20226 - Ruling on using cosmetics

the question

Is it permitted for women to wear make up even if they do not contain any animal derived or alcohol ingredients?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Shaykh Muhammad al-Saalih ibn ‘Uthaymeen said:

Making herself beautiful for her husband is one of the things that a woman should do. The more beautiful a woman looks for her husband, the more that will make him love her and that will create harmony between them. This is one of the objectives of sharee’ah, so if the makeup makes her look more beautiful and does not harm her, there is nothing wrong with that.

But I have heard that make-up can damage the skin of the face and change it in ways that make it look ugly and age the skin prematurely. I hope that women will ask their doctors about that, and if it is proven, then using make-up will be deemed to be either haraam or makruh at the very least, because everything that causes deformity or makes a person ugly is either haraam or makruh.

I would like to use this opportunity to discuss nail polish, which forms a layer on the nails. It is not permissible to use this if a woman is praying, because it prevents the water from reaching the nails when doing wudoo’ or ghusl, and it is not permissible to use anything that will prevent water from reaching the skin or nails when doing wudoo’ or ghusl. Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“wash your faces and your hands (forearms) up to the elbows…” [Al-Maa’idah 5:6]

So if a woman is wearing nail-polish which prevents water from reaching her nails, then she is not

really washing her hands, which means that she has omitted one of the obligatory parts of wudoo' and ghusl. But if she is not praying, there is nothing wrong with her using it, unless this action is one of the unique characteristics of kaafir woman, in which case it is not permissible because it involves imitating them.

And Allah knows best.