

Medical Benefit

Bloodletting Using a Blood Donation Bag

Date: 20/04/2016

Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and blessings and peace be upon our master Muhammad.

Some of our brothers asked about the ruling regarding **bloodletting (fasd)** performed using a **blood donation bag**, and whether it is equivalent to traditional bloodletting, especially since some people object to it.

Answer

Bloodletting is a complete evacuation of the humors, whereby blood, phlegm, yellow bile, and black bile are removed.

Traditionally, a band is tied above the vein to be opened, then the vein is cut lengthwise. Afterward, the band is released so that the blood flows out naturally without suction. One of its benefits is that

it removes both thick and thin humors from the depths of the body.

We asked our teacher, **Shaykh Abdullah al-Harari** (may Allah have mercy on him), about using a **blood donation bag** instead of traditional bloodletting. In this method, a band is tied above the vein, then a wide needle is inserted into the vein and connected to a blood collection bag. After the band is released, the blood flows into the bag naturally without suction.

He replied:

“This is another form of bloodletting that serves the purpose of *fasd*.”

Someone once asked the Shaykh whether drawing blood with a fine needle would also count as bloodletting. The Shaykh replied:

“These are two different matters.”

The questioner found the distinction difficult to understand, which prompted us to discuss the use of a blood donation bag as an alternative to traditional bloodletting. In reality, these are two different issues.

First Issue

The **wide-bore needle** through which blood flows naturally without suction is considered comparable to traditional bloodletting, because when connected to a collection bag it allows both thick and thin blood to leave the body without suction, just as in traditional bloodletting. Therefore, the Shaykh said:

“This form of bloodletting serves the purpose of traditional bloodletting.”

Second Issue

As for the **fine needle** through which blood is removed by suction, this is **not equivalent to traditional bloodletting**, because the fine needle used for drawing blood removes only the thinner blood

by suction and does not remove the thicker blood that is intended to be evacuated through bloodletting.

For this reason, it **does not fulfill the purpose of bloodletting**, and thus, as our teacher said:

“These are two different matters.”

If someone asks what we do in practice, the complete answer has already been given above.

And Allah, Glorified and Exalted is He, knows best.

Written by Dr. Hani Al-Batal.