

MODULE 3

Class Title: *Taharah*- Part 2 (2nd part of a 5 lesson series)

Aim of the lesson: To understand the concept of oral hygiene, physical hygiene and personal grooming in Islam

Category: Worship

Lesson Format: Power point presentation

Greeting to students) *AssalamalaikumwaRahmatullahiwaBarakatuh*

(*Ta'awwudh*) *Aoodhubillahi min AsShaytanirRajeem*

(*Tasmiyah*) *BismillahirRahmanirRaheem*

(*Du'a*) *Rabbishrahlisadriwayassirliamriwahluluqdatummillisaniyafqahuqawli*(Surah At Ta-Ha 20: Verse 25-28)

Slides 1-5:

Let's do a quick recap of what we did last time. We talked about *taharah*; we learned about physical cleanliness and spiritual cleanliness. We discussed that you don't need to have fancy or expensive products to be *taahir*; to be *paak*. We also said that there is no one word in Urdu or English for *taharah*. We say cleanliness, *paaki*, *safai*, purity, etc. but it is not equivalent to *taharah* because *taharah* includes a lot more things. We said that all these aspects are covered in *taharah*, but here we are just discussing the physical cleanliness aspect of *taharah*. We said that physical cleanliness includes personal hygiene, conditions that make *ghusl* compulsory and thirdly conditions that nullify ablution or *wudu*. Here, we are doing personal hygiene; it covers bathroom manners, which we discussed last time. Did anyone paste the *du'a* or make an effort to learn it? I'm sure some of your mothers have already put the *du'a* outside the washroom. Let's quickly go over the bathroom manners one at a time:

- We have to recite the *du'a* before entering the washroom.
- We have to enter with the left foot.
- We don't talk in the washroom.
- We come out with our right foot.
- We say the bathroom *du'a* after we exit.

Slides 6-7:

Today *inshaAllah* we will look at the next aspect of *taharah*, which is oral hygiene.

What does oral mean? You could say it refers to dental hygiene, because in oral hygiene you are basically talking about your teeth and mouth.

It is said that if the eyes are the windows to the soul then the mouth is the door way to the body. We have a problem here in Pakistan; we have this tendency to go to the dentist only when we

have problems with our teeth. That means the damage has already been done. You are supposed to go every six months so that if a cavity or any other problem is beginning to develop; even if there is a hint of it, it can be taken care of. But generally what we do is and again we are talking about what people generally do; I'm sure a lot of you don't do that, hopefully a lot of you go six monthly which is very good but generally what we do is that when the damage has been done then we go to the dentist.

And nobody here has milk teeth so we can't afford cavities. At your age *Alhamdulillah* you have lots of teeth. Even if one or two are removed or rot, you know you can survive. But have you seen old people? Most of them have dental problems. They can't eat, they can't chew and a lot of times there is no replacement; you get dentures. It is not like the original teeth.

The problem with a lot of these old people is that they didn't take care of their teeth when they were young. So we have to be careful about this. Your teeth can be seen when you are talking; and that means that you should try not to talk while you are chewing food.

Why do you think Rasool Allah (pbuh) said that? Why do you think we should not talk while there is food in our mouth? Because the half eaten food looks gross! It is absolutely basic manners. For one, the other person cannot understand what you are saying because there is food in your mouth - and two it is really disgusting. You can also choke. Look at the difference before and after cleaning; see what it can do for you? Once you get the cleaning done you realize what beautiful teeth you have, because you see yourself everyday and don't even realize that the colour of your teeth is changing because they are getting stained.

Slide 8:

Scientific research on the importance of oral hygiene now suggests that periodontal bacteria can enter the blood stream. That means that now it is not just restricted to the mouth. If you have problems in your mouth it is not just related to the teeth; it travels to different organs, beginning new infections.

This may contribute in the development of heart disease, increase the risk of strokes(who would have thought that?!),increase the rate of women having pre-term low weight babies(for the young ones, pre-term means before nine months) and pose a serious threat to diabetics, people with respiratory diseases or osteoporosis. Osteoporosis is the weakening of bones; the calcium and vitamin-D deficiency. So you see, all these problems could be related to your oral hygiene.

Slides 9-13:

There is growing evidence pointing to links between oral and whole body health. Whole body is treated by doctors, and dentistry and medicine are considered separate. This separation of the disciplines is slowly changing because the two are so interlinked.

‘Good teeth’ is more than the absence of disease or tooth decay. It is an integral part of your well-being.

People with good and exceptionally healthy bodies usually have healthy teeth and gums. That means they are inter-related. Sometimes people have bleeding gums and that really hurts when they bite. You have to take care of all these things so that you don’t end up with something like this; this is plaque.

It is not as if this person did not brush his teeth; this is not just because of the absence of brushing teeth; sometimes the brush movements are not proper and sometimes despite brushing we end up with this, because the brush cannot reach all the different areas. In order to avoid all this you should visit your dentist regularly.

At this age you people are probably going because of braces and *Alhamdulillah* along with the braces the dentist must be keeping a lookout for anything else too; but I’m sure not all of you are wearing braces. So the ones who are not should be visiting the dentist regularly and once your braces are off you should still continue to visit your dentist regularly.

Brush your teeth properly. Make sure you know what brush the movement has to be like this. Every tooth has to be brushed; the inner side, the outer side, the back portion. You should be using dental floss regularly and you should definitely not use tooth picks. If you have a loose tooth, don’t floss in that area.

Slides 14-16:

Germs cause bad breath. You must brush your tongue also because sometimes the tongue has germs that cause bad breath.

Has something like this ever happened to you? What about when you wake up in the morning? How does your mouth smell at that time? That is why we brush our teeth in the morning.

Sometimes people have bad breath despite brushing their teeth regularly. Perhaps they can chew something like chewing gum or a peppermint or *ilaichi* (cardamom). But if something like that is happening to you then you can take care of it.

What if your best friend has bad breath and when you sit with her you have a problem. What are you going to do about it? How will you handle the situation with somebody close to you or maybe even someone you don’t know very well? We could have mint or gum ourselves and offer her one as well; if she doesn’t accept it, there’s nothing you can do; at least you are making an effort. Obviously you cannot force it in her mouth - you can just offer it to her. What else? If it’s someone close to you, you can tell them. That is the best thing to do. You care about your best friend and you want the best for her, so the best thing is to tell her. She probably doesn’t

know, or if she does, is possibly troubled by it but too embarrassed to ask for help. But if you can't tell her directly maybe you can write an anonymous note to her.

Remember that if you ignore the problem your best friend's problem is not being solved. You wouldn't want that. You would want the best for her too. If you happen to have a younger brother or sister and something like this is happening with them and you feel that maybe if you tell them they might not like it, then you can tell your mother and she will look into it. Who knows - maybe she already knows! Okay, so please brush your tongue on a regular basis.

Slide 17:

Have you seen this? It's a *miswak*. This is a very thin *miswak* there are some thick ones available too. Using a *miswak* is highly recommended. A lot of non-Muslims think that we use twigs to clean our teeth. Why do we use twigs to clean our teeth? Because Rasool Allah (pbuh) said to. Why do some of the non-Muslims also use it?

Slide 18:

Let's first look it from our angle as Muslims; this is a hadith by IbnMajah: Abu Umamah (ra) said that Rasool Allah (pbuh) said, "Use the *miswak*. Indeed it purifies the mouth and it is a pleasure for the Lord. Jibreel (as) exhorted me to use the *miswak* so much that I feared its use would be made obligatory on me and my *ummah*."

That means that he probably felt that we have to use the *miswak* before doing *wudu*. It was not made obligatory but it is something which is immensely liked.

The hadith continues: "If I was not fearful of enforcing hardship on my *ummah* I would have made this obligatory on my people. Indeed I use the *miswak* so much that I fear that the front part of my mouth is being peeled (due to constant and abundant brushing from the *miswak*)."

Even when Rasool Allah's (saw) life was ending and he was on his death bed he asked A'isha (ra) to clean his teeth with it (he didn't have the energy to use it himself) ¹.

Slide 19:

Ibn Umar narrated that Rasool Allah (pbuh) said, "Make the practice of using the *miswak* regular, for indeed it is healthy for the mouth and it is a pleasure for the Creator." [Bukhari]

¹ Aisha (ra) said that, "He passed away in my house, on my day, between my chest and throat. And at death Allah (The Exalted) joined my saliva to his. For when my brother 'Abd al-Rahman entered carrying a Miswak in his hand, he (the Prophet) began to look at it, and I knew that it pleased him, so I said; "Shall I bring it to you?" Yes, he nodded, so I handed it to him. He put it into his mouth, but it was too hard for him. "Shall I soften it for you?" I asked. Yes, he nodded, so I made it soft. (Bukhari)

Allah (swt) is pleased with the Muslim who uses the *miswak*. It is not expensive and it is easily available. The only hindrance would be inculcating the habit and getting used to it. Just keep it in your bathroom and use it before you do *wudu*.

Slides 20-22:

The use of *miswak* is also being propagated by non-Muslims in the West. How did that come about? The *miswak* is a natural tool for brushing the teeth and its scientific name is 'salvedora perseca'. It is taken from the roots and branches of particular trees; in different countries it is taken from different trees.

In the Arab world and Asia it is taken from the *araq* tree. This is the most well known variety and is the kind that was used by the Prophet (pbuh). In Africa it comes from lime and orange trees and in America from zenith trees. In Pakistan it is made from *neem* trees, *peelu* trees and olive trees. You also have various flavours in this; lime, mint, clove or natural.

Slide 23:

This man here is carrying a really thin *miswak*, but I am sure you have seen thick ones too. It is basically your choice what you use. Some are a little bitter - the dark ones are a little bitter. The light ones are just ok. It might feel strange in your mouth initially but it is just a matter of getting used to it.

Slide 24:

This is a store in the U.K. that sells organic stuff; naturally green.co.uk. That means that it does not have any chemicals or any preservatives and they call it a natural toothbrush twig *miswak*. It costs 2 pounds! That is around five hundred rupees for a natural toothbrush twig. You see different articles on this and all of them say the same thing.

Slides 25- 27:

This is a natural toothbrush which has made the idea of brushing your teeth with a bio-degradable twig almost palatable. Fashioned from the nutrient pack root of the Araq tree it comes in three flavours mint, orange and lemon. It contains all kinds of natural nutrients and because of the increase in pollution they are really propagating this because it is completely natural. No plastic material in it, unlike in a toothbrush. Again this is taken from the root of the Araq tree which naturally contains a number of nutrients. It removes stains and encourages whiter and stronger teeth without tooth paste. You can use this instead of a toothbrush, or you can use it with a tooth brush. Even if you don't use a tooth brush it will clean your teeth perfectly well because that is its purpose. Toothbrushes came much later; this was the way people used to clean before that. It is perfect for travelling, trekking, camping or just keeping it in your pocket. No

toothbrush and tooth paste separately and water required, along with a place to spit it out and rinse your mouth; just a *miswak*. That is all.

Slide 28:

This is a radio presenter and she is being interviewed and asked a lot of questions; she is an environmentalist. The first question she is asked is: what is your biggest guilty green secret? And she says that I have used too much paper because as you know that is wastage because trees are cut when you use paper. But look at the last question: what would you save if the flood comes? She answered: my kids, my husband, my natural toothbrush and my mobile phone charger (the mobile phone is already with her).

Slide 29:

You peel back the bark and you have a new brush for each day because what happens is that you chew this area and when you have to start using it you can rinse it. If it is really hard you dip it in water for a little while; this area will become soft. Then with your molars you just press on it so it becomes a little soft and some juice starts to come out. Then you just start brushing it and then maybe everyday or when you feel that this area is not serving its purpose anymore as it is too soft and limp, just chop that part off and Voila! You have a fresh new toothbrush.

Slides 30- 31:

Miswak contains over 10 different natural compounds considered essential for good dental and oral hygiene (this feels like a chemistry class); fluoride, silica, sulphur, vitamin-C, chlorides; everything is in here. It is the ultimate green dental care system. There is no artificial fluoride which you see on all toothpastes. It has no sodium nor sulphate, no artificial colouring, no artificial sweetener, no harsh chemical bleach, no chemical preservatives and it has not been tested on animals.

Slides 32-35:

Miswak is environmentally friendly because it is natural; it comes from trees. Dentists recommend changing your toothbrush every three months. That is about twelve per year for just three people; forget the rest of the people in the city. The dozen are likely to end up in a landfill along with other plastic waste. We already have a lot of pollution and we are already bothered about what to do with all the plastic waste that we have. The *miswak* is natural and goes back to nature; no landfills need to be filled with this.

Slide 36:

Advantages of the *miswak*:

- It strengthens the gums and prevents tooth decay.

- It helps in eliminating tooth decay by preventing as well as curing it.
- It prevents further increase in decay which has already settled. If you already have decay then *inshaAllah* it will not increase.
- It makes the mouth smell fresh and fragrant, depending on which flavour you are using.
- It is a cure for illnesses.
- It removes odour. You can offer a *miswak* to a person who has bad breath.
- It sharpens the taste buds.
- It sharpens the memory.
- It is a cure for headaches.
- It makes teeth glow.
- It helps to cure indigestion.
- It clears the voice.

Slide 37:

These are all proved by scientific research.

However, what is the greatest benefit of using *miswak*?

The greatest benefit is gaining the pleasure of Allah (swt) because we just read in a hadith that Allah (swt) is pleased with the people who use a *miswak*. So it is a very simple and easy way of pleasing Allah (swt). It helps you physically and you also gain Allah's (swt) reward.

Slides 38-39:

Now let's talk about physical hygiene.

What do you think physical hygiene is?

It is basically cleaning of the whole body, which includes your face. It is important to shower regularly. Remember that when you smell bad, often you can't smell it yourself, the person sitting next to you can smell it. You can't smell your odour yourself and especially at the age of adolescence, when the hormones are changing, the odour is most unpleasant. We really have to take care and shower regularly.

Slide 40:

Next, be careful about lice. This is normally caught in school; that is the most common place where people catch lice. They just travel from here and there and you don't even have a clue as to what is happening – that's another advantage of wearing a scarf – protection from picking up lice! However, you should check your hair on a regular basis to make sure you don't have any. Lice multiply unbelievably fast, so you have to be quicker to eliminate them than they are at breeding.

Then there's dandruff; some people have dandruff everywhere - as you see in the shampoo ads, it really does happen like that - if you wear dark coloured clothes then you can see the dandruff. You should take care of it. You can use anti-dandruff shampoos and sometimes the case is so bad that you need to use medicine.

Slide 41:

Do use a deodorant please! As I said earlier, you can't smell yourself.

Poor people can't afford deodorants and they also don't have the concept of this aspect of physical hygiene. You probably have some maids/servants working for your parents, so we must be responsible for providing the stuff for them. You can give them a deodorant and tell them on how to keep themselves clean.

Slide 42:

Deodorants don't have to be expensive; you don't have to use fancy brands or anything of that sort if you can't afford it. Use alum instead; it's cheap and it is easily available. It is called *phitkari* in Urdu and alum in English.

This is a major ingredient in all deodorants. This is white and if you touch it, it feels a little like salt. Either you rub it directly on your under arms or wherever you want or you can dip it in water and apply it once it is a little wet.

You can even put it in water and leave it for a while and use that water for washing yourself; perhaps if you put it in a mug and then pour that water onto yourself. It is not soapy and it has no smell. It just removes odour; like odourless deodorant.

But alum is really effective. Its purpose is to remove the odour, not make you fragrant. It is totally natural and really inexpensive.

Slides 43- 44:

Next, do clean and trim your nails regularly. ²

If you want to grow your nails, grow them; but please keep them clean and trimmed. Some people have long nails and they are dirty and black from inside. You eat with the same hand and just by applying nail polish the bacteria and other germs won't go away. Please be careful; whether you are growing your nails or keep them short, you should take care of them; they should be clean and trimmed. You should not bite your nails. Use a nail cutter or file or

² Abu Hurayrah (RA) reported that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, "Five things are part of one's fitrah (nature): Shaving the pubic hairs, circumcision, trimming the moustache, removing the hair under the arms and trimming the nails." (Agreed Upon)

whatever you need to, but please keep your nails trimmed and clean. Even if you are growing your nails you should be trimming them at least once in forty days. It is preferable not to keep very long nails because they go in your food. They are an ideal place for bacteria, so just keep them at a length which you can comfortably manage. Can you see that? Somebody is handing you with such dirty nails you would say “yuck”. So whether they are short or long, they have to be clean.

Slides 45- 46:

Cleaning your body hair; do remove body hair regularly.³

You have to remove your pubic hair and your under arm hair once in forty days. **At least** once in forty days. If you have hair anywhere else on the body; legs, arms wherever; and if you are not comfortable with it or you feel it makes you sweat more, then you should remove it. Have it done from the parlour or do it at home. There are lots of lotions, creams, machines, ladies’ razors, wax strips etc.

Please remember an important thing when getting waxing done by someone else. We cannot expose the area between our belly button to our knees in front of anyone – not even another woman - except our husbands and for guys except their wives. So that means waxing of private parts and upper legs. You should do yourself or remove hair from there using some other method. This is because Rasool Allah (pbuh) said to Ali (ra): "Do not look at the thighs of a person either alive or dead." [Abu Dawud].

See how important it is to know our *deen*. Our day to day essential activities cannot be done properly without guidance from Allah (swt) and His Messenger (pbuh).

Slides 47- 49:

Now we come to the last part; personal grooming.

What is personal grooming?

Brushing your hair, for example. Do I need to brush my hair if I am wearing a scarf? Nobody can see my hair. If I have to wake up in the morning and go to school I can wear my scarf and go without brushing my hair and no one will know the difference. However, hair does need to be brushed, and it needs to be clean. If I come here without brushing my hair you will think something is wrong with me. You people look the same if your hair isn’t brushed properly. Wearing a scarf does not mean that you don’t need to brush your hair⁴. Get a haircut, because if

³ Said Anas (RA), "The time period for us to trim the moustache, cut the nails, pluck out the underarm hairs and cut the pubic hairs was forty nights." (Ahmad, Abu Dawud)

⁴ Abu Hurayrah (RA) reported the Prophet(PBUH) as saying, "Whoever has hair should honor it." (Abu Dawud.)

you don't have a haircut your hair tends to become weak and you get split ends. That is not good for your hair. You don't want to look like this. ⁵

Slide 50:

Do keep clothes neat and clean; that means ironed. Don't say, "What difference does it make?" People do see and people do note and even if they are not looking you can see for yourself. And our Prophet (pbuh) disliked untidy and unkempt people.

Slides 51- 54:

Do wear perfume but not so over powering that if I am sitting here then she can also smell it and the people in the back and the other room can also smell it.

Perfume ads are very inappropriate and very suggestive. What does our religion say about it? There is a hadith: "The woman who perfumes herself and passes through a gathering is an adulteress." [Tirmidhi and Abu Dawud]

An adulteress is a lady who has a relationship outside marriage. That is a very big sin, and definitely not a compliment.

There is another hadith: "The perfume for men the fragrance is apparent but the colour is hidden and the colour for women is apparent and the fragrance is hidden." [Mishkat]

Slide 55:

Rasool Allah (pbuh) was very particular about staying clean. It is a good idea to have a little "kit-bag" with us – with necessary travel-size toiletries like comb, deodorant, toothbrush & paste – better still – *miswaak*, also sanitary towels. You guys are out of the house for hours – school, tuitions, extra classes what have you – it is good to have your little kit bags in case of need and/or to freshen up.

Do you realize that all these tips of physical hygiene that we get from the sunnah of our Prophet (pbuh) are what we know from various medical and miss-manners type sources as the correct stuff to do! *Alhamdulillah* – our *deen* is truly a *deen* of *fitrah* (based on human nature) and it has to be – it is from the Creator of our nature.

Inshaallah, we will move on to the next topic from next week.

⁵ Said 'Ata ibn Yasar, "A man came to the Prophet with unkempt hair and an untidy beard. The Prophet pointed to him, as if ordering him to straighten his hair and beard. He did so and returned. Thereupon the Prophet observed, 'Is that not better than one of you coming with his hair unkempt, as if he were a devil?'" (Related by Malik.)

(Du'a for end of a gathering) *SubhanaRabbikaRabbulIzzati 'ammayasifunwasalamun
'alalmursaleen, walhamdulillahiRabbil 'alameen*

(Parting salutation to students) *AssalamalaikumwarahmatullahiwaBarakatuh*