

عن عبدِ اللهِ بنِ جَرادِ رضي اللهُ عنه قال : قال رسولُ اللهِ صلى اللهُ عليه و  
سلم : السَّوَاكُ الفِطْرَةُ ،

Sayyidina Abdullah ibni Jaraad ﷺ reports that Rasulullah

ﷺ said: “To use a Miswaak is human nature.”

# MISWAAK

## VIRTUES AND LAWS

*Compiled by:*

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## FOREWORD

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى أَشْرَفِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ، وَ  
عَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ الطَّيِّبِينَ الطَّاهِرِينَ أَجْمَعِينَ، أَمَا بَعْدُ:

The blessed Sunnah of Rasulullah ﷺ is the only means of our salvation and compulsory to follow. It takes us out from darkness towards light and delivers us on the road of true guidance and happiness. It holds the lofty position of Ibaadat – worship in the eyes of Almighty Allah. Fortunate is that person who, by practicing on the Sunnah, gains proximity to his Lord and builds up his bank balance in the hereafter. May Allah Ta'aala make us among them. Aameen.

All Sunnahs are valuable and important, but the Miswaak holds a very great and sacred position, so much so that there was a great likelihood of it becoming Fardh.

More than fifty types of plants can be used for the Miswaak and has been used for centuries. Scientific research has proven that it has antibiotic and anti-inflammatory qualities and fights oral bacteria. It also reduces plaque and gingivitis. The Noble Rasool of Allah ﷺ is considered to be the first dental educator in proper oral hygiene. This booklet will prove the care he took for his own teeth and the concern for the oral hygiene of others.

The purpose of this booklet is to inculcate within us love and adherence for this noble Sunnah of Miswaak.

This booklet is based on the book 'Fazaa'il Miswaak' by Hadhrat Moulana At'har Husayn Saheb Mazaahiri, but is not an exact translation of his book. Additions and changes have been made. May Allah Ta'aala reward Hadhrat Moulana for his compilation

and also reward the authors of other books that have been used for the preparation of this booklet.

May Allah Azza wa Jall grant us all the guidance to adhere to the use of the Miswaak and also to love, respect and practice on the entire Sunnah. May Allah have mercy on us in both worlds. Aameen.

Compiler

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MISWAAK IN THE LIGHT OF HADEETH

USE OF THE MISWAAK A NATURAL QUALITY

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا قَالَتْ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:  
عَشْرٌ مِنَ الْفِطْرَةِ، قَصُّ الشَّارِبِ وَإِعْفَاءُ اللَّحْيَةِ وَالسَّوَاكُ وَإِسْتِنْشَاقُ  
الْمَاءِ وَقَصُّ الْأَظْفَارِ وَغَسْلُ الْبَرَاجِمِ وَتَنْفُ الْإِبْطِ وَحَلْقُ الْعَانَةِ وَ  
انْتِقَاصُ الْمَاءِ يَعْنِي الْإِسْتِنْجَاءَ، وَقَالَ الرَّائِئِي نَسِيتُ الْعَاشِرَةَ إِلَّا أَنْ  
تَكُونَ الْمَضْمُضَةُ، (رواه مسلم، مشكوة ص 44)

Hadhrat Aa'ishah (Radhiyallaahu Anhaa) narrates that Rasulullah ﷺ said: "Ten things are from 'Al-Fitrah' – natural or inherent qualities; clipping the moustache, lengthening the beard, using the Miswaak, taking water into the nose, clipping the nails, washing the knuckles (finger joints), plucking the arm-pit hairs, shaving the pubic hairs and the pouring of water i.e. Istinjaah." (Use of water after relieving oneself in the toilet).

The narrator says he forgot the tenth point, most probably it is "rinsing of the mouth." (Mishkaat)

عن عبد الله بن جراد رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم: السواك الفطرة، (الفتح الكبير ج 2 ص 155)

Hadhrat Abdullah ibni Jaraad رضي الله عنه reports that the Rasool of Allah ﷺ said: “To use a Miswaak is a natural quality.” (Al Fat’hul Kabeer)

The Muhadditheen are divided with regard to the definition of ‘Al Fitrah’. Some say it refers to those things which were the Sunnah of the previous Ambiyaa too. Others say it refers to ‘Al Fitratus Saleemah’ i.e. sound natural qualities, which are found in and liked by a human.

Shaah Waliyyullah (Rahmatullaahi Alayh) writes in his Kitaab ‘Hujjatullaahul Baalighah’: “Every creed and nation possess their own special traits and ways that distinguish them from others, and submission to those ways proves their obedience and acceptance of their creed and culture.

These (above-mentioned) ten qualities are natural qualities of the Muslims. They are established from every group who were followers of the true Deen throughout the annals of history, therefore they are called ‘Al Fitrah’.”

#### THE SUNNAH OF THE AMBIYAA (Alayhimus Salaam)

عن أبي أيوب رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم: أربع من سنن المرسلين، الْحَيَاءُ وَيُرْوَى الْخِتَانُ وَالتَّعَطُّرُ وَالسَّوَاكُ وَالنِّكَاحُ، (رواه الترمذي مشكوة ص 45)

Sayyidina Abu Ayyoob رضي الله عنه says that the Prophet of Allah ﷺ said: “Four things are from the Sunnah of the Ambiyaa: modesty, (in

some narrations circumcision comes instead of modesty), applying of Itar (lawful perfumes), to use a Miswaak and Nikah - marriage.” (Mishkaat)

From among its major virtues, is the fact that it (the Miswaak) is the Sunnah of the Ambiyaa. Fortunate and blessed are those who use the Miswaak, fulfilling the Sunnah of the Ambiyaa. Unfortunate are those who neglect this Sunnah. They are depriving themselves of practicing on the Sunnah of not only one or two but of many Ambiyaa. Imagine the reward for an act which was adopted by the chosen ones of Allah!

Allaamah ibni Ismaa’eel (Rahmatullaahi Alayh) says: “I am shocked at those people who discard this great Sunnah, for there are numerous Ahaadeeth narrated from Rasulullah ﷺ relating its virtues. Behold! To discard the use of the Miswaak results in a great loss and harm to oneself.”

#### MISWAAK AND DIVINE PLEASURE

عن ابنِ عمرَ رضي اللهُ عنه عنِ النبيِّ صلى اللهُ عليه و سلم: عَلَيْكُمْ  
بِالسَّوَاكِ فَإِنَّهُ مَطِيْبَةٌ لِّلْفَمِ مَرْضَاةٌ لِلرَّبِّ تَبَارَكَ وَ تَعَالَى، (شرح ترمذي  
تحفة الاجودى ج 1 ص 35)

Sayyidina Abdullah ibni Umar ؓ narrates from Rasulullah ﷺ: “Make compulsory upon yourselves the use of the Miswaak, for in it lies the cleanliness of the mouth and the Pleasure of the Lord Most Glorious and Most High.” (Sharh Tirmidhi)

وقالت عائشة رضي اللهُ عنها عن النبيِّ صلى اللهُ عليه و سلم: السَّوَاكُ  
مَطْهَرَةٌ لِّلْفَمِ مَرْضَاةٌ لِلرَّبِّ، (البخاري ج 1 ص 259)

Hadhrat Aa'ishah (Radhiyallaahu Anhaa) narrates from Rasulullah ﷺ: "Use of the Miswaak is (a means of) cleanliness for the mouth and Pleasure of the Lord." (Bukhaari)

Use of the Miswaak results in the mouth and teeth staying clean and bad smells being removed. More importantly, the Pleasure of Allah is gained by practicing on this Sunnah.

The following is narrated from Sayyidina Ali (Radhiyallaahu Anhu:

"Make the use of Miswaak compulsory upon yourself and be steadfast in its use, for in it lies the Pleasure of Allah Ta'aala. Also, the reward of Salaah (after using the Miswaak) increases ninety-nine fold up to four hundred fold."

#### LIKELIHOOD OF MISWAAK BECOMING FARDH

عن أبي أمامة رضي الله عنه أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال:  
تَسَوَّكُوا فَإِنَّ السَّوَاكَ مَطْهَرَةٌ لِلْفَمِ مَرْضَاةٌ لِلرَّبِّ، مَا جَاءَنِي جِبْرَائِيلُ إِلَّا  
أَوْصَانِي بِالسَّوَاكِ، وَحَتَّى لَقَدْ خَشِيتُ أَنْ يُفْرَضَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَى أُمَّتِي، وَلَوْ  
لَا إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَنْ أَشَقَّ عَلَى أُمَّتِي لَفَرَضْتُهُ لَهُمْ، وَإِنِّي لَأَسْتَاكُ حَتَّى  
خَشِيتُ أَنْ أَحْفِيَ مَقَادِمَ فَمِي، (ابن ماجه ص 25)

Sayyidina Abu Umaamah ؓ narrates from Rasulullah ﷺ: "Use the Miswaak, for it cleanses the mouth and is pleasing to the Lord. Jibra'eel ؑ always advised me regarding the use of the Miswaak, so much so that I feared it would become Fardh on me and my Ummah. If I did not fear difficulty upon my Ummah, I would have made it Fardh upon them. I myself use the Miswaak to such an

extent that I fear the front portion of my mouth will become chafed.” (Ibni Maajah)

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: لَوْ  
لَا أَنْ أَشَقَّ عَلَى أُمَّتِي لِأَمْرَتِهِمْ بِالسَّوَاكِ عِنْدَ كُلِّ وُضُوءٍ، (البخاري -  
تعليقا في كتاب الصوم ج 1 ص 259)

Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrates that the Prophet of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: “If I did not fear difficulty upon my Ummah, I would have instructed them to use the Miswaak with every Wudhu performed.” (Bukhaari)

#### THE PRACTICE OF SAYYIDINA ABU HURAYRAH رضي الله عنه

لَقَدْ كُنْتُ اسْتَنْ قَبْلَ أَنْ أَنَامَ وَبَعْدَ مَا اسْتَيْقِظَ وَقَبْلَ أَنْ أَكَلَ وَبَعْدَ مَا أَكَلَ  
حِينَ سَمِعْتُهُ يَقُولُهُ، (السعاية في كشف ما في شرح الوقاية ج 1 ص 112)

Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه says that after hearing the (above-mentioned) Hadeeth, he used the Miswaak regularly before sleeping and after awakening and before and after eating. (As Si'aayah)

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم:  
لَوْ لَا أَنْ أَشَقَّ عَلَى أُمَّتِي لِأَمْرَتِهِمْ بِالسَّوَاكِ عِنْدَ كُلِّ صَلَاةٍ، (ترمذي ص  
34)

Hadhrat Abu Hurayrah ؓ reports that Rasulullah ﷺ said: “If I did not fear difficulty upon my Ummah, I would have instructed them to use the Miswaak before every Salaah. (Tirmidhi)

The innumerable virtues of the Miswaak demand that it be Fardh so that no person is deprived of these virtues. However, because of the difficulty in using the Miswaak with every Wudhu or Salaah, it was not made Fardh. Allah, through His Mercy and Kindness did not make it Fardh so that His servants are not inconvenienced, also, the non-user will not become a sinner for neglecting a Fardh. Thus, it has been made Sunnah to avoid anyone being deprived of its innumerable benefits and reward.

#### ADVICE OF HADHRAT JIBRA'EEL ؑ

عن أم سلمة قالت: قال رسول الله : ما زال جبريلُ يُوصيني بالسواك  
حتى خفتُ على أضراسي، (طبرانی ج 23 ص 251)

Hadhrat Ummi Salmah (Radhiyallaahu Anhaa) narrates that Rasulullah ﷺ said: “Jibreel advised me so much regarding the use of the Miswaak that I feared for my teeth.” (Tibraani)

#### POSSIBILITY OF REVELATION REGARDING MISWAAK

عن ابن عباس رضي الله عنهما عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: لقد  
أمرتُ بالسواك حتى ظننتُ أنه ينزل عليّ به قرآنٌ أو وحيٌّ، (مسند أبي  
يعلى الموصلى ج 8 ص 218)

Abdullah ibni Abbaas ؓ relates the following Hadeeth of Rasulullah ﷺ: “I was so excessively instructed with the use of the

Miswaak that I thought Qur’aan or revelation will be sent to me regarding it.” (Musnad Abi Ya’laa)

The fear of affecting his teeth due to excessive use of the Miswaak and the thought of a verse being revealed in the Qur’aan regarding it is ample proof of the importance and virtues of the Miswaak.

#### MISWAAK AND THE DREAM OF RASULULLAH ﷺ

عن ابنِ عمر رضي الله عنه: أن النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم قال: أرانى في المنام أتسوكُ بسواكٍ، فجاءني رجُلانِ أحدهُما أكبرُ من الآخر، فناولتُ السواكَ الأصغرَ منهما، فقبل لي كبر فدفعتهُ إلى الأكبرِ منهما، (متفق عليه مشكوة ص 45)

Sayyidina ibni Umar ؓ narrates from Rasulallah ﷺ “I saw myself in a dream using the Miswaak. Then two men came to me, one elder than the other. When I gave the Miswaak to the younger one, I was told to give it to the elder one. Thus, I gave it to the elder among them.” (Mishkaat)

Even in his dream, Rasulallah ﷺ was instructed regarding the Miswaak. It should be remembered that the dreams of the Ambiyaa also fall under the category of Wahi – revelation.

Also learnt from this Hadeeth is the permissibility of using the Miswaak of another if he (the owner) grants permission. (Another Hadeeth will follow later).

عن ابن طاوس عن أبيه عن ابن عباس في قوله تعالى: وإذا ابتلى إبراهيم ربه بكلمات فاتمهن، قال: إبتلاه بالطهارة خمس في الرأس وخمس في الجسد، في الرأس قص الشارب والمضمضة والاستنشاق والسواك وفرق الرأس، وفي الجسد تقليم الأظفار وحلق العانة والختان و تنف الإبط وغسل أثر الغائط والبول بالماء، (تفسير ابن كثير ج 1 ص 228)

Sayyidina ibni Abbaas ﷺ explains the following regarding the Tafseer (commentary) of the verse of the Qur'aan: "And (remember) when the Lord of Ebrahim (Allah) tested him with (certain) commands, which he (Ebrahim) fulfilled." (Surah Baqarah)

"He (Nabi Ebrahim ﷺ) was tested regarding Tahaarah – cleanliness; five matters in relation to the head and face and five in relation to the body. The five in relation to the head and face: (1) trimming the moustache, (2) rinsing the mouth, (3) taking water into the nose, (4) use of the Miswaak and (5) to form a path in the hair. The five in relation to the body:

- (1) clipping of the nails, (2) circumcision, (3) plucking of the arm-pit hairs, (4) shaving of the pubic hairs and (5) washing with water after excreting and urinating (Istinjaa)." (Tafseer ibni Katheer)

Among the many things in which Nabi Ebrahim ﷺ was tested is the use of the Miswaak. This increases its importance and virtues.

Thus, the Miswaak is also a Sunnate Ebrahimi – Sunnah of Sayyidina Ebrahim. He was successful in the tests he underwent.

## USE OF THE MISWAAK ON AWAKENING FROM SLEEP

عن عائشة رضي الله عنها أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم لا يَرَقْدُ مِنْ لَيْلٍ  
وَلَا نَهَارٍ فَيَسْتَيْقِظُ إِلَّا يَتَسَوَّكُ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَتَوَضَّأَ، (أبو داود ص 9)

Hadhrat Aa'ishah (Radhiyallaahu Anhaa) reports that whenever the Nabi ﷺ awakened from sleep, whether during the day or night, he used the Miswaak before performing Wudhu. (Abu Dawood)

Usually, the mouth develops an odour when sleeping. It can be removed by using the Miswaak on awakening.

## MISWAAK DURING THE NIGHT

عن عائشة رضي الله عنها أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم كان يُوضَعُ لَهُ  
وَضُوءُهُ وَسِوَاكُهُ، فَإِذَا قَامَ مِنَ اللَّيْلِ تَخَلَّى ثُمَّ اسْتَاكَ، (أبو داود ص 9)

Hadhrat Aa'ishah (Radhiyallaahu Anhaa) says that water for Wudhu and the Miswaak would be kept ready for Rasulullah ﷺ. When he awakened during the night (for Tahajjud), he would first relieve himself, then use the Miswaak. (Abu Dawood)

و روي عن حذيفة رضي الله عنه قال: أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه و

سلم كان إذا قامَ مِنَ اللَّيْلِ يُشَوِّصُ فَاهُ بِالسَّوَاكِ، (السعاية ج 1

ص 113)

Sayyidina Hudhayfah ؓ says: “When the Rasool of Allah ﷺ awakened at night, he cleaned his mouth with a Miswaak.” (As Si’aayah)

In another narration Hadhrat Aa’ishah (Radhiyallaahu Anhaa) says she would place three containers for him; one for Wudhu water, one with the Miswaak, and one for drinking water. (Ibni Maajah).

All these narrations demonstrate the care he exercised in the use of the Miswaak. The Miswaak placed next to the water avoided the anxiety of looking for it at night, teaching us management and order.

#### MISWAAK WHEN ENTERING THE HOME

عن شريح بن هانئ قال: سألت عائشةَ بِأَيِّ شَيْءٍ كَانَ يَبْدَأُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِذَا

دَخَلَ بَيْتَهُ؟ قَالَتْ: بِالسَّوَاكِ، (رواه مسلم مشكوة ص 44)

Shurayh ibni Haani’ asked Hadhrat Aa’ishah (Radhiyallaahu Anhaa): “What did Rasulullah ﷺ begin with when he entered the home?” She replied: “By using the Miswaak.” (Mishkaat)

Allaamah Munaawi (Rahmatullaahi Alayh) has given two reasons for this: a) We are instructed to make Salaam when entering the home. The Salaam is holy and has the name of Allah in it. The name of Allah should be taken with a clean mouth. b) the mouth

should be cleaned before kissing the wife (when entering the home) to avoid any inconvenience to her.

#### MISWAAK BEFORE RECITATION OF THE QUR’AAN

عن عليّ: إنّ أفواهكم طُرُقُ القرآن، فطَيّبوها بالسواك، (ابن ماجه  
ص 25)

Sayyidina Ali عليه السلام says: “Verily, your mouths are the pathways of the Qur’aan. So clean it with the Miswaak.” (Ibni Maajah)

The Fuqahaa – jurists say that it is Mustahabb – meritorious to use the Miswaak before recital.

عن علي قال: أمرنا بالسواك و قال: إن العبد إذا قام يُصَلِّي أتاه الملكُ  
فقام خلفه يستمع القرآن و يدنو، فلا يزال يستمع و يدنو حتى يضع فاهُ  
على فيه ، فلا يقرأ آيةً إلا كانت في جوف الملك، (السنن الكبرى ج 1  
ص 38)

Sayyidina Ali عليه السلام says: “We have been instructed to use the Miswaak. When a bondsman stands to perform Salaah, an angel appears and stands behind him listening attentively to Qur’aan (being recited). The angel keeps on drawing nearer until it places its mouth on his mouth. No verse is recited but it enters the angel.” (As Sunanul Kubraa)

## MISWAAK BEFORE MEETING SOMEONE OR BEFORE ATTENDING A GATHERING

عَنْ ابْنِ تَمَامِ بْنِ الْعَبَّاسِ عَنْ أَبِيهِ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: مَا لِي أَرَاكُمْ تَأْتُونِي قَلْحًا إِسْتَاكُوا، الْحَدِيثُ، (الْمَعْجَمُ الْكَبِيرُ لِلطَّبْرَانِيِّ ج 2 ص 64)

Ibni Tamaam ibni Abbaas relates from his father ﷺ that the Rasool of Allah ﷺ said: “Why do I see your teeth discoloured when you come to me? Use the Miswaak!” (Al Mu’jamul Kabeer of Tibraani)

The lesson learnt is to clean the mouth with the Miswaak before meeting someone or attending a gathering. At times the bad smell of another or his teeth being unclean and discoloured can inconvenience other people (in the gathering).

## MISWAAK ON A FRIDAY

عَنْ ابْنِ السَّبَّاقِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: يَا مَعْشَرَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ! هَذَا يَوْمٌ جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عِيدًا لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ، فَاغْتَسِلُوا، وَمَنْ كَانَ عِنْدَهُ طِيبٌ فَلَا يَضُرُّهُ أَنْ يَمَسَّ مِنْهُ، وَعَلَيْكُمْ بِالسَّوَاكِ، (مَوْطَأُ إِمَامِ مُحَمَّدٍ ص 72-73)

Hadhrat ibni Sabaq ﷺ reports that Rasulullah ﷺ said: “O gathering of Muslims! Allah Ta’aala has made this day (Friday) a day of Eid for the Muslims, therefore take a bath (on Fridays). If you have perfume, apply it. Also make the use of the Miswaak compulsory upon yourselves.” (Mu’attaa Imam Mohammed)

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم قال: مَنْ  
اغْتَسَلَ يَوْمَ الْجُمُعَةِ وَ اسْتَنَّ وَ مَسَّ مِنْ طَيِّبٍ إِنْ كَانَ عِنْدَهُ، وَ لَبَسَ مِنْ  
أَحْسَنِ ثِيَابِهِ، ثُمَّ خَرَجَ يَأْتِي الْمَسْجِدَ فَلَمْ يَتَخَطَّ رِقَابِ النَّاسِ، ثُمَّ رَكَعَ مَا  
شَاءَ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَرَكَعَ وَ أَنْصَتَ إِذَا خَرَجَ الْإِمَامُ، كَانَتْ كَفَّارَةً لِمَا بَيْنَهَا وَ  
بَيْنَ الْجُمُعَةِ الَّتِي قَبْلَهَا، (شرح معاني الآثار ص 253)

Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah ؓ narrates that the Rasool of Allah ﷺ said: “The person who takes a bath on a Friday, uses the Miswaak, applies perfume if he has, wears his best clothes and then proceeds to the Masjid. (When he enters the Masjid) he does not step over the necks of the people (does not inconvenience them when entering and finding a place for himself). Thereafter he performed Salaah according to the guidance given to him by Allah and maintained silence at the appearance of the Imam (during the Khutbah). This (all the above) becomes a means of pardon (from his sins committed) between this Friday and the previous Friday.” (Sharh Ma’aaniyul Aathaar)

In the first Hadeeth three things have been stressed upon; (a) taking a bath, (b) applying of perfume and (c) use of the Miswaak. The second Hadeeth mentions a few etiquettes of Friday, which includes, inter alia: the use of the Miswaak. Use of the Miswaak on a Friday holds greater virtue.

It is recorded in Zaadul Ma’aad: “On Jumu’ah and Eidayn (the two Eids) the gathering is enormous. So take more care of using the Miswaak on these days compared to other days.” We also learn from the second Hadeeth that the Miswaak has a part to play in the forgiveness of sins.

The use of permissible perfumes is allowed. They should be free from alcohol and other Haraam substances. Also, ‘the best of clothes’ is that which is closest to the Sunnah. Tight fitting and immodest clothes should be avoided at all times. ‘Old clothes’ which are nearer to the Sunnah is better than new clothes which are distant from the Sunnah.

#### TAKING THE MISWAAK WITH ON A JOURNEY

و روى العقيلي و أبو نعيم عن عائشة قالت: كان رسولُ الله إذا سافرَ  
حَمَلَ السَّوَاكَ و المِشْطَ و المِكْحَلَةَ و المِرْآةَ، (السعاية ج 1  
ص 113)

Hadhrat Aa'ishah (Radhiyallaahu Anhaa) says that when Rasulallah ﷺ travelled, he took with him a Miswaak, a comb, an antimony container and a mirror. (As Si'aayah)

Due to the difficulties experienced on a journey, he still did not discard the use of the Miswaak. In fact, he used the Miswaak on a journey just as he would use it at home.

#### KEEPING THE MISWAAK WITH ONESELF

عن جابر بن عبد الله رضي الله عنه قال: كان السواكُ من أذنِ النبي  
مَوْضِعَ القَلَمِ من أذنِ الكَاتِبِ، (السنن الكبرى ج 1 ص 37)

Hadhrat Jaabir ibni Abdullah ؓ says that Rasulallah ﷺ kept the Miswaak on his ear, the place where the writer would keep a pen (above the ear). (As Sunanul Kubraa)

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه: كان أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم يروحون و السواك على آذانهم، (ذكره العراقي في المعنى)  
(السعاية ج 1 ص 112)

Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah ؓ says that the companions (Sahaabah) of Rasulullah ﷺ kept the Miswaak on their ears while walking. (As Si'aayah)

The reason for keeping the Miswaak with at all times was that it could be used whenever needed, at any place and time.

قال أبو سلمة: فرأيت زَيْدًا في المسجد و أن السواك من أذنه مَوْضِعَ القلم من أذن الكاتب، فكلما قام إلى الصلاة استاك، (أبو داود ص 8)

Abu Salmah says that he saw Hadhrat Zayd ؓ sitting in the Masjid with the Miswaak on his ear, the place a writer places the pen. He would use the Miswaak before proceeding for the Salaah. (As Si'aayah)

According to Allaamah Shaami (Rahmatullaahi Alayh) some Sahaabah kept the Miswaak in the folds of the Amaamah – turban.

#### REWARD OF SALAAH INCREASED AFTER MISWAAK

عن عائشة رضي الله عنها قالت: تُفَضَّلُ الصلاة التي يُسْتَاكُ لها على الصلاة التي لا يُسْتَاكُ لها سبعين ضعفاً، (السنن الكبرى ج 1 ص 38)

Hadhrat Aa'ishah (Radhiyallaahu Anhaa) says: “A Salaah performed after using the Miswaak is seventy times superior to the Salaah performed without Miswaak.”

عن عائشة رضي الله عنها عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: الرَّكْعَتَانِ بَعْدَ

السَّوَالِكِ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ سَبْعِينَ رَكْعَةً قَبْلَ السَّوَالِكِ، (السنن الكبرى ج 1

ص 38)

Hadhrat Aa'ishah (Radhiyallaahu Anhaa) narrates from Nabi ﷺ: “Two Rakaats of Salaah after using the Miswaak is more beloved unto me than seventy Rakaats without Miswaak.” (As Sunanul Kubraa)

After understanding these two Ahaadeeth, who would want to be deprived of this great reward and virtue? There are many other Ahaadeeth extolling the superiority of Salaah after using the Miswaak. These two will suffice for this treatise. Other narrations mention ninety-nine fold up to four hundred fold. The Ulama explain that the difference in reward is in accordance with the Ikhlās – sincerity of the person. The more the sincerity, the more the reward.

#### USING THE MISWAAK OF ANOTHER PERSON

عن عائشة رضي الله عنها أَنَّهَا قَالَتْ: كَانَ نَبِيُّ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

يَسْتَاكُ فَيُعْطِينِي السَّوَالِكَ لِأَغْسِلَهُ، فَأَبْدَأُ بِهِ فَاسْتَاكُ ثُمَّ أَغْسِلُهُ وَأُدْفَعُهُ

إِلَيْهِ، (السنن الكبرى ج 1 ص 39)

Hadhrat Aa'ishah (Radhiyallaahu Anhaa) says: “The Nabi of Allah ﷺ used the Miswaak. He would give me the Miswaak so that I may

wash it. After using it myself I would wash it and then give it to him.” (As Sunanul Kubraa)

Two lessons are learnt from this Hadeeth. The first is, with permission, the Miswaak of another can be used. The second is, washing of the Miswaak (before and after use).

## CLEANING THE TONGUE WITH THE MISWAAK

عن أبي بردة عن أبيه قال: أتينا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم  
نَسْتَحْمِلُهُ، فرأيتُه يَسْتَاكُ على لسانِه، (السعاية ج 1 ص 112-113)

Hadhrat Abu Burdah relates the following from his father ﷺ: “We came to Rasulullah to seek assistance from him. (At that time) I saw him making Miswaak on the tongue.” (As Si’aayah)

In another narration he says: “I entered upon Nabi ﷺ while he was making Miswaak. He had the Miswaak on his tongue while he was saying ‘aah aah’, i.e. he was emitting a spewing sound.” (As Si’aayah)

The tongue should also be cleaned with the Miswaak. The above mentioned sound is usually emitted when an object reaches close to the throat.

## PROTECTION FROM ADULTERY

أَغْسَلُوا ثِيَابَكُمْ وَخُذُوا مِنْ شُعُورِكُمْ وَاسْتَاكُوا وَتَزَيَّنُوا، فَإِنَّ بَنِي  
إِسْرَائِيلَ لَمْ يَكُونُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ذَلِكَ فَزَنَّتْ نِسَائِهِمْ، (فيض القدير ج 1  
ص 241)

“Wash your clothes, trim your hair, use the Miswaak and beautify yourselves. The Bani Israa’eel (Jews) did not do these things, thus their womenfolk committed adultery. (Faydhul Qadeer)

This narration advises us to stay clean and neat and to beautify ourselves (within Islamic parameters), which includes use of the Miswaak to remove bad odours from the mouth. If we are neglectful in these matters, it will result in our womenfolk despising us, turning towards others and finally committing adultery. May Allah save us all. Aameen. The Bani Israa’eel were neglectful in these matters and their women got involved in adultery. It is written in the book “Siraajul Muneer” that women should also practice on these things to avoid their menfolk from looking at other women and committing adultery. The lesson learnt is that the Miswaak is an aid in preventing adultery. Subhaanallah!

#### MISWAAK AT THE TIME OF DEATH

أخبرنا محمد بن عمر: حدثني عبد الرحمن بن أبي بكر عن ابن أبي  
مليكة عن القاسم بن محمد قال: سمعته يقول: سمعت عائشة  
تقول: كان من نعمة الله عليّ و حسن بلائه عندي أن رسول الله صلى الله  
عليه و سلم مات في بيتي و في يومى و بين سحري و نحري، و جمع  
بين ريقى و ريقه عند الموت، قال القاسم: قد عرفنا كل الذى تقولين  
فكيف جمع بين ريقك و ريقه؟ قالت: دخل عبد الرحمن بن أم رمان  
أخى على النبى صلى الله عليه و سلم، يعوده و في يده سواك رطب و كان  
رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم مؤلعا بالسواك، فرأيت رسول الله صلى

الله عليه وسلم يُشخص بصره إليه، فقلتُ: يا عبد الرحمن اقضم السواك، فناولنيه فمضغته ثم أدخلته في في رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم، فتسوّك به فجمع بين ريقى و ريقه، (الطبقات الكبرى لابن سعد ج 2 ص 234)

Hadhrat Aa'ishah (Radhiyallaahu Anhaa) says: "From among the gifts of Allah upon me is that Rasulallah ﷺ passed away in my house and on my day, between my collar-bone and chest. Also, (from among the gifts of Allah upon me) is that my saliva was joined with his saliva at the time of his demise." Qaasim asked: "We understand everything that you are saying, but how was your saliva joined to his?" She replied: "Abdur Rahmaan ibni Umami Rummaan my brother came into the presence of Nabi ﷺ with a fresh Miswaak in his hand and Rasulallah ﷺ loved the Miswaak. I observed that he was casting his gaze at it, so I said: O Abdur Rahmaan! I will chew the Miswaak. He gave it to me and I chewed it (to soften it) and thereafter entered it in the mouth of Rasulallah ﷺ. He used the Miswaak and my saliva was joined to his." (Tabaqaatul Kubraa Ibni Sa'ad)

It is Mustahabb (meritorious) to achieve cleanliness before death. The Fuqahaa have written that if a person is aware he is about to die, it is Mustahabb for him to remove the pubic hair, etc. It is recorded that when the Kuffaar wanted to kill Hadhrat Khubayb ؓ, he took a razor and cleaned himself. The reason for this is that the person is about to meet his Creator, and the Hadeeth says that Allah loves cleanliness. Therefore, prior to death, (if one is aware that death is approaching) one should clean and prepare for meeting Allah Ta'aala.

May Allah Ta'aala grant us all Taufeeq and grant us a beautiful death with Imaan. Aameen.

In his book 'Kashkaul Ma'rifat', Aarif Billaah Hadhrat Moulana Shaah Hakeem Mohammed Akhtar Saheb (Daamat Barakaatuhum) records the following statement of Allaamah Shaami (Rahmatullaahi Alayh):

وَمِنْ مَنَافِعِهِ تَذْكَيرُ الشَّهَادَةِ عِنْدَ الْمَوْتِ، (كشكول معرفت ص 254  
بحواله شامی ج 1 ص 85)

From among the benefits of Miswaak is the remembering of the Kalimah at the time of death. (Kashkaul Ma'rifat on the authority of Shaami)

## COMMENTS OF THE SAHAABAH

(رضي الله عنهم أجمعين)

عن حسان بن عطية: السواكُ نصفُ الإيمانِ و الوضوءُ نصفُ  
الإيمانِ، (فضائل مسواك)

Hadhrat Hassaan ibni Atiyyah ؓ: To use the Miswaak is half of Imaan and Wudhu is half of Imaan.

عن عليّ و ابن عباس و عطاء: عَلَيْكُمْ بِالسَّوَاكِ، فَلَا تَغْفَلُوا عَنْهُ وَ أَدِيمُوهُ،  
فَإِنَّ فِيهِ رِضَاءُ الرَّحْمَنِ، وَ تَضَاعَفَ صَلَاتُهُ، وَ أَدَامَتُهُ تُورِثُ السَّعَةَ  
وَالْغِنَى وَ تَيْسِيرَ الرِّزْقِ، وَ يَطِيبُ الْفَمَ، وَ يَشُدُّ اللِّثَةَ، وَ يُسَكِّنُ الصُّدَاعَ وَ  
عُرُوقَ الرَّأْسِ، وَ يَذْهَبُ وَجَعَ الرَّأْسِ وَ الْبَلْغَمَ، وَ يُقَوِّي الْأَسْنَانَ وَ

يَجَلُوا البصر، و يُصَحِّحُ المعدة، و يُقَوِّي البدن، و يَزِيدُ الرجل فصاحةً و حِفْظاً و عَقْلاً، و يطهر القلب، و يزيد في الحسنات، و يَفْرُحُ الملائكة و تصافحه لِنورِ وجهه، و تُشَيِّعُه إذا خَرَجَ لِلصَّلَاةِ، و تَسْتَغْفِرُ حَمَلَةَ العرشِ لِفاعله إذا خَرَجَ مِنَ المسجدِ، و تَسْتَغْفِرُ له الأنبياءُ و الرسلُ، و السواكُ مُسَخِطَةٌ للشيطانِ مَطْرَدَةٌ له، مصفاةٌ للدَّهْنِ، مهضمَةٌ للطعامِ، مكثِرةٌ للولدِ، و يَجِيزُ على الصُّراطِ كالبرقِ الخاطفِ، و يُبْطِئُ الشَّيْبَ، و يُعْطَى الكتابَ باليمينِ، و يُقَوِّي البدنَ على طاعةِ الله، و يذهب الحرارةُ من الجسدِ، و يذهب الوجعُ، و يقوي الظَّهْرَ، و يذكر الشهادةَ، و يَسْرَعُ النَّزْعَ، و يبيضُ الأسنانَ، و يطيبُ النكهةَ، و يصفى الحلقُ، و يَجَلُوا اللسانَ، و يذكي الفطنة، و يقطعُ الرطوبةَ، و يحد البصرَ، و يَنمى المالَ و الأولادَ، و يُعِينُ على قضاءِ الحوائجِ، و يوسع عليه في قبره، و يؤنسه في لحده، و يتب له أجر من لم يستك يومه، و يُفْتَحُ له أبوابُ الجنةِ و تقولُ له الملائكةُ هذا مقتدٌ بالأنبياءِ يَقْفُوا آثارهم و يُغْلِقُ عنه أبوابُ جهنمَ، و لا يخرجُ مِنَ الدنيا إِلَّا و هُوَ طاهرٌ مُطَهَّرٌ و لا يَأْتِيه ملكُ الموتِ إِلَّا في الصورةِ الَّتِي يَأْتِي فيه الأولياءُ،

(السعاية ج 1 ص 118-119)

Sayyidina Ali, ibni Abbaas and Ataa' ؓ: Do not become negligent, use the Miswaak regularly. In it lies the Pleasure of Rahmaan (Allah). The reward of Salaah is increased. Constancy (on the Miswaak) brings ease, riches and facilitates sustenance. It cleans the mouth and strengthens the gums. It eases headaches and the veins of the head. It removes head pains and phlegm. It strengthens the teeth and brightens the eyes. It cures the stomach and strengthens the body. It increases a person's eloquence, memory and intelligence. It purifies the heart and increases good deeds. The angels become pleased and shake hands with him due to the Noor – radiance of his face. They escort him when he goes for Salaah. The bearers of the Arsh (the angels bearing the Throne of Allah) seek forgiveness for the person who uses the Miswaak when he exits from the Masjid. The Prophets also seek forgiveness on his behalf. Use of the Miswaak causes displeasure to Shaytaan and drives him away. It is a means of clearing the mind, digesting food and increasing offspring. It allows the person to pass on the Siraat like rapid lightning. It delays old age. The person will receive the book of deeds in the right hand. It gives the body strength in the obedience of Allah. It removes excessive heat and pain from the body and strengthens the back. It reminds one of the Kalimah (at the time of death) and speeds the extraction (of the Rooh – soul). It whitens the teeth and removes bad breath. It cleanses the throat and cleans the tongue. It gives sagacity, removes dankness and sharpens the eyesight. It increases wealth and children. It assists in the fulfilment of needs. It widens the grave for the person and gives him company (in the grave). The reward (which would have been given) to those who did not use the Miswaak is given to him. The doors of Jannah are opened for him and the angels say unto him: "This (person) is the follower of the Ambiyaa, he treads in their footsteps. The doors of Jahannam (hell) are closed upon him. He does not leave this world but in a clean and pure state. The Angel of Death does not come to him but in the appearance in which he comes to the Auliyyaa (friends of Allah).

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه: السواك يُزِيدُ الرَّجُلَ فَصَاحَةً: (أخرجه ابن عدي و العقيلي و الخطيب في الجامع) (فضائل مسواك)

Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah ؓ: Miswaak increases the eloquence of a person.

عن عائشة رضي الله عنها: السواكُ شِفَاءٌ مِنْ كُلِّ دَاءٍ إِلَّا السَّامَ، (أخرجه الديلمي في الفردوس) (فضائل مسواك)

Hadhrat Aa'ishah (Radhiyallaahu Anhaa): Miswaak is a cure for every ailment except death.

May Allah Ta'aala in His infinite Mercy, grant us all these benefits and many more. Aameen.

Hereunder follows the laws and etiquettes (Aadaab) of the Miswaak. Why are the Aadaab so important? The Ulama have written: "Whoever considers Aadaab (of anything) to be insignificant will be deprived of the Sunnah. Whoever considers the Sunnah (or any portion of the Sunnah) to be insignificant will be (eventually) deprived of the Faraa'idh. Whoever considers the Faraa'idh to be insignificant will be deprived of the Aakhirah (Jannah)."

Faqeeh Abul Layth (Rahmatullaahi Alayh) has said: "Islam is like that city which has five forts. The one is made of gold, the second of silver, the third of steel, the fourth of baked bricks and the fifth of unbaked bricks. Until the people of the forts protect the fort made of unbaked bricks (the most fragile), the enemy will not be tempted to attack the other forts. If they don't protect this fort (of unbaked bricks), it will be destroyed and the others will also eventually be destroyed. Islam also has five forts. The first is faith

(Yaqeen), the second is sincerity (Ikhlaas), the third is Faraa'idh, the fourth is the Sunnah and the fifth is Aadaab. Until a person protects the Aadaab, Shaytaan will not be tempted to lead him astray. If he is neglectful in the Aadaab, Shaytaan will now be tempted to take him away from the Sunnah. Thereafter the Faraa'idh, sincerity and faith will also be destroyed. (The result is that the persons entire Deen will be destroyed). Therefore, a person should protect the Aadaab in all matters, like Wudhu, Salaah, in the other laws of the Shari'ah and even in buying and selling (business dealings).”

The Mashaa'ikh have understood this. Therefore they have always taken great care in the performance of the Aadaab. May Allah Ta'aala grant us Taufeeq too. Aameen.

## **LAWS AND ETTIQUETTES**

1. According to the Hanafi Madhab, Miswaak is a Sunnah of Wudhu. Therefore Miswaak should be made at the time of Wudhu. According to the Shaafi'ee Madhab, it is a Sunnah of Salaah, so should be used just prior to Salaah. Some Hanafi jurists are of the opinion that Miswaak is Mustahabb before Salaah too. Thus, if one uses the Miswaak just prior to Salaah, ensure that no blood comes out. If blood comes out, the Wudhu will break according to the Hanafi Madhab. If one wishes to use the Miswaak prior to Salaah, it will be safer to use it lightly on the teeth only, avoiding the gums.
2. There are two opinions regarding the proper time for Miswaak in Wudhu. Some jurists say at the very beginning of making Wudhu. Others say at the time of rinsing the mouth. Both opinions are correct. It is preferable for a person whose gums normally bleed to use the Miswaak at the beginning of Wudhu and at the time of rinsing the mouth for one who does not bleed.
3. All types of tree twigs may be used for Miswaak with the exception of: a) the pomegranate tree, b) the basil plant, it can

cause leprosy, c) the myrtle tree, it can also cause leprosy. It, too, should not be used as a toothpick. Preferably, twigs from a bitter tree should be used, for, it (wood from a bitter tree) cleanses the mouth and strengthens the teeth and stomach. Ensure that it is not harmful or poisonous. The best Miswaak is from the olive tree. Sayyidina Mu'aadh ؓ narrates the following Hadeeth from Rasulallah: "The best Miswaak is from the olive tree, a blessed tree. It cleans the mouth and it is my Miswaak and the Miswaak of the Ambiyaa before me." (As Si'aayah).

It also Mustahabb to use dry twigs from the plant called *Salvadora Persica*, Araak in Arabic and called Peelu in Urdu, which has been soaked in water and become soft. Rasulallah ؓ and the Sahaabah used Miswaak from this tree.

4. According to the narration of Sayyidina Abdullah ibni Mas'ood ؓ the method of holding the Miswaak is to place the small finger at the bottom towards the end of the Miswaak and the thumb at the bottom towards the front (the brushing part) of it. The rest of the fingers should be placed on top. The right hand should be used.

5. Begin with the Miswaak on the right of the top teeth going towards the left and back towards the right. Thereafter clean the bottom teeth in the same manner. The teeth can be brushed lengthwise or breadth wise. It is preferable to clean the teeth breadth wise and the tongue lengthwise. The gums should also be brushed. Also, the back of the teeth.

6. If no Miswaak is available or a person does not have teeth, use the thumb and forefinger and rub the teeth or in the case of no teeth, the gums. The thumb will be used on the right and the forefinger on the left of the teeth. A piece of thick cloth can also be used. Do not use the fingers or a cloth when a Miswaak is available.

7. Miswaak is a Sunnah for both men and women.

8. It is Haraam to use a toothbrush made of pig bristles. It will be permissible to use one made of nylon. A toothbrush does not replace a Miswaak. The virtues and reward of Miswaak is not gained when using a toothbrush.
9. Toothpaste with any Haraam ingredient must be avoided.
10. Tooth powder with no Haraam ingredient is permissible but also does not substitute for a Miswaak.
11. The brushing portion of the Miswaak should not be too soft or too hard.
12. The Miswaak stick should be straight (not too bent) with not many knots.
13. Do not hold it in a fist and use. This can cause haemorrhoids (piles).
14. It is Makrooh (abominable) to use the Miswaak while lying down. It can lead to enlargement of the spleen.
15. Do not suck on the Miswaak, for, it can cause blindness.
16. Wash it (before and after brushing), otherwise Shaytaan uses it.
17. The length of the Miswaak should be one hand span when new. Shaytaan embarks on it if it is longer. There is no harm if because of use, the size decreases. It should be thick as the forefinger.
18. Do not leave it flat but place it in an upright position otherwise there is fear of insanity. Do not leave it flat on the ground. It is related from a Taabi'ee Sayyidina Sa'eed ibni Jubayr (رحمة الله عليه) that whoever does so and becomes insane has no one to blame but himself.

19. According to the Hanafi Madhab, a fasting person can use the Miswaak throughout the day. In the Shaafi'ee Madhab, it should not be used after Zawaal – after the sun reaches its zenith, i.e. till the beginning of the time of Zohar Salaah.
20. A Muhrim – a person in the state of Ihraam can use the Miswaak.
21. If the Miswaak is dry, it is Mustahabb to soften it with water.
22. Use the Miswaak thrice, washing it after each time. Others say it should be used (per occasion) until one is satisfied that the mouth is clean.
23. Do not use the Miswaak while in the toilet.
24. Do not use the Miswaak from both ends.
25. Do not use the Miswaak of another person without permission.
26. The Miswaak should also be used at the time of Ghusl – bathing.
27. To make it a habit, encourage the children to use the Miswaak.
28. This Du'aa can be recited at the time of Miswaak:

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْ سِوَاكِي رِضَاكَ عَنِّي وَاجْعَلْهُ طَهُورًا وَتَمْحِيصًا، وَبَيِّضْ  
وَجْهِي كَمَا تُبَيِّضُ بِهِ أَسْنَانِي (السعاية)

ALLAAHUMMAJ'AL SIWAAKEE RIDHAAKA ANNEE  
WAJ'ALHU TAHOORAW WA TAMHEESAA. WA BAYYIDH  
WAJHEE KAMAA TUBAYYIDHU BIHEE ASNAANEE.

O Allah! Make my use of the Miswaak pleasing unto You and make it a means of purification and forgiveness. (O Allah) brighten my face like You have brightened my teeth by the Miswaak.

These laws and etiquettes have been derived from the following Kitaabs:

‘As Si’aayah’ of Allaamah Mohammed Abdul Hayy Saheb Lukhnowi, ‘Kashkaul Ma’rifat’ of Aarif Billaah Hadhrat Moulana Shaah Hakeem Mohammed Akhtar Saheb and ‘Fadhaa’il Miswaak’ of Hadhrat Moulana At’har Husayn Saheb Mazaahiri.

ربنا تقبل منا إنك أنت السميع العليم،

و تب علينا، إنك أنت التواب الرحيم،

و صلى الله تعالى على خير خلقه سيدنا محمد

و على آله و أصحابه أجمعين،

و الحمد لله رب العالمين،

مَشَّ