

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Hairstyles in Islam

Islam is a complete way of life. Just like other aspects in Islam, guidelines have also been given regarding a person's outer appearance, form and clothing, which are included amongst the teachings of Islam. A true and complete Muslim is he who adheres to these Islamic teachings and practices upon them. While Allah is aware of our inner selves, there is a social need for our outer condition to be correct. Thus, the claim of practicing upon Islam in totality is not possible without one's outer condition being corrected. Islam has also given us specific injunctions regarding one's hair.

Hair is a great bounty and blessing of Allah. For every bounty conferred upon us by Allah, we have been commanded to express our shukr (gratitude and appreciation), both verbally and practically. The verbal shukr will be done by praising Allah, while the practical shukr will be expressed by obeying Allah with regards to our hair, by keeping it in accordance to His commands and the blessed way of Rasulullah (salla Allahu alaihi wasallam), as opposed to the ways of the disbelievers.

Mufti Rasheed Ahmad Ludhianwi (rahimahu Allah) writes,

“With regards to the keeping of hair, there are three permissible options:

1) Lengthening the hair. This can further be divided into three lengths:

- a) Hair that extends till the earlobes. This is called ‘wafrah’ in Arabic.
- b) Hair that extends till between the earlobe and the shoulder. It is called ‘limmah’ in Arabic.
- c) Hair that extends till the shoulder. It is called ‘jummah’.

2) Halq- to shave off all the hair of the head.

3) The shortening and cutting of the hair on the head equally.

From the above, the first option is the most preferable (since it was the practice of Rasulullah ﷺ). Next in rank is the second option (which was undoubtedly the practice of some Sahaabah like Ali (radhi Allahu anhu)), while the third option is merely permissible.” (Ahsanul-Fataawa v.8 pg.80-81) (Note: Keeping the hair longer than a jummah is disliked.)

He further writes, “The following hairstyles are impermissible:

1) Qaza'- To shave a portion of the head and maintain hair on the rest of the head, or to cut the hair unevenly, leaving one part shorter and the other part longer. Keeping such hair has been clearly prohibited in the Hadeeth.”(Ahsanul-Fataawa v.8 pg.82)

Abdullah ibn Umar (radhi Allahu anhu) narrates that Rasulullah (salla Allahu alaihi wasallam) prohibited from Qaza' (Sahih Bukhaari pg.877/ Sahih Muslim v.2 pg.203)

Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi writes, “If a person wishes to trim his hair, then it should be trimmed equally on all sides. To shorten the hair while keeping the front portion of the hair long, which has become a fashion

today, is not permissible. Similarly, to shave part of the head while leaving the rest is not correct either.” (Bahishti Zewar v.11 pg.115)

Not only is such a hairstyle impermissible, it is also extremely unhealthy. ‘A team of physiologists from Chile and Argentina have, after conducting numerous tests and surveys, come to the conclusion that those people who keep their hair at one length or those who keep no hair at all are very unlikely to develop Brights disease of the kidneys, as well as mental tension and pressure. The reasoning behind this, according to this team of expert doctors, is that since the hair is in many cases dark (and sometimes even black), when the light of the sun and its ultra-violet rays fall upon the head, it causes a (beneficial) chemical reaction. If the hair is uneven and some parts stick out higher than the rest, the light and rays of the sun fall upon those parts with a lot more force, which results in harmful effects (to the mind and body).’ (Sunnate-Nabawi aur Jadeed science v.1 pg.426)

Mufti Raheed Ahmad Ludhianwi has also mentioned another impermissible hairstyle, “2) Any hairstyle which is the custom or habit of the kuffaar (disbelievers) or fussiaq (open sinners). The reason for this prohibition is that it entails imitating the disbelievers and sinners. However, the habits and customs of the disbelievers and sinners of that particular era will be taken into consideration.”

He writes further, “Fashion is something which is continuously changing. However, from the inception of the English (or Western) fashion till today, the keeping of the hair unevenly has become one common and inseparable part of fashion. It seems as if one can only be fashionable if one’s hair is uneven. Just as the unevenness can be due to trimming, it is also sometimes due to shaving (a certain part off), as is the practice of shaving around the ears (and forming a circle). This form of hairstyle when the hair of the entire head is not of an equal length is explicitly prohibited in the sayings and advices of Rasulallah (salla Allahu alaihi wasallam), as well as in the clear texts of the scholars of Hadith and Fiqh, irrespective of whether it is the habit and custom or any group of kuffaar or sinners or not. Yes, if it happens to be the habit and custom of the kuffaar or sinners, the sin will be even more serious and severe. Allah states ‘Do not (even) incline slightly towards the (ways of) those who have oppressed themselves (by committing kufr or sins), otherwise the fire will afflict you’ (Surah Hud v.113). Rasulallah (salla Allahu alaihi wasallam) had also stated, “Whoever imitates a nation is from amongst them.” (Abu Daud) (Ahsanul-Fataawa v.8 pg.85)

Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (rahimahu Allah) writes, “Just as the Baabree hairstyle is prohibited (when the hair from the top of the head is cut, while the hair on all three sides is maintained), so too is the keeping of an English (Western) haircut totally haraam. Nowadays many fashions have sprung up amongst even the educated females and males. Many women now keep the hair of their daughters according to (modern) English (Western) styles, and braid and plait their daughters hair in imitation of some irreligious women (actresses, singers and pop stars). They also get their sons to keep hairstyles in imitation of irreligious men (actors, singers, sports stars etc.). All such fashion is impermissible. One should keep hair according to the hairstyles kept by the muslims in former times (i.e. the sunnah method). If you (o parents) will keep impermissible hairstyles for your children, the entire sin will fall upon you. The fact that the muslims have left their dress code and appearance (of sunnah) and have adopted the appearance of irreligious people and are even proud about it is indeed a matter of great shame.”(Bahishti Zewar v.6 pg.6)

May Allah grant us Taufiq to follow the sunnah in every aspect of our lives. Aameen!