9037 - Is Plucking Eyebrows Haram?

the question

I know that plucking the eyebrows is haram and removing facial hair is also haram but that we can remove hair above the lip and in between the eyebrows. What about the hair that comes between the hairline and the eyebrows down to the eyebrow?

Summary of answer

1- Plucking the eyebrows is haram and it is a major sin, because Prophet Muhammad cursed those who do it.
2- Scholars divide hair into three categories: 1- Hair which we are commanded to remove or shorten; 2- Hair which we are forbidden to remove; 3-Hair concerning which the texts are silent. For more about each category, see the detailed answer.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

With regard to removing hair or not removing it, the scholars divide hair into three categories:

Hair which we are commanded to remove or shorten

1 – Hair which we are commanded to remove or shorten. This is known as Sunan al-Fitrah, such as removing the pubic hairs, trimming the moustache and plucking the armpit hairs. That also includes shaving or cutting the hair of the head during Hajj or ‘Umrah.

The evidence for that is the hadith of ‘Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) who said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Ten (actions) are part of the fitrah [natural inclinations of man]: trimming the moustache, letting the beard grow, using the

siwak (tooth-stick), rinsing the nose with water, clipping the nails, washing the finger joints, plucking the armpit hairs, shaving the pubes and washing oneself with water after relieving oneself."

Zakariyya said: Mus'ab said: And I forgot the tenth but it may have been rinsing the mouth with water. (Narrated by Muslim, 261)

Hair which we are forbidden to remove

2 – Hair which we are forbidden to remove, which includes the eyebrows. The action of removing the hair of the eyebrows is called al-nams. It is also forbidden to remove the hair of the beard.

The evidence for that is the hadith of 'Abd-Allah ibn Mas'ud (may Allah be pleased with him) who said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) say: "Allah has cursed the woman who does tattoos and the one who has them done, the woman who plucks eyebrows (al-namisah) and the one who has it done (al-mutanammisah), and the one who files her teeth for the purpose of beauty, altering the creation of Allah." (Narrated by al-Bukhari, 5931; Muslim, 2125)

And it was narrated that 'Abd-Allah ibn 'Umar said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) say: "Be different from the mushrikin: let your beards grow and trim your moustaches." (Narrated by al-Bukhari, 5892; Muslim, 259)

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

"The namisah is the woman who removes hair from the face and the mutanammisah is the one who asks to have that done. This action is haram, unless a woman develops a beard or moustache, in which case it is not haram to remove it, rather that is mustahabb in our view." (Sharh al-Nawawi li Sahih Muslim, 14/106)

Hair concerning which the texts are silent

3 – Hair concerning which the texts are silent and do not say whether it is to be removed or left as

it is, such as hair on the legs, hands, cheeks or forehead.

There is some difference of scholarly opinion concerning this.

Some said that it is not permissible to remove it, because removing it implies changing the creation of Allah, as Allah tells us that the Shaytan said:

“ ‘and indeed I will order them to change the nature created by Allah’” [al-Nisa 4:119 – interpretation of the meaning]

Some said that this is one of the things concerning which nothing was said, so the ruling is that it is allowed. It is permissible to leave it or to remove it, because whatever is not mentioned in the Quran or Sunnah is permissible.

This was the view favoured by the scholars of the Standing Committee and by Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymin. (See Fatawa al-Mar ah al-Muslimah, 3/879)

Removing hair from the upper lip, thighs, calves and arms

It says in Fatawa al-Lajnah al-Daimah:

(a) There is no sin on a woman if she removes hair on her upper lip, thighs, calves and arms. This is not part of the tanammus (plucking) that is forbidden.(Fatawa al-Lajnah al-Daimah, 5/194, 195)

Plucking the hair between the eyebrows

(b)The Committee was asked:

What is the Islamic ruling on plucking the hair between the eyebrows ?

They replied:

“It is permissible to pluck it, because it is not part of the eyebrows.” (Fatawa al-Lajnah al-Daimah, 5/197)

The Standing Committee was asked:

What is the ruling on a woman removing hair from her body?

They replied:

“It is permissible for her to do that, apart from the hair of the eyebrows and head. It is not permissible for her to remove the hair of her head or to remove any part of the eyebrows, whether by shaving or any other means.” (Fatawa al-Lajnah al-Daimah, 5/194)

Is plucking eyebrows haram?

We should comment on the questioner’s words “I know that plucking the eyebrows is haram and removing facial hair is also haram.”

As for plucking the eyebrows, this is haram and is a major sin, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) cursed those who do it.

Removing facial hair

But as for removing facial hair , there is a difference of opinion among the scholars as to whether it is permissible to remove it. This is based on their various understandings of the word al-nams.

Some scholars said that al-nams means removing any facial hair, and they did not limit it to the eyebrows. Others were of the view that al-nams refers to removing the hair of the eyebrows only. This was the view favoured by the Standing Committee as is clear from the fatwas quoted above.

What is meant by al-nams (plucking)?

It says in Fatawa al-Lajnah al-Daimah:

“*Al-nams* means plucking the hair of the eyebrows, which is not permissible because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) cursed the woman who plucks eyebrows (al-namisah) and the one who has it done (al-mutanammisah).” (Fatawa al-Lajnah al-Daimah, 5/195)

And Allah knows best.