

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

1.0. Introduction

Muslims show utmost respect and love to the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allāh 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 Allāh be upon him) were devoutly respected by the Companions (may Allāh be pleased with them all) and the pious ancestors after them.

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

From the authentic *ahādīth*, it is clear that preserving and respecting the hairs is a practice which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) himself encouraged:

- Imām al-Bukhārī narrates in his *Sahīh* from Anas ibn Mālik that:

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

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

I saw the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh 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 Allāh 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 Allāh be upon him) *wanted* his Companions to keep them, as a form of *baraka*. The report of Imām Muslim clearly highlights this, where Abū Talha was explicitly told by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him): ‘Distribute the hairs amongst the people.’³

¹ *Sahīh al-Bukhārī*. Book of Ablution, hadīth no. 166.

² *Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal* (Hadīth no. 11951). *Tabarruk al-Sahāba bi Athar Rasūl Allāh*. Shaykh Muhammad Tāhir ibn Abd al-Qādir ibn Mahmūd al-Kurdī. (p. 13) Maktaka al-Qāhira Publications, Cairo, 1997.

³ *Sahīh Muslim*. Book of Hajj, hadīth no. 2300. The same report is also to be found in *Sunan al-Tirmidhī* (hadīth no. 836) and *Sunan Abu Dāwūd* (hadīth no. 1691).

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

3.1. They attached value and importance to his hairs

Imām al-Bukhārī reports in his *Sahīh* that Ibn Sīrīn once told Ubayda: ‘We have some hairs of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) that we attained from Anas (may Allāh be pleased with him).’ Ubayda replied:

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

3.2. They would seek *shifā* (cure) for his hairs

Umm Salama (may Allāh 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 *shifā*.⁵

3.3 They would seek victory and success through its *baraka*

Qādī Iyād writes that Khālīd ibn Walīd (may Allāh be pleased with him) had some hairs of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh 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 Allāh be upon him). In the battle of Yamāma, his cap accidentally fell off during the battle. Rather than to continue fighting without the cap, Khālīd ibn Walīd (may Allāh 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, Khālīd ibn Walīd 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 Allāh 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 Khālīd ibn Walīd (may Allāh be pleased with him) that such was the power and *baraka* of the hair, that it was a means to victory in battles. Secondly, Khālīd ibn Walīd (may Allāh 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, Khālīd ibn Walīd (may Allāh be pleased with him) was more anxious to preserve the Prophet’s hair than his own life. Finally, the enemies of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) have no right to his blessings and *tabarruk*.

⁴ *Sahīh al-Bukhārī*, Book of Ablution, hadīth no. 165.

⁵ *Sahīh al-Bukhārī*, Book of Clothes, hadīth no. 5446.

⁶ *Al-Shifā*. Qādī Iyād. p. 275. Dār Ibn Hazm Publications, Beirut, 2002.

3.4. They would seek peace and bliss in the grave from its *baraka*

- Anas ibn Mālik requested to be buried with the hairs of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) under his tongue. ⁷
- Mu'āwiya (may Allāh be pleased with him) possessed the shirt, nails and hairs of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh 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
- Imām Ahmad ibn Hanbal had three hairs from the body of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). He requested to be buried with one placed on his mouth and the other two on each eye. ⁹

4.0. Etiquettes of the *ziyārah* of his blessed hairs.

- He/she should be in the state of *wudū*. Qādī Iyād reports in *al-Shifā* that Ahmad ibn Fazlawiyya possessed the bow of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). He said:

I have never touched this bow with my hands except with *wudū* since I learnt that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) held this bow with his hand. ¹⁰

- He should display humbleness and humility.
- He should read *salāt wa'l salām* as much as possible.
- He should not turn his back towards the blessed hairs.
- He certainly should not raise his voice.
- He should perform *du'ās* in abundance.
- Importantly, Muslims should visit the blessed hairs rather than the blessed hairs visit them. The aforementioned report of Umm Salama (may Allah be pleased with her) indicates that the Companions would come to her house to visit the blessed hairs. She would not take it to them.
- Because the hairs are a part of his blessed body, photography in all forms of his blessed hairs is prohibited.

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⁷ p. 16. *Tabarruk al-Sahāba bi Athar Rasūl Allāh*. Shaykh Muhammad Tāhir ibn Abd al-Qādir ibn Mahmūd al-Kurdī. Maktaka al-Qāhira Publications, Cairo, 1997.

⁸ p. 24. *Tabarruk al-Sahāba bi Athar Rasul Allāh*. Shaykh Muhammad Tāhir ibn Abd al-Qādir ibn Mahmūd al-Kurdī. Maktaka al-Qāhira Publications, Cairo, 1997.

⁹ p. 17. *Ibid*.

¹⁰ p. 275. *Al-Shifā*. Qādī Iyād. p. 275. Dār Ibn Hazm Publications, Beirut, 2002.