



## THE CLEANLINESS FOR A HEALTHY LIFE: A PREVENTIVE REMEDY IN TIBBIN NABAWI

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### ABSTRACT

*Tibbin Nabawi* (Prophetic Medicine) is a divine remedy for a healthy life and family. Popular herbal and Ayurveda medicine promote a symbolic narration “prevention is better than cure”. Likewise, *Tibbin Nabawi* is divinely instructed and applied in the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) which compassionate both prevention and cure for the human body and soul. The modern medical science, however, tremendously grabbed some ideas and treatments that are very much relevant to the natural and divine practice of the Prophet. *Tibbin Nabawi* might have accredited one of the best remedy and autophagy to prevent and gradually cure fatal diseases. This study aims at investigating the relevance to the concept of divine remedy and the practice of the Prophet called “*tibbin nabawi*” with special reference to the concept of *taharah* or cleanliness. This study also substances to explore the following; i) *wudhu* (ablution), and ii) *siwaak* (tooth-brush). This research first examines *tibbin nabawi* from main sources - the Qur’an and Sunnah and the interpretation and approach of Muslim scholars to formulate a balanced and healthy life. This study finds the concept of *tibbin nabawi* is an important means that complements modern medical treatment. Furthermore, *tibbin nabawi* is a leading physical and spiritual paradigm to fight the toxic disease of the human body as well as to reshape the modern medical science which corresponds to the divine practice of the Prophetic traditions. This study concludes *tibbin nabawi* has the potential not only in promoting a ‘balanced and healthy lifestyle’ as championed by the Prophet of Islam but also to improve a moderate, healthy and peaceful life which is in favor of the well-being of the human body and soul.

**Keywords:** Tibbin Nabawi, Healthy Lifestyle, Taharah and Cleanliness.

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### INTRODUCTION

The Prophetic tradition or sunnah is the way of life prescribed by the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) for mankind in order to live a better life. Allah SWT says in the Qur’an: “We sent you not, but as a Mercy for all creatures” [Al-Anbia, 21:107]. The Prophetic tradition or sunnah is based on the teachings of Islam and interpretations of the Qur’an that Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) practiced in his life and recommended for others.

In the contemporary techno-civilized world, the religion or religious practice which is commonly believed a divine remedy corresponds to many issues in the health science scientifically evidenced from the laboratory data. Albeit, many practices that are well ingrained in traditional culture and society were found to have scientific evidence by the modern scientific methods only recently. Fascinatingly, those scientific facts validated in the human culture and society, and religious tradition even before the discovery of modern science. In this regard, our study aims to releveltize how the *tibbin nabawi* beautified and harmonized the traditional customs and modern scientific methods go together. This study also explores the Prophetic traditions in hygiene and cleanliness by corresponding some scientific evidence.

Islam maintains a balance-sheet for the wellbeing of health and soul. For instance, the provision of the necessity over the needs and the provision of the needs over the improvement provides the interest (*maslaha*) and wellbeing of people. It also corresponds to the objectives of Islamic *Shari'ah* called *Maqasid al-Shari'ah*. Equally, the interest of physically healthy and mentally sound is more important than the interest of the wealth of people (Yusuf al-Qaradawi, 1993). The popular proverb says: "health is wealth or "health first." Similarly, the Prophet of Islam advises taking advantage of five blessings before deprived it in the phase of life. He (s.a.w.) said:

*"Take advantage of five matters before five other matters: your youth, before you become old; and your health, before you fall sick; and your richness, before you become poor; and your free time before you become busy; and your life, before your death."* [Bukhari & Tirmidhi]

Five blessings and bounties pointed out by the Prophet (s.a.w) is essentially worth to maintain a healthy mind and soul. They are easy to chase and very simple to take benefit of it but few people appreciate.

The traditions of the Prophet and his customs in dieting, sleeping and cleanliness correspond a healthy life in order to worship of Allah SWT and serve the people. The wisdom of a healthy human life truly reflects when a person falls sick. A man, for example, can do more beneficial actions while he is in good health, and the sickness might prevent

him from doing such good deeds. The cleanliness and the healthy lifestyle in the Prophetic traditions can be buckled as; wudhu (ablution), and siwaak (tooth-brush) and bath when necessary.

### **FATAL DISEASE VS PREVENTIVE REMEDIES FOR HEALTHY LIFE**

The fatal diseases that are almost incurable and very expensive in treatment, and epidemic spreading to people of all ages and classes. It is crucial to know the causing factors and how to control it so easily. The incurable disease, like cancer, is not born in a single day or overnight, but it takes about six months to two years to take place in the human body. A historical statement in both traditional and modern health science is “prevention is better than cure” basically corresponds *tibbin nabawi*. In other words, the practice of *tibbin nabawi* better to prevent before treat. The former is nearly free and the latter intensively expensive (Rasheed, 2017).

Islam tells us to learn the balance from God’s creation and His nature. Indeed, there is a balance in nature. If the balance of nature is disbanded, the nature of the environment can be catastrophic. Similarly, if a man loses the balance in life style of food, rest and hygiene, undeniably, his body will have an imbalance and adverse reactions. Everything has to be at a sustainable level. In this regard, the Prophetic tradition is one of the best sustainable customs in cleanliness to be practiced.

### **CLEANLINESS (TAHARAH)**

1.1) Cleanliness and beautification are characteristics of Islam

Islam addresses itself in considerable depth to the question of cleanliness. The cleanliness is the essence of good appearance and the beauty of every adornment. It is reported that the Prophet (s.a.w) said: “Cleanse yourself, for Islam is cleanliness.” [Ibn Hayyan]. “Cleanliness invites toward faith, and faith leads its possessor to the *Jannah* (Paradise).” [al-Tabarani].

“The Prophet (s.a.w) placed a great emphasis on keeping the body, clothing, houses, and streets clean, and he laid special stress on cleaning the teeth, hands, and hair. This emphasis on cleanliness is not to be wondered at in a religion which makes cleanliness the key to its principle form of worship, salat,

for the Muslim's salat is not acceptable unless his body, clothing, and the place where he performs his salat are all clean" (al-Qaradawi, 2004, P:74 ).

In addition to this requirement, there are the obligatory types of cleansing, either of the entire body in the form of *ghusl* (total washing), or of those parts of the body which are exposed to dirt, in the form of *wudhu* (ablution for *salat*/prayer) (al-Qaradawi, 2004). Cleanliness of the body is a blessing like the purity of the soul. The blessing of Allah becomes complete only when one gets full guidance for the purity of both the body and the soul. (Maududi, Tafhim).

Allah SWT says in the Qur'an:

O Believers, when you rise to offer the Salat, you must wash your faces and hands and arms up to the elbows and wipe your heads with wet hands and wash your feet up to the ankles; and if you have become unclean, cleanse yourselves with a full bath; if, however, you are sick or are on a journey, or if any of you has relieved himself or if you have "touched" women and you can find no water, then cleanse yourselves with pure dust: strike your palms on it and wipe your hands and faces with it. Allah does not will to make life hard for you, but He wills to purify you and complete His blessing upon you so that you may show gratitude. [Al-Maida, 5:6].

Maududi further comments on this verse:

According to the practice and instructions of the Prophet, washing of the face includes the inside washing and cleaning of the mouth, throat and nose. It is also essential to wipe the ears from outside and inside as they form part of the head. The hands should be cleansed first because the other parts are to be cleansed with them. A full bath is essential in case one becomes "unclean" by cohabitation or by a discharge of semen during sleep etc. It is forbidden to touch the Qur'an or to offer the Prayer while one is "unclean" (Tafhim).

### 1.2) Perform ablution (*wudhu*) before going to bed

Narrated by Muslim, one of the companions said that the Prophet (s.a.w) told him, “Whenever you go to bed, perform ablution like that for the prayer, and lie on your right side” [Muslim].

### 1.3) Dusting and cleaning the bed before sleeping

Another hadith corresponds the similar message as mentioned before, the Prophet (s.a.w) said:

*“When any one of you goes to bed, he should take hold of the hem of his lower garment and then should clean (his bed) with the help of that and then should recite the name of Allah” [Muslim].*

It is noteworthy to mention, taking a nap or sleeping, the Prophet (s.a.w) encouraged two actions in preparation for it; i) to tidy up and/or clean the bed by shaking out, and ii) reciting a special dua’/prayer before sleeping (Tumiran et al. 2018). Abu Hurairah (r.a) narrated, the Prophet (s.a.w) said:

*“When anyone of you goes to bed, he should shake out his bed with the inside of his waist sheet, for he does not know what has come on to it after him, and then he should say: “In Your Name I have laid down on my side. If You take my soul, then have mercy on it. If You release it, then preserve it in the manner in which You preserve the men of right action” [Bukhari].*

Nevertheless, cleanliness and beautification have many forms in action as suggested in the Prophetic tradition. Ablution (*wudhu*) is one of the beautiful purifying actions in Islam. Subsequently, Allah SWT says in the Qur’an:

*“Truly, Allah loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean.” [Al Baqarah, 2: Verse 222]. “In it (mosque) are men who love to clean and to purify themselves. And Allah loves those who make themselves clean and pure.” [Al Tawba, 9: Verse 108].*

#### 1.4) Using Siwak/Miswak (Chewing Stick)

There are a number of Prophetic hadiths which state the virtues of miswak, and the practice of using miswak. The following hadith describes that using miswak is a tool to achieve Allah's pleasure. In an authentic narration, the Prophet (s.a.w) said:

*"Make a regular practice of the Miswaak, for verily, it is healthy for the mouth and it is a Pleasure for the Creator (i.e., Allah is pleased with the Muslim who uses the Miswaak)." [Bukhari].*

The following hadiths correspond that miswak was not only the practice of the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) but it used to be the practice of all the Prophets before him. The prophet (s.a.w) says:

*"Four things are amongst the practices of the Ambiyaa/Messengers - circumcision, application of perfume, Miswak and marriage." [Tirmidhi].*

Ten practices and qualities that lead a man to be pure and clean as narrated by Sayyidah A'isha (r.a.), the Prophet (s.a.w) mentioned that ten practices are the inherent qualities of human being and he (s.a.w) said:

There are 10 actions which are of Fitrat (inherent qualities) : (1) To trim the moustache; (2) To lengthen the beard; (3) To perform Miswak; (4) To put water into the nostrils (cleansing the nostrils); (5) To clip the nails; (6) To wash between the toes; (7) To remove the hair from under the arms; (8) To remove the pubic hair; (9) To perform Istinja (to clean oneself after answering the call of nature); and (10) To rinse the mouth. [Sahih Muslim].

The following hadith describes the time of using miswak. It is mentioned that the Prophet (s.a.w) used to do miswak before prayers, after coming back home and while waking up at night to perform prayers. The Prophet (s.a.w) says:

When anyone of you stand at night to offer salat , you should clean your teeth with a Miswak because when you recite the Qur'an, an angel places his mouth

on yours and anything coming out of your mouth enters the mouth of that angel. (Bukhari, 2117). “Whenever the Prophet (s.a.w) would wake up from his sleep, he would use the Miswak.” [Abu Dawud].

In conclusion, the miswak which was introduced in the 7<sup>th</sup> century by the Prophet (s.a.w) can be relevant today due to some health benefits. Miswak has become scientifically more important when the physicians are looking for a natural alternative for the toothbrush that does not have any side effect. The sources of the Prophetic traditions have put the highest emphasis on using miswak. When a Muslim performs the miswak, he pleases Allah SWT and at the same time stays healthy with better oral health.

#### 1.5) Hygiene in passing urine and stool

The Messenger of Allah (s.a.w) said: “Cleanliness is half the faith (Imaan).” [Muslim]. The Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) practiced cleanliness and ordered his companions to follow it. He kept his body and clothes clean, took bath on regular basis, liked use of perfume, liked to do miswaak, and he (s.a.w) disliked use of smelly things like garlic etc., and appreciated neat and attractive appearance. Furthermore, clipping nails, cleaning home, taking bath, cleaning teeth, making wudhu, using cologne or scent, or any other act of cleanliness make a conscious intention to clean up for Allah’s pleasure and good health (Islamic Information Portal, 2013).

In addition to that, most people of the world consider urine and stool as unclean, but Islam has gone one step further in declaring them to be ritually unclean. Worth to mention, in the matters of worship (*ibadah*) a Muslim who has passed urine or emptied his bowels cannot pray even after cleaning his body from urine and stool-he must also do *wudhu* or ablution. The Islamic *shari’ah* has prescribed certain rules on how to cleanse oneself of urine and stool. The organ of urination can be made *tahir* (clean and pure) only by the pouring of water on it at least twice. It is better to wash it three times. It is highly recommended to wash oneself with water. While praising the people who built Masjid Quba in Madinah, Allah SWT says: “Therein are men who love to cleanse themselves; and Allah loves those who cleanse themselves.” [Qur’an, 9:108]. When this verse was revealed, the Prophet (s.a.w) asked the people of Quba, “What do you do when cleaning yourselves

that Allah has praised you for it?" They said, "We cleanse ourselves after emptying the bowels with water." (Al-Islam.org).

## CONCLUSION

The Prophetic tradition or sunnah is the way of life prescribed by the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) for mankind in order to live a better life. He was sent as a Mercy for all creatures" as declared in the Qur'an. His saying, action and recommendation is full of wisdom. He was also sent to teach and purify the mankind as described in the Qur'an. "It is He who has sent among the unlettered a Messenger from themselves reciting to them His verses and purifying them and teaching them the Book and wisdom - although they were before in clear error" [Juma'h, 62:2].

The tradition of the Prophet and his customs in dieting, sleeping, and cleanliness corresponds a healthy life in order to worship of Allah SWT and serve the people. *Tibbin nabawi* has the potential not only in promoting a 'balanced and healthy lifestyle' as championed by the Prophet of Islam but also to improve a moderate, healthy and peaceful life. The Prophetic medicine or *tibbin nabawi* which is in favor of the well-being of the human body and soul is a wise and scientifically wide-ranging practice for a nation with the best health.

Islam encourages to enjoy the blessings of Allah SWT in a balanced and healthy way. 'Amr bin Shu'aib reported: The Messenger of Allah said,

*"Eat, drink, and give in charity. Wear nice clothing, but without pride and extravagance. Verily, Allah loves for his blessings to be seen upon his servants."*

[Musnad Ahmad].

The Prophetic in cleanliness and hygiene and all the criterion discussed above called *tibbin nabawi*. By smearing and practicing *tibbin nabawi*, a healthy family and society can shape a nation with the best health. Moreover, *tibbin nabawi* is blessed remedy for all people around the world without the distinction of believers or non-believers.

The Qur'an describes a moderate and balanced approach between *israaf* and *tabdhir*. About 1500 years ago, the Prophet (s.a.w) also emphasised the balance in dieting, alteration of night and day for sleep and nap, and hygiene. What's more, *tahara* (cleanliness) is a well-established cultural practice in the Islamic tradition. Muslims, practicingly sincere and balanced in approach, have been following the certain Prophetic traditions (*sunnah*) in food, rest and hygiene for hundreds of years to be a success in this world and in the Hereafter.

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