet himself encouraged:

- Imam Bukhari narrates in his *Sahih* from Anas ibn Malik that:

‘When the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had his head shaved (on the occasion of Hajj), Abu Talha was the first to take his hairs.’¹

- Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) reports:

‘I saw the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) when the barber was cutting his hair. The Companions were circulating him. Each one wanted the blessed hairs to fall in their hands.’²

If his hairs were of no importance or significance, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) would have prohibited his Companions from preserving them. No report is to be found as such. On the contrary, we find that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) *wanted* his Companions to keep them, as a form of *Baraka*. The report of Imam Muslim clearly highlights this, where Abu Talha was explicitly told by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): ‘Distribute the hairs amongst the people.’³

What did the Companions and the pious ancestors do with the blessed hairs of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)?

1. They attached value and importance to his hairs.

Imam al-Bukhari reports in his *Sahih* that Ibn Sirin once told Ubaida: ‘We have some hairs of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that we attained from Anas (may Allah be pleased with him).’ Ubaida replied:

‘Possessing one hair of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) would be more dear and valuable to me than the entire world and all of its contents.’⁴

¹ *Sahih al-Bukhari*. Book of Ablution. Hadith no. 166.

² *Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal* (Hadith no. 11951). *Tabarruk al-Sahaba bi Athar Rasul Allah*. Sheikh Muhammad Tahir ibn Abd al-Qadir ibn Mahmud al-Kurdi. (p. 13) Maktaka al-Qahira Publications, Cairo. 1997.

³ *Sahih Muslim*. Book of Hajj. Hadith no. 2300. The same report is also to be found in *Sunan al-Tirmidhi* (Hadith no. 836), *Sunan Abu Daud* (Hadith no. 1691)

⁴ *Sahih al-Bukhari*. Book of Ablution. Hadith no. 165.

2. They would seek *Shifa* (cure) for his hairs.

Umm Salma (may Allah be pleased with her) possessed some blessed hairs of the Prophet. When people were ill or affected by the evil eye, then they would come to her with water in a basin. She would then dip the hairs of the Prophet in the water. They would then drink this water or bathe from it as a means of *Shifa*.⁵

3. They would seek victory and success through its *Baraka*.

Qazi Ayadh writes that Khalid ibn Walid (may Allah be pleased with him) had some hairs of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in his cap. He used to wear this cap in battle and would be victorious with the blessings of the hairs of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). In the battle of Yamama, his cap accidentally fell off during the battle. Rather than to continue fighting without the cap, Khalid ibn Walid (may Allah be pleased with him) began searching for his cap, despite the intensity of fighting going on at the time. The companions were astonished and confused when they saw him pursuing his cap rather than protecting his life from the enemies. After the battle, Khalid ibn Walid explained to the companions why the cap was so valuable:

“I did not do it for the cap itself, but because of the hair of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that was in it so I would not be stripped of its blessing and to avoid it falling into the hands of the idol-worshippers.”⁶

There are many lessons to be learnt from this heart-warming episode. Firstly, it was the belief and conviction of Khalid ibn Walid (may Allah be pleased with him) that such was the power and *Baraka* of the hair, that it was a means to victory in battles. Secondly, Khalid ibn Walid (May Allah be pleased with him) valued the hair more than his own life. In the heat of the battle, when the enemies were pressing forward and threatening to kill the Muslims, Khalid ibn Walid (may Allah be pleased with him) was more anxious to preserve the Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) hair than his own life. Finally, the enemies of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) have no right to his blessings and *Tabarruk*.

4. They would seek peace and bliss in the grave from its *Baraka*.

- Anas ibn Malik requested to be buried with the hairs of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) under his tongue.⁷
- Mu'awiya (may Allah be pleased with him) possessed the shirt, nails and hairs of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He asked to be buried with these relics. When he made this bequest he remarked, 'If anything will benefit me [in the grave], then these relics will.'⁸
- Ahmad ibn Hanbal had three hairs from the body of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He requested to be buried with one placed on his mouth and the other two on each eye.⁹

Etiquettes of the *Ziyarah* of his blessed hairs.

- He should be in the state of *Wudhu*. Qadi Ayadh reports in *as-Shifa* that Ahmad ibn Fazlawiyya possessed the bow of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He said,

“I have never touched this bow with my hands expect with *Wudhu* since I learnt that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) held this bow with his hand.”¹⁰

- He should display humbleness and humility.
- He should read Salat-us-Salam as much as possible.
- He should not turn his back towards the blessed hairs.
- He certainly should not raise his voice.

Ather Hussain al-Azhari.

⁵ *Sahih al-Bukhari*. Book of Clothes. Hadith no. 5446.

⁶ *Al-Shifa*. Qadi Ayadh. p. 275. Dar Ibn Hazm Publications, Beirut, 2002.

⁷ p. 16. *Tabarruk al-Sahaba bi Athar Rasul Allah*. Sheikh Muhammad Tahir ibn Abd al-Qadir ibn Mahmud al-Kurdi. Maktaka al-Qahira Publications, Cairo. 1997.

⁸ p. 24. *Tabarruk al-Sahaba bi Athar Rasul Allah*. Sheikh Muhammad Tahir ibn Abd al-Qadir ibn Mahmud al-Kurdi. (p. 13) Maktaka al-Qahira Publications, Cairo. 1997.

⁹ p. 17. *Ibid*.

¹⁰ p. 275. *Al-Shifa*. Qadi Ayadh. p. 275. Dar Ibn Hazm Publications, Beirut, 2002.