45812 - There is some kind of crusty scab on his eye – what effect does that have on his wudoo'?

the question

For a while I have been having some secretions in the inner corner of my eye, in the area between the eye and the nose. When they dry up they leave a crusty scab. This happens several times a day and it usually happens when I check my eyes before each wudoo'. I wash them and I pay special attention to my eyes when doing wudoo'. But sometimes I do not do that then I find these secretions and I do not know if they were there before I did wudoo' and I did not see them, or if they happened after that, or if they were like grains of sand and the like. Please advise me, may Allaah reward you, because this matter is bothering me. Do I have to repeat my wudoo' if I find something like this?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The inner corner of the eye is that which is next to the nose. Ahmad (22277), Abu Dawood (134) and Ibn Maajah (444) narrated that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) used to wipe the inner corners of his eyes, but this hadeeth was classed as da'eef by al-Albaani in Da'eef Sunan Abi Dawood.

Al-Teebi said: Wiping it is mustahabb as a means of ensuring that wudoo' is done properly … because the eye is rarely free of kohl etc or white secretions which gather at the corner of the eye. End quote from 'Awn al-Ma'bood.

The Shaafa'is stated that it is obligatory to wash the inner corners of the eyes when doing wudoo', and to remove whatever secretions may be there that prevent water reaching the skin. Al-Ramli al-Shaafa'i said in Nihaayat al-Muhtaaj (1/168): The inner corners of the eyes must definitely be

washed; if there is anything like white secretions on them which prevent water reaching the place which must be washed, then it must be removed and the area beneath it washed. End quote.

In Asna al-Mataalib by Shaykh Zakariya al-Ansaari, discussing the acts that are recommended in wudoo', it says (1/43): Similarly the inner corners of the eyes that are next to the nose should be rubbed with the forefingers, the right forefinger for the right eye and the left forefinger for the left eye. The same applies for the outer corners of the eyes, and it is Sunnah to wash them if there is no white secretion that prevents water reaching the skin, otherwise washing them is obligatory as is mentioned in al-Majmoo'. End quote.

Some of the scholars think that if the secretion is slight, it may be overlooked and that does not affect wudoo'. This is the view favoured by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allaah have mercy on him).

Al-Mardaawi said in al-Insaaf: If there is a little dirt beneath his fingernails which prevents the water from reaching what is beneath it, then his wudoo' is not valid. This is the view of Ibn 'Aqeel.

And it was said that his wudoo' is valid. This is the correct view, which was described as such in al-Ri'aayah al-Kubra, and by the author of Hawaashi al-Muqni'. This was stated in al-Ifaadaat and was the view towards which al-Musaanif (i.e., Ibn Qudaamah) was inclined. It was also the view favoured by Shaykh Taqiy al-Deen… Shaykh Taqiy ad-Deen said: If there is something of such material anywhere on the body, such as blood, dough and the like, if it is a small amount, then it does not matter. End quote.

Ibn Qudaamah said in al-Mughni (1/174), after quoting the view of Ibn 'Aqeel that it is obligatory to remove any dirt that is beneath the fingernails, and that wudoo' is not valid if it prevents the water reaching what is beneath them:

It may be that this is not obligatory, because this is usually hidden, and if washing it was obligatory the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) would have said so, because it is not permissible for him to delay explaining something at the time when it is needed. End quote.

And Allaah knows best.