

Ruling of Abstaining from Removing Hair and Nails during Dhul Hijjah

Edited: Dhul Qa'dah 28, 1444H; June 17, 2023

Abu Abu Hurayrah

The following discussion will include:

- How the household used to slaughter during the time of the Prophet (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) and his companions
- Obligation of abstaining from Removing hair and nails
- The companions sunnah was to abstain from cutting hair and nail
- The obligation applies to the whole household, not just the head of the household
- Narration of Ibn Umar and Ibn Sireen supporting this position.

I ask Allaah to bless my teachers, specially Sheikh Abul Huda, Ghassan Abdel Fattah, whose article helped me understand this issue better and I would like to share it with all of my beloveds so they can learn the goodness from the sunnah. Of course, his article in Arabic is more comprehensive but I chose to summarize it using this narrations that will help our brothers and sisters to understand his scholarly work easily. May Allaah bless him, honor him in full in this life and hereafter.

How the household used to slaughter during the time of the Prophet (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) and his companions:

It was narrated that 'Ata' bin Yasar said:

"I asked Abu Ayyub Al- Ansari: 'How were sacrifices offered among you at the time of the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)?' He said: 'At the time of the Prophet (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam), a man would sacrifice a sheep on behalf of himself and the members of his household, and they would eat some of it and give some to others. Then people started to compete and it became as you see (nowadays).'" [Reported in Sunan of Imam Ibn Maajah, authenticated by Imam Al-Albaani, see Irwa Al-Ghaleel 1422]

It was narrated that Abu Sariyah said:

"My family started to put pressure on me after I came to know the Sunnah. People used to sacrifice one or two sheep, but now our neighbors call us stingy." [Sunan Ibn Maajah, Imam Muqbil said the hadith is authentic according to Saheehayn]

So, it is clear that the sahabah used to slaughter one for a whole household and all the household used to be part of this slaughtering.

Obligation of abstaining from Removing hair and nails

We start with the chapter heading of saheeh Muslim: "Chapter: When the first ten days of Dhul-Hijjah begin, it is forbidden for the one who wants to offer a sacrifice to remove anything from his hair, nails ". Hence we can understand from this title that the great Imam an-Nawawi

(this is because the titles of Saheeh Muslim are most likely from him or Imam Qadhi Iyyad) chose the position that it is haram (prohibited) to remove hair or nails or skin for the one who wants to slaughter for the Eid.

Umm Salama reported Allah's Messenger (sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) having said this: When any one of you intending to sacrifice the animal enters in the month (of Dhu'l-Hijja) he should not get his hair or nails touched (cut). In another report says the Prophet (sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said: "If anyone has in his possession a sacrificial animal to offer as a sacrifice (on 'Id al-Adha), he should not get his hair cut and nails trimmed after he has entered the first days of Dhu'l Hijja" [Saheeh Muslim]

'Amr b. Muslim b. 'Ammar al-Laithi reported:

While we were in a bathroom just before 'Id al-Adha some of the persons tried to remove the hair with the help of hair-removing chemicals. Thereupon some of the people owning the bath (or some of the people sitting therein) said that Sa'id b. Musayyib did not approve of it, or he prohibited it. Then I met Sa'id b. Musayyib and made a mention of that to him, whereupon he said: O my nephew, this is the hadith which has been forgotten, and abandoned. Umm Salama, the wife of Allah's Apostle (sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam), narrated to me Allah's Messenger (Sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) having said as narrated above. [Saheeh Muslim]

This shows that the sunnah was forgotten and not practiced in the time of Sayeed Ibn Musayyah, so think about our time!

The companions sunnah was to abstain from cutting hair and nail

Qatada reported on the authority of Yahya Ibn Katheer who said: Yahya Ibn Ya'mar used to give fatwa in Khurasan that if a man buys a udhiya and names it and enters the 10 days [of Dhul Hijjah], the he abstains from cutting his hair and nail.

Qatadah said: I asked Sayeed Ibn Musayyib: "On the authority of who?"

Sayeed said: "On the authority of the companions of the Prophet (sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam). [reported by Imam Ibn Hajr in "Mataalib Al-Aaliyah"]

In the report of Imam At-Tahawiy in "Mushkil Al-Athaar", Sayeed Ibn Musayyib said: "He did right, indeed the companions of the Prophet (sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) used to do this or say this!"

[The chain of narration of this report is very authentic]

The obligation applies to the whole household, not just the head of the household

Is this ruling applicable only for the head of household or does it include the other members of household?

Ulaamah differed and many suggested that it is only the head of the household.

However, when we read the narration of Abu Ayyub may Allaah be pleased with him (above), we understand that the head of household arranges and is responsible for the slaughtering but this doesn't mean that the members of household doesn't intend to slaughter. In fact, it is the responsibility of the father to teach the wife, children (young and old) the importance of udhiya. So, all of them intend to be part of this slaughtering.

So, it is very clear that this is not just a service that the father of the household does on his own and the rest of the household has nothing to do with it!

Rather they should intend to slaughter. In fact, if the lady of the household is asked "do you intend to slaughter?" If her husband decided to slaughter, she will say "for sure." Because this slaughtering is not just for her husband but rather for the whole family. Also, in many culture, the head of household chooses separate animals/shares for each member of the household (this is of course allowed in the sunnah but as we discussed one share of animal per household suffices regardless how large the household is). Hence, it is very clear that all members are part of this slaughtering and they must intend to slaughter otherwise the slaughtering will not be acceptable from them due to the famous narration of Umar (radiAllaahu 'anhu):

the Prophet (sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said: "Indeed deeds are depended upon intention and man will be rewarded based upon his intention." [Bukhari, Muslim].

How is it possible that we understand that the sahabah intended to sacrifice on behalf of their whole family and the individual family members - none of them had any intention! So, since it should be clearly understood that the members of household did intend, then they must fall under the command stated in the hadith of Umm Salamah may Allaah be pleased with her (as mentioned above)

To conclude, the hadith of Umm Salamah is general and includes all members of the household. Those who exclude them are obligated to provide evidence for their claim. The burden of proof is upon their shoulders.

Narration of Ibn Umar and Ibn Sireen supporting this position

Al-Waleed Ibn Muslim said " I asked Mohammad Ibn Ajlaan regarding cutting hair during the 10 days. He said: Nafee reported that Ibn Umar was passing by a woman who was cutting hair during the 10 days. So, Ibn Umar said "If you had waited until the day of Nahr (slaughtering), it would have been better." [reported by Imam Hakim in his mustadrak, chain is hasan as checked by noble teacher Ghassan Abdel Fattah, before him Ad-dhahabi and Imam Muqbil didn't mention anything about the grade!]

Ibn Hajar reported in "Mataalibul Aaliyah" on the authority of Mu'tamir Ibn Sulayman who reported from his father that Ibn Sireen used to dislike (yukrahu) for a man cut his hair and he would also dislike the cutting of the hair of little children.

Now, the term "makrooh" was used by the salaf to mean "prohibition." So, we understand that Ibn Sireen used to consider it haram for even the children.

After reporting this, Imam Ibn Hazm in his book "Muhalla" mentioned that this is the opinion of Ash-Shafee, Abu Thawr, Ahmed, Ishaq, Abu Sulayman and Al-Awzaee.

We ask Allaah to guide us to the truth, obedience and to beneficial knowledge.