134726 - What is the Sunnah with regard to wearing perfume?

the question

Is perfuming the beard part of the Sunnah? What is the Sunnah with regard to wearing perfume?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

An-Nasa’i, 3939, narrated that Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Two things of this world have been made dear to me: women and perfume, but my comfort is in prayer.”

Abu Dawud, 4074, narrated that `A’ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: I dyed a black cloak for the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and he wore it, but when he sweated he noticed the smell of wool coming from it, so he threw it away, for he liked good smells. Classed as authentic by al-Albani in *Sahih Abi Dawud* and elsewhere.

Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

It is soundly narrated from the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) that he said: “Of your worldly matters, women and perfume have been made dear to me, but my comfort is in prayer.”

The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) used to wear a great deal of perfume, and he disliked unpleasant smells, which he found difficult to bear.

Perfume is nourishment for the soul that gives physical strength, which is multiplied and increased by means of perfume, just as it is increased by nourishment (food), drink, rest, joy, meeting loved ones and happy occasions.

What is meant is that perfume was one of the most beloved of things to the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), as it has an impact on maintaining good health and warding off many kinds of pain and the causes thereof because what it contains is very powerful.

(End quote from *Zad al-Ma`ad*, 4/308)

An-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

It is especially recommended for men on Fridays and Eid, when attending gatherings of the Muslims and gatherings of dhikr and knowledge, when wanting to be intimate with one's wife, and so on. (End quote)

The best perfume that one can apply is musk.

Muslim, 2252, narrated from Abu Sa`id al-Khudri that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "Musk is the best of perfume."

Perfume is usually applied to the head and beard:

It was narrated that `A'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: It is as if I can see the glistening of the perfume in the parting of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) when he was in ihram.

Al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Perfuming oneself with different types of 'oud and bakhoor (incense) is also part of the Sunnah; that can be done to one's clothes, under the armpits and the beard.

Muslim, 2254, narrated that Nafi` said: When Ibn 'Umar perfumed himself with incense, he used aloeswood that was not mixed with anything, or he used camphor that he put with the aloeswood, then he said: This is how the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) used to perfume himself with incense.

An-Nawawi said:

Perfuming oneself as mentioned in the hadith means using perfume and incense to perfume oneself. Regarding aloeswood, al-Asma`i, Abu `Ubayd, and all the linguists who study rare words said that it is a type of ‘oud that is used as incense. End quote.

So matters is for a good smell to emanate from the one who puts on perfume, and for bad smells to dissipate from him, and whatever method is used to achieve that has achieved the purpose of using perfume and is in accordance with the Sunnah.

Hence it is permissible to perfume oneself with any type of perfume, without restricting it to a specific type, because the aim is to achieve a pleasant fragrance, and when that is achieved using any kind of perfume, then one has acted in accordance with the Sunnah.

And Allah knows best.