221756 - Is a small amount of impurity (najasah) overlooked?

the question

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Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The majority of scholars are of the view that no impurity is overlooked except a small amount of blood or pus, because the evidence does not differentiate between a large amount of impurity and a small amount.

Ibn Qudamah said: There is no difference between a small amount of impurity and a large amount, or whether the small amount is visible to the eye or not visible, of any type of impurity… It was narrated from ash-Shafa`i that whatever is not visible to the eye is overlooked, because of the hardship that would result from trying to avoid it.

End quote from *al-Mughni*, 1/46.

This is the view favoured by the Permanent Committee for Ifta'. They said: Impurity apart from blood and pus is not overlooked, whether the amount is great or small.

As for blood and pus, a small amount of them is overlooked if it does not come from the private part, because trying to avoid a small amount of it is too difficult. Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

{and [He] has not placed upon you in the religion any difficulty}

[al-Hajj 22:78]

{Allah intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship}

[al-Baqarah 2:185].

End quote from *Fatawa al-Lajnah ad-Da'imah*, 5/396, under the leadership of Shaykh Ibn Baz.

The Hanafis are of the view that a small amount of all impurities may be overlooked, such as blood, urine and other things. (*al-Ikhtiyar*, 1/31)

That is because a small amount of impurity is difficult to avoid, therefore it is overlooked, such as a few drops of urine that cannot be seen with the eye, if they get onto one's clothes or body.

Ibn al-Mundhir said: The scholars differed regarding a small amount of urine the size of a needle tip that gets onto one's clothes. One group said that it is obligatory to wash a small or large amount of that.

Muhammad ibn al-Hasan (a companion of Abu Hanifah) said: He does not have to wash it…

It was said to Mis`ar: Abu Yusuf (another companion of Abu Hanifah) says that there is nothing wrong with urine if it is the size of a locust's eye or a needle tip, and Mis`ar approved of that.

End quote from *al-Awsat*, 2/138.

The fact that a small amount of urine splashes back is overlooked is indicated by the report narrated by Muslim, 403, from Abu Wa'il, who said: Abu Musa was very strict about urine, and he would urinate into a bottle [for fear of any drops splashing onto him]. He would say: Among the Children of Israel, if urine got onto the skin of one of them, he would cut it off with scissors.

Hudhayfah said: I wish that your companion did not go to such extremes of strictness. I remember when the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and I were walking together. He came to a garbage-dump behind a wall and he stood as any one of you would stand and urinated. I turned away from him but he gestured to me to come, and I came and stood at his heels until he had finished.

An-Nawawi said: What Hudhayfah meant is that this extreme approach is contrary to the Sunnah, because the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) urinated whilst standing, and

undoubtedly when one urinates standing there is the possibility of drops [splashing onto one's clothes or body], but the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) did not pay attention to that possibility, and he did not go to the trouble of urinating into a bottle as Abu Musa (may Allah be pleased with him) did.

End quote from *Sharh Sahih Muslim*, 3/167.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah said: A small amount of impurity is overlooked, such as mouse droppings and the like in food and other things. This is one view in the madhhab of Ahmad. Even when we are certain that street mud is impure, a small amount is overlooked, because it is too difficult to avoid… And what flies into the air of dust from dried dung and the like, that cannot be avoided, is overlooked.

End quote from *al-Fatawa al-Kubra*, 5/313.

Al-Kasani al-Hanafi said: … and because a small amount of impurity is something that cannot be avoided, as flies land on impurity then land on the garment of one who is praying, and there is inevitably a small amount of impurity on their wings and feet, and if that were not overlooked, it would cause a great deal of hardship to people.

End quote from *Bada'i` as-Sana'i`*, 1/79.

Shaykh Ibn `Uthaymin said: The correct view is that of Abu Hanifah and Shaykh al-Islam… The small amount of impurity that is overlooked because it is too difficult to avoid it includes a small amount of urinary incontinence for the one who suffers from that but takes great precautions to protect himself from it to the best of his ability.

End quote from *ash-Sharh al-Mumti`*, 1/447.

This view is in accordance with the ease of Islamic teachings, but the more prudent approach is for the Muslim to purify himself of all impurities, whether the amount is great or small, so as to avoid a matter concerning which the scholars differed, and to be on the safe side, especially when it is for the sake of the prayer.

Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr said: Taking precautions to ensure that the prayer is valid is obligatory, and a person cannot be certain that his prayer is valid unless he offers the prayer in a clean garment, with his body free of impurities, in a spot that is entirely clean. So let the believer take precautions for his own sake and strive to do his best.

End quote from *at-Tamhid*, 22/241.

And Allah knows best.