

# THE SPIRITUAL AND MEDICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF MISWAK UNDER THE SUNNAH OF THE HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD (PBUH)

MUHAMMAD ASLAM KHAN

Department of Arabic, Islamic Studies & Research, Gomal University, Dera Ismail Khan (NWFP) Pakistan

## ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the significance of Miswak in the light of the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). It is commonly known that the Holy Prophet not only guided the humanity spiritually, but also suggested remedies for physical maladies. He (PBUH) issued directives regarding better hygienic living, i.e. cleanliness, general hygiene dietary habits and healthy food. These directions and principles lead to the prevention of various diseases of stomach, throat, liver, heart and brain etc. so in connection to these directions and principles, regular use of Miswak was also recommended and emphasized to achieve the spiritual and Medical significance.

## LITERAL AND TECHNICAL MEANING OF MISWAK

The term Miswak is synonym to tooth brush or tooth pick. However, the term Miswak denotes the act of cleaning teeth. The verbal expression being "Saaka Yasuku" (to rub and to grate) and "Istaka Yastuku" mean cleaning the teeth with Miswak. Technically the instrument consists of piece of smooth wood (piece of branch of tree or its root), the end of which is incised. It is similar to a brush, generally thick as a finger and lengthy of span in size (Ibn-e-Manzoor, 1405.H)

## EXCELLENCES OF MISWAK

Miswak is chiefly used in performing "wudu" (ablution) for *salat* (prayer). It is said that this was the practice of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). Abu Hurayra narrates that Muhammad (PBUH) once said he would have made it obligatory before *salat* during ablution if he had not feared that the obligation would overburden my community (Tirmizi, N.D)

In one tradition it is said that the use of Miswak before each *salat* was stated obligatory by Him (PBUH). (Ahmad Bin Hamble, N.D) The surpassing merits which appear to be essential from of these traditions culminate into the view that it belongs to customs of the "religion of

nature, The Sunnah of Prophets (Abi Dawood, N.D), and that source of pleasure of Allah Almighty (Ibn-e-Maja, N.D).

## PRECEPTS OF MISWAK

The use of Miswak is Sunnah, especially at the time of wudu (ablution) (Tirmizi, N.D). Likewise occasions where the use of Miswak is Sunnah or Mustahab are: in connection with the *Salat* (Prayer) with the recitation of the Quran (Al-Shoukani, N.D) after sleep, as often as the mouth has lost its freshness (Ashafi, 1973) after long silence, before Zikr-e-Illahi, at the time of entrance to the Kaba, and after entering to one's own house, before cohabitation with wife, before coming to join any good meeting, at the time of hunger and thirst, after getting up before coming the influences of death, before dawn, eating, and going on a journey, after coming from journey, and before going to bed. (Muhammad, N.D)

## SELECTION OF TREE FOR MISWAK:

According to the statement of Allama Ibn-al-Qayim, the finest Miswak is of the Tree of arak (Ibn-e-Qayyi, 1984), which has also been approved by Al-Mardavi (Al-mardavi, 1980), Zain-u-Din, and Maulana Abdul Haq Dehlvi (Zain-ud-Din, N.D). It had already been used and advised by the Holy Prophet (PBUH). (Abdul Haq, N.D) Likewise Miswak of Margosa, the Acacia, the