101285 - Can Women Cut Nails during Menses in Islam?

the question

Is removing and disposing of hair and nail during menstruation a sin? Is it required to wash them before disposing during menstruation?

Summary of answer

The menstruating woman may cut her nails and comb her hair. It is also permissible for her to do Ghusl whilst menstruating in the case of major ritual impurity if she has an erotic dream, or if her husband is intimate with her without having intercourse and she reaches climax.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

This is a matter concerning which many women are confused, namely the ruling on removing hair and nails and other Sunnahs of the Fitrah during the menstrual period. This stems from a false belief that some of them have, that all parts of a person will come back to him on the Day of Resurrection, so if he removes them when he is in a state of major impurity due to major impurity, menses or postpartum bleeding, they will come back to him impure and not purified on the Day of Resurrection. This is a false notion and an illusion which is not correct at all.

Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked – as it says in Majmu` Al-Fatawa (21/120-121) – about a man who cut his nails and moustache and combed his hair when he was in a state of major impurity; is there any blame on him for that? Some of them referred to that and said: If the person who is in a state of major impurity cuts his hair or nails, his parts will come back to him in the Hereafter and he will be raised on the Day of Resurrection will a share of major impurity commensurate with whatever was removed, and for every hair he will have a share of major impurity. Is that true or not?

He (may Allah have mercy on him) replied:

It is proven in the Hadith of Hudhayfah and the Hadith of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with them) that when mention of the person who is in a state of major impurity was made to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), he said: “The believer does not become impure.”

In Sahih Al-Hakim it adds: “alive or dead.” I do not know of any Shar`i evidence for the view that it is disliked for the person who is in a state of major impurity to remove hair or nails, rather the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Rid yourself of the hair of kufr and get circumcised.” (Narrated by Abu Dawud, 356 and classed as sound by Al-Albani in Irwa’ Al-Ghalil, 1/120). So he told the one who became Muslim to do Ghusl, and he did not tell him to delay circumcision and remove the hair until after doing Ghusl. The general meaning of his words implies that both are permissible. Similarly the menstruating woman is enjoined to comb her hair when doing Ghusl even though combing the hair pulls out some hairs. And Allah knows best. End quote.

Thus Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah referred to the Hadith of `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her), when she menstruated during the Farewell Pilgrimage and the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said to her: “Undo your hair and comb it, and enter ihram for Hajj, and leave `Umrah for now.” (Narrated by Al-Bukhari, 1556 and Muslim, 1211)

Combing is usually accompanied by some hairs falling out, but despite that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) gave permission for the pilgrim in Ihram and the menstruating woman to do that.

The Shafi`i jurists said, as it says in Tuhfat Al-Muhtaj (4/56):

“Our view is that the menstruating woman may remove them .” I.e., nails, pubic hair and armpit hair.

It says in Fatawa Nur `ala Ad-Darb by Shaykh Ibn `Uthaymin (Fatawa Az-Zinah wal-Mar’ah, question no. 9):

I heard that combing the hair is not permissible during the menses, and that one cannot cut one's nails or do Ghusl. Is this correct or not?

He (may Allah have mercy on him) replied:

"This is not correct. The menstruating woman may cut her nails and comb her hair, and it is permissible for her to do Ghusl in the case of major impurity, such as if she has an erotic dream when she is menstruation, then she may do Ghusl from major impurity; or if her husband is intimate with her without having intercourse and she reaches climax, then she may do Ghusl from major impurity. This view that is widely held among some women, that they cannot do Ghusl or comb their hair or cut their nails has no basis in Shari`ah as far as I know."

The view that this is disliked is not known from any of the reputable jurists, but it is mentioned in some books by followers of Bid`ah who go against Ahl As-sunnah, as it says in Sharh An-Nayl wash-Shifa' Al-`Alil (1/347) by Muhammad ibn Yusuf Al-Ibadi.

For more details, please refer to the following answers: 11993 , 26266 , 114810 , 70290 , and 1195 .

And Allah knows best.