

First Example

Understanding of the Hadith of the *Siwak*

Abu Hurayrah (Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: “Had I not thought it difficult for my Ummah, I would have commanded them to use the *Miswak* (tooth-stick) before every prayer.”¹

Zayd ibn Khaled Al-Juhani (Allah be pleased with him) narrated that he heard the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) saying: “Had I not thought it difficult for my Ummah, I would have commanded them to use the *Miswak* (tooth-stick) at the time of every prayer.”²

Abu Hurayrah (Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: “Had I not thought it difficult for my Ummah, I would have commanded them to use the *Miswak* (tooth-stick) before every ablution.”³

Hudhyafat (Allah be pleased with him) narrated: “Whenever the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) got up (from sleep), he would rub his teeth with *Miswak* (tooth-stick).”⁴

Miqdam Ibn Shurayh narrated that his father (Allah be pleased with him) said: “I asked A’isha what Allah’s Messenger (PBUH) did first when he entered his house, and she replied: He used tooth-stick (first of all).”⁵

Amer Ibn Rabi’at said: “I saw the Prophet (PBUH) using a tooth-stick while he was fasting.”⁶

¹ See Al-Bukhari, *Sahih*, Book of Friday; Chapter: *Al-Siwak Yawm Al-Jumua’*; Hadith no. (887)

² See Abu Dawud, *Sunan*, Book of Purification; Chapter: *Al-Siwak*; Hadith No. (46); see also Ibn Majah, *Sunan*, Book of Purification and Its Manners; Chapter on *Al-Siwak*; Hadith No. (287).

³ See Abu Dawud, *Sunan*, Book of Purification; Chapter: *Al-Siwak*.

⁴ See Al-Bukhari, *Sahih*, Book of Ablution; Chapter on *Al-Siwak*; Hadith No. (245); see also Muslim, *Sahih*, Book of Purification; Chapter on *Al-Siwak*; Hadith No. (255). The meaning of the Arabic sentence “*Yashus fahu*” is “rub it with the tooth-stick.”

⁵ See Muslim, *Sahih*, Book of Purification; Chapter on *Al-Siwak*; Hadith No. (253).

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) highlights the wisdom why we should continually use the tooth-stick in his (PBUH) Hadith: “*Siwak* is a means of purification for the mouth and is pleasing to the Lord.”⁷

Had the ultimate objective behind the use of *Siwak* is to purify one’s mouth and to keep it healthy and of good smell in addition to removing any bad odor and protecting teeth and gum, this objective can be fulfilled by any means that introduce the same purpose, exactly as it is maintained by the *Siwak* taken from the tree of *Arak*. In other words, there is no blame whatsoever to realize all the aforementioned points with the use of the *Siwak* specifically, or with the use of any other item like toothpaste, the toothbrush, etc. In actuality, to firmly adhere to the apparent meaning of the text, and confines the matter to the use of the *Siwak* taken from the tree of the *Arak*, believing that the use of this particular is a sign of righteousness and piety, thus placing two or three sticks in one’s pocket in spite of the fact that they might be contaminated by dust and climatic pollutants, is the essence of stagnation and narrow-mindedness. That is because this shows clearly that those people do not properly understand the ultimate objective of this action, that is, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his Companions (Allah be pleased with them all) used what was available at their time, and had they lived in our today’s world, they would have used the best, the latest, and the most useful of the scientific findings.

⁶ See Al-Bukhari, *Sahih*, Book of Fasting; Chapter: *Siwak Al-Ratb wa Al-Yabis Li Al-Sa’em*.

⁷ Ibid.

