40329 - Can You Do Ghusl with Braids?

the question

I have a very long hair up to my ankle and every time after sexual intercourse I have to take a full bath. Shall I do that every time for my hair because I find difficulty in doing that specially on alternative days?

Summary of answer

A woman does not have to undo her hair when she does Ghusl following Janabah (impurity following sexual discharge), but she must make sure that the water reaches all parts of her body, including the hair and its roots.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

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Shaykh `Abd Al-`Aziz ibn Baz (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked:

Some women braid their hair and when they do Ghusl following janabah they do not undo their braids. Is their Ghusl valid? Please note that the water does not reach all the roots of their hair. Please advise us, may Allah reward you with good.

He replied:

“If a woman pours water over her head, that is sufficient, because Umm Salamah (may Allah be pleased with her) asked the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) about that. She

said: I am a woman with braided hair; should I undo it when doing Ghusl for Janabah ? He said: “No, rather it will be sufficient for you to pour three handfuls of water on your head, then pour water over yourself and you will be purified.” (Narrated by Muslim)

So if a woman pours water on her head three times, that will be sufficient and she does not need to undo the braids, because of this an authentic Hadith.” (Majmu` Fatawa Ash-Shaykh Ibn Baz, 10/182)

Shaykh Ibn Baz (may Allah have mercy on him) also said:

“With regard to the major purification (i.e., Ghusl), it is essential to pour water over the head three times , and wiping is not sufficient, because of the report narrated by Muslim… then he mentioned the Hadith of Umm Salamah which is quoted above.” (Majmu` Fatawa Ash-Shaykh Ibn Baz, 10/161)

Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said in Tahdhib As-Sunan:

“This Hadith of Umm Salamah indicates that women do not have to undo their hair in order to do Ghusl following Janabah. The scholars were agreed on this point, except for the reports narrated from ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr and Ibrahim An-Nakha’i who said that she has to undo it, but we do not know of anyone else who agrees with them.”

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymin (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“The least that is required is that she should make the water reach every part of her body, even underneath the hair. It is best if it is done in the manner described in the Hadith of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), when Asma’ bint Shakl asked him about Ghusl following menses. He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “One of you should take her water and lotus leaves and purify herself and purify herself well. Then she should pour water over her head and rub it vigorously, so that it reaches the roots of her hair , and pour water over herself. Then she should take a piece of cloth that is scented with musk and purify herself with it.” Asma’ said: “How should she purify herself with it?” He said: ‘Subhan Allah, let her purify herself

with it.” `Aa’ishah said to her: “She should follow the traces of blood.” (Narrated by Al-Bukhaari and Muslim)

It is not necessary to undo the braids unless they are so tightly done that there is the fear that the water will not reach the roots of the hair, because of the Hadith of Umm Salamah (may Allah be pleased with her) which is narrated by Muslim… Then he mentioned the Hadith which we have quoted above.” (Majmu` Fatawa Ibn `Uthaymin, 11/318, 319)

And Allah knows best.