

244982 - Is it required to remove the nails altogether when cutting them, in order to comply with the Sunnah?

the question

When clipping the nails, is it required to remove them altogether, or is there nothing wrong with just shortening them and leaving a little of them? Because cutting them completely sometimes causes some pain. What is the amount that should be removed so that they will be in accordance with the fitrah?

Detailed answer

Firstly:

Cutting the nails is one of the sunnahs of the fitrah, because of the report narrated by al-Bukhari, 5889, and Muslim, 257, from Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him), who said: “The fitrah is five things – or five things are part of the fitrah – circumcision, shaving the pubes, plucking the armpit hairs, cutting the nails, and trimming the moustache.”

For more information, please see the answer to question no. [114810](#).

Secondly:

When cutting the nails, it is not stipulated that they should be removed altogether. What is required is to remove that which goes beyond the tip of the finger, which is that beneath which dirt collects.

Al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

What is required is to remove the part of the nail that goes beyond the tip of the finger, because the dirt collects beneath it then becomes repugnant, and it may go so far as to prevent water from reaching that which must be washed when purifying oneself... It is recommended to cut it back to the extent that will not do any harm to the finger.

(End quote from *Fat-h al-Bari*, 10.345)

Al-Manawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“Cutting the nails” means removing that part of the nail which goes beyond the tip of the finger, because dirt collects under it.

Ibn al-`Arabi (may Allah have mercy on him) said: Cutting the nails is Sunnah according to scholarly consensus, and we do not know of anyone who said that it is something that is intended for no reason. But if the dirt prevents water from reaching the skin, it must be removed for the purpose of purification.

(End quote from *Fayd al-Qadir*, 3/455).

Thirdly:

What should be done is taking care of the nails by cutting them every time they grow long, because cutting them is one of the sunnahs of the fitrah, and it is also part of perfect cleanliness.

Al-`Iraqi (may Allah have mercy on him) said in *Tarh at-Tathrib*, 2/83:

The author of *al-Mufhim* said: What is recommended is to check that every Friday, otherwise the scholars did not set any time limit for that, apart from stating that if the nails become long, they should be trimmed. Similarly, an-Nawawi said in *Sharh Muslim* that the view we favour is the view that that should be done as needed and whenever the nails grow long.

End quote. See also: Ibn Muflih: *al-Adab ash-Shar'iyyah*, 3/328-330.

But if he stops paying attention to that or does not cut them for a while, that should not go on for too long, and the maximum time he should leave them is forty days.

It was narrated that Anas ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him) said: A time limit was set for us for trimming the moustache, cutting the nails, plucking the armpit hairs and shaving the pubes: that was not to be left for more than forty days.

An-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

What is meant is that that should not be left for more than forty days, not that it should be done every forty days.

(End quote from *Sharh Muslim*, 3/149)

And Allah knows best.