

THEME 45 - RULING ON TATTOOS, PIERCINGS AND MAKEUP

حُكْمُ الْوَشْمِ وَالثُّقْبِ وَأَدَوَاتِ التَّجْمِيلِ

Learning objectives:

- To understand the various types of body modifications.
- To explain why body modification is prohibited in Islam.
- To learn that attempting to emulate the characteristics of the opposite gender is not allowed.

In this theme, you will learn:

In Islam, body modification is discouraged, as the human body is considered a sacred creation of Allah ﷻ. Permanent alterations, such as tattoos or excessive piercings, are viewed as inappropriate and contrary to the natural form bestowed by the Creator. Body modification is the deliberate change to the body or its physical appearance. It can range from tattoos, piercings, hair extensions, skin implants to plastic surgery and more. Some people want to alter their looks as they may not be satisfied with what Allah ﷻ has given them genetically. Islam has prohibited all unnecessary interfering, modifications and disfigurements to any part of Allah's creation.

قال الله تعالى: ﴿وَقُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا﴾ [النور: 31]. قَالَ تَعَالَى: ﴿وَلَا ضَلَّانَهُمْ وَلَا مُدْمِنِينَ لَهُمْ وَلَكَّامِرْتَهُمْ فَلْيَبْتَئِكُنَّ إِذَانَ الْأَنْعَامِ وَلَكَّامِرْتَهُمْ فَلْيَغَيِّرَنَّ خَلْقَ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يَتَّخِذِ الشَّيْطَانَ وَلِيًّا مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَقَدْ خَسِرَ خُسْرَانًا مُّبِينًا﴾ [النساء: 119].

Allah ﷻ says: “And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and be modest; they shouldn’t expose their beauty in public, except what is normally showing” (24:31). “I will lead them astray and give them false hopes and I will order them to slit the ears of cattle and to tinker with Allah’s creation. Whoever takes Satan as a protector beside Allah will clearly be a loser” (4:119).

[1] عن أسماء: أَنَّ امْرَأَةً سَأَلَتِ النَّبِيَّ فَقَالَتْ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ ابْنَتِي أَصَابَتْهَا الْحَصْبَةُ ، فَتَمَرَّقَ شَعْرُهَا ، وَإِنِّي زَوَّجْتُهَا ، أَفَأَصِلُ فِيهِ ؟ فَقَالَ : « لَعَنَ اللَّهُ الْوَاصِلَةَ وَالْمَوْصُولَةَ ». متفق عليه

1. Asma’ said: A woman came to the Prophet and said: “Messenger of Allah! I have a daughter who had an attack of small pox and all her hair fell out. Now I want to celebrate her marriage. Can I get her a wig?” The Prophet replied, “Allah has cursed the maker and wearer of a wig.”

[2] عن ابن عمر: أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ لَعَنَ الْوَاصِلَةَ وَالْمُسْتَوْصِلَةَ ، وَالْوَأَشِمَةَ وَالْمُسْتَوْشِمَةَ. متفق عليه.

2. Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ cursed the maker and wearer of a wig and the tattooer and the one who is tattooed.

COMMENTARY: Al-Washimah is a woman who practises Washm (tattoo). Washm was performed in the past by piercing a needle in a part of the body for drawing blood and then filling the cavity caused by it with some type of ink. In Arab society in the Prophet’s time, this fashion was popular among women for enhancing their beauty.

[3] عن ابن مسعود قال: لعن الله الواشمات والمستوشمات والمتنمصات، والمتفلجات للحسن، والمعيرات خلق الله، فقالت له امرأة في ذلك فقال: وما لي لا ألعن من لعنه رسول الله وهو في كتاب الله؟ قال الله تعالى: ﴿ وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا ﴾ [الحشر: 7]. متفق عليه.

3. Ibn Mas’ud رضي الله عنه said: Allah ﷻ has cursed those women who practise tattooing and those women who have themselves tattooed, and those women who get their hair removed from their eyebrows and faces (except beard and moustache), and those who make artificial spaces between their teeth for beauty, whereby they change Allah’s ﷻ creation. A woman started to argue with him, saying: “What is all this?” He replied: “Why should I not curse those whom the Messenger of Allah ﷺ cursed and who are cursed in Allah’s book? Allah ﷻ has said: “Whatsoever the Messenger gives you, take it; and whatsoever he forbids you, leave it” (59:7).

[4] عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ: لَعَنَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ الْمُتَشَبِّهَاتِ بِالرِّجَالِ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ وَالْمُتَشَبِّهِينَ بِالنِّسَاءِ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ. رواه الترمذي.

4. Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه said the Messenger of Allah ﷺ cursed women who imitate men and men who imitate women.

COMMENTARY: This hadith highlights the Prophet's concern about gender roles and the importance of preserving distinct gender identities in society. The curse on women who imitate men and vice versa indicates the disapproval of blurring gender boundaries and adopting behaviours or appearances that may lead to confusion or social disorder.

[5] عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ: لُعِنَتِ الْوَاصِلَةُ وَالْمُسْتَوْصِلَةُ وَالنَّامِصَةُ وَالْمُتَمَمِّصَةُ وَالْوَاشِمَةُ وَالْمُسْتَوْشِمَةُ مِنْ غَيْرِ دَاءٍ. رَوَاهُ أَبُو دَاوُدَ.

5. Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه said, “The one who supplies fake hair and the one who removes hair. The one who requests genital mutilation and the one who performs genital mutilation, the one who tattoos and the one who has been tattooed without a reason (e.g. disease) are all cursed.”

Activities:

- Research the health risks related to body modification and plastic surgery.
- Discuss the modern trends in body modifications and why it is prohibited in Islam.
- Design a poster showing the dangers of body modification and why Allah ﷻ has made it forbidden.

In this theme you have learnt:

- Body modification is the work of Satan.
- Satan will arouse people in false desires and whisper to them to change the nature as created by Allah ﷻ.
- The Prophet ﷺ prohibited the use of false hair and wigs.
- Allah ﷻ has cursed the maker and wearer of a wig and the tattooer and the one who is tattooed.
- Any effort to bring about a change in one's natural appearance is unlawful.