

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Chapter 7

بَابُ مَا جَاءَ فِي كُحْلِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ

What has been narrated regarding the *Kuḥl* of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

- al-Imām al-Tirmidhī included this chapter to explain matters related to the *kuḥl* of the Prophet ﷺ, and that using it was part of his guidance; from both his verbal and practical *Sunnahs*, as will be seen in the *aḥādīth* of this chapter.
- *Kuḥl* is a well-known type of stone. Some of it is black and some of it is reddish in colour. Both types are referred to as *ithmid* (antimony). It crumbles easily and is ground until it becomes fine, then applied to the eye using a *kuḥl* stick or something similar.
- The scholars have mentioned various benefits of using *ithmid kuḥl*, which Ibnul Qayyim summarised in his book *Zād al-Ma'ād*, saying: '*Kuḥl preserves the health of the eye, strengthens eyesight, brightens it, draws out harmful matter and removes it, along with beautifying the eye in some of its forms. Applying it at the time of sleep carries additional benefit, as the eye rests after application and is spared harmful movement, while the body's natural processes serve it. Ithmid in particular has a special quality in this regard.*'

Hadīth 49

عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ: اْكْتَحِلُوا بِالْإِثْمِدِ، فَإِنَّهُ يَجْلُو الْبَصَرَ، وَيُنْبِتُ الشَّعْرَ.

***Ibn 'Abbās narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'Apply kuḥl made from ithmid (antimony), for it clears the sight and causes the hair to grow.'* (Saḥīḥ)**

وَرَزَعَمَ ابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ ﷺ كَانَتْ لَهُ مَكْحَلَةٌ يَكْتَحِلُ مِنْهَا كُلَّ لَيْلَةٍ، ثَلَاثَةً فِي هَذِهِ، وَثَلَاثَةً فِي هَذِهِ.

***Ibn 'Abbās also maintained, that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had a kuḥl container from which he would apply kuḥl every night, three times in this eye and three times in the other.* (Ḍa'īf Jiddan)**

Hadīth 50

عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَ: كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ يَكْتَحِلُ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَنَامَ بِالْإِثْمِدِ ثَلَاثًا فِي كُلِّ عَيْنٍ. وَفِي

رواية: إِنَّ النَّبِيَّ ﷺ، كَانَتْ لَهُ مَكْحَلَةٌ يَكْتَحِلُ مِنْهَا عِنْدَ النَّوْمِ، ثَلَاثًا فِي كُلِّ عَيْنٍ.

Ibn ‘Abbās said: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to apply ithmid kuḥl before going to sleep, three times in each eye. In another narration: ‘The Prophet ﷺ had a kuḥl container from which he used to apply kuḥl before going to sleep, three times in each eye.’ (Ḍa‘īf)

- In the first ḥadīth (49) the Prophet ﷺ instructed the use of *ithmid* as *kuḥl* and mentioned two benefits.
- (كَانَ يَجْلُو الْبَصَرَ) – ***‘It clears the sight’***. Meaning, it cleans and purifies the eyes and helps to make the vision clearer and the eyes brighter.
- (وَيُنْبِتُ الشَّعْرَ) – ***‘And causes the hair to grow’***. This refers to the hair of the eyelids, or the eyelashes. The eyelashes protect and preserve the eye from dust and other particles, as well as providing beauty and other benefits. Among Allah’s blessings upon a person is that He made the eyes blink continuously, which has the great benefit of cleaning and protecting the eyes.
- The narrations of Ibn ‘Abbās in which he claimed that the Prophet ﷺ had a *kuḥl* container from which he would apply *kuḥl* every night, three times for each eye, are *ḍa‘īf jiddan* (very weak) and *ḍa‘īf* (weak) respectively. However, in another authentic narration, the Prophet ﷺ encouraged applying *kuḥl* in an odd number. He ﷺ said:

إِذَا كَتَحَلَ أَحَدُكُمْ فَلْيَكْتَحِلْ وَتَرًا.

‘When one of you applies kuḥl, let him apply it an odd number of times.’

(Aḥmad - Ḥassan)

- The scholars have mentioned two methods of applying *kuḥl* an odd number of times, however the *aḥādīth* which these are based on, have debatable chains of narration.
 1. The first method is to apply *kuḥl* to the right eye three times, and then apply it to the left eye three times, making the oddness (*witr*) in each eye.
 2. The second method is to begin with the right eye and apply it once, then the left eye once, then the right eye a second time, then the left eye a second time, and finally finish with the right eye for the fifth application. The total number of applications is odd, however the right eye is given preference in three ways: by beginning with it, ending with it, and giving it the additional application.

Hadīth 51

عَنْ جَابِرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ: عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْإِثْمِدِ عِنْدَ النَّوْمِ، فَإِنَّهُ يَجْلُو الْبَصَرَ وَيُنْبِتُ الشَّعْرَ.

Jābir ibn ‘Abdullāh said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Use ithmid (antimony) at the time of sleep, for it clears the sight and causes the hair to grow.’ (Ṣaḥīḥ)

- This ḥadīth specifically mentions the use of *kuḥl* at the time of sleep.

- (عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْإِثْمِدِ عِنْدَ النَّوْمِ) – ‘Use *ithmid* (antimony) at the time of sleep’. The statement of Ibnul Qayyim regarding the benefit of using *kuhl* at bedtime has already been mentioned: it is more beneficial for the eyes and safer from harm.
- (فَإِنَّهُ يَجْلُو الْبَصَرَ وَيُنْبِتُ الشَّعْرَ) – ‘For it clears the sight and causes the hair to grow’. This is the same as the previous *ḥadīth* in which the Prophet ﷺ mentions two benefits of applying *kuhl*.

Hadīth 52

عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ: إِنَّ خَيْرَ أَكْحَالِكُمُ الْإِثْمِدُ، يَجْلُو الْبَصَرَ وَيُنْبِتُ الشَّعْرَ.

Ibn ‘Abbās said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘The best of your kuhl is ithmid (antimony); it clears the sight and causes the hair to grow.’ (Saḥīḥ)

- (إِنَّ خَيْرَ أَكْحَالِكُمُ الْإِثْمِدُ) – ‘The best of your kuhl is ithmid’. This statement of the Prophet ﷺ means that the best thing you can use as *kuhl* is *ithmid* (antimony).
- This indicates that there are various other substances used as *kuhl*, but the best, most beneficial, and most excellent of them is *ithmid*. Among its benefits is that it clears the vision and causes the hair of the eyelashes to grow.

Hadīth 53

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ: عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْإِثْمِدِ، فَإِنَّهُ يَجْلُو الْبَصَرَ وَيُنْبِتُ الشَّعْرَ.

Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Use ithmid, for it clears the sight and causes the hair to grow.’ (Saḥīḥ)

- al-Imām al-Tirmidhī concluded this chapter with the *ḥadīth* of Ibn ‘Umar, which has the same meaning as the previous narrations in the chapter.
- Sheikh Abdul Razzāq al-Badr gave the following *fā’idah* (point of benefit) at the end of this chapter: ‘Some modern medical studies have established that some *ithmid* sold in the market is not free from impurities. It may be mixed with a type of lead that is ground together with it, or it may contain some form of contamination, making it harmful rather than beneficial. For this reason, a person should take care to obtain good quality *ithmid* whose purity and safety he can be confident of.’