

103623 - Ruling on shaving the moustache

the question

Some Brothers of mine growing the beard but there are shaving there mustaches. There are saying, that Omar, may Allah be pleased with him, did this and so it is good to do it. I read some answers on your website regarding the trimming of the mustaches, but it is permissible to shave it.

Detailed answer

The scholars differed concerning the mustahabb Sunnah regarding the moustache, and there are two views:

1-

The first view is that it is Sunnah to shave it off altogether. This is the view of the Hanafis and Hanbalis. They quoted as evidence the apparent meaning of the words of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that were narrated concerning this, such as "Trim the moustache" [narrated by al-Bukhari (5892) and Muslim (259)] and other similar reports in al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Al-Tahhaawi said in Sharh Ma'aani al-Athaar (4/230):

Shaving is better than trimming. This is the view of Abu Haneefah, Abu Yoosuf and Muhammad (may Allah have mercy on them). End quote.

Ibn 'Aabideen narrated in Radd al-Muhtaar (2/550) that later scholars preferred to trim it and said:

The (Hanafi) view according to some later scholars among our Shaykhs is that it should be trimmed. It says in al-Badaa'i': This is the correct view. End quote.

2-

The second view is that the Sunnah is to trim the moustache, and that shaving it is makrooh. This is the view of the Maalikis and Shaafa'is. Imam Maalik (may Allah have mercy on him) was very strict concerning that.

They quoted the following as evidence:

(i)

It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that he heard the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) say: "The fitrah is five things: circumcision, shaving the pubes, trimming the moustache, trimming the nails and plucking the armpit hairs." Narrated by al-Bukhari (5891) and Muslim (257).

(ii)

It was narrated that al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: My moustache grew too long and the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) trimmed it for me on a siwaak." Narrated by Abu Dawood (188); classed as saheeh by al-Albani in Saheeh Abi Dawood.

Al-Bayhaqi narrated in al-Sunan al-Kubra (1/151) with his isnaad that 'Abd al-'Azeez ibn 'Abd-Allah al-Uwaysi said: Maalik ibn Anas mentioned that some people shave their moustaches, and he said: The one who does that should be beaten. The hadeeth of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) about the moustache does not speak of shaving, rather it should be trimmed just enough to let the edge of the lips and the mouth show.

Maalik ibn Anas said: Shaving the moustache is a bid'ah (innovation) that has appeared among the people. End quote.

Abu'l-Waleed al-Baaji said in al-Muntaqa Sharh al-Muwatta' (7/266):

Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam narrated from Maalik: Trimming the moustache does not mean shaving it. I think that the one who shaves his moustache should be disciplined. Ashhab ibn Maalik

narrated: Shaving it is a bid'ah (innovation).

Maalik (may Allah have mercy on him) said: It was narrated from 'Umar ibn al-Khattaab (may Allah be pleased with him) that when he was upset by something, he would twist his moustache. If it was shaved off, there would be nothing to twist. End quote. See al-Tamheed (21/62-68).

Al-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said in al-Majmoo' (1/34-341):

The guideline on trimming the moustache is that it should be trimmed so that the edge of the lip can be seen, but it should not be shaved off completely. This is our view. End quote.

In Nihaayat al-Muhtaaj by al-Ramli (8/148), who is one of the Shaafa'i imams, it says: It is makrooh to shave the moustache. End quote.

This opinion was also narrated from a number of the salaf.

Al-Bayhaqi narrated in al-Sunan al-Kubra (1/151) with his isnaad that Shurahbeel ibn Muslim al-Khawlaani said: I saw five of the companions of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) trimming their moustaches and letting their beards grow and dyeing them with saffron: Abu Umaamah al-Baahili, 'Abd-Allah ibn Bisir, 'Utbah ibn 'Abd al-Sulami, al-Hajjaaj ibn 'Aamir al-Thamaali and al-Miqdaam ibn Ma'di Yakrib al-Kindi. They used to trim their moustaches to the edge of the lip.

They responded to the evidence quoted in favour of the first view in two ways:

1 - What is meant by trimming is trimming the edge of the hair which grows over the lip, not shaving off the hair completely, based on the evidence of the reports which mention trimming only.

Abu'l-Waleed al-Baaji said in al-Muntaqa Sharh al-Muwatta' (7/266):

Ibn al-Qaasim narrated from Maalik that the explanation of the hadeeth of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) about trimming the moustache is that it is to be trimmed enough to let the red part of the lips show and the edges of the mouth. end quote.

Al-Nawawi said in al-Majmoo' (1/340):

These reports – i.e. the reports which speak of trimming the moustache – are understood by us to mean trimming it to the edge of the lips, not shaving it off completely. End quote.

2 – Trimming does not mean removing it altogether, rather it means removing part of it.

The more correct view – and Allah knows best – is the second one, which is that the Sunnah is to trim the moustache and not to shave it.

Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) said in Majmoo' al-Fataawa (11/Baab al-Siwaak wa Sunan al-Fitrah/question no. 54):

The best is to trim the moustache as is the Sunnah. As for shaving it, that is not Sunnah. The analogy drawn by some of them, that it is prescribed to shave it as the head is shaved in Hajj is an analogy when a clear text states something else, so this analogy does not carry any weight. Hence Maalik said concerning shaving the moustache: It is an innovation that has appeared among the people, but we should not turn away from what is mentioned in the Sunnah, because following it is guidance, righteousness, happiness and success. End quote.

The Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas was asked: In a number of ahaadeeth it says “trim the moustache”. Is shaving different from trimming? Some people trim the first part of the moustache that is closest to the upper lip, and they leave the hair of the moustache, so they trim nearly half of the moustache and leave the rest. Is this what is meant? Or does trimming the moustache mean shaving off all of it? Please advise me of the manner in which the moustache should be trimmed.

They replied:

The saheeh ahaadeeth from the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) indicate that it is prescribed to trim the moustache. For example, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Trim the moustache and let the beard grow; be different from the mushrikeen.” (Agreed upon). And he (peace and blessings of Allah be

upon him) said: “Trim the moustache and let the beard grow; be different from the Magians,” and in some versions it says: “Trim the moustache.” Trimming means cutting it very short. The one who cuts his moustache very short so that the upper lip is visible or trims it is not to blame, because the ahaadeeth mention two things, but it is not permissible to leave the edges of the moustache, rather the whole moustache should be trimmed or cut, in accordance with the Sunnah. End quote.

Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azeez ibn Baaz, Shaykh ‘Abd al-Razzaaq ‘Afeefi, Shaykh ‘Abd-Allah ibn Qa’ood.

Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa’imah (5/149).

Al-Tabari and al-Qaadi ‘Iyaad favoured the view that both are permissible: shaving and trimming; al-Haafiz Ibn Hajar also inclined towards this view in Fath al-Baari (10/347).

See: al-Mawsoo’ah al-Fiqhiyyah (25/320).

And Allah knows best.